



Social media influences on tourism and travel planning

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Sample

- **Non-probability, convenience sample ($n = 653$) of university students:**
 - ❖ Quebec ($n = 499$)
 - ❖ Ontario ($n = 105$)
 - ❖ Unspecified ($n = 49$)
- **Sex:**
 - ❖ 288 females,
 - ❖ 307 males,
 - ❖ 58 unspecified
- **Age:**
 - ❖ $569 \leq 29$
 - ❖ $439 = 20$ to 24
- **People of age groups known to be advanced Web 2.0 users**



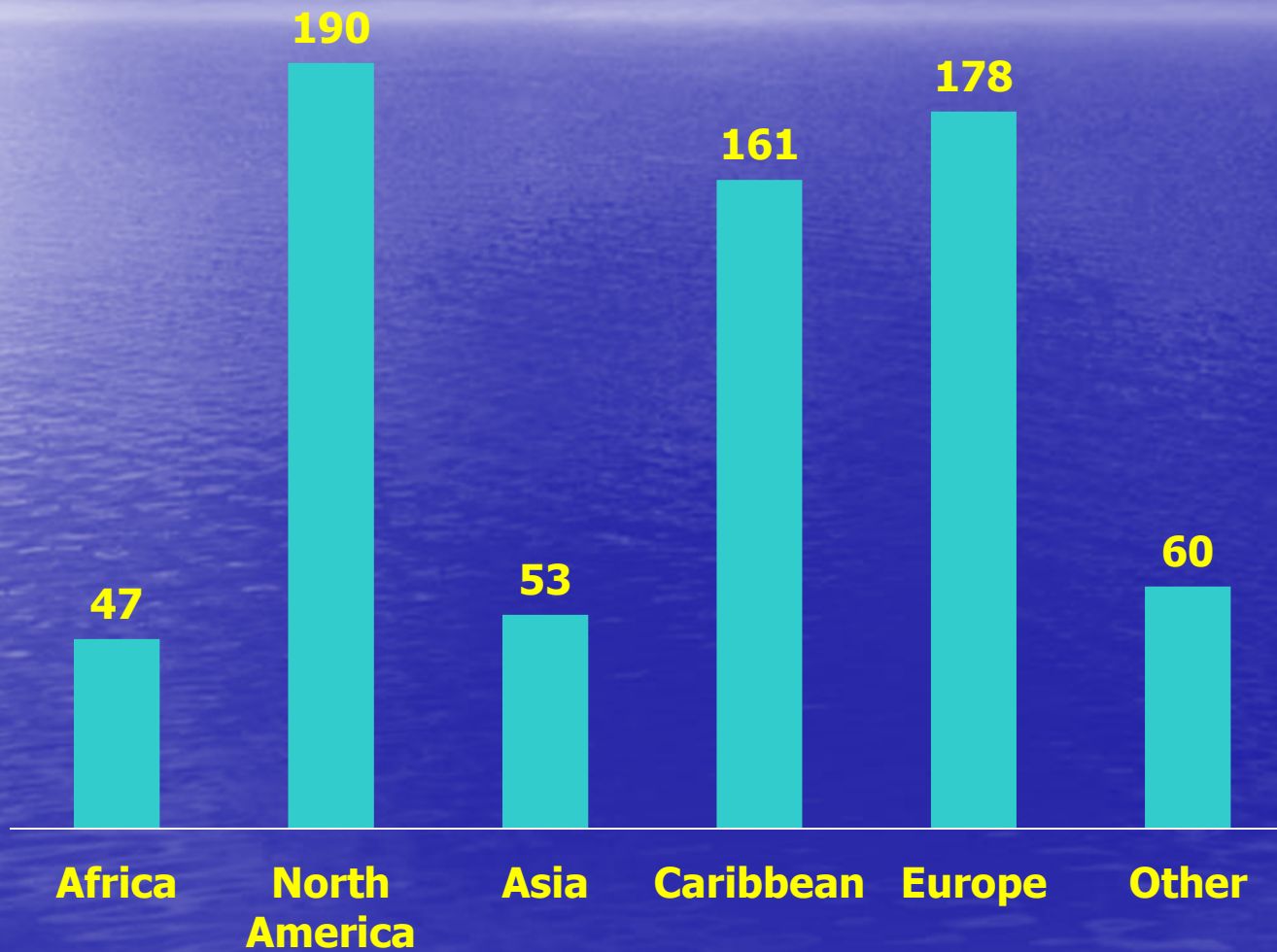
Data collection instrument

- **Questionnaire**
- **On-line survey, 23 questions**
- **Comparative influence of Web 2.0, sharing tools and traditional sources of information :**
 - ❖ **Trip planning**
 - ❖ **Travel choice**
- **Content posting behaviour**

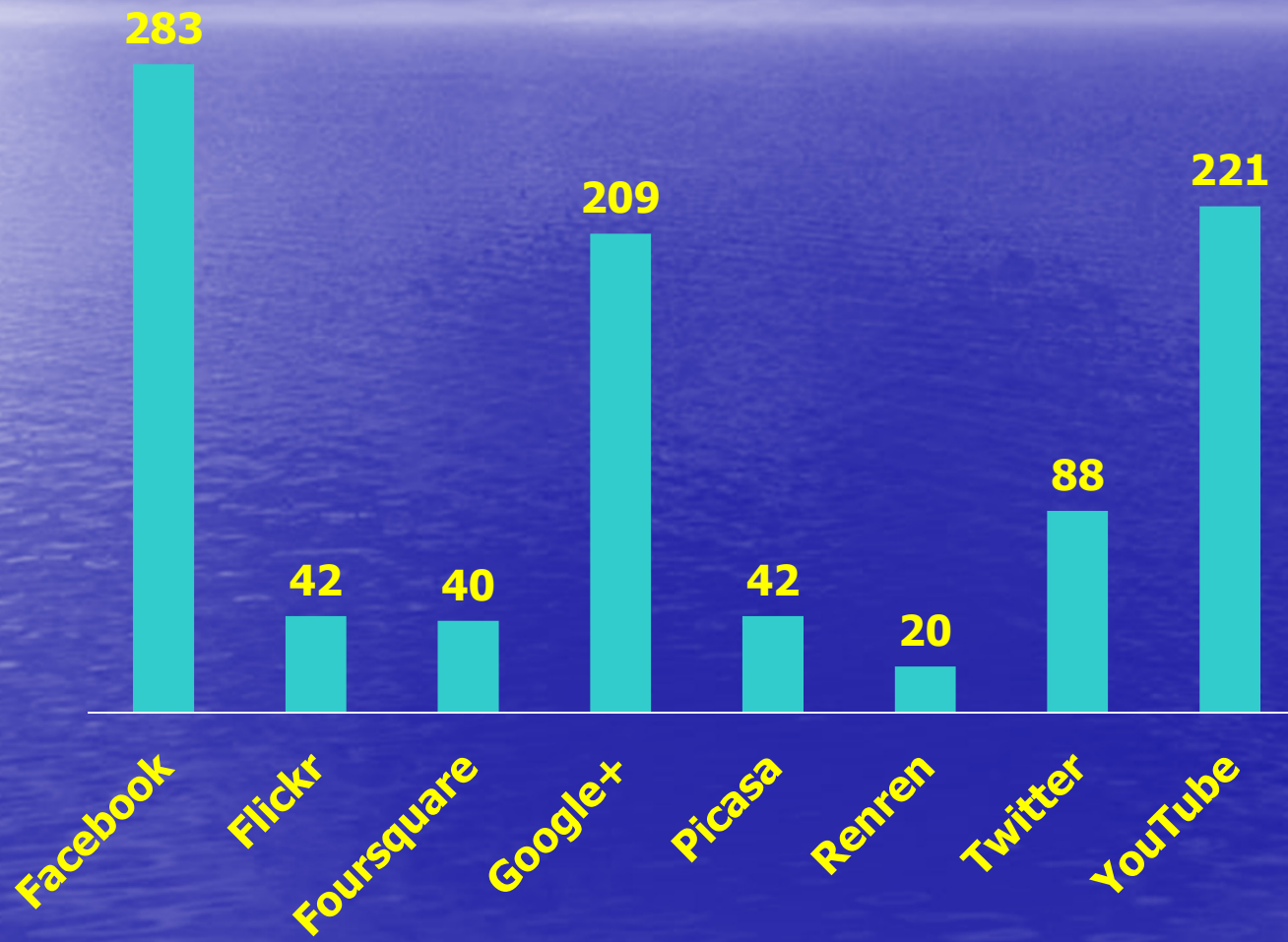


Influences on trip planning and travel choice

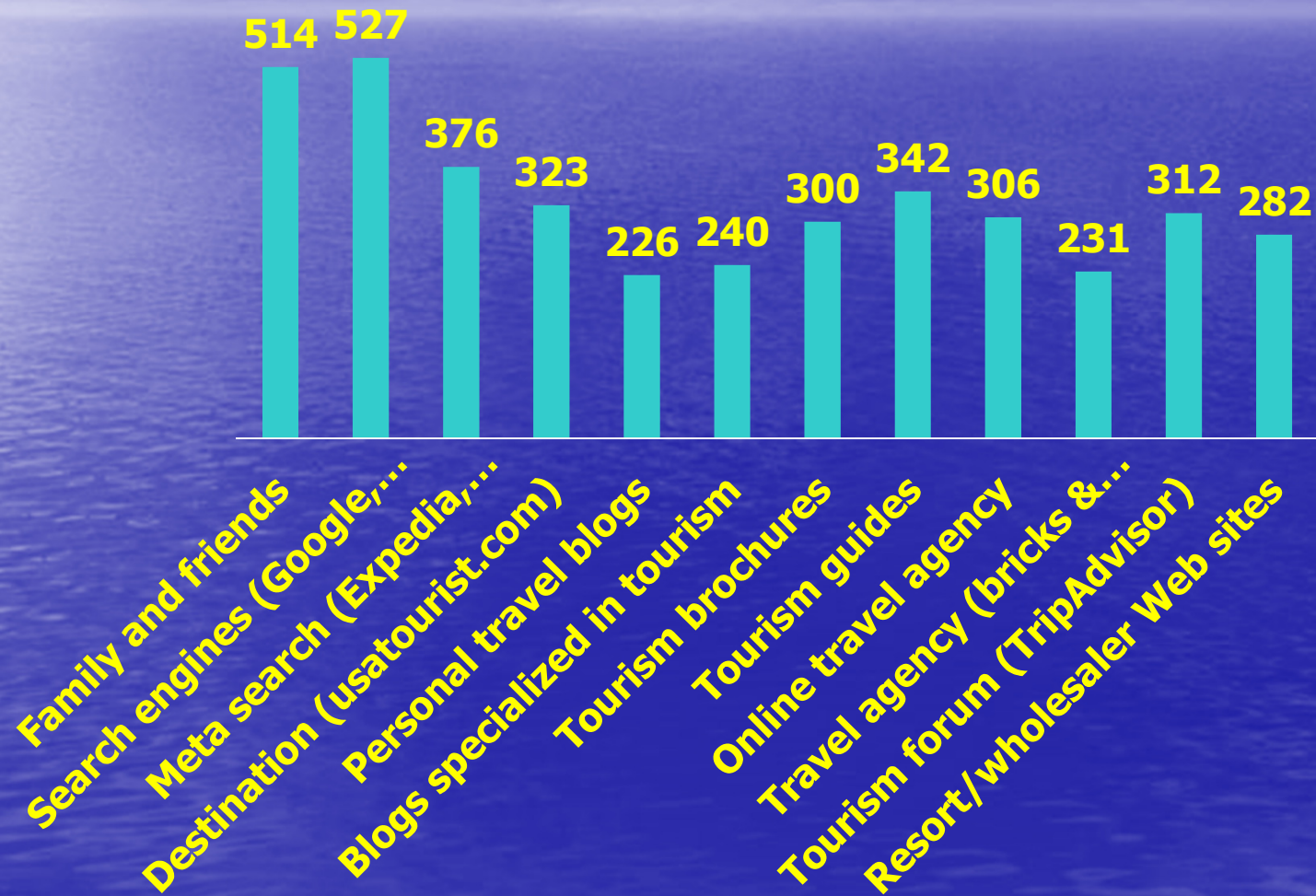
Destination of last pleasure trip (7+ days)



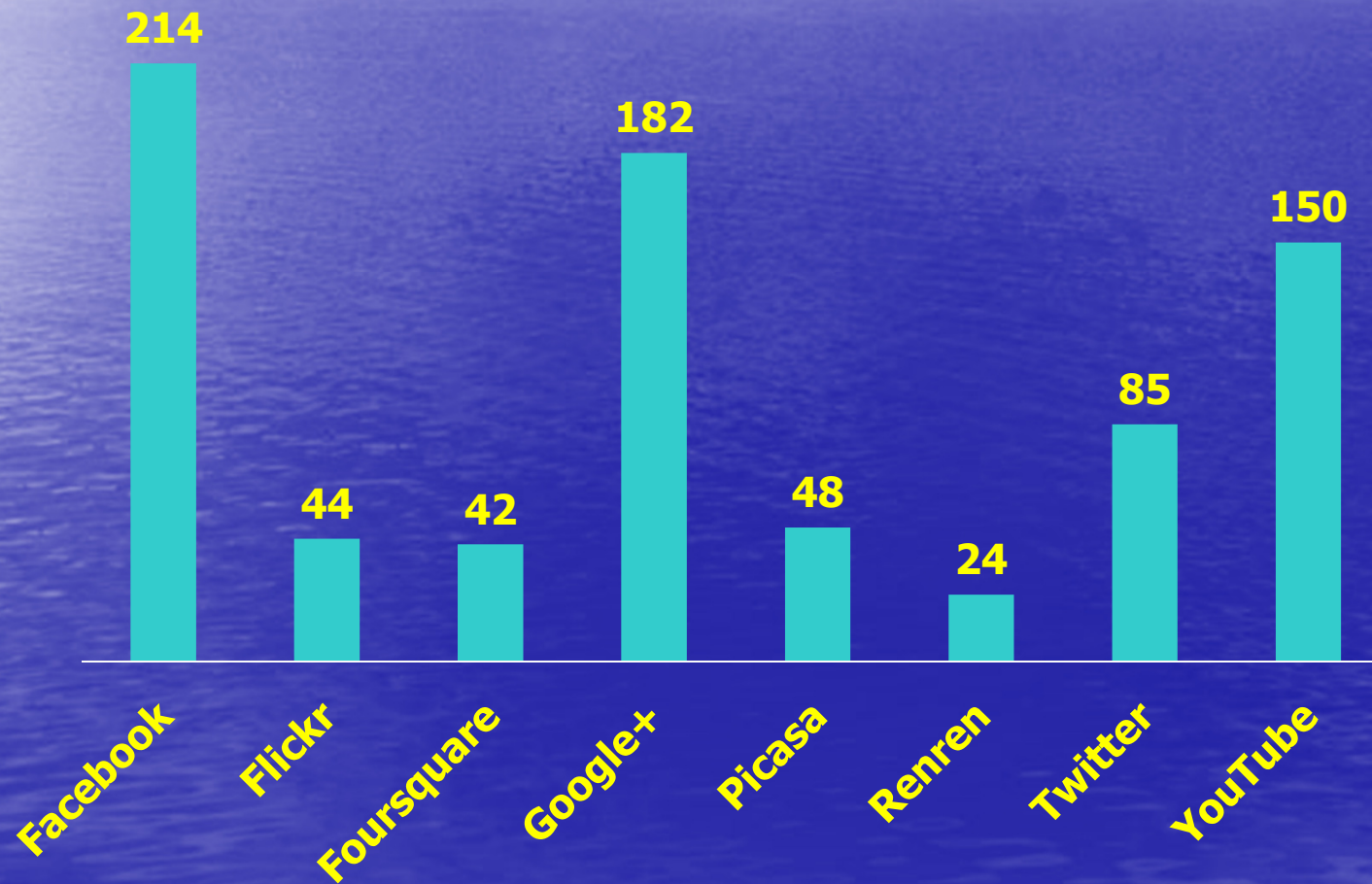
Moderately or highly useful - Social networks and sharing tools - Initial stage of trip planning



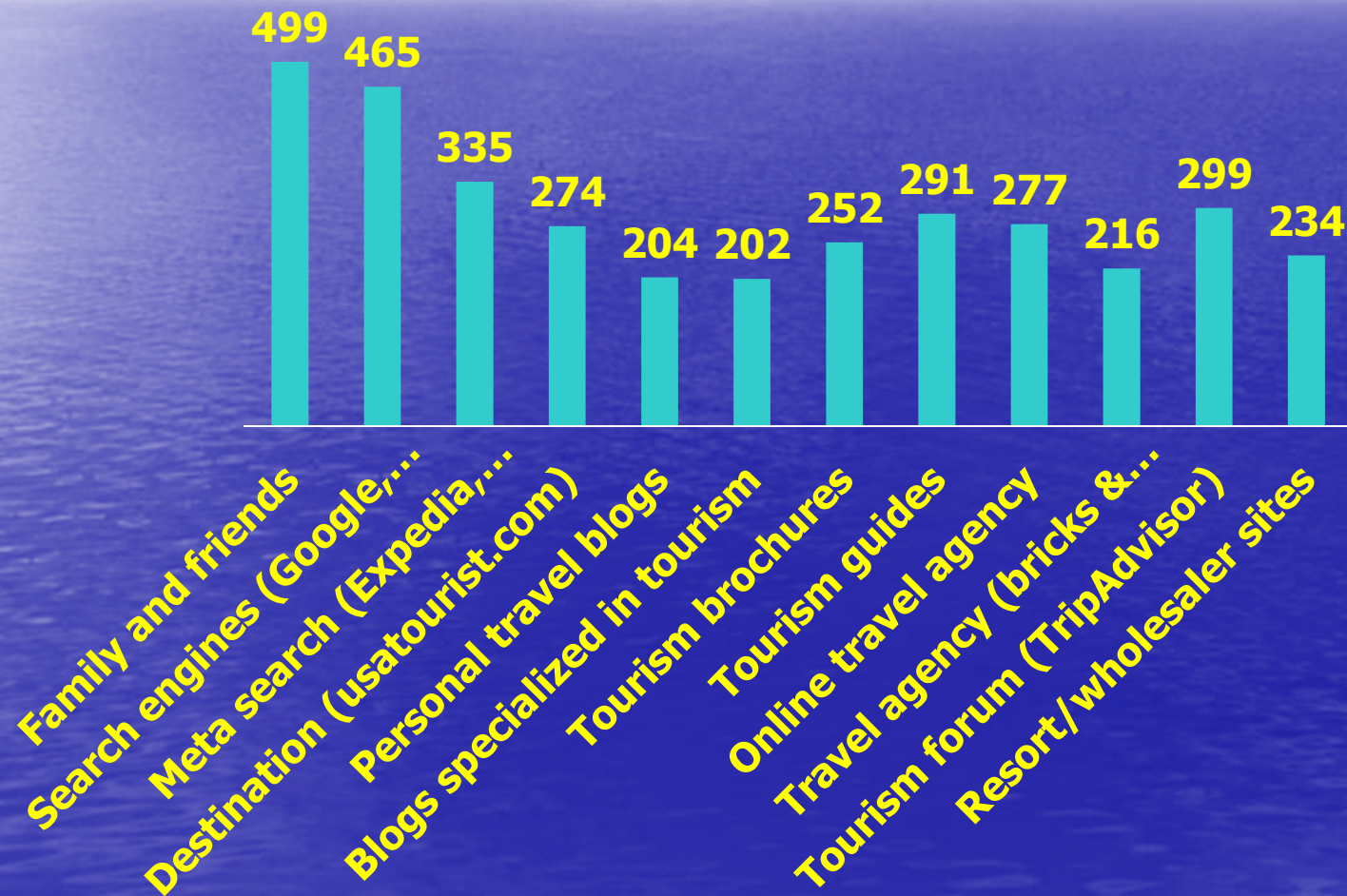
Moderately or highly useful – Other resources - Initial stage of trip planning



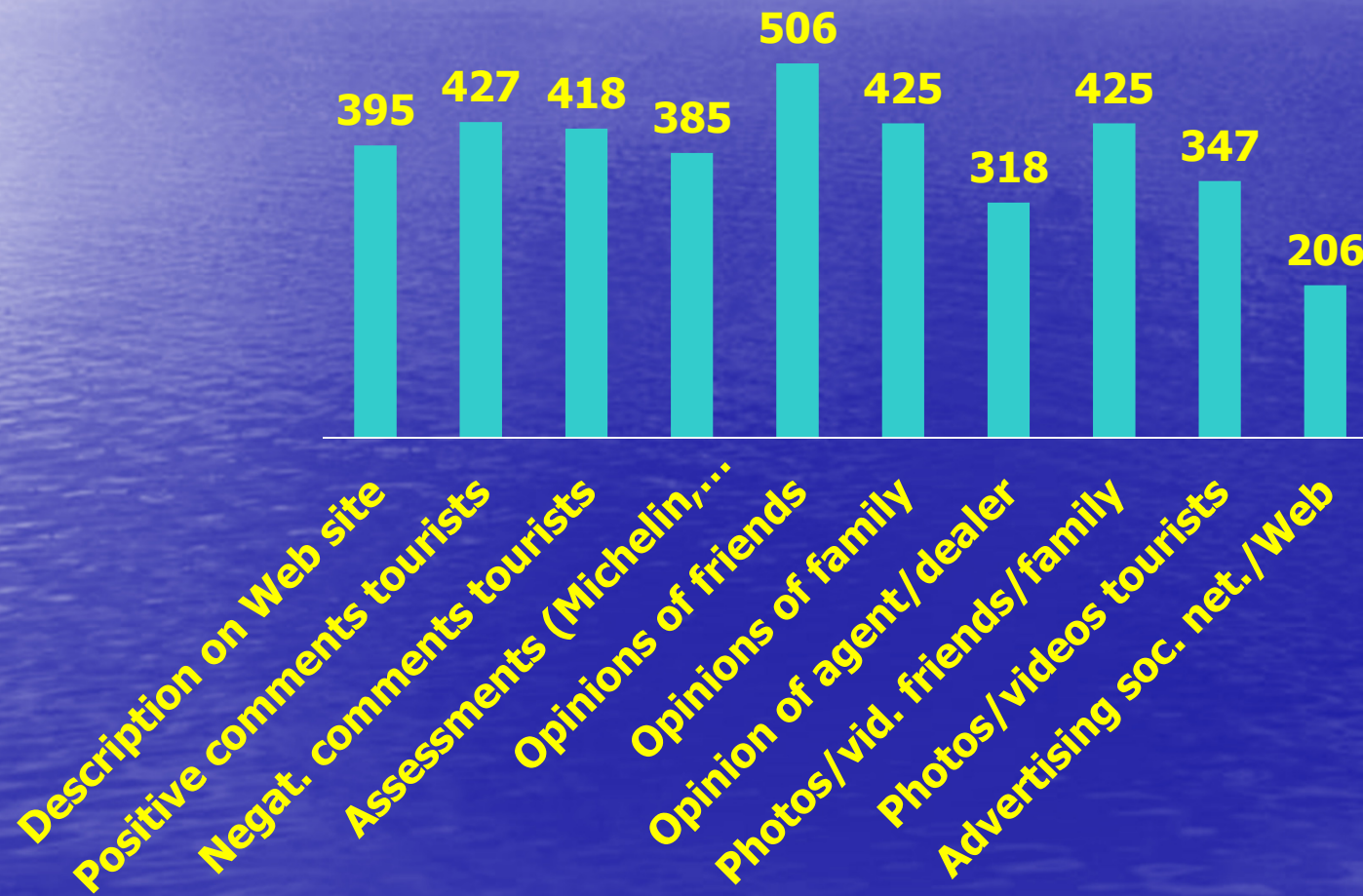
Moderately or highly useful - Social networks and sharing tools – Final travel choice



Moderately or highly useful – Other resources – Final travel choice



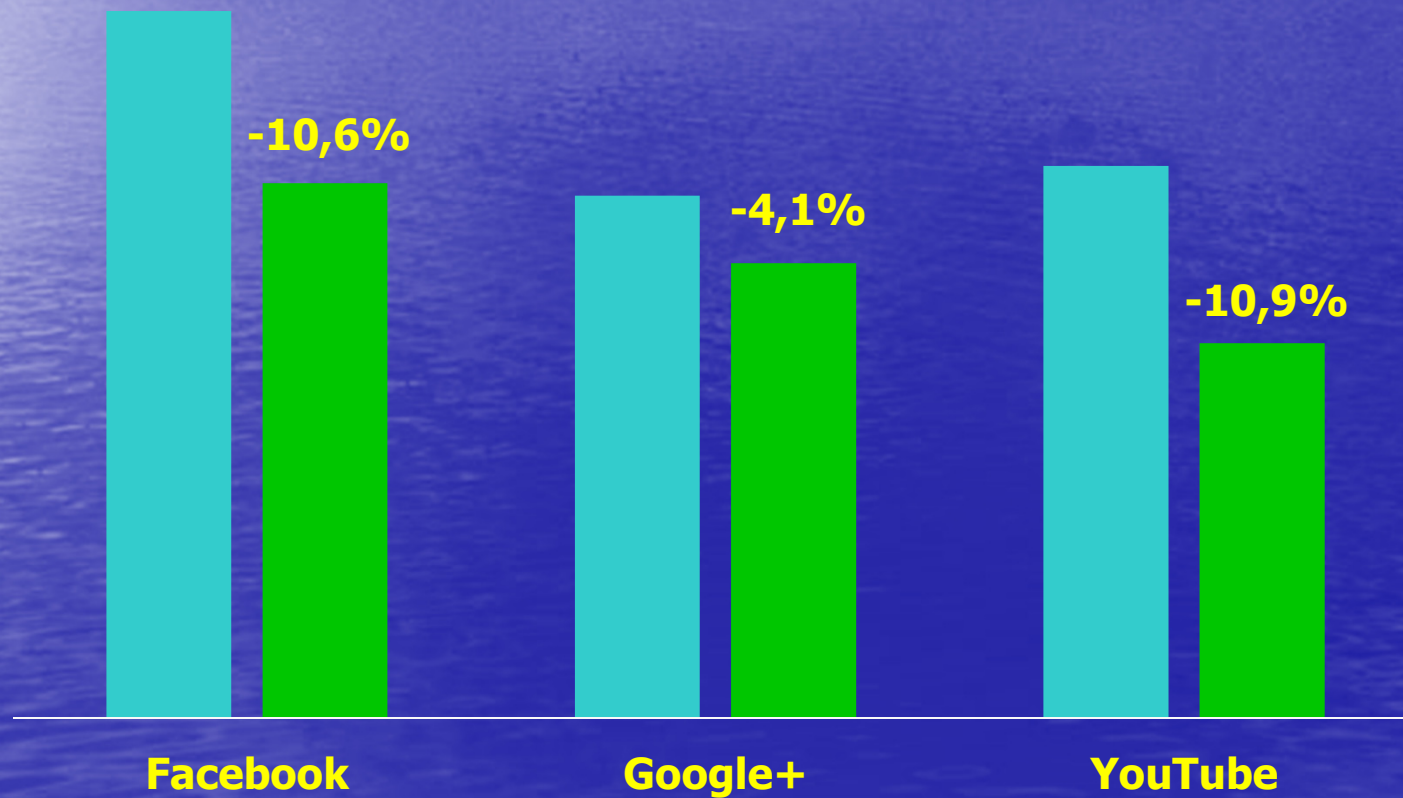
Elements moderately or highly influential on buying decision



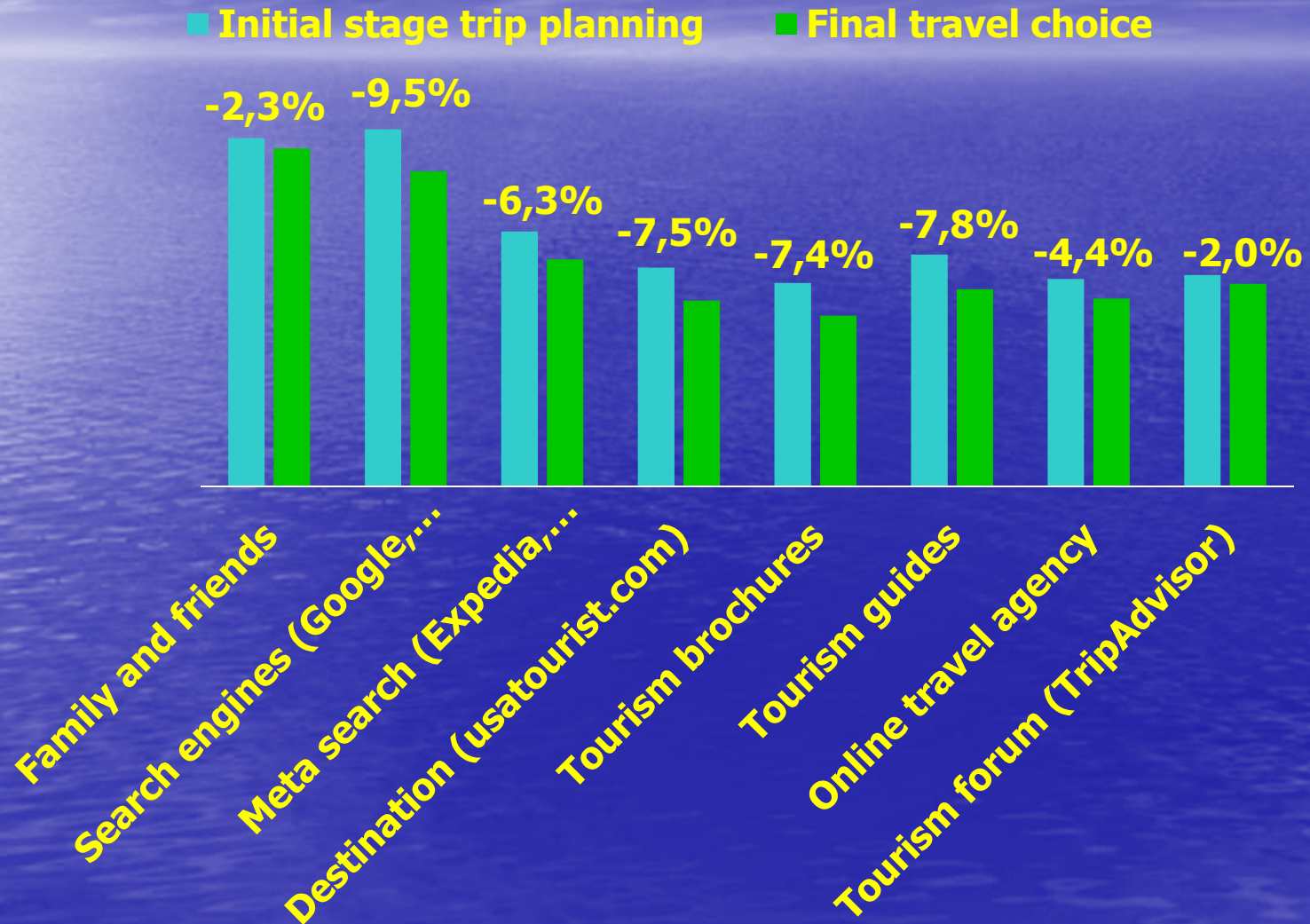
Comparison initial trip planning vs final travel choice

Social networks and sharing tools

■ Initial stage trip planning ■ Final travel choice

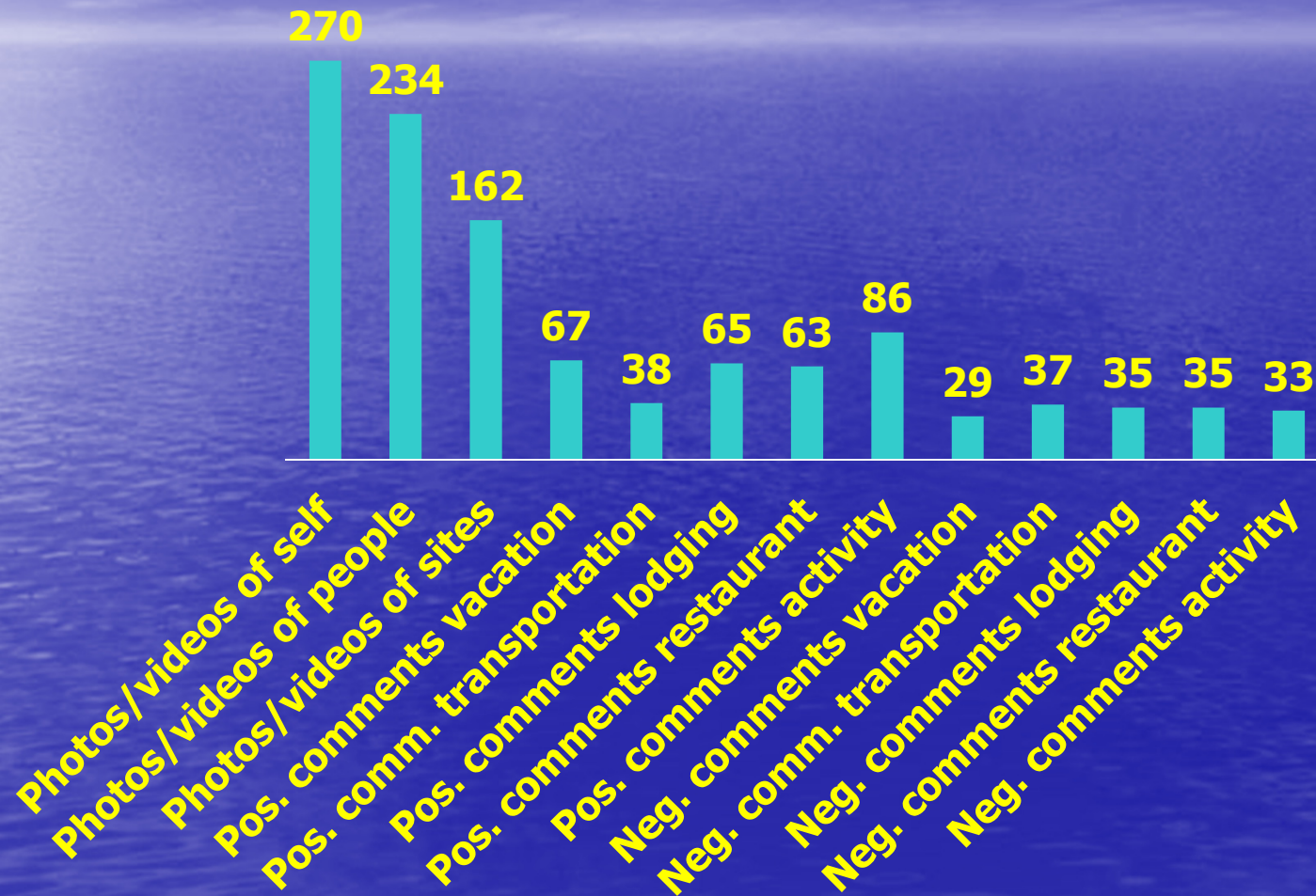


Other resources

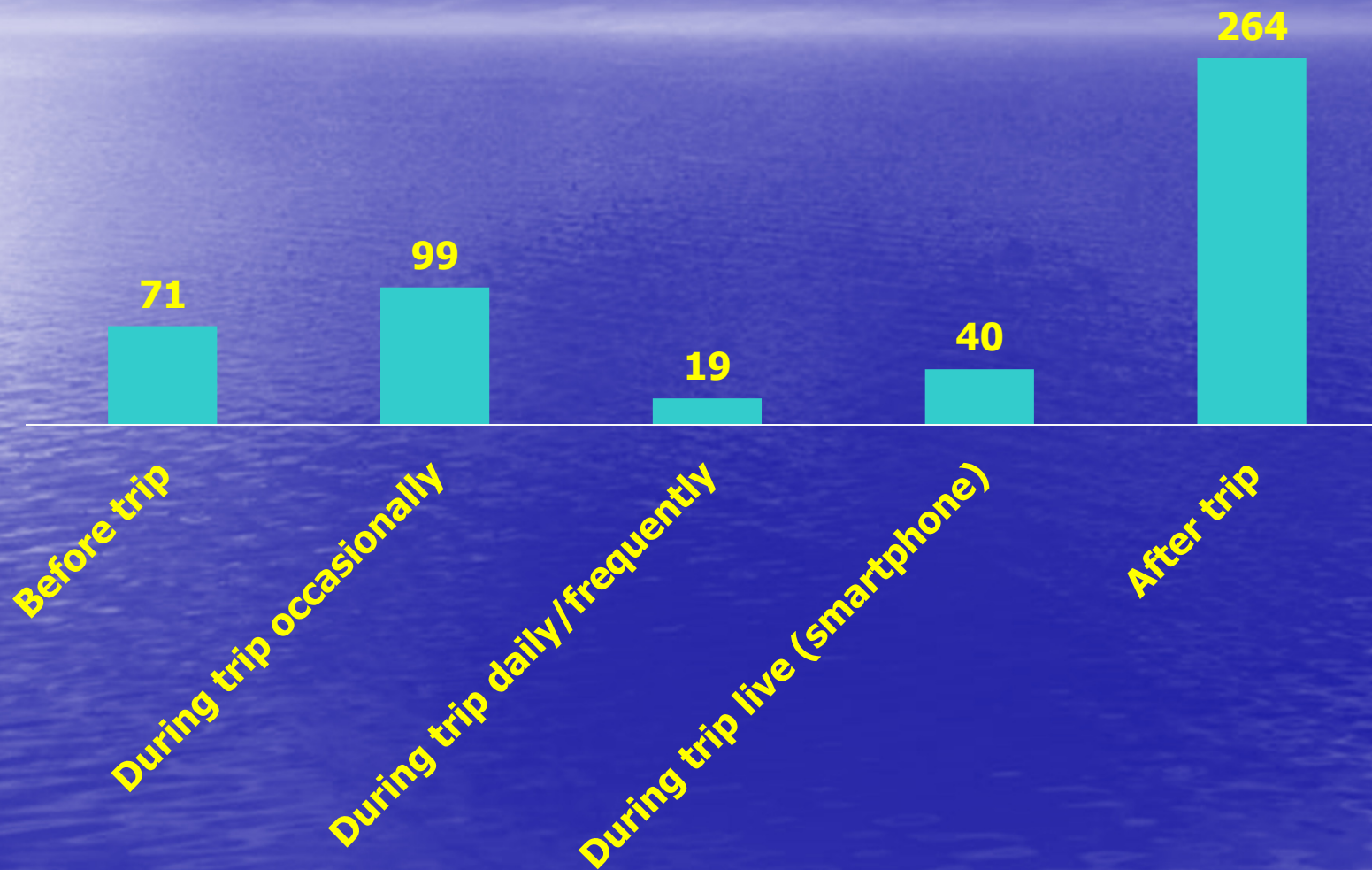


Content posting behaviour

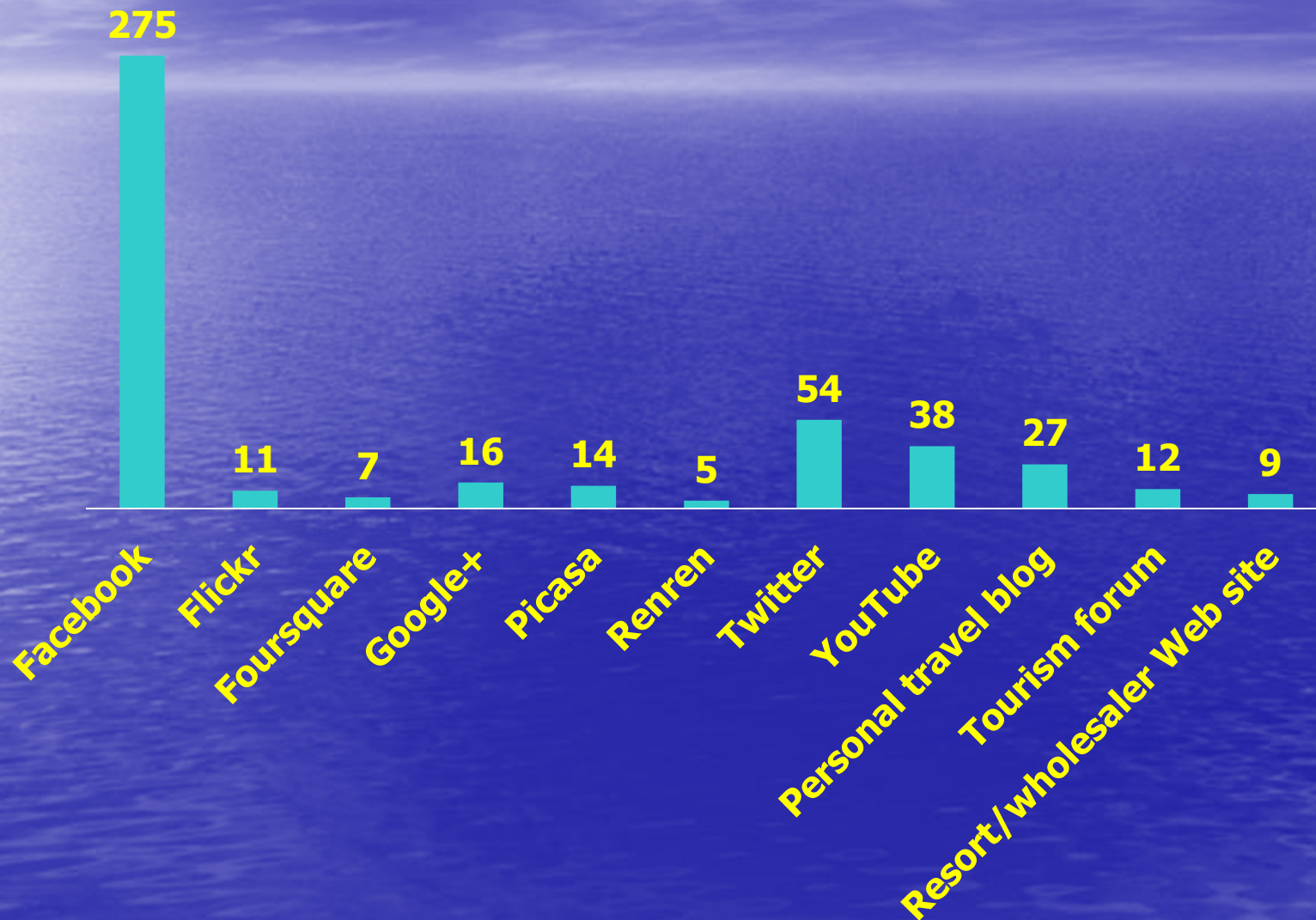
Contents posted on the Web



Times at which contents were posted



Content sharing tools used



**Cross-tabulation analysis between
contents shared on Web and
elements that have influenced
travel choice**

Cross-tabulation between posting photos/videos and the influence of photos/videos by friends/family

Web content posted	Influence of photos/videos by friends/family				Significance (<i>p</i>)
	None	Slight	Moderate	High	
Photos/videos of self	36.1%	38.7%	42.8%	51.2%	0.023
Photos/videos of people	24.6%	34.0%	36.0%	46.3%	0.013
Photos/videos of sites	11.5%	19.8%	24.3%	36.9%	0.000

Cross-tabulation between positive comments posted and the influence of positive comments by tourists

Web content posted	Influence of positive comments published by tourists				Significance (<i>p</i>)
	None	Slight	Moderate	High	
Positive comments vacation package	5.9%	8.9%	8.5%	16.3%	0.016
Positive comments restaurant	2.0%	12.1%	8.5%	13.5%	0.041

Sex and language differences

Cross-tabulation between resource usefulness and sex

Resource usefulness (stage)	Sex	
	Female	Male
Family/Friends (planning)		
Highly	70.5%	57.7%
Not at all	3.1%	9.1%
Significance (<i>p</i>)	0.002	
Family/Friends (choice)		
Highly	66.3%	53.7%
Not at all	5.6%	10.7%
Significance (<i>p</i>)	0.009	

Cross-tabulation between resource usefulness and language used

Resource usefulness (stage)	Language	
	French	English
Facebook (planning)		
Highly	23.0%	22.2%
Not at all	28.3%	36.7%
Do not use	2.7%	8.9%
Significance (<i>p</i>)	0.006	
Family/Friends (planning)		
Highly	59.1%	66.7%
Not at all	7.0%	6.7%
Significance (<i>p</i>)	0.010	
Family/Friends (choice)		
Highly	55.1%	61.1%
Not at all	10.2%	7.8%
Significance (<i>p</i>)	0.009	

Discussion and Conclusion (1 of 3)

- **Despite rising influence of Web 2.0, opinions of family and friends still the most influential element**
- **Opinions of family and friends trustworthy whether received face to face or social network because source is credible**
- **Credibility of information source is key element in strategy to promote tourism products**



Discussion and Conclusion (2 of 3)

- **Facebook is privileged source of information, which explains why it is preferred network of major establishments in hospitality industry, where social networks are used mainly to share information, promote products and inform clients (Duguay 2011)**
- **Positive comments influence the posting of additional positive comments :**
 - ❖ **Tailor Web sites**
 - ❖ **Monitor comments**



Discussion and Conclusion (2 of 3)

- **Since veracity and credibility of information is crucial, we would caution managers against using people inside the organization or hire commercial services to post favourable comments as pseudo-tourists**
- **Results used in article submitted to Journal of Information Technology and Tourism**

