



Persuasive Communication in Indonesian Digital Tourism Promotion: Destination Branding, Local Identity, and Tourist Engagement

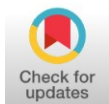
Suhartina Suhartina¹, Andi Nurindahsari²

^{1,2}Institut Agama Islam Negeri Parepare, Parepare, Sulawesi Selatan, Indonesia.

Corresponding Author: suhartina@iainpare.ac.id¹

<https://doi.org/10.69812/itj.v3i1.262>

Article Info



Article History;

Received:

9 May 2026

Revised:

18 May 2026

Accepted:

31 May 2026

Abstract:

Digital tourism promotion has transformed the way destinations are communicated, imagined, and selected by potential tourists. In Indonesia, tourism advertisements found through Google search results and Google Images widely use persuasive language and visual design to attract audiences, promote travel packages, and construct destination images. This study aims to examine how persuasive communication is used in Indonesian digital tourism advertisements, how verbal and visual elements construct destination branding, and how these advertisements represent local identity, tourist segmentation, and multimodal tourism promotion. This research employed a qualitative design with descriptive digital content analysis. The data consisted of 30 digital tourism advertisements in the form of posters, flyers, and online tourism brochures promoting Indonesian destinations. The data were selected through purposive sampling based on destination relevance, persuasive text, visual clarity, promotional content, and public accessibility through Google search results. The findings show that persuasive language is constructed through direct invitations, price emphasis, promotional claims, service assurance, and experiential expressions such as “Book Now,” “Promo,” “Start From,” “Paket Murah,” and “Liburan Yuk.” Visual elements such as beaches, mountains, temples, lakes, islands, cultural icons, and tourism activities strengthen destination branding and shape tourist imagination. The findings also reveal that local identity and tourist segmentation are represented through halal trip, honeymoon, study tour, open trip, private tour, family trip, and budget tourism packages. This study concludes that Indonesian digital tourism advertisements function as multimodal promotional texts that integrate language, image, price, facilities, itinerary, and booking information to strengthen destination branding.

Keyword: Persuasive Communication, Digital Tourism Advertisements, Destination Branding, Local Identity



INTRODUCTION

Persuasive communication in Indonesian digital tourism promotion has become a crucial academic issue because tourism destinations are no longer introduced only

through conventional advertising, brochures, or official campaigns, but through continuous digital interaction involving destination managers, tourists, local communities, influencers, and platform algorithms. In this context, promotion is not merely a process of transmitting information about attractions, facilities, or travel routes; it is a strategic effort to construct meaning, shape destination image, strengthen emotional attachment, and persuade audiences to imagine Indonesia as a memorable and culturally distinctive travel experience. The issue is particularly relevant for Indonesia because the country's tourism identity is built through diverse local cultures, maritime landscapes, heritage narratives, culinary traditions, and community-based destinations that require careful representation in digital media. Therefore, this article is positioned within the broader field of destination marketing, digital tourism communication, and place branding studies by examining how persuasive messages transform local identity into destination value and tourist engagement through digital platforms (Huerta-Álvarez et al., 2020; Garay, 2019; Költringer & Dickinger, 2015; Lund et al., 2018).

The central problem addressed in this article lies in the gap between the growing intensity of digital tourism promotion and the need for more conceptually grounded communication strategies that can connect branding, identity, and engagement in an integrated way. Many digital campaigns succeed in producing visibility, but visibility alone does not automatically create trust, authenticity, or meaningful engagement among tourists (Mutiani & Pinasthika, 2025). In destination branding, persuasive communication must be able to present a coherent identity, communicate credible information, and produce emotional resonance that encourages tourists to move from passive exposure to active interest, sharing, and travel intention. This means that digital tourism promotion must be examined not only as a technical marketing activity, but also as a symbolic and communicative process through which destinations construct persuasive narratives about place, culture, experience, and value (Li et al., 2023; Vinyals-Mirabent et al., 2019; Jiménez-Barreto et al., 2020; Kumail et al., 2022).

In the Indonesian context, local identity is a fundamental element of destination branding because tourism appeal is often rooted in cultural uniqueness, social memory, indigenous practices, religious heritage, coastal life, and community narratives. However, local identity can become vulnerable when digital promotion reduces culture into attractive images, slogans, or viral content without sufficient contextual meaning. Persuasive communication should therefore not detach local identity from its social and cultural foundations, but should translate it into stories that remain authentic, respectful, and relevant to tourist expectations. This article argues that Indonesian digital tourism promotion needs to balance promotional attractiveness with cultural integrity so that destination branding does not merely commodify local identity, but strengthens the symbolic value, legitimacy, and distinctiveness of destinations in competitive tourism markets (Abdillah et al., 2022; Michelson & Paadam, 2016; Wijaya Murti et al., 2026; Can et al., 2025).

Tourist engagement is another important aspect of this issue because digital promotion today is shaped by interaction, user-generated content, visual storytelling, comments, reviews, likes, shares, and online conversations. Tourists do not only receive destination messages; they reinterpret, reproduce, and circulate them through their own digital practices. As a result, persuasive communication in tourism must be understood

as a two-way and multi-actor process in which official branding messages interact with tourists' experiences, platform cultures, and audience responses. This perspective is important because tourist engagement can strengthen destination awareness, build credibility, stimulate electronic word-of-mouth, and expand the reach of local tourism narratives beyond institutional communication channels (Grosso et al., 2024; Blanco-Moreno et al., 2024; Hussain et al., 2024; Armutcu et al., 2023).

Indonesia's digital tourism promotion also needs to be viewed through the development of digital literacy, stakeholder collaboration, and sustainable tourism experience. The increasing use of social media, digital platforms, and online travel information has changed how tourists search, evaluate, and select destinations, while local governments and tourism actors are required to communicate destinations more effectively and responsibly. In this situation, persuasive communication is not only about attracting tourists, but also about guiding tourist expectations, promoting sustainable behavior, and encouraging participation in tourism experiences that respect local communities. Therefore, the urgency of this article is based on the need to understand how digital technology can support Indonesian tourism promotion without weakening the cultural and social values that make destinations meaningful (Sukma et al., 2025; Rumanti et al., 2025; Wilopo et al., 2025; Jokowi et al., 2025).

Although previous studies have discussed digital marketing, social media branding, destination image, online co-creation, and tourist behavior, there remains a need to connect these discussions more explicitly with persuasive communication and local identity in the Indonesian tourism context. The originality of this article lies in its effort to examine destination branding not only as a marketing outcome, but as a communicative process that links message design, cultural representation, audience engagement, and tourist response. This approach allows the article to explain why certain digital messages become persuasive, how local identity functions as a branding resource, and how tourists participate in strengthening or reshaping the meaning of destinations through online engagement. By integrating these dimensions, this article contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of digital tourism promotion as a dynamic interaction between institutional strategy and tourist participation (Lam et al., 2020; Mirzaalian et al., 2021; Sano et al., 2024; Zhou et al., 2024).

Table 1. Analytical Focus of Persuasive Communication in Indonesian Digital Tourism Promotion

Analytical Dimension	Condition in Indonesian Digital Tourism Promotion	Relevance to the Article
Destination branding	Destinations compete through digital visibility, image formation, and symbolic differentiation.	Explains how Indonesia's tourism identity is constructed and positioned in digital media.
Local identity	Cultural heritage, maritime landscapes, culinary traditions, and community narratives shape destination uniqueness.	Shows how local values become persuasive branding resources.

Analytical Dimension	Condition in Indonesian Digital Tourism Promotion	Relevance to the Article
Persuasive message design	Digital content uses storytelling, visuals, slogans, influencer narratives, and emotional appeals.	Identifies how messages influence perception, trust, and travel intention.
Tourist engagement	Tourists interact through likes, shares, comments, reviews, user-generated content, and eWOM.	Explains how audiences participate in expanding and reshaping destination meaning.
Digital platform ecology	Social media, official websites, online travel platforms, and short-video applications mediate tourism communication.	Clarifies how platform characteristics affect message circulation and engagement.
Scientific contribution	Existing studies often separate branding, identity, and engagement.	Positions the article as an integrative study of persuasive communication in digital tourism promotion.

Source: Author, 2026

The author’s approach in discussing this issue is based on an integrative conceptual perspective that connects persuasive communication, destination branding, local identity, and tourist engagement as mutually related components. Rather than treating digital promotion as a set of isolated marketing techniques, this article views it as a structured communication process that begins with the selection of local identity elements, continues through persuasive message construction, and develops into tourist engagement across digital platforms. This approach is significant because destination promotion in Indonesia requires more than attractive content; it requires communicative sensitivity to cultural meaning, audience interpretation, and the credibility of the destination narrative. Through this framework, the article aims to offer a scientific contribution to tourism communication studies by showing how persuasive digital promotion can strengthen destination branding while maintaining the authenticity of local identity (Pachucki et al., 2022; Qiu et al., 2024; Guo et al., 2024; Vichnevetskaia, 2026).

Based on the discussion above, this article seeks to examine how persuasive communication operates in Indonesian digital tourism promotion by focusing on three main aspects: the construction of destination branding, the representation of local identity, and the formation of tourist engagement. The article argues that these three aspects should not be separated because destination branding provides the strategic image, local identity supplies the symbolic and cultural substance, and tourist engagement determines whether digital promotion becomes socially meaningful and communicatively effective.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research design using descriptive digital content analysis. The study focused on persuasive communication in Indonesian digital

tourism promotion by examining how digital tourism advertisements use verbal and visual elements to construct destination branding, represent local identity, segment tourist markets, and encourage tourist interest. This approach was selected because the object of the study was not human behavior obtained through interviews or surveys, but digital advertising documents in the form of posters, flyers, and online tourism brochures that were publicly accessible through Google search results and Google Images.

The population of this study consisted of digital tourism advertisements promoting Indonesian tourism destinations. Google was used only as a search engine to locate relevant digital advertising materials, while the primary data consisted of the advertisements themselves. The sample was selected using purposive sampling, resulting in 30 digital tourism advertisements. The selected advertisements represented various Indonesian tourism destinations, including Bali, Labuan Bajo, Lombok, Gili Trawangan, Nusa Penida, Pulau Pari, Karimunjawa, Derawan, Pulau Tidung, Pacitan, Dieng, Bromo, Ijen, Danau Toba, Jogja, Minangkabau, Madiun, Lampung, Purbalingga, Maros Pangkep, and other domestic tourism destinations.

The selection of data was based on several inclusion criteria. First, the advertisement had to promote an Indonesian tourism destination. Second, the advertisement had to contain verbal promotional elements, such as destination names, travel package titles, prices, facilities, itinerary information, or calls to action. Third, the advertisement had to display visual elements of the destination, such as beaches, mountains, lakes, temples, cultural icons, culinary symbols, or tourism activities. Fourth, the advertisement had to contain persuasive language, such as “Book Now,” “Promo,” “Start From,” “Paket Murah,” “Liburan Yuk,” or similar expressions. Fifth, the advertisement had to be readable and accessible as a public digital document. Advertisements that promoted foreign destinations, appeared repeatedly, did not contain persuasive text, or had poor visual quality were excluded from the main corpus.

Table 2. Data Selection Criteria

No	Criteria	Description
1	Destination relevance	The advertisement promotes an Indonesian tourism destination
2	Promotional text	The advertisement contains persuasive words, package names, prices, facilities, or calls to action
3	Visual destination elements	The advertisement displays images of destinations, attractions, cultural symbols, or tourism activities
4	Public accessibility	The advertisement is publicly accessible through Google search results or Google Images
5	Image readability	The advertisement has readable text and sufficient visual quality
6	Non duplicate status	The advertisement is not a repeated image from the same promotional source
7	Research relevance	The advertisement is relevant to the analysis of persuasive language, destination branding, local identity, tourist segmentation, and multimodal communication

Source: Author’s methodological design, 2026.

Data collection was carried out through digital documentation. The researcher searched for advertisements using several keywords, including “poster paket wisata Bali,” “poster paket wisata Jogja,” “poster wisata Labuan Bajo,” “poster wisata Lombok,” “poster wisata Dieng,” “poster wisata Danau Toba,” “poster wisata Karimunjawa,” “poster wisata Pulau Pari,” “poster wisata Pacitan,” “poster wisata Bromo,” “poster wisata Pangandaran,” and “poster promosi pariwisata Indonesia.” The search results were screened based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Each selected advertisement was saved, coded, and classified according to destination, type of tourism, persuasive language, visual elements, local identity, tourist segmentation, and multimodal features.

Table 3. Data Corpus of Digital Tourism Advertisements

No	Data Category	Description
1	Type of data	Digital tourism advertisements in the form of online posters, flyers, and tourism brochures
2	Source of data	Publicly available digital materials found through Google search results and Google Images
3	Number of data	30 advertisements
4	Sampling technique	Purposive sampling
5	Main focus	Persuasive language, destination branding, local identity, tourist segmentation, and multimodal communication
6	Unit of analysis	Words, phrases, slogans, prices, visual images, colors, layout, facilities, itinerary, and contact information
7	Data code	Each advertisement was coded from P1 to P30

Source: Author’s methodological design, 2026.

The 30 selected advertisements were coded to ensure data traceability and to support systematic analysis. The coding process allowed each advertisement to be connected with specific analytical categories, such as persuasive language, destination image, local identity, tourist segmentation, and multimodal communication. The detailed corpus of the analyzed advertisements is presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Corpus of Digital Tourism Advertisements Analyzed in the Study

No	Code	Advertisement Label	Destination	Tourism Category	Main Analytical Value
1	P1	Paket Wisata Bali	Bali	Marine and cultural tourism	Cultural icons, destination image, package price, and travel duration
2	P2	Halal Trip Labuan Bajo	Labuan Bajo	Marine tourism and halal trip	Halal trip, island visuals, sea imagery, and price appeal

No	Code	Advertisement Label	Destination	Tourism Category	Main Analytical Value
3	P3	Study Tour Yogyakarta	Yogyakarta	Heritage and educational tourism	Study tour, group package, cultural destination, and educational travel
4	P4	Paket Wisata Dieng Murah	Dieng	Mountain and nature tourism	Cheap package, book now, highland landscape, and nature imagery
5	P5	Explore Wonderful Jogja	Yogyakarta	Cultural and recreational tourism	Special price, booking invitation, facilities, and cultural attractions
6	P6	Paket Wisata Lombok 3D2N	Lombok	Marine tourism	Price per person, facilities, beach visuals, and marine destination image
7	P7	Paket Tour 1 Hari Gili Trawangan	Gili Trawangan	Marine activity tourism	Included package, snorkeling activity, sea experience, and facilities
8	P8	Tour Nusa Penida Timur	Nusa Penida	Island tourism	Private trip, destination objects, tropical island image, and included services
9	P9	Open Weekend Trip Pulau Pari	Pulau Pari	Marine open trip tourism	Open weekend trip, book now, island destination, and package includes
10	P10	Open Weekend Trip Karimunjawa	Karimunjawa	Island tourism	Open trip, book now, island branding, and package facilities
11	P11	Open Trip Derawan	Derawan	Marine tourism	Open trip, booking information, sea visuals, and marine attraction
12	P12	Pulau Tidung	Pulau Tidung	Marine tourism	Price per person, facilities, itinerary, and island travel package

No	Code	Advertisement Label	Destination	Tourism Category	Main Analytical Value
13	P13	Pulau Pandang dan Salah Namu	Pulau Pandang and Salah Namu	Local island tourism	Package price, facilities, transportation, and local island promotion
14	P14	Paket Wisata Pink Beach dan Gili	Lombok	Marine and beach tourism	Pink Beach, Gili, travel package, beach visuals, and price per person
15	P15	Paket Wisata Anyer One Day Tour	Anyer	Beach tourism	One day tour, beach recreation, water activity, and short trip promotion
16	P16	Paket Wisata Pangandaran	Pangandaran	Marine and nature tourism	Start from, book now, package price, beach image, and nature attraction
17	P17	Pangandaran 1 Day Trip	Pangandaran	Short trip tourism	One day trip, join now, starting price, and accessibility
18	P18	Paket Wisata Pacitan	Pacitan	Nature and marine tourism	Beaches, caves, river destinations, price per person, and adventure image
19	P19	Private Tour di Pacitan	Pacitan	Family and private tour	Private tour, family package, starting price, and tourist segmentation
20	P20	Paket Bromo	Bromo	Mountain and adventure tourism	Package price, jeep, mountain image, destination list, and adventure experience
21	P21	Explore Ijen Sunrise and Jember Day Tour	Ijen and Jember	Mountain and nature tourism	Sunrise, day tour, nature experience, and mountain landscape
22	P22	Paket Tour Dieng 3 Hari 2 Malam	Dieng	Mountain and nature tourism	Book now, travel duration, facilities, and natural destination list

No	Code	Advertisement Label	Destination	Tourism Category	Main Analytical Value
23	P23	Paket Wisata Medan dan Danau Toba	Medan and Danau Toba	Nature and cultural tourism	Book now, destination list, facilities, lake image, and cultural tourism
24	P24	Enjoy Holiday Medan, Danau Toba, Samosir, Berastagi	Medan, Danau Toba, Samosir, and Berastagi	Family and group tourism	Group price, itinerary, facilities, and family oriented tourism
25	P25	3D Minangkabau Cooking Weekender	Minangkabau	Cultural and culinary tourism	Cooking weekender, price, local culture, and culinary experience
26	P26	Wisata Kota Pecel Madiun	Madiun	Urban and culinary tourism	Starting price, city tourism, local culinary identity, and urban attraction
27	P27	Paket Wisata Lampung	Lampung	Domestic tourism	Booking invitation, destination icons, local visuals, and regional promotion
28	P28	Open Trip Purbalingga	Purbalingga	Nature and recreational tourism	Open trip, price, facilities, nature attraction, and recreation
29	P29	Paket Trip Santorra De Laponte	Santorra De Laponte	Artificial and family recreation tourism	Price per person, facilities, destination list, and family recreation
30	P30	Paket Sinergi Budaya dan Wisata Festival Wong Gunung	Festival Wong Gunung	Cultural event tourism	Festival, culture, ticket price, event schedule, and community based tourism

Source: Author's analysis, 2026.

The main instrument of this study was a coding sheet developed by the researcher. The coding sheet was used to classify the data into five analytical categories, namely persuasive language, visual destination branding, local identity, tourist segmentation, and multimodal communication. Persuasive language included direct invitations, price emphasis, urgency markers, service assurance, and experiential

expressions. Visual destination branding included images of beaches, mountains, lakes, temples, islands, caves, cultural icons, and tourism activities. Local identity included place names, culinary elements, cultural symbols, festivals, and regional uniqueness. Tourist segmentation included halal trips, honeymoon packages, study tours, family trips, open trips, private tours, and budget tourism. Multimodal communication included the integration of text, images, colors, typography, prices, facilities, itinerary, service icons, websites, and contact information.

Table 5. Analytical Categories

No	Analytical Category	Indicators
1	Persuasive language	Book Now, Promo, Start From, Per Pax, Paket Murah, Liburan Yuk, Join Now
2	Visual destination branding	Beach, mountain, lake, temple, cave, island, boat, cultural icon, tourism activity
3	Local identity	Place names, culinary icons, traditions, festivals, cultural symbols, regional uniqueness
4	Tourist segmentation	Halal trip, honeymoon, study tour, family trip, open trip, private tour, group tour, budget tourism
5	Multimodal communication	Text, image, price, color, typography, facilities, itinerary, service icons, website, contact information

Source: Author's methodological design, 2026.

The data were analyzed using qualitative content analysis. The analysis was conducted in several stages. First, all advertisements were identified and coded based on their destination and type of tourism. Second, the verbal elements in each advertisement were examined to identify persuasive expressions, such as direct invitations, price emphasis, promotional claims, urgency markers, service assurance, and emotional language. Third, the visual elements were analyzed to understand how images, colors, layout, typography, and icons contributed to destination branding. Fourth, the advertisements were examined to identify representations of local identity and tourist segmentation. Fifth, the verbal and visual findings were interpreted together to explain how digital tourism advertisements function as multimodal communication tools in Indonesian tourism promotion.

To ensure the credibility of the analysis, this study applied source triangulation and category validation. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing advertisements from various Indonesian destinations and different types of tourism promotion. Category validation was conducted by repeatedly reviewing the coding results to ensure consistency between the data and the analytical categories. The interpretation was also strengthened by comparing the findings with relevant theories and previous studies on tourism language, destination branding, digital tourism marketing, visual communication, and multimodal communication.

Ethically, this study used only publicly accessible digital advertising documents. The research did not involve human participants, interviews, surveys, or private personal data. Therefore, informed consent was not required. However, the study maintained ethical standards by using the advertisements only for academic analysis, not for commercial purposes. The names of travel agents were not treated as objects of

evaluation because the focus of the study was on persuasive language, destination branding, local identity, tourist segmentation, and multimodal communication in digital tourism promotion.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the findings and discussion based on the analysis of 30 digital tourism advertisements promoting Indonesian tourism destinations. The findings are organized according to the research questions, namely how persuasive language is used in digital tourism promotion, how verbal and visual elements construct destination branding, and how digital tourism advertisements represent local identity, tourist segmentation, and multimodal tourism communication. The analysis shows that digital tourism advertisements do not merely function as informational media, but also operate as persuasive communication tools that shape tourist imagination, destination image, and travel decision making.

1. Persuasive Language as a Strategy in Digital Tourism Promotion

The first finding shows that persuasive language in Indonesian digital tourism advertisements is mainly constructed through direct invitation, price emphasis, service assurance, and emotional expressions. The analyzed advertisements frequently use words and phrases such as “Book Now,” “Pesan Sekarang,” “Liburan Yuk,” “Start From,” “Promo,” “Hemat,” “Per Pax,” “Best Deal,” and “Special Price.” These expressions indicate that tourism promotion in digital media is designed not only to inform potential tourists about destinations, but also to encourage immediate action.

Table 6. Patterns of Persuasive Language in Digital Tourism Advertisements

No	Pattern of Persuasive Language	Forms Found in Posters	Promotional Meaning
1	Direct invitation	Book Now, Pesan Sekarang, Liburan Yuk, Join Now	Encourages potential tourists to make quick decisions
2	Price emphasis	Start From, Mulai Dari, Per Pax, Hemat, Promo	Builds the impression of affordability and economic value
3	Superiority claim	Best Deal, Big Promo, Special Tour, Paket Murah	Strengthens the competitive appeal of travel packages
4	Service assurance	Include, Fasilitas, Tiket Masuk, Transportasi, Guide	Increases tourist trust in the offered travel services
5	Urgency marker	Promo Terbatas, Ready Seat, Low Season, Diskon	Creates a sense of limited opportunity
6	Experiential language	Explore, Memorable, Wonderful, Enjoy Holiday	Builds tourist imagination about pleasant travel experiences

No	Pattern of Persuasive Language	Forms Found in Posters	Promotional Meaning
7	Convenience language	One Day Tour, Open Trip, Private Tour, Paket Lengkap	Shows accessibility, flexibility, and travel convenience

Source: Author's analysis, 2026

The data in Table 6 shows that persuasive language in tourism posters tends to be practical, promotional, and action oriented. Direct invitation functions as a call to action, while price emphasis becomes a key strategy to attract tourists who consider affordability before making travel decisions. The frequent use of “promo,” “start from,” and “per pax” indicates that digital tourism promotion often relies on economic persuasion. This finding supports the argument that tourism language is not neutral because it is designed to persuade, seduce, and create desire for travel experiences (Dann, 1996). It also aligns with the view that social media and digital platforms have changed tourism communication into a more interactive and persuasive form (Hays et al., 2013).

This finding also indicates that persuasive tourism communication is shaped by the logic of digital marketing. In digital tourism advertisements, language must be short, attractive, and easy to remember because digital audiences tend to consume information quickly. Therefore, persuasive language is not only a linguistic strategy, but also a marketing device that connects destination information with tourist decision making. In this context, the posters analyzed in this study show that the success of digital tourism promotion depends on the ability to combine informative content with persuasive expressions.

2. Visual Destination Branding in Indonesian Tourism Posters

The second finding reveals that visual elements play a central role in constructing destination branding. Most posters place destination images as the main visual focus, including beaches, mountains, lakes, temples, caves, islands, waterfalls, boats, and cultural icons. These visuals do not only decorate the posters, but also create an imagined experience of the destination.

Table 7. Visual Destination Branding in Indonesian Digital Tourism Advertisements

No	Visual Category	Examples of Destinations	Destination Image Constructed
1	Marine tourism	Bali, Lombok, Gili Trawangan, Labuan Bajo, Nusa Penida, Karimunjawa, Pulau Pari	Exotic, fresh, relaxing, adventurous, and recreational
2	Mountain tourism	Dieng, Bromo, Ijen, Berastagi	Cool, natural, challenging, and experiential
3	Lake and natural landscape tourism	Danau Toba, Pacitan, Purbalingga	Calm, spacious, natural, and suitable for family tourism

No	Visual Category	Examples of Destinations	Destination Image Constructed
4	Cultural and heritage tourism	Jogja, Bali, Minangkabau, Madiun	Cultural, historical, authentic, and educational
5	Island tourism	Nusa Penida, Pulau Pari, Karimunjawa, Derawan, Pulau Tidung	Tropical, private, beautiful, and recreational
6	Artificial and recreational tourism	Santorra De Laponte, Madiun, Jogja	Modern, family oriented, relaxing, and accessible

Source: Author's analysis, 2026

The data in Table 7 indicates that destination branding in digital tourism advertisements is strongly shaped by visual representation. Marine tourism destinations are mostly represented through blue oceans, beaches, boats, and snorkeling activities. Mountain and natural destinations are represented through landscapes, sunrise, highlands, and adventure images. Cultural destinations are represented through temples, traditional icons, culinary symbols, and urban heritage.

This finding is relevant to destination image theory, which explains that tourists form perceptions of destinations through both cognitive and affective images (Echtner & Ritchie, 1991; Pike, 2015). In the analyzed posters, cognitive images appear through information about destination names, facilities, routes, and prices. Affective images appear through visual atmospheres such as calm beaches, beautiful mountains, cultural heritage, and romantic landscapes. The combination of cognitive and affective images strengthens the attractiveness of the destination.

The visual strategy found in the posters also supports Kavaratzis and Hatch's view that branding is not only a matter of logos or slogans, but also a process of constructing meaning and identity (Kavaratzis & Hatch, 2013). In this study, tourism posters construct destination identity through the interaction of images, colors, typography, and promotional phrases. For example, Bali is repeatedly represented as a destination of beaches, culture, and romance. Jogja is represented as a destination of heritage, education, and city tourism. Labuan Bajo is represented as marine adventure and halal tourism. These visual choices show that poster design plays an important role in shaping tourist expectations before visiting the destination.

3. Local Identity as a Differentiating Element in Destination Branding

The third finding shows that local identity is used as a key element in differentiating Indonesian tourism destinations. Local identity appears through place names, cultural symbols, culinary references, natural icons, festivals, and regional uniqueness. This pattern is found in posters promoting Jogja, Bali, Minangkabau, Danau Toba, Pacitan, Labuan Bajo, Lombok, Maros Pangkep, Madiun, and Festival Wong Gunung. The data in Table 8 shows that local identity is used to create uniqueness and differentiation. Destinations are not promoted merely as geographical places, but as cultural and experiential spaces. Jogja is promoted through heritage and educational tourism. Bali is promoted through the combination of nature, culture, and romance.

Minangkabau is promoted through culinary and cultural experience. Danau Toba is promoted through lake tourism and regional identity. These patterns indicate that local identity becomes an important resource in digital tourism branding.

Table 8. Local Identity in Digital Tourism Advertisements

No	Destination	Local Identity Represented	Function in Destination Branding
1	Jogja	Temples, cultural city, study tour, heritage	Builds an image as an educational and historical destination
2	Bali	Beaches, temples, culture, honeymoon, private tour	Strengthens the image of natural, cultural, and romantic tourism
3	Minangkabau	Culinary tourism, local culture, cooking weekender	Presents cultural tourism based on local experience
4	Danau Toba	Lake, Samosir, Berastagi, natural tourism	Strengthens the image of nature and cultural tourism in North Sumatra
5	Pacitan	Beaches, rivers, caves	Builds the image of nature and adventure tourism
6	Labuan Bajo	Islands, sea, boats, halal trip	Constructs marine, adventure, and Muslim friendly tourism images
7	Lombok	Beaches, Gili, snorkeling, Pink Beach	Strengthens the image of tropical marine tourism
8	Maros Pangkep	Karst landscape, islands, local South Sulawesi tourism	Strengthens local identity based on nature and community
9	Festival Wong Gunung	Festival, art, culture, local event	Strengthens community based cultural tourism
10	Madiun	Pecel, city tourism, local icons	Builds urban tourism based on culinary and recreation

Source: Author's analysis, 2026

This finding is in line with cultural tourism studies that emphasize the role of local culture, heritage, and community identity in creating destination uniqueness (Richards, 2018). It also supports the view that destination branding should not only highlight natural beauty, but also communicate local narratives and cultural meanings. In the context of Indonesian tourism, local identity becomes especially important because Indonesia has diverse cultural, geographical, and social landscapes. Therefore, digital tourism posters can function as media for representing cultural diversity and strengthening destination competitiveness.

However, the findings also show that local identity is often presented in a simplified way. Many posters display cultural icons only as visual attractions without deeper explanation of their cultural meanings. This suggests that digital tourism

promotion still tends to prioritize visual attractiveness and marketability over cultural interpretation. Therefore, tourism promotion should move beyond visual exoticism by providing more meaningful narratives about local communities, cultural values, and responsible tourism practices.

4. Tourist Segmentation in Digital Travel Promotion

The fourth finding shows that digital tourism advertisements are designed for specific tourist segments. The segmentation is visible through terms such as “halal trip,” “honeymoon,” “study tour,” “private tour,” “family trip,” “open trip,” “one day tour,” and “group tour.” This indicates that digital tourism promotion does not target tourists in a general way, but constructs specific travel experiences based on tourist needs, identities, and preferences.

Table 9. Tourist Segmentation in Digital Tourism Advertisements

No	Tourist Segment	Form of Promotion	Examples of Destinations	Strategic Meaning
1	Muslim tourists	Halal trip	Labuan Bajo	Offers safety, comfort, and compatibility with religious values
2	Couples	Honeymoon, romantic trip, private package	Jogja, Bali	Builds emotional and romantic travel experiences
3	Students	Study tour, group package	Yogyakarta	Connects tourism with educational purposes
4	Families and groups	Group tour, family trip, price based on number of participants	Medan, Danau Toba, Bali, Jogja	Offers cost efficiency and togetherness
5	Adventure tourists	Open trip, one day tour, jeep tour, snorkeling	Bromo, Gili Trawangan, Labuan Bajo, Pacitan	Constructs active and experiential travel images
6	Domestic tourists from other regions	Packages from Jakarta, Manado, Bandung, Surabaya	Bali, Jogja, Bromo, Labuan Bajo	Shows travel connectivity from tourists' cities of origin
7	Budget tourists	Paket murah, promo, start from, per pax	Jogja, Pacitan, Pangandaran, Madiun	Emphasizes affordability and economic accessibility

Source: Author’s analysis, 2026

The data in Table 9 indicates that tourism posters construct different types of tourists. Halal trip posters target Muslim tourists by emphasizing comfort and religious

compatibility. Honeymoon posters target couples by using emotional and romantic expressions. Study tour posters target students and educational institutions. Open trip and adventure posters target tourists who seek collective travel experiences, flexibility, and outdoor activities.

This finding supports the idea that digital tourism marketing increasingly relies on personalization and market segmentation. Information technology has transformed tourism marketing by enabling more specific communication with different tourist groups (Buhalis & Law, 2008). In this study, tourist segmentation is visible not only in the offered packages, but also in language choice, visual design, and pricing strategies. For example, posters targeting families and groups usually emphasize complete facilities and lower prices for more participants, while posters targeting couples emphasize privacy, romance, and memorable experiences.

The segmentation pattern also shows that tourism promotion is closely related to lifestyle and identity. Tourists are not only invited to visit places, but also to choose experiences that match their social role, religious identity, budget capacity, and emotional needs. This finding expands the discussion of destination branding by showing that branding is not only about the destination, but also about how the destination is connected to imagined tourist identities.

5. Multimodal Communication in Digital Tourism Advertisements

The fifth finding shows that digital tourism advertisements are multimodal communication products. They combine text, images, colors, typography, prices, facilities, itineraries, contact information, logos, and digital booking instructions. These elements work together to make the promotional message dense, attractive, and easy to understand.

Table 10. Multimodal Elements in Digital Tourism Advertisements

No	Multimodal Element	Form Found in Posters	Communication Function
1	Main text	Destination name, package name, travel duration	Provides quick promotional identity
2	Destination image	Photos of beaches, mountains, lakes, temples, caves, boats	Builds tourist imagination and travel desire
3	Price	Start From, Mulai Dari, Per Pax, package price	Attracts attention and constructs affordability
4	Facilities	Hotel, transportation, entrance ticket, guide, meals	Builds trust in the travel package
5	Call to action	Book Now, Pesan Sekarang, Hubungi Kami	Directs audiences to booking action
6	Digital contact	WhatsApp, website, and contact number	Facilitates interaction and tourism transaction
7	Color and typography	Bright colors, capital letters, large price numbers	Captures digital audience attention
8	Service icons	Hotel, plane, bus, meal, camera, ticket icons	Simplifies service information

Source: Author's analysis, 2026

The data in Table 10 shows that digital tourism advertisements communicate through a combination of verbal, visual, and transactional elements. The destination image attracts the audience emotionally, while price and facilities provide practical information. Call to action phrases and contact information then connect audience interest with booking behavior. This structure shows that poster communication is not linear, but layered and multimodal.

This finding is consistent with the perspective of multimodal communication, which emphasizes that meaning in digital advertising is produced through the interaction of several semiotic modes, including text, image, color, layout, typography, icons, price information, and contact details.

The multimodal character of tourism posters also reflects the transformation of tourism communication in digital culture. In the analyzed advertisements, the prominence of large price numbers, short calls to action, destination images, and contact information indicates that the design is intended for quick visual scanning and immediate booking response. As a result, poster design must be visually attractive, textually persuasive, and transactionally practical. This confirms that digital tourism promotion depends on the integration of communication, marketing, design, and platform logic.

6. Synthesis of Findings

The overall findings show that Indonesian digital tourism posters construct destination branding through five interconnected strategies. First, they use persuasive language to encourage quick decisions. Second, they use destination visuals to build imagination and emotional attraction. Third, they represent local identity to differentiate destinations. Fourth, they segment tourists based on travel needs and identities. Fifth, they combine text, image, price, facilities, and digital contact in multimodal promotional design.

Table 11. Synthesis of Research Findings

No	Research Finding	Main Result	Contribution to Destination Branding
1	Price and invitation language	Posters frequently use Book Now, Promo, Start From, Hemat, and Per Pax	Encourages tourist decisions through practical and economic appeal
2	Destination visuals	Photos of beaches, mountains, lakes, temples, caves, and cultural icons dominate the posters	Builds recognizable and attractive destination images
3	Local identity	Place names, culinary elements, culture, festivals, and local icons are presented as attractions	Strengthens the differentiation of Indonesian destinations
4	Tourist segmentation	Packages are designed for Muslim tourists, couples,	Connects destinations with specific market needs

No	Research Finding	Main Result	Contribution to Destination Branding
		students, families, groups, and adventure tourists	
5	Multimodal communication	Posters combine text, images, price, facilities, itinerary, color, and digital contact	Increases the effectiveness of digital tourism promotion
6	Digital transaction strategy	Posters display WhatsApp contacts, websites, Book Now buttons, and booking information	Reduces the distance between audience interest and purchase action
7	Destination competitiveness	Posters build destination image through attractive visuals, economic language, and local identity	Positions digital promotion as a competitive medium among destinations

Source: Author's analysis, 2026

The synthesis in Table 11 confirms that digital tourism advertisements are strategic media for destination branding. They do not only present travel information, but also construct destination image, tourist desire, and booking intention. The findings address the main issue of this study by showing that persuasive communication in digital tourism promotion works through the integration of language, visuals, local identity, segmentation, and multimodal design.

These findings contribute to tourism communication studies by showing that destination branding in the digital era is not only shaped by institutional tourism campaigns, but also by travel agents, digital posters, and online promotional materials. This study also shows that persuasive language and productive communication skills are important in tourism marketing because they help transform destinations into attractive, marketable, and memorable experiences. Therefore, digital tourism promotion should be understood as a communication practice that combines linguistic creativity, visual design, cultural representation, and marketing strategy.

In comparison with previous studies, the findings indicate that digital platforms have become important tools in destination marketing, supporting earlier arguments in the field (Hays et al., 2013). The findings also affirm the importance of storytelling in creating emotional engagement with destinations (Duarte & Soeiro, 2025). However, this study extends previous research by showing that even simple digital tourism advertisements contain complex persuasive and multimodal strategies. The posters analyzed in this study demonstrate that tourism communication is not only about promoting places, but also about shaping tourist identities, constructing local meanings, and facilitating digital transactions.

Overall, the results indicate that Indonesian tourism promotion in digital media depends on the ability to integrate persuasive language, strong visual branding, local identity, market segmentation, and multimodal communication. This integration is essential for improving the competitiveness of Indonesian destinations in the digital tourism ecosystem.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that persuasive communication in Indonesian digital tourism advertisements is constructed through the integration of verbal persuasion, visual destination branding, local identity, tourist segmentation, and multimodal communication. Based on the analysis of 30 digital tourism advertisements found through Google search results and Google Images, this study shows that online tourism advertisements do not merely function as media for delivering travel information. They also operate as strategic promotional texts that shape tourist imagination, construct destination image, and encourage travel decision making.

Theoretically, this study contributes to tourism communication and destination branding studies by showing that digital tourism advertisements are not simple promotional materials, but strategic communication texts that construct destination image, tourist identity, and travel desire. The study also expands the discussion of persuasive tourism communication by demonstrating that language, visual elements, local identity, and digital transaction features work together in shaping tourism promotion. In this sense, digital tourism advertisements can be understood as multimodal texts that connect destination branding with tourist imagination and market segmentation.

Practically, the findings of this study can be used by tourism managers, travel agents, local governments, content designers, and tourism promotion actors to design more persuasive and culturally meaningful digital advertisements. Tourism promotion should not only emphasize low prices and attractive visuals, but also strengthen local identity, cultural narratives, service clarity, and responsible tourism messages. By doing so, digital tourism advertisements can become more effective in promoting Indonesian destinations while also supporting cultural diversity, local economic value, and sustainable tourism communication.

This study is limited to digital tourism advertisements found through Google search results and Google Images. The analysis focuses only on publicly accessible advertising materials in the form of posters, flyers, and online tourism brochures. Therefore, the findings do not represent promotional practices on social media platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, or YouTube. Future studies may expand the data by comparing Google search based tourism advertisements with official tourism websites, travel agency platforms, or tourist generated digital content. Further research may also examine tourist responses to persuasive language and visual branding in digital tourism advertisements to understand how promotional messages influence travel interest and booking decisions.

Overall, this study affirms that persuasive communication is a crucial element in Indonesian digital tourism promotion. Digital tourism advertisements construct destination branding through the interaction of language, image, local identity, tourist segmentation, and multimodal design. This integration strengthens the role of digital advertising as a strategic medium for promoting Indonesian tourism destinations in a competitive digital tourism ecosystem.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

-

REFERENCES

- Abdillah, F., Afiff, A. Z., Hati, S. R. H., & Furinto, A. (2022). A local destination story for the restoration of the destination image affected by Covid-19 crisis: Evidence from Indonesia. *Heliyon*, 8(6), e09784. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2022.e09784>
- Armutcu, B., Tan, A., Amponsah, M., Parida, S., & Ramkissoon, H. (2023). Tourist behaviour: The role of digital marketing and social media. *Acta Psychologica*, 240, 104025. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.actpsy.2023.104025>
- Blanco-Moreno, S., González-Fernández, A. M., Muñoz, P., & Casaló, L. V. (2024). Understanding engagement with Instagram posts about tourism destinations. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 34, 100948. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdmm.2024.100948>
- Buhalis, D., & Law, R. (2008). Progress in information technology and tourism management: 20 years on and 10 years after the internet—The state of eTourism research. *Tourism Management*, 29(4), 609–623. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2008.01.005>
- Can, A. S., Barreda, A. A., Nusair, K., & Cobanoglu, C. (2025). Examining the impact of joint brand advertising on tourists' behavioural responses. *International Journal of Advertising*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02650487.2024.2432237>
- Dann, G. M. S. (1996). *The language of tourism: A sociolinguistic perspective*. CAB International.
- Duarte, A., & Soeiro, R. (2025). Destinations, experiences, and places: The role of storytelling in tourism advertising. *Janus.net, E-Journal of International Relations*, 15(2), 94–113. <https://doi.org/10.26619/1647-7251.DT0125.5>
- Echtner, C. M., & Ritchie, J. R. B. (1991). The meaning and measurement of destination image. *Journal of Tourism Studies*, 2(2), 2–12.
- Garay, L. (2019). #VisitSpain. Breaking down affective and cognitive attributes in the social media construction of the tourist destination image. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 32, 100560. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tmp.2019.100560>
- Grosso, F. O., Rodríguez-Molina, M. Á., & Castañeda-García, J. A. (2024). The impact of destination-brand social media content on consumer online brand-related activities (COBRAs). *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 51, 101239. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tmp.2024.101239>
- Guo, Y., Yu, M., & Zhao, Y. (2024). Impact of destination advertising on tourists' visit intention: The influence of self-congruence, self-confidence, and destination reputation. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 31, 100852. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdmm.2023.100852>
- Hays, S., Page, S. J., & Buhalis, D. (2013). Social media as a destination marketing tool: Its use by national tourism organisations. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 16(3), 211–239. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2012.662215>
- Huerta-Álvarez, R., Cambra-Fierro, J. J., & Fuentes-Blasco, M. (2020). The interplay between social media communication, brand equity and brand engagement in tourist destinations: An analysis in an emerging economy. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 16, 100413. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdmm.2020.100413>
- Jiménez-Barreto, J., Rubio, N., & Campo, S. (2020). Destination brand authenticity: What an experiential simulacrum! A multigroup analysis of its antecedents and

- outcomes through official online platforms. *Tourism Management*, 77, 104022. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2019.104022>
- Jokom, R., Wijaya, S., Kristanti, M., & Widjaja, D. C. (2025). Sustainable tourism experiences: The role of digital technology and government support in creating tourists' memorable experiences. *Cogent Social Sciences*, 11(1), 2482026. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311975.2025.2482026>
- Kavaratzis, M., & Hatch, M. J. (2013). The dynamics of place brands: An identity-based approach to place branding theory. *Marketing Theory*, 13(1), 69–86. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1470593112467268>
- Költringer, C., & Dickinger, A. (2015). Analyzing destination branding and image from online sources: A web content mining approach. *Journal of Business Research*, 68(9), 1836–1843. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2015.01.011>
- Kumail, T., Ali, W., Sadiq, F., Wu, D., & Aburumman, A. A. (2022). How destination brand equity and destination brand authenticity influence destination visit intention: Evidence from the United Arab Emirates. *Journal of Promotion Management*, 28(3), 332–358. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10496491.2021.1989540>
- Lam, J. M. S., Ismail, H., & Lee, S. (2020). User-generated content platforms, co-created online experiences, destination image and satisfaction. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 18, 100490. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdmm.2020.100490>
- Li, M., Cheng, M., Quintal, V., & Cheah, I. (2023). From live streamer to viewer?: Exploring travel live streamer persuasive linguistic styles and their impacts on travel intentions. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 40(8), 764–777. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10548408.2023.2294071>
- Lund, N. F., Cohen, S. A., & Scarles, C. (2018). The power of social media storytelling in destination branding. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 8, 271–280. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdmm.2017.05.003>
- Michelson, A., & Paadam, K. (2016). Destination branding and reconstructing symbolic capital of urban heritage: A spatially informed observational analysis in medieval towns. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 5(2), 141–153. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdmm.2015.12.002>
- Mirzaalian, F., Halpenny, E., & Harshaw, H. (2021). Exploring destination loyalty: Application of social media analytics in a nature-based tourism setting. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 20, 100598. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdmm.2021.100598>
- Mutiarni, Y. S., & Pinasthika, Z. (2025). Narrative Communication of Urban Village Tourism in Yogyakarta for Governing Community Resilience. *Indonesian Tourism Journal*, 2(1), 71–82. <https://doi.org/10.69812/itj.v2i1.155>
- Pachucki, C., Grohs, R., & Scholl-Grissemann, U. (2022). Is nothing like before? COVID-19-evoked changes to tourism destination social media communication. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 23, 100692. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdmm.2022.100692>
- Pike, S. (2015). Destination image: Identifying baseline perceptions of Brazil, Argentina and Chile in the nascent Australian long haul travel market. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 4(2), 103–114. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdmm.2015.03.006>

- Richards, G. (2018). Cultural tourism: A review of recent research and trends. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 36, 12–21. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhtm.2018.03.005>
- Rumanti, A. A., Wiratmadja, I. I., Sunaryo, I., Rizana, A. F., & Irianto, D. (2025). The role of organizational and stakeholder factors in strengthening digital literacy and communication for edu-tourism. *Journal of Open Innovation: Technology, Market, and Complexity*, 11(3), 100523. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.joitmc.2025.100523>
- Sano, K., Saito, H., & Yamada, N. (2024). The effects of temporal distance and post type on tourists' attitude strength and decision-making processes. *Tourism Management*, 101, 104846. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2023.104846>
- Vichnevetskaia, A. (2026). Maximising destination branding outcomes: Social media's role in the digital tourism journey. *Journal of Tourism Futures*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/20565607.2026.2651137>
- Vinyals-Mirabent, S., Kavaratzis, M., & Fernández-Cavia, J. (2019). The role of functional associations in building destination brand personality: When official websites do the talking. *Tourism Management*, 75, 148–155. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2019.04.022>
- Wang, L., Guo, Z., Li, F. S., & Xu, X. (2024). Show me the destination or show me the tourist? Effect of image-based user-generated advertisement type on tourists' destination interest. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 27(23), 4354–4373. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2024.2309165>
- Wijaya Murti, D. C., Swasty, W., & Purbani, W. (2026). Village branding and strategic communication: Building brand identity for rural tourism village through co-creation. *Cogent Arts & Humanities*, 13(1), 2624138. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2026.2624138>