

## Digital Branding of the Kutai Kartanegara Tourism Office on @Visitingkutaikartanegara Instagram Account in Increasing Tourist Visits

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### ABSTRACT

**Keywords:** digital branding, Instagram social media, tourism.

One of the main characteristics of the development of the Industrial Revolution 4.0 is the spread of Internet technology. The advantage of the internet lies in its ability to reach audiences without being constrained by geographical restrictions. In this study, the goal is to clarify branding activities in the framework of communication, where its elements, such as branding or branding, are presented through various ways and media, becoming elements of the message in the communication process. The study uses a descriptive approach, as a study that explores events of social action in a natural context, with an emphasis on how individuals understand and interpret their experiences. The result of this study is that the role of Instagram social media can increase the interest of tourists visiting tourist destinations in Kutai Kartanegara Regency, caused by the Kutai Kartanegara Tourism Office which has begun to routinely pay attention to tourism marketing through the role of social media by processing content on @visitingkutaikartanegara Instagram account. In addition, the Instagram account has begun to collaborate with various organizations and influencers to assist the Kutai Kartanegara Tourism Office in carrying out digital branding which can facilitate the dissemination of information through Instagram social media.



### Introduction

The rapid development of the world's digital era has expanded into the era of the fourth revolution known as the Industrial Revolution 4.0. This revolution is marked by the integration of communication and information technology in the industrial sector (Nur Islam et al., 2022). These changes have had a significant impact on the agency's approach to marketing and advertising. One of the main characteristics of this development is the spread of Internet technology. The use of the internet opens up opportunities to develop

new solutions in the field of communication, including the provision of effective communication services to better reach audiences. The advantage of the Internet lies in its ability to reach audiences without being constrained by geographical restrictions (Zulfikar et al., 2022).

Communication activities require channels as a medium to convey messages. These channels are often associated with the use of senses such as sight, feeling, hearing, and smell. (Turner & Roberts, 2023). On the other hand, in the context of communication, there is also the term media, which can be defined as a device or tool to convey a message. The definition of media includes the methods and technologies used. For example, newspapers are a representation of print media, radio is a representation of audio media, and television represents audio-visual media in the electronic media category. (Akrim, 2022) Also defines the internet as an example of an online network or media.

As time goes by, communication becomes more flexible and adjusted to the needs and developments of the times. Communication methods that were initially traditional have now changed to digital dominant. The widespread existence of the internet makes it easier and expands the reach of communication. (Fauzi, 2021). Through the internet, individuals and organizations can communicate with each other instantly, strengthening relationships in a fast and effective way. For organizations or agencies, the Internet is an important tool in interacting with the public and building a positive image. (Hundura et al., 2023).

Based on the results of a survey conducted by the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association and Technopreneur in 2018, it was found that out of 264.16 million people, the total population of Indonesia is 171.17 million people, including Internet service users. (Widiastuti, 2017). This increase in number is a driving factor for the role of communication to brands or brands that have a very significant impact on the business practices and operations of an organization. Various communication activities have been able to build, maintain, maintain, and maintain the continuity of a brand. (Shafiq et al., 2023).

Social media currently serves as a means for brands to interact with the public. Social media is a virtual platform that facilitates relationships between individuals by providing a place for them to share content. In this study, the goal is to clarify branding activities in the framework of communication, where its elements, such as branding or branding, are presented through various ways and media, becoming elements of the message in the communication process. Communication not only relies on the brand created by the agency but is also collaborative, involving consumer participation.

Some previous studies that have made significant contributions and become a source of inspiration for researchers include:

**Table 1** Previous Research

No.	Research Identity	Research Title
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- 1 Yanti Ratna Sari, Endang Erawan, and Sabiruddin (2022) The Role of Instagram Social Media in Increasing Tourist Interest in Visiting Kutai Kartanegara Tourist Destinations

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**Research Results:** The research method uses qualitative descriptive. The focus of this research is the *source, message, channel, receiver, and effects*. The informants are the Head of the Promotion Section, the Promotion Staff of the Kutai Kartanegara Regency Tourism Office, *the Press*, and Tourists. Qualitative data analysis uses an interactive model.

*Instagram* social media sources in increasing interest in visiting tourists with admins who update on social media. *Instagram* social media messages use attractive images and easy-to-understand language. Active *Instagram* social media channels do not display tourist destinations only events. *Instagram* social media receivers can attract visitors from various walks of life and various communities both in the city and outside the city. *The Instagram* social media effect has an impact on increasing tourist visits. Thus, *Instagram* social media has a significant effect in increasing tourist visits when used correctly.

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**Difference:** Lies in the theory and focus of the research used

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- 2 Rismawati Ine Umardi (2022) The Use of Instagram as a Tourism Promotion Media for Balekambang Park Surakarta

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**Research Results:** The research uses a descriptive qualitative approach. The data collection technique uses observation, interviews, and documentation. Balekambang Park is one of the tourist attractions in Surakarta. The promotion of Balekambang Park tourism using *Instagram* media has a positive impact on the tourist attraction. The use of features that have been on *Instagram* are well used to support Balekambang Park promotional activities. Several obstacles were found, including obstacles in human resource management, inadequate *live streaming* tools, and content content. The promotion carried out by Balekambang Park through *Instagram* has been effective because it hits many community targets, and already has many followers or followers making people who did not know Balekambang Park understand and visit.

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**Difference:** The difference in research lies in the place of research

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Based on these problems, the purpose of this study is to understand the Digital Branding of the Kutai Kartanegara Tourism Office which utilizes the *Instagram* social media platform in attracting tourists to visit.

## Method

This study uses qualitative research with a descriptive qualitative approach. Qualitative research is considered simple research because it focuses on interpretation using words by involving several procedures, starting from design, validation, data

collection, instrument trials, data analysis, and data coding, to data triangulation by considering time triangulation, source triangulation, expert triangulation, and theoretical triangulation. Another process that needs to be considered involves the formation of propositions as grand theories from research findings (Kharuddin, 2021).

The study uses a descriptive approach, as a study that explores events of social action in a natural context, with an emphasis on how individuals understand and interpret their experiences. The goal is to find solutions in solving individual problems by understanding social reality. (Mohajan, 2018). The results of this study will focus on verbal or visual representations rather than numerical data. This approach will be used by researchers to formulate hypotheses based on specific findings and information obtained from the field.

According to Sutopo (2006), a data source refers to a location or place where data is obtained through the application of certain methods, either from humans, artifacts, or documents. The source of research data collection will be divided into two types, namely primary data and secondary data.

### **Sample Determination Techniques**

The sampling method, or known as sampling, is the process of establishing several samples for research purposes. Sampling aims to collect as much information and data as possible, to reveal various aspects within a specific discussion framework. (Leuwol et al., 2023).

In this study, the researcher applied a non-probability sampling method using the purposive sampling method to select informants and set certain criteria for informants involved in this study. The informants involved in this study include managers and audiences or followers on Instagram @visitingkutaikartanegara.

### **Data Analysis Techniques**

Data analysis, according to Sugiyono (2018), refers to the systematic process of searching for and compiling data obtained from interviews, field notes, and documentation. This process involves organizing data into categories, dividing them into units, synthesizing, forming patterns, determining significant things, and preparing conclusions so that they can be easily understood by researchers and other parties. Moleong (2017:280-281) also mentioned that data analysis is the process of organizing and sorting data into basic patterns, categories, and units of description to find themes and formulate work hypotheses based on existing data.

## **Results and Discussion**

The author collected data in this study to identify the @visitingkutaikartanegara Instagram Social Media Digital Branding in Increasing Tourist Interest Visit Tourism in Kutai Kartanegara. The results of the interviews obtained are as follows:

### **Context**

One of the important aspects in the management of information social media is how to arrange the words in a message so that it is easily understood by the audience, known as Context by using Indonesian so that it is easy to understand by tourists, who do not

only come from the Kutai Kartanegara area (Engelina & Laulita, 2022). The results of the interview regarding the context with the Head of Marketing of the Kutai Kartanegara Regency Tourism Office and the Marketing Data Manager argued that:

"The use of simple language on Instagram accounts @visitingkutaikartanegara try to present information in clear and non-verbose words so that it is easy for the public to understand. The Media Team @visitingkutaikartanegara can compile words that are effective, precise, and easy for readers to understand" (Interview on November 4, 2024).

"Training is also carried out every year, at least once a year, to hone skills in processing words and content to make it look interesting" (Interview on November 5, 2024)

The above opinion shows that the Kutai Kartanegara Regency Tourism Office in promoting tourist destinations through social media has a Media Team that regularly updates social media. The results of the interview with the Marketing Staff of the Kutai Kartanegara Regency Tourism Office stated that:

"The explanation of the additional information presented by @visitingkutaikartanegara has gone through a simplification process and uses popular words. If there is a less common term, @visitingkutaikartanegara will replace it or add an explanation to make it easier for readers to understand the information conveyed" (Interview on November 11, 2024).

Interviews with informants show that the Kutai Kartanegara Regency Tourism Office uses Instagram social media to promote tourist destinations that make it easier for tourists to visit. In addition, social media such as Instagram is also used and managed directly by the Marketing Media Team of the Kutai Kartanegara Tourism Office to display content on Instagram feeds and stories.

### **Communication**

Communication Management @visitingkutaikartanegara @visitingkutaikartanegara Communication management aims to convey a message clearly so that it is easy to understand and can influence the attitude of the audience as expected. The results of the interview regarding communication with the Head of Marketing of the Kutai Kartanegara Regency Tourism Office and the Marketing Data Manager argued that:

"Completeness of Information, such as the presentation of quality information, is part of an effort to meet journalistic standards, which includes the elements of 5W + 1H, namely What, When, Where, Who, Why, and How" (Interview on November 4, 2024)

"Meeting and paying attention to the elements of communication and ensuring that the information conveyed is complete and reliable for tourists is part of our commitment" (Interview on November 5, 2024).

The two key informants agreed that the Kutai Kartanegara Regency Tourism Office in promoting tourist destinations through social media paid attention to the 5W + 1H rule in organizing information.

Communication management by @visitingkutaikartanegara aims to convey a clear and easy-to-understand message to the audience, in the hope of influencing the attitude and interests

of tourists. In an interview with the Head of Marketing of the Tourism Office of Kutai Kartanegara Regency, it was explained that success in conveying information is ensured by following the 5W + 1H journalistic rules (What, When, Where, Who, Why, How). This is considered as part of the Tourism Office's commitment to provide complete and trustworthy information for tourists.

In addition, the marketing staff added that the use of attractive photos and videos becomes important once the information is considered complete. This visual is expected to strengthen the message conveyed and increase tourist motivation. Photos and videos uploaded must also comply with journalistic standards, avoiding negative content such as SARA and pornography.

The press team involved in the management of communication in @visitingkutaikartanegara also emphasized the importance of photo and video layout. This setup aims to create a neat and attractive look on Instagram, using custom templates to ensure consistency and regularity of information. This makes it easier for people to find and enjoy information visually.

From interviews with tourists, it can be seen that communication management in @visitingkutaikartanegara has managed to attract their attention. Tourists find this account very communicative, conveying interesting and easy-to-understand information, which ultimately encourages them to visit tourist destinations in Kutai Kartanegara. One of the tourists stated that the promotion through this Instagram account succeeded in communicating the tourist attractions, which increased their interest in visiting the location.

Overall, effective communication and engaging visuals play an important role in the Kutai Kartanegara Tourism Office's efforts to promote tourist destinations through social media, which has proven to be successful in attracting tourists and increasing visits to the area.

### **Collaboration**

To present information, @visitingkutaikartanegara manages collaboration with various parties in the collection and publication of content. The results of the interview regarding Collaboration with the Head of Marketing of the Kutai Kartanegara Regency Tourism Office and the Marketing Data Manager argued that:

"Various organizations, influencers, and netizens actively take part in promoting tourism and sharing their uploads about tourism in Kutai Kartanegara, which helps @visitingkutaikartanegara update information. This collaboration happens through comments, direct messages, or posts that mark @visitingkutaikartanegara, which will be reposted."

"One of the organizations that every year always contributes to tourism promotion is the Creative Entrepreneurs and Tourism Ambassadors in collaboration with the Tourism Office in sharing information about Kutai Kartanegara, including destinations and culinary. Until uploads that involve collaboration with influencers also have a noticeable increase".

After obtaining the results of research on Digital Branding of the Kutai Kartanegara Tourism Office through the Instagram account @visitingkutaikartanegara In Increasing Tourist Visits, the following discussions were carried out:

### **Context**

Context is an important aspect of conveying an effective message on social media. In this case, the Kutai Kartanegara Tourism Office focuses on presenting information on Instagram in easy-to-understand, clear, and non-verbose language. Due to the large number of visitors who do not come from the Kutai Kartanegara Area, therefore the use of Indonesian has become more effective in conveying information on social media. Based on interviews with the Head of Marketing and Marketing Data Manager, the use

of simple language on Instagram accounts @visitingkutaikartanegara was prioritized so that information could be easily understood by the public. The Media Team also regularly hone their skills in content preparation to remain relevant and interesting.

This step is reinforced by the press team, which reviews the narrative regularly and uses colloquial language to make it more familiar to the audience. Interviews with tourists also showed appreciation for the use of easy-to-understand language, although some followers expect more frequently updated information, especially regarding new facilities or changes in tourist destinations. Overall, *context* plays an important role in ensuring that the message on Instagram @visitingkutaikartanegara can be understood by various groups, thereby increasing the attractiveness of tourist destinations for visitors.

In the context of social media management, context refers to how to convey a message so that it is easily understood by the audience by paying attention to the language used in its delivery. The results of the interview show that the Kutai Kartanegara Regency Tourism Office has applied this principle by using a simple and clear Indonesian on @visitingkutaikartanegara's Instagram account. The Media team regularly updates content and attends training to craft an effective, precise, and easy-to-understand message.

However, some tourists complained about the lack of information updates on some tourist destinations, even though the information conveyed was generally easy to understand. In conclusion, although the use of simple language has helped people understand information easily, the challenge that arises is to update destination information more consistently to maintain relevance and accuracy.

### **Communication**

The communication aspect aims to manage effective communication on Instagram so that messages can influence the audience according to their goals. According to the Head of Marketing, the submission of information on the @visitingkutaikartanegara account complies with the 5W+1H journalistic rules (What, When, Where, Who, Why, How) to ensure that the information provided is complete and clear. Marketing teams also utilize standard-compliant images and videos, without SARA or pornographic content, to reinforce the delivery of information.

The visual layout is also a special concern of the press team to create a neat and attractive look. The addition of templates for each upload helps create consistency and convenience for visitors in searching for information. Interviews with tourists show that the neat and complete management of communication on this Instagram account is effective in attracting tourists to visit in person.

Overall, communication in @visitingkutaikartanegara focuses on presenting complete, structured, and visually appealing information, which plays a big role in increasing tourist interest.

Deep communication, Communication management aims to convey the message clearly and influence the audience as expected. The Kutai Kartanegara Tourism Office ensures that the information conveyed through Instagram meets the 5W + 1H journalistic

rules (What, When, Where, Who, Why, How) to ensure the quality and reliability of the message. In addition, the use of attractive photos and videos also plays an important role in increasing the motivation of tourists.

Interviews with tourists show that the information presented on Instagram @visitingkutaikartanegara is easy to understand and interesting, but there are few complaints regarding the delivery of information. Overall, clear communication and attractive visuals have managed to attract tourists, but improvements in updating the content can further improve the user experience in establishing communication between the Kutai Kartanegara Regency Tourism Office and followers.

### **Collaboration**

Collaboration emphasizes the importance of cooperation with various parties to manage accurate and interesting information. The Kutai Kartanegara Regency Tourism Office collaborates with local organizations, influencers, and community netizens to promote tourist destinations on Instagram. The results of the interviews show that collaboration with creative economy actors and Tourism Ambassadors facilitates the dissemination of information, especially related to the tourist and culinary attractions of this area.

The press team also ensures that collaboration is carried out with parties with good ethics and reputation, and leverages Instagram features such as Reels, Instastory, and feeds to reach a wider audience. From interviews with tourists, this collaboration facilitates access to information for the public and increases tourist interest. Upload co-produced content *influencers* and Tourism Ambassadors also succeeded in bringing out the attractiveness of previously little-known destinations.

Overall, the collaboration in @visitingkutaikartanegara strengthens the digital branding strategy by leveraging a wide network of various parties to increase visibility and interest among travelers.

*Collaboration* refers to cooperation between various parties to achieve common goals. The Kutai Kartanegara Regency Tourism Office collaborates with various organizations, *influencers*, and *netizens* to expand information about tourist destinations. This collaboration includes joint uploads, hashtags, and content generated by other parties, such as Tourism Ambassadors and *influencers*.

This collaboration proved to be effective, with interviews showing that followers felt more interested and easily accessed information through content shared by *influencers* or other partners. Increased *Visibility* of tourist destinations that were previously little-known also shows that the collaboration has succeeded in introducing Kutai Kartanegara to *Audience* which is wider. In conclusion, good collaboration between various parties has played a big role in promoting tourist destinations in Kutai Kartanegara.

### **Connection**



The last aspect, *Connection*, focuses on the long-term relationship between the @visitingkutaikartanegara account and its followers. With two-way communication through comments, direct messages (DMs), and *Tags* in the upload, this account provides a space for the public to submit criticism, suggestions, or questions. According to the Head of Marketing, this kind of interaction helps create a closer relationship with followers, where incoming complaints and suggestions will be followed up by relevant parties.

The press *team* also adds a personal touch to the interaction by uploading light content, such as *gimmicks* or *bloopers*, which complement informative uploads with light entertainment to attract *audience* interest. Interviews with Instagram followers @visitingkutaikartanegara show that this approach has succeeded in increasing interest in visiting tourist destinations in person.

Overall *Connection* which is established through responsive and familiar interactions, both in formal uploads and light content, helps increase followers' attachment to the promoted tourist destinations and successfully encourages them to come to Kutai Kartanegara.

In terms of *connection*, managing ongoing relationships with followers is essential to maintain closeness and increase participation. The Kutai Kartanegara Tourism Office focuses on two-way communication through *direct messages*, comments, and uploads marked by followers. This allows followers to provide feedback and criticism that can be acted upon by relevant parties.

In addition, @visitingkutaikartanegara also engages in casual interactions with followers through light content that follows the latest trends, such as *bloopers* or *gimmicks*, which makes the relationship with followers more intimate and fun. The results of the interviews show that this approach increases the interest of followers to visit Kutai Kartanegara tourist destinations. In conclusion, responsive communication and more relaxed interactions can strengthen the relationship between Instagram accounts and their followers, as well as increase visitors' interest in visiting tourist destinations in person.

### **Digital Branding**

Digital branding is an important element in building and maintaining the image of a tourist destination in the digital era. The Kutai Kartanegara Regency Tourism Office uses Instagram through @visitingkutaikartanegara accounts as a means to introduce regional culture and tourism. The content uploaded by the account has a significant role in shaping and strengthening the image of the Kutai Kartanegara Regency Tourism Office.

In today's digital age, social media such as Instagram has become an essential tool in digital marketing communication strategies. One example is the @visitingkutaikartanegara Instagram account managed by the Tourism Office of Kutai Kartanegara Regency, East Kalimantan. This account is used to interact with *the audience* while promoting regional tourism through *an effective* digital branding strategy.

Instagram accounts @visitingkutaikartanegara consistently build a brand image through engaging and relevant content. As of June 24, 2024, this account has 8,156 followers, follows 1,344 accounts, and has posted 1,143 uploads since its formation in March 2017. The content focuses on tourism, culture, and entertainment information, accompanied by *Caption* Inviting communicative *audiences* to visit. The visual strategy implemented also highlights the Kukar Asia Wonder slogan as a form of identity of @visitingkutaikartanegara. The slogan used by @visitingkutaikartanegara, namely Kukar Asia Wonder, has a deep meaning and is also sacral so that by just looking at the logo and tagline on the @visitingkutaikartanegara *Audience* will be reminded of the culture and tourism in Kutai Kartanegara.

According to visual communication theory (Percy & Rosenbaum-Elliott, 2016), visual consistency helps improve brand appeal. This can be seen from @visitingkutaikartanegara uploads that managed to attract *the attention of the audience* and build a strong impression of Kutai Kartanegara. This *digital branding* is effective in promoting tourist destinations through the slogan Kukar Asia Wonder which is used to introduce tourism in Kutai Kartanegara. Some followers of the account stated that Instagram content encouraged them to visit tourist attractions in Kutai Kartanegara, including previously little-known locations. One of the comments from the visitor, Nur Eva, said that the information conveyed by @visitingkutaikartanegara made her interested in visiting the promoted destination.

Further observations show that this account's uploads showcase the natural beauty and local culture through high-quality photos and videos. The tagline "Kukar Asia Wonders" which is equipped with the symbol of Lembuswana, an icon of local belief, emphasizes the charm and natural wonders of Kutai Kartanegara.

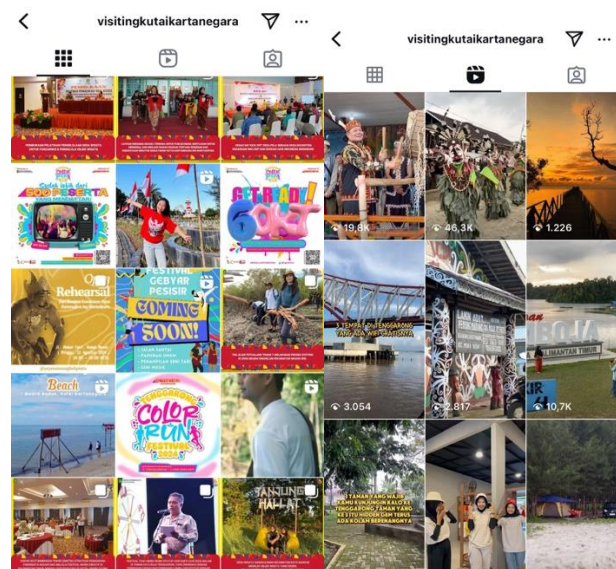


Figure 2  
@visitingkutaikartanegara Account Closure

Based on the image above, it can be said that looking at the content strategy, @visitingkutaikartanegara utilizes various types of content to attract and maintain *the attention of the audience* to build a strong digital presence. *Digital Branding* on each of these contents displays the Kukar Asia Wonders slogan logo which is contained in every content video uploaded by @visitingkutaikartanegara. Eye-catching visuals are also important to grab the attention of users who are browsing Instagram. Stories and Narratives, where each upload is accompanied by informative and interesting captions, provide additional context about the image or video. This can be a description of the activities that can be done in Kutai Kartanegara, the history of the place, or testimonials from visitors. The use of #VisitingKutaiKartanegara or #KukarAsiaWonders hashtags, in which case relevant and popular hashtags are used to increase *the visibility of posts*, can reach *a wider audience*.



**Figure 3**  
**Use of Hashtags in Instagram Uploads @visitingkutaikartanegara**

Overall *Digital Branding* implemented by @visitingkutaikartanegara shows the effectiveness of Instagram as a tourism promotion medium, with attractive visuals being the main attraction that can encourage the interest of tourist visits. In addition to interesting content, one of the things that also needs attention is the logo of the account.



**Figure 4**  
**Logo and/or Tagline of the Kutai Kartanegara Regency Tourism Office**

The image above is the logo as well as the tagline of the Kutai Kartanegara Regency Tourism Office which is the branding of tourism in Kutai Kartanegara. Lembusuana is the embodiment of an extraordinary animal or creature as a symbol of power and sovereignty of the Kutai Kartanegara Kingdom. In the past, according to the story, Lembusuana was the mount of Princess Karang Melenu or also Princess Junjung Buih who later gave birth to the kings of Kutai Kartanegara. And then the lembusuana was used as a vehicle by Batara Guru.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the results of research and discussion on the role of Instagram social media in increasing tourist interest in visiting tourist destinations in Kutai Kartanegara Regency, it can be concluded that this role is increasingly optimized.

This is because the Kutai Kartanegara Tourism Office has begun to routinely pay attention to tourism marketing through the role of social media, namely Instagram by processing content on @visitingkutaikartanegara Instagram accounts involving officials and staff as a source that can conceptualize content to be uploaded to order to convey tourism information to prospective tourists so that they are interested in visiting existing tourist destinations. In addition, the Instagram account has begun to collaborate with various organizations and influencers to assist the Kutai Kartanegara Tourism Office in carrying out digital branding which can facilitate the dissemination of information through Instagram social media.

However, the Marketing Team, especially the content manager at the Kutai Kartanegara Regency Tourism Office, needs to process content to continue to be interesting and follow existing trends by routinely holding training for content creators every year because visual content is one of the keys in promoting tourist destinations in the digital era to attract more tourist interest.

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