



The Era of Modernization: Digital Technology Marketing Strategies In Tourist Attraction Development

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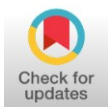
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Abstract:

The rapid advancement of digital technology has transformed how tourism destinations are promoted and managed, reshaping the competitiveness of ecotourism in the modern era. This study investigates digital technology-based marketing strategies for developing tourist attractions by integrating sustainability and community participation. The research aims to identify effective approaches for enhancing destination visibility and engagement through major social media platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, YouTube, and official tourism websites. Using a qualitative descriptive method, data were collected from literature reviews, online promotional content, and interviews with tourism stakeholders, including destination managers, digital marketing practitioners, and tourists. Analysis employed the Miles and Huberman model, encompassing data reduction, display, and conclusion drawing. The findings reveal that digital marketing significantly strengthens destination appeal through strategies tailored to each platform TikTok for virality, Instagram for branding, YouTube for in-depth storytelling, and websites for official information. Moreover, sustainable digitalization initiatives, including educational content, online booking systems, and collaborations with influencers and environmental NGOs, enhance conservation awareness and tourist experience. The study concludes that integrating digital marketing with sustainability principles fosters effective promotion and stakeholder synergy, while the government's regulatory and facilitative roles are essential to ensuring alignment with eco-tourism values and long-term development goals.

Keyword: Digital Technology, Digital Marketing, Ecotourism, Social Media



INTRODUCTION

The accelerating diffusion of information and communication technologies has fundamentally reshaped how destinations compete, communicate, and convert interest into visits, making digital destination marketing a central issue in contemporary tourism studies (Dewi et al., 2023; Ramadhan et al., 2024). As travelers increasingly rely on online destination content to search, compare, and evaluate options, promotional effectiveness is no longer determined only by the attractiveness of a place, but by the quality, accessibility, and persuasiveness of its digital presence. This shift creates a

strategic challenge for destination managers: aligning digital channels with visitor expectations while maintaining coherent positioning in a crowded marketplace. Against this backdrop, this article situates itself in the broader field of tourism marketing research by focusing on how digital marketing interactions shape tourists' behavioral intentions and how destinations can respond through structured, evidence informed strategy (Armutcu et al., 2023).

A second core issue concerns destination branding in the era of social media, where brand meaning is increasingly produced through circulating stories rather than controlled messages. Visual platforms encourage “brand narratives” that are performed and re-shared by networks of users, making storytelling a strategic resource and a managerial risk at the same time. The urgency arises because destinations that fail to cultivate credible and value-consistent stories can be overshadowed by more “shareable” places, regardless of intrinsic quality. This article therefore positions its discussion within branding scholarship by emphasizing that destinations must not merely post content, but intentionally craft sustainability-oriented narratives that can travel across platforms, stimulate engagement, and remain faithful to local identity and conservation values (Lund et al., 2018; Puspawati, 2018).

Within the expanding literature on social media communication, a persistent concern is how official and unofficial messages interact to shape brand perceptions, destination image, and downstream behaviors. Social media is not simply a distribution channel; it is an arena where stakeholders negotiate meaning, credibility, and relevance in real time. The urgency of this problem is amplified by platform dynamics: short attention cycles, rapid reputational swings, and algorithmic amplification can reward sensational messages over accurate ones. Accordingly, this article adopts a managerial lens that treats destination social media communication as a strategic system requiring governance of message consistency, audience engagement, and brand alignment while engaging with prior work that links social media communication to brand-related outcomes (Fauzi & Sumirat, 2023; Huerta-Álvarez et al., 2020a).

Short-form video platforms have introduced a new phenomenon that intensifies the stakes of digital marketing: destinations can become “famous overnight,” triggering sudden surges in visitation and attention that outpace local capacity. This creates an urgent managerial dilemma, especially for nature-based attractions: viral exposure can generate economic benefits while simultaneously increasing environmental pressure, crowding, and conflict with conservation goals. The issue is no longer whether a destination should be present on short-video platforms, but how it can design promotional strategies that avoid harmful overexposure and channel attention toward responsible behavior. This article highlights that digital marketing strategy must anticipate the consequences of viral popularity and integrate sustainability safeguards into promotional design (Siswantoro & Ikhwan, 2024; Wengel et al., 2022a).

At the behavioral level, the urgency is reinforced by evidence that TikTok and similar platforms increasingly influence destination choice, particularly among younger travelers who treat short videos as primary inspiration and decision cues. In such contexts, emotional appeal, perceived authenticity, and platform affordances can shape attitudes and intentions long before tourists encounter official information sources. This raises a strategic problem: if decision-making is formed through brief, algorithmically delivered content, destinations must optimize both message clarity and experiential

promise while ensuring that expectations remain realistic. The article therefore frames TikTok not merely as a promotional tool, but as a behavioral driver requiring targeted content strategy, platform-specific storytelling, and careful integration with official information channels (Matheus et al., 2021; Zhou et al., 2023).

While short-form video drives awareness, long-form platforms such as YouTube play a different strategic role by enabling deeper explanation, trust building, and “consideration-stage” persuasion through vlogs, reviews, and documentary-style content. The issue here is that many destinations still treat YouTube as secondary, despite its capacity to influence perceptions through detailed narratives about routes, facilities, costs, and cultural-environmental meaning. The urgency lies in the need to connect content depth with measurable outcomes engagement, information clarity, and ultimately visitor flows rather than relying on aesthetics alone. This article acknowledges that destinations require differentiated strategies by platform, where YouTube supports informed decision-making and complements the rapid reach of short-form media (Agostino et al., 2022; Shi & Zhang, 2025).

Another important dimension is the algorithmic shaping of tourist behavior, where social media can narrow tourists’ movement patterns and visual experiences, sometimes producing “echo chamber” effects that concentrate visitation in the same hotspots and reduce experiential diversity. This is urgent for destination management because concentrated flows can degrade visitor satisfaction and increase pressure on limited spaces, even when a destination offers many alternative attractions. The problem thus extends beyond marketing performance to on-site outcomes: the way destinations are portrayed online can structure where tourists go, what they value, and how they behave. The article treats this as a compelling reason to design digital promotion that distributes attention more evenly and encourages responsible, varied itineraries (Tang et al., 2024).

In addition to platform content, online reviews and eWOM have become critical determinants of trust and booking intentions, functioning as “social proof” that can reinforce or undermine official marketing. The urgency stems from the speed at which reputations can be built or damaged: even high-quality destinations can lose demand when negative reviews dominate, while misleading positivity can create expectation gaps that later provoke disappointment. This article therefore emphasizes that digital marketing strategy must include reputation management monitoring reviews, responding credibly, and using feedback to improve service delivery so that promotion aligns with lived experience and strengthens trust in the destination brand (Sparks & Browning, 2011).

Beyond trust, eWOM is closely tied to destination image formation and travel intention, meaning that peer-to-peer communication often operates as a decisive informational layer shaping perceived value and risk. This is urgent because eWOM does not exist in isolation; it interacts with platform algorithms, influencer narratives, and official messaging to create a composite “digital destination image.” If unmanaged, this ecosystem can produce distorted images overpromising, overlooking sustainability constraints, or excluding community perspectives. The article positions its contribution as clarifying how destinations can interpret eWOM strategically treating it as data for understanding market sentiment and as a communication space for reinforcing sustainability oriented expectations.

Responding to these interconnected issues, the article advances an integrated discussion approach that links platform dynamics, marketing transformation, and tourist behavioral response through the Digital Eco-Marketing Transformation Model (DEMTM). The urgency of this approach lies in moving beyond fragmented “tips and tricks” toward a coherent framework that can guide sustainable destination development across TikTok, Instagram, YouTube, and official websites while recognizing the co-created nature of tourism experiences in social media environments. Methodologically, the article adopts a qualitative-descriptive orientation organizing evidence from stakeholders and digital content to explain how strategies emerge, how actors (government, communities, private sector, influencers, NGOs, tourists) interact, and how sustainability values can be operationalized within digital marketing.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a descriptive qualitative research design to explore how digital technology-based marketing strategies are used to develop tourist attractions, with particular attention to ecotourism values (sustainability, conservation, and community empowerment). The inquiry was guided by an integrated conceptual lens (the Digital Eco-Marketing Transformation Model/DEMTM) to structure the discussion across three layers: (1) digital platforms and tools, (2) marketing transformation at the destination level, and (3) tourist behavioral responses in the digital environment. The qualitative approach was selected because it enables an in-depth interpretation of actors’ practices, digital promotional phenomena, and the meanings attached to platform-based communication in destination marketing.

Data collection combined online document review and digital content observation aligned with predefined inclusion criteria. Sources included official destination websites, tourism reports, journal literature, and promotional materials published via major platforms (TikTok, Instagram, YouTube, and official websites) (Bowen, 2009). Informants and units of analysis were selected purposively, covering tourism stakeholders and destination social media managers, as well as tourists and practitioners relevant to digital promotion; additionally, promotional content was prioritized when it was recent (e.g., posted within the last year), used official destination hashtags, and showed measurable engagement (likes, comments, shares). Data screening proceeded through platform mapping, relevance filtering, authenticity checks, and cross-source verification/triangulation; collection was concluded when no substantively new insights emerged.

Data analysis followed the Miles and Huberman interactive model data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification supported by thematic categorization of key constructs (digital strategies, content forms, tourist experience cues, engagement signals, and sustainability messaging) (Miles et al., 2014). To interpret inter-actor dynamics, the study also organized stakeholder relationships through structured mapping (e.g., power-interest positioning and digital ecosystem value chains) to explain how government, local communities, private actors, influencers, NGOs, and tourists collectively shape digital marketing outcomes. Trustworthiness was strengthened through iterative comparison across sources and consistent documentation of coding decisions and analytic memos.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Platform-Differentiated Strategies and Destination Brand Performance

The results indicate that digital marketing effectiveness is strongly shaped by platform logics and the balance between controlled (official accounts) and uncontrolled (tourist/creator-generated) communication. Destinations that achieved stronger brand engagement were those that treated social media not as a single megaphone, but as a coordinated system where each channel served a distinct role in building awareness, reinforcing brand meaning, and converting interest into visits. In particular, consistent brand cues (visual identity, sustainability narrative, and service information) across channels reduced message fragmentation and improved perceived credibility. This pattern aligns with destination-brand research showing that both controlled and uncontrolled social media communication can influence brand equity and engagement, requiring managers to orchestrate not merely post content across platforms (Huerta-Álvarez et al., 2020b).

A second finding concerns short-video dominance: platforms such as TikTok (and short-form Reels) perform best at accelerating awareness, but require deliberate creative choices to avoid shallow, trend-only exposure. In our evidence, short videos that combined strong visuals with clear informational cues (how to go, what to do, rules/ethics) produced higher interaction quality than purely aesthetic clips. Effective short-video strategies also relied on “micro-stories” (1–3 key reasons to visit, a single itinerary, or a conservation message) rather than generic montages. This supports prior findings that specific characteristics of destination short videos (e.g., vividness, informativeness, and persuasive structure) shape attitudes and marketing outcomes, making short-form content design a strategic not accidental determinant of performance (Cao et al., 2021).

Across cases and digital materials, four platform roles emerged as a stable pattern: TikTok for discovery, Instagram for brand image, YouTube for trust-building and depth, and the official website for authoritative information and conversion. Rather than competing, these platforms functioned as a funnel: discovery content triggered curiosity, visual identity strengthened preference, long-form explanation reduced uncertainty, and official pages finalized the decision (pricing, hours, routes, booking). When destinations tried to force the same content format across platforms, engagement weakened and audiences signaled confusion in comments and queries. This indicates that “platform fit” is not a minor technical detail but a central mechanism for explaining why some destination promotions travel further and convert better than others.

The analysis also shows that ecotourism framing works best when it is embedded inside attractive experiences, not delivered as separate moral messaging. Posts that paired sustainability values with concrete visitor practices (e.g., “leave no trace,” waste rules, visitor quotas, local guide etiquette) were perceived as more authentic than abstract claims like “eco-friendly” without evidence. Moreover, ecotourism destinations gained stronger differentiation when the brand story highlighted community stewardship (local guides, community-based products, conservation routines) rather than only scenery. This suggests that sustainability is not merely an ethical add-on but a competitive positioning asset if translated into visible behaviors and verifiable destination practices.

Another result is that information clarity becomes a competitive advantage under high digital attention. When official accounts systematically answered repeated questions (route, ticketing, safety, capacity), the destination reduced friction and created a sense of reliability, especially for first-time visitors. Conversely, destinations with weak informational content forced tourists to rely on unofficial sources, increasing the risk of misinformation and dissatisfaction. The implication is that digital marketing outcomes are partly produced by operational readiness: the stronger the alignment between promotional promises and service systems (booking, signage, rules), the higher the probability that online interest becomes a positive on-site experience.

Table 1. Platform-differentiated strategies

Platform	Primary role in the funnel	High-performing content forms	Key sustainability integration	Practical KPIs
TikTok / Reels	Discovery & virality	Short stories, transitions, “3 reasons,” UGC highlights	Quick eco-rules, do/don’t cues, visitor ethics	Reach, shares, saves, profile clicks
Instagram	Branding & preference	Photo sets, carousels, curated Reels, Stories Q&A	Visual proof of conservation/community roles	Engagement rate, saves, DM inquiries
YouTube	Trust & deep consideration	Vlogs, route guides, documentary/culture	Longer explanation of conservation practices	Watch time, comments quality, CTR to links
Official website	Authority & conversion	Detailed info, FAQs, booking links, event calendar	Capacity policy, codes of conduct, transparency	Booking conversions, time-on-page, bounce rate

Suource: Author, 2025

Overall, the results support a strategic conclusion: destinations succeed when they design an integrated cross-platform journey rather than treating each platform as an isolated campaign. TikTok and Instagram generate attention and desire, YouTube stabilizes trust through depth, and the website consolidates decision-making through authoritative information. This integration becomes especially important for ecotourism because it reduces the gap between “beautiful imagery” and “responsible visitation,” helping ensure that growth does not undermine conservation goals.

2. Content Strategy, Engagement Mechanisms, and User-Generated Value

The findings show that engagement is content-structure sensitive, especially on Instagram where visual composition and message type shape interaction intensity. Posts that combined strong mental imagery (clear scenic cues) with practical “how-to” micro-information (route tips, best visiting time, required preparation) attracted higher saves and meaningful comments than purely aesthetic posts. Additionally, sender identity matters: content from tourists or locals often performed differently from official posts, suggesting that destinations should curate a “portfolio” of senders to enhance credibility

and variety. This resonates with research analyzing how communication features and imagery-related cues influence engagement with tourism Instagram posts, emphasizing that engagement is not random but systematically driven by message design (Blanco-Moreno et al., 2024).

A complementary result is that social media images are not only promotional artifacts; they act as triggers for eWOM and downstream recommendation behaviors. In our dataset, posts that offered recognizable “signature moments” (iconic viewpoints, community-based experiences, conservation activities) generated more share-worthy narratives than generic landscape visuals. Importantly, eWOM rose when audiences perceived the content as authentic and coherent with the destination’s identity, while exaggerated claims tended to prompt skeptical comments. These patterns align with evidence that certain destination image factors and engagement pathways can predict eWOM behavior, highlighting the need to treat image selection as a strategic lever for recommendation outcomes (Abbasi et al., 2023).

Across platforms, high-performing content converged on a few recurring mechanisms: (a) storytelling (beginning–middle–end), (b) social proof (reviews, creator experience, UGC compilation), (c) interactive prompts (polls, Q&A, “choose your itinerary”), and (d) utility (maps, pricing, packing lists). The strongest campaigns deliberately mixed these mechanisms rather than relying on a single content style. This suggests that content strategy should be treated as a structured editorial system similar to a media organization where different “formats” serve different audience needs and travel-planning stages.

The evidence also indicates that UGC (user-generated content) is a critical value source for destination marketing, but it requires governance. Destinations that actively encouraged UGC through hashtags, repost incentives, and creator partnerships gained visibility and perceived authenticity. However, unmanaged UGC sometimes promoted harmful behavior (off-trail hiking, wildlife disturbance, littering), particularly in nature-based attractions. Thus, ecotourism promotion must operationalize ethical guidelines: the same UGC that expands reach can also amplify unsustainable practices if not steered through clear codes, creator briefings, and content moderation principles.

Table 2. Content Objective Tourism

Content objective	Recommended content formats	Best-fit platforms	Sustainability “must include”	Expected audience action
Spark curiosity	15–45s micro-story, before/after, “hidden gem”	TikTok, Reels	Simple eco-rule + respectful behavior cue	Share / follow / save
Build preference	Carousel guide, aesthetic reels, community stories	Instagram	Community role + conservation proof	Save / DM / itinerary planning
Reduce uncertainty	Route guide, cost breakdown, safety FAQ video	YouTube	Capacity limits + code of conduct	Longer watch / link click
Convert decision	FAQ page, booking button, calendar/event info	Website	Transparency on quotas, fees, regulations	Book / purchase / contact

Source: Author, 2025

Another key finding is the importance of creator collaboration design. Partnerships worked best when creators were briefed to include: (1) conservation-friendly behaviors, (2) community contribution narratives, and (3) accurate service information (fees, timing, access). When collaborations focused only on aesthetic shots, they drove short-term reach but produced weaker “consideration” signals (questions about logistics, safety, rules). This implies that influencer marketing in ecotourism should be evaluated not merely by views, but by whether the collaboration improves tourist preparedness and aligns expectations with destination capacity.

The results suggest that sustainable destination growth depends on content quality plus governance, not volume. High engagement emerges when destinations combine imagery, utility, and authenticity across platform-specific formats, while sustainable outcomes require that UGC and creator collaborations be guided toward conservation-aligned narratives. In this way, content becomes both a marketing instrument and a behavioral “nudge” that shapes how tourists approach the destination.

3. Stakeholder Ecosystem, Coordination, and Credibility Building

The findings confirm that eWOM functions as a bridge between perceived destination image and travel intention, making stakeholder coordination crucial. When tourists repeatedly encounter consistent signals official information, peer reviews, and creator narratives that agree destination credibility increases and the decision path becomes smoother. Conversely, conflicting messages (e.g., official claims vs. negative reviews about overcrowding or pricing) create uncertainty and reduce intent. This relationship mirrors established tourism research linking eWOM, destination image, attitudes, and travel intention, underscoring that digital marketing outcomes are co-produced by multiple communicators rather than controlled by a single manager (Jalilvand et al., 2012).

Our results further show that in periods of heightened risk sensitivity (post-crisis contexts, environmental concerns, or safety uncertainty), tourists pay increased attention to official information quality and how it interacts with eWOM. Destinations that strengthened official crisis communication, clarified policies, and provided timely updates reduced rumor effects and stabilized image. This is consistent with more recent work modeling relationships among eWOM, destination image, and travel intention while incorporating perceived quality of official information under uncertainty, reinforcing that credibility is shaped by both peer content and institutional communication (Servaes & Malikhao, 2016).

The stakeholder mapping highlights a clear division of functions: government provides regulation and infrastructure support; local communities/managers provide authentic experiences and operational control; private actors package services and extend distribution; influencers/creators amplify narratives; NGOs/nature communities safeguard sustainability; and tourists validate experiences through reviews and UGC. The results show that destinations achieve stronger strategic coherence when these roles are acknowledged and coordinated, rather than assumed to “work automatically.” In practice, coordination failures often appeared as unclear visitor rules, inconsistent pricing information, or promotional narratives that ignored ecological limits.

The government's role emerged as especially pivotal for ecotourism marketing because it sets the "rules of the game" for ethical promotion (e.g., image use in conservation zones, visitor quotas, safety requirements). Where governance frameworks existed, stakeholders were more likely to align digital campaigns with sustainability principles. Where governance was weak, promotions tended to chase attention without accountability. This supports the interpretation that digital marketing in ecotourism is partly a public policy issue, not only a private branding activity, because unmanaged growth can produce environmental harm and social conflict.

The discussion also reveals that coordination is increasingly data-driven. Managers used platform insights to identify visitor questions, peak attention periods, and content themes that triggered either positive or negative sentiment. When stakeholders shared such insights e.g., community managers feeding operational constraints into marketing calendars destinations reduced mismatch between promotion and capacity. This demonstrates that coordination is not purely institutional; it can be operationalized through simple routines: shared dashboards, agreed posting guidelines, and joint response protocols for misinformation or complaints.

Overall, the results emphasize that sustainable digital marketing depends on a governed ecosystem: stakeholder roles must be explicitly designed, communication must be synchronized, and credibility must be protected through consistent evidence across official information and peer discourse. In ecotourism contexts, this governance is not optional because the costs of misalignment appear quickly in overcrowding, environmental stress, and reputational decline.

4. Sustainability Integration, Visitor Management, and Risk of "Viral Overtourism"

The evidence shows that TikTok-driven popularity can transform destination trajectories rapidly, producing both economic opportunities and sustainability risks. When destinations became widely visible through short-video virality, visitor numbers could spike faster than infrastructure and local governance could respond. In ecotourism areas, this creates urgency: unprepared destinations face crowding, ecological disturbance, and reduced visitor satisfaction, which then feeds back into negative reviews. This mirrors empirical work documenting how TikTok can make previously off-the-beaten-track destinations "famous overnight," highlighting the need to anticipate and manage sudden popularity as part of marketing strategy (Wengel et al., 2022b).

We also found that sustainability outcomes depend heavily on how promotional videos frame the destination. When short videos used only emotional beauty framing, audiences expressed higher desire but also formed unrealistic expectations about access and capacity. Videos that combined emotional appeal with clear, concrete framing (rules, time windows, limited capacity, local guides) generated more responsible intent signals in comments and fewer conflicts between expectation and reality. This aligns with experimental evidence showing that the interaction between visual and verbal framing in tourism short video affects travel intention, suggesting that framing choices can shape not only intention strength but also intention quality (Gan et al., 2023).

A critical sustainability response observed in the study is technology-enabled visitor management (online booking, quota limits, QR-based entry, and capacity dashboards). These tools function as a bridge between marketing and conservation: they

allow destinations to promote confidently while enforcing limits that protect ecosystems. Importantly, the effectiveness of these tools increases when they are communicated proactively in marketing content so tourists understand that limits are part of the destination identity, not a service failure. This indicates that visitor management is not a backstage operation; it must be integrated into brand messaging for ecotourism.

The findings also show that educational content is a high-leverage sustainability mechanism. Content explaining endemic species, conservation actions, local stewardship, and “do/don’t” behavior guidelines produced more “meaning-focused” engagement than purely scenic posts. Such content can recalibrate what tourists seek: from extraction (photos only) to participation (learning, respecting rules, supporting local livelihoods). In practical terms, educational content reduces behavioral risk by pre-socializing visitors into responsible norms before arrival, which is particularly valuable where monitoring resources are limited.

Collaboration with NGOs, nature communities, and eco-influencers was another sustainability lever that strengthened legitimacy. Where conservation actors co-created campaigns such as digital pledges, clean-up events, reef protection narratives, or wildlife-awareness series audiences perceived sustainability claims as more credible. This suggests that sustainability marketing benefits from third-party validation: it reduces suspicions of greenwashing and increases the likelihood that tourists interpret “eco” as real operational commitments rather than decorative language. The results indicate that sustainability in digital marketing is achieved when destinations treat virality as a managed risk and embed conservation into framing, operations, and partnerships. Effective ecotourism promotion therefore requires a dual focus: building demand while simultaneously shaping visitor behavior and controlling volume through technology and governance.

5. Performance Measurement, Analytics, and Strategic Learning Loops

The results highlight that measurable links often exist between digital attention and tourism outcomes, especially when platforms like YouTube serve as information-rich channels. Destinations that systematically tracked views, watch time, and audience retention could identify which narratives and topics were associated with stronger interest and eventual visitation signals (questions about pricing, routes, and booking). In the reviewed materials, YouTube content also functioned as a “decision-support” channel, where content consumption aligned with tourist inflow patterns. This is consistent with recent research demonstrating that tourism-related social media content consumption particularly on YouTube relates to tourist inflows and engagement dynamics, reinforcing the importance of analytics for strategic decision-making (Hussain et al., 2024).

A second analytics related finding is that engagement quality depends not only on topics but also on emotional and communicative signals used by creators. Content that triggered curiosity, awe, or concern could raise engagement, but sustainability-sensitive destinations must manage how negative emotions (fear, disgust, anger) are deployed because they can also create reputational risk and misperceptions. This aligns with evidence that discrete emotions expressed by travel influencers on YouTube influence viewer engagement, and that the effects can vary by influencer scale implying that

destinations need nuanced creator selection and briefing, not generic influencer recruitment (Yoo et al., 2024).

The study suggests that performance evaluation should move beyond reach metrics toward a balanced dashboard capturing the entire funnel: awareness (reach), engagement (likes, shares, meaningful comments), consideration (FAQ clicks, watch time, itinerary questions), and conversion (booking, inquiries, ticket purchases). For ecotourism, additional indicators are needed: signs of responsible intent (comments about rules, conservation support, willingness to follow quotas) and signals of risk (crowding concerns, rule-breaking encouragement, misleading information spread). This broader measurement approach helps ensure that marketing success does not unintentionally signal sustainability failure.

Another key result is that strategic learning improves when analytics become part of a routine “feedback loop.” Destinations that updated FAQs based on repetitive comments, refined content after analyzing audience drop-off, and adjusted posting schedules based on platform insights demonstrated more stable growth than those running ad-hoc campaigns. This indicates that digital marketing in tourism functions best as an adaptive system: repeated measurement, structured reflection, and rapid iteration are necessary to keep pace with platform changes and shifting traveler preferences.

Importantly, analytics also supported stakeholder coordination: when managers shared insights with local communities and regulators, they could anticipate peaks, redesign visitor flows, and time conservation messaging. For example, if content about a sensitive area began trending, managers could proactively communicate capacity limits and reinforce codes of conduct. This demonstrates that measurement is not merely a marketing tool; it becomes a governance tool for sustainable destination management in digital environments.

Overall, the discussion concludes that effective digital marketing for tourist attraction development requires a measurement-driven strategy that links content design to behavioral outcomes and sustainability safeguards. When destinations build learning loops integrating platform analytics, visitor feedback, stakeholder coordination, and conservation constraints they are better positioned to achieve both competitiveness and long-term ecological-social viability.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that the modernization of tourism marketing is no longer defined by “being online,” but by how well destinations orchestrate a platform-differentiated digital ecosystem that converts attention into visits while protecting ecotourism values. Using a qualitative descriptive approach grounded in content review and stakeholder perspectives, the analysis indicates that promotional effectiveness rises when destinations match strategy to platform logic: TikTok for discovery and virality, Instagram for branding and preference-building, YouTube for deeper trust and storytelling, and official websites for authoritative information and conversion. In this integrated funnel, the central managerial task is to keep brand cues consistent across channels (identity, sustainability narrative, and service information) so that online interest does not fragment into confusion, misinformation, or unrealistic expectations. Thus, digital marketing modernization in tourism should be understood as a strategic system—where channel roles are intentionally designed, content is tailored to audience decision stages,

and operational readiness (routes, ticketing, safety, capacity) is communicated clearly to reduce friction and strengthen credibility.

The findings further emphasize that sustainability becomes most persuasive when it is operational and visible, embedded in experiences rather than delivered as abstract “eco-friendly” claims. Content performs better and appears more authentic when it pairs attractive visuals with concrete visitor practices ethical rules, capacity awareness, community etiquette, and conservation routines so audiences understand that responsible behavior is part of the destination identity, not an optional add-on.

In addition, the study highlights that tourism promotion is co-produced by multiple actors: government, destination managers, local communities, private operators, influencers/creators, NGOs, and tourists themselves through reviews and user-generated content. When these roles are not coordinated, inconsistencies quickly appear in pricing information, visitor rules, and narrative framing, which can weaken trust and reduce travel intention; conversely, aligned messaging across official information and peer discourse strengthens credibility and stabilizes destination image. Therefore, sustainable digital marketing is not only a branding activity it is also a governance issue that requires clear standards for ethical promotion, collaboration design, and communication synchronization across stakeholders.

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