# Website Evaluation for Destinations
## The application of an extended theoretical framework

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# Agenda

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# Problem Statement



- Websites play a vital role in the DMO performance
  - Information (Romanazzi, Petruzzellis, & Iannuzzi, 2011).
  - Communication (Babacan & Koker, 2008; Özdemir & Gök, 2009)
  - Revenue generation (Morosan, 2008)
- Technological challenges facing tourism industry (Gretzel, 2006)
  - Technology adaption
  - Expectation management
  - Competition
  - Success measurement
- Current website evaluation models are general (Tanrisevdi & Duran, 2011; Li & Wang, 2010)

# A EXTENDED THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

*for DMO website evaluation is NEEDED*

# Theoretical Background

- Website evaluation approaches
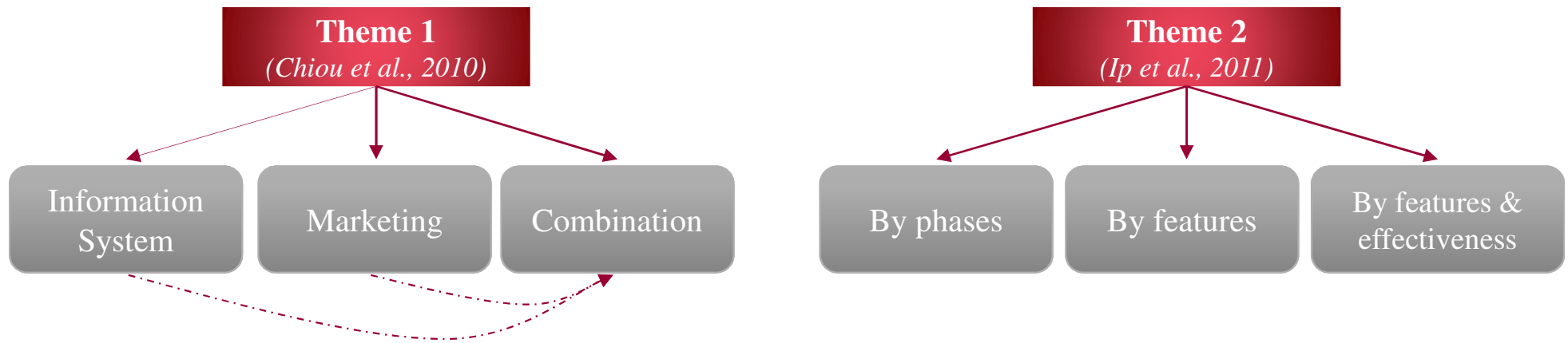


- NO standard evaluation model, flexibly in line with specific industry and background (Schmidt et al., 2008)

# Website evaluation for DMOs

| Framework | **BSC** *Kaplan (1996)* | **eMICA** *(Li & Wang, 2010)* | **ICTR** *(Wang & Russo, 2007)* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Dimensions covered | •Financial<br>•Internal Business Process<br>•Learning and Growth<br>•Customer | •Web-based Promotion<br>•Provision of Information and Services<br>•Transaction Processing | •Information<br>•Communication<br>•Transaction<br>•Relationship |
| Limitations | Limited number of dimensions *(Ip et al. 2011)* | Variations depending each business *(Schmidt et al., 2008)* | Neglected role of technical merits *(Li & Wang, 2010)* |

# Proposed extended theoretical framework



Relationship: Web 2.0 (embeded social media platforms)

SEO: Organic ranking and paid placement
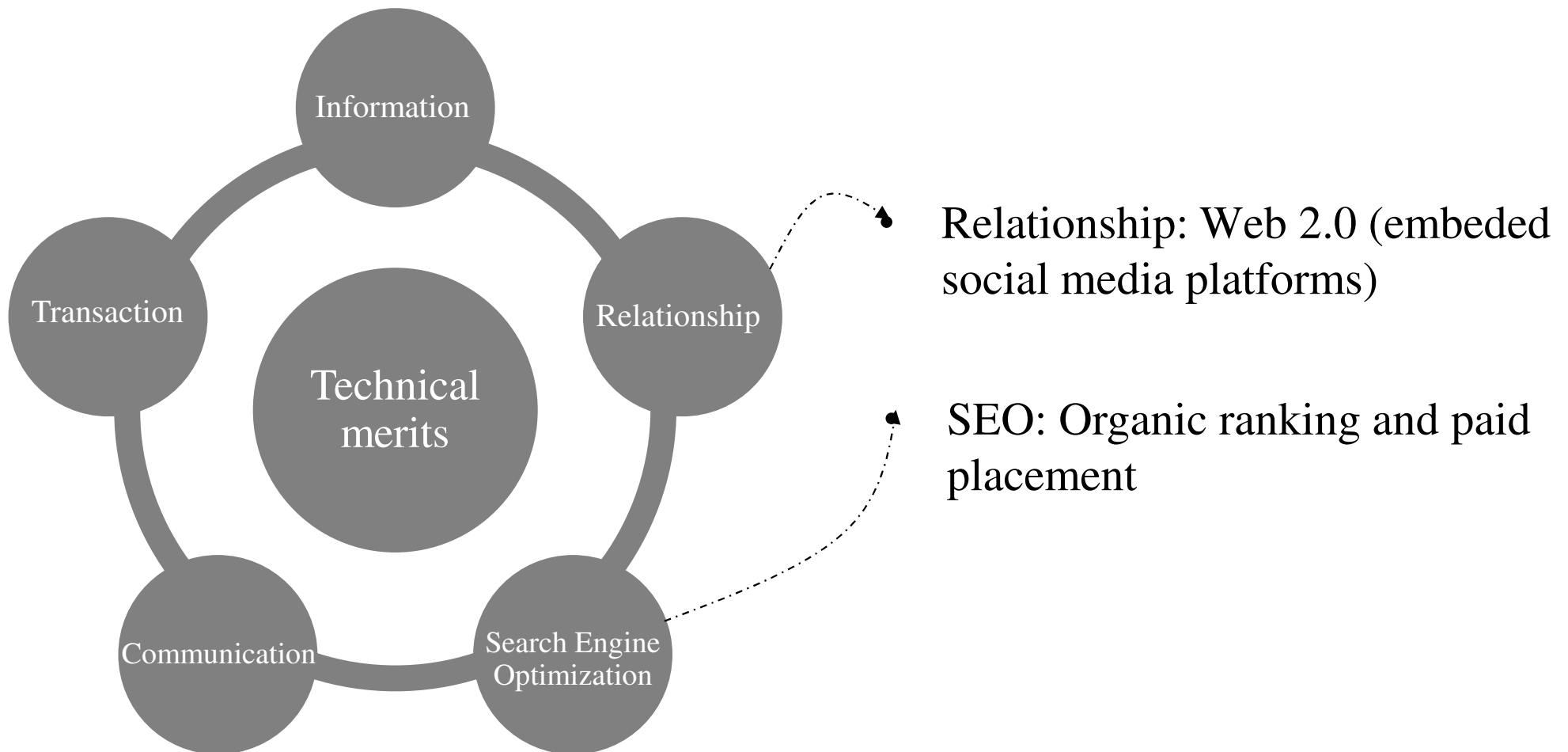
# Methodology

- Content analysis
  - Criteria catalogue  from selected website evaluation studies ;  allocated into 6 dimensions with 62 items

| Dimension | Number of item |
| --- | --- |
| Information | 21 |
| Communication | 8 |
| Transaction | 4 |
| Relationship | 11 |
| Search Engine Optimization | 5 |
| Technical merits | 13 |

  - Data collection: Yes/No question  (1-0)
  - Data analysis
- Sample: 57  DMO websites (32 countries and 25 cities), randomly selected from European Travel Commission and European cities marketing websites

# Results - Information

- Highest: Accommodation (95%), Attractions (91%)

- Lowest: Tickets (<30%)

- Country outperforms city except: News, About us, Food and beverage, Press release and Weather forecast

Table 1: Information richness of DMO websites

| Items | Country (%) | City (%) | Overall (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Accommodation | 97 | 92 | 95 |
| Attraction | 97 | 84 | 91 |
| Transportation | 94 | 84 | 89 |
| Culture Activity | 94 | 76 | 85 |
| Sports Activity | 91 | 72 | 82 |
| News | 78 | 86 | 82 |
| Recreation Activity | 91 | 68 | 80 |
| About us | 78 | 80 | 79 |
| Food and Beverage | 66 | 84 | 75 |
| Newsletter | 72 | 72 | 72 |
| Arts Activity | 81 | 56 | 69 |
| Map | 72 | 60 | 66 |
| Guide Book | 68 | 48 | 58 |
| Press Release | 56 | 60 | 58 |
| Weather Report | 56 | 60 | 58 |
| Visa | 56 | 35 | 46 |
| Attraction Tickets | 32 | 32 | 32 |
| Rent Car | 45 | 14 | 30 |
| Rail Tickets | 25 | 23 | 24 |
| Air Tickets | 29 | 12 | 21 |
| Ferry Tickets | 28 | 13 | 21 |
| Total | 67 | 58 | 63 |

# Results - Communication

Table 2: Communication performance of DMO websites

| Items | Country (%) | City (%) | Overall (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Telephone | 64 | 63 | 64 |
| Email | 66 | 53 | 60 |
| Postal Address | 63 | 48 | 56 |
| Feedback | 41 | 24 | 33 |
| Name of PIC | 22 | 24 | 23 |
| Integrated portal | 19 | 23 | 21 |
| Live-chat | 9 | 0 | 5 |
| Total | 41 | 34 | 37 |

- Overall: Low (37%)

- Highest: Telephone (64%)

- Lowest: Live-chat (5%)

- Country outperforms City in most criteria except Integrated portal and Name of PIC

# Results - Transaction

Table 3: Transaction performance of DMO websites

| Items | Country (%) | City (%) | Overall (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Advertisements | 41 | 55 | 49 |
| Booking system | 31 | 48 | 40 |
| Shopping system | 21 | 40 | 31 |
| Log in | 34 | 20 | 27 |
| Total | 32 | 41 | 37 |

- Overall: 37 %

- City perform better than Country, except Log-in

# Results – Relationship (social media)

Table 4: Relationship performance of DMO websites

| Items | Country (%) | City (%) | Overall (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Facebook | 88 | 88 | 88 |
| Twitter | 84 | 72 | 78 |
| YouTube | 81 | 64 | 73 |
| Virtual tour | 34 | 40 | 37 |
| RSS | 47 | 24 | 36 |
| Flickr | 38 | 32 | 35 |
| Hint to Mobile apps | 28 | 36 | 32 |
| Tripadvisor | 31 | 28 | 30 |
| Blogs | 16 | 28 | 22 |
| Dig / Delicious | 19 | 20 | 20 |
| Forum | 9 | 4 | 7 |
| Total | 43 | 40 | 42 |

- Top 3: Facebook, Twitter, YouTube

- Lowest: Forum

- Country outperform City except Dig/Delicious

# Results – Search Engine Optimization

Table 5: SEO performance of DMO websites

| Items | Country (%) | City (%) | Overall (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Page description | 94 | 84 | 89 |
| Paid placement | 88 | 72 | 80 |
| Title tag | 81 | 72 | 77 |
| Title tag-five pages | 78 | 76 | 77 |
| Total | 85 | 76 | 81 |

- Overall: High (81%)

- Ranked 3 – 4 in result page

- No significant difference in organic ranking between Country and City

Table 6: The independent samples test

Organic ranking of DMO websites in Google result page

| | Country/City | Mean | Std. Dev. | Min | Max | P-value |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Organic position | Country | 3.56 | 6.618 | 1 | 35 | 0.895 |
| | City | 3.80 | 5.766 | 1 | 25 | |

# Results - Technical merits

Table 7: Technical Merits performance of DMO websites

| Items | Country (%) | City (%) | Overall (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Picture | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Internal links | 100 | 92 | 96 |
| Text | 94 | 96 | 95 |
| Language | 91 | 92 | 92 |
| Sitemap | 78 | 68 | 73 |
| Video | 63 | 56 | 60 |
| Download | 66 | 44 | 55 |
| Flash-intro | 59 | 40 | 50 |
| Hot Button | 44 | 32 | 38 |
| Bookmark | 41 | 16 | 29 |
| Personalization | 16 | 24 | 20 |
| QR Code | 19 | 12 | 16 |
| Audio | 21 | 0 | 11 |
| Total | 61 | 52 | 56 |

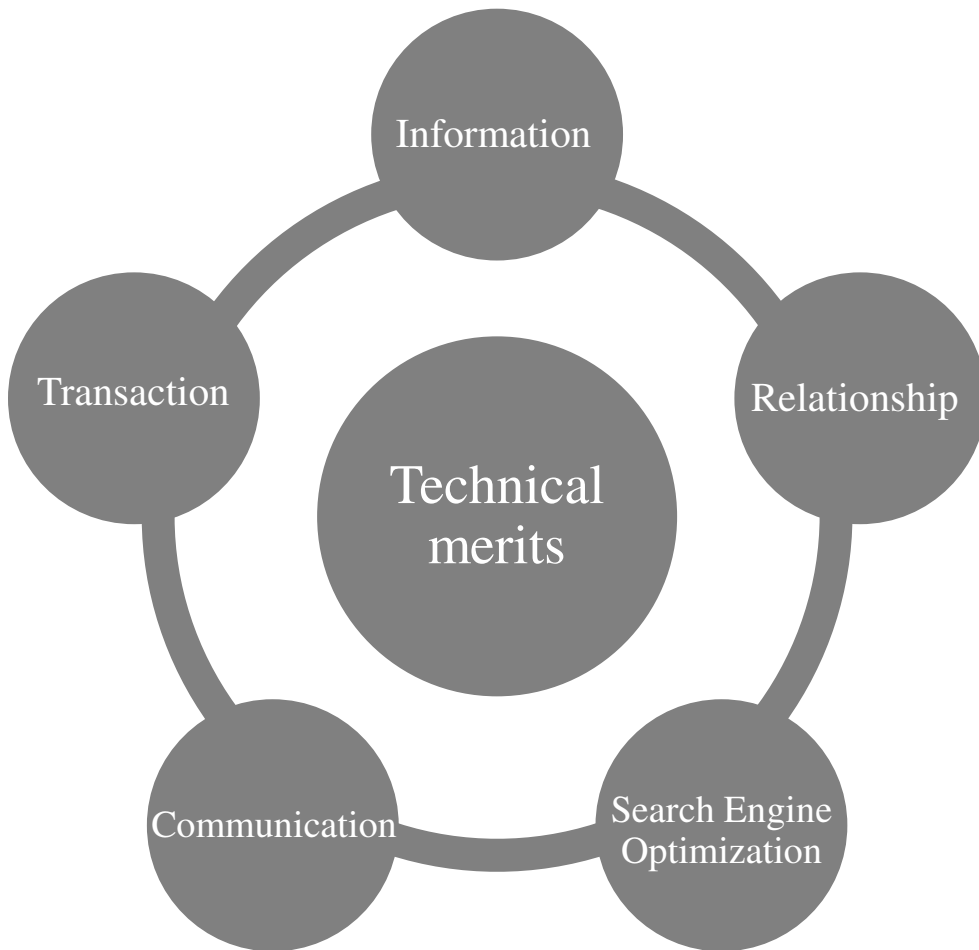- All websites have pictures

- Few websites provide audio files

- Effective technical merits: Language, Sitemap

# Results - Overview

Fig. 1: Key performance indicators of DMO websites (in %)
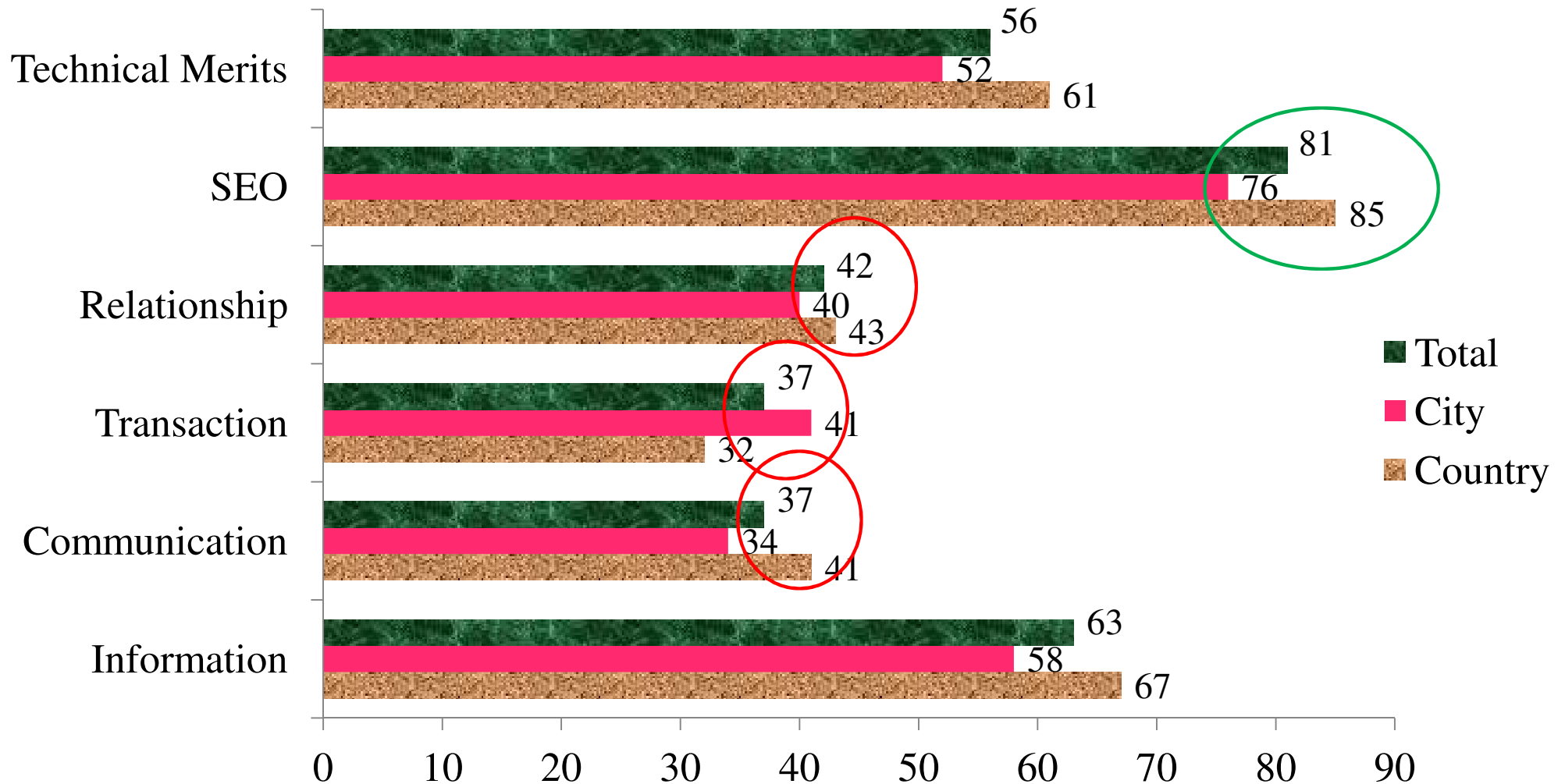
# Conclusions - Theoretical discussion

Information

Transaction

Relationship

Technical merits

Communication

Search Engine Optimization

- The framework is constructed based on studies of Wang & Russo (2007) and Li & Wang (2010)

- Poor performance of Communication, Transaction and Relationship may have an impact on the DMO performance

- Country outperform City on most dimensions except Transaction: Consistent with Choi, Lehto, & Oleary 's study (2007):

  - The lower the level of the destination is, the more specific and focused information is expected.

  - Tourists look for commercial-oriented activities on City DMO websites rather than Country

# Conclusions - Managerial implications

- Enhanced visibility of social media platforms.

- Adapted more communication tools such as live - chat.

- Extended multi-channel distributions such as online shopping and booking systems, to reinforce transaction performance of the websites.

# Conclusions - Limitations and Future Research



- Using the latent trait or factor models to recognise the patterns of binary and categorical data

- Testing the interaction effects within the framework.

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- Full list of reference can be found in the report paper

# Thank you for your attention!