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THE EFFICIENCY OF LOCAL GUIDES PROGRAM AS AN ADVERTISING TECHNIQUE ON GOOGLE MAPS APPLICATION IN TURKEY

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Abstract

In this study, the researcher aimed to measure the efficiency of the Google maps application as an advertising method in Turkey. To achieve this purpose the researcher used a questionnaire distributed randomly through social media channels. 35 persons from both genders and different age groups participated in the questionnaire. According to results more than half of the participant's trust reviews were written by local guides on the Google maps application. Also, participants believe that reviews on Google maps are consistent with reality.

Keywords: Local guides, Google maps, Crowdsourcing.

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Introduction

Now that everyone, old and young, carries their smartphone, it has become convenient for Internet users to share information with others. Everyone around the world can create great content online and it is easy for them to participate in various aspects. For example, Wikipedia is a successful model for benefiting from ongoing public contributions. In addition to the fact that there are international companies that have been able to benefit greatly from the crowds (crowds), for example, Amazon launched the Merch by Amazon service, which allows the public to participate in designing publications on demand. Amazon prints the designs and gives a financial part of this work to the designer when selling it. There is not necessarily any financial compensation for the public's contribution, as we will focus later on one of the types of crowdsourcing that does not depend on any financial benefit.

What is the Crowdsourcing?

Author Daren C. Brabham defines crowdsourcing as a distributed online production and problem-solving model that leverages the collective intelligence of online communities to serve specific organizational goals. Online communities (crowds) are given the opportunity to respond to crowdsourcing activities promoted by the organization and are motivated to respond for a variety of reasons.[1]

According to Jeff Howe, crowdsourcing refers to a new approach to distributed problem solving, in which tasks traditionally assigned to

[1] Brabham, Daren C. *Crowdsourcing*. Mit Press, 2013. P. xix.

employees of an organization, a particular group, or a community of interest are outsourced to an unspecified 'crowd' of people through an open call.[2]

Crowdsourcing "is a combination of the efforts of a group of people, usually volunteers, in a job in which each individual makes a small contribution in order to achieve a larger result and a collective goal.[3]

The crowdsourcing process consists of the following factors:[4]

• Collective Contractor (Student) - an institution or individual requesting assistance from the public

• Crowd - a group of people who work on a crowdsourcing job

• Mission - needs to be well defined

• Platform - a Web platform that allows users to reach the public. The simplified crowdsourcing process is shown in Figure 1

[2] Howe, Jeff. "The rise of crowdsourcing." *Wired magazine* 14, no. 6 (2006): 1-4.
[3] Injac-Malbaša, V. "Crowdsourcing-određenje pojma, tipologija i srodni termini." Glasnik Narodne biblioteke Srbije 2013 (2012): P. 239-255
[4] Niu, Xiao-Jing, Sheng-Feng Qin, John Vines, Rose Wong, and Hui Lu. "Key crowdsourcing technologies for product design and development." *International Journal of Automation and Computing* 16, no. 1 (2019): 1-15.

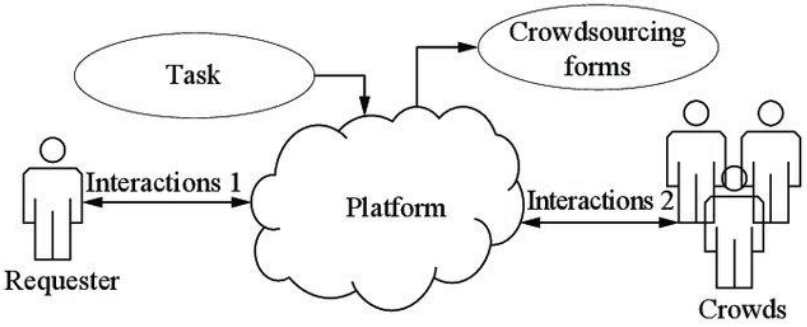


Figure no.1 Crowdsourcing process

Source: (Niu, Qin..., 2018)

Google's Mapmaker is a leading example of using crowdsourcing to improve data quality. It allows regular Google Maps users to share information and spot bugs about places they're familiar with called Local Guides, enhancing the quality of map data, and giving users who They regularly provide accurate information with more editing ability, allow regular users to gain experience, reward activists from them, and ultimately get accurate and up-to-date data.

Mapmaker Google's

In 2008, Google announced its new service, Google's Mapmaker, which allows users to contribute and edit map data for all regions around the world and allows everyone to add and modify most of the elements available on the maps, including roads, lakes, parks, shops, cities, etc...,

with ease of tracking any place on the map you want to go to using the satellite imagery.[5]

What Is a "Local Guide" in Google Maps?

A Local Guide is a volunteer position that allows you to contribute to Google Maps. While it is possible to contribute without being a local guide, there are some additional benefits to joining the program. Essentially, it's a method Google uses to incentivize contribution to Maps. Local Guides earn badges, points, and other perks for their input.[6]

Ways to Contribute Local Guides contribute to millions of people around the world through[7]:

- Edit the map
- Add a picture
- Write a review
- Edit information
- Ask and answer questions
- Add a place not listed on the map

[5] Google blog. Making your mark on the World https://maps.googleblog.com/2008/06/making-your-mark-on-world.html (accessed on 20 Dec 2021).
[6] JOE FEDEWA. What Is a "Local Guide" in Google Maps? https://www.howtogeek.com/722882/what-is-a-local-guide-in-google-maps/ (accessed on 22 Dec 2021).
[7] Overview- Local Guides Help (google.com) https://support.google.com/local-guides/answer/6225846?hl=en&ref_topic=6225845 (accessed on 21 Dec 2021).

How do I join the Google Local Guide program?[8]

In fact, you can become a Local Guide in a matter of minutes

Step 1 After logging in to your Gmail account, go to the Local Guides page

Step 2 Just enter the Local Guides page, you can make contributions to Google Maps immediately, you will search for the place you want to review and start contributing immediately

Step 3 Google will start asking some questions about this place you chose to review

Step 4 You can also contribute to correct pre-existing misinformation by other local guides

The perks and benefits available to Google Local Guides

Each contribution you make to the Local Guides Program earns you a certain number of points. For example, if you share a simple comment, you will earn 10 points, but if your comment is more detailed, you will get an additional 10 points, and if you add a picture, you will earn another 5 points, and so on.

As for the levels, if you reach a certain content, you will get a badge. For example, to get the first badge, you must reach the fourth level,

[8] Jamie Pitman. What is the Google Local Guide program? How to Get Perks and Badges? https://www.brightlocal.com/learn/what-is-a-google-local-guide-how-to-get-perks-and-badges/ (accessed on 25 Dec 2021).

and to reach the fourth level, this requires 250 points, and the tenth level is the highest requires 100,000 points.

In this article, the researcher assesses the impact of the local guide service on the behavior of customers who resort to searching for any place in Google Maps before heading to it and to know the extent of the credibility of the local guide for this customer by publishing a questionnaire on a number of young people residing in Turkey.

Results

The researcher distributed the questionnaire electronically to a random group of people residing in Turkey through social media and waited 48 hours. Only 35 people of different age groups interacted with the questionnaire, most of them were between 18-24 years old at 42.9%, followed by the 25-34 age group with 40%, the age group 35-44 was only 14.3%, and the age group 45-54 was only 2.9%. In terms of gender, the majority was for males at 60% and for females at 40%. In terms of education, the majority were university students with 68.6%, followed by master's students with 22.9%, and high school graduates with 8.6%, all of whom have smartphones and have Gmail accounts.

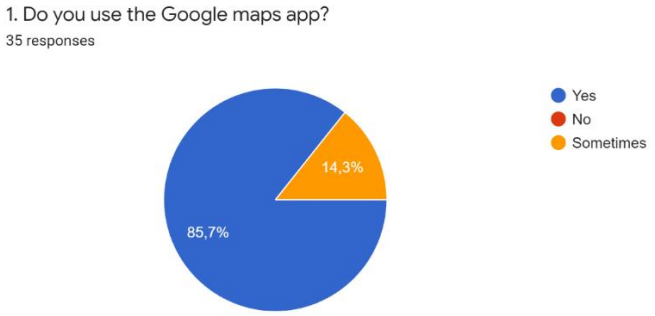


Figure no. 2

The first question related to the topic of the article was the sample's use of Google Maps in general. As shown in figure 2, the answer was that 85.7% use the Google Maps application extensively, while 14.3% use it sometimes.

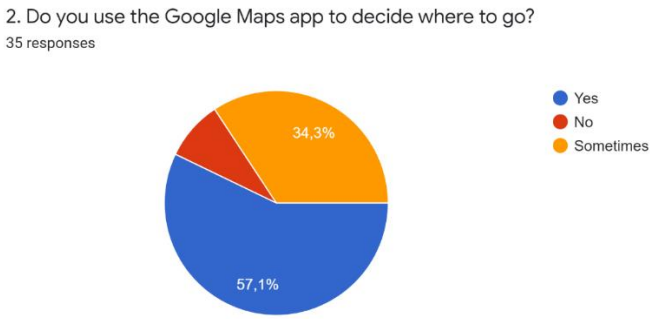


Figure no. 3

The second question was about the study sample's dependence on the use of Google Maps in deciding to visit a new place. As shown in figure 3 the majority agreed with that by 57.1%, 34.3% depend on it sometimes, and 8.6% do not rely on it at all in making the decision.

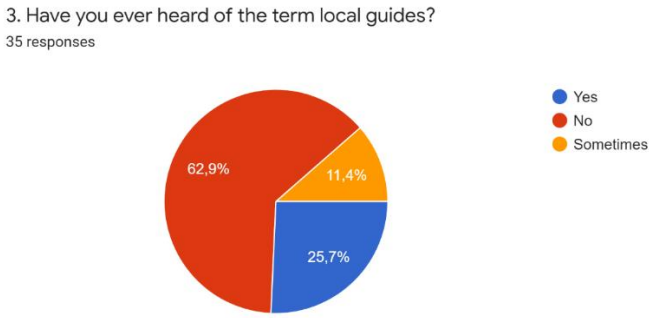


Figure no. 4

In the third question, the researcher relies on the extent to which local guides influence the Google Maps application's visitors in decision making. We asked the study sample whether they had heard of the term "local guide", but as it is illustrated in shape 4 the majority (62.9%) had never heard of it before, despite their use of Google Maps. Those who knew the term were 25.7%, and 11.4% heard very little about it or might have not known what it meant.

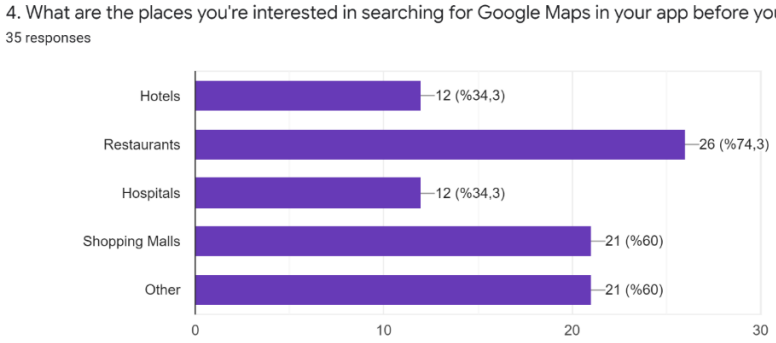


Figure no. 5

In the fourth question, the researcher asked the sample to choose the places they're interested in searching on Google Maps before visiting them to see the ratings given to those places by previous visitors. As shown in shape number 5 biggest share was for restaurant visitors (74.3%), followed by shopping mall visitors (60%), then other places that were not mentioned among the options (60%), and finally hotels and hospitals with a percentage of 34.3% each.

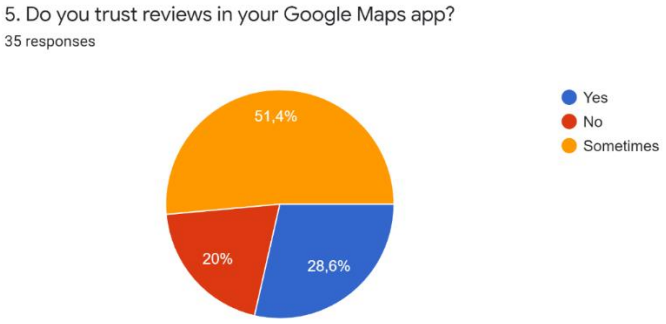


Figure no. 6

In the fifth question, the researcher wanted to know the extent to which Google Maps users trust the opinions on the visited places. The results illustrated in shape 6 indicated that 51.4% sometimes, but not completely, trust the mentioned opinions, 28.6% fully trust the existing opinions, while those who do not trust them at all and do not rely on these opinions make only 20% of the study sample.

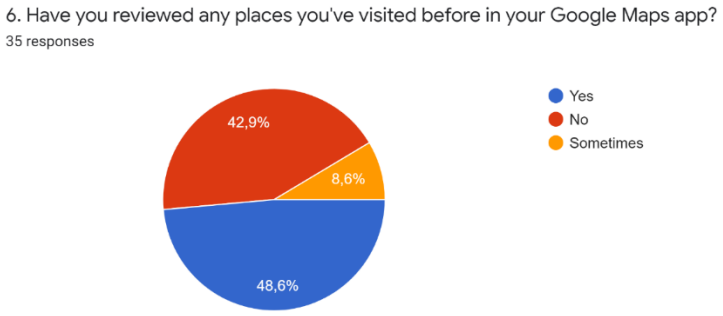


Figure no. 7

The sixth question here was whether the study sample had previously expressed their opinions in the Google Maps application about any place they visited, and as illustrated in shape 7 the majority agreed with that by 48.6% and 8.6% of the sample did so sometimes, but for those who never expressed their opinions, their percentage was 42.9%.

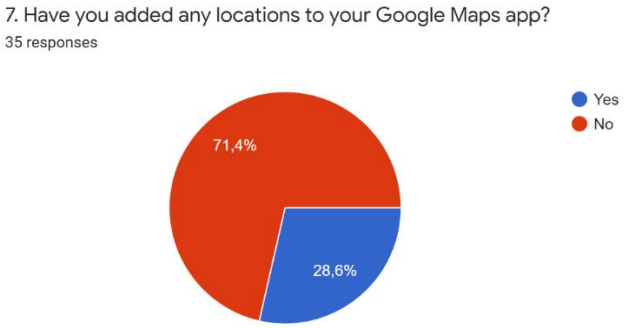


Figure no. 8

In the seventh question, the researcher wanted to know if they had added a location on Google Maps before. As shown in shape 8 the majority

who made 71.4% of the sample had not added a location, and only 28.6% of those had added a location before.

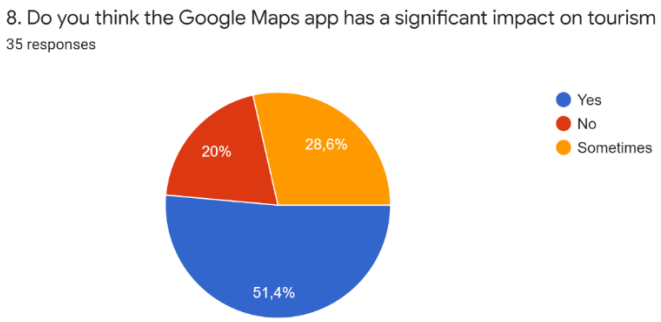


Figure no. 9

In the eighth question, the researcher asked the test sample for their opinions about whether Google Maps has any effect on tourism in Turkey since they live there. As illustrated in figure 9 their answers were as followed: 51.4% fully agree that the Google Maps application has an impact on tourism in Turkey, and 28.6% believe that it could sometimes be possible that it has an effect, but 20% believe that it has no effect at all.

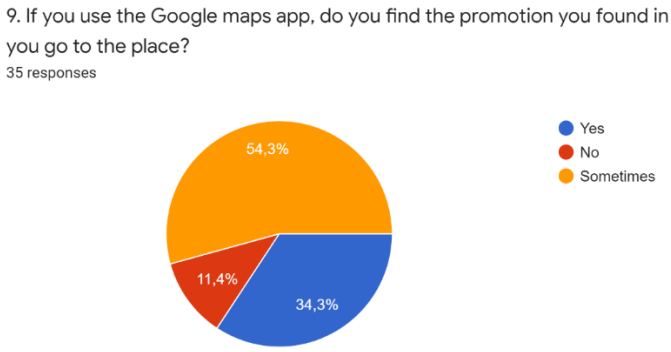


Figure no. 10

The researcher asked in the ninth question to the study sample about the characteristics and features that were mentioned about the place they wanted to visit in Google Maps. Was it identical to reality? As shown in shape 10, the majority answer was that it is sometimes identical, not always, with 54.3% and 34.3% believing that it was completely identical, while 11.4% believe that it did not match.

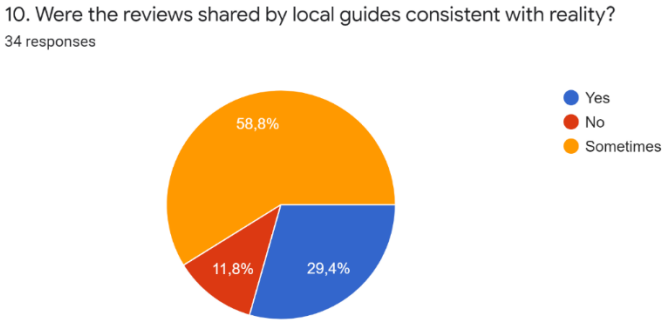


Figure no. 11

Here the researcher directed the tenth question to the test sample about whether the opinions of local guides found in Google Maps match what they found in reality. As the researcher sees in shape 11 the majority of the answers were that in some cases they match reality, with 58.8%, and those who fully support that it conforms to reality was 29.4%, while those who believe that it was never conforming to reality, their percentage was only 11.8%.

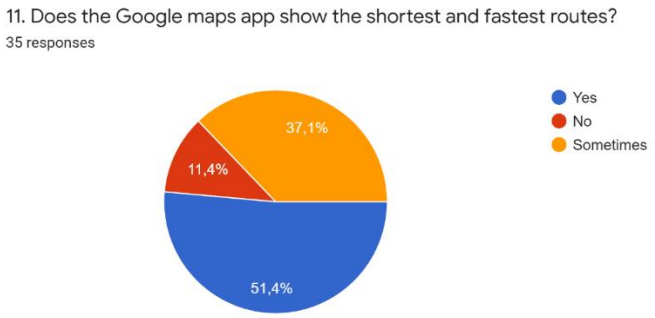


Figure no. 12

Here the researcher asked the eleventh question about the routes suggested by Google, whether they are accurate and fast, as shown in shape 12 the majority believed that the routes were accurate and fast. 51.4% fully agreed, and 37.1% believed that they were sometimes accurate, while only 11.4% believed that the routes are neither accurate nor fast.

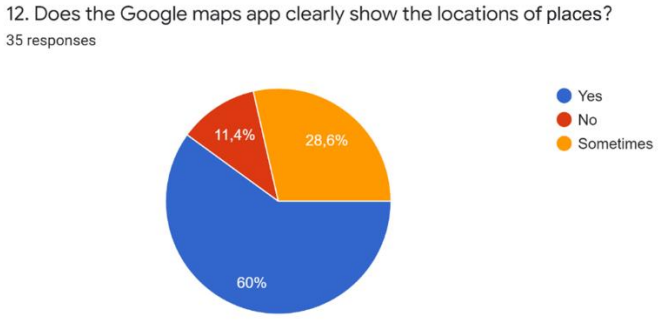


Figure no. 13

In the last question, the researcher asked participants about their opinion about the accuracy of locations shown on the Google maps app. As shown in shape 13 the majority confirmed by 60% that the place on the

maps was the same as in the real place, 28.6% believed that sometimes it was similar, but not always, and only 11.4% found the location on the map to not be identical to reality.

Conclusion

In this study the researcher aimed to assess the efficiency of the local guides program as an advertising technique on Google maps application. To achieve this purpose a questionnaire has been distributed randomly to social media users living in Turkey.

A large percentage of young people depend on Google Maps, whether to know the direction of a place or to know opinions about this place and despite that, the percentage of trust in those opinions was not 100%. In addition, these young people also interact to express their opinions in the Google Maps application, in order to be contributors in turn to the features provided by the application.

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