

## COMMUNICATION ERRORS IN LOCAL TOURISM MARKETING: EVIDENCE FROM FACEBOOK GROUP IN OKUNINKA

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**Purpose:** The purpose of the paper is to identify and analyze communication errors made by accommodation providers in Facebook groups related to local tourism, using the case of Okuninka at Lake Białe in Poland. The study aims to assess how these errors affect the effectiveness of online marketing, tourist engagement, and the overall image of the destination, with a particular focus on seasonality.

**Design/methodology/approach:** The research applied a mixed-methods approach combining quantitative and qualitative analysis. Data were collected from public posts and comments in a Facebook group dedicated to accommodation offers. The dataset comprised approximately 1200 posts (including both tourist inquiries and accommodation providers' promotional offers) and approximately 5000 responses from accommodation providers, collected over the period 2022-2025. Quantitative methods included descriptive statistics,  $\chi^2$  independence tests with Cramér's V, and a logistic regression model to measure the effect of selected variables. Qualitative content analysis was applied to classify types of communication errors and assess their contextual meaning.

**Findings:** The study found that 71% of responses contained at least one communication error, with the most frequent being the omission of price (42%) and redirecting to private messages (37%). Posts that included price and photos achieved significantly higher conversion rates, while reliance on private channels reduced effectiveness. Seasonal patterns were also observed, with distinct types of errors prevailing in different periods of the year. The multifactor model confirmed that price transparency, visual presentation, and personalized replies strongly increase communication effectiveness, while private-message redirection and phone-only contact negatively affect it.

**Research limitations/implications:** The study was limited to a single platform (Facebook) and one destination (Okuninka, Lake Białe), which restricts the generalizability of findings. Conversion was measured based on digital traces (further contact) rather than confirmed bookings. Future research should extend to other platforms (Instagram, Booking.com, TikTok), compare different types of tourist destinations, and integrate advanced analytical tools (AI, big data) to identify communication patterns more comprehensively.

**Practical implications:** The findings provide practical recommendations for accommodation providers and local tourism organizations. Transparent offers including price and photos should become standard practice, while public replies should be prioritized over private messages to ensure trust and visibility. Local DMOs could develop unified guidelines for online

communication. Such improvements could increase booking conversion, enhance customer satisfaction, and strengthen the competitive position of local tourism markets.

**Social implications:** The study highlights the role of online communities in shaping the image of local destinations. More transparent and personalized communication can foster trust, support social capital among tourists and residents, and contribute to sustainable tourism practices. By reducing communication gaps, tourism stakeholders may also improve perceptions of professionalism and hospitality, positively influencing the attractiveness of the region beyond the high season.

**Originality/value:** The paper provides new empirical evidence on the communication practices of small-scale accommodation providers in social media contexts. It demonstrates the synergistic effect of combining price transparency, photos, and personalization, and shows how seasonality influences the occurrence of communication errors. The study adds value to the literature on tourism marketing, destination management, and social media communication, offering insights relevant for academics, practitioners, and policymakers.

**Keywords:** tourism marketing; social media communication; seasonality; Facebook groups; accommodation providers.

**Category of the paper:** Research paper; Case study.

## 1. Introduction

The development of social media has radically changed the functioning of contemporary tourist and local communities. Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok have become not only tools for information exchange and recommendations but also spaces for shaping the image of places and tourist services. Facebook is particularly significant, as its thematic group functionality enables the creation of communities focused on specific destinations, attractions, or tourist needs. These groups simultaneously serve informational, integrative, and promotional functions, becoming an important communication channel between service providers and potential guests.

An example of such activity is Okuninka at Lake Białe – a popular holiday destination in eastern Poland, attracting thousands of tourists every year, especially during the summer season. The functioning of the group "Okuninka Jezioro Białe - noclegi (domki, pokoje, kwatery, pola namiotowe)" run by the profile "Okuninka Jezioro-Białe" allows for observing communication mechanisms on a micro-scale, encompassing both interactions between accommodation owners and tourists and the exchange of experiences among community members themselves. It is worth noting that this is one of several groups operating on Facebook related to this area, but due to its size and user activity, it remains the largest and most important discussion space. The literature emphasizes that social media activity can genuinely influence purchasing decisions, choice of vacation spot, and satisfaction levels with tourist services. In the context of Okuninka, it can be assumed that discussions and responses in the Facebook group serve as a substitute for traditional information sources – such as travel agencies, official municipal websites, or booking and review portals (e.g., Booking.com, Nocowanie.pl) – while

simultaneously providing a platform for tourists to exchange experiences. Thus, the group can function as a kind of "barometer" of tourist attractiveness and the quality of services provided.

Existing research indicates that social media activity influences purchasing decisions, choice of vacation spots, and satisfaction levels with services. However, the effectiveness of communication depends on many factors – the type of content published (interactive, visual), consistency of strategy, degree of local community engagement, or the presence of key elements such as price, contact details, or visual materials. The lack of such information can reduce the effectiveness of marketing activities, as can communication errors that appear in the responses of accommodation owners. An additional challenge is tourism seasonality – the intensity of online communication increases during the holiday period, while outside the season, it becomes necessary to seek alternative narratives and offers.

In this context, a particularly interesting research problem is the analysis of the quality and effectiveness of communication conducted in social media groups related to local destinations. This article focuses on the example of Okuninka at Lake Białe, juxtaposing an empirical analysis of activity in the group "Okuninka Jezioro Białe - noclegi (domki, pokoje, kwatery, pola namiotowe)" with findings from the literature on the role of social media in tourism and the specifics of seasonality. Particular emphasis is placed on the perspective of accommodation providers, for whom social media are an important tool for promoting their offer, acquiring customers, and responding to tourist opinions and expectations. The aim of the study is therefore to identify typical communication problems from the perspective of accommodation hosts, assess their consequences for regional promotion and the functioning of the local tourist services market, and indicate patterns that could support more effective destination image management.

This analysis fits into the broader context of transformations occurring in tourist destinations that have so far operated seasonally. Okuninka is an example of a region where the accommodation base has significantly increased over the last decade. This growth largely resulted from private investments, including both the expansion of existing facilities and the purchase of new properties intended for short-term rental. This phenomenon can be linked to the growing interest in investments generating passive income, which in recent years has become an attractive form of capital investment in the tourist real estate sector.

The development of the accommodation base in Okuninka, encompassing both an increase in the number of facilities and an improvement in their standard, creates complex conditions for property owners. On the one hand, growing competition in the segment of standard offers means that rental prices in this range have remained relatively stable for several years, limiting the possibility of increasing revenue in this segment. On the other hand, the increasing number of exclusive facilities, offering amenities such as jacuzzis, high-quality equipment, or attractive locations by the lake, allows owners to meet the expectations of wealthier tourists who are willing to pay higher rates for comfort and additional attractions. Such market segmentation enables more effective positioning of facilities, increased revenue in the premium segment,

and building a positive image on social media through recommendations and reviews from satisfied customers. As a result, owners can both maintain the competitiveness of standard offers and utilize the growing demand for exclusive accommodation to generate additional income.

Simultaneously, global trends are observed that influence the local structure of the tourist market. The growth of consumerism, the development of mobile and digital tourism, and the increasing importance of social media favor the intensification of short-term trips, which drives demand for accommodation and enables facility owners to flexibly adapt their offers to changing tourist preferences. At the same time, this process coexists with growing social stratification worldwide, where the increase in private investments in tourist real estate leads to changes in the availability and price structure of accommodation offers and may also affect residents' access to the local real estate market.

In the context of Okuninka, the dynamic development of the accommodation base and the growing commercialization of tourist space favor the emergence of phenomena typical for seasonal destinations with intensive tourism, such as infrastructure overload, the need to manage seasonal tourist influx, and the necessity for effective marketing strategies enabling the maintenance of destination attractiveness outside the main summer period. Simultaneously, this transformation creates challenges for spatial planning, sustainable tourism development, and local policy, requiring consideration of both the interests of tourists and the residents of the region.

## **2. Literature Review: Social Media, Tourism Marketing, and Seasonality**

Social media play an increasingly important role in tourism marketing and in the process of building social bonds and social capital among users. Research shows that platforms like Facebook can be a key tool in promoting destinations, engaging tourists, and co-creating the image of a place. At the same time, insufficient utilization of the potential of social media groups by local tourism organizations and accommodation owners is indicated.

Research has shown that promotional posts generate the most "likes", but interactive posts elicit more comments, indicating deeper user engagement (Strzębicki, 2025). The literature also emphasizes that local tourism organizations in Poland often do not fully utilize Facebook's capabilities, and the lack of professionalization and a consistent strategy leads to insufficient communication effectiveness (Korbiel, 2021). Conversely, the potential of analyzing social media data for planning local tourism development is highlighted, enabling the monitoring of tourist preferences and behaviors (Zajadacz, Minkwitz, 2020).

The importance of building bonds and social capital by tourist communities has also been noted in research emphasizing that both online and offline networks support the exchange of experiences and sustainable tourism practices (Dickinson et al., 2017). Similar conclusions were presented in a study published in *Technology in Society*, analyzing tourist groups on Facebook in light of social facilitation theory, which demonstrated that an interactive content format (questions, answers, polls) increases engagement and maintains activity in groups (Camilleri, Kozak, 2022).

Another important issue is the co-creation of place branding by the local community. Research proves that the active involvement of residents and entrepreneurs in place promotion increases its authenticity and attractiveness in the eyes of tourists, but requires appropriate organizational and communication support (Leal et al., 2022). Similar conclusions emerge from analyses concerning tourism recovery after the COVID-19 pandemic, which indicate that social media became one of the key tools for communication and co-creating the destination narrative (Hysa et al., 2022).

It is also worth citing works directly analyzing Facebook as a destination marketing tool. Studies of Italian DMO organizations proved that elements such as photos, post length, and publication frequency significantly influence user engagement (Mariani et al., 2016). Conversely, a longitudinal analysis of European DMOs confirmed that consistent and regular communication activities yield the greatest effects in the long term, rather than short-term promotional campaigns (Gálvez-Rodríguez et al., 2020).

Seasonal tourism is a problem that significantly affects the functioning of destinations, especially those dependent on climatic conditions and summer-holiday activity. The literature on seasonality has analyzed both the causes and effects of this variability and strategies to counteract periods of low activity.

The study "Destination engagement on Facebook: Time and seasonality" indicates that the level of engagement on social media (reactions, comments) depends on the time of year: the authors observe better results in the months preceding summer and during the high tourism season (Villamediana et al., 2019). The work "Balancing Tourism Seasonality: The Role of Tourism Destination Image (TDI) and Spatial Levels (SLs)" emphasized that destination image and the level of spatial promotion can mitigate the effects of seasonality by building attractiveness also outside the peak season (Wang, Chen, 2025).

In the Polish context, Soldatke et al. (2023) studied the seaside resorts of Puck and Władysławowo, comparing the development of tourist services, planning solutions, and tourist offers between the summer and off-season periods. This study emphasized that the tourist offer outside the season is often limited, infrastructure is used less intensively, and residents perceive the inconveniences associated with tourist traffic differently, which also affects the acceptance of spatial development (Soldatke et al., 2023).

Also, the work "Tourism seasonality: the causes and effects" (Zvaigzne et al., 2022) constitutes a literature review, focusing on the causes of seasonality (e.g., natural, institutional, economic factors) and their effects – economic, social, but also environmental. It is a good reference point for analyzing the influence of season on the engagement and activity of online communities.

The work "Study of Seasonality Tourism in Simanindo Sub-district, Samosir Regency" (Zvaigzne et al., 2022) analyzes seasonal patterns of tourist arrivals in the Simanindo region; the author states that the peak season is related to holiday and festive periods, and that outside the season, promotional activities and alternative tourist offers can mitigate declines if well planned.

The case study example "How off-season tourism promotion affects seasonal destinations? A multi-stakeholder perspective in Tibet" (Senyao et al., 2021) shows that off-season promotion requires considering the perspective of multiple stakeholders – local entrepreneurs, residents, and authorities – and may encounter resistance stemming from tradition or seasonal expectations, but also create new opportunities for the destination.

In summary, the literature confirms that social media play a key role in tourism, serving not only as a tool for promoting offers but also as a platform for building bonds, exchanging experiences, and co-creating the tourist value of a destination. Research indicates several factors that increase the effectiveness of online communication, among which the most frequently mentioned are the presence of interactive content, consistency of communication strategy, active engagement of the local community, and appropriate use of visual elements such as photos and multimedia materials.

Simultaneously, the literature emphasizes the importance of the seasonality aspect, which significantly shapes tourist activity and the effectiveness of promotional activities. Research results prove that both the level of engagement on social media and the effectiveness of promotional campaigns depend on the phase of the tourist season – increased user activity occurs in the summer months and in periods preceding the summer peak, while outside the season, activities require different tools and communication narratives. The literature also stresses the need to expand the off-season offer and build the image of a destination attractive year-round, which requires the cooperation of many stakeholders and tailoring the message to the variable needs of the audience.

The entire literature review thus indicates that effective communication on social media in tourism cannot be analyzed in isolation from the cyclicity and dynamics of the season. Considering these two perspectives – communication and seasonal – allows for a better understanding of user engagement mechanisms and also provides a theoretical basis for analyzing the case of the Facebook group related to Okuninka at Lake Biale.

### 3. Metodologia badań

The aim of the study was to identify and analyze communication errors made by accommodation owners in responses to tourist inquiries on social media, and then assess their impact on the effectiveness of marketing activities. The analysis was conducted based on publicly available posts and comments published in thematic groups on the Facebook platform, focused on searching for and offering accommodation. The research sample included approximately 1200 posts, comprising both tourist inquiries and promotional content published by facility owners, as well as nearly 5000 responses provided by landlords between 2022 and 2025. For the purposes of the study, all empirical material was anonymized, and individual authors were assigned identification codes, ensuring methodological and ethical reliability in the analysis process.

A mixed-methods approach – quantitative and qualitative – was applied. Quantitative variables included the number of comments, reactions (e.g., 👍❤️😊), views, and conversion understood as the percentage of inquiries leading to further contact. Among qualitative variables, the presence of price and photos in the offer, the form of response (public, private message, phone, email), personalization of the response, and the type of communication error were analyzed. Errors were classified into five main categories: lack of price, redirecting to "priv" (private message), lack of photos, ignoring the content of the inquiry, and preferring only telephone contact. The adopted classification was based on several years of observation of discussions in the analyzed group.

The analytical tools used included content analysis (qualitative classification of posts and responses), descriptive statistics (average number of comments, reactions, conversion),  $\chi^2$  independence tests along with the Cramér's V measure of association strength, and seasonality analysis (winter, spring, summer, autumn). Furthermore, a multifactor model in the form of a simplified logistic regression was developed, allowing estimation of the impact of the presence of price, photo, personalization of response, and form of communication ("priv", phone) on interaction effectiveness. For all tests, a significance level of  $\alpha = 0.05$  was adopted, enabling reliable statistical assessment of the data and limiting the risk of type I errors.

Based on the collected data, tabular summaries were prepared. The first presents the scale and consequences of communication errors, the second – the seasonality of error occurrence and their impact on conversion, the third – the significance of relationships between variables, and the fourth – the multifactor model illustrating the impact of individual factors on response effectiveness.

The study has certain limitations. The data come exclusively from Facebook, without comparison with other communication channels (e.g., Booking.com, Instagram). Conversion was determined based on digital traces (continuation of contact), not actual bookings. Additionally, the potential influence of seasonal advertising campaigns on the number of reactions and comments must be considered.

In light of the conducted analyses and identified communication problems, the following research hypotheses were formulated:

- H1: The lack of providing a price in accommodation offers significantly increases the number of comments (including questions "What's the price?"), but lowers the conversion of inquiries into actual reservation interest.
- H2: The presence of photos in the offer significantly increases the effectiveness of marketing communication, manifested by higher conversion and a greater number of positive reactions.
- H3: There are significant seasonal differences in the types of communication errors made by facility owners, with the practice of redirecting to private messages ("priv") dominating in summer, and the lack of price provision in winter.
- H4: Ignoring the content of tourist inquiries by accommodation owners (e.g., posting offers inadequate to the given criteria or omitting details contained in the post) significantly increases the percentage of comments that do not answer the question, indicating a serious problem of communication discrepancy between the parties.
- H5: There is a discrepancy between the communication channels preferred by accommodation owners (priv, phone) and tourist expectations (transparent public comments), which negatively affects the effectiveness of interactions.
- H6: The greatest positive impact on response effectiveness is exerted by providing the price, including a photo, and personalizing the message, while a negative impact is exerted by redirecting to "priv" and requiring telephone contact.

The above hypotheses summarize the assumed relationships between communication practices and their effectiveness. Their verification was carried out using both quantitative and qualitative methods described earlier. The following section presents the empirical results, allowing for a detailed assessment of the identified patterns and testing of the proposed hypotheses.

## 4. Research results

The analysis presented below covers both the frequency and nature of communication errors made by accommodation owners and their consequences for the effectiveness of interactions with tourists. The results are summarized in Tables 1-7, which illustrate the scale of the problem, the impact of the presence of key offer elements (price, photos), communication channel preferences, and identified statistical relationships. The chapter division allows first for an assessment of the scale and type of errors (4.1), and then an analysis of factors conditioning communication effectiveness on social media (4.2).

#### 4.1. The scale and nature of communication errors

Analysis of accommodation owners' responses to tourist posts revealed a significant scale of communication errors (Table 1). The most frequent was the lack of price provision – in 210 cases, constituting 42% of all responses. An equally significant problem was directing the conversation to private messages ("priv, priv"), noted in 185 cases (37%). Subsequent error categories were: ignoring the content of the inquiry (155 cases; 31%) and lack of photos in the offer (140 cases; 28%). The requirement for only telephone contact appeared least frequently (75 cases; 15%). In total, at least one error occurred in 71% of the analyzed responses, indicating a systemic nature of the problem and a lack of consistent communication standards with tourists.

**Table 1**

*Frequency of communication errors in responses to tourists' inquiries*

Type of communication error	Number of cases (N)	% of all responses
No price provided	210	42
"Priv, priv" (redirect to private message)	185	37
No photos in the offer	140	28
Ignoring the content of the inquiry	155	31
Only telephone contact	75	15
Total (at least 1 error)	355	71

Source Authors' own elaboration based on Facebook group data analysis.

The data confirm that communication errors are widespread among accommodation providers, indicating a lack of consistent communication standards. This provides a foundation for analyzing how such mistakes affect marketing effectiveness in subsequent sections.

Table 2 presents the impact of the presence of key offer elements (price and photos) on user engagement and communication effectiveness. Posts by accommodation owners with the price provided generated an average of 12 comments, of which only 5% concerned additional questions about cost, and they achieved a 68% conversion rate in availability inquiries. In comparison, posts without a price had an average of 22 comments and a higher number of views (2400), but as many as 54% of comments concerned questions about the price, and conversion was significantly lower (21%). A similar pattern concerned the presence of photos: posts with photos achieved higher conversion (52%) than posts without photos (24%), even though the latter attracted a greater number of views (2700). The results indicate that transparency and visualization of the offer are crucial for the actual effectiveness of marketing communication.

**Table 2***Frequency of communication errors in responses to tourists' inquiries*

Type of post	Average number of comments	% of comments asking "What's the price?"	Average number of views
Post with price	12	5	1,800
Post without price	22	54	2,400
Post with photo	18	12	2,100
Post without photo	20	41	2,700

Source: Authors' own elaboration based on Facebook group data analysis.

According to the data in Table 3, there is a clear discrepancy between the communication channels preferred by facility owners and tourist expectations. Owners most often redirected users to private messages (37%) or used the form of a public comment (28%), less frequently using email (20%) or phone (15%). Meanwhile, tourists decidedly preferred transparent responses in public comments (67%), and to a lesser extent private messages (54%). Phone contact (19%) and email (33%) were much less important to them. These data confirm a significant disconnect between the communication practices of owners and customer expectations, which can lead to the loss of potential reservations.

**Table 3***Communication channels preferred by owners and tourists*

Form of contact	Share in owners' responses (N)	Tourists' preference (as declared in comments) (%)
Public comment with full offer	28	67
Private message (Messenger)	37	54
Telephone	15	19
E-mail / contact form	20	33
Only telephone contact	75	15
Total (at least 1 error)	355	71

Source: Authors' own elaboration based on Facebook group data analysis.

The observed discrepancies between preferred and expected communication channels highlight a clear asymmetry between hosts and tourists. This issue is further explored in the next subsection, which examines the determinants of communication effectiveness.

#### 4.2. Dependencies and determinants of communication effectiveness

Table 4 presents the relationship between types of communication errors and user reactions in comments and emotional reactions. The highest percentage of responses burdened with an error concerned the lack of price (42%) and the "priv, priv" practice (37%). Lack of price generated an average of 22 comments and 6 positive reactions, but as many as 48% of owner comments did not directly answer the tourist's question. Ignoring the inquiry occurred in 31% of cases, resulting in 16 comments and 3 reactions, with 52% of responses being inadequate. The lowest indicators were recorded for offers limited only to telephone contact (15% of cases), which generated on average only 14 comments and 2 reactions.

**Table 4***Matrix of communication errors vs. average number of reactions and comments*

Type of communication error	% of responses with error	Average number of comments	Average number of reactions (👍❤️)	% of comments not addressing the question
No price provided	42	22	6	44
"Priv, priv"	37	18	5	39
No photos	28	20	4	32
Ignoring the inquiry	31	16	3	51
Telephone only	15	14	2	26

Note. Owners' comments in response to tourists' posts inquiring about accommodation.

Source: Authors' own elaboration based on Facebook group data analysis.

Seasonal analysis of communication (Table 5) reveals variability in the number of inquiries and the nature of owner errors in different seasons. The most inquiries were recorded in the summer period (470), where the "priv, priv" error dominated (45%), and only 36% of posts contained a price. In spring (350 inquiries), a common problem was ignoring the content of the inquiry (38%), with a moderate level of price transparency (41%). In winter, when the number of inquiries was lower (310), the lack of price predominated (47%), while in autumn (190 inquiries), the characteristic error was the lack of photos (32%), even though the percentage of posts with a price was highest in this period (49%). Importantly, regardless of the season, the percentage of owner comments not answering the tourist's question remained high (19-29%).

**Table 5***Seasonality of communication errors*

Season	Number of tourist inquiries	Most common owner error	% of posts with price provided	% of comments not addressing the question
Winter	190	No price provided (47%)	33	35
Spring	310	Ignoring the inquiry (38%)	41	42
Summer	570	"Priv, priv" (45%)	36	48
Autumn	150	No photos (32%)	49	27

Source: Authors' own elaboration based on Facebook group data analysis.

Table 6 presents the results of the  $\chi^2$  test, which allowed for examining the relationships between selected post features and user reactions. In all analyzed cases, statistically significant relationships were obtained. The analysis showed a statistically significant relationship between providing the price and the number of comments ( $\chi^2 = 18.4$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ; Cramér's  $V = 0.34$ ), indicating a moderate effect size. An even stronger relationship was recorded in the case of photo presence and conversion ( $\chi^2 = 22.7$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ; Cramér's  $V = 0.41$ ). The choice of contact channel also had a significant impact on the number of negative reactions ( $\chi^2 = 12.9$ ;  $p = 0.004$ ; Cramér's  $V = 0.27$ ).

**Table 6**  
*Dependency analysis –  $\chi^2$  test*

Variable 1	Variable 2	$\chi^2$ (chi-squared)	p-value	Cramér's V	Interpretation
Price provided (yes/no)*	Number of comments (<15 / $\geq$ 15)	18.4	0.0001	0.34	Significant relationship, moderate effect
Photo provided (yes/no)**	Conversion (yes/no)	22.7	0.0000	0.41	Significant relationship, medium effect
Contact channel (public/priv/phone)***	Number of negative reactions	12.9	0.004	0.27	Significant relationship, weak–moderate effect

Note. \*if the seller provided the price, the post more often obtained  $\geq$ 15 comments; \*\*presence of a photo in the post clearly increased the probability of conversion (e.g., purchase, offer inquiry); \*\*\*the proposed contact method (public, priv, phone) had an impact on whether users reacted negatively.

Source: Authors' own elaboration based on Facebook group data analysis.

Table 7 illustrates the results of the multifactor model, which determines the impact of individual features of posts: accommodation advertisements in Okuninka on response effectiveness. The strongest positive impact was exerted by personalizing the response ( $\beta = 0.45$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ) and providing the price ( $\beta = 0.42$ ;  $p = 0.001$ ). Adding a photo was also significant ( $\beta = 0.31$ ;  $p = 0.008$ ). Factors with a negative impact were redirecting to a private message ( $\beta = -0.38$ ;  $p = 0.002$ ) and requiring telephone contact ( $\beta = -0.29$ ;  $p = 0.014$ ).

**Table 7**  
*Multifactor model – impact of post features on response effectiveness*

Factor	Direction of effect	Effect strength ( $\beta$ )	Significance (p-value)
Price provided (0 = no, 1 = yes)	+	0.42	0.001
Photo included (0/1)	+	0.31	0.008
Personalized reply (0/1)	+	0.45	0.000
“Priv” as a reply (0/1)	–	-0.38	0.002
Telephone contact (0/1)	–	-0.29	0.014

Note: A multifactor logistic regression model was adopted in the form of  $\ln\left(\frac{p}{1-p}\right) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \cdot X_{price} + \beta_2 \cdot X_{photo} + \beta_3 \cdot X_{personal} + \beta_4 \cdot X_{priv} + \beta_5 \cdot X_{phone} + \varepsilon$ ; where: p – probability of obtaining an effective response (reaction from the recipient), explanatory variables X were coded binarily (0/1): presence of price, photo, personalization of response, reference to "priv", and requirement of telephone contact. Variables with positive coefficients ( $\beta > 0$ ) increased the probability of an effective response, while negative ones ( $\beta < 0$ ) decreased it.

Source: Authors' own elaboration based on Facebook group data analysis.

### 4.3. Verification of hypotheses

The conducted quantitative and qualitative analysis allowed for the verification of the six research hypotheses (H1-H6). Verification was conducted using tabular data (Tables 2-7) and statistical tests ( $\chi^2$ , Cramér's V, logistic regression). Detailed results are presented below.

- H1: Data from Table 2 showed that posts without a price generated on average more comments (22 vs. 12), but as many as 54% of them concerned the question "What's the price?". Conversion in this case was significantly lower (21% vs. 68% for posts with a price). The  $\chi^2$  test results (Table 6;  $\chi^2 = 18.4$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ; Cramér's  $V = 0.34$ ) confirm a significant relationship with a moderate effect size.
- H2: Data from Table 2 showed that posts with a photo achieved higher conversion (52%) than posts without a photo (24%). The  $\chi^2$  test (Table 6;  $\chi^2 = 22.7$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ; Cramér's  $V = 0.41$ ) indicated a significant relationship with a medium effect size.
- H3: Analysis of Table 5 revealed clear differences between seasons: in summer, redirecting to private messages dominated (45%), in winter lack of price (47%), in spring ignoring inquiries (38%), and in autumn lack of photos (32%). The  $\chi^2$  test confirmed the significance of the differences ( $p < 0.05$ ), indicating that seasonality significantly shapes the structure of errors.
- H4: As shown in Table 4, in the case of ignoring inquiries, as many as 51% of responses did not refer to the content of the question, which is the highest indicator among the analyzed error categories. This relationship persisted especially in spring and summer (Table 5). The  $\chi^2$  test confirmed the significance of the relationship ( $p < 0.05$ ), and the Cramér's  $V$  value indicated a moderate effect.
- H5: As indicated by Table 3, owners most often redirected tourists to private messages (37%) or required telephone contact (15%), while tourists primarily preferred public comments (67%). The  $\chi^2$  test (Table 6;  $\chi^2 = 12.9$ ;  $p = 0.004$ ; Cramér's  $V = 0.27$ ) confirmed a significant relationship between the communication channel and the number of negative reactions, indicating a weak–moderate effect.
- H6: The multifactor model (Table 7) showed that personalized response ( $\beta = 0.45$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ), providing the price ( $\beta = 0.42$ ;  $p = 0.001$ ), and adding a photo ( $\beta = 0.31$ ;  $p = 0.008$ ) had a significant positive impact on communication effectiveness. Conversely, negative impacts were exerted by: redirecting to private messages ( $\beta = -0.38$ ;  $p = 0.002$ ) and requiring telephone contact ( $\beta = -0.29$ ;  $p = 0.014$ ).

In summary, all research hypotheses (H1-H6) were confirmed, indicating a significant impact of both the form and content of online communication on the effectiveness of interactions between accommodation owners and tourists.

## 5. Discussion of the results

The obtained results confirm that the effectiveness of marketing communication on social media depends largely on the transparency of the message and the matching of responses to tourist expectations. The lack of providing a price or photo lowered conversion rates,

even though it increased the number of comments – which aligns with the conclusions of Strzębicki (2025), according to whom interactivity generates engagement but does not always lead to purchasing decisions. In the studied Facebook group, a contradiction between activity indicators (comments, reactions) and actual marketing effectiveness was therefore visible.

Reference to the literature indicates that this problem is not local. Studies by Mariani et al. (2016) and Gálvez-Rodríguez et al. (2020) on Italian and European DMO organizations show that systematicity and completeness of content are more important than the number of posts or their popularity. The results of our study strengthen these findings, emphasizing the importance of a transparent offer – especially including price and visualization – for the effective conversion of tourist inquiries.

Seasonality proved to be a factor differentiating both the number of inquiries and the nature of communication errors. In summer, redirecting to private messages dominated, while in winter the lack of price in the offer was most common. Convergent observations were presented by Villamediana et al. (2019), indicating that the intensity and form of activity on social media change throughout the annual cycle, reaching a maximum before and during the season. These results also correspond with the findings of Soldatke et al. (2023) for seaside resorts in Poland, where seasonality affects the limited off-season offer.

It is worth emphasizing that a discrepancy between tourist preferences and owner practices appeared in the analyzed group. While guests expected primarily responses in public comments, owners preferred "priv" or telephone contact. This communication asymmetry finds confirmation in the research of Camilleri and Kozak (2022), who point out that engaging content in an open online space builds lasting bonds and strengthens the sense of community. Our results suggest that moving conversations to private channels may limit the social capital of the group and reduce the potential for recommendations.

The identified communication errors can be interpreted in the context of the theory of social facilitation (Camilleri, Kozak, 2022) and the concept of social capital (Dickinson et al., 2017). The lack of price and photos, redirecting to "priv", or ignoring the content of the inquiry may result from the desire to control the message or avoid price comparisons. However, such behavior reduces the transparency of the offer and may lead to a loss of trust, which in the long run weakens the image of the destination.

A novel element introduced by this study is the empirical confirmation that the greatest positive impact on communication effectiveness comes from the simultaneous occurrence of three factors: providing the price, including a photo, and personalizing the response. In the literature, these have typically been analyzed separately (e.g., Leal et al., 2022 in the context of co-creating an authentic message, or Hysa et al., 2022 in studies on tourism recovery post-COVID-19). The results of our multifactor model indicate that the synergistic combination of these elements is crucial for translating online activity into actual tourist decisions.

The latest research emphasizes the growing importance of artificial intelligence in analyzing tourist data from social media. AI-based tools allow for the automatic detection of patterns in user behavior and can support local communities in adapting their communication. The integration of such solutions could help avoid the recurring communication errors identified in this study (Bulchand-Gidumal et al., 2024; To, Yu, 2025; Żyminkowska, Zachurzok-Srebrny, 2025).

The practical implications of the study are clear: accommodation owners should strive for transparent and personalized communication, providing key information (price, photos) already in the first contact. Local tourism organizations could develop communication standards and promote good practices, such as responding publicly to inquiries and using multimedia content. This would increase conversion, build trust, and strengthen the brand of the destination.

## 6. Conclusions

The conducted study enabled the identification of typical communication errors made by accommodation owners in Facebook groups dedicated to local tourism and an assessment of their impact on marketing effectiveness. The results confirmed that offer transparency and completeness—specifically, providing the price, including a photo, and personalizing the response—significantly enhance communication effectiveness and inquiry conversion. Conversely, strategies that involve moving conversations to private messages or insisting on exclusive telephone contact reduce interaction efficiency and provoke negative tourist reactions.

The study has several limitations. The analysis was confined to data from Facebook, excluding other platforms such as Booking.com, Instagram, and TikTok. Furthermore, conversion was measured based on digital traces (i.e., further contact initiated) rather than confirmed bookings. The study's focus on a single destination (Okuninka at Lake Białe) also limits the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, seasonal patterns may have been influenced by external factors like advertising campaigns, local events, weather conditions, or unpredictable incidents related to the town's border location. Despite these limitations, the study is entirely original in its scope and geographical focus.

The analysis revealed that 71% of owner responses contained at least one communication error. The most prevalent errors were omitting the price (42%) and redirecting users to private messages (37%). The presence of a price and photos in an offer significantly increased conversion rates, whereas redirecting to private messages or requiring telephone contact had a negative effect. Seasonal variations in the prevalence of different error types were also observed. All six research hypotheses were confirmed, indicating that communication errors represent a systemic issue that adversely affects interaction effectiveness with tourists.

These findings align with existing literature on social media in tourism, which emphasizes the importance of transparency, interactivity, and audience-tailored messaging.

Future research could extend this analysis in several directions: (1) comparing communication effectiveness across different social media platforms; (2) incorporating tangible economic metrics, such as the number of bookings and length of stay; (3) employing artificial intelligence and big data analytics to automate the detection of communication errors and patterns; (4) conducting comparative studies across various types of tourist destinations (e.g., coastal, mountain, and urban resorts); and (5) performing in-depth qualitative analyses that incorporate the sociodemographic perspectives of both tourists and facility owners.

This article contributes several novel elements to the literature. Firstly, it provides empirical confirmation that the synergistic combination of three factors, price transparency, visual content (photos), and response personalization, most substantially boosts communication effectiveness. Secondly, it demonstrates that seasonality influences not only inquiry volume but also the nature of the most common communication errors. Thirdly, it identifies a communication asymmetry between tourist preferences (for transparent public comments) and owner practices (favoring private channels). Lastly, it offers quantitative and qualitative insights from a local market previously unrepresented in social media tourism research.

Based on these results, several practical recommendations can be proposed. Accommodation owners should prioritize offer transparency by clearly stating prices and showcasing photos. Personalizing responses within public comment threads is advisable over mass redirection to private messages. Local tourism organizations could develop online communication standards to promote consistent and professional promotional practices. To maintain engagement during the off-season, alternative narratives—such as promoting weekend getaways, local events, and natural or cultural assets—should be leveraged. Finally, adopting analytical tools, including those powered by artificial intelligence, could facilitate the continuous identification of communication errors and help tailor content to better meet tourist expectations.

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