

The Role of Influencer Marketing for Tourism Destinations in Improving Brand Awareness through Instagram



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ABSTRACT: This abstract delves into a comprehensive examination of the impact of Influencer Marketing on elevating brand awareness for tourism destinations, specifically leveraging Instagram as a pivotal social media platform. Situated in Nglanggeran Tourism Village, Gunungkidul, Yogyakarta, Indonesia, the study investigates the symbiotic relationship between influencer collaboration and the promotion of tourism destinations, with a focal point on measuring brand awareness as a primary outcome. Employing a quantitative methodology that integrates content analysis, surveys, Focus Group Discussion, and In-depth interviews; the study aims to assess the efficacy of Influencer Marketing campaigns. It further aims to identify the key factors of influencing brand awareness and delve into the perceptions and experiences of the influencers. The research question is how does influencer marketing on Instagram contribute to enhancing brand awareness for tourism destinations and what factors influence the effectiveness of such campaigns in the context of evolving consumer behaviour and preference. The findings reveal a positive correlation between influencer marketing and brand awareness, underscoring Instagram's potential as a potent tool for destination promotion. This study offers valuable insights for tourism marketers and destination management organizations seeking to strategically utilize influencer collaborations to enhance brand visibility and attract a greater influx of tourists.

KEYWORDS: Influencer marketing, tourism destinations, brand awareness, Instagram, social media marketing.

BACKGROUND

In today's digital era, the dynamics of marketing have undergone a significant transformation, and tourism destinations are no exception. The emergence of social media platforms has redefined the way tourists perceive and engage with travel destinations. Social media platforms have an important role in destination marketing strategies, providing travellers with the opportunity to share their travel experiences in real time (Khan, 2022). One such influential platform is Instagram which has evolved into a visual storytelling hub and a powerful tool for marketing tourism destinations. Instagram is well known as the first social media platform that offered the possibility of social interactions with other users that is acting as real-life friends (Breves, 2021). The engagement occurred through digital interaction between a viewer and a character that creates a virtual/imagined and trustful relationship has led Instagram to become one of the most popular platforms in contemporary influencer marketing literature (Hoos, 2019). Simultaneously, the advent of influencer marketing has revolutionized brand promotion by leveraging the personal appeal and reach of individuals with significant online followers.

As of the year 2022, Instagram has over 500,000 influencers with over 15,000 followers which is 39% of all Instagram accounts. Among the group of active influencers 81% are followed by 15,000 and 100,000 people (Statista, 2021). Influencer marketing is an industry that promotes products and increases brand awareness through content distributed by social media users who are considered influential (Carter, 2016). The influencer marketing industry is experiencing rapid development and tourism is one of the sectors that implement this strategy the most (Schoemer, 2019). Influencers build a level of engagement with their followers and make them a part of their lives by closely showing their daily activities (Hearn & Schoenhoff, 2016). Efforts to share content, photos, streaming and conversation sessions are strategies for realizing engagement and building deeper attachments (Abidin, 2018; Cotter, 2018).

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Zhang (2021) explained that influencer marketing, on the other hand, takes advantage of well-followed internet influencers and the burgeoning popularity of social media to affect consumers' attitudes and decision-making processes, which therefore, has been widely used as a novel marketing strategy in recent years (Femenia-Serra & Gretzel, 2020; Jang et al., 2020; Jin et al., 2019). Anuar (2021) mentioned that followers give Instagram influencers the same degree of trust they have for their friends (Abdul Razak and Mansor, 2021; Swant, 2016; Ting et al., 2015), influence brand awareness and purchase intentions (Lou & Yuan, 2019; Jaya and Prianthara, 2020). They also persuasively influence young travellers choice of destination based on their "Instagram ability" in terms of photo and storytelling (Hayhurst, 2017; Ihsanuddin, & Anuar, 2016)

In addition, Pop (2021) also stated that the influence of trust in the tourism sector which has been examined previously in different contexts (Cohen et al., 2014) have a positive impact on the peer-to-peer market (Ert & Fleischer, 2019) and the intention to purchase online tourism products (Kim et al., 2011; Ponte et al., 2015), while eWOM (Abubakar & Ilkan, 2016) has similarly shown the positive effects of influencer marketing (Hu et al., 2019a; Hu et al., 2019b; Lou & Yuan, 2018).

This research delves into the synergy between influencer marketing and Instagram in the context of tourism destinations with a specific focus on enhancing brand awareness. The study aims to shed light on the pivotal role that influencer marketing plays in the promotion of tourism destinations and how Instagram serves as an optimal channel for this purpose.

The selected location of this research is Desa Wisata (tourism village) Nglanggeran Gunungkidul which just received the award of Best Tourism Village from The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) in 2021. Focus Group Discussion was held toward the management of the tourism village with Sugeng Handoko, Aris Budiyo, Triyono, and Ana as the driving force in this Tourism Village. To support the data validity, In depth Interview was conducted toward Faizal Tri Subekti and Dian Rockmad who have 5000+ followers on their Instagram.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Social Media & Influencer Marketing

Influencer marketing, examined from an academic standpoint, constitutes a strategic approach within modern marketing practices. It capitalizes on the influencers' perceived credibility and authority within their niche to establish a persuasive connection with their audience. This approach draws from the theory of social proof, wherein people tend to conform to the actions and opinions of others, particularly those they admire or perceive as experts.

In the contemporary digital age, social media platforms have emerged as potent tools for destination branding and promotion (Hudson & Thal, 2013). Social media has essentially altered the process of customer decision-making, and a more advanced perspective has emerged over the past decade of how customers interact with brands. According to the literature, direct communicating, engaging, and sharing are the main three characteristics of social media that contribute to shape travellers' perceptions on a destination's image formation (Sultan ; Sharmin, 2021).

It has become one of the main tools in implementing destination marketing strategies, considering its wide and fast reach and low costs (Hays, et.al 2012). Nowadays, contemporary tourist destinations have attempted to increase brand awareness through tourist involvement by utilizing social media (Koay, et. al. 2021). Thus, social media contributes to the process of forming tourist awareness of a destination (Oztamur & Karakadilar, 2015). The existence of a process of involvement, interactive communication and opportunities to share will shape tourists' perceptions of the image of a destination (Sultan et. al. 2021; Sharmin et.al. 2021). Social media has changed the pattern of tourists or users becoming more active and open in expressing opinions and sharing experiences about destinations (Cheung & Leung, 2022; Wang & Huang, 2022)

Several researchers are focused on the role and importance of these influencers in social media communication. For example, Menge (2018) points out that they are characterized by the key elements of the general theory of power, namely (1) the ability to use force digitally, (2) the accessibility to digital resources, and (3) the collective acceptance from several groups of social media users globally. Vrontis et al. (2021) highlights the emerging trend of social media content creators, known as social media influencers (SMIs), and the power generated by them as a main source of information for their audience.

Among the Social Media platforms, Instagram has gained significant prominence due to its visually- driven nature and extensive user base (hubspot.com, 2023). Instagram's popularity is influenced by its ability to create engagement and share content as well as being a source of inspiration and information (Sukunesan, 2020). It is also known as the first social media platform to offer social interaction between users as friends in real life (Breves et.al 2021). From 2019 to 2022, the number of Instagram users worldwide grew by 383 million. In fact, in 2020 the photo sharing network feature exceeded one billion for the first time and the number of users increased by 22.9 percent (oberlo.com, 2023). Instagram is the social media most widely used by influencers

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because of the sense of closeness it creates (Zolkepli et al., 2015). Likewise, the engagement rate is higher compared to other types of social media (Bakhshi et al., 2014). The presence of involvement through the digital interaction process makes Instagram as one of the most popular platforms in contemporary influencer marketing (Haos, 2019).

Influencer Marketing in Tourism Destination

Influencer marketing has become a powerful tool for businesses to establish authenticity, credibility, and relatability in their marketing efforts.

Influencer marketing on Instagram as one of social media popular platforms often relies on persuasive communication. In contemporary tourism literature, digital influencers consist of key destination spokespersons who stimulate tourists' preferences and boost the image of a destination. Electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) is the most important topic in e-marketing, social marketing, and consumer behavior in general (Mohammed Habes, Salloum, et al., 2018) . Instagram influencers who are considered experts and trustworthy, thus, have a greater impact on the perceptions of their followers. Instagram travel influencers can continue resonating with their fans through producing original and authentic content (Hashoff, 2017). . According to the Hashoff 2017 annual report, Instagram influencers aim to push rates of engagement ten times those of tweets endorsed by celebrities. In addition, followers' engagement/interactivity is accomplished mainly by soliciting feedback (Glucksman, 2017). It is focused on collaboration and knowledge sharing.

Academically, influencer marketing underscores the interplay of several key factors, including audience segmentation, authenticity, and relationship building. Establishing and nurturing relationships with influencers involves understanding their motivations, fostering mutual trust, and aligning marketing goals. The study of influencer marketing extends to evaluate the effectiveness of various platforms, measuring engagement metrics, and exploring the ethical dimensions of disclosure and transparency.

In the realm of tourism, destination branding has become an essential component for attracting travellers and enhancing tourism destination's appeal. Destination branding involves creating a distinct identity for a place by showcasing its unique culture, natural beauty, and experiences. It aims to position the destination as a must-visit location in the mind of potential tourists. In this context, influencer marketing has emerged as a dynamic strategy to amplify the reach and impact of destination branding initiatives.

The Role of Influencer Marketing in Tourism Promotion:

- a. **Authentic Storytelling:** Influencers possess the ability to narrate authentic and relatable stories about their experiences at a destination. This storytelling resonates with their followers and offers a more genuine perspective compared to traditional promotional content.
- b. **Visual Content:** Influencers often employ visually appealing content, such as photographs and videos to showcase the aesthetic charm of a destination. Such content is highly shareable and contributes to shape positive perceptions.
- c. **Targeted Reach:** Influencers often specialize in niches, enabling them to reach specific demographics that align with a destination's target audience. This precision in targeting ensures that promotional efforts are directed towards those who are most likely to engage and convert.
- d. **Social Proof:** The endorsement of a destination by trusted influencers serves as social proof, influencing the decision-making process of potential travellers. Positive reviews and recommendations from influencers establish credibility and build trust.

Instagram's interactive features, such as likes, comments, and direct messages, facilitate engagement between destinations and travellers. This direct interaction allows destinations to respond to queries, address concerns, and provide personalized recommendations, creating a virtual dialogue that enhances the travellers' experience even before arrival.

Collaborations with social media influencers have become a popular strategy for destination branding. Influencers, with their large and engaged follower bases, can authentically showcase a destination's offerings. These partnerships can significantly amplify the destination's visibility and appeal, especially among niche travel segments.

Influencers tend to address their followers directly through their posts with personal aesthetic touch that tends to create a pleasant experience for their followers (Magno & Cassia, 2018) and deliver informative content that positively influences brand awareness and drives sales (Lou & Quan, 2021).

The important role of influencers for tourism sector includes increasing brand awareness, intention to visit, forming a destination image, and attracting more visitors to tourist destinations and amenities such as hotels, airlines or restaurants (Gretzel, 2018; Xu & Pratt, 2018). In the tourism sector, studies related to the communicative role of influencers are still limited (Femenia-Serra & Gretzel, 2020; Ong & Ito, 2019) and there are limited empirical facts regarding the impact of influencer marketing (Agostino et al.,

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2019; Magno & Cassia, 2018; Seeler et al. , 2019; Yılmaz et al., 2020). Therefore, a study regarding the role of influencers in the context of building brand awareness for both tourists and other stakeholders still need to be further explored.

Indeed, this research was conducted to explore the multifaceted role of Instagram in promoting destination branding, shedding light on its influence, advantages, and potential challenges through Influencer Marketing.

METHODOLOGY

To comprehensively explore the role of influencer marketing in improving brand awareness for tourism destinations through Instagram in Desa Wisata Nglanggeran, a qualitative method was employed with Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and in-depth interviews, in order to capture a holistic understanding of the phenomenon.

1. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs):

The research commenced with a Focus Group Discussions involving the management and staff of Desa Wisata Nglanggeran, a captivating tourism destination nestled in Gunungkidul, Yogyakarta, Indonesia. FGDs are a valuable qualitative research method that encourages participants to engage in open discussions, sharing their insights, experiences, and perceptions related to influencer marketing and Instagram as tools for improving brand awareness. By involving key stakeholders within the destination, this phase of the research aims to gain a comprehensive understanding of how influencer marketing campaigns are conceived, executed, and evaluated from an organizational standpoint.

Focus Group Discussion was held offline with the head of Desa Wisata (tourism village) Nglanggeran, the social media administrative person of Desa Wisata Nglanggeran, the guide of Desa Wisata Nglanggeran and one of the best restaurant owner in the village. The reason of choosing these respondents were because they had the capacity in explaining the process and promotion strategic of Desa Wisata, and the character of visitors as well as the Influencers.

2. In-Depth Interviews with Instagram Influencers:

This research holds the potential to contribute insights that not only benefit Desa Wisata Nglanggeran but also provide a broader understanding of effective influencer marketing strategies for tourism destinations that seeks to optimize their brand awareness efforts through digital channels.

Complementing the insights gathered from FGDs, the research proceeded to conduct in-depth interviews with Two Instagram influencers who actively follow and help to promote the Instagram account of Desa Wisata Nglanggeran. These interviews consisted of the influencers' motivations, experiences, and perceptions of engaging with destination's content on Instagram. By exploring the influencers' interactions, preferences, and expectations, the research will elucidate the mechanisms through which influencer marketing on Instagram can enhance brand awareness and visitor engagement for tourism destinations.

The synthesis of findings from both the FGDs and in-depth interviews provide a holistic view of the comprehensive understanding when employing influencer marketing strategies on Instagram for tourism destination branding.

In-depth Interview was conducted online to selected and responded Influencers @dianrokmad dan @faizal_trisubkti. The reason of choosing these two influencers are:

- a) Have more than 2 Instagram contents of Desa Wisata Nglanggeran
- b) Have more than 5000 followers and authentic with very strong personal branding
- c) Content creator professionals
- d) Strong engagement with the followers
- e) Distinguish content

Research Question

The research question is how does influencer marketing on Instagram contribute to enhancing brand awareness for tourism destinations and what factors influence the effectiveness of such campaigns in the context of evolving consumer behaviour and preference.

RESULT

Desa Wisata (Tourism Village) Nglanggeran is a unique tourism village located in Gunungkidul, Yogyakarta, Indonesia. The village is known for its captivating natural landscapes, cultural heritage, and community-based tourism initiatives. It has gained popularity due to its distinctive features, attracting both local and international visitors. The Village boasts stunning geological formations, including ancient volcanic rocks and a picturesque limestone hill. This appeals to geology enthusiasts and nature lovers. In addition,

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the village's strong community engagement offers an authentic cultural experience for visitors, including traditional music, dance, and crafts. The emphasis on eco-friendly practices and sustainable tourism helps preserve the area's natural beauty while generating income for the local community.

In recent years, the landscape of marketing has undergone a significant transformation with the rise of social media platforms. Among these platforms, Instagram stands out as a powerful tool for influencing consumer behaviour and enhancing brand recognition. In the context of tourism destinations, where competition for traveller attention is fierce, the utilization of influencer marketing on Instagram has emerged as a strategic approach to amplify brand awareness.

This paper delves into the significance of influencer marketing on Instagram and its impact on improving brand awareness for tourism destinations.

I. Influencer Marketing: A Paradigm Shift in Brand Promotion

Influencer marketing is a modern marketing strategy that leverages the credibility and reach of social media influencers to promote products, services, or destinations. Instagram, being a visually oriented platform, is particularly suited for influencer collaborations. Influencers, with their engaged and dedicated follower base, can convey authentic narratives that resonate with their audience, thereby forging a deeper connection between brands and potential travellers.

Based on the results of discussions with the Nglanggeran tourism management, it was explained that influencers play a very important role in promoting tourist attractions. In particular, it was explained that influencers who have values in accordance with the character of tourist attractions are more likely to be invited to collaborate even though their number of followers is not that many but have interesting visual content.

"We collaborate with influencers who do have followers according to Nglanggeran's character, for example we collaborate by inviting influencers who are interested in geopark tourism or reposting photos of Nglanggeran's visual content from accounts who really like to talk about nature and mountains, not just from those who have have a lot of followers."

Influencers who have a close relationship with their followers and unique characteristics are considered far more able to convey messages and are easily accepted by the target market.

"Each influencer has their own way of delivering content tailored to their followers, and it's more effective. For example, people who really want to climb mountains to exercise by just looking at the scenery will have different pictures and explanations. And we chose both for us to repost, the aim is to expand the types of potential tourists here

According to several research results, it is explained that the suitability between influencer and follower characters have very strong relationship. The influencer's impact on the buying decision process has been studied in the tourism sector and shown to affect followers' travel intentions (Magno & Cassia, 2018), as well as increasing the likelihood of visiting a particular destination (Rinka & Pratt, 2018). Information search is mostly through SM (Dabija et al., 2018; Fotis et al., 2012; Guerreiro et al., 2019; Hudson & Thal, 2013). Followers adopt the influence because they find its content useful in resolving a problem.

In the context of tourism, the relationship of influencers with their followers has been considered to be very valuable for destination management operators (Stoldt, 2018). The tourism operators and destination marketers have to select appropriate influencers that can give a positive experience to their followers (Han & Chen, 2021). Influencers can build social (para-social) relationships with followers using responses and comments (Masuda, Han, S.H.; Lee, 2022). It has been revealed that followers of an influencer have a better positive relationship of intention to visit tourist destinations and a more positive attitude than non-followers.

II. The Power of Visual Storytelling

Tourism destinations are intricately linked to emotions, experiences, and visual narratives. Influencers on Instagram have the ability to craft compelling visual stories that showcase the unique attributes and offerings of a destination. Through captivating imagery and authentic captions, influencers can transport their followers to the destination, evoking a sense of wanderlust and curiosity.

An influencer's point of view, it is explained that the message conveyed greatly influences influencers and how interactions are built with their followers

"Followers will give a lot of positive responses by commenting, liking and sharing content that is related to them, including the suitability of the content with the character of the influencer himself."

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Besides that, image quality, interesting captions, image angles are other important elements of content to attract attention. A substantial creative effort goes into producing engaging content on social media (Colliander and Marder, 2018). For example, many influencers share highly creative images and videos on their Instagram accounts (Colliander and Marder, 2018).

"good angle photos and high image resolution, get more likes, comments and usually share."

With regard to captions or supporting writing in content, writing that provides clearer information about tourist destinations and is conveyed through a story gets a much more positive response from followers.

"Content that has a concept accompanied by captions that are packaged like a story, uses easy language and inserts important information more often gets a lot of likes and is saved compared to good visuals, but there is no information in it.

The positive impression given by the caption such as an interesting description, the right choice of words, and the support of the information needed is one of the important factors influencing the decision of potential tourists. In the context of Y and Z generations, an effective caption can be a very effective marketing tool in promoting tourist destinations and attracting the attention of informants to visit these destinations.

Prior research has confirmed that users' perception of novelty is a potent source of user engagement with blog posts (Carmel et al., 2012) and brand engagement behaviour on social media (Tafesse, 2015). In the context of influencer marketing, Casalo et al. (2020) found a positive association between followers' perception of content originality and influencers' opinion leadership on Instagram.

III. Amplified Reach and Engagement

The follower base of popular influencers often spans across geographical boundaries, allowing tourism destinations to extend their reach far beyond traditional marketing methods. Collaborations with influencers introduce destinations to new audiences, fostering engagement and conversations around the locale. The interactive nature of Instagram allows influencers to engage with their followers, answering queries and providing real-time insights, thereby fostering a sense of community and credibility.

From the point of view of tourism destination actors, the existence of influencers plays an important role as a link between tourist destinations and tourists themselves. The diversity of personality backgrounds, characters and also styles are some of the supporting factors that are able to expand the reach and improve the relationship between potential tourists and tourist destinations.

"The influencers who create content here has an impact on increasing the number of visitors, of course new tourists come with various backgrounds and various goals."

Backaler (2019) describes that Instagram travel influencers could even be characterized as representatives of destinations, in the sense that they shape travellers' decisions to choose a destination while presenting a place (Zhang, Chen & Lin, 2020). By proceeding to a cross-factor analysis, it was concluded that the number of followers, the behaviour towards the influencer's audience, and the engagement under posts comprise key factors in evaluating the power of travel influencers for shaping audience attitudes. If they present a high level of influence, they create a win-win strategy for tourism brands as virtual brand ambassadors in the era of destination marketing.

On the other hand, delivery techniques through interactive approaches with local approaches such as the use of language are considered to have far more impact

"The use of language is also very influential, so far we are still using Indonesian, for self-delivery, usually live broadcasts on IG reporting current conditions. That's a lot of viewers and usually a lot of people ask for information about Nglanggeran.

In terms of delivery, especially the use of interactive language and delivery techniques such as through live Instagram, influencers agree that both have a big impact.

"For the language itself it is very influential, usually including the local language is much more popular because it might describe culture in the context of live Instagram broadcasts for example, but in general the use of foreign languages is far more likely to reach a wider range of tourists"

Meanwhile, from the perspective of influencers, they consider the influencer's position to be a strategic enough position to connect tourist destinations with tourists. Influencers have many followers which allows them to reach a wider audience. In

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addition, influencers are able to provide additional information that has not been explained from tourist destinations according to the preferences deemed necessary.

"Additional information that we think is important and has not been explained in tourist destinations will usually be conveyed by the Influencers. In addition to broadening the reach of the audience, this is done to maintain interaction"

Based on the self-determination theory, human behaviour and motivation are identified with three types of psychological needs – competence, relatedness and autonomy (Engström and Elg, 2015; Gagné and Deci, 2005). Among them, the needs for relatedness served as the strongest predictor of attachment (La Guardia et al., 2000). As the need for relatedness refers to the need for belonging to and connectedness with others (Engström and Elg, 2015; Palmatier et al, 2008; Ryan and Deci, 2000), social media influencer followers tend to develop a higher level of attachment to the social media influencer than non-followers due to the stronger sense of relatedness and could result in a higher level of trust and commitment (Thomson, 2006).

IV. Building Trust and Authenticity

In the age of information, consumers are becoming increasingly discerning about the authenticity of brand messages. Influencers, with their relatable and personal approach, serve as trusted intermediaries who touch for the merits of the destination. Their genuine experiences resonate with followers, leading to a higher level of trust and authenticity in the brand's messaging.

Social media influencers engage tourists through recommendations and activities to share their travel experiences and influence their decisions regarding tourist destinations (Leung & Jiang, 2018). Given this, social media influencers have a significant role in establishing trust and maintaining successful relationships with tourists through social media posts (Buhalis, 2020). The travellers influenced by social media influencers posts are more likely to trust the source and seek additional information (Veriman, 2017)

Managers of tourist destinations explain that, content that comes from influencers with topics, their original language style including invitations gets a much more positive response. Managers assume that the content from influencers is a real condition so that the experiences shared are objective.

"Content from influencers, in fact, is much more believable than content created by destination managers because influencers review or explain what conditions exist, there are no artificial elements."

In the context of tourism, the relationship of influencers with their followers has been considered to be very valuable for destination management operators (Hu & wei, 2013). The tourism operators and destination marketers have to select appropriate influencers that can give a positive experience to their followers (Jaya & Prianthara, 2020). Influencers can build social (para-social) relationships with followers using responses and comments (Jin & Phua, 2014). It has been revealed that followers of an influencer have a better positive relationship of intention to visit tourist destinations and a more positive attitude than non-followers

From an influencer perspective, in order to support tourist destinations and maintain brand credibility; influencers pay attention to several aspects including aligning information with existing conditions, influencer personalities with tourist destinations, including active management of social media such as consistent content, incorporating information from trusted sources.

"To build follower trust, we have to provide what information there is, if it's good, say it's good, even say it's lacking. Apart from that, an active and consistent Instagram post also affects the level of trust with followers, including adding the right sources of information"

Konstantopoulou et al. (2019) revealed that prior positive experiences with the social media influencer lead to a stronger trust, and trust seems to be an important predictor of eWOM. From a consumer perspective, social media influencers seem to be more trustworthy than celebrities, followers can identify more with them, and social media influencers have a stronger impact on consumers' purchase intention (Schouten et al., 2020).

CONCLUSION

In the realm of tourism destinations, where fostering an emotional connection and conveying the essence of a place is paramount, influencer marketing on Instagram emerges as a potent tool. By harnessing the power of visual storytelling, extending reach, building trust, and fostering authenticity, this marketing approach holds the potential to significantly improve brand awareness. However, it is essential for destination marketers to carefully select influencers whose values align with the destination's identity, ensuring that the collaboration remains genuine and resonates with the intended audience.

Influencer marketing has evolved into a formidable force in the digital era, offering businesses a unique way to connect with their audiences. In the context of tourism promotion and destination branding, influencers play a vital role in conveying the essence of

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a place, building trust, and engaging potential travellers. As the landscape of digital marketing continues to evolve, influencer marketing is likely to maintain its relevance, shaping the future of destination branding and tourism promotion.

Indeed, this research is concluded that tourism destination needs Influencer for promotion purpose. The points that need to be paid attention is the good collaboration between tourism destination with influencers especially those who have interest with tourism destination character, good relationship with the followers (interaction and communicative), has creativity and following the trend in using features of social media as well as continuous communication in promoting the tourism destination such as picture quality, creativity, copywriting and storytelling.

Therefore, it is suggested that there should be a mutual agreement between the influencer and the destination as well as there should be an integrated plan strategy that consists of online specifically social media and offline promotion.

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