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**SOCIAL MEDIA TOURISM: MAXIMIZING VISITOR ENGAGEMENT THROUGH DIGITAL MARKETING****Nayvadius Lestari***University of Education National, Indonesia***ABOUT ARTICLE****Key words:** Social media, Tourism, Digital marketing, Visitor engagement, Destination marketing, Social media strategies.**Received:** 21.04.2024**Accepted:** 26.04.2024**Published:** 01.05.2024**Abstract:** This paper examines the role of social media marketing in promoting tourism and engaging visitors in the digital age. As digital platforms continue to reshape the tourism landscape, social media has emerged as a powerful tool for destination marketing, offering unparalleled opportunities for reaching and engaging with potential travelers. Drawing on empirical research and case studies, this study explores the effectiveness of social media strategies in attracting tourists, fostering destination loyalty, and enhancing visitor experiences. The findings highlight the importance of leveraging social media platforms to create compelling narratives, showcase authentic experiences, and facilitate meaningful interactions with travelers, thereby maximizing the impact of digital marketing efforts on tourism promotion.**INTRODUCTION**

Making steadfast clients is at the center of each and every business (Wear Peppers and Martha Rogers, 2017). The main worth that is made by the organization is the worth that comes from the client, including every one of the qualities that are claimed now and the worth that will be possessed from here on out. A company is considered successful if it succeeds in acquiring, retaining, and expanding customers. The only reason the business constructs factories, employs workers, arranges meetings, constructs fiber-optic lines, or engages in any business activity is due to customers. You can't run a business if you don't have customers. Those managers are of the opinion that customers are the sole source of revenue. A successful marketing manager turns the pyramid so that the customer is at the top, followed by frontline employees who serve, satisfy, and fulfill customers; Middle managers are at the base of the pyramid, and their job is to help front-line employees serve satisfied customers. Top management is at the base of the pyramid, and its job is to hire and support competent middle managers. Customer advocacy has evolved into a strategic and competitive advantage for some

established businesses with business models that place customers first. With the advent of digital technologies like the internet, today's more sophisticated customers expect businesses to do more than just connect with them, satisfy them, and even delight them. Customers today have more knowledge and education. They are able to check the claims made by the company and look for better alternatives. The worth saw by the client is the contrast between the imminent client's evaluation of the relative multitude of advantages and expenses of a proposal against the other option. The monetary value of the collection of economic, functional, and psychological benefits that customers anticipate from a market offer that is caused by products, service personnel, and the associated image is referred to as the "total customer benefits." The customer's perceived value is then determined by the disparity between what the customer receives and what he gives to the possibility of a variety of choices. Customers benefit while covering the costs. Through a combination of increased economic, functional, or emotional benefits and cost reductions, marketers can increase the value of customer offers. The following questions can be formulated on the basis of the aforementioned phenomena:

- (1) What role do social media play in the promotion trend for increasing digital-era tourist visits to Tegallantang village, Ubud, Bali?
- (2) How does the use of social media as a marketing strategy affect the number of visitors to Tegallantang village in Ubud, Bali?
- (3) Are local tour operators in the village of Tegallantang Ubud Bali aware of the use of social media as a marketing strategy to attract more tourists?

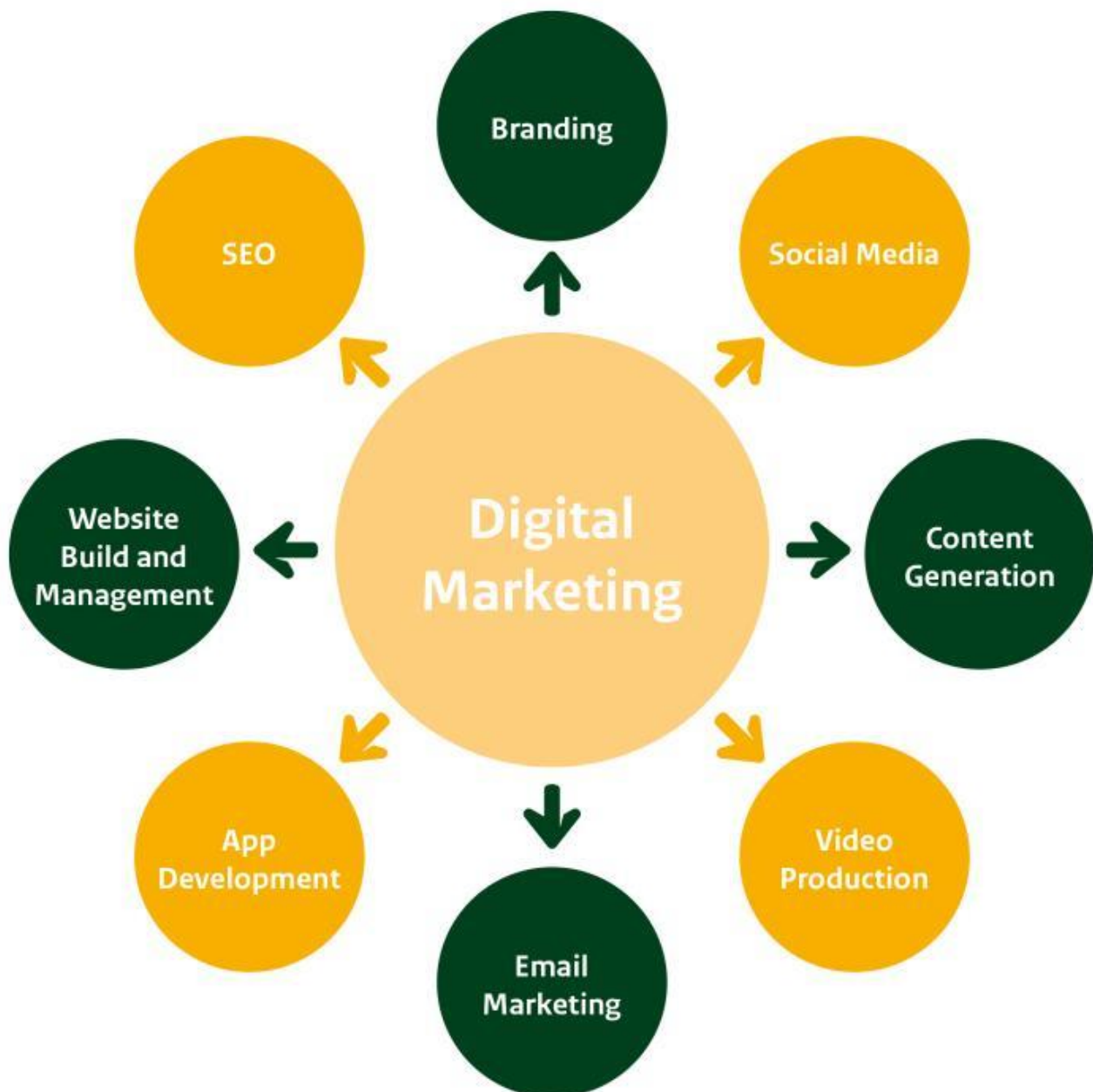
METHODS

Primary data, or data and information gathered directly from the source or respondent comprised the data used in this study. Interviews were conducted with members of the Tegallantang village community in Ubud, Bali, in order to obtain this data. By utilizing relative examining strategy with an example of 8 individuals from business visionaries participated in the travel industry area, 9 sightseers and 13 individuals locally. Secondary data, or data and supporting information gathered from the Tegallantang Ubud Bali village office.

Research model specifications

In Rangkuti (2016), the Analysis of Theory Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, Threats (SWOT) is used to examine the potential and challenges of social media as a promotional trend to increase tourist visits to Tegallantang Village, Ubud, Bali. The analysis is based on Kotler and Armstrong's SWOT theory. When developing a strategy, a methodical component is SWOT analysis. This analysis is based on the idea that opportunities and strengths can be maximized while threats and weaknesses can be minimized simultaneously. For tourism-related businesses, the process of making strategic decisions is always connected to establishing a mission, goals, strategies, and policies. According to Rangkuti (2016), SWOT analysis compares the internal factors of strengths and weaknesses with the external factors of opportunities and threats. The primary focus of this analysis is a method for achieving strong harmony between internal capabilities and external circumstances.

- 1) The stages of data collection are arranged according to the stages of preparation in strategic planning;
- 2) The research phase;
- 3) The stage of decision-making.



Social Category Theory

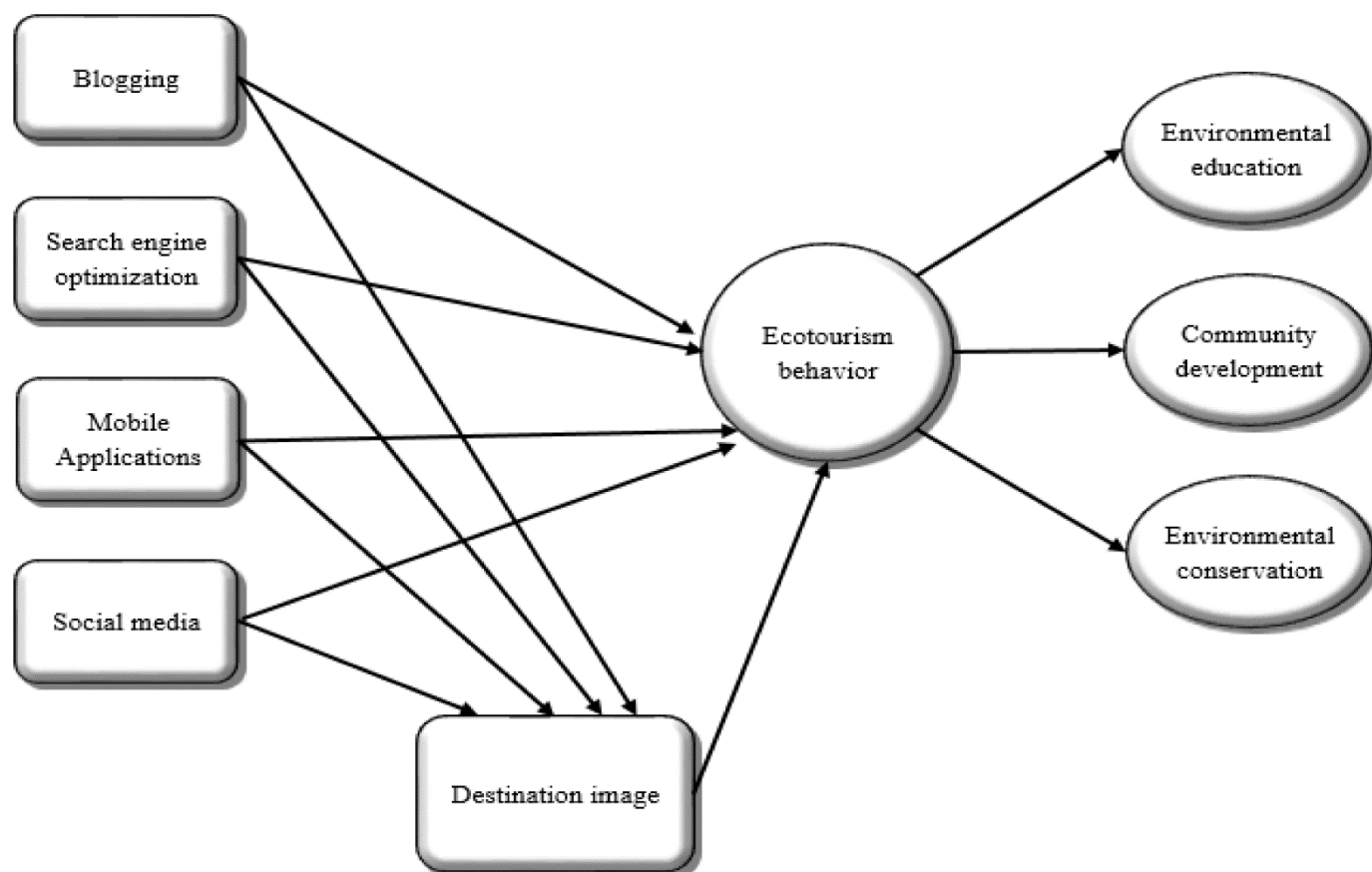
Melvin L. De Fleur (2016) Social classification hypothesis is an assortment, gathering, or social classes that exist in the public eye will give a uniform reaction to openness to virtual entertainment. This is an association like the tourism industry entrepreneurs in the village of Tegallantang Ubud Bali, a social group in an urban-industrial society whose behavior will almost always be the same when they are given certain stimulants. The fundamental premise of social category theory is that, despite the heterogeneity of modern society's life, individuals with a number of similar characteristics will follow the same traditional lifestyle. Characteristics: age, gender, income, level of education, location, or religious affiliations. Style, direction and conduct condition will connect with web-based entertainment side effects in uniform way of behaving.

Research Location

This study will take place in the village of Tegallantang Ubud, Bali, and will measure community activities by observing and mapping them. The hour of perception as an object of investigation is the state of 12 a year from January to December of 2017. The use of 2017 was taken into consideration to make it easier to record data on respondents—tourists, entrepreneurs in the tourism industry, and the Tegallantang village Ubud Bali community.

Research

Instruments



This study used descriptive research methods like in-depth interviews, literature surveys, and field surveys. There are open and closed questions during interviews.

Data Analysis Method

The following are some of the methods that were used in this study's analytical approach in accordance with the goals of the research:

1. Rangkuti's SWOT analysis by Kotler and Armstrong the SWOT (Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, Threats) analysis theory is used to evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of using social media as a marketing strategy to attract more tourists to Tegallantang Village, Ubud, Bali. A systematic identification of various factors is the goal of a SWOT analysis when developing a strategy. This analysis is based on the idea that strengths (opportunities) can be maximized while weaknesses (weaknesses) and threats (threats) can be minimized simultaneously. For tourism businesses, the process of making strategic decisions is always connected to establishing a mission, goals, strategies, and policies. According to Rangkuti (2016), the SWOT analysis is primarily a strategy that results in a

strong harmony between internal capabilities and external situations. It compares the external factors of opportunities and threats with the internal factors of strengths and weaknesses.

A company's strength is a resource, skill, or other advantage that can be used to meet market needs and competitors' expectations. Strength is a unique form of competition that gives businesses in the market a competitive advantage. Limitations or a lack of resources, abilities, and skills that effectively hinder the company's performance are weaknesses. These limitations, which can be facilities, financial resources, management and marketing abilities, can be a source of weakness for a company. Amazing open doors are significant circumstances that are worthwhile in the professional workplace. One of the sources of opportunity is the tendency, which is a significant tendency. Examples of opportunities for the business include altering technology and expanding the relationship between the company and its buyer or supplier.

The threat is significant and detrimental to the working environment of the company. The main obstacle to the company's current or desired position is the threat. The success of the business may be in jeopardy if new or revised government regulations are in place.

2. Melvin L. De Fleur's (2010) Social Category Theory states that a community's collection, group, or social categories will respond uniformly to media exposure. According to this theory, groups like the descendants of courtiers and communities of people who live in the village of Tohpati Klungkung—a social category in an urban-industrial society whose behavior will be almost uniform when exposed to certain stimulants—exist. Social category theory is based on the premise that people who share a number of characteristics will maintain the same traditional way of life, despite the fact that modern society is diverse. Characteristics: age, gender, income, level of education, location, or religious affiliations. A symptom, such as uniform behavior in the media, will be related to the style, orientation, and behavior equation. Members of a particular category will respond almost exactly the same way to the same communication. In this particular instance, interpersonal relationships are influenced by social media. In social interactions between people, elements of the concept of self-awareness include: 1) self-concept or how to view oneself; typically, this is done by classifying personal traits, social characteristics, and social roles. 2) Personal characteristics are traits that are possessed, at least in terms of how others perceive you. Self-concept is closely linked to knowledge, and these characteristics can be physical (male, female, high, low, beautiful, handsome, fat) or refer to specific abilities (smart, quiet, capable, stupid, educated). A person's self-concept is also high when they have a lot of knowledge. On the other hand, a person with a low self-concept also has a low level of knowledge. 3) Social qualities, in particular the attributes showed in associations with others (cordial or brutal, outgoing or contemplative, loquacious or calm, mindful or detached)

Observation and Interview Techniques

In order to get a closer look at the state of the Tegallantang village in Ubud, Bali, direct field observation is used to make observations. 30 individuals have been assigned as informants for an in-depth interview.

Documentation Study

The Tegallantang Ubud Bali village office and the relevant agencies gathered a number of documents or historical records for the documentation study.

orientation, and behavior equation. Members of a particular category will respond almost exactly the same way to the same communication. This has an impact on the social role, which encompasses all

aspects of the relationship between tourists and the local community in Tegallantang Ubud Bali. Regarding social media, this theory is consistent with general sociology.

RESULTS

The results of this study underscore the significant impact of social media marketing on tourism promotion and visitor engagement in the digital age. Empirical evidence and case studies demonstrate that destinations leveraging social media platforms effectively have experienced increased visibility, engagement, and visitation rates. By strategically crafting content, engaging with audiences, and fostering community participation, destinations can create immersive and authentic experiences that resonate with travelers, ultimately driving visitation and destination loyalty.

DISCUSSION

The findings highlight several key factors contributing to the success of social media tourism strategies. Firstly, the power of storytelling emerges as a critical element in capturing the attention and imagination of travelers. Destinations that effectively convey their unique narratives, cultural heritage, and natural beauty through compelling content stand out in the crowded digital landscape, inspiring travelers to explore and experience the destination firsthand. Additionally, the importance of authenticity cannot be overstated, as travelers increasingly seek genuine and meaningful experiences. Social media provides a platform for destinations to showcase authentic moments, experiences, and testimonials from real travelers, building trust and credibility among potential visitors.

Furthermore, the interactive nature of social media enables destinations to engage directly with travelers, fostering a sense of community and belonging. By responding to inquiries, sharing user-generated content, and facilitating conversations, destinations can cultivate relationships with their audience, turning visitors into advocates and ambassadors for the destination. This sense of engagement and connection extends beyond the digital realm, influencing travelers' perceptions and behaviors both during and after their visit.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, social media has become an indispensable tool for tourism promotion, offering destinations unprecedented opportunities to engage with travelers and showcase their unique offerings. By leveraging social media platforms effectively, destinations can maximize visitor engagement, drive visitation, and cultivate destination loyalty in the digital age. Moving forward, it is essential for destinations to continue innovating and adapting their social media strategies to meet the evolving needs and preferences of travelers, ensuring that they remain competitive and compelling in an increasingly digital world.

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