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The Effectiveness of Viral Marketing and Social Media Marketing in Increasing Tourism Interest in the Kayutangan Heritage, Malang City

Agnes Luisa Stefani¹, Estikowati^{1*}, Stella Alvianna¹, Anisa Zuhria Sugeha¹, Utik Kuntariati²

¹Tourism Diploma Program, University of Merdeka Malang, Indonesia

²Institute of Tourism and International Business, Bali, Indonesia

*Corresponding author: estikowati@unmer.ac.id

Abstract.

This study examines the influence of viral marketing and social media marketing on visit intention to Kampung Heritage Kayutangan, one of Malang City's most prominent cultural destinations. As heritage-based tourism continues to grow, digital promotional strategies have become crucial for engaging modern travelers seeking meaningful and authentic experiences. The research adopts an explanatory quantitative approach to identify the partial and simultaneous effects of both marketing variables on visitors' intention to visit. A total of 68 respondents were selected through purposive sampling, targeting individuals who had never visited the destination but showed interest in doing so. Data were analyzed using instrument validity tests, reliability tests, and multiple linear regression. The findings indicate that all research instruments were valid and reliable. Viral and social media marketing demonstrated significant positive effects on visit intention, partially and simultaneously. The regression model yields an Adjusted R² of 0.768, indicating that 76.8% of the variance in visit intention is explained by the two variables. The results highlight the importance of developing engaging digital content and strengthening social media presence to enhance promotional visibility. This study contributes to tourism marketing literature by emphasizing the effectiveness of digital promotion in cultural heritage destinations.

Keywords: viral marketing, social media marketing, tourism marketing, visit intention, heritage tourism

1 Introduction

Tourism is an important sector in regional economic development, especially in cities with strong historical and cultural potential. The historical and cultural potential referred to is cultural heritage such as historical sites, ancient buildings, and relics of the past. Not only that, but cultural heritage also has social, historical, and symbolic values that are relevant to building a tourist destination, making it an attractive visual element and enabling historical sites, ancient architectural structures, and local practices to provide a more profound and authentic tourist experience. Today's modern tourists tend to seek experiences that are not only enjoyable but also educational and emotional, thereby enhancing their understanding of history and the lives of local communities (Rachmawati & Hidayatullah, 2021; Maria, 2021). One tangible form of cultural heritage tourism potential that can be developed sustainably is the presence of heritage areas in urban areas, which not only preserve historical value but also reflect the local community's cultural identity. Kampung Heritage Kayutangan is a cultural and historical tourist destination in Malang City and has great potential to attract tourists and boost the local economy. This is further reinforced by Kampung Heritage Kayutangan's viral status and its recognition among domestic and foreign tourists. In developing a tourist destination, an effective marketing strategy is needed. According to Isman et al. (2020b), effective marketing



can trigger high awareness and interest in a product or service. Similarly, in the context of tourist destinations, viral and social media marketing are considered relevant and effective strategies for increasing visitor interest.

Viral marketing is a marketing strategy that uses social media to disseminate information quickly and widely and has the potential to create significant buzz among potential tourists (Muhajir et al., 2022). In addition to viral marketing, another effective marketing strategy is social media marketing, a form of digital marketing that uses social media and websites to market paid and organic business products or services (Lamberton & Stephen, 2016; Mahmudah, 2019). Social media marketing involves several activities, such as increasing brand awareness, growing social network following, and driving traffic to websites. Several platforms are also used as marketing media, including Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, and YouTube. According to Hidayatullah et al. (2021), social media enables destination managers to communicate in real time with tourists, provide relevant information, and respond to their feedback. This can increase tourists' trust and interest in visiting Kampung Heritage Kayutangan; however, Kampung Heritage Kayutangan currently has only one social media account, which, unfortunately, is not always updated with activities. Therefore, based on the problems identified in Kampung Heritage Kayutangan, the research questions can be formulated as follows: 1) Do viral marketing and social media marketing have a partial effect on the interest in visiting Kampung Heritage Kayutangan in Malang City? 2) Do viral marketing and social media marketing have a simultaneous effect on the interest in visiting Kampung Heritage Kayutangan in Malang City?

Based on the above description, the conceptual framework in this study can be explained in Figure 2 below:

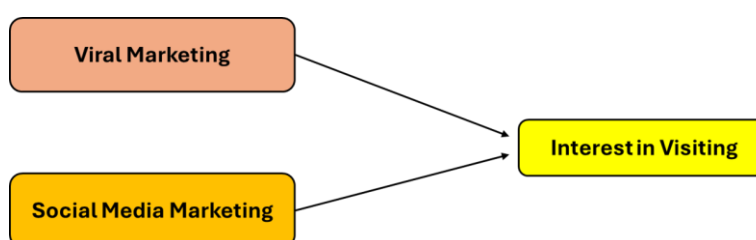


Figure 1. Research Conceptual Framework
Source: Various articles, compiled (2024)

2 Method

This research focuses on tourism management, particularly viral and social media marketing, and on interest in visiting Kampung Heritage Kayutangan. This research is explanatory, a type of research that explains the positions of the variables being studied and the relationships between them. The research location is Kampung Heritage Kayutangan. The population in this study consists of all individuals who have never visited Kampung Heritage



Kayutangan and are interested in visiting it, with an unknown population size. The sample in this study, calculated using the Slovin Formulas, yielded 68 respondents. The sampling technique used in this study was purposive sampling, which is based on specific criteria (Sugiyono, 2020). The data analysis techniques used in this study included testing the research instrument, multiple linear regression, and hypothesis testing.

Table 1. Operational Definitions of Variables

No	Research Variable	Operational Definition	Indicators
1	Viral Marketing	A marketing strategy that utilizes interesting content to encourage people to share information quickly and widely.	1. Social media used 2. Engagement 3. opinion leaders 4. Product knowledge 5. Talking about the product
2	Social Media Marketing	Destination marketing activities through social media platforms	1. Entertainment 2. Interaction 3. Trendiness 4. Customization 5. Advertisement
3	Interest in Visiting	Visitor interest refers to visitors' demand for or interest in a place, such as a tourist destination, recreational area, or other specific location.	1. Transactional interest 2. Referential interest 3. Preferential interest 4. Exploratory interest

Source: Various Articles, compiled (2024)

3 Result and Discussion

3.1 Research Instrument Testing

- a. Validity Test: Validity can be assessed by comparing the correlation values of each question with the table correlation values (r table). The product-moment r table value at $\alpha=0.05$ and $n = 68$ is 0.244. Based on the results of the 26 statement items tested, all statement items have positive correlation coefficients greater than the r value in the table. Furthermore, the probability is less than $\alpha 0.05$, indicating a significant relationship between each statement item and the total score. A significant correlation between each statement item and the total score indicates that the statement items can indeed be used to measure the variable. In other words, the instrument used is valid and can be used in this study.
- b. Reliability Test: social media marketing shows a high level of reliability with a Cronbach alpha value of 0.961, exceeding the minimum limit of 0.60. This value indicates strong internal consistency among the ten indicators. This consistency proves that the instrument is capable of measuring changes in interest in visiting. Thus, all indicators are deemed reliable for evaluating visit levels.

The results obtained from the SPSS analysis are as follows:

Table 2. SPSS Calculation Results

Variable	Description	Regression Coefficient	T Calculation	Sig	Description
X1	Viral Marketing	0.338	2.797	0.007	Significant
X2	Social media marketing	0.483	5.171	0.000	Significant



Variable	Description	Regression Coefficient	T Calculation	Sig	Description
Constant			2.007		
R			0.880		
<i>Adjusted R-Square</i>			0.768		
Calculated F			112.111		
F significance			0.000		
N			68		
Dependent Variable			Interest in Visiting		
F Table			3.136		
T Table			1.998		

Source: Primary Data, processed (2024)

Given that the constant is 2.007, the viral marketing value (b/regression coefficient) is 0.338, and the social media marketing value (b/regression coefficient) is 0.483, the regression equation becomes:

$$Y = a + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + e$$

$$Y = 2.007 + 0.338X_1 + 0.483X_2 + e$$

3.2 Hypothesis Testing

Based on the results of the multiple regression test, it is evident that viral and social media marketing, taken together or separately, affect interest in visiting Kampung Heritage Kayutangan in Malang City. To see this simultaneous effect, we can look at the F test results, where the calculated F value is 112.111. Therefore, we can conclude that the calculated F value is greater than the table F value ($112.111 > 3.136$), indicating that viral and social media marketing, together or simultaneously, affect interest in visiting Kampung Heritage Kayutangan in Malang City.

3.3 Viral Marketing Influences Interest in Visiting Kampung Heritage Kayutangan, Malang City

The research findings indicate that viral marketing significantly influences visitation interest in Kampung Heritage Kayutangan, Malang City. The partial test (t-test) results show a t-value of 2.797, which is greater than the t-table value of 1.998, and a significance value of 0.007, which is less than 0.05. This indicates that the hypothesis that viral marketing influences visit interest is accepted, suggesting that this marketing strategy is effective at attracting visitors' attention. These findings indicate that using social media and engaging content in viral marketing can increase public interest in visiting Kampung Heritage Kayutangan. This aligns with research by Dharma et al. (2022), which emphasizes that marketing based on consumer interaction and participation can generate greater interest and increase exposure of tourist locations. In addition, this study's results support a previous study by Pasaribu et al. (2023), which found that effective viral marketing can increase consumers' desire to visit a place, especially when information is disseminated through widely used digital platforms. Thus, the right viral marketing strategy can be a key factor in increasing visits to Kampung Heritage Kayutangan and other tourist attractions in Malang City.



3.4 Social Media Marketing Influences Interest in Visiting Kampung Heritage Kayutangan in Malang City

The study found that social media marketing has a significant effect on interest in visiting Kampung Heritage Kayutangan in Malang City. The partial test (t-test) results show a calculated t-value of 5.171, which is much greater than the table t-value of 1.998, and a significance value of 0.000, which is much smaller than 0.05. This indicates that the hypothesis, which states that social media marketing affects visitor interest, is accepted, signifying that social media marketing strategies are very effective at attracting visitors. These findings indicate that using social media platforms to promote Kampung Heritage Kayutangan can significantly increase public interest in visiting the place. Content that is interesting, interactive, and easy to share on social media can generate positive buzz and increase exposure for tourist attractions. This study aligns with the findings of Isman et al. (2020a), which show that social media marketing campaigns can strengthen the relationship between brands and consumers and encourage interest in visiting. In addition, the results of this study support those of Nguru et al. (2021) and Mileva (2018), which emphasize that effective social media marketing not only increases visibility but also creates a community around tourist attractions, thereby increasing a sense of belonging and the desire to visit. Thus, a well-planned and creative social media marketing strategy can be an important factor in increasing interest in visiting Kampung Heritage Kayutangan and other tourist destinations in Malang City.

3.5 Viral Marketing and Social Media Marketing Influence Interest in Visiting Kampung Heritage Kayutangan in Malang City

A simultaneous test (F-test) was conducted to determine whether the independent variables, namely viral marketing and social media marketing, together have a significant effect on interest in visiting Kampung Heritage Kayutangan, Malang City. Based on the SPSS analysis, a calculated F value of 112.111 with a significance level of 0.000 was obtained. Because the significance value is less than 0.05, H_0 is rejected, and H_3 is accepted. This means that, simultaneously, viral marketing and social media marketing have a significant effect on interest in visiting.

These results indicate that a combination of attractive viral marketing strategies and effective social media marketing can significantly increase public interest in visiting Kampung Heritage Kayutangan. In this context, viral marketing disseminates information widely and quickly, often through interesting, shareable content, while social media marketing uses digital platforms to reach a wider audience in an interactive, engaging way.

Furthermore, the coefficient of determination test results show an Adjusted R Square of 0.768, indicating that the two independent variables (viral marketing and social media marketing) explain 76.8% of the variation in interest in visiting. The remaining 23.2% can be attributed to factors beyond this research model, such as service quality, visitor reviews, and environmental factors.

These findings indicate that the more effective the viral and social media marketing strategies implemented, the greater the public's interest in visiting. These results align with the views of Estikowati et al. (2020) and Wahyuni & Saifudin (2023), who argue that effective marketing in the digital era depends heavily on the ability to attract attention and engage consumers through various media channels.

Thus, it can be concluded that viral marketing and social media marketing are two important factors that complement each other in increasing interest in visiting Kampung



Heritage Kayutangan. The management of Kampung Heritage is advised to continue optimizing this marketing strategy by creating engaging, interactive content and leveraging social media platforms to reach a wider audience, thereby significantly increasing visitor numbers.

4 Conclusion

From the analysis and discussion of the viral marketing and social media marketing variables, it was found that both variables had a significant effect on interest in visiting Kampung Heritage Kayutangan in Malang City. However, both viral and social media marketing had a significant positive effect on interest in visiting. The results of this study indicate that public interest in visiting Kampung Heritage Kayutangan is more influenced by the effectiveness of marketing strategies implemented through these two media. Attractive viral marketing can spread information quickly and widely, creating positive buzz in the community. On the other hand, social media marketing helps reach a wider audience and foster deeper interactions with potential visitors. The combination of these two strategies creates a strong public appeal, with interesting and informative content that is easy to share. Thus, it can be concluded that the more effective the viral and social media marketing strategies implemented, the greater the public's interest in visiting Kampung Heritage Kayutangan. The management of Kampung Heritage is advised to continue optimizing the use of these two strategies by creating engaging, interactive content and maximizing social media platforms to significantly increase visitor numbers.

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