

## THE EFFECT OF SOCIAL MEDIA-BASED PROMOTION ON TOURISM DECISIONS-MAKING

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### Abstract:

Indonesian tourism has an essential role in economic development and is a leading sector outside the oil and gas. The Indonesian government pays special attention to the tourism sector because it has a competitive advantage and comparative advantage. The competitive and comparative advantages mean that tourism in Indonesia is expected to be the largest foreign exchange earner, be the best in the regional region, and be achieved to establish Indonesian Incorporated. This study aimed to determine the social media promotion effect on travel decisions. This research design is survey research. The population in this study was people who searched for tourist information and made travel decisions. The sampling techniques in this study used purposive sampling with 110 samples. The data collection technique used a questionnaire tested for validity and reliability. The data analysis technique used to answer the research hypothesis is a simple regression test. This research indicates that there was a positive effect of social media promotion on travel decisions. The results of this study were the coefficient of determination (R<sup>2</sup>) which is 66.2%, the results of the Fcount test are 211.612 with a significance value of 0.000, then the t-count results are 14.547 with a significance value of 0.000. These results show that promotion through social media simultaneously and significantly influences travel decisions.

**Keywords:** Social media marketing, Marketing communication, tourism decisions making, Consumer behaviour.

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## INTRODUCTION

Indonesian tourism has an essential role in economic development and is a leading sector outside the oil and gas. The Indonesian government pays special attention to the tourism sector because it has a competitive advantage and comparative advantage. The competitive and comparative advantages mean that tourism in Indonesia is expected to be the largest foreign exchange earner, be the best in the regional region, and be achieved to establish Indonesian Incorporated. Continue by creating Indonesia as a Tourism Hub. The last is the allocation of resources where tourism is a priority of the Government of Indonesia, especially in terms of budget ([www.kemenpar.go.id](http://www.kemenpar.go.id), 2017). Currently, the Government of Indonesia is committed to develop tourism destinations in each region in Indonesia to become an international tourist destination and Bali tourism. Through the Ministry of Tourism, the Government of Indonesia has established ten National tourist destinations outside Bali tourism, which are included in the development priority. The ten destinations are Toba Lake (North Sumatra), Tanjung Kalayang (Bangka Belitung), Seribu Islands and Old Town/Kota Tua (DKI Jakarta), Tanjung Lesung (Banten), Borobudur (Central Java), Bromo Tengger Semeru (East Java), Mandalika (West Nusa Tenggara), Labuan Bajo (East Nusa Tenggara), Wakatobi (Southeast Sulawesi) and Morotai Island (North Maluku).

The government set the tourism sector to be one of the priority aspects by looking at the Foreign Exchange Ranking Report in 2011 - 2015, and the report shows that the tourism sector was ranked fifth as the largest foreign exchange contributor sector in 2011, 2012, and continued to increase to fourth place in 2013 to 2015. ([www.kemenpar.go.id](http://www.kemenpar.go.id), 2017). There is an increase in tourists visiting destinations through a gradual decision-making process. Experts, academics, and researchers widely discuss decision-making on consumer behavior to formulate and build models

of decision-making processes. There has been no single theory as a discipline for describing, explaining, or predicting consumer decisions (Sirakaya & Woodside, 2005).

As in consumer products, travel behavior is also a concern of researchers to uncover the phenomenon of tourist behavior in making travel decisions. Academics and tourism businesspeople realize the need to understand travel behavior, especially in the decision-making process, where the tourism business environment is currently increasingly competitive. The dynamic process of travel decision making is not structured and is full of contingencies (Sharma & Cristie, 2010), to facilitate decision making, prospective tourists divide decisions into more minor choices, such as planning tours by breaking down plans into sub-plans such as the choice of destinations to be visited, transportation, lodging, main activities, activities in the destination and other things that are considered necessary in preparation for tourist travel. A structured decision-making model can explain an organization facing structured decisions. The decision-making process consists of the identification, development, and selection phases. The decision-making process is more complex when prospective travelers involve two or three destinations that want to be visited simultaneously and with limited time and resources.

According to Philip Kotler and Gary Armstrong (2008), the consumer purchasing decision process consists of five stages: 1) Introduction to Needs: The buying process begins with introducing the problems or needs of buyers. 2) Information Search: Consumers who react to stimulants will try to find more information. The magnitude of the search for information carried out depends on the strength of the impulse. The source of information consists of family, advertising, mass media, or product users. 3) Alternative Evaluation: It is related to the weight given to the product by comparing one product with another product. 4) Purchasing Decisions: Consumers form preferences over the brands in the selection pool in the evaluation stage. Consumers intend to buy based on income, price and expected product benefits. 5) Post-Purchase Behavior: The buyer's decision process in which the consumer takes the following action after the purchase based on satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Consumers will also engage in action after purchase on marketers.

Prospective tourists carry out sub plans in the tourist decision-making process; according to Katsoni, Vickey, and Venetsanopoulou 2013 the tourist decision-making process, although some prospective tourists make decisions instantly to make tourist decisions, business actors must have preparation in accompanying prospective tourists through the travel decision process. The marketing efforts developed are, 1). External stimulation such as trade publications, 2). Tourists' personalities, socio-economic factors, attitudes, and values determine needs and desires, 3). The level of trust in the travel agent, the destination image, previous experience, costs, and time constraints, and 4). Destinations or service characteristics that influence the travel decision-making process.

Several factors influence the decision-making processes carried out by prospective travelers: social media that displays destinations through local government accounts, testimonials from tourists on or after the holidays, and then consider uploading the best photos to social media. Social media is an online platform where users can easily participate, share, and create content, including blogs, social networks, Wiki, forums, and virtual worlds. Blogs, social networks, and Wiki are the most common social media platform used worldwide. Andreas Kaplan and Michael Haenlein define social media as "a group of Internet-based applications built on the ideological and technological basis of Web 2.0, enabling the creation and exchange of user-generated content". Since 1999, bloggers have been blooming by showing their existence, gathering communities with similar interests, and connecting personally with others through the internet. In 2002-2003 followed by the presence of several social media such as Friendster, LinkedIn, and MySpace. The emergence of Facebook in 2004 further strengthened the interest of the world community to show the existence of everyone; it can be seen in all social media that Facebook has the most members. Even compared to social platforms born after Facebook, it cannot match the number of its members, say such as Twitter, Wiser, and even Google+ established in 2011.

According to Thoyibie (2010), social media contains information content created by people who utilize publishing technology and are highly accessible and intended to facilitate communication, influence, and interaction. Today, marketing through social media began to develop and is used as a product marketing tool to promote the company's brand. Social media is a gathering place for those who want to share information and a place to make new friends and interact with other friends online. The development of social media is rapid, as shown in Figure 1 – the increase of social media users in Indonesia (August E. Grant: 297).

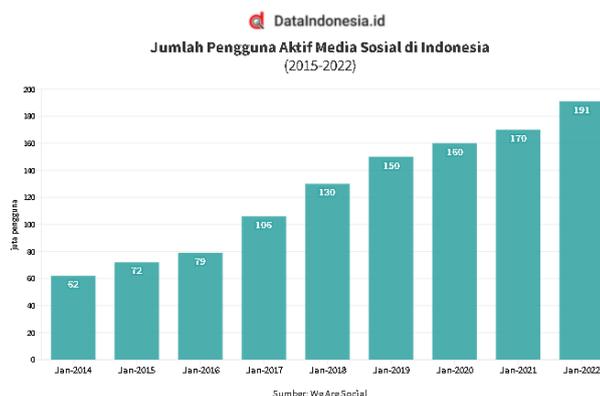


Figure 1

Figure 1 represents significant growth in 2017, where there was an increase of 27% from 2016. Furthermore, in 2019 there was an increase of 20% from the previous year. The increase in 2019 coincided Covid-19 pandemic that hit the whole world, including Indonesia in the second quarter, which was a lockdown due to the Covid-19 pandemic. During this pandemic period, the increase in social media users in Indonesia until 2022 reached 191 million users in the first quarter.

The overgrowing social platforms in Indonesia are Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, which have high-speed information accessed in seconds; another reason is that users prefer to be themselves on social media, which causes its development to be rapid. At the same time, as the desire for self-actualization and the need to create personal branding, social media marketing builds more personal and dynamic social relationships than conventional marketing strategies. Social media marketing activities focus on creating content that attracts attention and encourages readers to interact and share it in their friendship social networking environment. The influence of social media varies, but what is expected is that information derived from social media will influence consumers' purchasing decisions.

This research will analyze social media-based promotions that can influence tourists' decisions to visit tourist destinations. Barger, V., Peltier, J.W., and Schultz, D.E. stated in 2016 that promotion through social media platforms increases consumer engagement in deciding to consume. Consumer engagement through social media provides energy to the tourism industry and conducts promotional activities through social media so that consumer engagement with destinations can be started early, which provides alternative destinations to be visited. In their research, Imran Maqbool Khan, Sunil Sahadev, Tahir Rashid, and Snehasish Banerjee, 2022; stated that gender as an independent variable motivated by culture in a particular group's process of making decisions. The results of the study stated that the habits that exist in the culture of the group influence decision-making. Therefore, this study hypothesizes (H1) that promotion with social media platforms has a positive and significant effect on travel decision-making.

## METHODS

One of the marketing tools utilized by the company is social media. Proper and effective use of social media can improve the image of a company in the eyes of consumers. Social media power is built based on pleasure, hobbies, lifestyle, loyalty, and the curiosity drive of the consumers

themselves. All product information, sales promo information, product excellence, and product testimonials used in this research are tourism uploaded on social media that affect travel decisions. Therefore, when the consumer already understands the product that he thinks is interesting, the customer will immediately notify friends or people around him. The model of this research is visualized as follows:

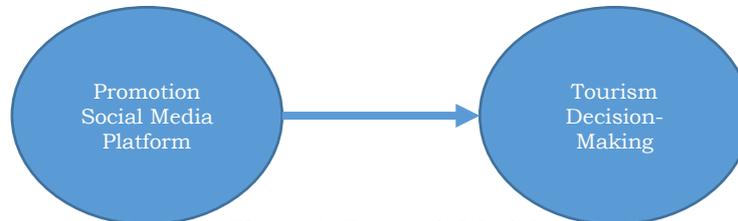


Figure 2. Research Model

The population in this research was tourists who traveled for holidays. Then, non-probability and purposive are chosen as the sampling that respondents have the characteristics of having made a tourist visit when traveling or after finishing uploading photos and testimonials to the destination, while visited respondents were domestic tourists. According to Hair et al. (2006), the sample size will be challenging to get a suitable model if it is too large, and it is recommended to use an appropriate sample size of between 100-200 respondents, so the sample conducted in this study was 110 respondents. Data collection techniques were using questionnaires on the Likert scale. Operationalization of promotion variables through social media platforms with dimensions of context, communication, collaboration, connection, and introduction to needs are eleven statements (Solis, 2010). Furthermore, the travel decision variable consists of information search dimensions, various alternatives evaluation, travel decisions, and post-travel behavior (Kotler & Armstrong, 2005); there were 12 available statements in these variables, and this research data were processed using SPSS.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The validity test results used Pearson Correlation if obtained a significance level of 0.000, which means a correlation (significant < 0.05); thus, it can be concluded that all existing variables can be further analyzed because they meet the criteria. Based on the processing results of research data, it was obtained that out of 23 (twenty-three) statements were declared valid. The data rehabilitation testing in this study used Cronbach's Alpha method, an instrument with good reliability if Cronbach's alpha coefficient is more significant than 0.70. With the following conditions:

1. If  $r_{count} > r_{table}$  with a significance level of 0.05, the question item is declared reliable.
2. If  $r_{count} < r_{table}$  with a significance level of 0.05, the question item is declared unreliable (Sulistyo, 2012).

**Reliability Test Results are shown in the table below:**  
**Table. Reliability Test Result**

Variable	Cronbach Alpha Value	Description
Promotion through Social Media	0.859	<i>Reliable</i>
Buying Decision	0.875	<i>Reliable</i>

Source: Primary Data

The reliability test results showed that all inspected question variable items were reliable because having a Cronbach Alpha value > 0.70. This research data's reliability and validity test results have proven reliable and valid. Accurate and valid data shows that the questionnaire used in this study has met the rules. This research aims to determine the influence of promotion through social media on travel decisions. The subject in this study is 110 consumers seeking information and making decisions to travel due to promotion through social media. Data analysis is carried out using

simple regression analysis, and then the classic assumption tests are the normality, multicollinearity, and heteroskedasticity test, all the implementations of prerequisite tests are carried out using SPSS.

**Simple Regression Analysis.** The results of regression analysis are used to test the influence of promotion through social media on travel decisions, presented in the table below:

**Table Regression Analysis Results of Promotion Influence through Social Media on Travel Decision Coefficients**

	Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	7.439	2.372		3.136	0.002
	Social Media (X)	0.930	0.064	0.814	14.54	0.000
7						

a. Dependent Variable: Tourism (Y)  
 Source: Primary Data

From the regression analysis results could be observed in the regression equation as follows:

$$Y = 7.439 + 0.930X$$

The regression equation shows that the constant value of 7,439 states that if an independent variable is considered constant, the average consumer decides to travel by 7,439 people, or it can be said to be seven people. Then the coefficient of promotion regression through social media is 0.930, stating that there is a positional influence on travel decisions; each increase in the number of promotions through social media by 1000 times the promotion will increase travel decisions by 930 decisions. The use of promotion through social media has become a new phenomenon in the last decade; many parties who participate in uploading travel experiences, destination information, and even advice and tips in preparing for the holidays are widely encountered. The promotional costs through social media are not as high as budgeted in previous promotional activities. People spend four to five hours on social media per day, so business actors, especially in the tourism industry, use social media to communicate with tourists.

The amount of influence of promotion through social media on travel decisions amounted to 0.662; This means that travel decisions are influenced by promotion through social media by 66.2%, while the remaining 33.8% are influenced by other factors that are not included in this study. The results of this study can show that respondents in this study interact with social media at a reasonably large rate because in 66.2%, then as many as 33.8% remain influenced by suggestions and opinions from family, co-workers, and curiosity that arises personally in a person. Recommendations from family and colleagues directly still influence the decision-making process of prospective tourists.

If the Fcount value > 4, at the degree of confidence of 5% (Imam Ghozali; 96). In this study, the statistical results of regression tests were obtained by Fcount of 211,612 with a significance value of 0,000 because the significance value was smaller than 0.05 (0.000<0.05), and the Fcount value > 4, the hypothesis stating that "promotion through social media simultaneously and significantly affects travel decisions" was accepted. The statistical results of regression tests were obtained by the thing of 14,547 with a significance value of 0,000 because the significance value was smaller than 0.05 (0.000<0.05), and the regression coefficient had a positive value of 0.930, the hypothesis that "There is a positive influence of promotion through social media on travel decisions is proven.

Someone who decides to visit a destination has an inevitable process. The tourism industry provides products and services separately by various connected organizations. Organizations use one of the tools in marketing, namely social media. The use of promotion through social media is appropriate and effective. It can be seen from the results of this study that as many as 930 decisions formed on a scale of 1000, promotion through social media platforms can improve the image of a company in the eyes of consumers, where the company is built based on pleasure, hobbies, lifestyle,

loyalty, and curiosity encouragement from the consumers themselves. These things affect travel decisions.

From the data in Figure 2, it can be seen that people accessing social media is increasing. During the Covid-19 pandemic, where the space for movement and mobilization of Indonesia and foreign people could not travel, the tourism industry automatically suspended animation from 2019 until now. However, through the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economics, the government continues to provide information and efforts to welcome tourists with the latest information at the opening in 2022. Through its social media accounts, the government conveys every development and information. Apart from the social media accounts of the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, social media is also enlivened with posts from tourists during vacation and after vacation then; there are travel agency companies that offer vacation packages, as well as SMEs located in destinations that offer prepared products and services.

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The information is uploaded on social media accounts with an attractive and neatly arranged look. So, if prospective tourists understand what is needed and get complete information through social media, then travel decisions can be made. This study showed that promotion through social media significantly influenced travel decisions. This work confirms research conducted by Fikri, 2019 where social media affects travel interest. Furthermore, it is revealed that social media has the power to improve readers' perception of the image that wants to be formed by organizations that can be done on social media. The impression, atmosphere, and uniqueness of the destination that wants to convey to the public can be uploaded through pictures, videos, and testimonials from figures to increase the curiosity of prospective tourists.

## CONCLUSION

This research was assessed based on the positive influence of promotion through social media on travel decisions. It can be proven from the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) which is 66.2%, that the results of the Fcount test at 211,612 with a significance value of 0.000, then the tcount result at 14,547 with a significance value of 0.000. The results show that promotion through social media significantly affects travel decisions. The study was conducted on respondents who had vacationed without looking at the respondent's destination. In the future, development can be done by specializing in specific destinations so that the scope of research is more specific and can be helpful for business people in the destination concerned. This research is carried out with one independent variable and one dependent variable in the future, and the subsequent research can be done development by adding free variables such as Promo / Package Holidays or intervening variables such as Words of Mouth (WOM).

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