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Halal Lifestyle in Marketing Communication of Tourism and Hospitality

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ABSTRACT

Tourism and hospitality has become primary needs consumed by the world community recently. Marketing communication has been adopted in many internet-based android application that offers a wide range of products and services such as various tourism destinations around the world. It is undeniable that the Islamic society contributes almost half of the world economy and growing rapidly including tourism and hospitality. Based on the background of global economic growth, Halal lifestyle in marketing communication of 'Islamic tourism or islamic culture' into a worldwide phenomenon today that is positioned to be applied in various sectors of the economy as demand continues to increase, for example: banking, transportation, food and beverages, etc. *Halal* lifestyle is needed by all of mankind not only for Muslims, because the halal concept philosophically and practically is an innovation from the "standard operation procedures" since fourteen centuries ago existed in Islamic sharia compliant. Inside of *Halal* lifestyle are the elements of health, safety and security, pure, prosperity and human dignity. However, the objective of this article is that the term '*halal* lifestyle' is not intended for a restriction or coercion, but rather to reintroduce from the viewpoint of Islam which is already stated in the Qur'an, although it is still in general platform, future research will always present a more specific scientific Platform.

Keywords: Halal, Marketing Communication, Tourism and Hospitality.

1. INTRODUCTION

World Population (2011) Grew 137% in the last decade, where Christians Grow as much as only 46%, on the contrary, Islam grows as much as five times that amount: 235%. (The Almanac Book of Facts, 2011). According to the World Economic Forum, it is estimated if this growth trend continues, it is expected that 1 of the 4 World Population is Muslim in 2050. (<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2015/10/how-religious-will-the-world-be-in-2050/>). It is seen in the diagram below:

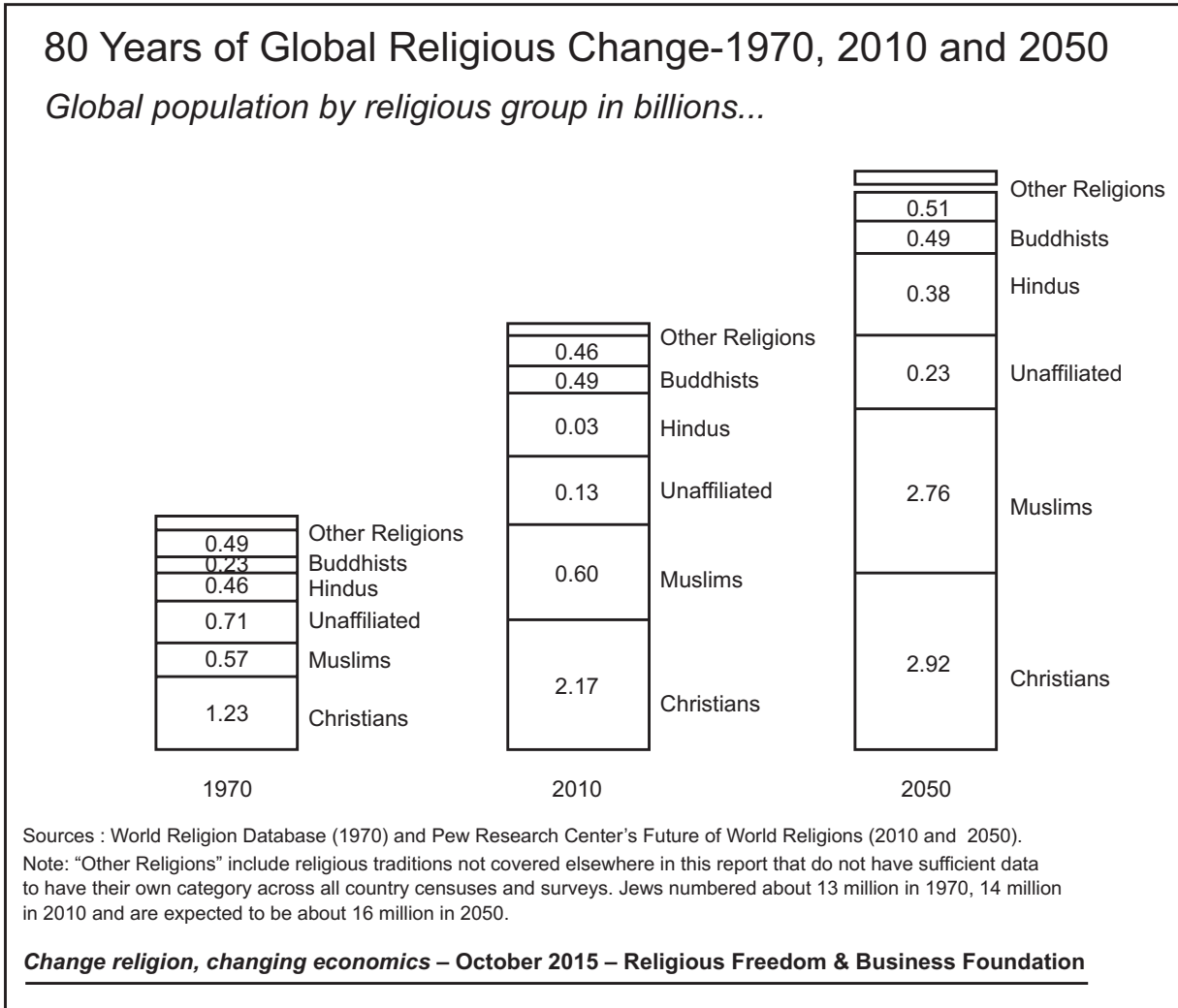


Figure 3.1: Global Population by Religious Group

In August 4-6, 2014, there was an event, Japan Halal Summit (Tokyo, Japan) under the theme “Global Halal Trade – Opportunities for Japan”. The event provides a golden opportunity for Sponsors, Exhibitors and Advertisers interested in Japanese market to promote their products and services from this platform. The demand for halal food is ever increasing, hence the Japanese government is also taking interest in *Halal* products to promote it within Japan as well as other delegates from Turkey, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, UAE, Bangladesh, South Africa, USA, UK, Brazil, Spain, France and Germany. Professor Sirrajudin explained that Japan is committed to be the center of halal products globally by 2020. With a background of economic development, Japan also declared Fuji city as the ‘Fuji Halal City’ with halal product. He said: “As for other countries such as South Korea also had to implement its halal products of their collaboration with both Korean Moslem Federation, called as halal tourism (sharia), which includes halal restaurants and Islamic centers located close to the tourist center”. This proves that the concept of halal has begun to be accepted by Muslims and non-Muslims, and gradually began to become a lifestyle.

1.1. Understanding the concept of “Halal Life Style”

Halal is an Arabic term, *Al-Halal* (The lawful) which means ‘permitted, with respect to which no restriction exists, and the doing of which the Law-Giver, Allah SWT has allowed’ Al-Qaradawi (2013: p.25). On the contrary, The antonym to *halal* is *haram* which means unlawful or forbidden. Between *halal* and *haram* is *al-makruh* (dislike) denotes less in degree than the *haram*. Al-Qur’an is Allah SWT words, which the only authentic guidance for defining the *halal* or the *haram*. Allah SWT is the creator, who knows what benefits man, good or bad for human as well as the authenticated prophetic Sunnah, as it is based on the divine revelation. *Halal* and *haram* are part of the overall standard legal system of Islam, called Shariah, a system whose primary objective is the good for mankind. There is no force in adopting *halal* and *haram* concept, as it is stated in the Qur’an ‘*laa ikrooha fiddiin*’ (QS. 2:256), means ‘there is no compulsion in believing or obeying our religion’ but ultimately for human own good and well-being.

Al-Qur’an is not a book of science but it is a book of signs that had been ‘revealed’ fourteen centuries ago and the content never been revised even a word until today. There are some signs in the Qur’an that had been proven by today’s science and technology. For example, the Qur’an prohibits the consumption of pork and some other things in many verses including: QS. 2:173, QS. 5:3, QS. 6:145 and QS. 16:115. In medical science, ‘among all animal meats pork is the filthiest diet to consume by human beings. Pig is the cradle of harmful germs. Scientific evidences prove that pig meat is least healthy having different harmful agents like Cholesterol and Fatty Acids, Bacteria and Toxins and a number of parasites. The pig meat is high in fat and cholesterol that causes the cardiovascular diseases, obesity, the incidence of large intestine cancer.... The pig excretory system secretes 2 percent of its uric acid that is injurious for the human health. Pork consumption seriously affects human health and adversely injurious one’s moral values. A person gets pig like characteristics by eating pork, Indecency, obscenity and vanished honour of women’. (Qamar and Raza, 2012:131-a56). And there are many more signs of Qur’an which have been proven by scientific research for only good of human ourselves.

1.2. Marketing Communication (Between Conventional and Islamic Principles / Sharia)

1.2.1. Conventional

Marketing does not simply surround us, but envelops us, permeating our lives (Brenkert, 2009). Marketing is a key functional area in the business organization that provides a visible interface with not only customers, but with stakeholders such as the media, investors, regulatory agencies, channel members, trade associations, as well as others (Farrell, 2001). Basically, it is a procedure of delivering transactional message in business activities with certain ethics, norms and values.

The basic conventional concepts of 4Ps in the marketing mix was first introduced by E. Jerome Mc.Carthy and years after developed by Philip Kotler. The 4Ps of marketing mix principles basically divide into four main parts namely Product, Place, Price, Promotion. Philip Kotler argued that the marketing mix is a grouping tips that the marketing company uses to achieve its marketing objectives in the target market. (Kotler & Armstrong 2001: 5)

The essence of marketing communications are: 1) The communication strategy. 2) Segmentation of potential. 3) Media planning. 4) Creative and visual messages. 4) The cost of communications and advertising expenditure. 5) Marketing communications research (Elvinaro 2011: 274). Marketing and communication studies has been ascertained known to many people, as there is a development and discoveries, it was discovered that marketing communications is multi-disciplinary (Prisgunanto, 2006: 28).

1.2.2. Islamic Principles/Sharia

In Islam, principles in marketing sharia by definition is “a strategic business discipline in accordance with the values and principles of Sharia” (Al Arif, 2010: 20). So marketing is executed based on the concept of Islamic sharia based on Al-Qur’an and taught by the Prophet Muhammad SAW. Integrity and transparency both are the core values of marketing sharia, so that marketers should not lie, and particularly people decided to buy because of need, not because of the attractiveness of the price (ie: discounts), emotional appeal (eg: testimonials figures / celebrities / sexuality) or the lure of the promise of gifts and merely superficial research.

The marketing activities are supposed to be returned to the actual characteristics, namely religious, ethical, realistic and uphold human values (Kertajaya, 2005). This is called Sharia Marketing, and this is the best marketing concept for today and the future. Marketing of Sharia is a business discipline throughout the process, both the creation process, the bidding process, and the process of changing the value, there should not be things that are contrary to the contract and the principles of “Muamalah Islami” (Kertajaya, and Sula 2006: 27). All transactions (seller and buyer) must be mutual and should be based on the wisdom through appropriate conduct of marketer and ethical advertising in delivering halal, pure, wholesome and lawful product and services.

There are important keywords on this: (1) Wisdom (Hikmah). In Islam the word Hikmah is very close to the strategy (Alom and Haque, 2011). (2) Needs. Islamic marketing is based on two basic needs as mentioned in the Quran: the physiological needs of food, water and clothing and need of safety (QS. 20:118-119; 17:29) while conventional marketing is based on wants (Cooke et al.1992). (3) Muslim consumers’ are defined by the dietary, lifestyle and financial rules of the Islamic faith, they are far from homogeneous (Kearney, 2006). Muslim consumers are not all Arabs, but they are in diversity, different language, countries, way of life and so on. However, not all Arabs are Muslims and not all Muslims are Arabs. (4) Market. A Muslim market abides by Sharia principles in all sectors. There are acceptable religious viewpoints regarding this. For example, in Muslim countries non *Halal* products or products that do not abide by sharia principle are sold in restaurants and hotels like alcohol and pork. Some Muslim customers have no problem eating in these hotels and restaurants as long as what they order and eat has no pork or alcohol. While in many countries like Malaysia, restaurants must be free of pork before Muslims will eat in them. (5) Good conduct: Ethical behavior. (6) Halal. “Tayyibat” Wholesomeness, pure, safe, lawful and beneficial products (QS. 2:172,2:168). (7) Mutual consent. Fair and free will of buyer and seller and without coercion (QS. 4:29). (8) Wellbeing: Falah, success and welfare (QS. 2:201) and (Hadiths). (9) Ethical advertising: No acts of misleading, deception or cheating in advertising (QS. 3:77).

According to Niazi (1996), in islam any commercial activity is governed by two principles. First, submission to the moral order of God and second, empathy and mercy to God’s creations which implies refraining from doing harm to others and thus preventing the spread of unethical practices.

Islam has gone beyond the conventional seven Ps of marketing mix to add ‘promise’ and ‘patience’. Islamic Marketing Mix has been explained as follow:

The below table 3.1 is a standard of 9Ps of Islamic point of view. And purpose is not meant to limit or force by any means, but meant to contribute positive impact and make better business world.

Table 3.1

| <i>Marketing Mix (9 Ps)</i> | | <i>Market</i> |
|-----------------------------|---|--|
| Product | Shariah compliance | No dullness of mind |
| | Should not use the name of Allah in branding and labeling | No product obsolescence |
| | Halal (pure and lawful) | Value durability |
| | Accurate labeling | Environmental impact |
| | No weak packaging | No laissez faire |
| | Safety “no harm” | Deliverable |
| Price | Fear God in pricing (God is pricer) | No unjustified price |
| | Fair | No manipulation |
| | Societal welfare approach | No predatory pricing |
| | Profit maximization not priority | No hoarding |
| | No cheating | No switch and bait |
| Place | No harm to people on roads | Channel create no burden on customer |
| | No Unnecessary delay | Closure during Friday midday prayer |
| | No coercion | Avoid suspicious places |
| Promotion | Shariah compliance | No sexual appeal |
| | Women should not be used to attract or lure customers | No swearing in the name of Allah |
| | No use of suggestive language and behavior | No exaggeration of attributes |
| | No use of women in advertising | No false assertions and No deception |
| | No concealment of fact and information | No misleading advertising and No obscene advertising |
| | No manipulative promotional behavior | Disclosure of faults and defects |
| People | Abide by Islamic Law (Shariah) | No harm to customers |
| | Polite, Friendly, Smiley, Honest | No coercion |
| | Good attire and appearance | Respect private property rights |
| | Nice smell, No fraud | Avoid suspicious acts and behavior |

| <i>Marketing Mix (9 Ps)</i> | | <i>Market</i> |
|-----------------------------|---|---|
| Process | Shariah compliance | No pressure selling techniques |
| | Shake hands with men | No swearing in the name of Allah |
| | Islamic greeting (Salamu Alikum) and hospitality | No exploitation of monopoly power |
| | No bribes, No sexual harassment | No fraud transaction |
| | Honesty, Fairness, Respect customers | Staff interaction efficiency |
| | No hard sale, No harm, No coercion | Proper use of customer waiting time |
| | Right marketing information | Respect for time |
| Physical Evidence | Shariah compliance | Quranic verses, Hadiths and Arab wisdoms and sayings on walls |
| | No gambling halls | Pictures of founders (not a must) |
| | Mosques in companies and businesses | Documentation and witnessing of credit |
| | Stationary engraved in the name of Allah and Islamic architecture | Taking items as collateral and guarantees for credit payment |
| Promise | Abide by Islamic law (Shariah) | Promise management |
| | Respect promises | Relationship marketing |
| | No faked promises | Good communication |
| | Respect for time | Passive persuasion |
| Patience | Abide by Islamic law (Shariah) | Listening to customers |
| | Be patient with all kinds of customers | Be helpful |
| | Good communication skills | Be joyful |

Source: Dr. Samir A. Abuznaid, Associate Professor of Marketing and Management, Hebron University, West Bank, Palestine.

1.3. Tourism and Hospitality

According to UNWTO definition, “Tourism comprises the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes” (Goeldner & Ritchie, 2006). Cook et al. (2014; p.3) defined Tourism as “the temporary movement of people to destinations outside their normal places of work and residence, the activities undertaken during their stay in those destinations, and the facilities created to cater to their needs”. Based on this definition, activities of tourists would have caused the demand and supply side. There are many tourism activities and require a lot of facilities to support this, such as transportation, access from – to, communication, foods and beverages, hotel, sports, creative product and service, etc. All of this supporting elements will increase economic growth both domestic and international.

Tourism recognizes the growing interest in Halal tourism and hospitality from both the perspectives of industry and research. Halal tourism can be summarized by any object or action which is permissible to use or engage in tourism industry, according to Islamic teachings. Therefore, the success of developing and marketing Halal tourism destination must be guided by the adoption of Islamic teachings and principles in all aspects of tourism activities.

In hospitality, today, Sharia-compliant hotels or Islamic hospitality market is becoming one of the fastest growing hotel segments in the Middle East and elsewhere. Islamic tourism alone is expected to grow at a rate of 20% annually.*

Hospitality in tourism for example is a hotel. Some ‘dry hotels’ (proclaimed as alcohol free and all foods served are halal) called themselves as shariah compliant hotel by only emphasizing on the prohibition of selling alcoholic beverages in the hotel but not imply a full commitment as Shariah compliant hotel requirements (Henderson, 2010). Resenburg and Choufany, 2009; Henderson, 2010 and BDRC, 2010) highlighted some of common shariah compliant hotels requirements as shown in table 3.2.

Table 3.2
Shariah Compliant Hotel Requirement

| <i>No.</i> | <i>Requirements</i> |
|------------|--|
| 1. | No alcoholic and pork products to be served or consumed on the premises |
| 2. | Serving only halal food |
| 3. | Majority staffs are Muslim |
| 4. | Female staff for single female room and male staff for single male room |
| 5. | Decent entertainment and television service |
| 6. | Disallow non-married couples to stay in the same room |
| 7. | Separate place or timing of using swimming pool for male and female |
| 8. | Proper women attired in dresses that comply |
| 9. | Sign for Kiblah (Mecca) |
| 10. | Prayer rooms |
| 11. | Hotel finance through Islamic financial arrangement |
| 12. | Should follow zakat principles |
| 13. | No alcoholic and pork products to be served or consumed on the premises. |
| 14. | Serving only halal food |
| 15. | Majority staffs are Muslim |

Source: Resenburg and Choufany, 2009; Henderson, 2010 and BDRC, 2010.

According to islamic teaching, islamic hospitality should consider at least some factors as follow:

1. Islamic courtesy.
2. Guest who visit should be comfortable.
3. Host should consider:
 - a) Spiritual – worship during travel (halal food, easy to pray).
 - b) Emotional – welcoming, friendly, trustworthy, courteous, serving with patience, etc.
 - c) Intellectual – knowledgeable, educational, informative.
 - d) Physical – hygiene, cleanliness, safety, ambience.

1.4. Opportunities and Challenges (Demographic Overview)

The Muslim market is composed of approximately 21.01 percent or 1.43 billion of the entire world population (CIA, 2009). Travel markets like Turkey, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Singapore and Indonesia, for example, already show strong interest in Muslim products, facilities, and accommodations. According to world reports and demographic studies the following facts have emerged about Muslim Population:

Table 3.3
Facts and Figures of Muslim Population

| <i>No.</i> | <i>Facts and Figures of Muslim Population</i> |
|------------|--|
| 1. | Muslims comprise one of the fastest growing consumer markets in the world, hence, represent a major growth opportunity for businesses around the world. |
| 2. | Average growth of Muslim population 1.8%.p.a (Kearney, 2006) |
| 3. | The market for Shariah –compliant products or services – that conform to Islamic law totals \$2 trillion annually in various sectors, particularly Halal food and finance and is growing rapidly. |
| 4. | There are more than 1.56 billion Muslims of all ages living in the world today. (Asia 870million), Middle East (190 million), Africa (443 million), Europe (51 million), North America (7 million), South America (3million) (Kearney, 2006) |
| 5. | Two- thirds of Muslims worldwide live in 10 countries (Indonesia, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Egypt, Nigeria, Iran, Turkey, Algeria, and Morocco). |
| 6. | Around 80% of the world’s Muslims Live in countries where Muslims are in the majority. |
| 7. | One fifth of the world Muslim population lives as religious minorities in their home countries. |
| 8. | Muslims living in the Asia–Pacific region constitute 62% of all Muslims world wide of which 50% live in south Asia (Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Bhutan. |
| 9. | The Middle East –North Africa is home to an estimated 315.3 million Muslims, or about 20% of the world’s Muslim population of which approximately 79 million live in Egypt. |
| 10. | The Palestinian territories are home to about 4 million Muslims. In addition, Israel is home to roughly 1 million Muslims. |
| 11. | Europe has about 38 million Muslims, constituting about 5% of its population. European Muslims make up slightly more than 2% of the world’s Muslim population. |
| 12. | The European countries with the highest concentration of Muslims are located in Eastern and central Europe: Kosovo, Albania, Bosnia, and Republic of Macedonia. |
| 13. | Greece is about 3% Muslim, Spain is about 1% Muslims, while Italy has the smallest populations of Muslims in Europe. |
| 14. | About 2.5 million Muslims live in the United States. Two percent of Canadians, about 700,000 people, are Muslims while 0.8% of the U.S. population is Muslim. |
| 15. | Muslim consumers constitute about one quarter of the total world population and represents a majority in more than 50 countries. |

Source: Mapping the Global Muslim Population: A Report on the Size and Distribution of the World’s Muslim Population ANALYSIS, October 7, 2009; Pew Research Center: The PEW Forum on Religion & Public Life; Kearney, A. T. Addressing the Muslim Market, Reuters, 2006.

Also Based on The Almanac Book of Facts 2011, that Muslims population throughout the world grow 235% as much as five times than the Christians which only 46%. This is a very good opportunity to broaden the market because of the demand increasing significantly. But at the same time also a challenges in developing and marketing muslim-friendly or halal lifestyle in tourism. Based on observation and experience, the writer identify and recognize some potential challenges, those are:

1. International Standard Operation Procedure system and sertification is needed in tourism and hospitality.
2. Every Muslims in many different countries have different understanding about *halal* especially when it comes to the variance and their local cultures.
3. Providing insights and thoughts with wisdom (hikmah) to attract non-muslims without clashing and enforcing with Islamic teaching.
4. Muslims and non-muslims are also have different variance of particular needs, demand, and desires.
5. Muslims and non-muslims against the Islamic teachings are somehow exist in different forms of issue.
6. Concern of political policy on halal tourism practices and activities in their respective countries.
7. Minimum *halal* facilities and infrastructures are ready to offer.
8. Training programmes and/or Education syllabus are needed in hospitality industry to understand Halal issues and this could be an opportunity to universities and training centres to offer such programmes.
9. Innovative product and service, innovative marketing communication and innovative user friendly application adopting high-end technology.

2. CONCLUSION

The paper has identified marketing communication for halal tourism and hospitality. The concept of *Halal* reintroduced not to give limitation or to force anyone to follow it. The concept of *halal* will become a lifestyle in near future, so it can be said as *halal* lifestyle. The important elements of *Halal* lifestyle are: (1) Product – halal food and beverages is compulsory. (2) Service – hospitality must be based on sharia compliant. (3) Prosperity – for good of human and natural resources. (4) Human dignity – positive values, norms, and ethical codes among human civilization. One of the best way for the first step to introduce *halal* lifestyle is to open access to halal food and beverages in public area as widely as possible such as in the airport, station, bus stop, at least separated *halal* sections in hotel, because *halal* food and beverages are very helpful to stay healthy for both muslims and non-muslims. And finally, for marketing communication tools, a muslim-friendly motto, slogan, logo, and other attractive creative friendly advertisement and promotion are strongly recommended to build a peaceful dignified human civilization (*rahmatan lil 'aalamiin*).

3. RECOMMENDATION

Halal tourism, hospitality and halal marketing communication are new area of research. Especially questioning on how and/or what are the criteria to make tourism destinations friendly for both muslims and non-muslims as well as questioning on how and/or what are the criteria to deliver effective promotion to be well-accepted toward non-muslims on halal perception with wisdom (hikmah). probably, combination of qualitative and quantitativ research could formulate some criteria on this matter.

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