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Tourism Marketing Strategies to Sustain Small Resorts in the British Virgin Islands

Rosemary Callwood
Walden University

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Walden University

College of Management and Technology

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Rosemary Callwood

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Faculty

Dr. Levita Bassett, Committee Member, Doctor of Business Administration Faculty

Dr. Judith Blando, University Reviewer, Doctor of Business Administration Faculty

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Sue Subocz, Ph.D.

Walden University
2022

Abstract

Tourism Marketing Strategies to Sustain Small Resorts in the British Virgin Islands

by

Rosemary Callwood

MBA, Walden University, 2013

BS, Everest University, 2009

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

Walden University

October 2022

Abstract

Business owners are often ill-equipped to implement tourism marketing strategies needed to drive successful businesses. Ineffective marketing strategies can negatively impact small resorts' viability and result in premature business failure. Grounded in Porter's five forces theory, the purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore tourism marketing strategies that business owners use to achieve sustainability in their business successfully. The participants were owners of three small resorts in the British Virgin Islands (BVI) who successfully achieved sustainability in their businesses. Data were collected through face-to-face semistructured interviews, archival records, and social media websites. Through thematic analysis, four themes emerged: (a) social media marketing strategies, (b) internet marketing strategies, (c) business operations, and (d) traditional marketing strategies. A key recommendation is for owners of small resorts to create a measurement plan to monitor marketing efforts. The implications for positive social change include the potential to increase local communities' tax revenues.

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Dedication

Parents are worthy of all honor which gives hope and encouragement. Exceptional honor and dedication go out to my parents, Henrietta, and Roy (D.O.D. 25.10.94 and 07.03.14), who sacrificed everything to guarantee I lacked nothing in life. To the family's matriarch, "Mammy," I can never repay you for what you have done for me. I will always cherish and hold fast to the memories which strengthen me. Your unconditional love, support, and perseverance inspire me to take on the mantle you left behind. To my dad, I got to know you later in life, but in the end, you showed me how easy it was to forgive and forget. I will deeply miss you both. May you both continue to rest in eternal peace. Thanks to my brother-in-law (AKA), Poppa, for always encouraging me to push on despite the situation. Take your heavenly rest, my brother. I dedicate this study to the rest of my family, especially my siblings and brother-in-law, Tyrone, who remains my pillar of strength. Your prayers and support have carried me through it all. Thanks for understanding the many months that turned into years when I missed most family gatherings due to studying or assignments. This celebration, I share with you!

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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

The rationale behind tourism marketing is to stimulate business principles, stand out from rivals, attract customers, and generate brand awareness (Razak et al., 2020). Businesses in the tourism industry must find ways to stand out from competitors, promote themselves as the best choice for travelers, and highlight areas that qualify them as different or superior (Fuentes-Moraleda et al., 2019). Businesses must understand the unique characteristics of tourism experiences and incentives and the behaviors of traveling consumers (Walker et al., 2021). Tourism marketing strategies require knowing the differences between marketing goods and services (Sadq et al., 2019). Both approaches are fundamental for achieving the best tourism marketing tips, focusing on helping businesses find and promote that unique selling point (Varadarajan, 2020). Marketers must preserve the latest trends to create a diverse marketing mix and employ sustainability practices (Chou et al., 2020). In this qualitative, multiple case study, I explored tourism marketing strategies to sustain small resorts in the BVI.

Background of the Problem

Tourism is fundamental to BVI's economy, contributing 51.8% of the government's revenue (Debono et al., 2017). Wondirad and Ewnetu (2019) posited tourism industry employs various individuals in the territory and contributes further to a considerable proportion of locally owned businesses and tourism-dependent sole traders. Tourism marketing consists of various industry strategies to promote and attract touristic products, services, and visitors to a specific location (Al-hazmi & Hassan, 2020). Sadq et

al. (2019) postulated the importance of tourism marketing strategies, their competitiveness, and their awareness of the requirements and desirability of customers.

Kornilaki and Font (2019) revealed that tourism marketing strategies impact the reliability of small-scale resorts and businesses' survival. Tourism has benefitted limited economic growth, especially in the Caribbean (Cannonier & Burke, 2018; Enilov & Wang, 2021; Grilli et al., 2021; Manzoor et al., 2019; Walker et al., 2021). Marketing strategies must improve to compete with other resorts, generate brand awareness, gain a competitive advantage, and retain more customers (Aghimien et al., 2018; Oberholzer-Gee & Yao, 2018). Little research has occurred on tourism marketing strategies and, if left overlooked, could diminish the effectiveness of strategies (Cunha et al., 2018). In this study, I aimed to develop and measure successful tourism marketing strategies to sustain small resorts and determine their effectiveness in BVI.

Problem Statement

Marketing strategies can negatively impact the longevity of small resorts (Williams & Ramdani, 2018, p. 1023). According to Makropoulos et al. (2020, p. 411–419), during 2004 to 2013, 96% of U.K. small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) that entered liquidation failed due to leadership and business process characteristics. The general business problem is that ineffective marketing strategies can negatively impact small resorts' viability and result in premature business failure. The specific business problem is that some BVI resort owners lack tourism marketing strategies to sustain small BVI resorts.

Purpose Statement

This qualitative, multiple case study aimed to explore tourism marketing strategies for sustaining small resorts in BVI. The targeted population comprised of three owners of small beach resort businesses who have used tourism marketing strategies to achieve sustainability in their business. The findings could have implications for positive social change by providing tourism marketing intelligence and design to small businesses in BVI. The results could benefit BVI's society and economy by increasing job formation and supporting citizens through increased resort profitability and derivative tax revenues.

Nature of the Study

The three research methods are (a) quantitative, (b) qualitative, and (c) mixed (Fuller, 2017; Yin, 2018). The qualitative method was most suitable for this study because it enables researchers to explore events and processes (Shinkle et al., 2019; Wijngaarden, 2017). Lodhia and Smith (2019) contended that researchers explore a phenomenon's significance by understanding the situation and reason for selecting a qualitative research design. The quantitative research method was inappropriate for this study because hypotheses were neither tested nor examined variables' characteristics or relationships (Kunicki et al., 2019). The mixed-method approach did not meet this study's purpose because it requires combining the qualitative and quantitative methods in the same research (Khoo-Lattimore et al., 2019). I selected the qualitative method to gain feedback from research participants through personal interviews and document reviews.

A qualitative case study design best aligned with this study because a case study would draw upon participants' insights and views (Yin, 2018). Goffin et al. (2019)

concluded that a case study facilitates investigating a phenomenon through in-depth empirical inquiry and defining real-life experiences and perspectives. A case study is a qualitative design that can use direct observations and analysis from more than one participant (Basias & Pollalis, 2018; Ngozwana, 2018). A multiple case study design was appropriate because it provides a fairer and more balanced research approach than a single case study (Yin, 2018). A narrative research design was unsuitable for this study because the purpose was not to understand cultural and social realities (Eichsteller, 2019). A phenomenological method was inappropriate for this study, as researchers use that design to explore individuals' lived experiences (Flynn & Korcuska, 2018). An ethnography design was not appropriate for this study, as I did not want to explore a specific culture through participants' lived experiences (Beuving, 2020) or the personal projections of participants based on a cultural phenomenon (McGranahan, 2018).

Research Question

What tourism marketing strategies were used to sustain small resorts in the BVI?

Interview Questions

1. What is your current tourism marketing strategy approach?
2. How did you administer the marketing strategies to sustain your business?
3. What barriers did you encounter when administering tourism marketing strategies?
4. How do you measure the success of your marketing strategies?
5. Based on your experience, how do your tourism marketing strategies enable you to compete with other hoteliers and business owners?

6. What else can you share with me about your tourism marketing strategies for sustaining small resorts in the BVI?

Conceptual Framework

Competitive theory, instituted by Porter (1979), was the conceptual framework for this study. Porter (1980) posited competitive strategy's end goal is to capture excess profits. Owners, entrepreneurs, government officials, and academic scholars must collaborate to implement effective tourism marketing strategies to foster success. Porter (1986) identified five forces shaping every market and industry globally. Menon and Yao (2017) provided enhanced descriptions and explanations for each of Porter's five forces (PFF): (a) the potential for new entrants, (b) the intensity of competitive rivalry refers to the number of competitors and their capacity to undercut a company, (c) the bargaining power of suppliers addresses how comfortably suppliers can increase the cost of inputs, (d) bargaining power of customers that have the propensity to drive prices lower, and (e) the threat of substitutes.

Porter's (1979) competitive theory identified the basis for achieving profitability, which helps businesses discover their competitive advantages. Porter's (1986) framework can describe how small resorts in the BVI seek tourism marketing initiatives to differentiate themselves significantly from their competitors. Porter's (1979) competitive theory facilitates understanding the participating resorts' strategies for identifying profitability improvement.

Operational Definitions

Market failure: Less than predictable performance under perfect competition conditions (Klein, 2019).

Small and medium enterprises (SMEs): Businesses that employ staff below a certain threshold (Tibay et al., 2018).

Small hotel (boutique hotel, small resort): A design-led property with fewer than 100 rooms providing guests with ultra-personalized service and accommodation (Henderson, 2011).

Blue ocean strategy: A novel approach that helps organizations create uncontested market space where competition is irrelevant (Sadiq et al., 2021).

Marketing mix: A set marketing activity that a business uses to promote its brand or product in the market (Sadq et al., 2019).

Tourism marketing strategy: A business blueprint or process to achieve a marketing goal and purpose (Albuquerque et al., 2018).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Assumptions

Assumptions are the beliefs and paradigms researchers of a study assume to be true (Rashid et al., 2019b). According to Moses and Chan (2018), assumptions are foundational theories and the exploration of instruments to execute the research process. My first assumption in this study was all small resort owners implement tourism marketing strategies to help sustain their businesses. My second assumption was all research participants would answer questions honestly and be unbiased in their responses

to the interview questions based on experiences with tourism marketing. Another assumption was that participants would be knowledgeable about the topic. My final assumption was that the sample of participants in the study would be representative of leaders in small resorts throughout the BVI. In response to open-ended, semistructured interview questions, I depended on participants to disclose information at their discretion to safeguard research validity.

Limitations

Limitations are potential weaknesses of a study that impact the validity of information beyond a researcher's control (Leedy & Ormrod, 2021). Limitations are research elements that affect the interpretation of a study (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2019). The first limitation of this qualitative case study was the sample size of three small resort owners only within the BVI region. The value of sample size in research is to improve generalizability and for a researcher to understand the significant level, size, margin of error, and ratio among population and design effect (Andrade, 2020; Bonett, 2021). Another limitation was the limited experience of the participants regarding which tourism marketing strategies were most effective to ensure profitability. The final limitation was the brief time limit of the study.

Delimitations

Researchers inflict deliberate boundaries or limits to emphasize a study's aim and intentions (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2018). The first delimitation in this study was the geographical location: BVI. The geographical delimitation was suitable for this study because I did not foresee any regulations affecting the subject matter. The second

delimitation was small resorts operational for more than 5 years. The study contained no data from small resort owners whose businesses were operational for fewer than 5 years. In the concluding delimitation, participants were small resort leaders.

Significance of the Study

Contribution to Business Practice

The value of the study's findings enables small business leaders to gain knowledge and incorporate marketing strategies to facilitate sustainability. Marketing strategies are vital to shape consumption patterns used to identify more sustainable business practices and support consumption patterns for sustainable initiatives (Trivedi et al., 2018). Sustaining marketing strategies contribute to a viable business plan's economic, social, and environmental aim (Walker, 2019). Findings from this qualitative case study may enable small resorts operating in BVI to identify and adopt strategies that could lead to higher success rates. The government of the Virgin Islands, state and local governments, entrepreneurs, and small resort owners will benefit from the findings because the findings will enable business leaders to develop and improve strategies for enhancing tourism marketing. This study fills disparities in understanding the effective practice of business.

Implications for Social Change

The implications for social change arising from this study's results are that owners and managers of small resorts may sustain their businesses using the identified survival marketing strategies. Small business owner failures threaten to destabilize the economy, impacting communities, local economies, and families (Doumpos et al., 2017). BVI small

resort owners who manage their businesses can deliver jobs to the local economy, spurring economic progress. The exchange and gathering of lessons learned from successful small resorts may increase the success rate of other small resort owners, which can affect general beneficial change through increasing tax revenues to benefit needy citizens.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

Researchers conduct a literature review to examine a phenomenon by collecting data (Paul & Criado, 2020). In this qualitative multiple case study, I explored tourism marketing strategies for sustaining small resorts in the BVI. This literature review aims to provide context and authentication of analysis on the principal research question regarding tourism marketing strategies for sustaining small resorts in the BVI. An assessment of the literature included an overview of tourism marketing strategies that small resort owners use to maintain their business, emphasizing the theories' history, similarities, and differences. Zhu et al. (2020) postulated that the ultimate vulnerability of SMEs is a failure in the process of internationalization markets. Stam (2020) opined that the meaning of theory provides a firm foundation of superior quality research by recognizing methodological choice and strategy. The literature review concludes with an account of the general business problem: ineffective marketing strategies negatively impact small resorts' viability and result in premature business failure. Contributions to expertise, time, and other valuable resources presented by scholars can apprise business owners of tourism marketing strategies for sustainability.

This subsection examines various perspectives on small business sustainability strategies and factors that can lead to success. I reviewed the literature regarding successful marketing strategies. The literature review covered the PFF model (competitive strategy theory) as the main conceptual framework and various contrasting and supporting views. The lack of capabilities and organizational resources continues to be a struggle with business owners concerning technology gained through competitive advantage as a marketing tool (Ritz et al., 2019).

Search Strategy

The literature review includes data from diverse scholarly sources for dissertations, books, and peer-review journal articles—which was the primary source of information. I accessed websites from Google Scholar and the BVI tourism database. Walden University Library websites also provided ABI/INFORM Complete, ERIC, Business Source Complete, Academic Search Complete/Premier, Emerald Management Journals, SAGE Premier, EBSCOhost, ScienceDirect, and ProQuest databases. I used the following keywords in the study of existing literature: *Porter's five forces model, business strategies, Caribbean small businesses, marketing, SME sustainability, small business leadership, competitive strategy theory, SME failure, SME success, SME survival, SME performance, small business entrepreneurship, SME operation strategies, small business management, competitive advantage, and marketing strategies.*

The literature summarized and assessed the academic level of the research study. The literature review includes 217 references, including books, journals, periodicals, and dissertations (see Table 1). Of the total references, 88% of the articles were published

within the last 5 years. Table 1 shows the summary of reference types, the publication year range, and the total percentage of published sources within the past 5 years.

Table 1

Literature Review Source Content

Reference type	Total	< 5 years	> 5 years	% Total < 5 years
Peer-reviewed journals	182	166	16	92
Books	14	7	8	50
Non-peer-reviewed journals	21	18	3	86
Total	217	191	27	88

Discussions of the literature include significant themes and subthemes allowing small resort owners to use effective tourism marketing strategies to sustain their businesses beyond 5 years. The literature review begins with an overview of the conceptual framework PFF, relevant alternative theories, marketing background and importance, small business marketing, SMEs in the Caribbean, small business survivability, and small business failure. I provide background on tourism in the Caribbean. A conclusion follows with a summary and transition into Section 2.

Conceptual Framework

The word *strategy* originated in the military field and is the leading theory of the contemporary era applied to human activities and business strategies (Fuertes et al., 2020). According to Fuertes et al. (2020), understanding the competitive environment and interpreting the effects of competition in business is difficult for business strategists. Two schools of thought— PFF and resource-based view (RBV)—have influenced competitive strategies, thus playing a crucial role in affecting an organization's competitive advantage

(Ramon-Jeronimo et al., 2019). A successful competitive strategy depends on external environments, the industry, and competitors (Porter, 1980). In 1979, the strategic management discipline Porter's competitive strategy helped business leaders identify power (Kharub et al., 2019). PFF helped mold industries' academic research and business practices by determining their strengths, weakness, and long-run profitability (Porter, 2008). A competitive strategy explains small businesses' operations to achieve a competitive advantage (Udriyah et al., 2019). According to Anastasiu et al. (2020), a sustainable business approach is contingent on specific external forces: (a) rivalry, (b) organizations as buyers, (c) supply power, (d) the threat of new entrants, and (e) the threat of substitutes examines the success or failure of businesses.

Porter (1979) aimed to identify and manage competitive environments by exploring competitor or organization perspectives. According to Bruijl (2018), PFF drives competition and exposes business capacity to profit. Businesses that create more consumer values will generate more than their rivals (Daengs et al., 2019).

A competitive advantage is when businesses focus on cost or differentiation (Brett, 2018; Liu & Atuahene-Gima, 2018; Quaye & Mensah, 2018). The dynamic theory of strategy brings a wealth of knowledge to businesses in evaluating performance and positioning for effective continuous growth (Porter, 1991). The importance of a competitive process is critical to an industry's sustainability beyond 5 years. Porter (1991) noted that the difference in success and failure of a business depends on the choices and changes made in its environment. Porter's competitive theory aligns with this study, in which I explored tourism marketing strategies that small resort owners deploy

for sustainability. According to researchers, sustainability is a crucial driver for success, especially in the tourism industry (Alonso-Almeida et al., 2018; Brauer et al., 2019; Dans & González, 2019; Kim et al., 2020). Business leader competitiveness depends on their ability to respond to challenges in sustainable development (Papadas et al., 2019).

Porter's Five Forces Model

This study aimed to explore tourism marketing strategies to sustain small resorts in the BVI. When used effectively, the PFF framework unlocks the profit potential of a business. PFF is a popular business transformational strategy tool manager, and entrepreneurs use to analyze their industry's competitive environment (Isabelle et al., 2020). A competitive advantage is one indicator that an organization can show over its rivals, using assets and competencies to earn superior business performance (Zainal-Abidin & Mohd-Roslin, 2020). According to Ivars-Baidal et al. (2021), indicators are fundamental for destinations to progress toward more sustainable tourism development. Organizations perform in a healthy competitive environment that determines attractiveness by serving customers and making profits. A strategic approach is relevant to long-term business, leading to better performance (Anastasiu et al., 2020). A sustainable and profitable environment depends on the PFF framework (Porter, 1980). PFF is an influential and straightforward tool used to identify experiential personals within known business situations using the outside-in perspective (Adelakun, 2020). The framework identifies an industry's structure to determine strategy and is an excellent model for understanding competitive levels (Mugo, 2020). I used Porter's competitive strategy theory as a conceptual framework in this study.

According to Porter (1991), competitiveness improves a group's productivity, prosperity, and sustainability. Competitiveness influences the development of a country (Neverauskienė et al., 2020) based on macroeconomic or microeconomic factors (Ketels & Porter, 2020). According to Horvathova and Mokrsova (2020), a macroeconomic level of competitiveness must always consider the microeconomic context. A microeconomic factor refers to the internal environment of a company and how businesses compete. In contrast, a macroeconomic factor refers to demography, economy, natural forces, technology, politics, and culture (Möbius & Althammer, 2019). Möbius and Althammer (2019) further outlined three strong predictors of sustainable outcomes that reap a stable and favorable macroeconomic environment: (a) high-quality institutions, (b) productivity-enhancing rules and regulations, and (c) sophisticated business environments. A competitive advantage is a strategic theory for Caribbean businesses' long-term survival and ability to sustain competitive advantage. According to Knudsen et al. (2021), business success depends on a sustainable competitive advantage. Competitive advantage has a significant lead over competitors by creating value chain benefits (Išoraitė, 2018). The value chain concept introduced by Porter in 1985 is the collection of activities businesses perform to design, produce, market, deliver, and support products (Ferro-Diez et al., 2020). A value chain particularizes business strategies to attain competitive advantage (Ferro-Diez et al., 2020).

SMEs play a pivotal role in an economy (Guha et al., 2018). SMEs must adapt and anticipate market changes in a rapidly changing business environment to create sustainable innovations (Sulistyo & Ayuni, 2019). Porter (2003) expressed that

competitive advantage is vital to a company's performance in a competitive market. The growth and development of competition have led leaders to overlook competitive advantage (Daengs GS et al., 2019). As managers address the possibility of imperfections and weaknesses of businesses and implement practical tools and strategies to maintain competitive advantages, a sustainable advantage in the market is vital (Badenhorst-Weiss & Cilliers, 2019). Competitive advantage must go beyond the traditional organizational context to understand the competitive advantage for sustainability.

Competitive advantage is one determinant of superior performance that relies on operational effectiveness and subtle businesses (Porter, 1985). One of the earliest original strategies in the industry, competitive theory, is the most researched in business literature (Momaya, 2019) and is grounded on three generic strategies: (a) lower cost, (b) differentiated, or (c) focused. The competitive approach encompasses resources and is contingent on nations, firms, and individuals (Porter, 1991). Productivity is vital to the competitiveness of a business (Baumann et al., 2019; Flachenecker & Kornejew, 2019), and the stronger the competitive force, the more profitable and essential a business will become (Porter, 1979). Company leaders are responsible for introducing innovative business strategies, products, and services to gain and create competitive advantages in the market (Dao, 2019; Kuka, 2018). Market shares are under constant pressure, and highly competitive firms are engaged in voluntary productivity and competitive environments (Flachenecker & Kornejew, 2019). Even though most successful organizations improve, their strategy often remains the same. According to Eyasu and Arefayne (2020), business leaders are responsible for attracting customers and creating a

competitive advantage for the continuous improvement of the economy. Porter (1991) argued that a company's ability to compete was based on location advantages.

Determining the strength of each competitive force takes into perspective existing organizations or already living businesses in the industry (Porter, 2003).

Traditional marketing practices involve looking at the PFF model to gauge the level of competition at various indicators (Zainal-Abidin & Mohd-Roslin, 2020). Indicators are used to identify weaknesses and strengths and to determine the business strategy to adopt. According to Fuertes et al. (2020), a business's success demands continuous adaptation to its environment. Fuertes et al. (2020) further stated that competitive understanding of environments and interpreting effects is a focal difficulty for business strategists. Although fierce competition may arise, leaders must obtain the best suitable candidate from the labor market (Latukha, 2018). Zainal-Abidin and Mohd-Roslin (2020) postulated four common business strategies: (a) cost leadership, (b) innovation, (c) differentiation, and (d) operational effectiveness. The ultimate function of Porter's competitive strategy is to explain the sustainability of profits against bargaining and direct and indirect competition (Porter, 1991). I will further discuss how the PFF framework can significantly value businesses today (Adelakun, 2020) by expanding on the indicators.

The state of competition in an industry depends on the indicators' combined strengths defining the industry's ultimate profit potential (Porter, 1980). The five force indicators comprise (a) rivalry, (b) bargaining power of buyers, (c) bargaining power of suppliers, (d) the threat of substitutes, and (e) the threat of potential entrants (Pervan et

al., 2018; Porter, 1979). These indicators help to shape an industry and market. Business leaders should maintain a sustainable competitive strategy, especially during uncertain times. This phenomenon allows leaders to understand what impacts an organization's sustainability comprehensively. Bruijl (2018) posited that awareness of the five forces gives leaders a better understanding of the industry and helps them to develop a position that is more profitable, more sustainable, and less vulnerable to attack. In this study, PFF helps explain and document tourism marketing strategies that small resorts use to support longevity in their business. The PFF framework addresses the research questions in this study, in which I sought to understand what tourism marketing strategies small resort owners use and why. As resort owners shared their experiences, the PFF framework was a way to understand how marketing strategies support sustainability.

Rivalry

Rivalry is an industry's player or competitors' efforts to sustain and improve market share, revenue, profitability, and image (Chesula & Kiriinya, 2018). The competition takes the shape of lowered prices, advertising, enhanced services, and advanced product introduction. When analyzing competitive business advantage, Zainal-Abidin and Mohd-Roslin (2020) indicated keeping your friends and enemies close. A financial strength signifies the industry's player's power and the ability to pressure rivals (Porter et al., 2007). A highly competitive level reduces the profitability of an enterprise (Zainal-Abidin & Mohd-Roslin, 2020), and the level of competition depends on its strength and source (Porter, 2008). When analyzing competition, managers should consider the threat to brand equity, market position, advertising expertise, and

technological innovation (Dumitriu et al., 2019). If competitive traits lack stability and ongoing competitive edge, prominent players in the industry become obsolete (Enjolras et al., 2019). Rivalry is critical and functional to the other four forces affecting the industry.

Bargaining Powers of Buyers

Buyers' bargaining power refers to forces exerted by buyers in a company (Kabeyi, 2018). Buyers' bargaining power describes business sensitivity to price changes (Holdford, 2018). Zhong and Moon (2020) stated that customers could drastically reduce prices and demand improved quality and more services to gain significant value. Neglect of the cost to buyers is decisive when investigating buyers' power (Pingali, 2019). In mitigating threats, a diverse customer base is vital (Hawkins et al., 2020).

Bargaining Power of Suppliers

Supply power is a function whereby suppliers can compel firms to pay extra for inputs or the availability of supplier substitutes (Anastasiu et al., 2020). There are a few alternatives to accepting suppliers' demand; suppliers can squeeze the company's profits by not passing on the cost increase to prices and threaten an industry by increasing prices or reducing goods and services. Inaccurate delivery of inputs may disrupt company operations. According to Adelakun (2020), suppliers' power focuses on size, the concentration of suppliers, and the degree of differentiation relative to industry participants to acquire the most significant value. Supply power, like buyer suppliers, depends on the strength of a business that may threaten smaller niche businesses relating to price hikes from suppliers.

Threat of New Entrants

The threat of new entrants is a barrier to entry within the industry and geographic boundaries (Porter, 2008). The threat of new entrants brings additional power and competition, gaining market share on prices, costs, and investment rates. According to Barlow et al. (2019), an existing business has an entry barrier advantage compared to market entrants. Barriers to entry are crucial components of PFF, including patents, substantial capital requirements, government regulations, access to a good distribution network, and technological expertise (Couto & Barbosa, 2020). Business start-ups will have to compete with established companies to overcome barriers, and if the industry requires capital expenditures, smaller businesses will be unable to enter the market. Competitors can quickly expand in the market and imitate profitable companies once a solid barrier to entry is attained, diminishing original returns.

Threat of Substitutes

The threat of substitute is a product or service that customers can easily switch to as an alternative option (Porter, 2008). The greatest danger to buyers involves replacements that can offer preferred products or services at a lower cost (Chesula & Kiriinya, 2018). Zainal-Abidin and Mohd-Roslin (2020) defined the threat of substitutes as a similar or advanced package that extends to existing or new employers. The threat of substitutes always exists but is easily overlooked due to unusual appearances. Several factors determine a threat to products in an industry: (a) cost, (b) price ceiling, (c) quality, and (d) performance. If consumer costs are low, the price ceiling is cheaper than the industry's product. Alternatively, if the product remains or is of better quality to rivals,

and performances are equal or superior, there is a high threat of substitutes. Substitution affects the competitive environment and influences the capacity to achieve profitability (Chen et al., 2018). Substitution signifies a constraint issue in the capacity of suppliers to raise prices. When determining whether such a threat is realistic, businesses must consider switching costs and the practicality of alternative products.

The five forces model proposed by Michael Porter posits a clear view of how businesses attain competitive advantage in specific industries using the five imperative forces (Narayanan & Fahey, 2005). The PFF model applies to every industry (Porter, 2008). The widely renowned and accepted theory of competitive advantage is not free of its flaws (Khan et al., 2018); the research will analyze Michael Porter's competitive advantage critically. The five forces could alter the positioning of a business signifying the threat that varies from industry to industry. Porter's model gives an optimal positioning strategy where companies dominate the industry through sheer size and control over the five forces.

Advantages of Five Forces Framework

PFF provides the vision of a company's power in the market and presents insight into the business competition. Porter (1979) postulated that awareness of where power lies could bolster businesses to recognize their strengths, improve weaknesses, and avoid mistakes. According to Porter (1980), such strength defines a definitive profit potential in analyzing industry and development of business strategy. The five forces analysis is a tool that helps make informed decisions relating to the industry and developing competitive strategies (Fuertes et al., 2020). According to Johnson et al. (2008), product

diversity and price competition can ponder advanced competition and is an inviting starting point for strategic analysis. Porter's differentiation strategy results in higher success through higher prices that focuses on meeting opportunities and threats to the external environment and searching for market imperfections (Porter, 1980). Porter's differentiation strategy supports the marketing of a product in the industry. The strategy differentiates offerings based on brand image, product design, advanced technology, product features, client service, and other dimensions, increasing profit margins and avoiding a low-cost position (Porter, 1980). According to knight et al. (2020), a differentiation strategy can boost SMEs to gain salience, stand out in crowded markets, and provides entrepreneurship, international growth, and international learning to internationalized SMEs.

PFF went beyond the fundamental focus to determine industry attractiveness by anticipating the future, developments, and trends (Kotler et al., 2019). Islami et al. (2020) theorized in a study conducted in the Republic of Kosovo that Porter's competitive strategy adds significant value to a firm's performance. The researchers investigated 113 firms in the Kosovo region and found Porter's differentiation strategy provided higher performance than his other generic strategies (low-cost and focus). Implementing any of these strategies in a company can have a competitive advantage and reap success in business (Porter, 1985).

Disadvantages and Criticisms

According to Isabelle et al. (2020), PFF remains questionable for discussing, categorizing, and selecting company strategies in the 21st century. Critics contended that

the framework is too static– rooted in the past and not practical in the new millennium (Grundy, 2006; Thurlby, 1998). According to Thurlby (1998), PFF is a superb concept for the 1980s. As technology and organizations evolved, the need for transition became compulsory. Thurlby (1998) outlined that the differences in buyer behavior, product differentiation, and elevated segmentation propels shifts in the market. Even though PFF provides a snapshot to spot and exploit competitive advantages in the market, managers must check the framework for accuracy and as a guide contrary to a definitive model (Thurlby, 1998). As many businesses rely on competitiveness and transformation for success, a need for long-term solutions, as opposed to short-term ones, is vital (Teece, 2018).

Grundy (2006, p. 213) also criticized Porter’s model as “frozen in time.” Grundy (2006) stated that the framework created a limited awareness and usage of the PFF concept among managers and scholars. The PFF framework is implicit and cannot convey unique and captivating opportunities (Grundy, 2006). According to Paniagua and Delsing (2021), the functionalities and characteristics of frameworks get new points of view; focusing on cementing a competitive advantage in the market is key to successfully adapting to changes (Islami et al., 2020). Managers and entrepreneurs need a deeper understanding of the theory to drive industry competition (Bruijl, 2018).

Grundy (2006) criticized Porter’s model oversimplifies industry value chains. Using two components: (a) segmented and differentiated and (b) intermediate buyers and end customers, Grundy (2006) speculated that Porter’s value chain process is critical to businesses. According to Straková et al. (2020), businesses require a value chain concept

to understand and analyze activities and identify and eliminate unnecessary value to products or services. A value chain process achieves competitive advantage and long-term profitability. According to Porter (2008), PFF has had its share of difficulties in practical application and misapplication, as well as a value chain not supporting adequate planning (Porter, 1985). Value chains are questionable but constitute a significant conundrum for practitioners (Mapanga et al., 2018). A value chain would be valuable for Caribbean small resorts' endurance to enhance value-added services and products, eliminate competitiveness and barriers to internalization and create a relationship with suppliers in the industry. Other critics stated that the model lacks competent governance in regulatory systems (Ostrom, 2014), lacks trust (Elms & Low, 2013), has weak intermediaries and institutions (Lee et al., 2012), and experience operational difficulties (Pervan et al., 2018).

Dawes and Sharp (1996), Hendry (1990), and Niño Duran et al. (2018) cast doubts on the validity of Porter's methodology. Dawes and Sharp (1996) identified Porter's theory lacks interpretation of specific strategies, which interferes with strategy performance. The study re-analyses published work and provide viewpoints from other sources who want to expand competitive advantage knowledge between strategy and implementation. The study concluded Porter's generic marketing strategy is flawed and does not provide a realistic view of strategies or support the notion.

Hendry (1990) contended that despite achieving the five forces for success, the process triggers confusion with other key concepts and models. Hendry stated knowledgeable information is left behind during the marketing and finance concept,

spurring managers to look deeper into marketing capabilities, the behavior of customers, and creating investment returns. PFF is a pragmatic strategic framework (Bartunek, 2019) that helps widen managers stance to compete from a broader perspective (Cescon et al., 2018; Grundy, 2006). Although there may be no ideal models of an organization, managers should brace for uncertainties in business (Porter, 2008). As a workable analysis, Porter's framework guides the positioning of organizations (Johnson et al., 2008), enhancing competitive forces (Schwarz et al., 2019). The criticism, PFF remains an active tool for creating business value for success and long-term sustainability (Porter, 1985).

Relevant/Alternative Theories

This study of small businesses' success or failure was contingent on several conceptual frameworks. Some frameworks generate consistent comparisons among other models, while others extend to different theories (Schlager, 2019). I evaluated multiple theories and models to explore and understand sustainability for small resorts. Relevant theories, (a) theory of RBV, (b) blue ocean strategy (BOS), and (c) transformational leadership (TFL) extend PFF's competitive advantage. In the following sections, I discuss these three theories.

Resource-Based View Model

The RBV model complements PFF in creating value and sustaining competitive advantage. I considered the RBV model but did not choose it as the conceptual framework for my study. Introduced by Wernerfelt (1984), the RBV generates competencies and guarantees an understanding of business performance differences.

According to Nason and Wiklund (2018), the RBV theory has had firm business support for more than 30 years and has a significant above-average return framework (Varadarajan, 2020). The RBV paradigm is the most dominant theoretical lens and framework accepted by scholars in the study of management (Chahal et al., 2020; Collins, 2020). According to (David-West et al., 2018; Pereira & Bamel, 2021; Wernerfelt, 1984), RBV allows for companies to utilize an array of resources (a) physical, (b) organizational-human, and (c) knowledge). With a focus on internal resources and capabilities. RBV has proven to be a fruitful direction for managing internationalization and attaining sustainable competitive advantage (Gueler & Schneider, 2021).

The implication of the RBV framework differentiates businesses from competitors (Battisti et al., 2021). Moradi et al. (2021) postulated the theory pushes companies beyond boundaries. As a promising prospect, various critics voiced the view as vague and unnecessary (Lockett et al., 2009; Priem & Butler, 2001). Despite the criticisms, RBV supporters claimed the benefits overshadow its critiques (Barney, 1991; Kraaijenbrink et al., 2009). Managers should observe the market to maintain development and maximize performance (Anning-Dorson, 2018). Not only is RBV successful in developing unfamiliar entrants but it contributes significantly to the achievement of other theories. The RBV allows for the spread of resources, providing managers with a snapshot of strengths and how to obtain sustainable advantage (Ma et al., 2019) for unique strategies not easily replicated by rivals (Laskovaia et al., 2018).

Blue Ocean Strategy

According to Kim and Mauborgne (2005), BOS pursues differentiation, lowers costs for new markets, and creates greener demands. The BOS process is simple: do not attempt to outcompete rivals in a crowded market but seek out uncontested market spaces (Kim & Mauborgne, 2005). The BOS brings a fresher perspective of tackling competition in business and their ability to become successful. In a completed study, 150 strategic business moves span over 100 years. Within 30 companies, Kim and Mauborgne (2005) sought to answer, “Why do some companies succeed in creating new market spaces while others fail?” The study found that most businesses compete for mediocre market shares using similar products and plans. The study sought to provide ideas for a triumphant return.

Business environments are evolving due to several factors (a) globalization, (b) economic transformation, (c) differences in personal preferences, and (d) digitization, causing uncertainties in the market (Nag & Tran, 2020). Nag and Tran (2020) purported, the more for less syndrome aims for higher profit from competitors on a long-term strategy. Businesses that adhere to the process stand to prosper rather than others who continue to live in denial. Based on the existence of the BOS, the potential for profit increases in a competitive, driven economy (Deb et al., 2020). The BOS is applied across businesses; small resorts can capitalize on the process. Yeshitila et al. (2020) stated that a successful BOS depends on internal and external customers. With a BOS, businesses need not worry over the competition but rather leap into fresh streams of thinking around business strategies (Madsen & Slåtten, 2019). According to Ellinger et al. (2020), BOS

aims to capture uncontested market potential. Nag and Tran (2020) posited that BOS compliments three processes:

1. Creation of a strategy canvas
2. Creation of a four-step framework (eliminating, enhancing, reducing, and creating)
3. Creation of three supportive strategies (focus, divergence, and motto)

The BOS processes are a guide for success, fewer risks, and increased worry-free profits. According to Kim and Mauborgne (2005), BOS is a new value innovation strategy that takes businesses out of fierce competition- a process the authors call the red ocean strategy (ROS). Yeshitila et al. (2020) asserted that value innovation is the cornerstone of BOS, creating a value leap for customers and aligning innovation with utility, price, and cost positions. Kim and Mauborgne (2005) vowed that rivals would reap the harvest if the BOS innovation process failed.

According to Madsen and Slåtten (2019), BOS is the defeat and conquer approach to win new customers in today's economy, regardless of company size. An innovation process is imperative to obtaining an innovative advantage over competitors (Chege & Wang, 2020). SMEs can benefit from a BOS, competing with larger companies and meeting global competitiveness. Thus, the BOS theory did not support my research question to explore tourism marketing strategies for sustaining small resorts in the BVI. In contrast, transformational leadership brought significant characteristics to followers and organizations.

Transformational Leadership

In 1973, James V. Downton originally developed the transforming theory to change businesses' techniques, goals, and ideas (Lo et al., 2020). The concept of 1978 later changed the transforming approach to transformational leadership under the leadership of James Macgregor Burns, based on his political research on leaders. Not until 1985 did Barnard M. Bass extend the concept, but Burns was classified and remained the father of transformational theories. Burns took the credit for introducing the transformational theory approach (Burns, 1978).

Luo et al. (2019) postulated that TFL is a type of leadership that inspires employees not to contemplate themselves but the company by transforming morals, ideals, interests, and values. TFL consists of four factors and are known as the four I's, (a) idealized influence, (b) inspirational motivation, (c) intellectual stimulation, and (d) individual consideration, which creates a significant change in the life of people and the organization (Lai et al., 2021). These four components signify the ethical foundation for leaders (Metwally et al., 2019).

TFL has been a driving point for leading researchers investigating innovative behavior. Encouraging work behavior and influencing followers' creativity are qualities leaders possess to empower and foster trust and performance. Such significant predictors keep staff engaged and assist in building trust and work behaviors (Boukamcha, 2019; Metwally et al., 2019). Trusting and engaging workers are critical strengths to TFL, and leaders must utilize such skills to help solve work-based problems (H. Li et al., 2019). In a competitive industry, especially where hospitality plays a vital role, TFL empowers,

supports, challenges, and rewards employees to think creatively to enhance overall performance (Schuckert et al., 2018).

According to Boukamcha (2019), TFL acts as a training mechanism for followers to develop their leadership potential and predict leaders' future success in an organization. The success of small businesses is thus essential to leaders who are the trusted visionaries of an organization (Mgqibi & Sines, 2020). Gaining advanced skillsets will transform new ways of thinking (Deshwal & Ashraf Ali, 2020), which can help shape employees' commitment and institutionalize change efforts.

According to Metwally et al. (2019), change can come in two ways: (a) social learning effect and (b) social exchange effect, which improves employees' openness to change and interprets change from an optimistic viewpoint. According to Bass (1985), TFL is one of the most traditional leadership theories. As a result, tourism managers and organizational leaders who develop an innovative climate can expand service innovation by implementing transformational leadership. Because business leaders are not directly involved in developing strategies, the TFL model was not fitting for this study.

Marketing Background and Importance

Marketing is a set of procedures that creates, communicates, and delivers value to consumers to benefit a company (Chandy et al., 2021). According to Cristobal-Fransi et al. (2020), marketing plays an integral role in businesses and sustainable tourist destinations. Some researchers theorized that marketing looks at the unified business process to discover, arouse, and satisfy consumer needs, wants, and desires of targeted markets (Fawzee et al., 2019; Panwar et al., 2019). Leaders should know the different

marketing capabilities for building, maintaining, and leveraging international markets (Morgan et al., 2018). The marketing concept proliferated in the 20th century, outlining marketers' importance in understanding and adapting to business performances (Tumbe & Ralli, 2018). Kuka (2018) stated that a marketing concept is key to achieving organizational goals and delivering satisfaction more effectively and efficiently to competitors. From a concept and philosophical viewpoint, marketing remains a cornerstone for success (Larentis et al., 2018), leading businesses to meet their target better (Sołoducho-Pelc & Sulich, 2020). Gaining a dominant position in the market and keeping a distance from competitors is vital (Zhu et al., 2020). Some managers fail to see the critical concept of marketing (Kalaignanam et al., 2020) and do not realize its importance to businesses (Morgan et al., 2018). To add long-term sustainability, academic, and industry, researchers must study practical marketing strategies and have a greater demand for effectiveness in marketing (Trivedi et al., 2018).

Researchers should study successful business marketing strategies for businesses, including small resorts of all types and sizes. According to Witell et al. (2020), several business leaders diminish the need for marketing. Others experiment with new venture accomplishments and use entrepreneurial actions (Diakanastasi et al., 2018). Business organizers accepted marketing as a stand-alone concept and a performance indicator to drive improved results (Mahmudova & Kovács, 2018). Marketing strategies are paramount for sustainability for business owners (Trivedi et al., 2018). According to Mensah (2019), sustainability increases business success and addresses global challenges that threaten future generations' life qualities. By embracing the different concepts of

people, planet, and profit in an organization, businesses can benefit and run smoothly in the distant future (Zu, 2019).

Marketing seeks to satisfy organizational and individual needs (Dwivedi et al., 2021; Wooliscroft & Ganglmair-Wooliscroft, 2018). Although marketing is uncomfortable, the resolution meets market needs and wants (Sheth & Parvatiyar, 2020). Timoshenko and Hauser (2019) postulated that an integral part of marketing strategy is understanding customer needs, which helps segment a market, identify resources for differentiation and make management decisions. To identify customers' needs, a deeper understanding through interviews can aid with customer experience issues (Timoshenko and Hauser, (2019). The focus should be on marketing management to achieve a more desired exchange outcome (Li et al., 2021).

Marketing can be critical to a business's success (Sheth & Parvatiyar, 2020). Recently, several firms and organizations found marketing meaningful and compulsory (Laczniaak & Shultz, 2020). Many small business leaders struggle to keep businesses operational (Denton, 2020). According to Bocken and Geradts (2020), small businesses have the potential for long-term commitments to sustainability. Suppliers should establish voluntary goals for sustainability initiatives (Kot, 2018; Meuer et al., 2019). Kemper and Ballantine (2019) theorized fresh perspectives and new insights achieved through current marketing and different methodologies.

Small Business Marketing

SMEs contribute to the growth of the economy. According to Mahmudova and Kovács (2018), marketing has played a role in businesses' survival, renewal, and

development for centuries. Mahmudova and Kovács (2018) stated that marketing is the backbone of many economies, including the Caribbean, in terms of innovation by supplying products and services and generating revenue through sustainability. As organizations undergo globalization, financialization, and digital transformation, new opportunities and challenges emerge, creating a business change for new visions and solutions to take root (Tzempelikos, 2021). Kot (2018) called for appropriate strategies, including supply chain management (SCM), to further develop SMEs. According to Thoumrungroje and Racela (2021), implementing modern technology drives international marketing agility to develop, integrate, and reconfigure resources that enable SMEs to cope in volatile environments. Deep transformations influence organization design, performance, and monitoring.

Tourism Marketing Strategies

As a trendsetter, tourism and hospitality commerce are diverse and vibrant activities built on innovators (Salman et al., 2017). Marketing is the most extensive part of growing a business and focuses on providing lower costs to products or services to consumers. Analyzing empirical data and a well-based strategy for businesses' uniqueness is vital for companies to be successful. Many small businesses are capitalizing on the low-budget marketing plan. There is a concern in determining the right marketing strategy as some small business owners lack marketing skills, do not know how to use current marketing tactics, or are afraid to try new ventures without experience or resources. According to Yeshitila et al. (2020), a firm's future strategic position is paramount to business growth. Del Vecchio et al. (2018) contended that small

businesses should have a marketing implementation mechanism to identify attractiveness, build a value proposition and drive innovation or risk failing to meet expectations.

Safari and Saleh (2020) specified in a qualitative study how Artificial Intelligence (AI) can subsidize marketing strategy formulation using interviews conducted by three independent researchers who work with artificial intelligence tools. Five fundamental ideas came out of the study, making way for a creative perspective for the potential use of AI. The study's implications concentrated only on strategy creation which used AI as an active reaction to external possibilities of high volumes of data, uncertain environmental conditions, and limited managerial cognition. The authors used the practical implications of the Gartner Analytics Ascendancy Model. The study explored the contingency theory experience concerning AI's role in marketing strategy formulation and discovered possible ways to use AI in strategic marketing.

Taherdangkoo et al. (2019) emphasized that industry drivers (industries' environmental reputation and competitive intensity) are sustainable marketing strategies on customers' ecological concerns and discovered the effects on performance.

Taherdangkoo et al. (2019) investigated 64 Iranian export companies across seven industries using a structural equation model methodology of professional managers and performed seven interviews lasting 60–90 minutes. This study found that industries' environmental status was constructively related to sustainability marketing strategies based on customers' ecological concerns and superior financial and market performance. The study's implications examined the influence of industry drivers on sustainability marketing strategy and performance. This study provided a better understanding of

business strengths, customers' needs, and concerns in sustainable marketing strategies. This study also provided reasons to implement a plan to tailor the marketing mix- price, product, promotion, and place (4Ps) with the target needs and expectations in mind. Business leaders implementing the 4Ps can alter and customize marketing efforts to meet target markets (Purohit et al., 2021).

Trihatmoko et al. (2019) specified how to detect, describe, and provide a thorough understanding of the decision of new product purchases and the usefulness of new product innovation related to channel capacity. The study participants consisted of experts with more than ten years of involvement in FMCG. This study found four significant results: channel capability characteristics are the core of buyers' responses, creation of business buyer behavior, the economic mechanism, the effectiveness of new product innovation, and channel capabilities of selling products. Three practical implications came about from the study:

- Developing business buyer behavior in a new-task purchase situation
- Expanding the microeconomic system of the trading sector
- Increasing the concept of marketing mix strategy

This study's value helps create awareness of business significance aligned with the 4Ps. A hospitality manager's sales team can target specific guests or market segments and provide them with an innovative tool to overcome challenges (Salman et al., 2017). Scholars reveal that international marketing agility allows businesses to respond, predict, and readjust to domestic and international market situations (Gomes et al., 2020; R. Li et

al., 2019; Moi & Cabiddu, 2020). Marketing strategies are action plans for organizations to reach their goals and objectives.

Digital Marketing

Digital marketing is a tool different from traditional marketing that uses channels and methods to promote products or services via digital technologies. The growth of modern technologies in digital environments is valuable for businesses spurring the demands for marketers to stay innovative and prepare others to adapt to today's market challenges (Olson et al., 2021). DM has different platforms, and hotel marketers should have the prospective to be innovative, enabling them to connect with more customers. DM gives equal opportunity for small and big brands alike to grow. DM is another option for business services and a new place for distinct brands where companies and consumers can interact and evaluate each other. Widodo and Wahid (2020) stated that eservices marketing is a transaction's beginning to end. The digital age revolutionized our business (Langan et al., 2019). According to Kanuri et al. (2018), stemming 2016, DM is the newest technology, accumulating 1.8 billion engaged users worldwide. Organizations should embrace the influence of the digital landscape and find ways and methods to market online.

DM helps to promote and market a company's product and service (Ismaili, 2020), and it is one of the most influential and prominent brand awareness strategies to promote businesses online. The reward of DM is that it is cost-effective, targets the audience, and scales down a business faster. Organizations must stay abreast of digital

market trends, improve customer experience by responding to their needs, and adopt and implement DM strategies daily to remain competitive and survive the market.

Digital marketing communications is a new, fast-changing technology that attracts high-quality customers. The evolution of this process signified a successful and unsuccessful organization. Digital marketing consists of three factors: (a) personalization, (b) content marketing, and (c) interactive content, all of which are vital for attracting customers (Pradana & Wahid, 2020). Engaging and interacting with customers gain their interests and enhance experiences, and managers must be online to advertise effectively, especially in the resort industry.

Social Media Marketing

SMM is a media platform that engages customers and their conversations (Iankova et al., 2019; Shareef et al., 2019). According to Jacobson et al. (2020), everyone can benefit from SMM by gathering information or sharing experiences via posts, tweets, shares, likes, and reviews. SMM is a dominant strategy in digital marketing and an online driving force in how businesses relate to their customers (Janavi et al., 2021). According to Arya et al. (2019), SMM interacts with customers in real time, combining the strengths of integrating systems and social media for business success. The prioritization of social media platforms is vital to marketers who want to communicate effectively, gather knowledge, and receive customer feedback, building reputation and increasing revenue (Jami Pour & Jafari, 2019).

SMM is a unique platform offering new languages in AI, enabling the industry to develop and increase efficiency in the market. Social media is a new and dynamic area of

research (Hultman et al., 2019), providing a deeper understanding and actionable managerial implications relying heavily on network structure and measurable value (Muller & Peres, 2019). SMM has been widely accepted and expanded by marketing managers and is revolutionizing online marketing by driving traffic, building brand awareness, and taking advantage of social selling revelations. There are four SMM strategies that business owners can use: (a) social commerce, (b) social content, (c) social monitoring, and (d) social customer relationship management (Li et al., 2021). According to Jami Pour et al. (2021), SMM success factors are palpable, but marketers must identify factors to avoid business failure. Several authors opined that businesses gain if they incorporate SMM in their overall business plan (Shareef et al., 2019; Shareef et al., 2020; Shiau et al., 2018). Resort owners can benefit from SMM by driving guests to engage and book with resorts making social media a meaningful opportunity for alternatives to capture the attention of potential guests.

SMEs in the Caribbean

According to Williams and Ramdani (2018), SMEs have significantly contributed to the Caribbean economy representing about 90% of global businesses and over 50% of job creation. Despite its small island size, the Caribbean has garnered international recognition (Minto-Coy et al., 2018). Manzoor et al. (2021) declared that SMEs are a noteworthy driver of economic development, generating opportunities, income and wealth, and poverty reduction. According to Cannonier and Burke (2018), SMEs are recognized worldwide for economic growth and fostering progress in developing

Caribbean countries and are attributed to higher labor intensity with fewer resources and lower management costs (Manzoor et al., 2021).

Caribbean enterprises must understand their history, role, and race (Williams & Ramdani, 2018). Caribbean SMEs support economies and societies in many ways but face many financial, economic, and marketing challenges. Policymakers must seek ways to improve SMEs financially and help with research and market intelligence services. Operating procedures will positively impact economic performance growth, help reduce poverty, and eliminate unemployment to achieve global financial success (Littlewood & Holt, 2018; Manzoor et al., 2021).

Pinho et al. (2018) contended whether international readiness impacts the internationalization of small businesses differently. Compared to the sample, the study found disparities for Asian countries regarding innovation-related drivers and sensitivity to product innovation and opportunities. This study addressed small businesses with less than 50 employees, of which 22,680 entrepreneurs were supposed to take the survey: but only 1,060 replied.

This study's implication showed how small businesses might be successful exporters. The analysis assumed that competitive advantage significantly affected internationalization and concluded with the main contributions and limitations while suggesting future studies. This study provides a better understanding of the impacts on global readiness for small businesses.

Owners or managers of SME resorts must develop skills and capabilities related to strategic leadership. Leadership is fundamental to achieving growth and prosperity in

small businesses (Quansah & Hartz, 2021). According to Williams and Ramdani (2018), Caribbean SMEs prosper when they have strategic leadership capabilities, social and business networks, and intimate knowledge of their products and operations.

Policymakers should consider promoting industry clusters to strengthen network capabilities so entrepreneurs can improve business performance (Williams & Ramdani, 2018). Reengineering can help a firm compete through environmental changes, exploit relational abilities, and respond to customers (Bouncken et al., 2020). Value creation can affect firms' best performance and long-term sustainability value chain (Climent & Haftor, 2021).

Small Business Survivability

Survivability is a crucial goal for any business. Survivability measures performance and the possibility for the economy and businesses. According to Najib et al. (2021), a link exists between innovation and the business performance of SMEs. Although SMEs have financial constraints, an internal control system will help reflect good governance, corporate social responsibility, and business ethics (Phornlaphatrachakorn & Kalasindhu, 2020). Internal control strategies effectively develop and improve an organization's appropriate concepts and characteristics.

Phornlaphatrachakorn and Kalasindhu (2020) indicated that internal control mechanisms influence productivity and business survival. Internal controls are a function of corporate governance vital to preventing, discovering, strengthening, and improving various business processes (Anh et al., 2020). Better internal control leads to more long-term survival. It is imperative to develop the appropriate communication strategy and be

aware of players' signals for survival and prosperity during uncertain times (Martinez et al., 2019). The internal control system's effectiveness is essential for successful businesses.

Creativity and innovation contribute to companies' survival, enabling them to remain competitive in an ever-changing environment (Maticiuc, 2018; Yu et al., 2021). Creativity provides a person with ideas, and innovation transforms the concept into a product or service (Nakano & Wechsler, 2018). Creativity is associated with strategies for managing decisions and taking responsibility. According to Sipa (2018), innovative growth requires proper resources and continues to gain recognition for competitive development (Maticiuc, 2018). Employees play a critical role in increasing innovativeness both as a resource and as a capital of an organization (Sipa, 2018). Resistance to change is not always positive (Keem et al., 2018), nor is innovation always valuable. Still, managers should ensure conditions are available to stimulate creativity in employees and assist in organizational learning, knowledge creation, and innovation development (Sipa, 2018). Nakano and Wechsler (2018) postulated the importance of building a good atmosphere for employees and investing in developing a company's objective. In a competitive world, businesses should concentrate on properly managing human capital to enhance creativity and innovativeness (Sipa, 2018).

Small Business Failure

The survival and growth of businesses create a challenge for business owners leading to failures in strategy, leadership, and management skills. Sipa (2018) outlined sustainable advancement and innovativeness as two changes businesses face. The world

has come exceptionally far concerning technology, allowing us to connect. According to Quach et al. (2021), failures have a rippling effect on unemployment which can be detrimental to the economy. Business failure accounts for about 50% - 90% of failure rates from micro and macroeconomic factors (Martinez et al., 2019). Managers should develop a skill base to build broader skills to alleviate failure during a crisis and ensure long-term survival (Sipa, 2028). There are several symptoms of business failures discussed below:

Ineffective Technology

According to Orben (2020), technology is the foundation and agent for change spurring widespread concerns about innovative technologies. Technology is supposed to be good, yet researchers argue it hurts more than it helps. Technology quickly embeds itself in society, making it difficult to change or adapt based on provisioning needs (McPhearson et al., 2021). According to Goel et al. (2020), as the advancements in information and communication technologies expand with the internet, social media, mobile, and cloud, the rise of cyber exposure also extend. Humans are constantly developing and improving innovative technologies to replace the old with technological advancement.

Persons use personal information for numerous services or purchases daily. Online users expect the safety of data information through some form of privacy behaviors and systems, but this is not the case, according to Park (2019). As modern technology evolves, processes should be easier and more secure, but some online service providers maintain lax security measures, increasing the vulnerabilities of data risk (Park,

2019). As organizations expand operations to include the usage of technologies such as social media, the internet, mobile, and the cloud, they inherently extend their cyber exposure.

Government should enforce different levels of cybersecurity threat strategies to protect and manage private and sensitive information for customers. Suppliers should also push for better online security and reputations for protection regarding policies or legislation. The data controller must take practical steps. For recommended best practices, there needs to be legislation in place to appoint data protection officers for all jurisdictions, including BVI, to reduce risk and help controllers and processors meet data-protection obligations.

Lack of Leadership

Leaders can and ought to be the driving force to competitive advantage. In the hospitality industry, managers face many trials for better administration and skillsets during uncertainties. According to Roque et al. (2020), leadership influence is recognizable to organizational success. A leader must possess the people and technical skills to engage others and achieve the goal (Leonard & Maulding Green, 2019). Ethical culture shapes leaders' creation and support (Roque et al., 2020). Ethical culture also fails to honor leadership responsibility effectively, devastating a leader, team, and organization. Leaders cannot exist unless there is followership. Strong leaders and strong leadership teams are essential to sustaining today's highly complex and globalized business leadership that cannot be for granted.

Ineffective leaders represent the way to organizational disasters (Fergusson, 2019). Leaders must adapt to change. Resort managers must understand how transformational leadership is used positively as a management tool to help maintain and increase productivity while minimizing employee burnout. Technological revolutions will continue, and managers must adapt to all innovative technology. Leaders must utilize newfound knowledge and resources to improve the organization rather than destroy it, such as ongoing training on how to be a good supervisor and lead others. The implementation of small resort failure contributes to the journey of knowledge enlightenment (Quach et al., 2021). Managers should enforce an in-house leadership development program for supervisors and managers to eliminate the problems of inadequate leadership skills. Senior leaders can benefit from realizing the pitfalls that make leaders ineffective and endeavor to improve leadership skills for success.

Poor Marketing

Marketing is valuable to a business and a diverse element relevant to small business sustainability (Kot, 2018). Marketing studies how firms create and maintain exchanges with customers. Marketing is practices and institutions that describe and explain present value offered to partners, clients, consumers, and society (Benton, 2020). Poor marketing is inappropriate marketing execution, and small business owners should be aware of marketing strategies that are not achieving desired results. According to Busche (2019), weak planning and executed marketing efforts render a business unable to meet its goal. Busche indicated that poor marketing, pricing, location, and promotion are the root causes of business failure.

According to Jackson and Jabbie (2020), market failure is unproductive market structures and economic systems. Small business owners must continuously remain involved during the innovation and implementation planning (Harel et al., 2020). Inadequate marketing skills of owners create marketing challenges in the small business sector. Small business owners must grasp specific skill sets to determine success and failure in business while taking the necessary steps as guidance for sustainability. Small business owners can grow their businesses; they must effectively build an atmosphere to increase chances toward longer sustainability.

To be effective, managers should use the 4Ps that comprise the marketing mix. Managers should also investigate marketing practices before strategic adjustments. Managers of SMEs should ensure technology adoption is present in their business, as this process takes marketing to another level. Training is integral in an organization; managers should train employees on current online marketing tools and strategies for success and transfer the knowledge of technology usage to employees. Minimizing failure in any one of these areas can result in business failure.

Tourism in the Caribbean

Tourism is a compelling character for the long-term growth of a country, and it is the fastest-growing activity in the Caribbean area (Moreno-Luna et al., 2021). Peterson and DiPietro (2021) assumed the Caribbean is an intense tourism region with rising levels of overtourism, especially in small island-dependent tourism economies. Overtourism, according to Mihalic and Kuščer (2021), is when there are too many visitors to a particular destination. Destination managers should monitor the five-factor

model of positive impacts, negative impacts, residents' irritation, health, and destination management to monitor the risks and causes of overtourism. Government and local authorities also need to examine ways to regulate tourist numbers, such as raising prices, issuing permits to certain attractions, or having the potential to decide which business to open and the location. This process of policy and structure will secure authorities' connection with the local people. Sustainable tourism development is one of the hallmarks of the 21st century, and with the economic growth experienced throughout the world, the Caribbean region is no exception to prosper (Castilho et al., 2021). As mounting pressures emerge with the increase in climate change compounded by enduring social vulnerabilities, the growth and sustainability of businesses diminish (Peterson & DiPietro, 2021).

Responsible tourism creates a better place for people to live and visit based on the continual sociocultural, environmental, and economic search for dynamic dimensions of responsible tourism (Paskova & Zelenka, 2019). Business owners should emphasize improved tourism for living to diversify markets, fortify and expand airline relationships, and rebrand the Caribbean as a quality destination rather than a mass destination. An open labor market would reflect the dynamism of contemporary tourism, modernizing labor regulation that will contribute toward a tourism economy that is flexible, fair, and future-ready. SMEs globalization enables businesses to access the larger market, allowing for their sustainability; therefore, managers need to implement digital platform use in business to reap success. Tourism's potential benefits are clear. Small business activity can stimulate a competitive and entrepreneurial business (Coda et al., 2018).

Transition

Section 1 of the study includes an introduction to the business problem concerning exploring tourism marketing strategies small resort owners could implement for sustainability in business. Section 1 provides an overview of the sections: the foundation of the study, a background of the problem, a problem statement, a purpose statement, and the nature of the study. Elements discussed include the interview questions, conceptual framework, assumptions, limitations, delimitations, the significance of the study, and professional and academic literature review. Section 2 necessitates re-evaluating the research purpose, the role of the researcher, participants who indeed cover a detailed description of the research methodology and design, population and sampling, and ethical research. Further discussion surrounds data collection instruments, data organization techniques, data analysis, and reliability and validity.

Section 2 elaborates on the methods, analysis process, and data collection approaches associated with the study. Section 3 discusses the research findings, interview responses analysis, and possible recommendations for other research areas. In this section, I explained the data collection and analysis process.

Section 2: The Project

Most managers strive for success (Kornilaki et al., 2019), and in the BVI, leaders in the tourism industry seek to improve sustainable business practices. In this research, I explored tourism marketing strategies that small resorts in the BVI use to sustain their business. Section 2 consists of the purpose statement, the role of the researcher and participants, followed by the research method and design, population and sampling, ethical research, data collection, and data analysis technique. In this section, I report on the reliability and validity of information, addressing the dependability and credibility of the data.

Purpose Statement

This qualitative multiple case study aimed to explore tourism marketing strategies for sustaining small resorts in the BVI. The targeted population comprised three owners of small beach resort businesses who have used tourism marketing strategies to achieve sustainability in their businesses. The study's findings may affect social change by providing tourism marketing intelligence and design to small businesses in the BVI. The results could benefit BVI society and economy by increasing job formation and supporting citizens through increased resorts' profitability and derivative tax revenues.

Role of the Researcher

A researcher plays a focal role in collecting data, safeguarding assessment, and data organization (Cumyn et al., 2019). A researcher's ethical responsibility lies in their ability to communicate, collaborate, and transfer knowledge (Pather & Remenyi, 2019). The fundamental responsibility of protecting the confidentiality of participants lies with

the individual researcher under the terms stated in the informed consent form (Pather & Remenyi, 2019). I was the data collection instrument responsible for conducting research honestly and ethically during this research. A researcher is a primary instrument for data collection, applying the most effective methods for success (Yin, 2018) while minimizing researcher bias or opinions (Bergen & Labonté, 2020). Researchers can collect qualitative data information from several sources: (a) audio recordings, (b) video recordings, (c) interviews, (d) observations, (e) questionnaires/surveys, and (f) records (Yin, 2018).

My experience in the resort industry is limited; therefore, it was critical to understand the concept of tourism marketing strategies regarding sustainability in the BVI. Oberai and Anand (2018) stated that a researcher depends on participants' knowledge of the phenomena and willingness to share. I did not have affiliations or business relationships with the research participants or their three small resorts, which helped mitigate bias. According to Mitchell et al. (2018) and Poerwandari (2021), managing researcher bias compels setting aside personal prejudices and presumptions necessary for building a sturdy foundation. Remaining focused with an awareness of the various sources of bias and asking quality questions results in higher qualitative research standards.

The real success of organizations lies in effective communications (Nwabueze & Mileski, 2018). Ethics plays a critical role in research, allowing researchers to have the responsibility to minimize ethical misconduct and wrongdoing and maximize benefit (The Belmont Report, 2003). Ethics supports honesty and integrity, which helps to resist measures based on self-interest (Alizadeh et al., 2020). The Belmont Report (2003)

promotes ethical guidelines through the lens of autonomy: (a) respecting individuals involved in the research process, (b) ensuring acceptable standards of research environments, and (c) exploiting research benefits to participants without harm to anyone.

I completed the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative in preparation for conducting my study and obtained certification. The CITI program from the Belmont Report contains standards for ethically selecting and protecting humans. Researchers must apply flexibility to navigate ethical challenges and encourage greater engagement for participants (Brittain et al., 2020). Brothers et al. (2019) described the informed consent process for qualitative interviews as a principle of respect for people. Informed consent shapes research involving human beings (Bergen & Labonté, 2020). Explaining a researcher's role and the purpose of exploring tourism marketing strategies for sustaining small resorts in the BVI is compulsory to build confidence in the respondents (Nunan, 2020; Valenti et al., 2020). Researchers should consider ethical standards that can lead to fruitful synergies (Glass et al., 2018). Asking probing questions and listening to a deeper level of the conversation helps to build a picture using ideas and theories from various sources (Millum & Bromwich, 2021). Guillemin et al. (2018) indicated that researchers are responsible for behaving honestly and ethically, which underpins the quality and reliability of a research outcome and encourages collaboration (Jordan, 2018).

My responsibility as a researcher was to implement the most suitable research methodology and design by seeking and engaging applicable study participants. The construction of the interview questions was in a manner that elicits informative answers. I

facilitated rapport by asking relevant follow-up questions and performing member checking to avoid bias. Transcribing and assuring the credibility and trustworthiness of member checking were critical in the research (Tomaszewski et al., 2020). According to McGrath et al. (2019), researchers tend to benefit from a well-structured interview protocol in terms of increased quality data and improved reliability of the interview process. I developed an interview protocol that promotes enhanced consistency and validity (see Appendix A).

Participants

The participants in this qualitative multiple case study are owners of small resorts located in the BVI. The selection criteria consisted of owners from three small resorts in the BVI who have successfully used tourism marketing strategies to achieve sustainability in their business. Participant responses contributed to future trends of cost savings, improved operational image, economic stimulation, and competitiveness in the tourism market. The purposive sampling method is appropriate to identify, contact, and obtain interview preapprovals of owners of small resorts with fewer than 50 employees that have been operational beyond 5 years, who have experience with tourism marketing strategies and are in the BVI. Kalu (2019) posited that purposive sampling in a study ensures that the relevant experience contributes to a shared understanding. Protecting the rights of participants, I followed Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) guidelines, requesting that all participants sign an informed consent form before the interview. After approval from IRB, I selected potential participants who met the study's criteria. Data saturation is when enough data have been collected or analyzed that

additional data are unnecessary (Saunders et al., 2018). Emails and face-to-face visits were used to secure contact with participants. I requested their participation and gained their interest in the study. I strategized screening participants' eligibility and explained the study's intent. Data collection from participant interviews, websites, and research articles transpired after data saturation. According to Al Tajir (2018), the Belmont Report aims to ensure respect, beneficence, and justice for research participants. The value of a participant's privacy encompasses three elements: (a) protecting information and identity, (b) communicating the research process, and (c) their rights as applied to the Belmont Report (Dougherty, 2021). Researchers should always be ready to return to the field and negotiate with participants (Hussien, 2020). The principle of confidentiality maintains trust and enhances participant relationships (Guillemin et al., 2018).

Research Method and Design

In this qualitative multiple case study, I focused on tourism marketing strategies for sustaining small resorts in the BVI. This section provides the rationale for the selected research method and design for the study. Qualitative research provides insights and an understanding of a problem framework (Mohajan, 2018). Qualitative research is a method of inquiry to understand human behavior and experiences of the how and why of the decision-making process, which quantitative studies cannot assess (Lanka et al., 2021). Haven and Van Grootel (2019) posited that qualitative research is a real-life example of post-diction research that strengthens and deepens a qualitative study's rigor and validity. I will protect the confidentiality of each participant by safely storing and

protecting all data, with a commitment to destroy records after 5 years. The principle of privacy maintains trust and enhances participants' relationships (Guillemin et al., 2018).

Research Method

Researchers apply different methods and designs to study marketing strategies and sustainability (Aladag et al., 2020), incorporating qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-method approaches (Abutabenjeh & Jaradat, 2018). A qualitative research method was most appropriate to explore the tourism marketing strategies resort owners implement. A qualitative methodology allows a researcher to gather and analyze participants' answers about the study phenomenon. The value of qualitative research is that it provides a voice for participants' lived experiences while gaining a deeper understanding of individuals. A qualitative study can provide valuable information in establishing the best marketing strategies (Crick, 2020), which can benefit small resort owners.

Quantitative research is a set of strategic techniques and assumptions used to explore phenomena and variables' relationships using statistics (Rutberg & Bouikidis, 2018). Quantitative research is focused on causation and is measurable, generalizable, and replicable (Mohajan, 2020). Quantitative research was not suitable for this study because I was not seeking to measure variables or test hypotheses. Quantitative analysis is used to gather data without interviews or observations to determine conclusions (Yin, 2018); hence, I did not choose this method. To advance further qualitative research, I reviewed company records and used interviews to help complete my research. Yin (2018) stated a mixed-method approach comprises qualitative and quantitative research methods.

The mixed-method process was inappropriate because I only applied qualitative and not quantitative methods in my research.

Qualitative researchers rely on the perception of transferability to generate theoretical or conceptual insights and are considered a vital element in the criterion of rigor (Tutelman & Webster, 2020). A qualitative method will allow for exploring lived experiences of resort owners by conducting face-to-face interviews to understand the phenomenon. Qualitative research is considered the most humanistic and person-centered way of discovering and uncovering the thoughts and actions of human beings, which lies in the richness of data (Englander, 2019; Renjith et al., 2021).

Quantitative research involves a systematic and empirical investigation of a phenomenon to determine the strength of a relationship between variables and outcomes based on descriptive data that are manipulated and transformed (Rutberg & Bouikidis, 2018; Skillman et al., 2018). Cortina (2020) contended quantitative researchers should be more candid and thoughtful about assumptions, and quantitative studies cannot achieve the same quality as qualitative research. Quantitative research, measured by behaviors and opinions, generalizes a larger population to examine consequences (Allmark & Machaczek, 2018). A quantitative method was inappropriate for this study, as I was not employing numerical or statistical data.

Researchers can assemble combined numerical and verbal data (Mirhosseini, 2018) to integrate quantitative and qualitative data practices (Cabrera & Reiner, 2018). A mixed-method approach combines two or more distinct research elements within a single study (Schoonenboom, 2018) and can be costly and time-consuming (Yin, 2018). A

mixed method was inappropriate for this study because I was not seeking to apply statistical data or explore relationships between quantitative variables. I used the qualitative method to analyze the problem, respect participants' voices, map the density of a situation and express various participants' perceptions.

Research Design

According to Yin (2018), a research design proposes to provide a framework for research. Abutabenjeh and Jaradat (2018) and Tomaszewski et al. (2020) postulated that a qualitative study could occur through various designs: (a) case studies, (b) narrative, (c) phenomenology, (d) grounded theory, and (e) ethnographies. According to Yin (2018), a case study answers what, why, and how questions.

Researchers who use case studies provide an in-depth, holistic view of a phenomenon of interest that demands an accurate and complete description of the case (Nilmanat & Kurniawan, 2021). Abma et al. (2020) indicated that case studies are a practical choice that allows creativity and flexibility to understand complexity. Case study research is a detailed investigation, often with empirical material collected from a well-defined case to analyze the context and processes involved in the phenomenon. The case study method involves a practical collection process that answers the research questions with maximum breadth (Rashid et al., 2019b). A case study design best fits this study; I investigated the role of organizational culture in the study company by identifying issues and causes.

According to De Vries (2018), narrative design is a fruitful approach that helps a researcher to understand the surroundings of data collection and analysis. Narrative

research uses various analytic practices entrenched in different social and humanities disciplines (Fusté-Forné & Masip, 2018). As Haydon et al. (2018) suggested, narrative can be a method with the experiences expressed in lived and told stories of individuals and study phenomena. Narrative research was not suitable for this study. I sought to explore tourism marketing strategies owners of small resorts use for sustainability and not collect data on participants' real-life stories (Yasar, 2021).

Whereas narrative focuses on the life of one individual, a phenomenological study describes several viewpoints of individual lived experiences or phenomena (Moser & Korstjens, 2018). According to Creswell and Poth (2018), phenomenology captures trends lived by people who participated in a phenomenon. A phenomenology explores a more extensive concept and is less concerned about whether accuracy is true to the living sense (Cypress, 2019). A phenomenological design will not apply to this study. The aim is not to gather the experiences of resort owners; instead, tourism marketing strategies that owners use to achieve and maintain viability.

Wood and Mattson (2019) postulated that an ethnographic researcher realizes humans' richness, how people sense objects and culture and understand a different worldview. According to Rashid et al. (2019a), ethnography describes people and their culture. Ethnography design is suitable for discovering cultural groups with natural settings (Yin, 2018). An ethnographic researcher relies profoundly on practical skills, which understand how groups function (Carter, 2018). Ethnography is inappropriate as the study sought to understand critical everyday dynamics better and not explore group culture.

Population and Sampling

The population for the study consisted of three resort business owners in the BVI. The participants manage small resorts with less than 100 room occupancy and use tourism marketing strategies. Qualitative researchers must capture similarities, differences, and anomalies (Conlon et al., 2020). Conlon et al. (2020) further stated the importance of sampling qualitative research focuses on characteristics or data sources. There are diverse types of sampling methods for this qualitative study: (a) purposeful, (b) snowball, and (c) theoretical sampling (Farrugia, 2019). A sampling strategy supports the purpose of a study. The researcher must decide on anticipated sample sizes to satisfy the analysis (Young & Casey, 2018). Researchers use purposive sampling in a qualitative study (Kalu, 2019). Purposive sampling was best for the study as it is contingent on the inclusion criteria, thus, ensuring shared characteristics for variables such as size, ownership, location, and services provided (Johnson et al., 2019b).

According to S. Campbell et al. (2020), purposive sampling best meets the need of aims and objectives of a study to enhance the rigor and trustworthiness of the data and results. Researchers can choose participants with similar and distinct characteristics related to the research topic. Ames et al. (2019) opined on the importance of purposive sampling in managing data. Snowballing is another proper sampling mechanism in qualitative research that harvests sampling opportunities based on participant referrals (Geddes et al., 2018). Snowballing focuses on the broader use of saturation, directly assessing sample sizes rather than data accuracy (Hennink et al., 2019). Snowballing is a collecting information mechanism for hard-to-reach populations (Audemard, 2020).

Snowballing was used as a backup to gain additional participants if saturation was not met.

For this qualitative, multiple case study, I searched the BVI Tourist Board website, particularly the resort business listings, for research participants 18 years or older and in the Caribbean region. I identified six small resorts, selecting three as my targeted sample size from these six targets. I retrieved contact details such as business location, email addresses, and phone numbers from public websites, word-of-mouth, and social media platforms. I placed them in a Microsoft Excel document. I contacted participants via email and included an interest form to request their participation in the study (see Appendix B). I sent email requests to participants in advance to prepare for the interview. When a confirmation from a participant was received, I emailed an informed consent form and set up a formal semistructured interview. I delivered the consent form to participants via email. Qualitative research recommends semistructured, face-to-face, and in-depth interviews (Yin, 2018). Member checking helped reach data saturation (Busetto et al., 2020). I used member checking to establish the tenet of credibility in trustworthiness to ensure data accuracy for participants.

Glaser and Strauss (1967) developed the concept of data saturation, focusing on developing conceptual or explanatory models from data. As called, thematic saturation reflects a juncture in the data collection process where repeated patterns cause further data to become redundant (Lowe et al., 2018). According to Hennink et al. (2019), saturation is a qualitative criterion determining rigor for an adequate sample size. There is a connection between data saturation, sampling strategies, and sample size revealing its

importance in quality research (Gill, 2020). Lowe et al. (2018) stated that a researcher achieves data saturation when repeated information does not reap new themes (Lowe et al., 2018). Data saturation occurred when I interviewed participants and determined that no new patterns had developed.

Ethical Research

Ethical considerations are essential to research (Rashid et al., 2019b). Informed consent is a meaningful exchange of information process formation between the researcher and the participant (Choudhury et al., 2018). The consent process commences when a researcher contacts a potential research participant for eligibility. Participant recruitment was not allowed until Walden University's IRB reviewed and approved the research. Roth and Von Unger (2018) expressed the need for qualitative researchers to have written consent in a study. Adherence to ethical norms in research is essential, which helps promote the aim of the study (Brear, 2018). A researcher's responsibility lies within the premise of building credibility and validity to gain user consent (Gaches, 2020). Researchers ponder on two critical elements of research: (a) informed consent and (b) ethical responsibility.

The Belmont Report of 1979 serves as guidance for beneficence, justice, and respect for persons in a study (The Belmont Report, 2003). I requested IRB approval before conducting the research to safeguard and ensure the study abides by federal guidelines and Walden University's requirements. To meet the study's criteria for getting IRB approval to conduct research, I sent participants an email outlining the study's details and intent. If the participant agrees to the interview, they will reply to the email,

consenting to participate. I informed participants that the study was voluntary and that they were under no obligation to continue participating if they wished to do so. Obtaining informed consent before commencing the interview process is essential (Biros, 2018). The participants were not compensated or rewarded for participating, and the information received was confidential, protecting participants' privacy. The validation of the consent form rests on participants being fully aware of their involvement and role in a research study (Rashid et al., 2019b). Boosting participants' benefits and minimizing risks, consent forms will be sent to potential research participants via email after IRB approval, outlining clarity on confidentiality protection and rights to discontinue the interview at any given time. Participants made their disclosure on whether they want to participate or to continue participating in research, which should be through an informed process that involves individuals to (a) precisely informed of the research process, (b) understand how and why of their interests, and (c) voluntary decide to participate (Choudhury et al., 2018). A recruitment letter helped to source participants, and a copy was available. A signed copy of the letter of cooperation (see Appendix B) authorized site approval of the study and interview process.

Consent requires written certification (Lawrence et al., 2020), while assent assumes continual participation in research (Klykken, 2021). If a participant wanted to withdraw from the study, it could be done at any time without recourse by letting the researcher know their intent. The consent form outlined the procedure for the withdrawal process, which can be formal or informal (see Appendix C). The voluntary nature of participation in a study requires researchers to inform each participant that they may

discontinue participation without penalty. The Belmont Report (2003) outlined the IRB application process, which requires researchers to describe their withdrawal process, conditions for informed consent, and participants' termination terms.

Clark (2019) invoked the importance of ethical standards to protect participants in research by avoiding harm and obtaining informed consent to preserve participants' privacy and confidentiality. The integrity of the data collected from participants will comprise data storage on a password-protected computer and USB drive in a secure location. Data collected will be deleted after 5 years, based on Walden University's requirements. Preserving privacy and safeguarding data collection, storage, and analysis is key to ensuring the rights of participants are protected (Yin, 2018).

Data Collection Instruments

Data collection is the process of gathering meaningful information from a sample of research participants (Clark & Vealé, 2018). Two types of data collection are: (a) primary data collection and (b) secondary data collection (Yin, 2018). Primary data is firsthand data that researchers collect from participants, and secondary data is existing data collected by someone else previously (Tate & Happ, 2018). According to McGrath et al. (2019), a researcher is part of the data collection instrument. I am this study's primary data collection instrument and will use a semistructured interview approach.

In the spirit of improving the value of a study's qualitative result, researchers use several data collection instruments depending on the capability to use them effectively and the purpose of the study (Hamilton & Finley, 2019). There are six data collection resources: (a) interviews, (b) questionnaires and surveys, (c) observation, (d) documents,

(e) focus groups, and (f) face-to-face and researchers should utilize at least two of them in a study (Yin, 2018). First, I conducted face-to-face interviews on a day and time prescribed by the participant while adhering to acceptable interview protocol for this study. Using Zoom was an alternative if a face-to-face interview could not be performed. Zoom is a videoconferencing platform used for research purposes (Archibald et al., 2019; Daniels et al., 2019; Matthews et al., 2018) to produce rich data for scholars (Pang et al., 2018). Yin (2018) stated that the interview protocols include an overview of the guidelines. Second, within a week of the interview, I sent copies of transcripts to participants requesting validation of information. The process helped review transcribed data for any errors or corrections.

Formal credentials of the company's documents, such as financial records, business plans, marketing strategy documents, and customer base information, will be sources of data triangulation. Yin (2018) proposed that data triangulation enhances a study's reliability and validity. As the interviewer, I ensured total transparency and disclosure of protocols. The evidence collected answered the research question, which aids in validating and understanding the processes. According to Yin (2018), focusing on research should enhance reliability. The data collection instruments will help clarify and validate whether processes are working and coherent with the participants' responses. Member checking is vital to ensure the research study's validity, credibility, and reliability after the interview (Candela, 2019). Member checking enriches the reliability of the research (Zairul, 2021) and allows participants to reassess their responses and respond to preliminary interpretations (Smith & McGannon, 2018). Caretta and Pérez

(2019) noted that participants must have a voice and commitment to the research process. During preliminary interviews, I invoked member checking to alleviate concerns about expectations and time commitments. The interview guide served as the connection point between the researcher and the participant.

Data Collection Technique

For this qualitative multiple case study, I explored tourism marketing strategies to sustain small BVI resorts. I received participants' email addresses and telephone numbers from websites targeting the BVI tourism sector. I contacted three potential participants via email and sent a copy of the informed consent form, which included an email script, to participate. I awaited electronic signatures with "I consent" from participants via email, consenting them to participate in the study. Once consent was received, I sent out another email to participants outlining the interview questions and interview protocols prior to the interview. At a particular time, date and place agreed upon by the participants. Interviews were conducted individually in a private, face-to-face setting with three participants. I did not need permission from participants as they were the company owners. Before the interview, I reminded participants that the interview was voluntary and confidential. I also reminded participants that they would not be compensated for this study and could withdraw at any time. I asked permission from participants to record the interview using a Sony ICD-B7 handheld digital voice recorder and a voice recorder app that was downloaded to my cellphone. I used note taking to record pertinent information. After the interview, I thanked the participants and informed individuals of the transcribing process, including an emailed summary to make corrections. I used NVivo

12 to transcribe the audio interviews from my cellphone app. I performed member checking using the summary sent to participants via email for review and feedback on my interpretations of the interview. I waited for the participants to respond to the email summary, and a confirmation email was received to reflect the accuracy of my interpretation. All participants responded to member checking.

Case study research contributed to the in-depth understanding of a phenomenon within the context of the study (Takahashi & Araujo, 2019). I used direct data from interviews of three participants using face-to-face semistructured interview questions collected from interviews, archival records, and social media websites. I collected archival information like newspaper clippings from the local public library tourism archive catalog. I was also privy to archival information from searching the internet and the BVI Tourist Board website of the Inns and Villa program. I also used archival records, business and strategy plans, note taking information, and social media websites as additional data sources. No method is better than others. Researchers must carefully evaluate, pick, and use the best method to reach their goal (Gusenbauer & Haddaway, 2020). The primary data collection technique for this study was face-to-face interviews. I conducted in-person interviews with all participants. I did not use Zoom video conferencing in this study.

A qualitative interview is a powerful data collection tool that allows researchers to explore unknown areas (McGrath et al., 2019). Interviews are a characteristic of data collection in a qualitative setting that provides a direct approach to rich data gathering in a phenomenon (Johnson et al., 2019a). The interview process supported research through

participants based on protocols and guidelines. When conducting an interview, the codes of conduct should be clear and adequately communicated (Tracy, 2019). An interview schedule can occur via (a) written questionnaire, (b) electronically (via chat rooms, virtual spaces, or electronic mail), or (c) face-to-face and over the telephone, overcoming geographical barriers to participant recruitment and becoming more prevalent (McGrath et al., 2019). I used face-to-face interviews to answer the research question because it permits a researcher to seek new insights, ask questions, and assess phenomena from different perspectives. This study's interview protocol maintained a transparent and consistent process (see Appendix A). The steps to data collection are as follows:

1. Participants contacted by e-mail and sent email script via letter of expression of interest (see Appendix B).
2. A list of potential participants to be acquired and selected from the tourism industry sector.
3. Participants to receive a copy of the inform consent form upon agreement to participate.
4. Participant instructed to confirm their participation by replying to the e-mail, "I consent."
5. Participants to receive copy of the interview questions and interview protocol prior to the interview.
6. Interviews to take place in a private setting desired by the participant.
7. The researcher will review the terms of the consent form and give the participant the opportunity to ask any questions.

8. Researcher reminds each participant that participation in the interview is voluntary and confidential.
9. Participants received reminders that there was no compensation and that they could withdraw at any time.

Semistructured interviews were suitable for collecting data about tourism marketing strategies that resort owners can implement. Researchers using semistructured interviews help mitigate bias and bring awareness or a new perspective to the phenomenon (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019). Interviews are an objective, personalized, and intuitive method for exploring specific interest points (Johnson et al., 2019a; Sovacool et al., 2018). A well-designed semistructured interview should ensure data capture crucial areas of flexibility for participants to bring their personalities and perspective to the discussion (Dadzie et al., 2018). Semistructured interview employs a detailed interview guide about the phenomenon (McGrath et al., 2019), shared with the participants. Semistructured interviews allow researchers to diverge from the topic, with the discussions having transformative effects (Blake et al., 2021). According to DeJonckheere and Vaughn (2019), a semistructured interview forms the base for two-way communication, allowing the interviewer and participant to ask questions and discuss pertinent topics. Price and Smith (2021) contended that semistructured interview data provides a cognitive view into the minds of humans. Semistructured interviews ask participants a list of questions related to the research question (Shaw & Satalkar, 2018). A potential drawback to semistructured discussions is that researchers may lack the required skills to conduct research, fail to ask related questions to the research study, and

the research becoming too expensive (Yin, 2018), causing data saturation to be unreachable. A drawback of using internal data was that participants would not be comfortable providing sensitive information, such as sales reports about the company. I reassured resort owners about the confidentiality of my study and that no incentives were involved if sensitive information was collected, which helped to mitigate sensitivity issues. I described my procedures thoroughly, allowing replication to be possible.

All interviews require skill on the researcher's part (Barrett & Twycross, 2018). I developed an interview protocol to manage the interviews. Once I received approval from Walden IRB, the participants received an invitation via email introducing myself and this study. After selecting the six participants, I telephoned and confirmed the time, date, and demographics of the three participants for the interview. I gave the participants a consent form for their review and signature, including consent to record them.

I performed authenticity and viability checks before conducting the research. After receiving IRB approval, I used the data collected from the audio to analyze transcripts of participants' responses to the interview questions. I interviewed three participants in this study, which resulted in 23 pages of transcription. I uploaded 23 into NVivo for initial analysis, which resulted in four emergent themes: (a) SMM strategies, (b) internet marketing strategies, (c) business operations, and (d) traditional marketing strategies. Lemon and Hayes (2020) concluded that using qualitative data analysis tools like NVivo and audio in a study derives in-depth, phenomenological interviews, which improves the quality and increases trust in the validity of the study's conclusions.

Before the data collection concluded, I contacted the participants via email as a follow-up to validating participants' answers and verifying authenticity using member checking (see Appendix A). I asked the participants to provide feedback on this study to see whether interpretations were fair, represented, and realistic. The participants had no revisions to the transcript. Yin (2018) explained that the data collection process comprises: (a) data analysis and interpretation, (b) data collection, (c) data reorganization, (d) act of results, and (e) confirming data (Yin, 2018). I verified all participants' comments for authenticity and used member-checking data to input captured data into the NVivo 12 software, which helped to locate different themes.

McGrath et al. (2019) explained that member checking is a trustworthy qualitative data-driven mechanism. I used data triangulation, member checking, and methodological approaches to validate data during the collection process and to add rigor, breadth, and depth to the study. Member checking is a method used to return interview results of participants' transcripts. Caretta and Pérez (2019) posited that member checking is one way to achieve validity in ensuring a mutual agreement and understanding of the analysis. I used member checking to import data into NVivo 12 software. According to Candela (2019), member checking involves asking participants (in writing or in an interview) about the report's accuracy. I used NVivo 12 to ensure I captured the interviews verbatim. NVivo 12 is a software used for qualitative and mixed-methods research that accesses most file types and imports social media (Wilk et al., 2019). The confidentiality of my participants was maintained by coding their names using numerical values. All information and recordings will be stored on a private external USB drive and

locked in my fire-proof safe for 5 years. Five years after approval of my study, I will destroy all files via permanent deletion and shred any documents to protect participants' rights.

Data Organization Technique

Ashworth et al. (2018) emphasized the importance of blending rigor with richness in a qualitative study. I added context to the data by naming and organizing files, emails, documentation, and managing references according to APA 7 format. Individual business owners were assigned a specific code and marking for differentiation which was secured for privacy and ethical purposes by independently categorizing the following: Participant 1 (PT1), Participant 2 (PT2), and Participant 3 (PT3). A well-laid-out data collection protocol is key to decreasing bias (Wutich & Brewis, 2019). All interviews underwent transcription verbatim, and data was controlled using NVivo 12. I used NVivo 12 to store, organize, and analyze data. Atlas is another excellent software for qualitative study. I did not use Atlas because it was more visual and portable and eased analytical discussions of two or more researchers (Feng & Behar-Horenstein, 2019). According to Wilk et al. (2019), Leximancer is a qualitative software that identifies emerging concepts and themes without a researcher's input. I did not use Leximancer because I did not want to extract concepts from text documents and present them visually to reveal the structured meaning in the text. Castleberry and Nolen (2018) stated that researchers use NVivo 12 to determine and link codes' patterns across immense data fields. Recorded participants' interview sessions consisted of a voice recorder installed on a cellphone device and Sony ICD-B7 handheld digital voice recorder. I used a notepad to capture observations and

responses from participants. NVivo 12 software is excellent for data management and retrieval facilities, supporting analysis, write-up, and data coding (Maher et al., 2018).

To protect the data collection and prevent unintended data loss, I will keep the data electronically in a password-protected hard drive and locked in a fireproof safe, allowing for an organized data storage process. The collected data will remain in a secure area of my home for 5 years. After 5 years, I will destroy data to protect the confidentiality of the participants. I will provide the confidentiality of each participant by labeling each participant's name as PT1, PT2, and PT3. Before gathering data, I acquired approval from Walden University IRB, obtaining an approval number for this study.

Data Analysis

The objective of the qualitative, multiple case study was to identify practical tourism marketing strategies small resort owners use to sustain their business. Natow (2020) indicated that triangulation enhances the validity of research, which encompasses multiple data sources and methodologies. Fusch et al. (2018) explained that researchers must use triangulation to mitigate bias and improve data saturation. The importance and accuracy of triangulation in research are pertinent to participants' viewpoints (Yin, 2018). Triangulation is a critical analysis because it provides a richer understanding of a problem, offers alternative views, and identifies new facts surrounding a case (Fusch et al., 2018). The four types of triangulations exist: (a) methodical, (b) data, (c) theory, and (d) investigating (Denzin, 1978; Yin, 2018). I used methodical triangulation, which is known to be the most accurate triangulation method, ensuring data saturation for

interview transcripts, analyzing business documents, and reviewing websites (Campbell et al., 2020).

Contacting the interviewee depends on a relationship, connection to interview partners, level of formality, and hierarchical position. Renz et al. (2018) contended the need for researchers to review notes and commence coding data in the analysis process. Data analysis uses a continuous comparison that leads to emerging themes from all participants. Using the defined interview protocol, I collected data from three small resort owners in the BVI. After contacting via email first, email became the mode used for follow-ups. Before the interview, I asked the participant's permission to record the interview accurately using a Sony ICD-B7 handheld digital voice recorder and a downloaded voice recorder app from my cellphone. I also used a notepad to record pertinent information.

Participants have anonymity, guaranteeing data protection from third parties. After completing the interviews, I transcribed participants' responses from the voice recorder on my cellphone into NVivo®12 software. The software provides a workspace for researchers to analyze, store, and manage unstructured, open-ended responses to interview questions and highlights the difference within participants' groups. I addressed triangulation through semistructured discussions and other supporting documentation, such as the PFF framework and existing literature, to better understand effective tourism marketing strategies.

Reliability and Validity

Reliability and validity establish dependability, credibility, transferability, confirmability, and data saturation in qualitative research (Yin, 2018). Qualitative researchers depend on subjective, interpretive, and contextual data, thus, allowing researchers to ensure the reliability and validity of their research findings (Aspers & Corte, 2019). Reliability and validity are two crucial qualitative factors for the applicability and credibility of an assessment instrument (Norin et al., 2018). According to Yin (2018), researchers address three main aspects concerning reliability and validity: (a) planning for the design, (b) analyzing results, and (c) interpreting findings.

According to Mays and Pope (2019), reliability and validity are equally applicable to qualitative reviews; however, they differ. According to Yin (2018), reliability ensures consistency, truth, and data accuracy. Reliability relates to data adequacy, and validity refers to data appropriateness (Spiers et al., 2018). Researchers' fundamental responsibility is checking and adjusting research processes rather than justifying limitations and deficiencies written after a study has concluded. As a researcher, I assessed rigor by applying member checking, methodological triangulation, prolonged engagement, reflexivity, and thick descriptions to the research. I used the study's interview protocol, reliability, validity, and consistency as a guide. Wertgen and Richter (2020) posited that the validation of text information helps detect inconsistency or false information in text comprehension.

Reliability

Reliability uses copious data, allowing researchers to reveal stable analysis across participants in qualitative research. Data saturation collects and validates data from multiple sources, helping to mitigate bias and augment data saturation (Fusch et al., 2018; Yin, 2018). Data triangulation uses data sets such as raw material, codes, concepts, and theory throughout the analysis process (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). I adhered to triangulation in this study and achieved multiple data collection tools such as semi-structured interviews and archival records. Firstly, I collected and analyzed data by gathering all sources and observations. Secondly, I accessed resort information from resort owners and via the internet. Reliability evaluates the uniformity of results over time and contains a specific embedded notion of stability of the results found (Hayashi et al., 2019). The dependability of the study depended on the evidence of quality and rigor. Dependability considers repeating a study based on settings changes (Gravesande et al., 2019). If a researcher successfully addresses trustworthiness, evidence of quality and rigor becomes much clearer (Smith & McGannon, 2018).

Dependability deals with consistency, ensuring the data analysis process aligns with the accepted norm for a particular design. Trustworthiness involves participants assessing the study's findings, interpretation, and recommendations over time (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). Dependability consists of member checking, peer review, coding, and triangulation. I enhanced this study's process by following the guidelines outlined in a transcript review, member-checking data presentation, and using the interview protocol.

Participants' accuracy depended on the researcher following uniform steps to collect and analyze data from interviews, websites, company documents, and small hotel reviews.

Validity

Validity takes shape in three components in qualitative research: (a) credibility, (b) confirmability, and (c) transferability (Hayashi et al., 2019). I evaluated the data for this research and used member checking to apply reliability. Validity occurs if findings are credible, transferable, and confirmable (Yin, 2018), corresponding to real-life experiences (Assarroudi et al., 2018). Validity support is consistent results from different attempts, such as credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Hayashi et al., 2019).

Credibility

Credibility in research is associated with accuracy and accountability (Liao & Hitchcock, 2018). Safeguarding rigor and trustworthiness are vital to ensure credibility and meaningful application of findings (Pelzang & Hutchinson, 2018). I used purposeful sampling and interview methodology to reduce sample bias throughout the interview process. Qualitative researchers who use credibility confirm that they are addressing the findings from the view of the participants (Korstjens & Moser, 2018).

Transferability

Data transferability is applicable, referring to a clear, rich, detailed description that assists contextualization (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). Transferability does not just deal with behavior and experiences, but behavior and experiences meaningful to

outsiders. To help with transferability in this study, I took notes, collected reliable data, analyzed data impartially, and ensured credible conclusions.

Confirmability

Confirmability concerns neutrality or returns to the idea of objectivity (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). Hayashi et al. (2019) posited that validity and transparency in research should include all aspects of the research, guaranteeing quality and rigor. Confirmability derives from research and is not a figment of the researcher's imagination (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). According to Johnson et al. (2019b), confirmability supports the research question and case study conclusions centered on the following data from participants. Confirmability maintains ethical standards and strategies (Yin, 2018). Confirmability was guaranteed in this study using methodical triangulation that compared research findings from face-to-face interviews, business websites, and archival records. I ensured the results were supported and confirmed by others.

Transition and Summary

Section 2 consisted of a description of the intent of the proposed study methodology, which comprised of (a) role of the researcher, (b) participants, (c) research method and design, (d) population and sampling, (e) ethical research, (f) data collection instruments, (g) data collection technique, (h) data collection organization, and (i) data analysis techniques.

Section 2 also engages arguments regarding methods and techniques that guarantee reliability and validity in a study. I chose the participants for the research using a purposeful sampling technique after obtaining IRB approval. Data collection from study

participants took place through semistructured interviews using the face-to-face interview method and company information. Instruments such as reflexivity, member checking, and methodological triangulation improved the research study's reliability and validity. The findings of the study apply to Section 3, which will provide an overview of:

1. Application to professional practice.
2. Implications for social change
3. Recommendations for action.
4. Further research and conclusion

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

Introduction

In this qualitative multiple case study, I explored tourism marketing strategies for sustaining small resorts in the BVI. The data collected came from interviews with three owners of small resorts in BVI who have successfully implemented tourism marketing strategies to achieve sustainability in their businesses. I collected triangulated data from face-to-face semistructured interviews, business websites, strategy documents, note taking, and archival records. I received strategy documents, such as the business mission and vision statements, from participants, which provided details of the company's present situation and outlined plans and goals. Note taking helped me to record the essence of participants' information from a different source and platform, freeing my mind from having to recall everything. Business archival records, which consist of yearly business plans, newspaper articles, and strategy documents, helped preserve heritage and history (Netshakhuma, 2019). Skarpelis (2020) postulated that archival records are valuable for keeping businesses functional by providing documentation, explanation, and justification for past and current actions. NVivo 12 software assisted in data coding and analysis, supporting immersion in the data, and developing emergent theories within the study.

This section's overview comprises the findings, application to professional practice, and reflections on my research experience. Four themes emerged from data analysis: (a) SMM strategies, (b) internet marketing strategies, (c) business operations, and (d) traditional marketing strategies. Owners of small resorts must use effective

tourism marketing strategies to achieve and maintain business operations and profitability.

Presentations of Findings

The overarching research question for this study was: What tourism marketing strategies are used to sustain small resorts in the BVI? I conducted face-to-face interviews with selected participants, which lasted less than 60 minutes. I completed member checking via email with a three–four-page summary of each semistructured interview. Data saturation was achieved after the third interview because I received no new information. The criteria selected indicated that each participant needed to be the owner of a small resort with fewer than 50 employees that have been operational beyond 5 years and who is experienced with tourism marketing strategies and located in the BVI.

I identified participants as Participant 1 (PT1), Participant 2 (PT2), and Participant 3 (PT3) as an alternative to using their names in the study. All participants have owned and operated small resorts for over 8 years and were able to offer experience operating small resorts in the BVI. All participants reliably answered the six interview questions. I gathered company information and recognized themes during the data analysis process. Four themes emerged from the analysis of data collected: (a) SMM strategies, (b) internet marketing strategies, (c) business operations, and (d) traditional marketing strategies. Owners of small resorts can successfully sustain their businesses despite the threat of new entrants. The findings showed tourism marketing strategies owners use to sustain small resorts in the BVI. I gained an in-depth understanding through data from face-to-face semistructured interviews, business websites, strategy

documents, note taking, and archival records on how small resort owners successfully applied tourism marketing strategies. The information from these data provided participants with a standardized set of responses. The following is an analysis of the themes that emerged from the data analysis.

Theme 1: SMM Strategies

Modern technology use is an essential advancement for positive business change (Cao et al., 2021; Mathiyazhagan et al., 2021). Social media has changed the traditional communication between brands and consumers and enables consumers to influence brand equity positively and negatively. Brand loyalty is a potent brand differentiator and offers a sustainable competitive advantage. Brand credibility and awareness reinforce brand personality and enhance its value. The purpose of SMM strategies is to influence tourists' travel choices using the reliability of the content shared.

Small business success depends on building relationships between customers and the company (Diffley & McCole, 2019). "Marketing is like oxygen for business" (Kaur & Kumar, 2020, p. 18), and SMM strategies have transformed the way businesses interact with and influence customers (Hallock et al., 2019). SMM strategies are valuable for businesses to reach customers, share information, stimulate brand, and focus on communication. SMM for resorts is a powerful tool to drive traffic to a website, create human connections, and interact daily with guests. SMM also serves as an excellent tool for outlining business goals while setting measurable objectives for desired outcomes (Hallock et al., 2019). Business promotion through social media is an art, and to get

maximum benefits, the best platforms reach and engage the target audience (Kaur & Kumar, 2020).

As a conduit for fulfilling personal needs and users' convenience, SMM is the way to leverage business. As an inexpensive tool, SMM is helpful to businesses regarding online listening, brand knowledge, and creating and measuring posts for engagement and success. SMM is also used for brands, building fan pages, and developing online advertisements through social media platforms (Liu et al., 2021).

Interview and Supporting Data Contribution

All three participants in this study understood the potential superiority of SMM relative to traditional advertising and marketing efforts that influence brand awareness and image. PT1 explained, "As a daily activity, various social media platforms help their business connect and interact with audiences, regardless of location. Social media is a vital marketing tool that propels and expands the business to attract more clientele and clients." PT2 added,

For the past couple of years, I have used the services of the Inns and Villa program, which advertises in crucial tourist areas (international markets) where most BVI guests originate. My business has been successful because of the continued advertisement exposure, for which I am well pleased with the returns to my business and the free marketing capabilities that the BVI Tourist Board offers. PT3 noted that using various social media platforms, large banners in public places, and the Inns and Villas online ads program allows them to adapt to changes. The various social media platforms also bring considerable growth and change to the islands, leading

to relationships with other small businesses and motivating people to put the BVI on their bucket lists. PT3 indicated they are more inclined to listen to customers and see things from their perspectives, allowing them to try something new every time.

The three participants identified that SMM strategies allow resort owners to create a human connection with current and potential guests while using various channels that give a face to their resort. Within the hotel context, customer loyalty ranks among the greatest motivations to engage in social media strategies, reduce marketing costs, and create guest databases (Jung et al., 2018). The influence of interaction and ubiquity on trust perceived benefits, and enjoyment is vital for guest engagement. PT1 stated that creating a visual experience through photos and videos via free websites such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram has benefited their business immensely. The visual experience attracts and engages customers, increasing revenue turnover using a cost-saving method for achievement. PT2 noted,

The level of service and effective strategies my business implement is a testament to my returning guests' successful growth. Repeat customers, quality of service, and offers indicate our competitiveness in the marketplace with other hoteliers, inns, and villas in the territory. Social networking services like Facebook and other various media houses increase the focus on user-generated content and social interaction on the web. I am happy to host returning guests at our resort, which is an excellent investment for the business, with the continued hope of leaving a lasting impression on potential customers vacationing in nature's little secrets.

PT3 explored platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat, YouTube, and Twitter and used direct advertisements on several individuals who frequent these sites. PT3 said,

I reach out to other successful businesses to make my business stand out and attract the customers I want. I communicate with potential customers who are looking for my products and services. I posted my products and all information I thought was relevant and valuable to help people learn more about my business. I refurbished banners posted around the island when necessary and used YouTube to post live video tutorials.

All participants in the study use social media engagement strategies to build clientele relationships. Table 2 depicts the frequency of responses referencing social media engagement strategy. Business owners use features of social media platforms such as Facebook, Snapchat, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram to communicate, interact, and gain customer feedback. All participants used Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, and two used Snapchat and Instagram to engage with customers (see Table 3).

Table 2

Participants' Responses Referencing Social Media Engagement Strategy

Participants	References
Participant 1	6
Participant 2	7
Participant 3	6

Table 3*Participants' Social Media Platform Presence*

	Facebook	Twitter	Instagram	Snapchat	YouTube
Participant 1	X	X			X
Participant 2	X	X			X
Participant 3	X	X	X	X	X

Small resort owners' use of social media is a proven successful marketing strategy to sustain business and increase revenue. Li et al. (2021) posited the importance of using social media communications and interactions to achieve desirable marketing results. Small- and medium-sized companies engage and leverage business for decision-making purposes, customer relationship management, and understanding key competitors regarding pricing and promotion and strategic development and reorientation (Siti-Nabiha et al., 2021). A structured approach to social data use is vital to ensure small business survival and competitiveness.

Findings

Social media is an effective strategy for profit sustainment, for which, according to Jung et al. (2018), driven by interactions and mediated by trust, a positive relationship lies between SMM activities, brand knowledge, and profitability. According to Cheung et al. (2019), the theme confirms that social media influences brand awareness and image, generates higher performance levels, integrates social networking platforms into business tactics, and challenges online communities. The theme aligns with the findings of Foltean et al. (2019) that marketing and technological resources have become a strategic priority to maintain business competitiveness. A combination of both these resources drives

competitive advantage and improves performance (Venciūtė, 2018). Small resort owners' use of SMM strategies connects with the competitive theory framework for this study.

Theme 2: Internet Marketing Strategies

Information without engagement and entertainment lacks achieving customer delight. The internet is the beginning of new innovative marketing that is an imperative connector using the internet network to develop marketing strategies and advertise effectively (Dilham et al., 2018). Internet marketing, often called *digital marketing*, *online marketing*, or *web marketing*, is when a business markets products and services and builds customer relationships through internet media. Resort owners can reach a larger audience and target prospects. Additionally, IMS is more cost-effective than traditional marketing, allowing business owners to measure their success and marketing potential.

As a primary business playground and the most popular communication channel for creating new rules and roles, the internet plays a vital role in business operations (Grubor & Jakša, 2018). While inevitable in shaping all aspects of life, the internet is a business platform that accelerates trading amounts, increases investments, and promotes business transactions. Online technologies are the catalyst for businesses to understand their target better, create appropriate products and services, set attractive prices, and develop good communication messages and effective modes of distribution and planning (Katsikeas et al., 2019). As technology revolutionizes, consumers use online options to discover the best solutions for their interests per their lifestyle and self-image (Grubor & Jakša, 2018). Online consumers demand satisfaction with marketing communication and

experience with the products and services used (Dahiya & Gayatri, 2018). Internet marketing companies have realized the importance of digital marketing and the need for effective strategies to meet customers' needs.

In the digital economy era, internet marketing promotes the effectiveness and success of companies on the market and serves as a critical enabler to gaining a competitive advantage regarding differentiation (Grubor & Jakša, 2018). The emergence of e-platforms aids businesses in increasing customers and provides a positive experience to strengthen relationships with clients. Despite e-commerce limitations and obstacles, SMEs can still benefit. There are various internet marketing resources: websites, search engine marketing, social media marketing, content marketing, e-mail marketing, mobile marketing, and banner advertising. IMS reshapes business models by improving competitive dynamics.

Interview and Supporting Data Contribution

All three participants identified the need for internet-based marketing approaches and strategies for gaining sustainable competitive advantage. Various IMS emerged, and the responses are referenced in Table 4.

Table 4

Participants' Responses Referencing Internet Marketing Strategy

Participants	References
Participant 1	8
Participant 2	7
Participant 3	10

Businesses can use blogs, social media, email, and other digital options to have a less expensive fresh start in the industry. PT1 noted,

As a small business owner in the hospitality industry, effective communication, especially in an online forum, is fundamental marketing that propels and expands my business to attract more clientele and clients. I want my business to be unique, so I invest time monitoring comments and postings and providing feedback to secure potential customers and returning guests to the territory who want an enjoyable stay at my resort.

PT2 mentioned,

My small business depends heavily on the success and approach of the BVI Inns and Villa online program. Members are privy to all data collected from the program, and the annual information generated is what I use to measure the success of my business. I monitor the program for potential updates and look at online reviews and their impact on business. I compare and analyze data from other hoteliers to develop a marketing strategy that will benefit my business.

PT3 added, “I utilize YouTube to post live video tutorials and the Inns and Villa program to lure customers to businesses, offer yearly data information, that provide the latest guest reviews for hotels and resorts.” Grubor and Jakša (2018) posited that competitors and customers create and achieve a competitive advantage and target the digital age segment by keeping up with the latest trends, innovations, and behavior patterns. Businesses must decide to take advantage of the virtual world, which unlocks room for improvement and helps them create strategic approaches that can be superior.

The barriers to entry and internet low-speed are significant hurdles to e-business marketing strategies. PT1 noted, “The internet service is unreliable and sometimes poses difficulties uploading content and providing timely feedback. Engaging consumers and sharing experiences online have also been a challenge regarding the slow bandwidth the internet service providers are offering in the territory.”

PT1 stated, “To overcome these barriers, effective marketing and being tech-savvy are keys to success.” PT2 explained, “Cost is always the main factor, distraction, hindrance, and obstacle to getting your business out there,” or being marketable. “As a small establishment, saving money is always the goal.” According to PT2, “As advertisement becomes costly, free online services are an asset to business owners where travelers can discover more about you and your business.”

PT3 was a resort owner with over \$30 million in sales. PT3 added, “Managing and the consistency in creating and posting content on social media platforms are barriers encountered in business.” PT3 noted, “Price increase for taxis in some locations, and Coronavirus has changed the way of business.” PT3 also noted, “Poor infrastructure, time spent traveling around the island for advertisement, and money spent to administer marketing strategies as barriers.” Grubor and Jakša (2018) posited that businesses should be aware of all limitations and risks of internet marketing implementation when planning online strategies.

Findings

The findings revealed that all study participants utilized internet marketing strategies for success. Katsikeas et al. (2019) stated technological business perspective is

vital to achieving market success and identifying clients. Understanding internet marketing and its channels is the new-age marketing strategy critical to the methods and manifestation of a competitive business landscape. Porter (2003) postulated that internet marketing strengthens existing and new competition in a global market. To differentiate from competitors, resort owners should combine digital and traditional approaches to create attractive websites, participate in social media, develop engaging video ads, and offer reliable products and services for success (Katsikeas et al., 2019).

The findings also revealed that positive online reviews were essential to branding. According to Mendaña and Apritado (2021), positive online reviews increase hotel or resort bookings. PT1 mentioned, “I create a measurement plan to monitor all my marketing efforts. With the measurement plan, I can monitor my return on investments that allows me to see what plan works best for my business and improve on those that are not to help save money.” PT2 added,

I monitor the program for potential updates and look at online reviews and their impact on business. I compare and analyze data and information from other hoteliers to develop a marketing strategy that will benefit my business. As I take a projective outlook of my business, I understand where I want my business to be and what I can do to help get it to where I need it to be. Data information also gives me an outlook on what my rivals are doing, the competitiveness of my business in the market, and ways to improve as I continue to utilize the Inns and Villa program. I monitor all reviews to understand customers’ overall satisfaction and plan and develop the way forward for my business.

PT3 stated, “I would be more inclined to listen to the customers and see things from their perspectives, allowing me to try something new.” SMEs can build satisfying, long-lasting, valuable relationships with global customers, thus outperforming rivals. The impact of digital marketing transcends borders, attracting people from around the world and turning unique places into popular tourist destinations (Popa et al., 2021). The study’s findings divulge that internet marketing strategies align with the competitive advantage theory. Implementing internet marketing strategies is not easy (Grubor & Jakša, 2018), but crucial for businesses to create a sustainable competitive advantage. However, by choosing the most effective internet marketing strategy, small resort owners can create a competitive advantage to gain benefits and improve their chances of survival.

Theme 3: Business Operations

SMEs are the central backbone of every economy (Haseeb et al., 2019). Business operations are vital tasks and activities for survival, growth, and success in a competitive environment. When used efficiently and effectively, business operations achieve a level of productivity to outstrip rivals, play a crucial role in business management, and are the principal profit-generating activity (Temnyshov & Belyaev, 2020). Family business succession includes three elements: (1) predecessor, (2) successor, and (3) succession process (Magrelli et al., 2022), and maintaining profitability over the long term is contingent on the strength of dynamic business capability (Teece, 2018).

Interview and Supporting Data Contribution

One hundred percent of the participants are active in the business's day-to-day operations and identified a need for longevity in the ownership of their business. Table 5 depicts the frequency of business operations for each participant. One participant has been operating a business for over eight years, and the other two have been operating a business for ten years. Temnyshov and Belyaev (2020) posited that a successful business operation relates to the company's business strategy and interaction with all involved.

Table 5

Participants' Responses Referencing Business Operations

Participants	References
Participant 1	7
Participant 2	6
Participant 3	6

Business operations aim to determine competitive advantages. Longevity in the ownership of a small resort and the owner's day-to-day involvement in the family business structure are two subthemes that emerged during the data analysis. PT1 participant explained, "Tourism is one of the world's largest and most competitive industries. Businesses operating in this industry should find unique strategies to stay afloat in the market and for their customers." PT2 added,

It is hard to measure the success of my business against major ones because it is considered a small business. However, we strive to offer and deliver high-quality service to our guests. The level of service and effective strategies my business

implement is a testament to my returning guests' successful growth. Repeat customers, quality of service, and offers indicate our competitiveness in the marketplace with other hoteliers, Inns, and villas in the territory. I am pleased with the returns to my business and the free marketing capabilities that the BVI Tourist Board has offered over the last few years.

PT3 stated that "We have been operating as a family business for the past 40 years. I have been operating the family business for the past ten years." All participants communicate that their resort is a family-run business. According to Lude and Prüggl (2018), these types of businesses show more genuine family involvement than brands that do not.

Findings

Emerging family businesses have an immense potential to innovate and differentiate from their competitors. To create value, a profitable organization relies on its business operations (Shi et al., 2019). Data collected from PTs showed that all PTs were active participants in the operations of a small resort and were engaged in the decision-making process for their resort. Lude and Prüggl (2018) postulated that family business brands could trigger inferences of trusts. Business operation is a formational tool to develop and manage competitive advantages (Temnyshov & Belyaev, 2020).

Family businesses are encouraged to innovate to become and remain competitive (Erdogan et al., 2019). Family-owned businesses should implement strategic assets and market orientation for a positive effect on the performance of the business, which can interpret changes in the business environment (Calabrò et al., 2018). Managing strategic assets of a family business increases competitiveness and business performance.

Businesses will need to evaluate market achievement to remain pillars of economic conditions. Growth and long-term survival depend on the owner ability to build a functional business model (Chaudhary et al., 2021). The participants' responses confirm the assertions of Kelly et al. (2000) that a founder could shape external environments through family interactions and impact the strategic management of the business. The study findings align with the conceptual framework by providing a positive, long-term beneficial relationship with stakeholders, which could turn into a competitive advantage for family businesses.

Theme 4: Traditional Marketing Strategies

Marketing is vital to the success of any enterprise (Tien et al., 2019). Marketing plays an intrinsic role for businesses by understanding customer needs and establishing a business as the best solution for that need (Di Muro, 2021). Joung et al. (2018) postulated that marketing is an emerging communication technology fostering increased competition among businesses. International marketing strategy enhances a company's reputation, builds, and promotes strong brand awareness and brand loyalty, which creates trust and awareness of customers, reducing marketing costs and maximizing profits (Tien et al., 2019). Businesses with a competitor-focused marketing strategy may succeed over rivals, embracing forward-looking and long-term business success as opposed to short-term profits (Al-Surmi et al., 2020). To be successful in the market, resort owners should keep abreast of changing times to target potential consumers and understand how to achieve a competitive advantage utilizing marketing strategies.

Traditional marketing links longevity in business. Everyday activities such as magazines, banners, catalogs, and billboards are traditional offline marketing that still benefits local audiences. Although dominated by digital marketing, traditional marketing should not be ignored. A blend of digital and traditional marketing achieves goals, boosts brand, and interacts with customers personally.

Interview and Supporting Data Contribution

All participants employed traditional marketing strategies to attract customers and do business effectively. Table 6 represents the frequency of traditional marketing strategies for each participant. Traditional marketing expands business and distributes products to primary geographical levels. PT1 contended, “Communication is critical to marketing and expanding businesses to attract more clientele and clients.” Stacho et al. (2019) stated that communication influences every organization’s innovation process, and its effectiveness is vital (Hitka et al., 2018). Communication is necessary for businesses to adopt an understanding of traditional marketing to satisfy customers’ needs.

Table 6

Participants’ Responses Referencing Traditional Marketing Strategies

Participants	References
Participant 1	8
Participant 2	7
Participant 3	7

PT1 noted,

I remain competitive in this business by creating authentic relationships with returning customers via guest feedback and emailing frequent and direct contacts.

Returning guests have been a great help to my business by assisting in spreading the word about their experience at my resort. I also listen to guest feedback. Listening provides valuable insights into what works best for my business and the necessary improvements.

PT1 and PT2 emphasized, “Word of mouth is one of the most potent forms of communication in the market, which tends to build strong relationships.” PT2 noted,

Small resorts are brought to the limelight via word of mouth, opening possible accommodations and services in the future, not because we offer services at a lower price. However, it is about quality and marketing capabilities – who gets the best bang for the buck.

Word-of-mouth referrals are effective for small resorts when customers share their experiences after visiting. Marketers must understand customer interactions and relationships to strengthen brands (Sahi et al., 2019). Customer referral is an excellent approach to attracting new customers and helping spread the word about the company.

PT3 mentioned,

I refurbished banners posted around the island when necessary and used YouTube to post live video tutorials. The utilization of social media and the use of banners will allow me to adapt to changes. I will be more inclined to listen to the customers, see things from their perspective, and try something new every time. PT3 utilized “banners as a traditional marketing strategy.” Small resort owners can utilize banners to attract customers.

Application to Professional Practice

The results of this study can help current, and future small resort owners understand the best effective tourism marketing strategies for success. Small resorts significantly impact the economic growth of local communities (Croes et al., 2018). The study may help boost business survivability for existing and potential business leaders across diverse organizations. The overall perception and desire of more visitors to a business contribute to the successful planning and optimization of goals. Based on the research question, my interpretation and analysis of participants interview responses, as well as company documents, determined four themes: (a) SMM strategies, (b) internet marketing strategies, (c) business operations, and (d) traditional marketing strategies. The findings from this research revealed that tourism marketing strategies are applicable and critical for small business owners' achievement to (a) identify targets, (b) increase customer, and brand awareness, (c) increase sales and ROI, (d) promote businesses values and offerings and (e) gaining a competitive advantage.

The four generated themes contributed to effective tourism marketing strategies and are meaningful to owners of small resorts. Tovmasyan1 (2020) posited that marketing strategies develop tourism and reap success. The specific business problem was that some resort owners lacked tourism marketing strategies to sustain small BVI resorts. Porter's five force framework was the conceptual framework that successfully aligned with the study's findings. Business owners' and managers should understand a business's marketing capability for competition (Ju et al., 2018).

All PTs exhibited sustainability in resort ownership beyond 5 years and emphasized the power of SMM, internet marketing, and marketing strategies. Researchers found that marketing strategies are low-cost initiatives that build brand awareness and recognition. This study shows a relationship between the competitive theory and tourism marketing strategies. SMM benefits are limitless, allowing for a broad reach and fast-speed communication in discovering new customers (Kumar & Nanda, 2019). Integrating social media platforms helps improve SMEs' processes by better engaging stakeholders and keeping track of information flow and activities. SMM is highly effective and should be a consistent part of every brand marketing strategy. Internet marketing strategies are effective for organizations. A business will save money and reach more customers for less.

Marketing is the crucial functional area of a business that is vital to understanding target markets and increasing sales. Hoteliers must understand marketing to achieve and maintain profitability by ensuring managers create a customized sales strategy to drive sales at their individual properties. Managers can work with other tourism business professionals to promote the region by offering marketing campaigns targeting robust inbound tourism markets and driving more traffic. Managers can use booking engines to secure online bookings from personal websites or social media platforms to create a frictionless experience for guests by boosting conversions and improving the result of sales. Mastering business operations helps to achieve business success. Managers can streamline and improve service delivery for customers, which increases customer satisfaction through their expectations from feedback and complaints. Organizations

should guard for new technology that improves and eases critical processes by updating manual processes to automated programs, saving time and cost. Businesses should keep up with the latest trends and changes in operations to be competitive in the market. Keeping up with business operations can improve performance, cut costs, and help businesses stay compliant with new regulations. Without a solid marketing strategy, businesses would not thrive.

Implications for Social Change

Ineffective marketing strategies negatively contribute to premature business failure. Independent resort owners and small business owners may use the results of this study to remain competitive and increase knowledge of effective tourism marketing strategies for sustainability. Sustainability is an integral part of business strategy for successful organizations (Cooney et al., 2022). Using effective tourism marketing strategies helps small business owners promote business, stand out from rivals, attract customers, and generate brand awareness. The findings may improve a stronger community and individual living standards through gainful employment, reducing the need for social benefits.

Based on the study, it is reasonable to conclude that there is a need to rethink and innovate tourism marketing strategies. Implementing effective tourism marketing strategies could result in positive social change to sustain business operations (Kristiana et al., 2021). By developing effective tourism marketing strategies, resort owners can stimulate economic progress, create more jobs, and improve the local community. To ensure an important place in international markets, local authorities, tourism associations,

and chambers of commerce can take the leading role in strengthening the degree of peace between tourism entrepreneurs and states. The results of this study identified several ways owners of small resorts could contribute to positive social change (a) increase tax revenue, (b) tourism-related development, and (c) training programs for entrepreneurs and society.

Establishing and maintaining tourism-related development may enable owners and government to increase, develop and encourage tourism in particular destinations. Managers and owners must understand the different marketing and technology strategies for effectively planning and implementing tourism and hospitality marketing. Social media marketing may enable marketers and organizers to improve destination images, influencing behaviors in individuals and communities for the greater social good. Social media marketing can enable resort management to stimulate customer response instantly, understand their needs, and offer customized solutions. Management can directly communicate offerings and packages with customers to enhance customers' intentions and loyalty. Government and business owners offering marketing training programs in communities could promote awareness through community engagement. Training programs will bring more awareness, build more affinity for the brand, and foster a better relationship with local communities. By adopting the recommendations for further action, disadvantaged individuals will be more knowledgeable about avoiding the downside of small resort failures.

Recommendations for Action

A tourism marketing strategy is necessary for the resort industry. Sadq et al. (2019) opined that tourism marketing embodies tourism demand using research, forecasting, and selecting the right market to achieve the greatest return. I researched successful tourism marketing strategies small resort owners used in BVI for sustainability beyond 5 years. Implementation of recommendations from this study is relevant to small resort owners, the Government of the Virgin Islands, state and local governments, and entrepreneurs. Effective tourism marketing strategies may assist all groups in gaining a competitive advantage, sustainability, and profitability in business. After conducting the research study, I recommend that owners of small resorts (a) develop an annual operating plan, (b) implement effective marketing strategies, (c) implement social media and internet marketing to increase brand loyalty, (d) develop and implement a marketing/business plan, (e) implement training programs/campaigns and (f) create a content marketing strategy.

The first recommendation is to develop an annual operating plan to manage all budgets and analyze financial statements. Kabeyi (2019) opined that a strategic plan does not guarantee success, but a well-crafted, innovative, and creative plan, guarantees success. An effective annual plan provides everything businesses need to meet their goals and vision. Small resort owners should follow an annual action plan as a roadmap for productive operations. An operation plan could foster a better understanding, appreciation, and acceptance of tourists' demands and satisfaction and develop and maintain strong relationships with the community and internal partners. The second

recommendation is to implement effective marketing strategies to increase sustainability and profitability. Small resort owners should use marketing strategies to maximize bookings and revenue, monitor trends, and drive product awareness. The correct marketing approach should be identified, developed, and implemented to avoid executing wrong strategies. The third recommendation is to implement social media and internet marketing. Business organizations employ social media marketing to maximize return on investments. Small resort owners and entrepreneurs can increase consumer satisfaction and brand loyalty among customers and build cultures and society. Owners may also help promote business using social media channels such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube.

Small resort owners should develop a marketing /business plan to understand business strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for competitive advantages in the market. A strategic plan should determine an organization's subsequent long-term success or failure. Small resort owners and government officials can use a strategic plan to develop and implement activities for the business. Another recommendation is for Governments to implement marketing training programs/campaigns. Such strategies will provide innovative training to SMEs to maximize marketing capabilities. SMEs can develop social media campaigns based on the competitive framework and help small resorts gain the most out of their business. Training programs will also benefit resort owners and tourists in addressing infrastructure improvements.

Content marketing is one of the best tourism strategies (Ho et al., 2020). Small resort owners and entrepreneurs can use this strategy to draw attention to their business

and company websites using high-quality content such as blog posts, web articles, infographics, e-books, and videos to boost business visibility. I plan to publish this study's results with other business owners and professionals through scholarly journals, business publications, and training programs. I will share the results of this study with the participants.

Recommendations for Further Research

The qualitative research for this study involved exploring tourism marketing strategies that small resort owners use to sustain small resorts. Four common themes emerged from this study, using three small resort owners in the Caribbean region. The selection of qualitative research resulted in a better understanding of the thought process for my study. This study's findings revealed effective tourism marketing strategies that small resort owners used to sustain business and increase profit, including (a) SMM strategies, (b) internet marketing strategies, (c) business operations, and (d) traditional marketing strategies. The three limitations of my study consisted of (a) sample size, (b) limited experience of participants, and (c) short time limit of the study. The sample size of this study comprised three successful, small resort owners, which may not represent all small resort owner's perceptions and actual outcomes of the findings. Researchers may use experienced participants to impact the outcomes and conclusions of the research, producing a complete presentation that will enrich the readers' understanding and support future investigations. There is also a need for a future longitudinal study to yield reliable or precise results to answer this research problem.

Researchers should identify other significant factors affecting sustainability and profitability. Further studies can focus on larger resorts which may result in differing tourism marketing strategies for success and interviews conducted on more extensive samples that would be more representative of the entire tourism population. Another study could include a more expansive area targeting the general tourist populace to compare the two results. Future researchers could also use a quantitative or mixed-method study to enhance the generalization of findings.

Reflections

I conducted a qualitative, multiple case study to explore tourism marketing strategies that resort owners in BVI use to sustain small resorts beyond 5 years. In conducting this study on small resorts, I recognize the specific business problem is that some resort owners lack tourism marketing strategies to sustain small BVI resorts. I understood the competitiveness in a small resort environment and that resort owners' use of diverse marketing strategies could sustain and expand business operations. Through the research process, I had the opportunity to engage in rich conversations with individuals with experience in the industry and gain diverse insights. The data results provided an in-depth understanding of small resort tourism marketing strategies and eliminated personal bias from my experience to increase the reliability of the study's findings. I conducted the research interview with no expectations or bias from participants regarding how they answered the interview question. I do not work in the tourism industry. My reflection on the study includes a deeper understanding of small resort owners' resilience and commitment to the business.

Completing this research has been a challenging experience; however, it is one that I do not regret. Valuable resources, including family, faculty, friends, online forums, and classmates at Walden University, gave me vital support to complete the program. It is an experience that has helped me learn and grow professionally while gaining the knowledge and skills needed to help me succeed on a fulfilling career path. The knowledge and perspective about tourism marketing theories and strategies significantly developed after this research study and reviewing existing literature. My professional perspective on the study's findings confirmed the power of marketing efforts, including the continuous learning, development, and implementation of effective tourism marketing strategies to achieve the sustainability and profitability of small resort organizations.

I am delighted to learn and understand all the hard work small business owners put into doing something they love. I look forward to assisting small business owners in developing tourism marketing strategies. I hope that entrepreneurs and small resort business owners will use this study's findings to maintain sustainability and profitability.

Conclusion

Some resort owners lack tourism marketing strategies to sustain small BVI resorts. This qualitative multiple case study aimed to explore tourism marketing strategies for sustaining small resorts in the BVI. All participants showed a direct relationship between using effective tourism marketing strategies and attaining business success. The competitive framework provided a greater understanding of effective tourism marketing strategies that resort owners can use to increase revenue, attract customers, and stay ahead of rivals.

I interviewed three participants using semistructured interviews who have sustained profit beyond 5 years. I coded and analyzed data using the NVivo software. Four themes emerged: (a) SMM strategies, (b) internet marketing strategies, (c) business operations, and (d) traditional marketing strategies. Tourism marketing has become increasingly complex over the years, permitting technological progress for many autonomous suppliers, and allowing customers to decide based on destination experiences (Popa et al., 2021). An innovative approach to marketing strategies is fundamental for promoting and distributing tourism services through various electronic platform methods and ideologies to attract many customers and sustainability in business. Businesses that do not effectively adopt more sustainable practices face withering public scrutiny and intensifying competition. The findings contributed to the foundation of scholarly knowledge and provided fruitful insights to SME owners by identifying and controlling critical sustainability aspects of business practice. I recommend that resort owners, entrepreneurs, government officials, and academic scholars better understand effective tourism marketing strategies using the findings and recommendations from this research study.

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Appendix A: Interview Protocol

Participant Code: _____ **Interview Date:** _____

Research Question: What tourism marketing strategies are used to sustain small resorts in the BVI?

Interview Purpose: In this study, the interview will contain 6 open-ended questions and additional follow-up questions to determine tourism marketing strategies used to sustain small resorts in the BVI?

Interview Mode:

Face-to Face _____ Video Conferencing _____

Telephone _____ Other (please specify) _____

Participant Selection Process:

- Participants contacted either by telephone or e-mail.
- A list of potential participants to be acquired and selected from the tourism industry sector.
- Participants to receive a copy of the inform consent form upon agreement to participate.
- Participant instructed to confirm their participation by replying to the e-mail, “I consent.”
- Participants to receive copy of the interview questions and interview protocol prior to the interview.

Demographic Questions:

- How long have you been with the existing organization?

- How many years of business leadership experience do you have
- What is your highest educational attainment

Interview Setting:

- Interviews to take place in a private setting desired by the participant.
- The research will review the terms of the consent form and give the participant the opportunity to ask any questions.
- Researcher reminds each participant that participation in the interview is voluntary and confidential.
- Participants receive reminders there is no compensation, and they may withdraw at any time.

Recording the Interview:

- The researcher reminds each participant of the recording and receives confirmation.
- The researcher alerts each participant that a journal is a secondary way of capturing notes from the interview and to mitigate bias.

After the Interview:

- A thank-you note is sent to each participant one day after the interview along, with an e-mail.
- Each participant's recorded interview will be transcribed by the interviewer and a copy sent to participants for feedback.
- Member checking will occur for accuracy by contacting each participant by email or telephone for review of interpretation to responses.

- Identify the need for follow-up questions or for a second interview after the translation of data occurs.
- Collection of electronic data to be stored with password encryption, and nonelectronic data is to be stored in a home-locked safe for a minimum of 5 years before discarding all transcripts.

Appendix B: Letter of Expression of Interest

[Date]

Re: A Doctoral Study of Potential Interest

Dear [Name]:

My name is Rosemary Callwood, and I am currently a graduate student at Walden University pursuing a doctoral degree in Business Administration with a leadership specialization. I am researching current tourism marketing strategies for sustainability. My study entitled: Tourism Marketing Strategies for Sustaining small resorts the British Virgin Islands. I am interested in exploring tourism marketing strategies that resort business owners in the BVI use for business sustainability. I want to invite you and two other small resort business owners to participate in this research.

I am seeking to interview small resort business owners who fit the following criteria:

- Participants to have at least five years of sustainability in business.
- Is from the Caribbean region.
- Business depends on tourism marketing strategies.

The participant study criteria are determined to provide the researcher with a unique perspective to this study. Participants who chose to become participants in the study will perform a Zoom teleconference interview. Results and findings will be shared with participants. All responses will be categorized, and no names of any sort will be attached to the results. Confidentiality remains imperative, and the process of interest will go through the protocol of Walden University Internal Review Board (IRB).

Individuals who meet the above criteria and is interested in participating in the study can contact the researcher at 1284-468-9831 or by email at

Rosemary.callwood@Walden.edu.

Participation in this study is voluntary.

Thank you for your time and effort.

Sincerely

Rosemary Callwood

Appendix C: Consent Form

You are invited to participate in a research study about Tourism Marketing Strategies for Sustaining Small Resorts in the British Virgin Islands. The researcher is inviting small beach resort business owners in the British Virgin Islands to be in the study. This form is a consent form that sets out the guidelines and instructions for consent and your ability to decide whether you want to partake in the study.

Rosemary Callwood, who is a doctoral student at Walden University, will be conducting this study.

Background Information:

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study is to explore tourism marketing strategies for sustaining small resorts in the BVI.

Procedures:

These are the following steps to the study:

- Participate in a face to face or videoconferencing interview that will last for 50 minutes to 60 minutes for the sole purpose of collecting data based on participant preference.
- Participate in member checking, if necessary, for researcher's interpretation and participant feedback. The process is to take place in 20-30 minutes (Phone option available)

Please see sample questions below:

1. What is your current tourism marketing strategy approach?
2. How did you implement the marketing strategies to sustain your business?

3. What key barriers did you encounter when implementing tourism marketing strategies?

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

The research will be conducted by participants who made an informed and voluntary choice to freely or refuse to participate. Regardless of choice, Walden University will respect and reserve your right to partake or not, whether formal or informal. Participants can stop if they do not want to partake in the study anymore for whatever reasons come what may. The researcher is seeking to interview three volunteers for this study.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:

Due to protection in place, the study would pose minimal risk to participant's wellbeing. However, the interviewer recognizes several discomforts such as stress and fatigue that can contribute to participant's involvement in daily life encounters.

Participants will not directly benefit from this study. This study aims to benefit society by offering more employment opportunities and increase resort profitability.

Payment:

No payment or compensation is offered for participating in this study, and to protect participant's conflict of interest, IRB mandates that such information be disclosed.

Privacy:

The interviewer protects the participant's privacy. Therefore, your identity and personal information will remain confidential within the scope of the law, and the information received will be used for the sole purpose of this research project. Your name and or possible identification will not be disclosed in study reports. If data is shared amongst

other researchers, removing all names and possible identification is paramount, not obtaining further consent. According to Walden University, data will be securely shielded by data protection, data encryption, and codes in a secured external drive and kept secure for at least five years.

Contacts and Questions:

You can ask questions of the researcher by email at rosemary.callwood@waldenu.edu. If participants want to talk privately about their rights or any concerns about them, please feel free to call Walden University's Research Participant Advocate at 1-612-312-1210. My Walden University's approval number for this study is 05-02-22-0166976, and it expires on May 1, 2023.

Please retain this consent form for your records, or you may contact the researcher by email or Walden University for a copy at any time using the contact information listed above.

Obtaining Your Consent

Please endorse your signature below if you understand the consent and wish to volunteer in the study.

Printed Name of Participant _____

Consent Date _____

Participant's Signature _____

Researcher's Signature _____