

Study on the Impact of Social Media on Marketing Strategies and Tourism Management of Millennial Generation

Afialdi Yonandes¹, Rahmat Althof², Aulia Ulfa Cheni³

¹ Universitas Putra Indonesia "YPTK" Padang

² Universitas Negeri Padang

³ Universitas Telkom

* Correspondence: afialdiyonandes@gmail.com

Article Information

Received: November 16, 2024

Revised: December 20, 2024

Online: December 23, 2024

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to examine the impact of social media on marketing strategies and tourism management targeting millennials. Data were collected using a structured online questionnaire distributed to millennials aged 18–40 who had previously used social media to plan or share travel experiences. A total of 200 respondents participated in this study. Secondary data were obtained from relevant literature, including Scopus- and SINTA-indexed journals, industry reports, and previous studies related to social media and tourism. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistical analysis and regression analysis. The findings indicate that social media, particularly Instagram and TikTok, plays a significant role in promoting and managing tourism destinations. Furthermore, the integration of social media usage and effective marketing strategies has a synergistic effect in enhancing the quality and attractiveness of tourism destination management. This study highlights the importance of social media-based marketing strategies in strengthening the competitiveness of tourism destinations among millennials.

Keywords: social media; marketing strategy; tourism management; millennials.

1. Introduction

In recent decades, social media has evolved into a major communication tool that influences various aspects of people's lives. The role of social media is no longer limited to social interaction, but has become the main platform for sharing



information, experiences, and recommendations [1]. Millennials, also known as “digital natives,” are the generation that uses social media the most for inspiration, especially when it comes to travel [2].

The impact of social media has significantly changed the travel and tourism sector. Travellers may readily access information about locations, read user reviews, and share their own experiences on social media sites like Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram. This makes social media a powerful promotional tool in building the image of tourist destinations [3].

User-generated content (UGC) has a significant impact on tourists’ decisions, particularly those of millennials. This generation tends to rely on online reviews, photos, and videos as the main source of information over traditional advertising. Research shows that social media content can influence the planning stage, destination selection, and activities during a traveller’s trip [4].

Millennials are not only looking for unique travel experiences, but also those that can be shared visually on social media. This trend has encouraged tourist destinations to create “Instagrammable” experiences to attract young travellers. This demonstrates how social media can be used to create more engaging travel experiences in addition to being a marketing tool [5].

In addition to user-generated content, social media influencers have a significant role in influencing tourists’ choices. Influencers with high credibility are able to build audience trust in a particular destination. Marketing campaigns involving influencers have been shown to increase travel interest, particularly among the millennial generation [6].

However, the adaptation of social media in marketing strategies is not without challenges. Tourism destination managers often face obstacles such as changes in platform algorithms, high costs for digital campaigns, and the speed of information dissemination that can have a negative impact if unfavorable reviews spread widely [7]. Nonetheless, social media provides a valuable opportunity to develop creative and targeted marketing strategies. By understanding millennials’ preferences, destination managers can design data-driven campaigns to reach the appropriate audience, enabling more effective and efficient promotion.

Apart from marketing, social media also affects destination management. Information circulating on social media can help managers understand travellers’



needs and improve services. However, managers must also address potential risks such as over-tourism caused by destination virality [8]. Although the role of social media in tourism has been widely examined, limited studies specifically address marketing and management strategies relevant to the millennial demographic. Understanding this relationship is essential to fully leverage social media as a tool for managing and promoting tourism destinations [9].

By comprehensively examining the influence of social media on marketing and destination management strategies targeting millennials, this study aims to bridge this research gap. The findings are expected to provide strategic recommendations for destination managers and marketers to optimize the use of social media in developing relevant and sustainable travel experiences.

2. Materials and Method

This study employed a quantitative research approach using a survey method to examine the impact of social media on tourism marketing and management strategies targeting millennials. A structured questionnaire was distributed online to individuals aged 18–40 who had used social media to plan or share travel experiences. Purposive sampling was applied to ensure that respondents were relevant to the research objectives. A total of 200 valid responses were collected.

The questionnaire measured key variables, including social media platform usage, the influence of user-generated content, the role of influencers, and the impact of social media on travel decision-making. Responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale.

Secondary data were obtained from Scopus- and SINTA-indexed journals, industry reports, and previous studies related to social media and tourism. Descriptive statistical analysis was used to summarize respondent characteristics and social media usage patterns, while regression analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between social media usage, marketing strategy effectiveness, and tourism management outcomes.

3. Result

The following is a table of analysis results in accordance with the research results:



Summary of Respondent Features

Table 1. Summary of Respondent Features

Characteristics	Category	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Age	< 21 Years	30	15%
	21-30 Years	150	75%
	> 30 Years	20	10%
Gender	Women	120	60%
	Male	80	40%
Frequency of Tours	> 2 times per year	130	65%
Educational Background	Higher Education	140	70%

Table 1 presents a summary of the attributes of the participants that this research is relevant to the target millennial generation, dominated by respondents aged 21-30 years as many as 150 respondents (75%). And a higher education background supports the credibility of the data, considering that the majority of respondents are individuals who understand the use of social media.

Patterns of Social Media Use

Table 2. Patterns of Social Media Use

Aspects	Platform	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Platform used	Instagram	160	80%
	TikTok	140	70%
	Facebook	80	40%
	Twitter	60	30%
Purpose of use	Destination information	120	60%
	User reviews	100	50%
	Share experiences	80	40%



According to Table 2, the two most important channels for tourist marketing and management are Instagram (80%) and TikTok (70%). Additionally, social media is widely utilised to obtain evaluations and information, highlighting the significance of openness and destination reputation.

Social Media's Place in Tourism Management Marketing Strategy

Table 3. The Connection Between Marketing Strategy, Social Media, and Tourism Management

Variable (x)	Variable (y)	Regression coefficient (β)	p-value
The role of social media	Level of tourism	0,45	< 0,05
Marketing strategy	management	0,55	< 0,01
The role of social media+marketing strategy		-	-

Table 3 illustrates the link between marketing tactics and social media's function in tourist management. Specifically, there is a strong positive correlation between social media and tourism management. The degree of tourist management improves with increased social media usage. The importance of creating successful strategies for enhancing tourist management is indicated by the stronger positive correlation between marketing strategy and social media.

The combination of both variables shows significant synergy in improving tourism management, as per the Adjusted $R^2 = 0.68$.

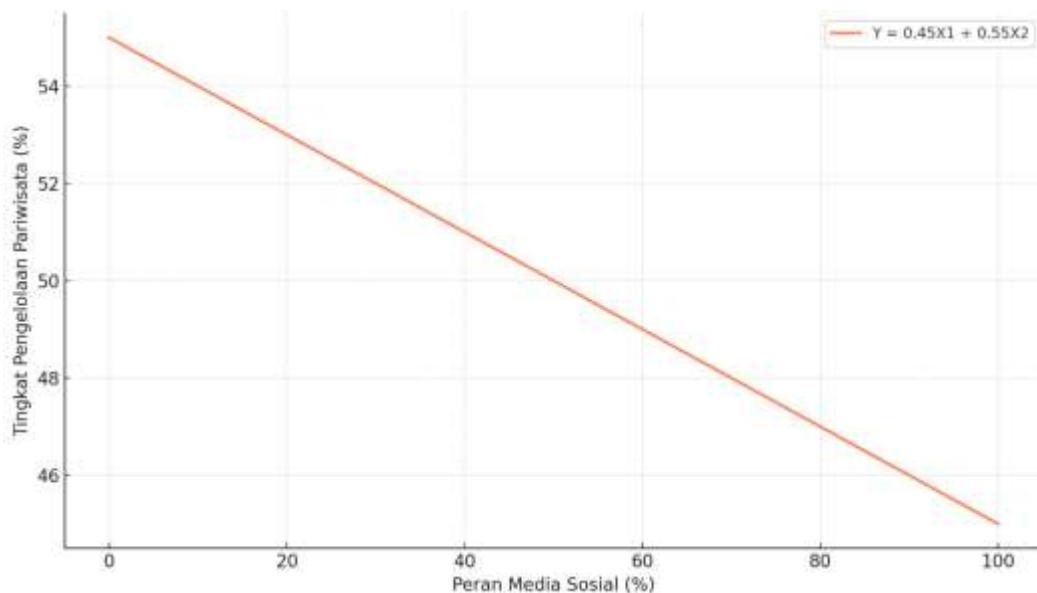


Figure 1. The Connection Between Marketing Strategy and Social Media's Role in Tourism Management

4. Discussion

Respondent Characteristics

Based on Table 1, most respondents were aged 21–30 years (75%), representing the millennial generation, which is the primary focus of this study. This confirms the strong relevance of the sample to the research objectives. This demographic profile is further supported by the respondents' educational background, with 70% holding higher education qualifications, indicating adequate access to and understanding of digital technology and social media.

This finding aligns with the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), a technology adoption framework developed by Davis, which explains how individuals accept and use new technologies. TAM emphasizes two main constructs: perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use. Individuals with higher educational levels tend to adopt new technologies, including social media, more rapidly due to stronger cognitive readiness and technological literacy [10,11].

Therefore, the characteristics of the respondents strengthen the assumption that millennials are highly engaged in using social media for travel-related purposes. Previous research confirms that social networks play a significant role in influencing millennial travellers' destination choices, attitudes, and behavioural intentions [12].



Higher educational attainment enables millennials to critically evaluate information obtained through social media, reinforcing the premise that social media is not merely a source of entertainment but also an essential tool for travel planning.

Moreover, the finding that 65% of respondents travel more than twice a year supports the argument that millennials are frequent travellers who actively rely on social media to assess destinations and make decisions based on the experiences and opinions shared by other users.

Social Media Usage Patterns

The results presented in Table 2 indicate that Instagram (80%) and TikTok (70%) are the most widely used platforms among respondents. Both platforms emphasize visual and interactive content, making them particularly effective for promoting tourist destinations. Prior studies have demonstrated that visually oriented social media platforms are more effective in digital marketing due to their strong ability to capture attention and influence travel-related decision-making processes.

Furthermore, respondents primarily use social media to search for destination information (60%) and read user reviews (50%). This finding is consistent with marketing communication theory, which highlights that consumer decisions are strongly influenced by information derived from other users' experiences rather than traditional advertising [13]. Previous studies on millennials' travel decision-making processes also confirm that social media significantly shapes destination selection by providing accessible, experience-based information [14].

These findings support the core assumption of this study that social media functions not only as an entertainment medium but also as a critical information source in travellers' decision-making processes. Millennials tend to trust content generated by other users more than conventional promotional messages. The transparency offered by reviews, photos, and videos enables travellers to make more rational and experience-based decisions, thereby strengthening trust in tourist destinations. The increasing popularity of experiential content on Instagram and TikTok further reinforces the tendency of millennials to choose destinations that receive positive engagement from their online communities.

Relationship between Social Media and Marketing Strategy on Tourism Management



The results in Table 3 reveal a positive relationship between social media usage and tourism management, with a regression coefficient of 0.45 ($p < 0.05$). This indicates that increased use of social media contributes to improved tourism destination management. This finding supports previous research suggesting that social media enhances destination visibility, visitor engagement, and information dissemination.

In addition, marketing strategy exhibits a stronger influence on tourism management, as indicated by a regression coefficient of 0.55 ($p < 0.01$). This demonstrates that well-designed marketing strategies play a crucial role in strengthening destination management effectiveness. Digital marketing theory emphasizes that appropriate strategic planning in digital environments can enhance brand awareness, influence consumer behaviour, and increase destination competitiveness [15].

The combined effect of social media and marketing strategy is reflected in the Adjusted R^2 value of 0.68, indicating that 68% of the variation in tourism management performance can be explained by these variables. This suggests a strong synergistic relationship between social media utilization and marketing strategy in improving tourism management outcomes.

Furthermore, this study assumes that social media-based marketing strategies not only increase tourist arrivals but also shape destination reputation over time. By producing relevant, engaging, and authentic content, destinations can establish a strong brand image in the minds of travellers. Consequently, effective use of social media requires a strategic approach that integrates organic user-generated content with planned promotional campaigns to ensure long-term sustainability and competitiveness.

5. Conclusions

According to the study's findings, social media particularly Instagram and TikTok plays a crucial part in promoting and overseeing travel destinations. Before choosing a place, most travellers utilise social media to look up information and read user reviews. This demonstrates that social media has a significant role in influencing travellers' opinions of a place in addition to serving as a communication medium.



The degree of tourist management is positively and significantly correlated with the use of social media and marketing techniques, according to regression study. Social media has less of an impact than a successful marketing plan, suggesting that the two might work best together to enhance the quality and appeal of tourist destination management. This study's Adjusted R² score of 0.68 indicates that social media and marketing tactics account for 68% of the variation in tourist management.

This study confirms that the synergy between social media utilisation and appropriate marketing strategies can strengthen the competitiveness of tourist destinations. Destinations that are able to adapt to digital trends and effectively manage interactions with tourists through social media have the potential to increase tourist loyalty and sustainability of the tourism industry. Therefore, a marketing strategy that focuses not only on promotion, but also on traveller experience management is needed to build a positive reputation and increase customer satisfaction.

References

1. Arifin, A. The Phenomenon of Social Media Use. VOA Indonesia 2022. Available online: <https://www.voaindonesia.com/a/fenomena-penggunaan-media-sosial/6631266.html>
2. TripIt. Gen Z and Millennial Travel Trends. Available online: <https://www.tripit.com/web/blog/travel-tips/gen-z-and-millennial-travel>
3. Hadianfar, N. Impact of Social Media Marketing on Consumer-Based Brand Equity for Tourism Destination. *Int. J. Digit. Content Manag.* 2021, 2, 150–170. <https://doi.org/10.22054/dcm.2021.13069>
4. Constantoglou, M.; Trihas, N. The Influence of Social Media on the Travel Behaviour of Greek Millennials (Gen Y). *J. Tour. Hosp. Manag.* 2020, 8, 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.15640/jthm.v8n2a2>
5. Rasul, T.; Zaman, U.; Hoque, M.R. Examining the Pulse of the Tourism Industry in the Asia-Pacific Region: A Systematic Review of Social Media. *Tour. Hosp. Manag.* 2020, 26, 173–193. <https://doi.org/10.20867/thm.26.1.10>
6. Sirayasa, I.N.; Sudarmi; Ridwan; Salim, M.A.M.; Rahmayanti, F. Influencers: A Millennial Traveller-Friendly Promotional Resource. *Briliant J. Res. Concept.* 2024, 9, 38. <https://doi.org/10.28926/briliant.v9i1.1797>



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International license](#)
Smart International Management Journal, December 2024, Vol 1, No 4

7. Hysa, B.; Karasek, A.; Zdonek, I. Social Media Usage by Different Generations as a Tool for Sustainable Tourism Marketing in Society 5.0 Idea. *Sustainability* 2021, 13, 1018. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13031018>
8. Liu, H.; Wu, L.; Li, X.R. Social Media Envy: How Experience Sharing on Social Networking Sites Drives Millennials' Aspirational Tourism Consumption. *J. Travel Res.* 2019, 58, 355–369. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0047287518761615>
9. Ana, M.-I.; Istudor, L.-G. The Role of Social Media and User-Generated Content in Millennials' Travel Behaviour. *Manag. Dyn. Knowl. Econ.* 2019, 7, 87–104. <https://doi.org/10.25019/MDKE/7.1.05>
10. Supriyono; Terminanto, A.A. Adoption of Digital Technology in Tourism in Indonesia with the UTAUT3 Model. *J. Islam. Econ. Bus. Stud.* 2024, 5, 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.47467/elmal.v5i12.6048>
11. Wikipedia. Technology Acceptance Model. Wikipedia, Wikimedia Foundation 2018. Available online: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Technology_acceptance_model
12. Kasim, H.; Abdurachman, E.; Furinto, A.; Kosasih, W. Social Network for the Choice of Tourist Destination: Attitude and Behavioural Intention. *Manag. Sci. Lett.* 2019, 9, 2415–2420. <https://doi.org/10.5267/j.msl.2019.7.014>
13. Lolowang, I.; Maramis, J.B.; Saerang, D.P.E.; Datulong, L.O.H.; Soepeno, D. New Patterns of Property Marketing Communication Post Pandemic. *EMBA J.* 2022, 10, 1–12.
14. Senanayake, S.; Anise, R. The Influence of Social Media on Millennials' Travel Decision-Making Process. *Colombo J. Adv. Res.* 2019, 1, 192–205.
15. Chaffey, D.; Chadwick, F.E. *Digital Marketing: Strategy, Implementation and Practice*; Pearson Education: Harlow, UK, 2019.