



Who wants to see what?

**An exploratory qualitative study on how the level of
Sensation Seeking influences preferences regarding
visual online tourism content on social media**

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Abstract

Objective: The purpose of this study is to provide in-depth and rich explorations and understandings of the visual social media preferences of travellers with different levels of the Sensation Seeking personality trait. This includes a possible difference between online and offline preferences, the difference in social media platforms and visual content themes.

Method: An exploratory, qualitative study was established. 21 DMO-marketeers, travellers and tourism bloggers were interviewed to get an insight and deeper understanding of Sensation Seeking in the tourism social media research field. They were found through purpose and snowball sampling. Furthermore an infographic and semi-structured interview guides were created and the data was inductively analysed through a three step coding process.

Results: It is found that online content should be similar to offline Sensation Seeking preference. However, it is also expected that low Sensation Seekers are interested in both types of content and high Sensation Seekers only in high Sensation Seeking content. Additionally, it was found that Instagram presumably fits both low and high Sensation Seekers, Snapchat high Sensation Seekers and Pinterest low Sensation Seekers. Finally, it became apparent that the content themes of low and high Sensation Seeking are mostly in line with previous research.

Conclusions: It is suggested that extremity bias might play a role when the content shown on social media is a bit more extreme than that of the real world counterpart. Further research should be done about this. Furthermore, the high Sensation Seeking fit of Snapchat and the low Sensation Seeking fit of Pinterest could both be because of age.

Keywords: Sensation Seeking, Social Media, Instagram, Snapchat, Pinterest, Consumer profiles, Tourism.

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1. Introduction

In 2020, the world changed with the start of the Covid-19 pandemic. This had many implications in, among other industries, the tourism industry. Zenker and Kock (2020) describe the virus as one of the most impactful events of the 21st century. For the tourism industry it implies that borders are closed, airplanes are not flying and hotels, restaurants and other leisure facilities are also closed or deal with other limitations (Nicola et al., 2020; Zenker & Kock, 2020). So, people are not able to travel anymore, both nationally and internationally depending on the country (Chinazzi et al., 2020).

According to the World Tourist Organization (UNWTO), the year to date change in international tourist arrivals (January 2020 – January 2021) has been -87%. With the worst months being April, May and June of 2020 with respectively having -97%, -96% and -91% of international tourist arrivals (World Tourist Organization, n.d.). The UNWTO also states that between 100 and 120 million of tourism jobs are at risk and that at least 1.3 trillion US dollars in exports from tourism are have not been spend (World Tourist Organization, 2021).

At the same time, it was found that media device usage increased by 70% due to the Covid-19 virus outbreak amongst internet users worldwide (Watson, 2020a). Additionally, Watson (2020b) found that 45% and 44% of her respondents spend more time on message services and social media respectively during the Covid-19 pandemic. This increase of social media and device usage could be beneficial for the tourism industry to still try to connect with people and to communicate with them now that actual travel is limited.

When looking at the relationship between social media and tourism it can be stated that the development of social media had a profound impact on tourism. Social media play a role in the trip planning and decision making phases of travel (Zarezadeh et al., 2018), it was found that travellers use social media specifically in the pre-visit stage of their travel process (Balouchi & Khanmohammadi, 2015; Cox et al., 2009). Since it could be said that the pre-visit stage is now extended because of the Covid-19 pandemic, it is even more important to reach future travellers effectively through the use of social media in today's world.

Henche (2018) described that social media give travel providers the opportunity to share information and communicate with (future) travellers. However, she also describes that it is important to reach the right tourist customer profile to fit the specific travel provider. Besides that, Hernandez et al. (2013) state that comprehensive consumer profiles are important to understand insights and trends and to be able to improve analyses of consumer opinions across multiple consumer segments.

One way of segmenting consumer profiles in tourism is by making use of the personality trait Sensation Seeking (Zuckerman, 1979). Research done about Sensation Seeking is focussed around offline and real life tourist behaviour, the type of tourist activities, preferred travel arrangements and the corresponding level of arousal correlated with those preferences (Eachus, 2004; Lepp & Gibson, 2008; Pizam et al., 2001; Pizam et al., 2004; Zuckerman, 1979). However, as far as the researcher is aware, no research has been done to study whether people with different levels of Sensation Seeking are attracted to either high or low arousal visual online content showing images similar to that of the real life activities which they are interested in. So, is it the case that people want to see content reflecting what they actually want to do? The current study will fill this gap by applying the existing Sensation Seeking personality trait to the new context of online tourist behaviour and visual content on social media. To be able to study Sensation Seeking in the online context of social media, different social media platforms will be studied. Because of the implied visual nature of Sensation Seeking activities, it is chosen to only focus on explicit visual social media platforms within this study. Instagram, Snapchat and Pinterest have been chosen as they are considered the most relevant visual social media platforms for images (eRocket, 2021).

The objective of this study is to provide in-depth and rich explorations and understandings of the visual social media preferences of travellers with different levels of the Sensation Seeking trait. Therefore, the research question for the study is as follows: *What visual social media content are travellers with different levels of the Sensation Seeking personality trait interested in?* To be able to answer this question, several sub questions need to be answered in the process as well:

1. How do travellers with different levels of the Sensation Seeking personality trait differ in being interested in online social media visual content that shows the same or matching activities/ sights/ people/ etc. that they are interested in while offline, real life travelling according to experts?
2. How do the different visual social media platforms (Instagram, Snapchat and Pinterest) differ in being preferred by travellers with different levels of the Sensation Seeking personality trait?
3. What themes in visual online social media content are relevant to post on a social media page to position oneself in the field of either the low or high Sensation Seeking personality trait with regard to travellers?

Since this is a new topic in the tourism social media research field, it was chosen to perform an exploratory qualitative research to get a substantiated understanding of the research topic.

Because of the novelty of the subject, a good and deep understanding of this topic that cannot be found in literature alone. Therefore, interviews will be conducted amongst destination marketing organization (DMO) marketeers, (semi-professional) travellers and social media travel bloggers. These groups are chosen because they are all able to say something about the consumption of visual social media content by travellers from different perspectives (consumers and/ or creators).

Studying this will benefit the research field in multiple ways. First of all, the qualitative research design of this study will give a substantiated understanding of the online tourism field (Zarezadeh et al., 2018). This research could also give insights in how the right content on social media could add to the travel identity construction and the relationship between travellers and travel providers (Zarezadeh et al., 2018). Continuing, Gretzel (2017) also mentioned several research gaps in the tourism social media research field. She mentioned the dearth of studies about how the different visual platforms could be used strategy wise and a classification of different content related to tourism travel content. Since the current study focusses around these topics, it could add to these research gaps. And finally, this research could also be beneficial for research done about the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on the tourism industry (Zender & Kock, 2020). Since this research will take place while many of the Covid-19 restrictions are still in place and travel is still extremely limited, it could give insight in how travel providers could use the travellers' personality trait Sensation Seeking and use this to create appealing visual social media content to connect travellers to their services.

This study might give some practical benefits as well. Because more knowledge about the personality trait Sensation Seeking could be used for segmentation and for improved content creation. Also because it should become apparent what kinds of platforms and content themes both low and/ or high Sensation Seeking prefer. This could all be of strategic value when creating marketing plans or expanding the marketing toolbox.

In the upcoming sections, a literature review will be presented where the most important concepts of the study are elaborated on including the concept of Sensation Seeking and the three visual social media platforms. Next, a description of the methods used in this research is given. Here the design of the study, the participants, the materials, the procedure and the data processing will be explained. Following this, the results are laid out in the results section and the most striking findings will be presented. And finally ending with the discussion where the most outstanding results are discussed against literature and the addition to literature, the practical implications, limitations and advise for further research are given.

2. Theoretical framework

The following section of this research paper discusses the relevant literature related to segmentation in tourism consumer profiles, the Sensation Seeking personality trait and the three different visual social media platforms.

2.1 Segmentation in tourism consumer profiles

The concept of market segmentation was introduced by Smith (1956) who describes that *“segmentation is based upon developments on the demand side of the market and represents a rational and more precise adjustment of product and marketing effort to consumer or user requirements”* (p. 5). He also mentions that segmentation subdivides a heterogeneous market into multiple homogeneous markets. The definition is also still relevant in the market segmentation literature today, as Dolnicar et al. (2018) mention it prominently in their book and give relevant examples connecting sections of this definition to modern examples. Therefore showing that Smith’s (1956) definition can still be used in modern market segmentation research literature.

One variable used for market segmentation is psychographic segmentation (Kotler et al., 2014). Psychographic segmentation consists of dividing the market into groups based on lifestyle, social class and personality among other things. Within tourism, the psychographic type of segmentation is one that has the ability to insightfully describe the market segments (Hsu et al., 2002). Psychographics are also described as lifestyle and as activities/ attitudes, interests and opinions (AIOs) (Davis et al., 1988; Schewe & Calantone, 1978; Vyncke, 2002). Mitchell (1994) states that when a product or service that is highly related to the ‘self’ or where a customer is highly involved, psychographics can be of added value to get more precise segmentation because of the understanding of the data where the segmentation is based on. Schewe and Calantone (1978) explain this by mentioning that psychographics could assist in getting a deeper understanding of the psychological side of customers and that it helps in getting an understanding in their way of living.

One psychographic variable that is linked to tourism is that of the personality trait Sensation Seeking (Eachus, 2004; Lepp & Gibson, 2008; Pizam et al., 2001; Pizam et al., 2004; Zuckerman, 1979). For instance, Eachus (2004), Pizam et al. (2001) and Pizam et al. (2004) have done research to find out the preferences of travellers with regard to preferred activities and holiday accommodation in relation to their Sensation Seeking level. Furthermore, Lepp and Gibson (2008) and Zuckerman (1979) have studied what the preferred type of travel destination is in relation to the Sensation Seeking level of travellers.

The Sensation Seeking personality trait is also pictured as a valuable segmentation tool. Lepp and Gibson (2008) mention that the Sensation Seeking trait could be used to design and communicate different preferences within the Sensation Seeking spectrum in different ways. They say this can be done by designing “*separate promotional messages for high sensation seekers and low sensation seekers*” (p. 748). For example, they state that “*highlighting cultural differences would be likely to increase the perception of risk thus attracting high sensation seekers and discouraging low sensation seekers. However, if cultural differences were promoted as opportunities to learn about other cultures, individuals low in SS might become interested*” (p. 748). Similar applications of using the Sensation Seeking trait for market segmentation are also stated by Pizam et al. (2001) and Pizam et al. (2004). They mention in their practical implications that Sensation Seeking could function as a segmentation tool where marketers could choose to focus on either the low or high Sensation Seeking segment.

However, the above mentioned studies only mention the segmentation ability of Sensation Seeking in their conclusions or practical implications. Galloway (2002), on the other hand, did a study using the Sensation Seeking trait in combination with market segmentation, he found that using this trait as a variable in market segmentation is successful and that it enabled identification of differences between low and high Sensation Seekers regarding attitudes and behaviours related to the study object. This finding and the previous statements about the possible use of the Sensation Seeking trait as a segmentation tool, show that Sensation Seeking is in fact an effective way of splitting the tourism market. Because of the good fit as a segmentation tool, the relationship with the tourism industry and the implied visual nature of Sensation Seeking activities; Sensation Seeking will therefore be the main focus of this study. In the next section, Sensation Seeking in the tourism industry will be more elaborated on with relevant findings regarding travel preferences.

2.2 Sensation Seeking

The concept of Sensation Seeking is developed by Zuckerman. The definition is, according to Zuckerman (1979), “*a trait defined by the need for varied, novel, and complex sensations and experiences and the willingness to take physical and social risks for the sake of such experience*” (p. 10). The level of Sensation Seeking is related to the optimal level of arousal, in a way that high sensation seekers have a higher optimal level of arousal (Zuckerman, 1979). To be able to access this trait, Zuckerman has developed a scale, the Sensation Seeking Scale (SSS). The Sensation Seeking Scale consists of four sub-dimensions with each ten items. The sub-dimensions and its explanations are as follows (Zuckerman, 1983):

- *Thrill and Adventure Seeking (TAS)*: indicates a longing for risky and adventurous activities providing unusual sensations.
- *Experience Seeking (ES)*: indicates a desire of stimulation through the mind and senses.
- *Disinhibition (Dis)*: indicates a desire of looking for sensation through partying (etc.), also shows impulsive extraversion.
- *Boredom Susceptibility (BS)*: indicates an aversion to repetition and shows restlessness and boredom when such is the case.

One study, done by Lu et al. (2017), combined a virtual message with Sensation Seeking in an tourism research environment. These virtual messages are not social media content, they are promotional videos. Lu et al. found that when vacation-related, tourism information stratifies the psychological needs and preferences of people. Which in turn leads to a favourable attitude to the messages which are received. They expected that messages that relate to the correct level of Sensation Seeking, would lead to a more positive attitude towards the aforementioned messages. Thus, implying that there needs to be a similarity between virtual messages and real activities when putting information in relation to Sensation Seeking.

Furthermore, the application of the Sensation Seeking trait in tourism studies has resulted in multiple insights in how different levels of sensation seekers behave in an offline environment. Eachus (2004) found in his study that people with a higher need for sensation are more likely to prefer holidays that will give them higher levels of stimulation, they want adventure experiences, nightlife, excitement and some level of danger. They do not like passive activities like museums, historical sites and learning the language and/ or culture. Eachus (2004) also found that there is a group of moderate Sensation Seekers who prefer a luxury and self-indulgent holiday. They prefer an exclusive hotel, laying at the pool and being served.

Pizam et al. (2001) also found that people with a high Sensation Seeking level prefer to engage in adventurous and risky tourist activities and that people who prefer more safer activities are scoring lower on the Sensation Seeking trait. They also found that people with a high level of Sensation Seeking like to participate in extreme sports while on a holiday and that people with a low Sensation Seeking score like going to cultural and heritage attractions, natural attractions and like to view sports or participate in traditional sports (e.g. football, basketball, etc.). People who prefer to make their own travel arrangements have a higher score on the Sensation Seeking Scale than people who prefer guided groups tours, packaged tours or with family or friends. Summarized, *“high Sensation-Seekers will prefer to make their travel arrangements independently, visit unfamiliar and/ or uncommon destinations, and engage in*

active and risky tourist activities. On the other hand, low sensation–seekers will prefer to travel in groups, visit familiar destinations, and engage in safe and passive tourist activities” (p. 29).

More specifically, Pizam et al. (2001) also found that that people who prefer to do extreme sports have higher scores in the TAS dimension and people who prefer to go to cultural and/ or natural attractions and watch or do traditional sports score lower on the TAS dimension. The relationship with extreme sports was only visible for the TAS dimension, the other three dimensions (ES, DIS and BS) showed no association. Additionally, people who plan their own travel arrangements score high on three out of the four dimensions. Only the Boredom Susceptibility showed no relationship.

In 2004, Pizam et al. did a study combining Sensation Seeking with risk taking and their effect on travel behaviour. They found that people who are high Sensation Seeking and risk taking prefer high-energy, outdoor-type activities, going to bars and to concerts. They like active, fast-paced, spontaneous and non-comfortable holidays. They like to travel by themselves or with (a) friend(s) on self- or jointly organized trips. While on the contrary, people with a low score like low-energy, indoor activities like shopping and going to religious places. They prefer passive, slow-paced, planned and comfortable holidays. They like to travel with family or friends in organized trips.

Lepp and Gibson (2008) did a study in which they used the Sensation Seeking trait to investigate the usefulness of Sensation Seeking in predicting the tourist role, perception of risk and destination choice. They found that travel style and tourist activities seem to have a relationship with Sensation Seeking in which high Sensation Seekers prefer more independent styles of travel and more novel activities than low Sensation Seekers. Additionally, they found that people with high Sensation Seeking mostly prefer to travel internationally and to ‘risky’ countries. However, they state that there is no difference in how low or high Sensation Seekers perceive the risk to travel to travel to certain regions of the world. But, as stated before, high Sensation Seekers are more likely to actually go to these regions. To conclude, they confirmed in their findings the results of both the studies done by Pizam et al. (2001, 2004), giving these findings even more strength.

Finally, Zuckerman himself (1979) has also done a study about travel situations. He found that low Sensation Seekers will be less likely to go to less familiar or exotic places compared to high Sensation Seekers. All of these findings complement each other and give insight in how the level of Sensation Seeking relates to real life tourism activities.

2.3 Visual social media platforms

Social media is defined differently by different authors, but the definition that will be used in this research is by Filo et al., (2015). They define social media as “*new media technologies facilitating interactivity and co-creation that allow for the development and sharing of user generated content among and between organisations (e.g. teams, governing bodies, agencies and media groups) and individuals (e.g. consumers, athletes and journalists)*” (p. 167). The context of this research is focussed around visual social media. Therefore, in the following sections the multiple visual social media platforms and different types of visual content will be elaborated on.

Within the spectrum of visual social media, the choice has to be made whether the study will focus on platforms that are explicitly dedicated to visual content or platforms that support and encourage visual content but are also focused on other types of content as well (Highfield & Leaver, 2016). The scope of this research are social media platforms that are explicitly dedicated to visual social media, more specifically, photographic visual social media. This is because it is thought that visual images can better reflect offline, real life activities by being able to literally show them. Platforms that fit this description are Instagram, Snapchat and Pinterest.

2.3.1 Instagram. Instagram is a social media platform that is based on photos and (live) videos (Ha et al., 2019; Kim & Kim, 2019; Li & Xie, 2020) which are shared and viewed (Rozgonjuk et al., 2020). Instagram focuses on media content (photo, image, video) but it does give users the option to use text in the captions, tags, hashtags and comments, this enables the user to place the visual media content into context (Ha et al., 2019; Li & Xie, 2020). Instagram provides the possibility to use different content manipulation tools (filters), to change the appearance of the content (Hu et al., 2014).

Within the tourism industry, Instagram is an important social media tool when being used as an online photo-album but also a promotional channel. It was found that 71% of the Millennial Instagram users used the app on the road and additionally that at least 50% of the users saw Instagram as a source of inspiration for travelling (Smith, 2018). Especially in the pre-visit stage, Instagram plays an important role. The photo-album role of Instagram gives the opportunity for people to be a promoter of a tourism destination or travel provider and therefore share their own user-generated (geo-tagged) content (Fatani & Suyadnya, 2015). This is also part of the promotional function of Instagram because the tourism experience through user-generated content is a valuable component within travel promotion. Majid (2019) mentions that Instagram also offers the opportunity for all kinds of users to make use of the platform. From

personal use by members of the general public, travel bloggers or even celebrities to professional use of tourism destinations or travel providers. Majid (2019) also mentions that the showing and sharing the travel experience is an important feature of Instagram, to inspire others.

2.3.2 Snapchat. In comparison to Instagram, Snapchat is an app that is only accessible through a mobile device. The unique feature of Snapchat is that users can only share disappearing, ephemeral content (Jeffrey et al., 2019; Kofoed & Larsen, 2016; Piwek & Joinson, 2016), this is an important factor in the popularity of the application (Jeffrey et al., 2019). Snapchat users can also choose with whom they share their content, they select the people who they will sent it to (Piwek & Joinson, 2016). Because of the disappearing nature of the content created, users are less focussed on sharing the perfect, polished picture. Snapchat creates a certain intimacy that allows for this kind of less perfect self-exposure (Kofoed & Larsen, 2016). Snapchat offers the possibility to add text to the visual content, to draw and to add multiple layers to the content (lenses, filters, stickers etc.). Snapchat is mostly used by younger people and is seen as a medium for phatic, lightweight communication between close relations (Kofoed & Larsen, 2016), and also performs as an instant messaging service (Piwek & Joinson, 2016).

Within the tourism industry, Snapchat could be used by tourism marketers by making use of the ‘stories’ option and sharing content of the tourism destination or travel provider, or by adding geofilters which users can apply in their user-generated content (Gretzel, 2017). Beside the stories and geofilter options, Snapchat also offers the option to make use of Snap Ads (vertical video adds) and interactive lenses (Sârbu et al., 2018). The use of Snapchat is especially interesting when the tourism destination or travel provider focusses on the Generation Z target group because they find Snapchat attractive and popular (Kusa & Zazikova, 2016). Ibrahim (2017) mentions that Snapchat could be a useful tool for tourism marketers when focusing on reaching the youth.

2.3.3 Pinterest. Pinterest is a photo sharing website that allows users to post (‘pin’) a photo/ image to their digital scrapbook which can be organized in multiple different topical collections (Gilbert et al., 2013; Phillips et al., 2014; Voorveld et al., 2018). This scrapbook could be either public or private. A predominant demographic feature of Pinterest is that women are the main user group (Gilbert et al., 2013; Voorveld et al., 2018). A unique quality of Pinterest is that the website/ application is very suitable for advertisement (Gilbert et al., 2013; Phillips et al., 2014; Voorveld et al., 2018). Voorveld et al. (2018) found that Pinterest works stimulating with content that makes people enthusiastic or content that is original or unique fits

the platform. The platform also is perceived as functional, which advertisers can make use of. Users like to see useful tips, reliable information or how to fix problems. People experience advertising on Pinterest as the most positive among the multiple social media platforms, they perceive advertising on Pinterest as an opportunity for social interaction with others. They tend to share and/ or perform the advertised information (Voorveld et al., 2018).

With regard to the link with tourism, it was found that Pinterest could serve as a tool for destination marketing organisations to better position their visual marketing (McMullen, 2020), the usage of Pinterest as a marketing tool in the tourism industry is also perceived as positive (Maurer & Hinterdorfer, 2013). However, tourism related content on Pinterest does differ from tourism content found on other social media platforms or professional tourism destination websites, the preferred image of a tourism destination on Pinterest is based on the travellers' desire to see the novelty of a destination (McMullen, 2020; Song & Kim, 2016). McMullen (2020) mentions that on Pinterest hardly any people are shown on the pictures and it is more important what is shown on the picture than how artistic or professional the picture was taken. Pinterest offers an insight in the most interesting features of a travel destination. Tourism marketers can use Pinterest as a tool to analyse what people imagine or desire about a travel destination based on the pictures that they pin and share on the platform (McMullen, 2020). They could also use the popular categories on Pinterest to get an insight in what people find interesting about the travel destination and use this insight to create a consistency between travellers' interests and the destination marketers' projections of the travel destination (Song & Kim, 2016). The usage of Pinterest as a tourism marketing tool could best be done in the pre-visit inspiration phase of the travel cycle (Maurer & Hinterdorfer, 2013).

2.4 Conclusion

It was found that psychographic segmentation is a useful way of segmenting the tourism market. The psychographic personality trait Sensation Seeking has been used in tourism studies before, it has also been a proven and useful segmentation tool. However, Sensation Seeking has only been studied in an offline environment where real life preferences of travellers were researched. This has been done multiple times by multiple authors and therefore provides us with a broad base of knowledge about how travellers with different levels of Sensation Seeking are expected to act with regard to their travel preferences. Therefore knowing what they prefer to undertake with regard to specific activities while they are travelling but also giving us insights in how travelling is organized and what kind of destinations are preferred. Because the above findings

are mainly centred around the low versus high Sensation Seeking division and not the four sub-dimensions of Sensation Seeking, the sub-dimensions will not play a part in this study.

Social media consist of a lot of different social network sites, but because this research is focussed around visual social media, only platforms that are explicitly dedicated to visual social media are included in the study. Instagram, Snapchat and Pinterest are the most well-known and studied platforms at the current time and age. All three of the platforms also have been studied in a tourism context. The platforms will be used to study the online social media environment of this research and to see whether there is a difference in preference regarding different levels of Sensation Seeking.

With regard to the findings, it is expected that some outcomes might come up. However, because of the exploratory and qualitative nature of this study and the novelty of the subject, the literature review did not provide many exact deductive expectations and therefore the results will mainly be inductive. Firstly, because the findings of Eachus (2004), Lepp & Gibson (2008), Pizam et al. (2001), Pizam et al. (2004) and Zuckerman (1979) generally support each other about preferences while travelling and what kind of activities belong to low and high Sensation Seeking, it is expected that this line of reasoning will also translate to an online environment. Therefore, it is expected that these travel preferences will also lead to tending to visual social media content that shows the same or similar kinds of activities, sights or people as in real life. And secondly, because undertaking an experience in real life is much more of an experience because of the possible presence of some level of danger, submersion in the culture and novelty; it is expected that the online content must clearly show the activities/ sights/ people related to either low or high Sensation Seeking because otherwise it might not be stimulating enough to be perceived as a preferred image on social media. With regard to the type of social media platform that might give a difference in how interested travellers are in the visual social media content, no expectations are made because of the novelty of this part of the research.

3. Methodology

To be able to answer the research questions, an exploratory, qualitative study has been set up. The purpose of this study is to provide in-depth and rich explorations and understandings of the visual social media preferences of travellers with different levels of the Sensation Seeking trait.

3.1 Design

An inductive, exploratory, qualitative design was chosen because of the dearth of research done using this methodology in the tourism social media research field (Zarezadeh et al., 2018). It is chosen to make use of a qualitative interview because an interview gives the researcher the possibility to learn from the participant's knowledge, perspectives and experiences (Boeije, 2010). These insights will give the researcher a deeper understanding of the topic. For this study, it is chosen to make use of a semi-structured interview. This type of interview ensures that the required topics are all discussed but that flexibility is present (Boeije, 2010).

3.2 Participants

According to Boeije (2010) the interview topics and questions should fit the participant's frame of reference. For this research, it is important to get an insight and deeper understanding of the Sensation Seeking trait in the tourism social media research field. Therefore, the researcher made use of purposive sampling (Bryman, 2012). The participants of this research are either: destination marketing organization (DMO) marketeers, (semi-professional) travellers and social media travel bloggers. These professions and/ or descriptions are chosen because they provide different perspectives on the same topic; on the creator and/ or consumer side of tourism content creation. Which therefore enabled the researcher to say something about the preferences of travellers with regard to content because this has been studied from multiple perspectives. To create a valid study, 20 interviews were done. The first few interviews have also served as a pre-test to fine-tune the interview guide. Only some phrasing needed to be changed with no major changes. With regard to the saturation point, the 20 interviews were sufficient, around 15 interviews the researcher noticed that not much new data was brought in.

The researcher made use of her own network, LinkedIn, Google and Instagram to find participants. LinkedIn and Google have been used for finding the tourism marketeers, Instagram and Google have been used for the travel bloggers and the own network for the (semi-professional) travellers. In the case of the travel bloggers, additional snowball sampling has also been used by making use of a collaboration of travel bloggers in The Netherlands.

Not many strict requirements were in place to acquire participants. The researcher only interviewed people who were 18 years or older. The researcher did look for participants all over the Netherlands. Due to the Covid-19 restrictions, all interviews have been done by making use of virtual communication software and therefore distance did not play a role. Because this research has been done in the Netherlands, the language of the interviews was Dutch.

Eventually, 20 interviews were held with 21 people. Seven were travellers, another seven were tourism marketeers and the final seven were travel bloggers (one blogger duo). The participants were not asked their exact ages so therefore an exact demographic could not be given but it is estimated that most fit the age group 18 – 35 years old. Of the participants, 18 were female and only 3 were male. The participants were located in all parts of the Netherlands, so almost all of the provinces are represented. Because of the nature of the professions and the limited amount of people in several regions of The Netherlands who perform these professions, to ensure anonymity, it will not be laid out whether a person comes from a certain province.

Because this research is focused around the preferences of travellers regarding Sensation Seeking content on social media and therefore the consumption of travel content on social media in the context of Sensation Seeking, the participants were asked to self assign themselves and/ or their main target group to either low or high Sensation Seeking. Because the study is focussed around the consumption part, the bloggers are both consumer and creator and did therefore assign both themselves and their target group to a level of Sensation Seeking. The marketeers are creators and assigned their target groups and the travellers are consumers and therefore assigned themselves. In Table 1 an overview of the different participants is given.

Table 1

Overview participants

Profession	Gender	Estimated age group	Self assigned level of Sensation Seeking oneself	Self assigned level of Sensation Seeking target group
Blogger	Female	18 – 35 years old	High Sensation Seeking	Both
Blogger	Female	18 – 35 years old	High Sensation Seeking	High Sensation Seeking
Blogger	Female	35 – 55 years old	Low Sensation Seeking	Low Sensation Seeking
Blogger	Female	18 – 35 years old	High Sensation Seeking	High Sensation Seeking
Blogger	Female	35 – 55 years old	High Sensation Seeking	High Sensation Seeking
Blogger duo	Female	18 – 35 years old	High Sensation Seeking	Both
Marketeer	Female	18 – 35 years old	-	Low Sensation Seeker (high Sensation Seeker sub-group)
Marketeer	Male	18 – 35 years old	-	Low Sensation Seeker (high Sensation Seeker sub-group)
Marketeer	Female	18 – 35 years old	-	Low Sensation Seeker (high Sensation Seeker sub-group)
Marketeer	Female	18 – 35 years old	-	Both

Marketeer	Female	18 – 35 years old	-	Both
Marketeer	Male	18 – 35 years old	-	Both
Marketeer	Female	35 – 55 years old	-	Low Sensation Seeker (high Sensation Seeker sub-group)
Traveller	Female	18 – 35 years old	High Sensation Seeking	-
Traveller	Male	18 – 35 years old	High Sensation Seeking	-
Traveller	Female	18 – 35 years old	Low Sensation Seeking	-
Traveller	Female	18 – 35 years old	High Sensation Seeking	-
Traveller	Female	18 – 35 years old	High Sensation Seeking	-
Traveller	Female	18 – 35 years old	High Sensation Seeking	-
Traveller	Female	18 – 35 years old	High Sensation Seeking	-

3.3 Materials

Prior to the interview, the participant received an infographic (Appendix A) containing an explanation of the concept of Sensation Seeking to prepare them and give them some insight in the interview topic, providing them with enough knowledge to be able to answer the questions. The infographic was designed by the researcher and has been based on the existing literature from the theoretical framework, therefore adding to the validity of the infographic.

Additionally, as mentioned above, this study made use of semi-structured interviews with the help of a list of topics and/ or questions, also called the interview guide. Three types of interview guides have been made to personalize the topics and questions to one of the three groups to which the participant belonged. The interview guides have been created based on the literature review regarding the Sensation Seeking personality trait and the different types of visual social media platforms. The interview guides consist of multiple sections to ensure that the topics from the research questions are included in the interview, these sections will be presented in Table 2. The interview guides can be found in Appendix B. Another part of the materials used has been the informed consent which all participants agreed on.

Table 2

Interview structure

Section	Explanation
Difference in online/ offline preferences regarding the Sensation Seeking personality trait (RQ 1).	Finding out possible similarities or dissimilarities between the online and offline preferences regarding Sensation Seeking and how this is explained.
Difference in visual social media platforms (RQ 2).	Finding out the differences in type of Sensation Seekers, usage and content shown on Instagram, Snapchat and Pinterest and how this is explained.
Themes of the visual social media content (RQ 3).	Finding out the characteristic (stereotypical) themes for visual social media content for both low and high Sensation Seekers.

3.4 Procedure

Regarding the interview procedure, the researcher started with introducing herself and some informal small talk to reach rapport (Boeije, 2010). Then, the researcher started the recording and read the informed consent. Subsequently, the participant was asked to introduce him-/herself. Then the researcher went on with the official interview questions. Following the final question, it was asked if the researcher had forgotten something important in the eyes of the participant. And finally, the participant was thanked for his or her time and knowledge. On average, the interviews took 30 – 60 minutes to complete.

3.5 Data processing

The first step of the data processing was transcribing the interviews. To make sure no personal data could be retrieved from the transcripts the interviews were given a number. The first draft transcript was created by making use of the Amberscript software. After the software made a this first draft, the researcher went through all of them manually to correct mistakes.

Afterwards, the transcripts were coded using the ATLAS.ti software. A three-step coding method has been used: open coding, axial coding and selective coding (Boeije, 2010; Strauss & Corbin, 1998); a variation on the grounded theory approach as developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967). To make sure that the coding process was saturated, the researcher went through the open and axial coding steps multiple times..

With open coding, all the data has been divided into fragments. The fragments have been compared to one another, grouped into categories with the same subject and labelled with a code. This step has been done inductively. While open coding, low Sensation Seeking has been abbreviated to ‘LSS’ and high Sensation Seeking to ‘HSS’. With open coding, codes like ‘LSS: museum’, ‘Pinterest: search engine’ and ‘ LSS offline -> both LSS and HSS content online’ were created. In Appendix C the final codebook with all the open codes can be found. And in Appendix D it can be found to which axial codes all the open codes have been assigned.

Axial coding codes the open coding categories into several new categories. Here, the categories made, relate to the literature and the interview guides as can be seen in Table 2.

Table 3

Axial coding structure

Categories	Axial codes
Difference in online/ offline preferences regarding the Sensation Seeking personality trait (RQ 1).	‘Online preference Sensation Seeking’.
Difference in visual social media platforms (RQ 2).	‘Instagram: Sensation Seeking’, ‘Instagram: content’, ‘Instagram: usage’, Snapchat: Sensation Seeking’,

Themes of the visual social media content (RQ 3).	‘Snapchat: content’, ‘Snapchat: usage’, ‘Pinterest: Sensation Seeking’, ‘Pinterest: content’ and ‘Pinterest: usage’.
Other relevant findings separate from above categories.	‘LSS topics’ and ‘HSS topics’.
	‘Other’

Finally, selective coding is about looking for connections between the axial coding categories in order to make sense of all the data. This stage of coding could lead to theory development if new and interesting findings are found.

In order to assess the reliability of this method, several semi-random segments of several interviews (around 10%) have been coded by another coder who made use of the codebook of the researcher. Because of the purpose and design of exploratory research, the reliability is accepted to be lower than those of other research designs (Krippendorff, 2004; Lombard et al., 2002; Neurendorf, 2002). Namely coefficients of 0.7 or higher are acceptable for exploratory research instead of the normal 0.8 or higher. For this research Krippendorff’s Alpha is calculated by using the Atlas.ti software. It was found that the inter-rater coded sections have a reliability coefficient of 0.76.

But only a statistic reliability coefficient does not fully describe the trustworthiness and credibility of the data. As described by Braun and Clarke (2013), Hollway and Jefferson (2013) and Yardley (2000) statistic inter-rater reliability challenges the purpose qualitative research being interpretive and therefore this kind of research could never be fully objective because some interpretation of the data is necessary, as is also mentioned by Krippendorff (2004). However, above researchers do state that some sort of credibility or trust check is necessary. For this research, this extra step has been taken and was done by semi-randomly choosing fragments of the coded interviews and going through the coding steps together with both coders. The second coder was asked her opinion about all the coded sections, the codes given and codes groups. Several fragments and codes led to discussion. Resolving the problems helped to improve the credibility and the trustworthiness of the chosen method. In the end, some codes were changed, added and/ or deleted. At last, both coders agreed about the final end product of the codebook and coded fragments. The final codebook was used to again code all the interviews and change what needed to be changed based on the inter-coder outcomes. The final codebook can be found in Appendix C. Because the Krippendorff’s Alpha was calculated before the realization of the final codebook and the process mentioned before, it is expected that the real Krippendorff’s Alpha might be of a higher coefficient than the found 0.76.

4. Results

In this chapter, the results gathered from the data will be presented. The results will be presented in a similar order as the interview guides and the axial coding scheme. Therefore starting with the difference in online/ offline preferences regarding the Sensation Seeking personality trait, continuing with the difference in visual social media platforms. Then the themes of the visual social media content and finally the other relevant findings.

All the results are focussed around the consumption side of visual social media content based on the opinions of the experts (DMO-marketeers, travellers and travel blogger). Therefore comments are made by both low or high Sensation Seekers talking about their own consumption of content (travellers and bloggers) and by people who describe how they create content for their low or high Sensation Seeking target group to consume (DMO-marketeers and bloggers). The mentioning of the amount of comments made is not similar to the amount of people who said it, it could be that multiple people mentioned something multiple times.

4.1 Difference online versus offline preference Sensation Seeking

To start with, the results of the first research question *“How do travellers with different levels of the Sensation Seeking personality trait differ in being interested in online social media visual content that shows the same or matching activities/ sights/ people/ etc. that they are interested in while offline, real life travelling according to experts?”* are given (Table 4). First, the interests of the low Sensation Seekers will be laid out, then those of the high Sensation Seekers and ending with comments made about the similarities between offline and online preferences.

The main comment made about the social media content preference of low Sensation Seekers is that it is expected that they prefer both low and high Sensation Seeking social media content. In total 15 comments were made about this, several of those comments stated that the high Sensation Seeking content stands out more for the low Sensation Seekers and therefore could work as an eye catcher or to inspire them, as is described by a marketer (low Sensation Seeking target group) who states: *“I think that especially from low to high Sensation Seeking you can tempt people to take it one step further. If you have never paddle boarded before, paddle boarding may be a step up. And if you [DMO organisation] didn't post it [on social media], you might never have tempted people who have never done that before”*. When looking at low Sensation Seekers preferring low Sensation Seeking content, the one comment made states that this could be because of age, that older people are more likely to be low Sensation Seekers and will also look for content that they prefer to actually do in real life instead of more extreme content. Continuing on, low Sensation Seekers preferring high Sensation Seeking

content could be seen as an amplifier of the preference for both low and high Sensation Seeking content (as stated above). As none of the participants explicitly state that low Sensation Seekers exclusively prefer high Sensation Seeking content. However it is thought that it is preferred to see high Sensation Seeking content in general, as a marketer (both low and high Sensation Seeking target group) speculated: *“I think people in general prefer to see the high Sensation Seeking content. Because the images of high are more beautiful, you can imagine yourself doing it in your dreams”*.

Regarding the social media content preference of high Sensation Seekers, eight comments were made about that it is expected that they will also prefer high Sensation Seeking content online. It is said that this could be because high Sensation Seekers might prefer that kick and more extreme content, a high Sensation Seeking blogger (high Sensation Seeking target group) explains: *“But when I think about myself... I also watch base jumpers while I wouldn't necessarily want to do that myself”*. Finally, four comments were made about low Sensation Seeking content might not suit high Sensation Seekers because it might already fall within the interest and comfort zone of the high Sensation Seekers. This could lead to them seeing low Sensation Seeking content as more boring than high Sensation Seeking content.

With regard to the perceived similarity between offline and online Sensation Seeking preferences, most participants thought that online preference regarding type of Sensation Seeking content is similar to offline preference regarding Sensation Seeking activities. 36 comments were made that agreed to this statement. The general consensus is that it is thought that people like to see what they are already interested in and that this interest is reflected by the level of Sensation Seeking as is pointed out by a high Sensation Seeking traveller: *“I think that your interests are what you prefer to see on social media. And I think those interests are reflected in Sensation Seeking”*. On the contrary, the thought that online preference regarding type of Sensation Seeking content is not similar to offline preference regarding Sensation Seeking activities is less agreed on, only nine comments were made in favour of that statement. These comments state that showing the opposite preference could work very well as a stimulating factor and to let the content stand out against all that is offered online, as described by a marketer (low Sensation Seeking target group): *“We [the DMO] are predominantly low Sensation Seeking and we communicate what we offer [in the region] and that all fits exactly in the look, feel and text of low Sensation Seeking. On the other hand, to stand out a little more within the flow of content that is already there, we could choose high Sensation Seeking content and check if that has an effect”*.

To conclude, it was found that high Sensation Seeking content could presumably work for both low and high Sensation Seekers but for different reasons. As it is assumed that low Sensation Seekers are interested in both types of content and high Sensation Seekers only in high Sensation Seeking content. This underlines the comments made about similarity between offline and online preferences regarding Sensation Seeking. It became apparent that it is seen as important that online content should be in line with offline preference with regard to Sensation Seeking, therefore be similar. When showing content that is not similar to the offline preference of either low or high Sensation Seeking, this could be done to stimulate people and to let the content stand out more.

Table 4

Differences regarding online versus offline preference Sensation Seeking

Codes	Definition	Example
HSS offline -> HSS online 8 comments	It is described that if a person is a high Sensation Seeking person in real, offline life; he/ she also likes high sensation seeking content online. Therefore, stating that offline/ online preference is similar. It is necessary that high Sensation Seeking is specifically mentioned in this case.	<i>“Yes, and that is indeed what I mentioned earlier: that those are not necessarily the people that I can reach. Of course, they are present. But I think that they would rather follow Red Bull, we do that as well. And you can never reach that type of content, it’s just so extreme and cool. And what I am doing falls into nothingness. That would be more interesting for someone who never dares to do anything and thinks: oh wow”!</i> (High Sensation Seeking blogger with a high Sensation Seeking target group).
HSS offline -> LSS online 4 comments	Something is said about the specific relationship between being a high Sensation Seeking person in real, offline life; and the preference of low sensation seeking content online.	<i>“Ok, but what I get from your answer is that if you are low Sensation Seeking that high Sensation Seeking content could be interesting in your view. However, the other way around would be less interesting because then it could already fall within your comfort zone?”</i> - Yes”. (High Sensation Seeking blogger with both low and high Sensation Seeking target group).
LSS offline -> both LSS and HSS content online 15 comments	Something is said that if people are low Sensation Seeking in their real, offline life; they prefer to consume only both low and high Sensation Seeking content online.	<i>“No, I don’t think so and I think that relates to what I mentioned earlier is that I try to find that mix. Because I know that my follower don’t necessarily are high Sensation Seeking but they do look at it. Could be because they think it’s cool but not necessarily to do it themselves or because they aspire to be more like that”.</i> (High Sensation Seeking blogger with a high Sensation Seeking target group).
LSS offline -> HSS online 7 comments	Something is said that if people are low Sensation Seeking in their real, offline life; they prefer to consume only high Sensation Seeking content online. Therefore, stating that offline/ online preference is not similar.	<i>“Yes, but at the same time I think that if you are low Sensation Seeking that maybe the content of high Sensation Seeking speaks to you. Because if you see those extreme sports you could find it interesting to see but that doesn’t mean that you want to do it yourself. So I do think it works that way”.</i> (High Sensation Seeking blogger with both low and high Sensation Seeking target group).
LSS offline -> LSS online 1 comment	Something is said that if people are low Sensation Seeking in their real, offline life; they also prefer to	<i>“I think that from 40 years on that people will start to look for things that they are intending to do as well. I think because they do not identify themselves that much anymore with the other group. Or they</i>

<p>Online preference not similar to offline preference 9 comments</p>	<p>consume only low Sensation Seeking content online. Therefore, stating that offline/ online preference is similar.</p> <p>Something is said about that someone's online preference with regard to social media content is not similar to what they prefer to do offline, in real life.</p>	<p>would want that they like it, for example: <i>I like to visit a church so that's what I like to see, and I like to see pictures of nature. Those kind of things</i>".</p> <p>(Marketeer with both low and high Sensation Seeking target group).</p> <p><i>"I think that in general people like to see the high Sensation Seeking content. That's because those images are prettier, you can see yourself in your dreams doing that. But I do think that a large part does not belong to that group and that people like it that it's a bit more quiet, going on a nice hike. But yes, it is cool to see other people jumping out of an airplane"</i>.</p> <p>(Marketeer with both low and high Sensation Seeking target group).</p>
<p>Online preference similar to offline preference 36 comments</p>	<p>Something is said about that someone's online preference with regard to social media content is in fact similar to what they prefer to do offline, in real life.</p>	<p><i>"So I do think that I does relate to that you follow what your interests are on social media. And I do think that interests are present in Sensation Seeking"</i>.</p> <p>(High Sensation Seeking traveller).</p>

4.2 Social media platforms

In this section, the results to the second research question *"How do the different visual social media platforms (Instagram, Snapchat and Pinterest) differ in being preferred by travellers with different levels of the Sensation Seeking personality trait?"* are given. When talking about the platforms, three main themes arouse: the type of Sensation Seekers that fits the platforms, the type of content posted on the platforms and the usage of the platforms. Coming next, the platforms and the respective main themes will be discussed.

4.2.1 Instagram

Regarding the type of Sensation Seekers (Table 5), it was thought that Instagram can be seen as a platform that fits both low and high Sensation Seekers, as supported by 20 comments made. Several comments were made saying that there are different types of accounts for different kind of Sensation Seekers. This is described by a low Sensation Seeking traveller as follows: *"I think that for both [low and high Sensation Seekers] there are platforms that [...] have a certain kind of low or high [content]. That there are special accounts that attract people, want to get people in. [...] I think there is a difference in accounts there"*. When solely looking at the fit for high Sensation Seekers, 10 comments were made to support this. Most statements given explain this by mentioning that Instagram is about seeing and to be seen and that it is expected that high Sensation Seeking content performs better, as explained by a high Sensation Seeking blogger with a high Sensation Seeking target group: *"I think [Instagram fits] high Sensation Seekers. Because those are the things that score on Instagram that are easy to capture with images"*. With regard to Instagram being a platform that fits low Sensation Seekers, only four comments

were made about this. Three out of the four comments were based around the thought that low Sensation Seekers will spent more time on social media than high Sensation Seekers.

Table 5

Type of Sensation Seekers using Instagram

Codes	Definition	Example
Instagram: HSS 10 comments	Instagram is described as a platform that is more suitable for high Sensation Seeking users.	<i>“Yes, I do think high. And Instagram is about being seen and showing the nicest things. And there I do see indeed extreme sports, nightlife, excitement. And not traditional sports or historical, no not those. I do see Instagram within the high Sensation Seeking category”.</i> (Marketeer with a low Sensation Seeking target group).
Instagram: LSS 4 comments	Instagram is described as a platform that is more suitable for low Sensation Seeking users.	<i>“Ok, and you think that low Sensation Seekers are more likely to post something on Instagram while they are travelling? - Yes, at least they will watch more Instagram and maybe also be more likely to post something”.</i> (High Sensation Seeking traveller).
Instagram: LSS and HSS 20 comments	Instagram is described as a platform that is suitable for both low and high Sensation Seeking users.	<i>“I do think that both could be found there. Not necessarily on my account, but they will be there but they are following other accounts”</i> (Low Sensation Seeking blogger with low Sensation Seeking target group).

When asked about the type of content (Table 6) placed on Instagram statements were made about the feed, guides, IGTV, live, reels and stories. According to the 41 comments made about the Instagram feed, the feed thought to best used to post the ‘prettiest’ pictures that fit the target audience. The feed serves as a shopping window with long-living content. A high Sensation Seeking blogger with a high Sensation Seeking target group describes how ‘prettiest’ pictures could be defined: *“I am very perfectionist about the feed, to the annoyance. I actually only post photos there, usually taken with my DSLR camera, only those I like. So, I have pretty high standards for myself”*. About the Instagram guides were mixed feelings in the nine comments made. Most do state that because it is relatively new, they still need to find out how it could work for them and some have disregarded it already. Five comments were made about IGTV, of which three state they do not use it and 1 made that it is difficult to distinguish between IGTV and YouTube. Only one comment was made about Instagram live stating that it is only used for peak moments in a year. Concerning Instagram reels, 14 comments were fashioned. Several of the comments compared the Instagram reels to TikTok and preferring the latter. The main advantage given about reels is that they are short videos therefore easy to consume. Finally, 35 comments were made about the story-feature on Instagram. According to those comments, the stories could best be used for easy, approachable, ‘less perfect’ content. The importance of storytelling and taking people with you, preferably with video and done on the day it is posted, is also an important aspect of the Instagram stories. A marketeer with both a low and high

Sensation Seeking target group underlines this by stating: *“We use stories to actually [do storytelling], in a good way. Yes, storytelling is kind of like a clincher, but we really believe in it. I personally think that you can take people along with you in a certain story with the help of Instagram stories”*. On the business-side of Instagram travel content, the stories could also be used for advertising.

About the (general) type of content that fits Instagram, 18 comments were made. The general consensus is that Instagram lends itself for the best, most pretty, unique, ‘Instagram-worthy’ pictures as a high Sensation Seeking traveller states short but sweet: *“It is really about the Insta-worthy pictures for me”*. The content needs to be able to distinguish itself amongst other content. Especially because Instagram is about scrolling, the content needs to stand out. Regarding type of content, in eight comments something was said about user generated content (UGC). These comments were mostly related to the business side of Instagram travel content and mentioned that UGC is often reposted by DMO’s. The presumed advantage of UGC is to show a specific area through the eyes of the followers, as described by a marketer with a low Sensation Seeking target group: *“But it’s much better when people actually tell the story for us. [...] So we have seen that it works, people like it. And that it might be a little more believable that we share normal images and not just the images of ourselves”*.

Table 6

Type of content created on Instagram

Codes	Definition	Example
Instagram: feed 41 comments	Something is said about the Instagram feed. Example: what kind of content is placed in the feed.	<i>“What we are doing is that the feed is some kind of shop window. So that people who don’t follow us and see our feed that immediately see: here I feel comfortable, here I don’t feel comfortable”</i> . (Marketeer with both low and high Sensation Seeking target group).
Instagram: guides 9 comments	Something is said about the Instagram guides. Example: what kind of content is placed in the guides.	<i>“I noticed that Instagram had something new, something blog-like, that you can make a guide. Then you can place multiple post within one guide, so that’s new. That’s also interesting”</i> . (High Sensation Seeking blogger with both low and high Sensation Seeking target group).
Instagram: IGTV 5 comments	Something is said about Instagram TV. Example: what kind of content is placed in IGTV.	<i>“And IGTV is also something we are looking at. But that is not yet a concrete part of our strategy in that we will have posted a video on there next week or the week after. But it does have my attention”</i> . (Marketeer with both low and high Sensation Seeking target group).
Instagram: live 1 comment	Something is said about Instagram live. Example: what kind of content is created with live.	<i>“And separate to the other features we sometimes use Instagram live. But it’s not like we are always live. We use it for the peak moments in a year”</i> . (Marketeer with both low and high Sensation Seeking target group).
Instagram: reels 14 comments	Something is said about Instagram reels. Example:	<i>“And with reels, than I prefer TikTok. I notice that when I watch reels of other people that there is little engagement because I think that it doesn’t show well on peoples timelines”</i> .

	what kind of content is placed in reels.	(High Sensation Seeking blogger with both low and high Sensation Seeking target group).
Instagram: stories 35 comments	Something is said about the Instagram stories. Example: what kind of content is placed in the stories.	<i>“And Instagram stories we only use for advertising. Or if someone tags us, then we will repost it organically”.</i> (Marketeer with low Sensation Seeking target group).
Instagram: type of content 18 comments	Something is said about the type of content that fits Instagram.	<i>“They do post really nice pictures. I just think that is already very beautiful. But there are always things that you cannot find quickly online and that they will post. So you can get some more information from them like: this is a nice spot. Or restaurants, online you mostly see those touristy restaurants but they post those local ones, that where I like to go. So this kind of information I get from Instagram”.</i> (Low Sensation Seeking traveller).
Instagram: user generated content 8 comments	Something is said about the use of user generated content on Instagram.	<i>“It is mostly user generated content. So content that other people post on Instagram and which we will reuse, with permission, on our Facebook and Instagram. And we will add some facts about the picture”.</i> (Marketeer with low Sensation Seeking target group).

Regarding the different ways Instagram is used and what it offers (Table 7), three comments were made about how often one should post something on Instagram. The comments state that this needs to be fairly regular, almost daily. The situation that content stays within Instagram received three comments, here it was stated that Instagram can be seen as a closed circuit, and that it is hard to get people to leave Instagram. Finally, six comments were fashioned about that the age group found on Instagram is perceived to be a younger target audience as mentioned by a marketer with a low Sensation Seeking target group: *“I think instinctively, I can't actually substantiate it at the moment, the slightly younger generation is on Instagram”.*

Table 7
Different ways Instagram is used

Codes	Definition	Example
Instagram: posting frequency 3 comments	Something is said about the posting frequency on Instagram.	<i>“With Instagram and Facebook you have to post on a fairly regular basis”.</i> (Marketeer with low Sensation Seeking target group).
Instagram: stays within Instagram 3 comments	Something is said about how the content created on Instagram, stays on Instagram, it is difficult to let users leave Instagram.	<i>“Instagram is mainly for inspiring and engaging. But it is difficult to transfer them to your own platforms”.</i> (Marketeer with low Sensation Seeking target group).
Instagram: younger audience 6 comments	Something is said about a younger audience on Instagram.	<i>“On Instagram we want to reach the younger target audience, because the older target audience is not present there, or little present. Is also becoming more and more”.</i> (Marketeer with low Sensation Seeking target group).

4.2.2 Snapchat

Regarding the type of Sensation Seekers on Snapchat (Table 8), according to the comments made it was thought that Snapchat is a platform that mostly fits the high Sensation Seekers with

14 comments made. It is expected that this is because of the fast content and the presence of a younger audience as explained a marketer with a low Sensation Seeking target group: *“Then I think high [Sensation Seeking], because I have the idea that that target group is still a bit higher. [...] And most of all I think the generation that is on Snapchat, so those teens, early 20’s, it’s all going a bit faster and they need fast stimuli”*. Snapchat being for low Sensation Seekers got three comments, they state that Snapchat is being used a lot for sharing daily activities, and that therefore it fits low Sensation Seeking. The combination of both low and high Sensation Seekers being a good fit for Snapchat got two comments stating that Snapchat can be for both since there is no particular Snapchat content one needs to follow. Finally, there were also four comments stating it was unclear whether Snapchat is a better fit for either low or high Sensation Seekers because of how Snapchat is used and what kind of content is created on there, as stated by a high Sensation Seeking traveller: *“Where I tend to say high Sensation Seeking with Instagram, I would have less of that with Snapchat. Because for myself, just friends use it. So then I don’t think I would easily link it to either low or high”*.

Table 8

Type of Sensation Seekers using Snapchat

Codes	Definition	Example
Snapchat: HSS 14 comments	Snapchat is described as a platform that is more suitable for high Sensation Seeking users.	<i>“The content that is shown on Snapchat is content what I also see on TikTok. That is very extreme, just to score. And if I am looking at the characteristics of high Sensation Seeking, I do see similarities”</i> . (Marketeer with both high and low Sensation Seeking target group).
Snapchat: LSS and HSS 2 comments	Snapchat is described as a platform that is suitable for both low and high Sensation Seeking users.	<i>“I think I will have the same answer. Because you have people who make a picture that they are laying on the couch and you have people that make a cool video on their night out. So I do think this differs per person”</i> . (High Sensation Seeking blogger with both low and high Sensation Seeking target group).
Snapchat: LSS 3 comments	Snapchat is described as a platform that is more suitable for low Sensation Seeking users.	<i>“Maybe it is low Sensation Seeking content. I do think that it doesn’t relate much to high. I cannot laugh about it very quickly”</i> . (High Sensation Seeking traveller).
Snapchat: unclear LSS/HSS 4 comments	Something is said about that it is unclear to the person whether Pinterest could be described as a platform that is suitable for either low and/ or high Sensation Seeking users.	<i>“Where I tend to say high Sensation Seeking with Instagram, I would have less of that with Snapchat. Because for myself, really just friends use it. So then I don’t think I would easily link it to either low or high”</i> . (High Sensation Seeking traveller).

When looking at the type of content that fits Snapchat (Table 9), eight comments were made about that Snapchat is used to show everyday activities. The temporary aspect of the Snapchat content received 13 comments, mostly stating this in a semi-negative way, especially when

considering Snapchat for business. A high Sensation Seeking blogger with a high Sensation Seeking target group says about this: *“I think Snapchat is way too fast. I already have that difficulty with Instagram stories, but I don't think Snapchat is a sustainable way of producing content”*. Snapchat is also seen as a texting platform with five comment made, giving the option to communicate one-to-one with others. Finally, the general type of content that fits Snapchat received 33 comments. The type of content that fits Snapchat can be described as short, temporary and impactful with content that shows (exciting) activities like nightlife. A high Sensation Seeking traveller describes the content as follows: *“Well, I like it when someone goes out and does something and shares it on Snapchat. [...] I always like to see those activity things”*. Also the filters and geotags could be interesting content on Snapchat. The ‘for you’ page and explore page do not seem to get a lot of attention from users.

Table 9

Type of content created on Snapchat

Codes	Definition	Example
Snapchat: everyday activities 8 comments	Something is said about that Snapchat is used to show pictures of everyday life.	<i>“What I do like about Snapchat is that you get an a little insight in what you friends are doing in a day, with a picture with it”</i> . (High Sensation Seeking traveller).
Snapchat: temporary 13 comments	Something is said about that a picture is only temporary on Snapchat.	<i>“Instinctively , it is also much more temporary content. So it is there for a short while and it is shorter. I think content wise that is something that also fits within what you want to communicate, so I thought it’s perhaps a bit more high: short, a lot of impact and temporarily”</i> . (Marketeer with low Sensation Seeking target group).
Snapchat: texting platform 5 comments	Something is said about that Snapchat is used as a texting platform.	<i>“It is a bit WhatsApp like”</i> . (High Sensation Seeking traveller).
Snapchat: type of content 33 comment	Something is said about the type of content that fits Snapchat.	<i>“Very fast. And it is of course a temporary medium. What I see on Snapchat are mostly those funny lenses which you can use. But there are of course also those kind of Instagram stories which you can post there. So I think that you can use it like that and of course advertisements, you can advertise as well”</i> . (Marketeer with both low and high Sensation Seeking target group).

Four main categories were created about how Snapchat is used and what it offers (Table 10). Firstly, 19 comments were made about how Snapchat is a platform that is mainly used between friends, family and other acquaintances, as underlined by a high Sensation Seeking traveller: *“I actually use Snapchat purely and only with friends”*. Snapchat being mainly used between friends is also given as a reason as to why professional content creation might not work on the platform. Another reason as to why Snapchat might not be used, especially in a business context, is a lack of resources. Those resources could be attention, time and people. Continuing on, nine comments were made about a reason as to why Snapchat might potentially be used.

The reasons given were: a change of target group, a growth of Snapchat within the older target audience, campaign-/ event-based, city marketing and ambassadors doing a take-over. Finally, Snapchat is seen as a platform that is mainly used by younger people as it is mentioned in 19 comments, as underlined by a high Sensation Seeking blogger with a high Sensation Seeking target group: *“And I can indeed imagine, [...] that you will attract a younger audience with that [Snapchat]. At least I think the people who use snapchat are generally a bit younger”*.

Table 10

Different ways Snapchat is used

Codes	Definition	Example
Snapchat: friends <i>19 comments</i>	Something is said about Snapchat that relates to the friends of the person or that Snapchat is used between friends/ family/ colleagues.	<i>“But Snapchat is really only with my friends. And even then limited”</i> . (High Sensation Seeking traveller).
Snapchat: lack of resources <i>4 comments</i>	Something is said about the lack of resources available to be able to use Snapchat at all or to be able to use Snapchat more.	<i>“Well also a lack of time, I just made choices, where am I visible and where not. I thought: I can't do everything perfectly. So when I found it very complicated in the beginning, I threw it out again”</i> . (Low Sensation Seeking blogger with low Sensation Seeking target group).
Snapchat: reason to potentially use it <i>9 comments</i>	Something is said about a reason as to why the person/ company might decide to start using Snapchat in the future.	<i>“So I can imagine that you can also apply it, campaign-based for example. So indeed on one day you will do something with it”</i> . (Marketeer with low Sensation Seeking target group).
Snapchat: younger audience <i>19 comments</i>	Something is said about a younger audience on Snapchat.	<i>“I think that there is a very young audience there and my target group is really hardly, in my opinion, on Snapchat”</i> . (Low Sensation Seeking blogger with low Sensation Seeking target group).

4.2.3 Pinterest

Finally Pinterest, regarding type of Sensation Seekers (Table 11), Pinterest is seen as a platform that mostly fits the low Sensation Seekers as underlined by 10 comments. This is because it is seen as a less communicative platform where older people are present and where information is sought (both used to describe low Sensation Seekers in this context). Also Pinterest has interior inspiration, recipes and DIY content that is thought to fit low Sensation Seekers. The next best expected fit for Pinterest is a mix of both low and high Sensation Seekers with 10 comments made. Pinterest is mainly a platform where you actively search for something and it is thought that both low and high Sensation Seeking content can be found on the platform. Also it depends on how you use Pinterest, and that again relates to what you look for as explained by a high Sensation Seeking traveller: *“I’m looking for home stuff on Pinterest. Yes, that might be a bit low, I don’t know, but I don’t think that makes much of a difference. I think Pinterest is*

more dependent on what you are looking for, I think you are searching more instead of scrolling”. Finally, three comments were made about that Pinterest mostly fits high Sensation Seekers. Two out the three comments say that this is because Pinterest could be used for making ones own travel plans and finding unique travel destinations and activities.

Table 11

Type of Sensation Seekers using Pinterest

Codes	Definition	Example
Pinterest: HSS 3 comments	Pinterest is described as a platform that is more suitable for high Sensation Seeking users.	<i>“Yes, I am looking at it. Because for example making your own travel plans is written with high Sensation Seeking. I think that also fits with Pinterest”.</i> (Marketeer with both low and high Sensation Seeking target group).
Pinterest: LSS and HSS 10 comments	Pinterest is described as a platform that is suitable for both low and high Sensation Seeking users.	<i>“I think that is also very much depends on how you use Pinterest. If I look at myself, I really use it a lot for travel and I mainly look at the unique things, at the extreme things, then I would really say: it’s high. But Pinterest is so broad. What I said: I sometimes look up a dinner recipe. And that may not necessarily have to do with high or low”.</i> (High Sensation Seeking traveller).
Pinterest: LSS 15 comments	Pinterest is described as a platform that is more suitable for low Sensation Seeking users.	<i>“I think low Sensation Seeking because that’s more like the museums and a bit calmer and I think that fits more with Pinterest. I don’t think a very extreme person is going to be on Pinterest any time soon because it’s not a very well-known platform either”.</i> (High Sensation Seeking traveller).

With regard to the type of content (Table 12), seven comments were made stating that Pinterest is very interesting for travel content in particular. It is said that travel tips, (unknown) destinations, off the beaten track activities and information can be found on Pinterest. In general, 31 comments were made about content that is placed on Pinterest. The visual content should show the core of the blog/ website linked to it, show the atmosphere and be informative. Design-wise, the content could consist of placing text on top of the picture as described by a marketer with a low Sensation Seeking target group: *“With a few images and a title on top of it: top five of [...] the nicest cities. And that links to an article”.*

Table 12

Type of content created on Pinterest

Codes	Definition	Example
Pinterest: travel content 7 comments	Something is said about travel content specifically on Pinterest.	<i>“What we have noticed is that you can also very well provide atmospheres and inspiration in the field of travel”.</i> (Marketeer with low Sensation Seeking target group).
Pinterest: type of content 31 comments	Something is said about the type of content that fits Pinterest.	<i>“On Pinterest there is generally just an image with the text on it and the link to my website. So that is much more meant to click through to my website.”.</i> (High Sensation Seeking blogger with high Sensation Seeking target group).

Nine main categories were created about how Pinterest is used and what it offers (Table 13). Firstly, four comments were made about how people are redirected to Pinterest from Google when they search for something. Next, in three comments something was said about that the effect of posting on Pinterest seems to give good, quick results and even old content performs well as described by a high Sensation Seeking blogger with both a low and high Sensation Seeking target group: *“But what is striking is, for example, that we put a photo on Pinterest a while ago and it went very well. That photo then disappeared for two months and then suddenly it performs really well again”*. In 10 given comments, the lack of interaction on Pinterest is stated and therefore it is perceived as a more passive medium. Seven comments were fashioned about the lack of resources as to why Pinterest is not used. The main reasons given were: capacity, attention and time as underlined by a marketer with a low Sensation Seeking target group: *“We are having some capacity issues in our department right now, so ideally I would like to do a little more there on Pinterest than we are doing right now”*. In two given comments it was expected that a lower posting frequency than Instagram is acceptable on Pinterest.

Eight comments were made about a reason as to why somebody or a company might potentially want to use Pinterest. The main reason given was about the search engine feature, also some general interest in all that Pinterest offers is seen as a reason to why potentially use it. 10 comments were given about that Pinterest is seen a photo search engine, it is stated that it is easy to let Pinterest search for something. A high Sensation Seeking traveller describes this as: *“Pinterest is actually a kind of Google with everything in one place where I happen to be able to save the Google images”*. One presumably very strong usage feature of Pinterest is the possibility to lead people to a website from the content on Pinterest and it is a strong SEO builder, as there were 20 comments made about this. Also, visitors like it that they can visit a website when interesting content is found, as explained by a high Sensation Seeking traveller: *“On Pinterest it is also very easy to have those links to certain websites that you can click on. [...] So that you easily end up on blogs via certain links”*. Finally, five comments were fashioned about the possibility to save things on Pinterest on a board, this is seen as convenient.

Table 13

Different ways Pinterest is used

Codes	Definition	Example
Pinterest: directed from Google 4 comments	Something is said about that people are directed to Pinterest after starting their initial search on Google.	<i>“I also sometimes find quotes on it. Then I look for quotes via Pinterest. Or actually I Google them and then I always end up on Pinterest”</i> . (High Sensation Seeking traveller).

Pinterest: immediate effect 3 comments	Something is said about that posting something on Pinterest gives an (immediate) effect in engagement/ traffic/ numbers.	<i>"But we are aware that, on a certain basis, we must at least ensure that new things are added. When we do that, we immediately see peaks in analytics".</i> (Marketeer with low Sensation Seeking target group).
Pinterest: lack of interaction 10 comments	Something is said about the lack of interaction that takes place on Pinterest.	<i>"Pinterest is a channel where basically zero interaction takes place, but we are active on it, but on the back burner".</i> (Marketeer with both low and high Sensation Seeking target group).
Pinterest: lack of resources 7 comments	Something is said about the lack of resources available to be able to use Pinterest at all or to be able to use Pinterest more.	<i>"We also have a Pinterest account, but we don't use that anymore purely because of a lack of time. And so I know when I just started as helping hands I thought: well Pinterest, we are going to make beautiful boards. But, no it takes too much time".</i> (Marketeer with low Sensation Seeking target group).
Pinterest: posting frequency 2 comments	Something is said about the posting frequency on Pinterest.	<i>"And what we have worked is that with a slightly lower frequency on Pinterest you can actually achieve a lot when you are actually doing something".</i> (Marketeer with low Sensation Seeking target group).
Pinterest: reason to potentially use it 8 comments	Something is said about a reason as to why the person/ company might decide to start using Pinterest in the future.	<i>"I think I would never use it to post photos myself, but I might think: okay, for example for styling your living room or finding a new travel location or that sort of thing, then maybe".</i> (High Sensation Seeking traveller).
Pinterest: search engine 10 comments	Something is said that describes Pinterest as a search engine.	<i>"It's just a really good search engine, actually. Just type in something and Pinterest will find it all".</i> (Marketeer with low Sensation Seeking target group).
Pinterest: traffic to website 20 comments	Something is said about that Pinterest leads traffic from Pinterest to the website of the person/ company.	<i>"I really only use Pinterest to get traffic to the website. So what I do is, when I discover a new place I post it on Pinterest. But I myself am not actively pinning or responding to others, so it is purely a kind of conduit to my website".</i> (Low Sensation Seeking blogger with low Sensation Seeking target group).
Pinterest: use to save things 5 comments	Something is said about the option to use Pinterest to save things/ to pin things to a board.	<i>"While on Pinterest, [everything] is stored on those boards".</i> (High Sensation Seeking blogger with high Sensation Seeking target group).

To conclude, it is expected that Instagram mostly fits both low and high Sensation Seekers, Snapchat high Sensation Seekers and Pinterest low Sensation Seekers. With regard to Instagram, the feed and the stories are presumably the most used and important types of Instagram content. The content shown on Instagram should be the best and the most pretty besides being unique as well. On Snapchat, the content is described as temporary, short and showing both everyday activities but also exciting things like nightlife. The content on Pinterest should be created with a text in a photo and a link to a website. The content should be informative, unique and different than what is found on other platforms.

The usage of Instagram should be frequent and for a younger target audience in general. Snapchat is mostly used between friends and by a younger audience. It is not (yet) used for business travel content but there are some factors that could change this. Finally, Pinterest is mostly used and prided for its convenient search engine functionality and that it is easy to

redirect traffic from Pinterest to another website. However, there is a lack of interaction on Pinterest and it is seen a more passive social media platform.

4.3 Low and high Sensation Seeking content themes

In this section, the results to the third research question “*What themes in visual online social media content are relevant to post on a social media page to position oneself in the field of either the low or high Sensation Seeking personality trait with regard to travellers?*” will be given. In the interviews, the participants visualized either low and/ or high Sensation Seeking activities and/ or content. They did this by describing the kind of activities, people, sights etc. they associated with either low or high Sensation Seeking. The results from these visualizations are given below starting with low Sensation Seeking, followed by high Sensation Seeking and ending with a mix between low and high Sensation Seeking content.

4.3.1 Low Sensation Seeking content

When talking about low Sensation Seeking content, the participants came up with several themes and characteristics which were repeated on multiple times (Table 14). With regard to the themes, low Sensation Seeking content consists of the showing of calm activities, cities and/ or villages, culinary activities, history and culture, museums, nature, and touristy activities. Firstly, calm activities were mentioned 19 times, these are activities like being outdoors and doing an easy hike or bike tour, going to the beach and shopping. The presence of cities and/ or villages is commented on 17 times. Mainly just the visible presence of the atmosphere of a(n) (authentic) town seems to be important here. Culinary activities received 22 comments. Most were about the genuine experience of food and/ or drinks. A high Sensation Seeking traveller visualizes this by stating: “*Or a very nice breakfast from a hotel room with the Eiffel Tower in the background*”. 24 comments were made about history and culture (museums excluded). Images with heritage, churches, (Dutch) architecture, castles, monuments, windmills, language and culture, theatre and libraries are thought of in this category. Aside from the before mentioned cultural activities, museums were brought up 13 times. Nature was mentioned 36 times. Low Sensation Seeking nature images is expected to consist of: sunsets, the beach, the polder, Dutch nature, forests, traditional landscapes and the country side. A marketeer with a low Sensation Seeking target group describes low Sensation Seeking nature as: “*Then I do indeed think landscape. And then maybe a bit more the traditional landscape. So with us, that will be hills or just a lot of green*”. And finally, 15 comments were made about touristy activities. Examples given were: the Eiffel Tower, the border triangle, amusement parks, a zoo, the Sydney opera house, climbing a church tower, mass activities and iconic places in a city.

Besides the above mentioned themes, comments were also made about the characteristics of the content like: the amount of people in the picture, doing research prior to traveling, travelling with family, joining tour operator trips and the general image specs. Firstly, the amount of people in the picture received eight comments, seven of these comments state that there should at least be people present on the picture. Three comments were made about doing research prior to travelling, this can be visualized by showing planned activities or giving the story behind the picture. About travelling with family, seven comments were made. These are mainly about the travel company, children included. About tour operator trips, six comments were fashioned, most visualizing this as bus tour holidays, cruising and package holidays. A high Sensation Seeking blogger with a high Sensation Seeking target group describes this as follows: *“Something that immediately comes to mind is a cruise boat, for example. That [the cruise] you join with 100,000 other people is low for me”*. Finally, the general image specs of a low Sensation Seeking photo received 11 comments. Most state that a low Sensation Seeking image should radiate calmness and tranquillity, where detail is important. The image is pure and pretty. A marketer with both a low and high Sensation Seeking target group illustrates: *“It [the picture] doesn't have to be very flashy, but it does look very cosy”*.

47 comments were made when the participants were asked to describe a stereotypical low Sensation Seeking photo. Most of the above mentioned themes and/ or characteristics were indeed spoken of. However, some little features revealed themselves, like that the age groups is perceived to be of higher age with low Sensation Seeking or perceiving low Sensation Seekers as families with children.

Table 14

Low Sensation Seeking content themes

Codes	Definition	Example
LSS and HSS: mix <i>17 comments</i>	The content shown, portrays a mix of both high and low Sensation Seeking content (could be because of various reasons). Something could also be said about the gap between high and low Sensation Seeking content, therefore implying a mix of content is present or that the subject could be both low and high and context is important.	<i>“So that is really a mix of both, because I certainly do not want to say that I only place adventurous activities. But also just nature and I find it so difficult, because I also want to show that the special and the unusual can be in something that does not seem so interesting at first glance. I think I'm really showing a mix. And that I do that quite consciously, because I also know that my target group is like that because I know that they want to see the excitement, but not only because then I would also lose them that way”</i> . (High Sensation Seeking blogger with high Sensation Seeking target group).

LSS: (amount of) people 8 comments	Something is said about the amount of people on an image in relationship to low Sensation Seeking. Could be a very small statement.	<i>"That the photo was taken from behind so that you don't necessarily see the face"</i> . (Marketeer with low Sensation Seeking target group).
LSS: calm activity 19 comments	Something is said about a calm activity in relationship to low Sensation Seeking. Could be a very small statement. Example: cycling, hiking (both calm intensity), shopping.	<i>"Which are something different than just walking around the lake"</i> . (High Sensation Seeking blogger with high Sensation Seeking target group).
LSS: city/village 17 comments	Something is said about a city or village in relationship to low Sensation Seeking. Could be a very small statement.	<i>"And just someone who is walking through a city, who just stands in the city and takes a picture there in a beautiful street or sitting on a terrace somewhere"</i> . (High Sensation Seeking blogger with both low and Sensation Seeking target group).
LSS: culinary 22 comments	Something is said about a culinary activity in relationship to low Sensation Seeking. Could be a very small statement.	<i>"Then I see a couple with a glass of wine in their hand at sunset by the sea. And then toast to life at a trendy beach bar"</i> . (Low Sensation Seeking blogger with low Sensation Seeking target group).
LSS: doing research 3 comments	Something is said about doing research prior to going on vacation in relationship to low Sensation Seeking. Could be a very small statement.	<i>"Someone who just does research, who knows where he is going and who also goes more for himself than just social media"</i> . (Marketeer with both low and high Sensation Seeking target group).
LSS: family 7 comments	Something is said about family in relationship to low Sensation Seeking. Could be a very small statement.	<i>"Of course again the attractions for children or family outings"</i> . (Marketeer with low Sensation Seeking target group).
LSS: history and culture 24 comments	Something is said about historical and/ or cultural activities in relationship to low Sensation Seeking. Could be a very small statement. Important: if a museum is mentioned, the code museum needs to be used.	<i>"We are quite interested in or again in monuments, mills, etc. we like. For example, Kinderdijk and windmills could be that. Or recently we visited the city gate of Delft"</i> . (High Sensation Seeking blogger with both low and high Sensation Seeking target group).
LSS: image specs 11 comments	Something is said about the specifications of an image in relationship to low Sensation Seeking. Could be a very small statement. Could be about composition, serenity, etc.	<i>"At low I think there is much more calm image, slomo video is also possible, but all tranquil"</i> . (Marketeer with low Sensation Seeking target group).
LSS: museum 13 comments	Something is said about a museum in relationship to low Sensation Seeking. Could be a very small statement. Important: museum needs to be mentioned, otherwise the code history and culture could be used.	<i>"Well, I think at low also just a museum, an art museum, just the Rijksmuseum or something like that. Where just plain paintings are hanging"</i> . (High Sensation Seeking traveller).
LSS: nature 36 comments	Something is said about nature in relationship to low Sensation Seeking. Could be a very small statement. Low Sensation Seeking nature could be described as: flat, easy to access.	<i>"So nature, which I just said, rather the coast for example. And not the coast of strong wind and kite surfing, but the coast of just beautiful or rolling hilly landscapes, South Limburg something like that"</i> . (High Sensation Seeking blogger with high Sensation Seeking target group).
LSS: touristy destinations/activities 15 comments	Something is said about typical touristy destinations and/ or activities in relationship to low Sensation Seeking. Could be a very small statement. For example: the Eiffel tower in Paris.	<i>"Because those are actually the typical destinations you can actually go to when you go to that country. So just like the Eiffel Tower in Paris, for example. Really those typical sights that you go to when you go to that country"</i> . (Low Sensation Seeking traveller).

LSS: tour operator 6 comments	Something is said about travelling by tour operator in relationship to low Sensation Seeking. Could be a very small statement.	<i>“Then I would really think of a bus group trip, I think that is very low. Just do nothing on the bus, you will be dropped off everywhere, planned and nothing else. So really completely organized”.</i> (High Sensation Seeking traveller).
Stereotype LSS content 47 comments	Something is said about what the person perceives as stereotypical low Sensation Seeking content. Here, an ultimate low Sensation Seeking picture is described. This code is used to code the final question from the interview guide.	<i>“But I also just see a lot of those urban things in front of me. And some more library photos, because they are sometimes very nice large libraries like in Prague or something like that, you know. Or a very nice breakfast from a hotel room with the Eiffel Tower in the background. I see things like that there”.</i> (High Sensation Seeking traveller).

4.3.2 High Sensation Seeking content

Similar as to low Sensation Seeking, participants also came up with multiple themes and characteristics for high Sensation Seeking content (Table 15). With regard to the themes, the participants mentioned the following: (unique) travel destinations, adventurous activities, concerts and/ or festivals, culinary activities, extreme sports, locals, nature, nightlife and water. Firstly, (unique) travel destinations received 26 comments. Most were about exotic destinations, special places to stay overnight, places of the beaten track and undiscovered places. About adventurous activities were 35 comments made. Most participants visualized this as: a mountain hike, sitting on the edge of a cliff or on the top of a mountain, bungee jumping, rafting, motorbiking and dark tourism (travelling to places linked with death and tragedy). A high Sensation Seeking blogger with a high Sensation Seeking target group describes an adventurous activity as follows: *“When you jump off a mountain in a special suit. [...] A wingsuit”*. One part of adventurous activities is extreme sports. This was mentioned 19 times. The described sports were: kitesurfing, paragliding, skydiving, sea sailing, rock climbing, snowboarding and mountain biking. A high Sensation Seeking traveller sums this up by stating: *“Especially sporty, so for example snowboarding, mountain climbing, mountain biking, let's just say, all of those sports. Skydiving”*.

Concerts and/ or festivals got 11 comments made about them. These activities are generally perceived as high Sensation Seeking however most participants state that these kind of pictures do not work on social media. In addition to this, nightlife received nine comments. However nightlife is not seen as an extreme form of high Sensation Seeking content as it is generally seen as quite normal. Two comments were made about culinary activities described as an exclusive, Burgundian setting. About an interaction of some sort with locals were seven comments made, mostly combining it with a food experience like described by a high Sensation Seeking blogger with both a low and high Sensation Seeking target group: *“Trying local food,*

such as a street food market in Thailand for example, I also think is high [Sensation Seeking]”. Nature received 15 comments. High Sensation Seeking nature images are expected to consist of: mountains, non-Dutch landscapes, extreme landscapes and being in the middle of nowhere. A high Sensation Seeking traveller describes this as: *“I would rather really go for that extreme something [nature], which is unique to me as a Dutch person”*. Continuing on, water was mentioned six times, three of these comments were about diving.

Besides the themes, the characteristics were about independent travel, people in the picture and the image specs. 10 comments were made about independent travel, mostly talking about solo travel or planning ones own trip. About people in the picture, 12 comments were fashioned. Here, most comments were about that a person needs to be present to show the effort that is done to get to the location to be able to feel like joining them in that moment. A high Sensation Seeking traveller explains this by saying: *“Come to think of it, because high [Sensation Seeking] is about activities, about doing things, and those are verbs and you need people for that”*. Finally, the general image specs of a high Sensation Seeking photo received seven comments. Most state that a high Sensation Seeking image should contain movement, colours, emotion and drone shots. A marketer with a low Sensation Seeking target group describes this as follows: *“And with high [Sensation Seeking images] I see a bit more movement, speed, so someone who does something and that you can also see the expression”*.

43 comments were made when the participants were asked to describe a stereotypical high Sensation Seeking photo. Most of the above mentioned themes and/ or characteristics were indeed brought up. However, there were some new aspects that showed up, like: the age group is being perceived as younger with high Sensation Seeking and high Sensation Seekers are thought of as having no children. Also, it is thought that it is very important that for high Sensation Seeking content, an activity of some sort is shown.

Table 15

High Sensation Seeking content themes

Codes	Definition	Example
LSS and HSS: mix 17 comments	The content shown, portrays a mix of both high and low Sensation Seeking content (could be because of various reasons). Something could also be said about the gap between high and low Sensation Seeking content, therefore implying a mix of content is present or that the subject could be both low and high and context is important.	<i>“So that is really a mix of both, because I certainly do not want to say that I only place adventurous activities. But also just nature and I find it so difficult, because I also want to show that the special and the unusual can be in something that does not seem so interesting at first glance. I think I'm really showing a mix. And that I do that quite consciously, because I also know that my target group is like that because I know that they want</i>

		<i>to see the excitement, but not only because then I would also lose them that way”.</i> (High Sensation Seeking blogger with high Sensation Seeking target group).
HSS: (unique) travel destinations 26 comments	Something is said about a (unique) travel destination in relationship to high Sensation Seeking. Could be a very small statement.	<i>“And I think the part of traveling is for me that undiscovered, that trackless path, those are the most beautiful memories”.</i> (High Sensation Seeking traveller).
HSS: adventurous activity 35 comments	Something is said about an adventurous activity of some sort in relationship to high Sensation Seeking. Could be a very small statement. Important: when the activity fits the extreme sports code, it is placed there.	<i>“I also had a look at rafting, some five star raft, some white water rafting. On top of a mountain with a snowy moustache, like: yes I made it”.</i> (Low Sensation Seeking blogger with low Sensation Seeking target group).
HSS: concerts/festivals 11 comments	Something is said about concerts/ festivals in relationship to high Sensation Seeking. Could be a very small statement.	<i>“I think festivals also fit in very well with that. Images of it of people partying”.</i> (Marketeer with both low and high Sensation Seeking target group).
HSS: culinary 2 comments	Something is said about some sort of culinary activity in relationship to high Sensation Seeking. Could be a very small statement.	<i>“The Burgundian lifestyle. Well, that's really something we focus on as it were, but it's just not really used on Instagram. I certainly see a fancy terrace or something similar in front of me. I also see that with the high target group Sensation seeking”.</i> (Marketeer with low Sensation Seeking target group).
HSS: extreme sports 19 comments	Something is said about some sort of extreme sports in relationship to high Sensation Seeking. Could be a very small statement. Important: if the activity described could not be seen as a sport, it can be placed under the code adventurous activity.	<i>“Especially sporty, so for example snowboarding, mountain climbing, mountain biking, let's just say, all of those sports. Skydiving ...”.</i> (High Sensation Seeking traveller).
HSS: image specs 7 comments	Something is said about the specifications of an image in relationship to high Sensation Seeking. Could be a very small statement. Could be about composition, colour, etc.	<i>“High is much more colourful, is much more dynamic, is much more movement”.</i> (Marketeer with low Sensation Seeking target group).
HSS: independent 10 comments	Something is said about being independent/ solo travel in relationship to high Sensation Seeking. Could be a very small statement.	<i>“For example China, we just went there independently. Have arranged everything ourselves, no travel organizations, nothing. And we like that, it is also exciting, that is what makes traveling fun”.</i> (High Sensation Seeking blogger with high Sensation Seeking target group).
HSS: locals 7 comments	Something is said about the locals in relationship to high Sensation Seeking. Could be a very small statement.	<i>“Or someone who is eating with his hands with a local population somewhere in South Africa”.</i> (High Sensation Seeking traveller).
HSS: nature 15 comments	Something is said about nature in relationship to high Sensation Seeking. Could be a very small statement. HSS nature could be described as: mountains, difficult to reach, more extreme.	<i>“Then I really see a lot more forest and water. For example, that someone is standing on a well-known mountain in Norway, is really such a typical picture that I can now see in front of me”.</i> (High Sensation Seeking traveller).
HSS: nightlife 9 comments	Something is said about nightlife in relationship to high Sensation Seeking. Could be a very small statement.	<i>“The nightlife that people post pictures of: oh gone out, it has become five o'clock, we were in bed at seven. Yes, I can see that fitting high”.</i> (Low Sensation Seeking traveller).

HSS: people in the picture 12 comments	Something is said about the presence of a person in the picture in relationship to high Sensation Seeking. Could be a very small statement.	<i>“But I also see a lot more the role of a person being visible because then you can empathize with that adrenaline moment much more”.</i> (High Sensation Seeking blogger with high Sensation Seeking target group).
HSS: water 6 comments	Something is said about water in relationship to high Sensation Seeking. Could be a very small statement.	<i>“Water sounds so stupid but just ocean or in terms of diving I always find that very interesting”.</i> (High Sensation Seeking traveller).
Stereotype HSS content 43 comments	Something is said about what the person perceives as stereotypical high Sensation Seeking content. Here, an ultimate high Sensation Seeking picture is described. This code is used to code the final question from the interview guide.	<i>“Anyone alone on top of a very large mountain. Or someone who is eating with his hands with a local population somewhere in South Africa or someone who is camping everywhere and nowhere in the wild nature with his own tent and his car”.</i> (High Sensation Seeking traveller).

4.3.3 Mix low and high Sensation Seeking

In Tables 14 and 15 the category low and high Sensation Seeking content mix was also shown. 17 comments were made about this and the participants described this mix as something that is between low and high Sensation Seeking activities. One example given is that of bouldering, this could be done at various levels and when it is at an accessible level, it is perceived to fit both groups. A high Sensation Seeking blogger with a high Sensation Seeking target group states: *“Recently I posted something about bouldering. That was indoor, and that is of course not as extreme as climbing mountains. See that's an example of what's a little in between. On the one hand, people see it as adventurous but quite accessible, because in principle anyone can do that. But not so extreme that people think: oh yeah, I'm not even going to get into that”.*

Another type of mixed content between low and high Sensation seeking is that of showing both kinds of content. A high Sensation Seeking blogger with both a low and high Sensation Seeking target group explains this by saying: *“I recently wrote an article about [a trip]. Then you can say [write]: one day you could go to a museum and another day you could do a cool hike, something adventurous. Then you could divide it like that”.*

4.4 Other relevant findings

Some findings were left uncategorized but still very relevant to this research. They are therefore combined in this ‘other’ category (Table 16). One comment was made about a blogger stating that the type of Sensation Seeking depends on the trip and three comments were made about the same statement but then made by a traveller. They say that the type, the purpose and the destination of the trip and the travel experience in general plays a part in deciding the level of Sensation Seeking that is preferred for that specific trip. Another interesting finding is that six comments were made stating that low Sensation Seeking relates to being introvert and high

Sensation Seeking to being extravert. One requirement made by multiple participants is about the quality of the picture, 12 comments were made about this saying that it does not matter whether content is low or high Sensation Seeking or on what platform it is posted; the quality of the image needs to be good as described by a high Sensation Seeking blogger with both a low and high Sensation Seeking target group: *“I do believe in quality over quantity. I would rather post good, beautiful photos than post a lot of trash just to post”*.

Another big finding is the perceived difference between the three platforms, 33 comments were made about this. Instagram is expected to be used for engagement and Pinterest for clicks to a website. As well as, Pinterest is perceived to be used for searching things, on Instagram scrolling is much more thought of as common. Instagram is also seen as being about inspiration and Pinterest about information. Furthermore, because of the option of posting stories on Instagram alongside a multitude of other features, using stories on Snapchat is expected to be much less interesting as Snapchat does not offer much else. In addition to this, because it is possible to build a profile on Instagram, this is perceived as a more interesting platform than Snapchat which is only temporary. Furthermore Pinterest is seen as more personal. And Instagram and Snapchat are used to share with others. Finally, Instagram and Pinterest are thought of as being about pretty pictures, Snapchat is not and is much more raw.

To end with, besides the coded findings, it was also noticed that the majority of the participants mentioned a change in how they travel and where they travelled to this past year because of the Covid-19 pandemic. They stated they re-discovered the Netherlands and that they might keep travelling nationally in the future as well. They also mentioned, sometimes even in passing, that the type of content that they post has changed (bloggers and DMO-marketeers) or that they are interested in other types of content in the current situation (travellers and a few bloggers).

Table 16

Other relevant inductive findings

Codes	Definition	Example
Blogger: depends on trip <i>I comment</i>	Blogger describes that her level of Sensation Seeking depends on the type of trip that she will undertake.	<i>“It may also depend a bit on the type of trip. I have the idea that a low comes out a bit more during a city trip. And then high, if I have been traveling for a long time or really travel through an entire country, then high comes out a bit more. I have the idea that the high is also less suitable for a city, okay going out then again suits the city and nightlife. Don’t know, the adventurous fits a bit more when you really travel through a country”</i> .

Traveller: depends on trip 3 comments	Traveller describes that his/ her level of Sensation Seeking depends on the type of trip that he/ she will undertake.	(High Sensation Seeking blogger with both low and high Sensation Seeking target group). “Well, I think that depends very much on the trip or vacation that I make, because my first trip I can put myself in low. My second and third trip are actually in high. But it really illuminates with what purpose I am going there and what I was going to do and who I am with, that is”.
SS -> introvert/ extravert 6 comments	Something is said about either low or high Sensation Seeking that relates to being introvert or extravert.	(High Sensation Seeking traveller). “If I think about it a little bit more, I think that introverts are very low, and extroverts are very high. So let's just say that those are also very much the personality differences”.
Quality of the picture 12 comments	Something is said about the (technical) quality of the picture. Important: this information needs to be separate to either low or high Sensation Seeking codes. It could be described as a separate requirement in relation to content in general.	(High Sensation Seeking traveller). “So there is also a condition for me. I would like to follow someone, but they should be able to take some nice pictures. At the moment when it's just interesting, but it's an ugly picture: I don't care about that”.
Difference in platforms 33 comments	Something is said about a difference between the platforms (Instagram, Pinterest and/ or Snapchat). Not all three need to be mentioned, but at least two and some comparison needs to be mentioned.	(High Sensation Seeking traveller). “I think Pinterest is a bit more for yourself in that regard. And Instagram and Snapchat also more for sharing something with someone else”.

4.5 Difference low versus high Sensation Seeking

The majority of the main differences between low and high Sensation Seeking have already been presented in the above findings. However, an additional interesting difference between low and high Sensation Seeking is that high Sensation Seekers/ people with a high Sensation Seeking target group talk more about high Sensation Seeking themes than low Sensation Seeking themes in their interviews. A similar finding is found for low Sensation Seekers/ people with a low Sensation Seeking target group, they also talk more about low Sensation Seeking themes than high Sensation Seeking themes in their interviews. Between the three groups, this is all in line with each other, DMO-marketeers, travellers and tourism bloggers all talk equally less or more about either low or high Sensation Seeking depending their self assigned level of Sensation Seeking or the self assigned level of Sensation Seeking of their target group.

Especially when talking about high Sensation Seeking nature, high Sensation Seekers/ people with a high Sensation Seeking target group talk more about this than low Sensation Seekers/ people with a low Sensation Seeking target group. The other way around, when talking about low Sensation Seeking nature, this is slightly true. Low Sensation Seekers/ people with a low Sensation Seeking target group do talk more about it, but it is in fact also mentioned by several high Sensation Seekers/ people with a high Sensation Seeking target group.

5. Discussion

5.1 Discussion of the results

In this chapter, the results found in Chapter 4 will be discussed by comparing it to previous research, reviewing the theoretical and practical implications of this research for the field of tourism social media research and providing the limitations and ideas for future research.

5.1.1 The difference in online and offline preferences regarding Sensation Seeking. As described in section 4.1, it is expected to be important that online content is in line with offline preferences regarding Sensation Seeking. This is because it was described that people want to see what they are already interested in. This is supported by research done by Lu et al. (2017) who found that information that satisfies people's psychological needs and preferences leads to a positive attitude to the received message. They presumed that content that relates to people's level of Sensation Seeking, would lead to a more favourable attitude towards said content. Therefore, in the case of visual social media content, implying that this content needs to show similar activities/ sights/ people etc. to what is preferred in real life.

It was also found that low Sensation Seekers presumably prefer both low and high Sensation Seeking content while high Sensation Seekers only favour high Sensation Seeking content. A possible explanation could be that on social media, content always needs to be one step extremer than one would do in real life. This could explain why high Sensation Seeking content could work for both low and high Sensation Seekers but low Sensation Seeking content only for low Sensation Seekers. Showing less extreme content might not work as demonstrated by the result that high Sensation Seekers do not favour low Sensation Seeking content as it already falls within the comfort zone. This phenomenon is described as an 'extremity bias' by Bigley and Leonhardt (2018). They describe extremity bias as "*a preference for the consumption and creation of more verses less extreme content*" (p. 125). On social media this is established through creating and/ or consuming content that is more extreme than one would do in real life. The concept is relatively new and little research has been done, therefore this current study adds to the knowledge about this concept.

And finally, to answer the first research question: "*How do travellers with different levels of the Sensation Seeking personality trait differ in being interested in online social media visual content that shows the same or matching activities/ sights/ people/ etc. that they are interested in while offline, real life travelling according to experts?*", it can be stated that travellers with a low level of Sensation Seeking will prefer both low and high Sensation content as opposed to travellers with a high level of Sensation Seeking who only favour high Sensation

Seeking content on social media. In general it could be stated that the content shown online should be in line with the offline preference. However, extremity bias might play a role when the content shown on social media is a bit more extreme than that of the real world counterpart.

5.1.2 The difference in visual social media platforms. With regard to Instagram it was found that it is expected to fit both low and high Sensation Seekers as users of the platform. This might be because Instagram is such a big platform with more than one billion users on a monthly basis (Instagram, n.d.), therefore there are all kinds of accounts to follow. As described by Maijd (2019), all kinds of users make use of the platform, from personal to business use. Also, as stated in the current study, there are multiple different features within Instagram. It could be thought of as the possibility that everyone could create ones own combination of features as to what they prefer to create and consume. Therefore it could also be implied that because Instagram is such a broad platform, there is something to find for everyone and thus might fit both low and high Sensation Seekers as users of the platform.

Snapchat is seen as a platform that generally best fits high Sensation Seekers according to the results of this study because of the fast content and younger audience. This is interesting because in literature the type of content that is portrayed does not seem to fit the description and the content themes of high Sensation Seeking. Piwek and Joinson (2016) found that Snapchats are mostly send because of a desire to share funny, personal or emotional content or out of boredom. In the results of the current study it was found that everyday activities are a popular Snapchat theme, adding to the finding of Piwek and Joinson (2016). Piwek and Joinson also found that Snapchats are mainly send from home and send in the late morning/ early afternoon or in the evening. Besides from the evening time of sending Snapchats, the other findings from Piwek and Joinson do mostly fit the low level of arousal description of low Sensation Seekers provided by Zuckerman (1979). An explanation given in the current study as to why Snapchat is seen as a high Sensation Seeking platform is because of the age of the users, these are mainly young people (Generation Z/ early Millennials) as explained by Kusa and Zazikova (2016). The relationship between age and Sensation Seeking has been researched by Zuckerman (1979), he describes that Sensation Seeking increases with age until adolescence and then decreases as one gets older. The user group of Snapchat therefore falls in the presumed high Sensation Seeking category when looking at their ages. Also in the current study, another popular use of Snapchat is to send nightlife Snapchats, combined with sending Snapchat in the evening (Piwek & Joinson, 2016), this fits high Sensation Seeking and could be an explanation as to why Snapchat is being seen to fit high Sensation Seekers.

Continuing, Pinterest is expected to fit low Sensation Seekers as users because it is less communicative and older people use it. This finding could be seen as surprising when related to content shown on Pinterest. Because the results from this study showed that Pinterest is especially interesting for off the beaten track activities and unknown, unpopular destinations, which fit the high Sensation Seeking description. This is also underlined by Gretzel (2021) who found that pinned travel content on Pinterest barely contains any churches and temples, food and iconic travel destinations; typical low Sensation Seeking themes. Han et al. (2017) also found that the low Sensation Seeking themes: design, architecture and film, music and books, have a relatively low virality thus popularity on Pinterest. However, as already stated in the results of the current study, Pinterest is seen as fitting low Sensation Seekers because of the perceived older age of the users. Pinterest is indeed more used by relatively older people compared to other social media platforms: 42% of the users is 50 years or older (Tankovska, 2021). As previously mentioned, Zuckerman (1979) found that the level of Sensation Seeking decreases with age. So because this group is relatively older, it can be assumed that their level of Sensation Seeking is also lower. Additionally, women are the main user group (Gilbert et al., 2013; Voorveld et al., 2018), Zuckerman (1979) also found that women have a lower level of Sensation Seeking than men. Therefore this could also play a role as in why Pinterest is seen as a fitting platform for low Sensation Seekers.

And finally, to answer the second research question: *“how do the different visual social media platforms (Instagram, Pinterest and Snapchat) differ in being preferred by travellers with different levels of the Sensation Seeking personality trait?”*, it can be stated that according to the findings of this study: Instagram is preferred by both low and high Sensation Seekers, Snapchat by high Sensation Seekers and Pinterest by low Sensation Seekers.

5.1.3 The themes of the visual social media content. It was found that low Sensation Seeking content themes show calm activities, cities and/ or villages, culinary activities, history and culture, museums, nature, and touristy activities. With regard to the characteristics of an image, it was found that there should be people present in the picture, and that research is done beforehand. Also that low Sensation Seekers content could show travelling with family (including children) and tour operator travels. Finally, a low Sensation Seeking image should show tranquillity, calmness, details and is pure and pretty.

When comparing these results to previous research done, it can be said that the results from the current study support the findings of previous studies done about Sensation Seeking in the tourism industry (Eachus, 2004; Lepp & Gibson, 2008; Pizam et al., 2001; Pizam et al,

2004; Zuckerman, 1979). The preferred content themes and the showing of family and tour operator travels can be seen as indeed fitting low Sensation Seeking according to prior research. However, this research also presented some new findings specifically about social media content. It was found that low Sensation Seeking content should presumably show people, tranquillity, calmness, details and be pure and pretty. Additionally, it was found that low Sensation Seekers are expected to do more research and therefore presumably prefer information-centred content.

High Sensation Seeking content themes are described as (unique) travel destinations, adventurous activities, concerts and/ or festivals, culinary activities, extreme sports, locals, nature, nightlife and water. With regard to the image characteristics, high Sensation Seeking content should show independent travel, people in the picture and the image specs.

When analysing these findings in relation to previous tourism Sensation Seeking research (Eachus, 2004; Lepp & Gibson, 2008; Pizam et al., 2001; Pizam et al, 2004; Zuckerman, 1979), most results are in line with what is found in these previous studies and therefore the themes and independent travel can indeed be supported as fitting high Sensation Seekers according to the current study. Some new findings are about social media content in particular and some new themes that have not yet been previously used to show the preference of high Sensation Seekers. The content themes ‘culinary activities’, ‘locals’ and ‘water’ are new to add to the high Sensation Seeking literature. Their descriptions do fit the high stimulation level that is used to describe high Sensation Seeking activities. Therefore, these new themes could potentially be used in further research to describe high Sensation Seekers and their preferences. With regard to social media content, high Sensation Seeking content could portrait movement, colours, emotion and drone shots and have people present performing an activity.

Finally, to answer the third and final research question “*what themes in visual online social media content are relevant to post on a social media page to position oneself in the field of either the low or high Sensation Seeking personality trait with regard to travellers?*”, it can be stated that the aforementioned themes and characteristics are relevant to post on social media to appeal to either low or high Sensation Seeking travellers. A mix between high and low Sensation Seeking content could be used to attract both groups of travellers who identify themselves in between low and high Sensation Seeking.

5.1.4 Other relevant findings. In this section, some relevant findings who do not directly fit in the aforementioned section, will be discussed. Firstly, it was found that the level of Sensation Seeking one identifies with could depend on the type of trip one is going to

undertake. This could be described through the concept of change seeking (Yıldırım & Çakici, 2020). Yıldırım and Çakici describe this concept as “*the behavio[u]r of searching different alternatives in order to create diversity*” (p. 102). In tourism this is outed through the desire of wanting to visit different destinations each trip, travelling to lesser known areas, or choosing a different style of travelling. However, it is interesting that Yıldırım and Çakici found that a high aspiration of change seeking is related to a higher level of Sensation Seeking. This is in line with the self assigned level of Sensation Seeking of the participants in the current study (high Sensation Seekers), who mentioned that the level of Sensation Seeking one identifies with while travelling could depend on the type of trip. However, it is not clear if the desire of change seeking also leads to an outing of different levels of Sensation Seeking or sought arousal in the different trips one takes, this is not described by Yıldırım and Çakici (2020).

5.2 Original value of the study

In the introduction it was described that it was expected that this research adds to several existing research gaps because of the novelty of the topic and the chosen research design. In this section, the additions to these gaps will be elaborated on. This research added knowledge to the field of tourism social media research as well as a contribution to the Covid-19 study field.

To start with, this study is relevant because it adds knowledge to the gap of visual social media content research in multiple ways. Gretzel (2017) described the dearth of studies about the classification of different content topics related to travel content and how the different visual platforms could be used in social media strategies. The current study has seemingly classified the different content themes that might belong to both low and high Sensation Seeking which can be used in visual social media content providing a way to categorize content into groups. Additionally, it became apparent which visual social media platforms (Instagram, Snapchat and/ or Pinterest) could best be used for either low and/ or high Sensation Seekers, how these platforms can best be used and what (travel) content fits these platforms.

This research also benefits the online tourism research field by adding to some under-researched topics as described by Zarezadeh et al. (2018). Firstly, the study gave an expectation of content themes that could fit either low or high Sensation Seekers and what platforms suit them best. It could be stated that these insights might help build the travel identity construction of the people looking for travel content. This could be because these groups can be targeted more easily. This could lead to the formation of in-groups and out-groups as explained through the Social Identity Theory (Tajfel et al. 1979). Because of a better creation of the preferred

online environment of the target group, they could more easily find and connect to these accounts/ pages and therefore create an in-group, thus enhancing the feeling of pride and self esteem giving these people a sense of social identity in the travel world.

Moreover, because of the improved insights in the content and platform preferences of both low and high Sensation Seekers, this might lead to a better relationship between travellers and travel providers. This could be because by using the presumed new knowledge, travel providers can now better provide fitting content on the right platforms for the right target groups, assuming that this right fit will lead to a better satisfaction amongst travellers.

Finally, it was found that a the majority of the participants stated that Covid-19 had an influence on how they travel and/ or what kind of content they post. As described by Zender and Kock (2020), Covid-19 could lead to a behaviour change in how people travel. This was indeed found in this research as well, it was found that people (re)discovered the Netherlands and all its multiple aspects with regard to travel, also indicating several times that even after Covid-19 was gone, they would keep visiting Dutch destinations. This was predicted by Zender and Kock (2020) who expected a shift from far-away destinations to domestic destinations.

5.3 Practical implications

From this study and its results, several practical implications for the tourism industry could be suggested. Broadly speaking, the main practical take away from this study is the insight in the usage and themes that work well on Instagram, Snapchat and Pinterest. As well as a more developed understanding of the Sensation Seeking personality trait online.

Firstly, the usage of the personality trait Sensation Seeking is explored more deeply and this could aid DMO-marketeers, travel bloggers and other people who work in the (online) tourism industry in improving their segmentation of their target group(s). Sensation Seeking could therefore be implemented as a possible segmentation tool to describe different target groups. It does not need to be the main segmentation tool but could be of added benefit to better understand and divide the target group. Especially because it is presumed that the preferences of offline behaviour and online content are similar and it is therefore expectably better known how people behave online with regard to Sensation Seeking.

Secondly, a lot of useful and practical information about the usage of Instagram, Snapchat and Pinterest has been described. These findings could aid DMO-marketeers, travel bloggers and other people who work in the (online) tourism industry to better use their platforms and its features and to get an improved insight in how these platforms and features are used by its users. This could especially be interesting when a new platform is added to the marketing

toolbox. Then the information from this study could be used to help set up the optimum strategy to use the chosen platform, especially because the current results are solely based on the tourism industry. Additionally, when the Sensation Seeking trait is chosen as a segmentation tool, it is known what kind of platforms best to use to reach the target audience. This is of strategic importance because it is beneficial to know what platforms best to communicate on when a marketing plan is made.

Thirdly, an important key take-away is the type of content that best suits Instagram, Snapchat and Pinterest. This information can be used to optimize the production of content for those platforms. Furthermore, when Sensation Seeking is used as a segmentation tool, there is also an extensive list of both low and high Sensation Seeking content that can best be used to provide presumed attractive content that both low and/ or high Sensation Seekers prefer.

Next, an useful learning from this research is something that is already known and mostly practiced by social media marketers, but it is the importance of a good quality image. It became clear that no matter the theme of the content or the platform it was posted on, the image quality is an important factor in whether or not an image is posted or perceived well. This should be kept in mind when producing online content as it seems an important boundary condition.

Finally, an extensive analysis about the differences between Instagram, Snapchat and Pinterest is provided. This can be extremely useful for the industry when making strategic decisions about which platforms to use. This is because this analysis gives an insight in what makes the platforms stand out, how they are used and how they are perceived by the users; all in comparison to each other.

5.4 Limitations and further research

A limitation of this study was that because of the Covid-19 pandemic, the interviews could not take place in a face-to-face setting. All the interviews were done by making use of virtual communication software. Because of technical difficulties in some interviews, the video-connection was not always established well, leading to a loss of rapport. Also, while transcribing it was noticed that some data was missing because of a malfunction in the recording or cross talking. Additionally, according to Lo Iacono et al. (2016), virtual communication could never fully replace face-to-face communication. It could therefore best be used alongside other data collection methods instead of solely virtual as is was unavoidable in the current research. In further research both methods could be used next to each other.

There were also some limitations regarding the participants. There only were 3 male participants out of the 21 people interviewed. This might have lead to a more skewed result section with more feminine answers and opinions. It was tried to get a higher number of male participants. However, none of the contacted male bloggers responded and regarding the marketing employees, the researcher was dependent on who from the DMO organizations was available and willing to participate in the interview. Additionally, there is a slight skew towards high Sensation Seeking regarding the self-assigned groups. Nine out of the 21 participants assigned themselves or their target group to high Sensation Seeking against six out of 21 to low Sensation Seeking and five out of 21 to both. This is a complex limitation to prevent in further research when self-assigned segmentation is used as well. But when participants are asked to fill in a segmentation questionnaire beforehand, this demographic could be equally distributed.

A limitation of conducting interviews is the intensity and the time consumption. This has lead to a relatively small amount of people being interviewed. Although saturation was reached, 20 interviews is still relatively limited. Especially because those 20 interviews were divided amongst 3 groups. And because of the decision to interview DMO-marketeers, travellers and travel bloggers; it is difficult to generalize the results of this study outside these groups. To improve this generalizability, further research could include other tourism stakeholders like travel accommodations, travel agencies and consultancy agencies. In addition to these results, they could provide a broader explanation as to how they perceive Sensation Seeking in the tourism social media industry.

Further research could focus on the presence of extremity bias on social media and study weather this does indeed play a role within content related to Sensation Seeking as is expected in the current study. Since the topic of extremity bias on social media is also a novelty, both the Sensation Seeking and the extremity bias research topics profit of more research being done about them and their expected relationship. This could be done through, again, a qualitative study. But also a quantitative experiment could give interesting results. Another research direction could be focussed around the exploration of the usage of different social media platforms for different segmentation tools. Especially personality traits in relation to social media platforms could provide an interesting insight as to how the characteristics of each platform fit certain groups of people and to understand how online preference is related to personality traits. Finally, in this current study, the four sub-dimensions of Sensation Seeking were left out. But they could be very interesting to study in further research in relation to a similar topic. It could give more in-depth insights as to how Sensation Seeking behaves in an online social media environment.

5.5 Conclusion

To conclude, this study contributed to the field of tourism social media research by examining how online preferences relate to offline preferences regarding Sensation Seeking. This is done through addressing the difference between preference in visual social media platforms and by providing an insight in preferred social media content themes regarding low and high Sensation Seeking. These results gave the input to be able to answer the main research question “*What visual social media content are travellers with different levels of the Sensation Seeking personality trait interested in?*”. And it can be stated that it is expected that travellers prefer to see content that is similar to that of their offline Sensation Seeking preferences but with a possible extremity bias. Low Sensation Seekers prefer to see content on Instagram and/ or Pinterest with themes like: calm activities, cities and/ or villages, culinary activities, history and culture, museums, nature, and touristy activities. High Sensation Seeker prefer to see their content on Instagram and/ or Snapchat with themes like: (unique) travel destinations, adventurous activities, concerts and/ or festivals, culinary activities, extreme sports, locals, nature, nightlife and water. This study adds to multiple gaps in the research field and also has a multitude of practical implications for the workforce. It is advised that further research focusses around studying a more diverse group of tourism stakeholders, the four sub-dimensions of Sensation Seeking and/ or getting better and deeper understanding about how the presence of extremity bias plays a role in online Sensation Seeking content.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Infographic

Sensation Seeking

"Sensatiezoeken" persoonlijkheidskenmerk

Sensation Seeking is een persoonlijkheidskenmerk dat wordt bepaald door de behoefte aan gevarieerde, nieuwe en complexe sensaties en ervaringen en de bereidheid om fysieke en sociale risico's te nemen omwille van een dergelijke ervaring (Zuckerman, 1979).

Er zijn twee niveaus van Sensation Seeking te onderscheiden waardoor de toerismemarkt wordt opgesplitst in twee verschillende segmentatiegroepen: lage en hoge sensatiezoekers.

<i>Laag</i>	<i>Hoog</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Kalme, risicoloze activiteiten◆ Musea bezoeken◆ Historische gebouwen bezoeken◆ Religieuze gebouwen bezoeken◆ Leren van taal en cultuur◆ Natuur bezoeken◆ Traditionele sporten (bijv. voetbal)◆ Begeleide groepsreizen◆ Reizen met familie en/of vrienden◆ Bezoeken van bekende bestemmingen◆ Indoor-activiteiten◆ Rustige, geplande, comfortabele reizen	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Avontuurlijke, gewaagde activiteiten◆ Spanning en opwindning◆ Nachtleven◆ Concerten en/of festivals bezoeken◆ Ongewone activiteiten◆ Extreme sporten (bijv. rotsklimmen)◆ Eigen reisplannen maken◆ Alleen op reis of met vrienden◆ Exotische, onbekende bestemmingen◆ Internationale, gewaagde bestemmingen◆ Outdoor-activiteiten◆ Actieve, spontane en oncomfortabele reizen
	
	

Appendix B: Interview guides

Interview guide DMO-marketeer

- Introductie
 - Kunt u me wat vertellen over uzelf?
 - En over uw werk? Wat voor een achtergrond heeft u?
- Sensation Seeking
 - Heeft u naar aanleiding van de infographic over Sensation Seeking hier nog vragen over?
 - Was u al bekend met dit persoonlijkheidskenmerk?
 - Heeft u wel eens gebruik gemaakt van dit persoonlijkheidskenmerk in uw werk?
 - Zo ja, kunt u een voorbeeld noemen? Zo nee, wellicht onbewust?
 - Maakt uw bedrijf onderscheid in verschillende doelgroepen?
 - Ja: Wanneer u nadenkt over de doelgroep(en), behoren deze tot de lage of hoge Sensation Seekers? Misschien een mix? En waarom?
 - Nee: tot welke groep rekent u de klanten/gasten van uw bedrijf, hoge of lage Sensation Seekers? En waarom?
 - Als u kijkt naar de inzet van sociale media, houdt u (wellicht onbewust) rekening met de voorkeuren van de doelgroep(en)? En bent u van mening dat Sensation Seeking hier een rol in speelt?
 - Denkt u dat mensen met een hoog niveau Sensation Seeking geïnteresseerd zijn in visuele content die activiteiten laat zien waar ze ‘in de echte wereld’ ook geïnteresseerd in zijn (zoals de voorbeelden genoemd in de infographic als evt. toelichting bij onduidelijkheid)? En waarom?
 - En is dit ook het geval met mensen met een laag niveau Sensation Seeking? En waarom?
 - Is er een type content waarvan u merkt dat dit goed presteert op jullie social media kanalen? Kunt u toelichten waarom? Kan dit te maken hebben met hoge of lage Sensation Seekers voorkeuren?
- Social media platformen
 - Welke social media platformen gebruikt uw bedrijf? En waarom?
 - Welk platform werkt voor u het beste? En waarom?
 - Instagram/ Snapchat/ Pinterest:
 - Bij gebruik: wat is uw doelgroep op dit platform? Wat voor een content plaatst u? En waarom? Hoe maakt u gebruik van de unieke

mogelijkheden van dit platform ten opzichte van andere sociale media?
Zit er een verschil in niveau Sensation Seekers op dit platform volgens u?

- Bij geen gebruik: waarom niet? Kunt u zich voorstellen dit in de toekomst wel te gaan doen?
- Per platform: vragen wat de manager bij lage en bij hoge Sensation Seekers zou kiezen qua (stereotype) content.

- Afsluiting

- Aangeven dat interview ten einde is.
- Zijn er nog dingen die u graag nog wilt noemen of die u verwacht had dat ik nog zou vragen?
- Bedanken voor de tijd. Vragen of hij/zij het uiteindelijke rapport wil ontvangen.

Interview guide (semi-professional) traveller

- Introductie
 - Kunt u me wat vertellen over uzelf?
 - Wanneer bent u begonnen met reizen? Hoeveel reizen heeft u al gemaakt? Wat is uw meest memorabele reis?
- Sensation Seeking
 - Heeft u naar aanleiding van de infographic over Sensation Seeking hier nog vragen over?
 - Was u al bekend met dit persoonlijkheidskenmerk?
 - Hoe schat u uzelf in binnen dit kenmerk? Bent u een hoge of lage Sensation Seeker tijdens uw reizen?
 - Met betrekking tot sociale media, gebruikt u dit? Zo ja, welke? Zo nee, waarom niet? (vervolgens vragen om zich de rest van het interview in te beelden wat hij/zij zou doen als hij/zij dit wel gebruikte).
 - Wat voor een content vindt u interessant om te zien?
 - Wat maakt het dat iets er voor u uitspringt?
 - Denkt u dat mensen met een hoog niveau Sensation Seeking geïnteresseerd zijn in visuele content die activiteiten laat zien waar ze ‘in de echte wereld’ ook geïnteresseerd in zijn (zoals de voorbeelden genoemd in de infographic als evt. toelichting bij onduidelijkheid)? En waarom?
 - En is dit ook het geval met mensen met een laag niveau Sensation Seeking? En waarom?
- Social media platformen
 - Welke social media platformen gebruikt u? En waarom?
 - Welk platform vindt u het leukst om te gebruiken? En waarom?
 - Instagram/ Snapchat/ Pinterest:
 - Bij gebruik: Wat voor een content ziet u graag op dit platform? En waarom? Hoe maakt u gebruik van de unieke mogelijkheden van dit platform ten opzichte van andere sociale media? Zit er een verschil in niveau Sensation Seekers op dit platform volgens u?
 - Bij geen gebruik: waarom niet? Kunt u zich voorstellen dit in de toekomst wel te gaan doen?
 - Per platform: vragen wat de reiziger bij lage en bij hoge Sensation Seekers zou kiezen qua (stereotype) content.

- Afsluiting

- Aangeven dat interview ten einde is.
- Zijn er nog dingen die u graag nog wilt noemen of die u verwacht had dat ik nog zou vragen?
- Bedanken voor de tijd. Vragen of hij/zij het uiteindelijke rapport wil ontvangen.

Interview guide social media travel blogger

- Introductie

- Kunt u me wat vertellen over uzelf?
- En over uw werk? Wat voor een achtergrond heeft u?
- Wanneer bent u begonnen met reizen? Hoeveel reizen heeft u al gemaakt? Wat is uw meest memorabele reis?

- Sensation Seeking

- Heeft u naar aanleiding van de infographic over Sensation Seeking hier nog vragen over?
- Was u al bekend met dit persoonlijkheidskenmerk?
- Hoe schat u uzelf in binnen dit kenmerk? Bent u een hoge of lage Sensation Seeker tijdens uw reizen?
- Maakt uw bedrijf onderscheid in verschillende doelgroepen?
 - Ja: Wanneer u nadenkt over de doelgroep(en), behoren deze tot de lage of hoge Sensation Seekers? Misschien een mix? En waarom?
 - Nee: tot welke groep rekent u de klanten/gasten van uw bedrijf, hoge of lage Sensation Seekers? En waarom?
- Als u kijkt naar de inzet van sociale media, houdt u (wellicht onbewust) rekening met de voorkeuren van de doelgroep(en)?
 - En bent u van mening dat Sensation Seeking hier een rol in speelt?
- Wat voor een content vindt u interessant om te zien?
 - Wat maakt het dat iets er voor u uitspringt? Creëert u zelf vergelijkbare content?
 - Plaatst u zelf content die overeenkomt met uw eigen niveau van Sensation Seeking? Doet u dit (achteraf gezien) bewust?
- Denkt u dat mensen met een hoog niveau Sensation Seeking geïnteresseerd zijn in visuele content die activiteiten laat zien waar ze 'in de echte wereld' ook geïnteresseerd in zijn (zoals de voorbeelden genoemd in de infographic als evt. toelichting bij onduidelijkheid)? En waarom?
 - En is dit ook het geval met mensen met een laag niveau Sensation Seeking? En waarom?
- Is er een type content waarvan u merkt dat dit goed presteert op uw social media kanalen? Kunt u toelichten waarom?

- Social media platformen

- Welke social media platformen gebruikt u? En waarom? Welk platform werkt voor u het beste?
- Instagram/ Snapchat/ Pinterest:
 - Bij gebruik: wat is uw doelgroep op dit platform? Wat voor een content plaatst u? En waarom? Hoe maakt u gebruik van de unieke mogelijkheden van dit platform ten opzichte van andere sociale media? Zit er een verschil in niveau Sensation Seekers op dit platform volgens u?
 - Bij geen gebruik: waarom niet? Kunt u zich voorstellen dit in de toekomst wel te gaan doen?
- Per platform: vragen wat de blogger bij lage en bij hoge Sensation Seekers zou kiezen qua (stereotype) content.

- Afsluiting

- Aangeven dat interview ten einde is.
- Zijn er nog dingen die u graag nog wilt noemen of die u verwacht had dat ik nog zou vragen?
- Bedanken voor de tijd. Vragen of hij/zij het uiteindelijke rapport wil ontvangen.

Appendix C: Final codebook

Table C1

Final codebook

Code	Description
Blogger: depends on trip	Blogger describes that her level of Sensation Seeking depends on the type of trip that she will undertake.
Blogger: HSS	Blogger describes herself as high Sensation Seeking. This could be the initial response or the choice after the interviewer asked to make a choice.
Blogger: interesting content	Blogger describes what she finds interesting content or what content performs well on her platforms, therefore what she describes as being interesting to her followers.
Blogger: LSS	Blogger describes herself as low Sensation Seeking. This could be the initial response or the choice after the interviewer asked to make a choice.
Blogger: LSS and HSS	Blogger describes herself as both low and high Sensation Seeking. This could be the initial response or the choice after the interviewer asked to make a choice.
Difference in platforms	Something is said about a difference between the platforms (Instagram, Pinterest and/or Snapchat). Not all three need to be mentioned, but at least two and some comparison needs to be mentioned.
HSS offline -> HSS content online	It is described that if a person is a high Sensation Seeking person in real, offline life; he/she also likes high sensation seeking content online. Therefore, stating that offline/online preference is similar. It is necessary that high Sensation Seeking is specifically mentioned in this case.
HSS offline -> LSS online	Something is said about the specific relationship between being a high Sensation Seeking person in real, offline life; and the preference of low sensation seeking content online.
HSS/LSS: mix	The content shown, portrays a mix of both high and low Sensation Seeking content (could be because of various reasons). Something could also be said about the gap between high and low Sensation Seeking content, therefore implying a mix of content is present or that the subject could be both low and high and context is important.
HSS: (unique) travel destinations	Something is said about a (unique) travel destination in relationship to high Sensation Seeking. Could be a very small statement.
HSS: adventurous activity	Something is said about an adventurous activity of some sort in relationship to high Sensation Seeking. Could be a very small statement. Important: when the activity fits the extreme sports code, it is placed there.
HSS: concerts/ festivals	Something is said about concerts/ festivals in relationship to high Sensation Seeking. Could be a very small statement.
HSS: culinary	Something is said about some sort of culinary activity in relationship to high Sensation Seeking. Could be a very small statement.

HSS: extreme sports	Something is said about some sort of extreme sports in relationship to high Sensation Seeking. Could be a very small statement. Important: if the activity described could not be seen as a sport, it can be placed under the code adventurous activity.
HSS: image specs	Something is said about the specifications of an image in relationship to high Sensation Seeking. Could be a very small statement. Could be about composition, colour, etc.
HSS: independent	Something is said about being independent/ solo travel in relationship to high Sensation Seeking. Could be a very small statement.
HSS: locals	Something is said about the locals in relationship to high Sensation Seeking. Could be a very small statement.
HSS: nature	Something is said about nature in relationship to high Sensation Seeking. Could be a very small statement. HSS nature could be described as: mountains, difficult to reach, more extreme.
HSS: nightlife	Something is said about nightlife in relationship to high Sensation Seeking. Could be a very small statement.
HSS: person in the picture	Something is said about the presence of a person in the picture in relationship to high Sensation Seeking. Could be a very small statement.
HSS: water	Something is said about water in relationship to high Sensation Seeking. Could be a very small statement.
Instagram: feed	Something is said about the Instagram feed. Example: what kind of content is placed in the feed.
Instagram: guides	Something is said about the Instagram guides. Example: what kind of content is placed in the guides.
Instagram: HSS	Instagram is described as a platform that is more suitable for high Sensation Seeking users.
Instagram: Instagram TV	Something is said about Instagram TV. Example: what kind of content is placed in IGTV.
Instagram: live	Something is said about Instagram live. Example: what kind of content is created with live.
Instagram: LSS	Instagram is described as a platform that is more suitable for low Sensation Seeking users.
Instagram: LSS and HSS	Instagram is described as a platform that is suitable for both low and high Sensation Seeking users.
Instagram: posting frequency	Something is said about the posting frequency on Instagram.
Instagram: reels	Something is said about Instagram reels. Example: what kind of content is placed in reels.
Instagram: stays within Instagram	Something is said about how the content created on Instagram, stays on Instagram, it is difficult to let users leave Instagram.
Instagram: type of content	Something is said about the type of content that fits Instagram.
Instagram: stories	Something is said about the Instagram stories. Example: what kind of content is placed in the stories.
Instagram: user generated content	Something is said about the use of user generated content on Instagram.
Instagram: younger audience	Something is said about a younger audience on Instagram.

LSS offline -> both LSS and HSS content online	Something is said that if people are low Sensation Seeking in their real, offline life; they prefer to consume only both low and high Sensation Seeking content online.
LSS offline -> HSS online	Something is said that if people are low Sensation Seeking in their real, offline life; they prefer to consume only high Sensation Seeking content online. Therefore, stating that offline/online preference is not similar.
LSS offline -> LSS online	Something is said that if people are low Sensation Seeking in their real, offline life; they also prefer to consume only low Sensation Seeking content online. Therefore, stating that offline/online preference is similar.
LSS: (amount of) people	Something is said about the amount of people on an image in relationship to low Sensation Seeking. Could be a very small statement.
LSS: calm activity	Something is said about a calm activity in relationship to low Sensation Seeking. Could be a very small statement. Example: cycling, hiking (both calm intensity), shopping.
LSS: city/ village	Something is said about a city or village in relationship to low Sensation Seeking. Could be a very small statement.
LSS: culinary	Something is said about a culinary activity in relationship to low Sensation Seeking. Could be a very small statement.
LSS: doing research	Something is said about doing research prior to going on vacation in relationship to low Sensation Seeking. Could be a very small statement.
LSS: family	Something is said about family in relationship to low Sensation Seeking. Could be a very small statement.
LSS: history and culture	Something is said about historical and/or cultural activities in relationship to low Sensation Seeking. Could be a very small statement. Important: if a museum is mentioned, the code museum needs to be used.
LSS: image specs	Something is said about the specifications of an image in relationship to low Sensation Seeking. Could be a very small statement. Could be about composition, serenity, etc.
LSS: museum	Something is said about a museum in relationship to low Sensation Seeking. Could be a very small statement. Important: museum needs to be mentioned, otherwise the code history and culture could be used.
LSS: nature	Something is said about nature in relationship to low Sensation Seeking. Could be a very small statement. Low Sensation Seeking nature could be described as: flat, easy to access.
LSS: touristy destinations/activities	Something is said about typical touristy destinations and/or activities in relationship to low Sensation Seeking. Could be a very small statement. For example: the Eiffel tower in Paris.
LSS: tour operator	Something is said about travelling by tour operator in relationship to low Sensation Seeking. Could be a very small statement.
Main target group: HSS	The main target group mentioned can be described as high Sensation Seeking.
Main target group: LSS	The main target group mentioned can be described as low Sensation Seeking.
Marketing: interesting content	Marketeer describes what he/she finds interesting content or what content performs well on their platforms, therefore what he/she describes as being interesting to their followers.
Online preference not similar to offline preference	Something is said about that someone's online preference with regard to social media content is not similar to what they prefer to do offline, in real life.

Online preference similar to offline preference	Something is said about that someone's online preference with regard to social media content is in fact similar to what they prefer to do offline, in real life.
Pinterest: directed from google	Something is said about that people are directed to Pinterest after starting their initial search on Google.
Pinterest: HSS	Pinterest is described as a platform that is more suitable for high Sensation Seeking users.
Pinterest: HSS/ LSS	Pinterest is described as a platform that is suitable for both low and high Sensation Seeking users.
Pinterest: immediate effect	Something is said about that posting something on Pinterest gives an (immediate) effect in engagement/traffic/numbers.
Pinterest: lack of interaction	Something is said about the lack of interaction that takes place on Pinterest.
Pinterest: lack of resources	Something is said about the lack of resources available to be able to use Pinterest at all or to be able to use Pinterest more.
Pinterest: LSS	Pinterest is described as a platform that is more suitable for low Sensation Seeking users.
Pinterest: posting frequency	Something is said about the posting frequency on Pinterest.
Pinterest: reason to potentially use it	Something is said about a reason as to why the person/company might decide to start using Pinterest in the future.
Pinterest: search engine	Something is said that describes Pinterest as a search engine.
Pinterest: traffic to website	Something is said about that Pinterest leads traffic from Pinterest to the website of the person/company.
Pinterest: travel content	Something is said about travel content specifically on Pinterest.
Pinterest: type of content	Something is said about the type of content that fits Pinterest.
Pinterest: use to save things	Something is said about the option to use Pinterest to save things/ to pin things to a board.
Quality of the picture	Something is said about the (technical) quality of the picture. Important: this information needs to be separate to either low or high Sensation Seeking codes. It could be described as a separate requirement in relation to content in general.
Snapchat: everyday activities	Something is said about that Snapchat is used to show pictures of everyday life.
Snapchat: friends	Something is said about Snapchat that relates to the friends of the person or that Snapchat is used between friends/family/colleagues.
Snapchat: HSS	Snapchat is described as a platform that is more suitable for high Sensation Seeking users.
Snapchat: HSS/ LSS	Pinterest is described as a platform that is suitable for both low and high Sensation Seeking users.
Snapchat: lack of resources	Something is said about the lack of resources available to be able to use Snapchat at all or to be able to use Snapchat more.
Snapchat: LSS	Pinterest is described as a platform that is more suitable for low Sensation Seeking users.
Snapchat: reason to potentially use it	Something is said about a reason as to why the person/company might decide to start using Snapchat in the future.
Snapchat: temporary (picture will disappear)	Something is said about that a picture is only temporary on Snapchat.
Snapchat: texting platform	Something is said about that Snapchat is used as a texting platform.
Snapchat: type of content	Something is said about the type of content that fits Snapchat.

Snapchat: unclear HSS/ LSS	Something is said about that it is unclear to the person whether Pinterest could be described as a platform that is suitable either low and/or high Sensation Seeking users.
Snapchat: younger audience	Something is said about a younger audience on Snapchat.
SS -> introvert/ extravert	Something is said about either low or high Sensation Seeking that relates to being introvert or extravert.
Stereotype HSS content	Something is said about what the person perceives as stereotypical high Sensation Seeking content. Here, an ultimate high Sensation Seeking picture is described. This code is used to code the final question from the interview guide.
Stereotype LSS content	Something is said about what the person perceives as stereotypical low Sensation Seeking content. Here, an ultimate low Sensation Seeking picture is described. This code is used to code the final question from the interview guide.
Sub target group: HSS	The sub target group mentioned can be described as high Sensation Seeking.
Sub target group: LSS	The sub target group mentioned can be described as low Sensation Seeking.
Traveller: HSS	Traveller describes him-/herself as high Sensation Seeking. This could be the initial response or the choice after the interviewer asked to make a choice.
Traveller: interesting content	Traveller describes what he/she finds interesting content online.
Traveller: LSS	Traveller describes him-/herself as low Sensation Seeking. This could be the initial response or the choice after the interviewer asked to make a choice.
Traveller: LSS and HSS	Traveller describes him-/herself as both low and high Sensation Seeking. This could be the initial response or the choice after the interviewer asked to make a choice.
Traveller: SS depends on trip	Blogger describes that his/her level of Sensation Seeking depends on the type of trip that he/she will undertake.

Appendix D: Code groups

Table D1

Code groups

Code group	Open codes
Blogger	Blogger: depends on trip, Blogger: HSS, Blogger: LSS, Blogger: LSS and HSS.
HSS topics	HSS/ LSS mix, HSS: (unique) travel destinations, HSS: adventurous activity, HSS: concerts/ festivals, HSS: culinary, HSS: extreme sports, HSS: image specs, HSS: independent, HSS: locals, HSS: nature, HSS: nightlife, HSS: person in the picture, HSS: water, Stereotype HSS content.
Instagram: content	Instagram: feed, Instagram: guides, Instagram: Instagram TV, Instagram: live, Instagram: reels, Instagram: stories, Instagram: type of content, Instagram: user generated content.
Instagram: Sensation Seeking	Instagram: HSS, Instagram: LSS, Instagram: LSS and HSS.
Instagram: usage	Instagram: posting frequency, Instagram: stays within Instagram, Instagram: younger audience.
LSS topics	HSS/ LSS mix, LSS: (amount of) people, LSS: calm activity, LSS: city/ village, LSS: culinary, LSS: doing research, LSS: family, LSS: history and culture, LSS: image specs, LSS: museum, LSS: nature, LSS: touristy destinations/ activities, LSS: touroperator, Stereotype LSS content.
Online preference Sensation Seeking	HSS offline → HSS online, HSS offline → LSS online, LSS offline → both LSS and HSS content online, LSS offline → HSS online, LSS offline → LSS online, Online preference not similar to offline preference, Online preference similar to offline preference.
Other	Blogger: interesting content, Difference in platforms, Marketing: interesting content, Quality of the picture, SS → introvert/ extravert, Traveller: interesting content.
Pinterest: content	Pinterest: travel content, Pinterest: type of content.
Pinterest: Sensation Seeking	Pinterest: HSS, Pinterest: HSS/ LSS, Pinterest: LSS.
Pinterest: usage	Pinterest: directed from Google, Pinterest: immediate effect, Pinterest: lack of interaction, Pinterest: lack of resources, Pinterest: posting frequency, Pinterest: reason to potentially use it, Pinterest: search engine, Pinterest: traffic to website, Pinterest: use to save things.
Snapchat: content	Snapchat: everyday activities, Snapchat: temporary (picture will disappear), Snapchat: texting platform, Snapchat: type of content.
Snapchat: Sensation Seeking	Snapchat: HSS, Snapchat: HSS/ LSS, Snapchat: LSS, Snapchat: unclear HSS/ LSS.
Snapchat: usage	Snapchat: friends, Snapchat: lack of resources, Snapchat: reason to potentially use it, Snapchat: younger audience.
Target groups	Main target group: HSS, Main target group: LSS, Sub target group: HSS, Sub target group: LSS.
Traveller	Traveller: HSS, Traveller: LSS, Traveller, LSS and HSS, Traveller: SS depends on trip.