

Evaluating website performance as a digital awareness tool for cultural festivals: a google analytics study of festival Golo Koe

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ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

cultural festival, digital awareness, digital tourism marketing, google analytics, website performance

Katakunci:

digital awareness, festival budaya, google analytics, kinerja website, pemasaran pariwisata digital

DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.26905/jpp.v11i1.16734>

Received **February 3, 2026**

Review **February 20, 2026**

Accepted **June 9, 2026**

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ABSTRACT

The development of digital technology has transformed the way cultural festivals communicate with potential visitors, positioning websites as strategic tools for building digital awareness. While previous studies have primarily focused on website quality and user satisfaction, limited research has examined how behavioral analytics data can be used to evaluate the role of cultural festival websites in generating digital awareness. This study aims to evaluate the performance of the Golo Koe Festival website as a digital awareness tool for a cultural festival using Google Analytics data. A descriptive quantitative approach with a case study method was employed. The research analyzed website traffic performance, top pages, traffic sources, and audience demographics based on Google Analytics data collected from 1 June to 31 August 2025. The findings show that the website attracted 824 new users out of 825 active users, indicating its effectiveness in reaching previously unreachable audiences. Organic search was the dominant traffic source (64.3%), followed by Instagram referrals (16.0%), demonstrating the important role of search engines and social media in generating digital awareness. However, the average engagement time was relatively short (41 seconds), and the homepage recorded a high bounce rate (56%), suggesting that while the website successfully attracted audience attention, it was less effective in encouraging deeper content exploration. Audience demographics revealed that visitors were predominantly domestic, although the presence of international users indicated emerging global interest in the festival. This study concludes that website performance should be evaluated through both awareness indicators and engagement indicators. The findings contribute to digital tourism marketing literature by demonstrating how behavioral analytics can be used to assess digital awareness in cultural festival promotion and provide practical insights for optimizing data-driven strategies to support sustainable cultural tourism development.

HOW TO CITE ITEM

Ciptosari, F., Vione, E., & Halim, T. (2026). Evaluating website performance as a digital awareness tool for cultural festivals: A google analytics study of festival Golo Koe. *Jurnal Pariwisata Pesona*, 11(1), 74–85. <https://doi.org/10.26905/jpp.v11i1.16734>

ABSTRAK

Perkembangan teknologi digital telah mengubah cara festival budaya berkomunikasi dengan calon pengunjung, sehingga website menjadi salah satu sarana strategis dalam membangun digital awareness. Meskipun berbagai penelitian sebelumnya banyak berfokus pada kualitas website dan kepuasan pengguna, penelitian yang memanfaatkan data analitik perilaku untuk mengevaluasi peran website festival budaya dalam membangun digital awareness masih terbatas. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengevaluasi kinerja website Festival Golo Koe sebagai sarana digital awareness menggunakan data Google Analytics. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif deskriptif dengan metode studi kasus. Analisis dilakukan terhadap kinerja trafik website, halaman yang

paling banyak dikunjungi, sumber trafik, dan karakteristik demografis audiens berdasarkan data Google Analytics periode 1 Juni–31 Agustus 2025. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa website berhasil menarik 824 pengguna baru dari total 825 pengguna aktif, yang mengindikasikan efektivitas website dalam menjangkau audiens yang sebelumnya belum mengenal Festival Golo Koe. Sumber trafik utama berasal dari pencarian organik Google (64,3%) dan rujukan Instagram (16,0%), yang menunjukkan pentingnya mesin pencari dan media sosial dalam membangun digital awareness. Namun demikian, rata-rata waktu keterlibatan pengguna yang relatif singkat (41 detik) serta tingkat bounce rate beranda yang cukup tinggi (56%) menunjukkan bahwa meskipun website berhasil menarik perhatian audiens, kemampuannya dalam mendorong eksplorasi konten yang lebih mendalam masih terbatas. Analisis demografis menunjukkan bahwa mayoritas audiens berasal dari pasar domestik, meskipun keberadaan pengguna internasional mengindikasikan mulai munculnya minat dari pasar global. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa evaluasi kinerja website perlu mempertimbangkan indikator awareness dan indikator engagement secara bersamaan. Temuan penelitian ini berkontribusi pada pengembangan literatur pemasaran pariwisata digital dengan menunjukkan bagaimana data analitik perilaku dapat digunakan untuk mengukur digital awareness dalam promosi festival budaya, serta memberikan implikasi praktis bagi pengelola festival dalam mengoptimalkan strategi promosi digital berbasis data guna mendukung pengembangan pariwisata budaya yang berkelanjutan.

INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology has brought significant changes to the way tourism destinations and events communicate with potential visitors. In the digital era, websites are no longer understood merely as information-providing media; rather, they have evolved into strategic instruments for building digital awareness, shaping destination image, and influencing tourists' interest and travel decisions. In the tourism context, websites function as an initial touchpoint that connects destinations and events with audiences who increasingly rely on digital media during the travel information search process (Dasrita, Yolveri, & Rusman, 2026; Grimaldo, Fernandez, & Manalo, 2026).

Cultural festivals represent one form of tourism attraction with strategic value in strengthening local identity and supporting destination development. Festivals not only serve as spaces for cultural expression but also act as tools to attract visitors and enhance destination competitiveness. However, the effectiveness of cultural festivals in attracting audiences is highly dependent on the promotional strategies employed. Along with the increasing use of the internet and digital media in travel planning, cultural festival promotion is required to adapt to digital marketing approaches that are capable of reaching broader markets more efficiently (Getz & Page, 2016; Walhidayah, 2024; Angelie, et al., 2025).

Destination and event websites have become one of the main channels in digital tourism promotion strategies. Previous studies indicate that well-managed websites can enhance tourist awareness through the provision of relevant information, attractive visual presentation, and ease of information access (Fernández-Cavia et al., 2014). In addition, websites allow event organizers to communicate messages directly to audiences without relying entirely on third-party intermediaries. Nevertheless, the mere presence of a website does not guarantee promotional effectiveness if it is not supported by optimal content management and user experience design (Octavia & Pristiwasa, 2025).

Empirically, many tourism and cultural festival websites have not been systematically evaluated based on user behavior data. As a result, event organizers often lack a strong analytical foundation to assess the extent to which a website functions effectively in building digital awareness and reaching targeted audience segments. In fact, the use of digital analytics tools such as Google Analytics enables objective evaluation of website performance through the measurement of traffic, traffic sources, engagement levels, and users' demographic characteristics (Ramadhani & Lestari, 2022; Kantanantha & Awichanirost, 2022).

Digital awareness refers to the extent to which a destination, event, or tourism product becomes recognized and noticed by potential audiences through digital channels. Within the digital marketing framework, awareness represents the initial stage of the customer journey before audiences develop interest, intention, and actual participation (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019). In the context of tourism events, website visibility, visitor acquisition, traffic sources, and audience reach can serve as indicators of digital awareness because they reflect

the ability of digital platforms to attract and expose information to potential visitors. Therefore, evaluating website performance is not merely a technical assessment but also an important approach for understanding how effectively a tourism event gains attention in the digital environment.

In addition to supporting promotional objectives, digital awareness is particularly important for cultural festivals because it enables cultural narratives and destination identities to be communicated to broader audiences through digital channels. Cultural festivals are not merely tourism events; they also function as vehicles for preserving, interpreting, and promoting local cultural heritage. Therefore, understanding how festival websites contribute to digital awareness is relevant not only from a marketing perspective but also from the perspective of sustainable tourism development, where digital platforms can facilitate wider access to cultural information and strengthen destination storytelling (UNWTO, 2018; Cahyani, Mardani, & Widianingsih, 2023).

Despite the growing body of research on tourism websites and digital marketing, most previous studies have focused on destination websites, website usability, or social media performance. Studies specifically examining cultural festival websites using behavioral analytics data remain limited, particularly in developing tourism destinations. Furthermore, existing studies tend to emphasize website quality and user satisfaction rather than assessing how website performance contributes to building digital awareness. This study addresses this gap by employing Google Analytics data to evaluate the effectiveness of a cultural festival website as a digital awareness tool. The novelty of this research lies in the use of behavioral analytics data from Google Analytics to assess digital awareness in the context of a cultural festival. Unlike previous studies that primarily focus on website quality or user perceptions, this study integrates website performance metrics including traffic performance, audience acquisition, top pages, traffic sources, and demographic reach to evaluate how a cultural festival website functions as a digital awareness-building tool.

Festival Golo Koe is one of the cultural festivals organized to promote local cultural heritage and support destination tourism development. As part of its digital promotion strategy, the festival organizers have developed an official website accessible at <http://www.festivalgolokoe.com>, which serves as the main platform for disseminating festival information, event agendas, news, and contact details. However, to date, there has been no empirical study that specifically evaluates the performance of the Festival Golo Koe website as a digital awareness-building tool based on user behavior data.

Based on this context, this study aims to evaluate the performance of the Festival Golo Koe website as a digital awareness tool for cultural festivals using Google Analytics data. The analysis focuses on website traffic performance, top pages, traffic sources, and audience demographics. This study is expected to contribute theoretically to the enrichment of digital tourism marketing and cultural festival literature, as well as practically to provide insights for event organizers in designing and optimizing more effective, data-driven digital promotion strategies.

METHODS

This study employs a descriptive quantitative approach using a case study method. This approach was selected to provide an empirical overview of the performance of the Festival Golo Koe website as a promotional medium in building awareness of a cultural festival. A descriptive quantitative approach is appropriate when the research aims to interpret patterns, trends, and data characteristics without testing causal relationships between variables (Sugiyono, 2019). Meanwhile, the case study method is applied because the research focuses in depth on a single object, namely the official Festival Golo Koe website, allowing the researcher to comprehensively understand the context and dynamics of digital promotion for a cultural festival (Assyakurrohim *et al.*, 2023).

The combination of a descriptive quantitative approach and a case study design was considered appropriate because the objective of this research is not to test causal relationships, but rather to evaluate and describe the performance of a specific digital platform in its real-world context. Website analytics generate large amounts of behavioral data that can be quantified and interpreted to reveal audience reach, engagement patterns, and information-seeking behavior. A case study design enables an in-depth examination of the Festival Golo Koe website as a unique example of a cultural festival website, providing contextual insights that may not be captured through broader comparative studies (Yin, 2018). Therefore, this methodological approach allows for a comprehensive assessment of website performance as a digital awareness tool.

The object of this study is the official Festival Golo Koe website, which functions as an information channel and digital promotion platform for the cultural festival. The website provides information on the festival profile, event schedules, latest news, documentation galleries, and organizer contact details. The data source for this study is Google Analytics, a web analytics tool used to record and monitor website user behavior in real time. Google Analytics is widely used in tourism and digital marketing research due to its ability to provide quantitative data on website traffic, user interactions, and audience characteristics (Clifton, 2012). The analyzed data cover the period from 1 June to 31 August 2025, which was selected to represent promotional activities and website visits during the preparation and implementation phases of the Festival Golo Koe.

This study utilized Google Analytics 4 (GA4), which was integrated into the official Festival Golo Koe website prior to the observation period. Access to the analytics dashboard was obtained through the website

administrator, enabling the researchers to retrieve aggregated performance data. Data extraction was conducted directly from the GA4 reporting interface using standard reports, including Acquisition Reports, Engagement Reports, Pages and Screens Reports, and Demographic Reports. These reports were selected because they provide comprehensive information regarding audience acquisition, user behavior, content performance, and audience characteristics. Only aggregated and anonymized data were analyzed, ensuring that no personally identifiable information was accessed during the research process.

Data collection was conducted through the extraction of secondary data from Google Analytics. The collected data include the number of users, visitor characteristics, visitation patterns, and levels of user interaction with website content. The use of secondary data from digital analytics platforms is effective for evaluating the performance of tourism promotional media, as it captures actual user behavior without researcher intervention (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019). The variables used in this study focus on website performance as a digital awareness medium, which is measured using several key Google Analytics indicators. These indicators are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Research Variables and Indicators

Variable	Indicator	Description
Website Performance	Active Users	Total number of users accessing the website
	New Users	Indikator of new audience reach
	Engagement Time	Average duration of user interaction
	Number of Interactions (Event Count)	User activities within the website
	Bounce Rate	Percentage of users who exit without further interaction
	Traffic Sources	Origin of user visits
	Audience Demographics	User's country and city of origin

The use of these indicators is consistent with previous studies that employed Google Analytics metrics to evaluate the effectiveness of tourism and event websites in building awareness and audience engagement (Ramadhani & Lestari, 2022).

The selection of these indicators is based on the concept of digital awareness, which refers to the extent to which a digital platform successfully attracts audience attention and increases exposure to information about a destination or event. Active Users and New Users represent audience reach and the ability of the website to attract new visitors. Traffic Sources indicate the effectiveness of various digital channels in directing audiences to the website. Audience Demographics provide insights into the geographic reach of promotional activities. Meanwhile, Engagement Time, Event Count, and Bounce Rate reflect the extent to which visitors interact with website content after initial exposure. Collectively, these indicators provide a comprehensive assessment of the website's role in generating awareness and stimulating audience engagement within the digital environment.

Data analysis was conducted using a descriptive quantitative approach by interpreting basic statistical values generated by Google Analytics, such as the number of users, the percentage of traffic sources, engagement duration, and levels of user interaction. The results of the analysis are presented in the form of tables and narrative descriptions to facilitate understanding and interpretation.

This descriptive analytical approach allows researchers to identify patterns of audience behavior and evaluate the effectiveness of the website as a digital promotional medium for cultural festivals, without performing inferential statistical generalizations. This technique is considered relevant for tourism research based on case studies and the evaluation of digital media performance (Buhalis & Law, 2008).

This study has several limitations. First, the analyzed data cover only a single festival website and a specific time period. Second, the study does not compare the performance of the Festival Golo Koe website with other cultural festival websites. Therefore, the findings are contextual in nature and can serve as a foundation for future research with broader objects and methodological approaches.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Website Traffic Performance

The analysis of the Festival Golo Koe website traffic performance was conducted to assess the extent to which the website functions as a digital medium in building awareness of the cultural festival. The analyzed data were obtained from Google Analytics for the period from 1 June to 31 August 2025, focusing on the number of users, visitor characteristics, and the level of users' initial interaction with the website. Based on the analysis results (table 2), the Festival Golo Koe website recorded 825 active users, of whom 842 were new users. This finding indicates that nearly all website visitors were first-time audiences accessing information related to the Festival Golo Koe through digital channels. This condition suggests that the website has functioned effectively as an initial introduction medium for the festival to a broader audience.

The dominance of new users reflects the website's success in reaching audiences who were previously unfamiliar with the Festival Golo Koe. In the tourism context, this achievement indicates that the website has effectively fulfilled its role as a digital awareness channel, particularly in expanding the promotional reach of the cultural festival. From a theoretical perspective, this finding supports the notion that website reach and new visitor acquisition can serve as observable indicators of digital awareness, especially during early stages of the visitor decision-making journey. Since awareness itself is difficult to measure directly in digital environments, the ability of a website to attract first-time visitors provides observable evidence that promotional messages have successfully reached previously unreached audiences (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016; Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019).

Table 2. Summary of Festival Golo Koe Website Traffic Performance

Indicator	Value	Description
Active Users	825	Total number of users during the research period
New Users	824	Indicates the dominance of new audiences
Average Engagement Time	41 seconds	Duration of user interaction with the website
Number of Interactions (Event Count)	4.700	Total user activities (clicks, navigation, interactions)

Source: Google Analytics (processed by the authors, 2025)

However, the analysis also reveals that the average user engagement time is relatively short, at only 41 seconds. This duration suggests that most visitors have not explored the website content extensively. In other words, while the website successfully captured initial audience attention, its ability to sustain engagement remained limited. This finding indicates that awareness generation and audience engagement may represent two distinct dimensions of website effectiveness, requiring different optimization strategies.

The website recorded a total of 4,700 interactions during the observation period, equivalent to approximately 5–6 interactions per user. These interactions included menu clicks, page navigation, and the use of specific website features. However, this figure should be interpreted carefully. Many of these interactions appear to be related to visitors' efforts to obtain essential festival information rather than to explore the website extensively. The Festival Golo Koe website provides clear access to key information through its main navigation menus and two prominent call-to-action (CTA) features on the homepage: Timeline and Contact. These features allow visitors to quickly find information about festival schedules, event agendas, and organizer contacts, which are often the primary information needs of potential visitors. As a result, users may interact with the website several times while still focusing only on obtaining practical information.

From a theoretical perspective, these findings contribute to the growing body of literature on digital tourism marketing by demonstrating that website performance should not be evaluated solely based on engagement metrics. Previous studies have emphasized the importance of websites as digital touchpoints that influence tourists' information search and decision-making processes (Buhalis & Law, 2008; Balaji & Rao, 2018). The Festival Golo Koe case shows that a website can effectively generate awareness by attracting a high proportion of new users, even when visitor engagement remains relatively limited. This suggests that awareness generation and engagement should be treated as related but distinct dimensions of website effectiveness.

The findings also support the concept of the customer journey in digital tourism, where awareness represents an earlier stage than active engagement or behavioral intention (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016). The large proportion of new visitors indicates that the website successfully performs its awareness-building function by introducing the festival to previously unreached audiences. However, the relatively short engagement time suggests that many visitors have not yet progressed to deeper stages of information exploration. This highlights the importance of evaluating website performance not only through traffic volume but also through users' progression across different stages of the digital visitor journey.

Furthermore, the results indicate that digital awareness metrics, such as reach and new visitor acquisition, can provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of tourism promotion efforts. Future evaluations of tourism and festival websites should therefore distinguish between awareness indicators (e.g., reach and new users) and engagement indicators (e.g., time spent, content exploration, and interaction depth). Such a distinction may offer a more comprehensive understanding of how digital platforms contribute to tourism promotion and audience development.

The practical implication of these findings is that Festival Golo Koe organizers should not only focus on attracting new visitors but also develop strategies that encourage longer and more meaningful interactions with website content. Improving content quality, information structure, and user experience may help convert initial awareness into deeper audience engagement and stronger interest in the festival.

Top Pages Visited by Users

The analysis of top pages was conducted to understand the types of content on the Festival Golo Koe website that are most frequently accessed by users, as well as the level of engagement generated by each page.

This evaluation is important for identifying which pages are effective in retaining visitors' attention and which pages still require optimization as part of the festival's digital promotion strategy.

Based on Google Analytics data, the Festival Golo Koe homepage was the most frequently visited page during the research period. The homepage serves as the main entry point for audiences accessing festival information, whether they originate from search engines or social media platforms.

Table 3. Top Pages of the Festival Golo Koe Website

Page	Number of Views	Active Users	Number of Interactions	Bounce Rate
Festival Golo Koe Homepage	1.200	754	3.600	56,0%
About Festival Golo Koe	59	81	199	26,7%
Festival News	68	35	153	9,4%
Secretariat Contact	57	35	130	10,6%
Festival Gallery	54	40	146	21,8%

Source: Google Analytics (processed by the authors, 2025)

The data in Table 3 shows that the Festival Golo Koe homepage recorded the highest number of views, reaching 1.200 visits with 754 active users. However, the homepage also had the highest bounce rate, at 56%, meaning that more than half of visitors left the website without opening other pages. This finding does not necessarily indicate poor homepage performance. The homepage already provides essential information sought by prospective visitors, particularly the festival timeline and event agenda. Given that these are among the most important information needs of potential attendees, the high bounce rate may indicate that many visitors were able to obtain the information they needed directly from the homepage without navigating to additional pages.

At the same time, the finding suggests that although the homepage effectively delivers essential festival information, it has not yet fully encouraged visitors to explore other sections of the website. As a result, the homepage functions effectively as an information source but plays a more limited role in guiding users toward additional content such as festival news, cultural stories, background information, or visual documentation of festival activities.

In contrast, the Festival News and Secretariat Contact Pages recorded lower bounce rate of 9,4% and 10,6%, respectively. These pages were visited by a smaller number of users, but the visitors who accessed them were likely looking for specific information related to festival activities or organizer contacts. Therefore, they tended to spend more time interacting with the website and were more likely to visit additional pages. The About Festival Golo Koe and Festival Gallery pages also showed relatively good performance, with bounce rates below 30%. This indicates that some visitors were interested in learning more about the festival's background and viewing visual content related to festival activities.

These findings suggest that visitors are primarily interested in practical and relevant information, particularly event schedules, festival updates, and contact information. At the same time, there is an opportunity to encourage greater exploration of other website content that introduces the festival's cultural values and identity. From a theoretical perspective, this finding supports the information-seeking behavior perspective in tourism marketing, which suggests that prospective visitors prioritize functional information that reduces uncertainty during trip planning (Xiang et al., 2015; Yang, O'Connor, & Wibowo, 2025). In the context of cultural festivals, practical information such as event schedules and contact details may play a more important role in attracting user attention than interpretive or storytelling content during the early stages of information search.

The findings also suggest that page effectiveness in cultural festival websites should not be evaluated solely based on traffic volume. While the homepage generated the highest number of visits, pages containing specific and task-oriented information, such as Festival News and Secretariat Contact, demonstrated stronger visitor retention. This finding extends previous tourism website research by indicating that information relevance may be a stronger driver of continued website navigation than page popularity alone.

The practical implication of these findings is that Festival Golo Koe organizers should maintain easy access to essential information on the homepage while strengthening internal navigation to other sections of the website. Additional call-to-action (CTA) features such as "Read Festival News," "Explore Festival Stories," or "View Festival Gallery" could encourage visitors to continue exploring the website. By doing so, the homepage can function not only as an information source but also as a gateway that increases audience engagement and strengthens digital awareness of the festival.

Website Traffic Sources as Indicators of Digital Promotion Effectiveness

The analysis of the Festival Golo Koe website traffic sources was conducted to assess the effectiveness of the digital promotion channels used to direct audiences to the official festival website. Information on traffic sources is important for understanding potential visitors' information search behavior and for identifying the promotional channels that play the most significant role in building awareness of the cultural festival.

Based on Google Analytics data for the period from 1 June to 31 August 2025, the majority of visitors to the Festival Golo Koe website originated from Google search through organic search results. In addition, social media, particularly Instagram, also contributed significantly as a source of website traffic.

Table 4. Website Traffic Sources of the Festival Golo Koe Website

Source/Medium	Active Users	Percentage
Google/Organic Search	522	64,3%
Instagram (Referral)	130	16,0%
Direct	118	14,5%
Facebook (Referral)	25	2,0%
Other Search Engines	16	2,0%
Total	811	100%

Source: Google Analytics (processed by the authors, 2025)

Table 4 shows that the dominance of traffic from Google Organic search (64.3%) indicates that audiences actively searched for information related to the Festival Golo Koe through search engines. This finding suggests that the festival website has achieved a good level of visibility in search results and is relevant to the keywords used by potential visitors. In the context of tourism promotion, this reflects the important role of search engines as a gateway through which audiences discover cultural events and destinations.

The second-largest source of traffic comes from Instagram (16.0%), highlighting the role of visual social media in attracting audience attention and directing users to the official festival website. Instagram functions as a supporting promotional channel that helps introduce the festival through visual content and storytelling, while the website serves as the primary source of more detailed information.

Direct traffic accounted for 14.5% of total visits, indicating a certain level of festival awareness among audiences. Users who accessed the website directly were likely already familiar with the festival name or had obtained the website address through social media, offline promotional activities, media coverage, or word-of-mouth communication. Meanwhile, traffic from Facebook and other search engines remained relatively limited, suggesting that these channels have not yet played a major role in attracting website visitors.

These findings demonstrate that audience awareness of Festival Golo Koe is strongly influenced by online information-search behavior. Potential visitors tend to search for festival-related information through search engines before accessing the official website. This finding supports previous tourism studies that describe travelers as active information seekers who rely on digital platforms during the information search stage of the travel decision-making process (Grimaldo, Fernandez, & Manalo, 2026).

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to digital tourism marketing literature by highlighting the complementary roles of search engines and social media in building digital awareness. Previous studies have generally emphasized social media as a key channel for destination promotion and audience engagement (Kasemsarn & Nickpour, 2025; Song, Park, & Park, 2021). However, the findings of this study suggest that awareness of cultural festivals may be driven more strongly by active information-seeking behavior through search engines than by passive exposure through social media alone. In this context, organic search traffic can be interpreted as a manifestation of audience interest that has progressed beyond simple exposure and entered the information-search stage of the tourist decision journey.

A particularly important finding is the significant contribution of organic search traffic, which highlights the strategic value of website content in supporting search engine optimization (SEO). The Festival Golo Koe website includes a news section that provides textual content related to festival activities and updates. Such content creates opportunities to target relevant keywords and improve website visibility in search engine results. Therefore, the news section should not be viewed merely as an information feature but also as an important component of the festival's digital marketing strategy.

The findings also extend existing knowledge regarding the role of website content in tourism promotion. While previous studies have emphasized website quality and usability as determinants of online tourism marketing effectiveness (Fernández-Cavia *et al.*, 2014; Novabos, Matias, & Mena, 2015), this study demonstrates that content-driven visibility, particularly through regularly updated news and festival-related information, can significantly contribute to awareness generation by increasing discoverability through search engines. This suggests that content strategy and SEO performance should be considered important dimensions when evaluating the effectiveness of tourism and event websites.

The practical implication of these findings is that Festival Golo Koe should continue prioritizing SEO and Instagram as its main digital promotion channels. Regular publication of news articles, festival updates, and cultural stories can help increase the website's visibility in search engines and attract new audiences organically. At the same time, organizers may consider expanding their digital promotion efforts through additional platforms and strategic partnerships to broaden audience reach and strengthen the festival's overall digital presence.

Audience Demographics and Festival Market Potential

The analysis of audience demographics was conducted to understand the characteristics of visitors to the Golo Koe Festival website based on their country and city of origin. This demographic information is important for identifying festival market segmentation as well as assessing the potential for tourism promotion development at both domestic and international levels.

Table 5. Demographic Profile of Golo Koe Festival Website Users by Country and City

No	Category	Country/City	Active Users
A	Country	Indonesia	691
		United States	44
		Hong Kong	11
		Singapore	10
		Poland	8
		Belgium	7
		China	6
B	City (Indonesia)	Denpasar	112
		Bima	100
		Jakarta	85
		Makassar	40
		Kupang	31
		Surabaya	15
		Kuta	14

Source: Google Analytics (processed by the authors, 2025)

Data in Table 5 shows that the majority of the Golo Koe Festival website audience originates from Indonesia, with 691 users, accounting for approximately 88% of total visitors. This finding indicates that the festival's primary audience remains within the domestic market, which is expected given that Festival Golo Koe is a cultural event closely associated with local traditions and Indonesian cultural identity.

Nevertheless, the presence of international visitors from countries such as the United States, Hong Kong, Singapore, Poland, Belgium, and China suggests that Festival Golo Koe has begun to attract attention beyond the domestic market. Although the number of international users remains relatively small, this finding indicates that information about the festival has reached audiences outside Indonesia through digital channels.

At the domestic level, the largest numbers of website users originated from Denpasar, Bima, and Jakarta. The strong presence of users from Denpasar and Bima may reflect geographical proximity and tourism connections between Bali, Nusa Tenggara, and Labuan Bajo. Meanwhile, Jakarta represents an important urban market with strong potential interest in cultural tourism and event-based travel.

The presence of users from Makassar, Kupang, and other cities in Eastern Indonesia further indicates that Festival Golo Koe has gained recognition beyond its immediate local area. This pattern suggests that the festival is attracting interest from audiences located within regional tourism networks connected to Labuan Bajo and Eastern Indonesia.

An important finding is that the website was available only in Bahasa Indonesia during the study period. Despite this limitation, the website still attracted visitors from several foreign countries. This suggests the existence of initial international interest in Festival Golo Koe, even though the website has not yet been fully optimized for global audiences. From a digital marketing perspective, this finding demonstrates that cultural festivals can generate international awareness through online visibility, even before implementing dedicated international communication strategies.

From a theoretical perspective, these findings support previous studies suggesting that digital platforms enable tourism destinations and events to transcend geographical boundaries in reaching potential audiences (Rafael & Reis, 2026; Abreu et al., 2026). The Festival Golo Koe case demonstrates that digital awareness can emerge among international audiences even when website content is primarily designed for domestic users. This finding extends existing tourism marketing literature by showing that website visibility itself may generate early-stage international awareness prior to the implementation of multilingual content or targeted international marketing campaigns.

Furthermore, the findings highlight the value of website analytics as a market intelligence tool. While destination websites are commonly viewed as promotional channels, the demographic data generated through digital analytics can also help identify emerging market segments and geographic areas with potential interest in cultural tourism products. In this regard, website analytics contributes not only to promotional evaluation but also to market discovery and audience development strategies.

These findings suggest that digital awareness should be understood not only as the ability to attract visitors but also as the ability to expand the geographic reach of cultural tourism promotion. The presence of both domestic and international audiences indicates that website visibility can facilitate broader exposure of cultural festivals beyond their local markets and support the gradual internationalization of tourism events.

The practical implication of these findings is that Festival Golo Koe organizers should continue strengthening promotional efforts in high-interest domestic markets such as Bali, Nusa Tenggara, and major Indonesian cities. At the same time, the presence of international visitors highlights an opportunity to expand global reach through website internationalization. Providing bilingual content, particularly in English, and strengthening promotion through international digital channels could improve accessibility for foreign audiences and support the future development of Festival Golo Koe as a cultural tourism event with broader international appeal.

Website Performance as a Digital Awareness and Cultural Communication Tool

The findings of this study demonstrate that the Festival Golo Koe website has played an important role in building digital awareness of the cultural festival. The high proportion of new users and the dominance of organic search traffic indicate that the website successfully reached audiences who were previously unfamiliar with the festival. This finding reinforces previous studies that identify websites as critical digital touchpoints in the tourism decision-making process, where potential visitors first encounter information about destinations and events before developing further interest (Balaji & Rao, 2018; Yang, O'Connor, & Wibowo, 2025). In the context of cultural festival promotion, the website functions as an entry point that introduces the festival to wider audiences beyond its immediate geographical area.

The dominance of new users suggests that the website has been effective in generating awareness rather than merely serving returning visitors. This finding contributes to the growing literature on digital tourism marketing by suggesting that website reach and new visitor acquisition can be considered observable indicators of digital awareness. While previous tourism website studies have frequently emphasized user satisfaction, website quality, and engagement outcomes (Fernández-Cavia *et al.*, 2014; Novabos, Matias, & Mena, 2015), the present study highlights the importance of awareness generation as a distinct dimension of website performance. In other words, a website may be considered successful not only because it engages visitors but also because it effectively exposes a tourism product to previously unreached audiences.

Despite its effectiveness in generating awareness, the website demonstrated relatively limited audience engagement. The average engagement time of 41 seconds indicates that many visitors did not extensively explore the website content. Furthermore, user interactions were concentrated primarily on obtaining practical information, such as festival schedules, event agendas, and organizer contact details. This finding is consistent with previous tourism studies showing that travelers often use destination websites as functional information sources during the information-search stage of travel planning (Grimaldo, Fernandez, & Manalo, 2026; Yang, O'Connor, & Wibowo, 2025; Xiang *et al.*, 2015). Visitors tend to prioritize information that reduces uncertainty and assists decision-making before seeking deeper experiential or interpretive content.

These results suggest that awareness generation and audience engagement should be viewed as two related but distinct dimensions of website effectiveness. The Festival Golo Koe website successfully attracted visitors, but attracting visitors does not automatically translate into deeper interaction with website content. This observation supports the customer journey perspective, which argues that awareness represents an earlier stage of visitor engagement and does not necessarily lead directly to more advanced stages such as involvement, attachment, or behavioral intention (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016; Yuwantiningrum, *et al.* 2025). Therefore, evaluating tourism websites solely through traffic indicators may provide an incomplete understanding of their overall effectiveness.

The analysis of top pages further illustrates this phenomenon. The homepage received the highest number of visits but also recorded the highest bounce rate. Rather than indicating poor performance, this result suggests that the homepage successfully provides the essential information sought by visitors, particularly festival schedules and event timelines. As a result, many users may feel that their immediate information needs have already been satisfied without navigating to additional pages. Similar patterns have been observed in tourism information systems, where users often prioritize efficiency in accessing travel-related information (Xiang *et al.*, 2015; Popşa, 2024). However, this behavior also indicates that the website has not yet fully encouraged visitors to explore other content that communicates the broader identity and cultural significance of the festival.

This issue becomes particularly important when viewed from the perspective of cultural tourism and sustainable tourism development. Cultural festivals are not merely tourism events; they also function as mechanisms for preserving, communicating, and celebrating local cultural identity (Getz & Page, 2016). Consequently, the role of a festival website should extend beyond providing logistical information. It should also serve as a platform for cultural storytelling that enables visitors to understand the meaning, values, and uniqueness of the destination.

The findings reveal that pages containing festival stories, news updates, cultural information, and visual documentation attracted substantially fewer visitors than pages providing practical information. Kreps (2015) suggests that the website currently functions more effectively as an informational platform than as a medium for communicating cultural narratives. From a sustainable tourism perspective, this represents a missed opportunity. Sustainable tourism development emphasizes not only economic outcomes but also the preservation and

interpretation of cultural heritage for visitors and local communities (Streimikiene, et al., 2021; GSTC, 2025). Through effective digital storytelling, websites can contribute to these objectives by helping audiences understand the cultural significance of a destination before their visit.

The findings therefore suggest that website architecture and navigation design play a crucial role in supporting cultural communication. Stronger internal navigation and strategically placed call-to-action (CTA) elements could encourage visitors to move from practical information pages toward content that explains the festival's cultural background and community significance. For example, visitors accessing the festival schedule could be directed to related stories about local traditions, community participation, or the historical meaning of festival activities. Such an approach would allow the website to function not only as a promotional medium but also as a tool for cultural interpretation and destination storytelling.

Another important finding is the significant contribution of organic search traffic. The dominance of Google Organic Search indicates that audiences actively search for information related to Festival Golo Koe through search engines. This finding highlights the importance of search engine visibility in cultural tourism promotion and supports previous research emphasizing the role of online information search behavior in tourism decision-making (Xiang et al., 2015; Zarezadeh, et al., 2023; Yang, O'Connor, & Wibowo, 2025). Furthermore, the existence of a news section on the website demonstrates the strategic value of textual content in supporting search engine optimization (SEO). Beyond increasing visibility, regularly updated news content provides opportunities to communicate cultural narratives and strengthen destination branding simultaneously.

Finally, the audience demographic profile reveals that although the majority of visitors originated from Indonesia, the website also attracted audiences from several foreign countries despite being available only in Bahasa Indonesia. This finding suggests that digital awareness generated through websites is not constrained by geographical boundaries. The ability to reach international audiences supports previous arguments that digital platforms enable tourism destinations to extend their market reach beyond traditional promotional limitations (Marbun et al., 2024; Walhidayah, 2024). At the same time, the presence of international visitors indicates the potential benefits of website internationalization through bilingual content and more globally accessible communication strategies.

Overall, this study demonstrates that the effectiveness of cultural festival websites should be understood through multiple dimensions, including awareness generation, audience engagement, and cultural communication. The Festival Golo Koe website has successfully performed its awareness-building function by attracting new audiences and increasing festival visibility. However, its potential as a platform for deeper audience engagement and cultural storytelling remains underdeveloped. Strengthening content connectivity, improving navigation pathways, and integrating storytelling-oriented digital strategies may enable the website to contribute not only to festival promotion but also to the broader objectives of cultural preservation and sustainable tourism development.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the performance of the Festival Golo Koe website as a digital awareness tool by utilizing behavioral data obtained from Google Analytics. The findings demonstrate that the website plays an important role in extending the visibility of the cultural festival and reaching audiences beyond its immediate geographic area. At the same time, the study shows that attracting visitors to a festival website does not automatically lead to deeper audience engagement. Website users primarily utilized the platform to access practical festival information, indicating that the awareness-building function of the website is stronger than its engagement-building function.

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to the digital tourism marketing literature by highlighting the distinction between digital awareness and audience engagement as two complementary but different dimensions of website effectiveness. The findings suggest that website performance evaluation should not rely solely on engagement indicators such as time spent or interaction volume, but should also consider awareness-related indicators including audience reach, new user acquisition, and traffic visibility. Furthermore, the study demonstrates the potential role of cultural festival websites as digital platforms that not only promote events but also communicate cultural narratives and destination identity, thereby supporting the long-term visibility of cultural tourism destinations.

This study is limited to a single cultural festival website and a specific observation period; therefore, the findings should be interpreted within the context of Festival Golo Koe. Future research may compare multiple festival websites, examine the relationship between website performance and visitation intentions, or investigate how digital storytelling and website navigation influence audience engagement and cultural awareness. Such studies would contribute to a deeper understanding of the role of digital platforms in cultural festival promotion and sustainable tourism development.

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