

# An Impact of Using Social Media on Purchasing Behavior through Electronic “Word of Mouth” A Filed Study at Travel and Tourism Companies in Jordan

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The aim of this study is to identify “An Impact of Using social Media on Purchasing Behavior through Electronic Word of Mouth – A Filed Study at Travel and Tourism Companies in Jordan”, In this study, (396) respondents from different users of social media networks on the pages of who are competent Travel and Tourism Companies. The researcher relied on the questionnaire designed for the study to gather data, and he has followed and used the descriptive analytical method, and used the SPSS V.20 program.

The study results reveal that there is an impact of using social media (awareness of social media characteristics, interaction with social media) on purchasing behavior through electronic word of mouth (both celebrities and friends) about Travel and Tourism Companies in Jordan. In light of the findings of the study, the researcher made a number of recommendations, the most important of which are: Providing sufficient informative details about the products displayed on the companies’ social media pages specialized in Travel and Tourism Companies follow-up to ensure customers satisfaction feedback, due to its magnificent impact on the existing and potential customers’ electronic word of mouth (eWOM) about the products that affects the purchasing behavior in order to maximize companies’ sales volume.

**Key words:** *Social Media on Purchasing Behavior, Electronic Word of Mouth, Travel and Tourism Companies*



## Introduction

Recently, social networking sites have emerged to achieve the concept of virtual social communication in the world, and this has served to fill the needs of individuals to build relationships and communicate with one another, and the popularity of social networking sites in the Middle East, whose population has become highly reliant on social media communication, cannot be denied. Users of social electronic sites use instant chat, visit their friends' pages, see and exchange images, videos, and other content.

It has led to the birth of the so-called electronic spoken word, which has spread in all its forms on social networking sites such as Like, Share, Comments, Mention, and others, and its capacity is rising. Because the electronic spoken word is transmitted faster than the traditional spoken word and can be read by millions of users, it has become a double-edged sword for organizations, because it has a broader and more comprehensive range of traditional channels (communication face-to-face and by phone).

It is by nature ambiguous and difficult to fabricate, being based on consumer experiences about the quality, service or experience of a particular product or service, and today it is fast-paced and keeps pace with all events such as celebrity events, who use it constantly to try to satisfy their followers, and it has a high technological value for trade mark travel and tourism Companies, specifically Celebrities who live a fast-paced and multi-tasking lifestyle, influence their followers as they view celebrities as role models and may influence them in marketing advertising campaigns using the endorsement of these celebrities (business2community, 2014).

Because the impact of the traditional spoken word is intangible as it was not electronic and cannot be tracked or counted, it is difficult for organizations to see and touch the effects of it directly, therefore there is a need for more awareness of individual interactions via the Internet about organizations and knowledge of the long-term effects of brands and should considering it a positive strength point that must be exploited by the commercial sectors to know and study what is going on by current and prospective customers about their products or services and to work out plans to take advantage of them as they have become tangible, legible and measurable,

Where it was found that there is a similarity between companies that have not been successful through social networking sites as a result of not paying attention to the electronic spoken word and that always focus on their current customers through social networking sites without showing any interest to the target customers. Companies that are only concerned with the number of Likes on social networking sites and the number of followers or fans they will gain, and then offer discounts and promotions to them, as well as companies that do not consider or process customer reactions, are nothing more than billboards with no foundation for customer understanding. (Smiciklas, 2011).

Many companies, especially telecommunications companies, faced obstacles on social networking sites because they considered customer feedback as unimportant, and now they need to realize that today's customers can also control brands, most of which are present in the form of pages on social networking sites and working to market and advertise their products and services, whether they are small, medium or large-sized companies, many companies have worked to create departments to manage and follow up Its pages on social networking sites in order to market electronically through this window and consider it an effective marketing channel, since marketing through social networking sites has a kind of simulation of reality and direct feedback. Accordingly, the purchasing behavior of customers is linked in one way or another to social networking sites through the electronic spoken word (business2community, 2014).

From this point of view, this study seeks to clarify some aspects of the travel and tourism companies present on social networking sites for what the electronic spoken word by celebrities and friends can have a role in influencing the purchasing behavior of their customers about their products, and what other factors that can affect the consumer to change from his buying behavior.

### **Study problem and questions**

Social networking sites have become an effective medium that allows users to communicate as a means of communicating with friends and relatives in light of the daily preoccupations that everyone faces. In the era of technological acceleration, the number of users on these sites has exceeded expectations and their role as a mediator of social communication. The advertisers and marketers in the commercial sectors have become aware of the importance and effectiveness of this excellent medium to place advertisements to promote their products and services to benefit from it in increasing their sales and profits, as well as to improve their image in front of their customers and try to increase the share market and target segment to the maximum extent available to them by these sites. The electronic spoken word in these sites has become a key role in judging goods and services in addition to its impact on the behavior of individuals and groups and their purchasing behavior (Hassan, 2014).

Through previous studies that raised the issue of purchasing behavior, such as (Al-Adayleh, 2015) and (Omri, 2015), it was found that there are some obstacles and problems that affect purchasing behavior, which result from the use of social networking sites and what is transmitted through the electronic spoken word. Which affects the enhancement of the purchasing behavior of the followers on these sites, and accordingly, the problem of the study can be clarified by answering the following:

- 1- Is there an impact of the use of social networking sites by customers on the purchasing behavior of travel and tourism companies in Jordan?
- 2- Is there an impact of the use of social networking sites by customers on the electronic spoken word in travel and tourism companies in Jordan?
- 3- Is there an effect of the electronic spoken word by customers on the purchasing behavior of travel and tourism companies in Jordan?
- 4- Is there an impact of the use of social networking sites by customers on purchasing behavior through the electronic spoken word?

### **Objectives of the study**

This study seeks to determine the impact of each of the use of social networking sites on purchasing behavior through the electronic spoken word in tourism and travel companies in Jordan through the following:

1. Determining the level of use of social networking sites from the point of view of customers of travel and tourism companies in Jordan.
2. Knowing the direct and indirect impact of using social networking sites on purchasing behavior through the electronic spoken word in travel and tourism companies in Jordan.
3. Recognize the importance of the electronic spoken word on purchasing behavior in travel and tourism companies in Jordan.

### **Study importance**

The importance of this study is highlighted by:

1. Scientific importance: This study is considered one of the important references for those interested in the fields of scientific research, as there are few Arabic studies related to the use of social networking sites and for this reason, this study is considered one of the important references in this field to the knowledge of the researcher.
2. Practical importance: The importance of this study lies in the fact that it may help managers and workers in the Travel and Tourism Companies in Jordan to discover strengths and weaknesses regarding the electronic spoken word on purchasing behavior as well as the use of social networking sites.
3. Importance for the local community: Social networking sites are one of the most important topics that serve the local community in terms of saving time, effort and the trouble of searching for products and services.

## Study hypotheses

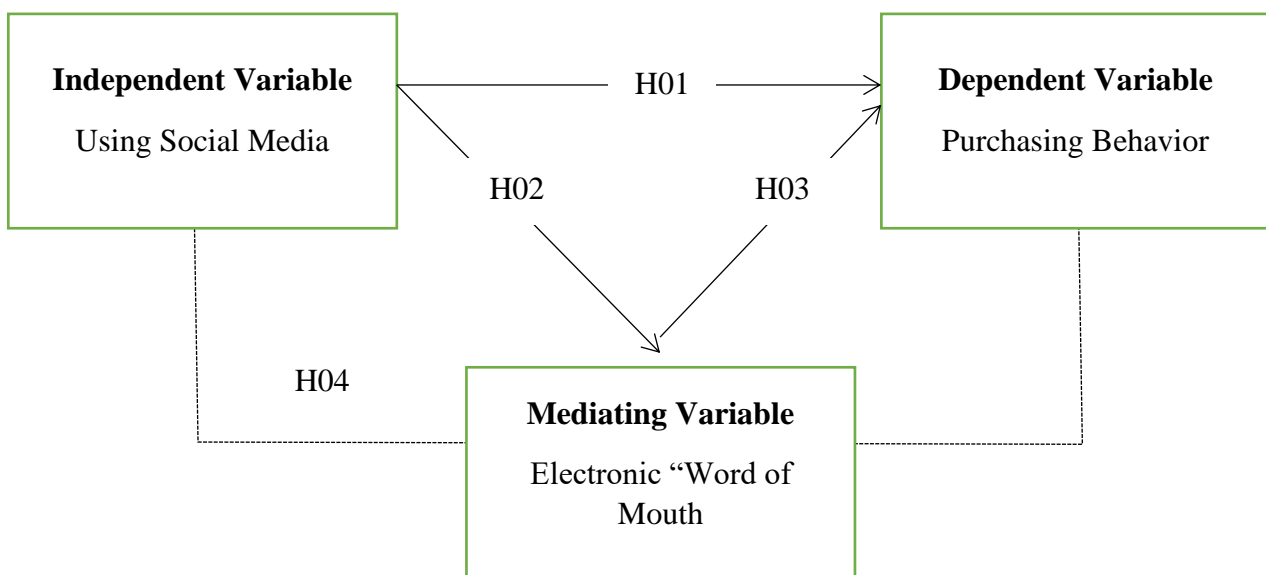
First Hypothesis: (H01) There is no statistically significant effect of using social networking sites on the purchasing behavior of the services of travel and tourism companies in Jordan at the level of statistical significance  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ .

Second hypothesis: (H02) There is no statistically significant effect of using social networking sites on the electronic spoken word in travel and tourism companies in Jordan at the level of statistical significance  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ .

Third hypothesis: (H03) There is no statistically significant effect of the electronic spoken word on the purchasing behavior of the services of travel and tourism companies in Jordan at the level of statistical significance  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ .

Fourth hypothesis: (H04) There is no statistically significant effect of using social networking sites on purchasing behavior through the electronic spoken word as a mediating variable at the level of statistical significance  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ .

## Study Model



## Jordanian travel and tourism companies

Travel and tourism companies are the primary engine and effective organizers of tourism transportation, promotion of tourism, and customer service. festivals, and much more.

Tourism and travel companies in Jordan include three types:

1. Tourism and travel offices: These offices work on marketing and promoting tourist destinations in Jordan through integrated tourism programs, and they attract tourists through a variety of means, the most prominent of which are advertisements in newspapers, international magazines, and satellite channels, as well as websites and social networking sites. According to Ministry of Tourism statistics, the number of these offices reached approximately 722 in 2018.(Al-Rifai, 2019).
2. Jordan Hotel Association: an association established under Jordanian law with a legal personality, having the capacity to own movable and immovable funds, to achieve its goals and objectives of raising the level of practicing the tourism profession and revitalizing it through holding conferences, meetings, seminars and tourism exhibitions inside and outside Jordan, and issuing magazines and periodicals about tourist sites. (Jordan Hotel Association Publications, 2018).
3. Royal Jordanian Airlines offices: one of the important institutions in marketing and promoting Jordanian tourist sites through its offices in many countries of the world, through printed and visual magazines, the production of documentaries, brochures and tourism posters. (Magableh, 2011).

### **Dimensions of social media positions:**

Most of people, old and young, spend part of their time on social networking sites, or use them as a form of online communication technology. Social networking sites are a great way for adults and kids to interact with friends. The use of computers and smart tablets has changed the way of communication, so that social networking sites have become an integral part of people's daily lives, as they are used for the following:

- Communicate with friends and family.
- Meet new people.
- Reconnect or keep in touch with old friends.
- Share messages, videos and photos.
- Planning for social life.
- Participation in groups.
- Share online games with others. (Pewinternet, 2015)

In marketing field, social networking sites are considered a development of the process of exploring new and existing customers and to read and perceive specific content, also considered a new way to communicate with customers unlike traditional marketing methods, which used limited methods of communication between companies and customers by creating and sending a marketing message to customers. On the other hand, social networking sites worked to provide dual communications where the customer plays a big role by

reviewing the content and creating an effective exchange for it by spreading his experience with other consumers. Marketers have noticed that they must work on grouping customers on social networking sites and to organize and search for the most appropriate sites to reach them in the possible way to present the product or service to them in order to receive and observe customer feedback.

It has proven that people trust the responses circulated by their friends more than traditional advertising by talking about the product on social networking sites, which leads to marketing activities for the company without it doing so. This process is known as the electronic spoken word. It should be implemented gradually in the marketing plan of companies and not used as a substitute for it, by being among other integrated marketing tools (Nikolova, (2012).

### **Electronic spoken word dimensions**

The spoken word has become electronic in the social networking sites environment, and it has become one of the biggest benefits for users who communicate with their geographically separated family and friends. Because of the popularity of social networking sites, many consumers can freely express their opinions about companies, brands, products and services. This global communication may generate positive or negative messages related to products and services that may spread globally on various social networking sites (Qualman, 2012).

The increasing popularity of the Internet has focused the world's attention on the electronic spoken word as a marketing tool, both in terms of academic framework and business sector. The main point of this concept is to create opportunities for customers to exchange ideas and concepts for products and services for companies. This type of information has been considered vital because of its impact on consumers' purchasing intentions due to the speed and convenience of using the Internet so customers can obtain information from the electronic spoken word instantly from different types of sources (Huang, 2010).

### **Dimensions of purchasing behavior**

There are five stages that the buying process goes through (Ghosh, Tripathi, Saini & Agrawal 2010)

- Recognition of the problem, which means identifying the needs of consumers.
- Information search, which means searching external knowledge bases or sources for information about a product.
- The probability of resorting to alternative options, meaning if there are better or less expensive options for the products available.
- Purchase option for the product.
- Actual purchase of the product.

(Kotler, 1997) demonstrated the stages of behaviors to make the purchasing decision, which are:

- 1- **Decision of need:** The buying process begins when the consumer feels that he or she has needs and wants to satisfy them, whether it is a basic need or something else. Goods and services are one of the means used primarily in satisfying the sufficient desires of potential consumers. Marketing efforts at this stage seek to identify unsatisfied needs, as well as to provoke sufficient desires to stir instincts and emotions in a way that helps create a desire to acquire a commodity. The interaction of external stimuli with internal motives creates in the individual a feeling of need. This feeling is no more than a matter of unsatisfied psychological desire.
- 2- **Gathering information on alternatives:** When the consumer feels the need of a certain product, he or she searches and collects information about the commodity to be purchased, where they have a set of sources to obtain information, the most important of which are friends, family, co-workers, personal experience and the nature of the information that the consumer needs revolves around the quality of the commodity, its location, characteristics and price and the method of paying the price. There is disagreement among consumers about the length of time a consumer spends searching for information. It is natural for the individual to search for this information within the available places or with the least cost in effort, time and money, and that the available alternatives are linked in terms of clarity, comprehensiveness and accuracy, to the information on which it is built, and to the abundance of goods and services offered in the markets that are accessible to the consumer.
- 3- **Evaluation of alternatives:** At this stage of the purchase process, the consumer conducts an evaluation process for the various alternatives available for the commodity to be purchased after providing the necessary information. The consumer uses a set of criteria in the evaluation process, and these criteria differ among consumers according to their psychological and demographic characteristics and purchasing power.
- 4- **Making a purchasing decision:** The evaluation process results in the selection of the appropriate commodity that satisfies his needs and desires, and the purchase decision is like any decision as a choice between the available alternatives and a comparison between its benefits and cost, and therefore it is a complex decision with various aspects, because it is the result of a group of interlocking partial decisions to buy a specific commodity and of a particular type and from a specific place, at a specific time, and at a specific price, using a specific payment method.
- 5- **Post-purchase evaluation:** After the purchase process, the consumer evaluates the process of making his purchasing decision in terms of his previous expectations and



whether the commodity achieved the appropriate saturation for him or not, and the evaluation that comes after the purchase process, which is the extent to which the commodity satisfies the need. This depends on matching what the commodity offers with what is expected of it. Positive or negative evaluation of the purchase decision is closely related to the credibility of the information provided by producers to the consumer. We must emphasize that the buyer does not move from a stage until he knows all aspects.

## **Previous studies**

### **1- Omari study, (2015) entitled: The effect of the spoken word on the purchasing behavior of cosmetics.**

This study aimed to identify the impact of the spoken word on purchasing behavior in Zarqa, Jordan, where the study sample included 433 respondents. SPSS was also used to analyze the study data, where the study concluded that there is an impact of the spoken word in terms of (the spoken word through friends, the spoken word through celebrities, and the spoken word through social media) all together in influencing the purchasing behavior of cosmetics.

The results of the study also showed that social media plays a weak role in influencing the purchasing behavior of women for cosmetics advertised online.

### **2- Adaileh study, (2015) entitled: The Role of Social Networks in Influencing the Consumer's Purchasing Decision via the Internet.**

This study aimed to identify the role of social networks in influencing the purchasing decision of the consumer via the Internet in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. **The researcher** also used the SPSS statistical package program to analyze the study data. The study concluded that the dimensions of social networks in terms of (information exchange and product evaluation) have an impact on the purchasing decision, and the results of the study showed that there was no effect on the dimension related to consumer support, as one of the dimensions of social communication in influencing the purchasing decision.

### **3- (Ahmad, 2010) study entitled: The evaluation of social media effects on marketing communication from consumer's perspective**

This study aimed to identify the assessment of the effects of social media on marketing communications from the point of view of consumers in Malaysia.

Where the study sample included a respondent. SPSS was used to analyze the study data, where the study concluded that there are effects of social media in terms of (interaction through the characteristics of social media and awareness of the characteristics of social



media) all together in influencing marketing communications from consumers' point of view in Malaysia. The results of the study also showed that personal satisfaction plays an important role in influencing through social media on their friends through their actions and prompting them to interact electronically, it was found that most consumers are afraid of wasting time and privacy when participating in conversations in a social media environment.

**4- (Papadopoulou, Pavlidou & Hodza, 2012) study entitled: Electronic Word of-Mouth through Social Networking Sites, how does it affect consumers.**

The aim of the study is to identify the role of the electronic spoken word through social networking sites and how it affects consumers in Sweden.

The study sample included 278 respondents. The researchers used the SPSS statistical package program to analyze the study data, the study concluded that there is an impact of the electronically spoken word in terms of (product awareness and purchase intention) all together in influencing consumers in terms of gender and age. The results of the study also showed that age has an effect on the relationship between the electronic word and social networking sites through product perceptions and purchase intentions of consumers, and that the perception of the product and the intention to buy for men is more affected than women for the electronic word through social networking sites.

**5- (Liu & Lopez, 2013) study entitled: The Impact of Social Media on Consumer Demand: The Case of Carbonated Soft Drink Market**

The study aimed to measure the impact of social media on consumer demand in the United States of America. The methodology used in this study was based on sales data for eighteen (18) brands of soft drinks sold in 12 states over a period of 17 months.

The results of the study indicated that social media has a significant impact on consumer evaluation, and more specifically about conversations about certain brands that raise awareness among consumers about those brands, which led to a significant positive evaluation of the brands under study. The study also found that consumer conversations can have a strong impact on demand for soft drink products and create more acceptable characteristics for consumers who communicate through social media. It has been observed that conversations on social media do not have a significant negative impact on prices, or one possible explanation is that consumers are not interested in discussing prices for products that stand out from other soft drink products due to competition in quality.

#### **6-(Acharya & Bhatt, (2013) study entitled: Effect of social media on consumer's behavior**

This study aimed to identify the impact of social networking sites and its impact on consumer behavior in terms of education in India. The study sample included 236 respondents. The SPSS statistical package was used to analyze the study data. The study concluded that there is an impact of social networking sites in terms of (trusting information from personal sources, trusting information from external sources, interacting with social networking sites, realizing privacy and the importance of social communication) all together in influencing the behavior of consumers. The results of also showed that educators do not realize the importance of social networking sites and that the contemporary generation does not realize the educational use of social network sites and that it can be used for different educational purposes.

#### **7- Study by Wolny & Mueller, (2013) entitled: Analysis of consumer's fashion's motives to engage in electronic word-of-mouth communication through social media platforms**

This study aimed to analyze the motives for the participation of fashion sector consumers in the electronic spoken word through social media platforms in Britain (UK). The study sample included 192 respondents, and the SPSS statistical package was used to analyze the study data. The study concluded that there are effects of social media motives in terms of (product participation, self-participation, participation of others, search for advice and the need for social interaction) combined in influencing the participation of consumers in the fashion sector in the electronic spoken word through social media in Britain,

The results of the study also showed that interaction through social media has a recurring link to electronic spoken word engagement, and that users are aware of the social benefits that occur when writing a "comment" or "sharing" a brand-related post with friends. It has been shown that seeking advice is not a significant factor in influencing the purchasing behavior of brand-specific fashion discussed through the electronic word of mouth.

#### **8-(Clark & Melacon, (2013) study entitled: The influence of social media investment on relation outcomes: A relationship marketing perspective.**

This study examined the impact of social networking sites on building relationships with customers and how they work to maintain and sustain them in the United States of America. Social networking sites were used as part of the relationship investment and tested on customer satisfaction. The study sample consisted of 144 respondents. SPSS was used to analyze the study data. Where the study concluded that there is an impact of social networking sites in achieving the quality of relations with customers and that it is achieved in the investment of the relationship at high levels and leads to an increase in the level of customer satisfaction as well as loyalty and positive feeling, as a result, it leads to the exchange of positive talk about the company.



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## **Study Approach**

This study used a descriptive analytical approach to characterize a phenomenon in order to determine the causes of the phenomenon's occurrence as well as the factors that influence it. The analytical component of this study is concerned with gathering and evaluating data, putting the study's hypotheses to the test, and finally generating findings. The questionnaire was used by the researcher to obtain data from the study sample.

## **Study community**

The study community consisted of all users of social networking sites in Jordan, as it is difficult to limit the study community due to its large size.

According to Pewinternet Research Center figures, the number of Internet users linked through social networking sites in Jordan is roughly 7.2 million out of 8 million Internet users, and according to recently published numbers and indicators on the use of several social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snap chat, etc.)

Jordan placed first in the world in terms of social networking site users, with 91 %, and the most popular platforms in Jordan are (Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, and LinkedIn), according to the findings. (pewinternet, 2016)

## **Study sample**

The researcher used Uma Sekaran tables to determine the sample size due to the large size of the study population, and according to the tables, the sample size should be 221 or more. (Sekaran, 2016). In the process of distributing the questionnaires, the researcher selected an appropriate sample of customers present on social networking sites (Facebook and Instagram) by distributing (500) electronic questionnaires to users of social networking sites and members of specialized pages of Jordanian telecommunications companies, from which (396) questionnaires were retrieved and (11) questionnaires were excluded, resulting in a valid percentage of (79.2%).

### The demographic variables of the study sample

**Table (1) characteristics of the study sample**

	<b>Variable</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent %</b>
<b>Gender</b>	Male	164	41.4
	Female	232	58.6
<b>Total</b>		<b>396</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Age Category</b>	18 year and Less	60	15.2
	19 – 28 Years	114	28.8
	29 – 38 years	170	42.9
	39 years and more	52	13.1
<b>Total</b>		<b>396</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Qualification</b>	High school or less	49	12.4
	diploma	96	24.2
	Bachelor's	187	47.2
	Postgraduate	64	16.2
<b>Total</b>		<b>396</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Income Category</b>	5000 JD and less	146	36.9
	5001- 9000 JD	97	24.5
	9001 -12000 JD	92	23.2
	12001 JD and More	61	15.4
<b>Total</b>		<b>396</b>	<b>100</b>

Table(1) displays the gender distribution of the study sample members. According to the previous table, the total number of males in the study sample is (164), or 41.4 percent, and the total number of females in the study sample is (232), or 42.4 percent (58.6%). The researcher explains the clearly higher percentage of females than males by the fact that there are more female users of social networking sites, especially when it comes to purchasing online services, because they are more users of social networking sites to provide the time needed for that and because they love and desire to buy travel and tourism services. Males are more rational than females when it comes to buying online, especially in the surrounding environment.

The distribution of the study sample members by age group is shown in Table (1). which reveals that respondents aged 39 and up made up the smallest percentage of respondents (13.1%), while those aged 18 and under made up the largest percentage (18.3%). (15.2%). The majority of the study sample members are between the ages of (29-38) years, followed by those between the ages of (19-27) years, as shown in the previous table. The researcher explains this by saying that these young age groups are the most active on social networking sites because they are more likely to use the Internet on a regular basis via (smart tablets), which makes it easier to access social networking pages at any time.

Table (1) shows the distribution of study sample members by educational qualification. According to the educational qualification variable, 12.4 % of the study sample has a high

school diploma or less, and the majority of the study sample has a bachelor's degree (47.2 %), followed by diploma holders (24.2 %). The findings also revealed that there are 64% of people with a master's degree, and they make up a significant portion of the population (16.2%).

The researcher explains these findings by stating that all diploma, bachelor's, and postgraduate degree holders are most likely classified as members of society's working class and interact with social networking sites in some way because the Internet has become a necessity of daily life, whether at work or in leisure, and they have sufficient knowledge to use social networking sites.

Table (1) shows the distribution of the study sample members according to the annual income variable. The table also shows that 39.9% of the study sample members earn an annual income of 5000 dinars or less, accounting for the largest percentage of the total sample of the study, followed by 24.5 % of the study sample members earning between 5001 dinars and 9000 dinars, accounting for the second largest percentage of the total sample of the study.

The percentage constituted 15.4 % of the study sample as the lowest percentage of those who receive an annual income of 1,2001 dinars or more, followed by 23.2 % of those who earn between 9001 and 12000 dinars as annual income from the study sample, and the percentage constituted 23.2 % of those who earn between 9001 and 12000 dinars as annual income from the study sample. The researcher interprets these results on the grounds that the average income of the Jordanian citizen is rather low.

### **Study tools and information sources**

The researcher gathered information from two key sources in order to meet the study's objectives:

1. Secondary data sources: The researcher used secondary data sources to address the theoretical framework of the study, which included related Arab and foreign books and references, periodicals, articles and reports, previous research and studies on the subject of the study, and research and reading on various Internet sites.
2. Main sources: To address the analytical components of the study's issue, primary data collection was resorted to through a questionnaire designed by the researcher as the study's major tool, and the Five Likert Scale was utilized to assign relative importance to each answer.

The statistical program SPSS V.20 was used for the analysis, and the questionnaire was divided into three sections:

- **Part One:** This section deals with the study sample members' demographic factors via four variables, namely (gender, age group, educational qualification, and annual income).

- **Part two:** The independent variable scale's components comprised the use of social networking sites across two key dimensions: (knowledge of social networking site characteristics, engagement with social networking sites), and the study instrument included (13) items to assess.
- **Part three:** The electronic spoken word dimensions' scale had two main dimensions: celebrities and friends, and the study instrument had eleven things to measure.
- **Part four:** incorporated a measure of the dimensions of purchasing behavior, with (12) items to measure it in the study instrument.

Thus, the questionnaire (the study tool) in its final form consisted of (36) items on the Five Likert Scale.

### The validity and reliability of the study tool

The Cronbach Alpha internal consistency test was used to measure the consistency in the respondents' answers to all the questions on the scale. Table (3-5) shows the results of the reliability tool for this study.

**Table (2) Internal consistency stability coefficient of resolution dimensions (Cronbach's alpha scale)**

No	Dimensions	No of Items	Alpha Value
<b>1</b>	<b>Use of social networking sites</b>		
1-1	Awareness of the social networking sites characteristics	6	0.71
1-2	Interact with social media	7	0.86
<b>2</b>	<b>Electronic spoken word</b>		
2-1	by celebrities	6	0.86
2-2	by friends	5	0.85
<b>3</b>	<b>Purchasing behavior</b>	12	0.79

The electronic spoken word variable's stability values varied from (0.861) for celebrities to (0.852) for the friends' dimension. In terms of the Cronbach's alpha value for the dependent variable, purchasing behavior, which is 12 items (0.790), the Cronbach Alpha indications above show that the study instrument in general has a high stability coefficient and its capacity to meet the study's objectives. (Sekaran, 2016).

### Study data analysis

Dimensions of the independent variable the use of social networking sites:

The researcher used arithmetic averages and standard deviations to describe and analyze the dimensions of social networking site use, as shown in Tables (4-1) for the variable awareness of social networking site characteristics and Table (4-2) for the variable interaction with social networking sites.

The following tables also display the study paragraphs in order of relevance from the perspective of users of social networking sites who visit pages that promote Jordanian travel and tourism services. The tables will also reflect the importance of each paragraph based on the study sample's point of view, as follows:

**Table (3) Means and standard deviations of the of the social networking sites characteristics awareness variable**

No	Awareness of the social networking sites characteristics	Mean	S.D	Rank	Level
1	I can easily repost the information available on social media	4.42	0.99	3	High
2	Social media enables you to share comments with others	4.67	0.81	1	High
3	Get valuable feedback through social media	3.62	1.13	5	Moderate
4	I get the information I need through social media	3.91	1.12	4	High
5	I trust the information I get through social media.	2.83	0.96	6	Moderate
6	Social networking sites provide the possibility of instant communication with others.	4.59	0.86	2	High
<b>All Items</b>		<b>4.01</b>	<b>0.58</b>		<b>High</b>

Table (3) illustrates the responses to the paragraphs of the main study tool (the questionnaire) that are related to the paragraphs of the independent variable using social networking sites and to the dimension of awareness of social networking site characteristics. On the Five-Year Likert Scale, the arithmetic averages for this measure ranged from (2.83-4.67), with a total average of (4.01), indicating that the study sample has a high level of awareness of the characteristics of social networking sites.

The paragraph " Social media enables you to share comments with others" came in first with an arithmetic average of (4.67), which is higher than the general arithmetic average of (4.01), being the most important characteristic of these sites, and a standard deviation of (4.01). (0.81), while the paragraph " I trust the information I get through social media " ranked sixth and last with an average of (2.83), which is lower than the total arithmetic average of (4.01) and a standard deviation (0.96) because trust in any site is based on several considerations,



and the average of (2.83) is lower than the total arithmetic average of (4.01) and a standard deviation (0.96) because trust in any site is based on several considerations, and the average of ( All of the study sample's answers to the paragraphs of the variable awareness of the characteristics of social networking sites had a high arithmetic.

**Table (4) Means and standard deviations of the interaction with social networking sites variable**

No	Interaction with social networking sites variable	Mean	S.D	Rank	Level
7	I follow ads of travel and tourism companies on social media.	4.22	1.16	1	High
8	I interact with ads of travel and tourism companies on social media	3.69	1.27	2	High
9	Exchange with others the ads of travel and tourism companies on social media.	3.15	1.43	4	Moderate
11	Exchange with others the advertisements of tourism companies and ask for the necessary assistance when needed through social networking sites regarding issues related to the services of tourism and travel companies	3.14	1.39	5	Moderate
11	I receive responses when asking for help through social networking sites regarding issues related to the services of tourism and travel companies.	3.32	1.36	3	Moderate
12	I share with others ads of travel and tourism companies on social media.	3.10	1.34	6	Moderate
13	Comment on ads of travel and tourism companies on social media	2.94	1.30	7	
<b>All Items</b>		<b>3.37</b>	<b>0.58</b>		<b>Moderate</b>

Table (4) indicates the respondents' answers to the statements related to interaction with social networking sites.

The arithmetic averages for this variable ranged between (2.94 - 4.22) with a total average of (3.37) on the five-point Likert scale, which indicates the average level of the study sample's answers to the questionnaire items related to interaction with social networking sites.

The paragraph "I follow ads of travel and tourism companies on social media." came in first place with an average of (4.22), which is higher than the general average of (3.37), and a standard deviation of (1.16). While the paragraph " Comment on ads of travel and tourism companies on social media" ranked seventh and last with an arithmetic mean (2.94) which is

lower than the total arithmetic mean of (3.37) and with a standard deviation of (1.30). Social networking sites are average.

### Dimensions of the intermediate variable related to the electronic spoken word:

To describe and analyze the dimensions of the electronic spoken word, the researcher has resorted to using arithmetic averages and standard deviations, as shown in Table (5) for the electronic spoken word variable by celebrities, and Table (6) for the electronic spoken word variable by friends.

First: The answers of the study sample to the paragraphs of the study tool related to the mediating variable electronic spoken word by celebrities

**Table (5) Means and standard deviations for the median variable (electronic utterance by celebrities)**

No	Interaction with social networking sites variable	Mean	S.D	Rank	Level
14	I believe in the information that celebrities pass on social media	2.71	1.06	3	Moderate
15	I trust information passed on by celebrities on social media.	2.61	1.05	4	Moderate
16	I find that what celebrities say on social media helps me to choose services from a particular brand	2.82	1.25	1	Moderate
17	I am influenced by the advertisements that celebrities make about a particular brand	2.76	1.21	2	Moderate
18	I share information provided by celebrities via social networking sites with others.	2.57	1.19	5	Moderate
19	I buy services from the brand that celebrities share on social media	2.38	1.01	6	Moderate
<b>All Items</b>		<b>2.64</b>	<b>1.13</b>		<b>Moderate</b>

Table No. (5) shows the answers of the study sample to the phrases related to the mediating variable, the electronic spoken word by celebrities, where the arithmetic averages for this variable ranged between (2.38-2.82) with a total average of (2.64) on the five-point Likert scale, which indicates the average level of the electronic spoken word by celebrities according to the opinions of the study sample members. The paragraph "I find that what celebrities say on social media helps me to choose services from a particular brand" came in the first place, with an average of (2.82) which is higher than the general mean of (2.64), and a standard deviation of (1.25). While the paragraph " I buy services from the brand that celebrities share on social media " ranked sixth and last with a mean of (2.38), which is lower than the overall mean of (2.64) and with a standard deviation of (1.01).

In general, the answers of the study sample were average on all paragraphs of the electronic spoken word by celebrities, meaning that the opinion of the celebrity can be helpful to the choice, but not conducive to the purchase.

**Second: The answers of the study sample to the paragraphs of the study tool related to the intermediate variable electronic spoken word by friends**

**Table (6) Means and standard deviations for the median variable (electronic utterance by friends)**

No	Interaction with social networking sites variable	Mean	S.D	Rank	Level
20	I believe in the information that friends pass on social media	3.44	1.05	1	Moderate
21	I trust information passed on by friends on social media.	3.31	1.06	2	Moderate
22	I find that what friends say on social media helps me to choose services from a particular brand	3.23	1.15	4	Moderate
23	I share information provided by friends via social networking sites with others.	3.29	1.23	3	Moderate
24	I buy services from the brand that celebrities share on social media	2.80	1.19	5	Moderate
<b>All Items</b>		<b>3.21</b>	<b>1.13</b>		<b>Moderate</b>

Table No. (6) shows the answers of the study sample to the phrases related to the intermediate variable electronic spoken word by friends, where the arithmetic averages for this variable ranged between (2.80-3.44) with a total average of (3.21) on the five-point Likert scale, which indicates the average level of the electronic spoken word by friends according to the opinions of the study sample members. The paragraph "I believe in the information that friends pass on social media" came in the first place, with an arithmetic mean of (3.44), which is higher than the general arithmetic average of (3.21) and a standard deviation of (1.05). While the paragraph " I buy services from the brand that celebrities share on social media" ranked fifth and last, with an arithmetic average of (2.80), which is lower than the overall arithmetic average of (3.21) and with a standard deviation of (1.19).

In general, the answers of the study sample were average on all paragraphs of the electronic spoken word by friends, that is, the opinion of friends can lead to more conviction than to lead to a rush to buy.

### The dependent variable of purchasing behavior

To describe and analyze the dimensions of purchasing behavior, the researcher resorted to using arithmetic averages and standard deviations, as shown in Tables (7) of the variable purchasing behavior.

First: The answers of the study sample to the paragraphs of the study tool related to the dependent variable purchasing behavior

**Table (7) Means and standard deviations for the dependent variable (purchasing behavior)**

No	Interaction with social networking sites variable	Mean	S.D	Rank	Level
25	I search for the services I need through several sources that offer a specific brand	4.30	1.05	9	High
26	I give enough time to find the services I need from a particular companies.	4.29	1.10	10	High
27	I care about the quality of the tourism services I need during the search for a specific brand	4.62	0.88	4	High
28	I always follow the offers offered by travel and tourism companies in search of the services I need from a particular brand	4.35	1.06	8	High
29	Get the necessary information about a specific brand through family or friends	3.81	1.16	12	High
30	I prefer to buy services from travel and tourism companies that provide details of a particular brand	4.68	0.84	1	High
31	I browse through several sites in search of the right price for the services I need from a particular brand	4.42	1.01	7	High
32	I care about what is being said about a particular brand	4.14	1.09	11	High
33	I compare the services available in travel and tourism companies before buying a particular brand	4.43	0.98	6	High
34	I review my past experiences before purchasing from a particular brand	4.67	0.79	2	High
35	I choose between service price and quality before buying a particular brand	4.64	0.86	3	High
36	Buy the service that adds value compared to other brands	4.48	0.97	5	High
<b>All Items</b>		<b>4.40</b>	<b>0.54</b>		<b>High</b>

Table No. (7) shows the answers of the study sample to the statements related to the dependent variable purchasing behavior, as the arithmetic averages for this variable ranged between (3.81-4.68) with a total average of (4.40) on the Likert quintuple scale, which indicates the high level of purchasing behavior according to the opinions of study sample members. The paragraph " I prefer to buy services from travel and tourism companies that provide details of a particular brand" came in the first place, with an arithmetic mean of (4.68), which is higher than the general arithmetic average of (4.40), and a standard deviation of (0.84). While the paragraph "Get the necessary information about a specific brand through family or friends" ranked the twelfth and last with an arithmetic mean (3.81) which is lower than the total arithmetic average of (4.40) and with a standard deviation (1.16), and in general, the answers of the study sample came High on all paragraphs of purchasing behavior.

### **Analyze the suitability of the data to the hypotheses testing assumptions of the study**

Before starting the application of regression analysis to test the hypotheses of the study, the researcher performed some tests in order to ensure that the data fit the assumptions of the regression analysis, as it was confirmed that there was no high correlation between the multi-collinearity independent variables using the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and the allowable variance test (Tolerance) for each of the variables of the study, taking into account that the permissible variance inflation factor (VIF) does not exceed the value (10) and that the value of the permissible variance of Tolerance is greater than (0.05), and the following table shows the results of these tests.

**Table (8) result of Variance Inflation Factor and Tolerance test**

No	Interaction with social networking sites variable	VIF	Tolerance
1	Use of social networking sites	1.133	0.883
2	Electronic spoken word	1.274	0.785
3	Purchasing behavior	1.597	0.792

### **Testing the hypotheses of the study**

The first hypothesis: "There is no statistically significant effect of the use of social networking sites on the purchasing behavior of the services of travel and tourism companies in Jordan at the level of statistical significance  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ."

To test this hypothesis, simple regression analysis was used because this hypothesis examines the effect of all dimensions of the independent variable combined on one dependent variable, which is purchasing behavior. The results of testing this hypothesis appeared in Table (9).

**Table (9): Simple regression to test the first hypothesis**

Hypothesis	R <sup>2</sup>	R	P- Value	T
H01	0.088	0.296	0.000	4.138

Table (9) refers to the results of testing the first hypothesis, and it is noted that the calculated (T) value is greater than its tabular value at the level of significance (0.05), which means rejecting the null hypothesis and accepting the alternative hypothesis, meaning that there is a statistically significant effect of using social networking sites on the purchasing behavior of the services of travel and tourism companies in Jordan at the level of statistical significance  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ .

This result is consistent with the findings of many previous studies, such as the study (Wolny & Mueller, 2013) and the study (Acharya & Bhatt, 2013). The researcher explains this result because the constant use of social networking sites with its combined characteristics can lead to the formation of a mental image directly or indirectly about the services offered by online stores or by individuals, whether they display content with or without promotional intent or display them as advertisements funded by the advertiser, which leads, even in the future, to a direct or indirect impact on the purchasing behavior of the user.

**Second hypothesis test:** (H02) There is no statistically significant effect of using social networking sites on the electronic spoken word in travel and tourism companies in Jordan at the level of statistical significance  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ .

To test this hypothesis, simple regression analysis was used because this hypothesis examines the effect of the combined dimensions of the independent variable on the mediating variable (the spoken word - electronic), and the results of testing this hypothesis appeared in Table (4-9).

**Table (10): Simple regression to test the second hypothesis**

Hypothesis	R <sup>2</sup>	R	P- Value	T
H02	0.342	0.585	0.000	5.95

Table (10) refers to the results of the second hypothesis test, and it is noted that the calculated (T) value is greater than its tabular value at the level of significance (0.05). This means rejecting the null hypothesis and accepting the alternative hypothesis, meaning that there is a statistically significant effect of using social networking sites on the electronic spoken word in tourism and travel companies in Jordan at the level of statistical significance  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ . This result is consistent with the findings of many previous studies, such as the study (Wolny & Mueller, 2013). The researcher explains this result, which is that interaction through social networking sites is related to participation through the electronic spoken word and that users are aware of the social benefits that occur when writing a comment or sharing a post related to a particular brand with friends, and the researchers justify this by the fact that there is

awareness by customers Those who use social networking sites more than they used to be, as they are getting smarter about targeted advertisements through these sites.

**Test the third hypothesis:** (H03) There is no statistically significant effect of the electronic spoken word on the purchasing behavior of the services of travel and tourism companies in Jordan at the level of statistical significance  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ .

To test this hypothesis, simple regression analysis was used because this hypothesis examines the effect of the combined dimensions of the mediator variable on the dependent variable (purchasing behavior). The results of testing this hypothesis appeared in Table (11).

**Table (11): Simple regression to test the third hypothesis**

Hypothesis	R <sup>2</sup>	R	P- Value	T
H03	0.066	0.256	0.000	3.017

Table (11) shows the results of the third hypothesis test, and it's worth noting that at the level of significance, the calculated (T) value is bigger than the tabular value (0.05).

This entails rejecting the null hypothesis and adopting the alternative hypothesis, implying that the electronic spoken word has a statistically significant impact on the purchase behavior of tourism and travel services in Jordan at the statistical significance level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ).

This result is consistent with the findings of many previous studies, such as (Wolny & Mueller, 2013) study, and the researcher explains this result, which is that interaction via social networking sites is related to participation via the electronic spoken word, and that users are aware of the social benefits that occur when they write a comment or share a post related to a specific brand with friends. The researcher supports this by stating that clients who use social networking sites are more knowledgeable than they were previously, as advertisements aimed through these sites have gotten smarter.

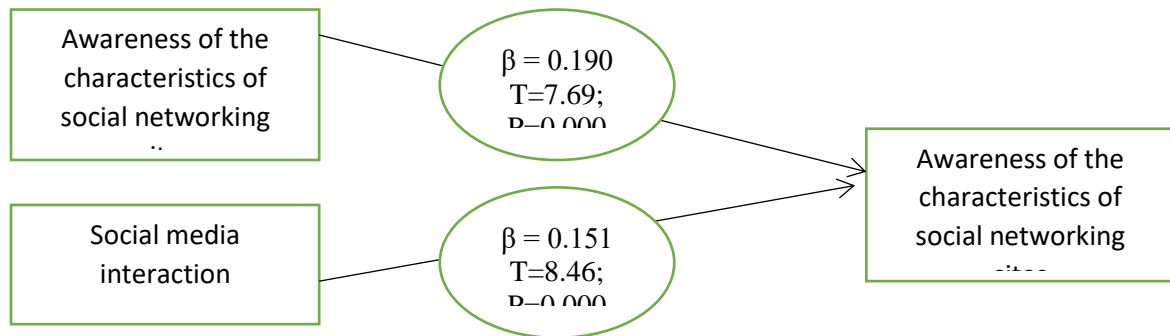
**Fourth Hypothesis Test:** (H04) There is no statistically significant effect of the use of social networking sites on the behavior of the services of travel and tourism companies in Jordan at the level of statistical significance  $\alpha \leq 0.05$

To examine the effect of using social networking sites on purchasing behavior, the path test was used, which adopts the Structural Equation Modeling approach, which is necessary to test the mediating role of a variable in the effect of an independent variable on a dependent variable.

The mediating role can be tested in two stages: The direct relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable without the presence of the mediating

variable, and the indirect relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable with the presence of the mediating variable.

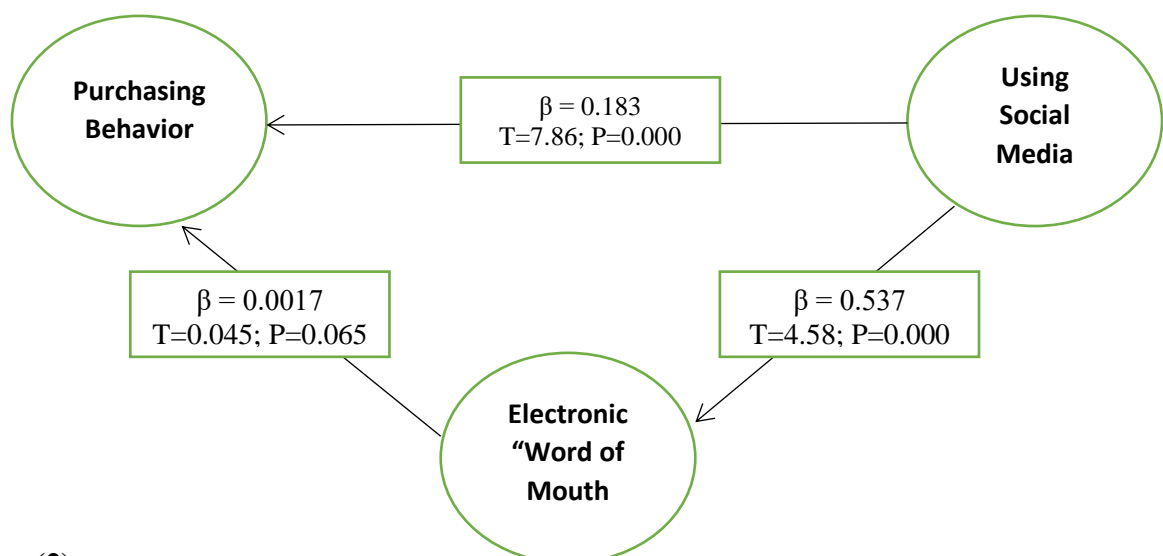
Figure (1) shows the direct effect of using social networking sites, represented by its two dimensions (awareness of the characteristics of social networking sites, and interaction with social networking sites) on purchasing behavior.



**Figure (1)**

It is clear from Figure (1) that the path coefficient of the direct relationship = (0.190), which is statistically significant at the level of significance ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) between awareness of the characteristics of social networking sites and purchasing behavior, and the path factor of the direct relationship (0.151), which is statistically significant at the level of Significance ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) between interaction with social networking sites and purchasing behavior, and this indicates that there is a direct effect relationship between the independent and the dependent variable.

Figure (2), shows the indirect effect of using social networking sites on purchasing behavior through the mediating variable, which is the electronic spoken word.



**Figure (2)**



Where it becomes clear that the indirect relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable still exists and is statistically significant, in addition to the fact that the path coefficient between the use of social networking sites and purchasing behavior has a statistical significance in the presence of the mediating variable, which is the electronic spoken word. This result, as seen by the researcher, is logical, due to the use of celebrities and friends by companies through social networking sites to convince their customers of their products, which leads to a change in one way or another in their purchasing behavior.

## Results

The results of the study showed a statistically significant impact of the dimensions of the use of social networking sites, represented in (awareness of the characteristics of social networking sites, and interaction with social networking sites) on the purchasing behavior of the services of tourism and travel companies in Jordan at the level of significance ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ), as the correlation coefficient reached ( $R=0.269$ ), and the coefficient of determination ( $R^2=0.088$ ).

The results also showed a statistically significant impact of the use of social networking sites on the electronic spoken word in travel and tourism companies in Jordan at the level of statistical significance ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ), as the correlation coefficient was ( $R=0.585$ ), and the coefficient of determination was ( $R^2=0.342$ ).

The results also showed a statistically significant effect of the electronic spoken word on the purchasing behavior of the services of travel and tourism companies in Jordan at the level of statistical significance  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ , where the correlation coefficient was ( $R = 0.210$ ), and the coefficient of determination was ( $R^2 = 0.044$ ).

The results of the study showed a statistically significant effect of the use of social networking sites on purchasing behavior through the electronic spoken word as a mediating variable at the level of statistical significance  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ .

## Recommendations

The study recommends that tourism and travel companies on social networking sites should pay attention to the content of the information provided about their services, because of its positive impact on increasing the confidence of customers on these pages. Positive impact of follow-up and attention by customers, especially friends.

The study also recommends setting policies and procedures to develop current and new products in line with customer reactions on social media pages by tourism and travel companies in Jordan.

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