



ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Received April 18, 2026;

Revised May 7, 2026;

Revised May 11, 2026

Accepted May 12, 2026;

Published Online June 28, 2026

Citation:

Riady, I., & Pohan, Z. (2026). Digital Technology, Storytelling, and Ecosystem Challenges in Promoting Traditional Batak Cuisine as a Tourist Attraction in Simalungun Regency. *Jurnal Kepariwisata Destinasi, Hospitalitas dan Perjalanan*, 10(1), 140-159.

<https://doi.org/10.34013/jk.v10i1.2568>

© The Author(s) 2026. This article is published under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY-SA 4.0). To view a copy of this license, visit:

<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>



This is an open-access journal, making all its content freely accessible to the public, promoting global knowledge sharing and broader dissemination of research findings.

Research Paper

Digital Technology, Storytelling, and Ecosystem Challenges in Promoting Traditional Batak Cuisine as a Tourist Attraction in Simalungun Regency

Iwan Riady^{1*}

Zulkhaidir Pohan²

¹ Politeknik Pariwisata Palembang, Indonesia

² Politeknik Pariwisata Medan, Indonesia

*e-mail: iwanriady08@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study examines the role of digital technology in promoting traditional Batak cuisine as a tourist attraction in Simalungun Regency, but requires effective promotional strategies in the digital age. This study aims to examine the role of digital technology in promoting traditional Batak cuisine and to analyze the key enabling and constraining factors influencing its utilization among local culinary businesses. The study used a qualitative descriptive approach by observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. The research informants consisted of 13 people. The data were analyzed using the thematic analysis. The results showed that digital technology plays a significant role as an enabler in promoting traditional Batak cuisine through four main dimensions: (1) amplifying visibility through social media; (2) democratizing access; (3) interactivity and engagement building; (4) digital storytelling. Meanwhile, the barriers include limited digital literacy, especially among the older generation, limited capital for digital investment, uneven Internet infrastructure in rural areas, limited time and human resources, content competition and platform algorithm changes, difficulty in measuring ROI, the risk of authenticity distortion, and a lack of coordination among stakeholders. This study concludes that digital technology plays a vital role in promoting Batak traditional cuisine as a tourist attraction, but its success depends on an ecosystem involving various stakeholders and requires a balanced strategy between digital innovation and cultural authenticity preservation.

Keywords: *Batak cuisine, Culinary tourism, Digital marketing, Simalungun*

Declaration of Conflict of Interest: The authors declare no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

1. INTRODUCTION

Various tourism case studies such as the promotion of Lake Toba tourism (Yanti, 2020), the promotion of tourist attractions in Aceh (Fransiska, 2025), and the promotion of cultural tourism in Baubau showed that effective digital promotion can drive increased visits and transactions for local MSMEs (Sartika et al., 2024). The phenomenon of viral content and event-driven marketing shows how the combination of physical events and digital content distribution can generate a surge in visibility. Like lake Toba, Simalungun regency also has attractions with great potential to attract tourists to visit and have the potential to elevate traditional menus to viral status, namely traditional Batak cuisine. Simalungun traditional Batak cuisine has the uniqueness of being traditional and regionally distinctive such as *arsik*, *saksang*, *mie gomak*, and *sambal andaliman* (Rakhman et al., 2024; Darwis et al., 2021). Viral content about local activities can be disseminated through vlogs, reels, or national media, but fame also carries the risk of distorting cultural meaning if the context is not presented proportionally (Hall & Sharples, 2004; Jenkins et al., 2013).

Therefore, the quality of content, communication strategies, collaboration with influencers, and the technical readiness of business actors (e.g., content production capabilities, digital payment systems, and logistics) becomes an important thing in promoting a region. However, this often becomes an obstacle at the local community level (Smith, 2022). The readiness of digital infrastructure in tourist areas also affects the effectiveness of promotion. The ability of business owners to manage online platforms, and supporting services such as logistics, electronic payments are determining factors in translating digital promotion into actual visits and transactions (Evans et al., 2021). In rural areas or indigenous communities, efforts to improve digital literacy are a priority (UNDP, 2024).

Various studies on the promotion of viral content attracting tourist visits have been widely conducted, but interaction between digital technology and culinary culture preservation are still developing (Arifin et al., 2026). In addition to promotion and marketing aspects, the role of digital technology also includes mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the impact of promotion (e.g., social media analytics, customer reviews, visit metrics) that can be used to develop more accurate and sustainable promotional strategies, as well as to identify the economic impact on local businesses so that policy interventions can be more targeted (Smith, 2022; UNDP, 2024).

There are relatively limited researches that address this, particularly in the context of specific local culinary contextualization to understand socio-cultural dynamics, MSME economic structures, and marketing practices at the village/district level. Therefore, this study aims to examine the role of digital technology in promoting traditional Batak cuisine and to analyze the key enabling and constraining factors influencing its utilization among local culinary businesses.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Digital Technology & Marketing

Digital technology is a system that enables the storage, processing, and dissemination of information in the form of electronic data. In the context of tourism, digital technology includes the use of the Internet, social media, websites, tourism applications, digital payment systems, and big data analytics to facilitate promotion and interaction with tourists (Smith, 2022). Plangger et al., (2022) added that digital technologies are key to achieving competitive advantage, across marketing and retailing contexts. In the culinary context, digital marketing not only promotes food products but also the cultural stories, local values, and travel experiences associated with these dishes (Jenkins et al., 2013; Wergadalem, et al., 2023; Veseli et al., 2025). The destination marketing managers also are confronted by a variety of challenges surrounding the strategic use of these technologies, the destination marketing

managers needs to re-think their digital strategies, and most important think that managers need to develop consumer attitudes and engagement with optimisation use Facebook (de Silva, 2021), Instagram (Gross & Wangenheim, 2022), and Tik Tok (Zhang et al., 2023).

According to Evans et al. (2021), social media acts as an interactive space where consumers are not only recipients of information but also creators of content (user-generated content) that expands product exposure. Digital technology bridges the gap between businesses and consumers in the modern tourism ecosystem. Digital marketing is the promotion of products or services through digital channels such as websites, social media, and search engines (Smith., 2022). Digital marketing is interactive, real-time, and data-driven, enabling more accurate market segmentation. Strategies such as influencer marketing, visual storytelling, and content marketing are key to the success of traditional culinary promotion (Widyaningrum & Rakhman, 2023).

Although digital marketing gives big impact, it also has some weakness for marketing like website accessibility, positioning, performance level and load time There are some aspect to improve it such as inclusive web design must be considered to facilitate access, consequently, usability, and navigation efficiency commitment (Herrada-Lores et al., 2022). The social media also important for microenterprises, the benefit of social media for it like noticeable financially, reducing the costs associated with marketing actions, but can also in crease brand recognition and credibility, reaching not only paid and owned media, but also the so-called earned media (Aracil-Jordá et al., 2023).

2.2. Traditional and Neo Cuisine

Traditional cuisine represents a vital element of cultural heritage, reflecting the history, ways of life, and values of communities that have lived in a region across generations This close relationship between food and culture plays a crucial role in safeguarding indigenous knowledge. Consequently, culinary heritage becomes an important resource that needs to be preserved and promoted. Every region and community possesses its own unique food culture, making culinary heritage a significant cultural asset, it serves to link destinations, business actors, consumers, tourists, and other key stakeholders, while also reinforcing local identity (Partarakis et al., 2021; Huete-Alcocer & Hernandez-Rojas, 2022; Ossowska, 2024; Arifin et al., 2026).

Traditional cuisine is transmitted across generations and serves as a representation of cultural identity, when people migrate, they bring their native foods with them, and preparing traditional dishes becomes a way to maintain their cultural roots in a new environment (Abidin et al., 2020). Cooking familiar meals for the family not only reflects pride in their heritage but also helps ease feelings of homesickness (Partarakis et al., 2021; Arifin et al., 2026). Nevertheless, cuisine is not static (Huete-alcocer & Hernandez-rojas, 2022). When immigrants introduce their food in a different country, they offer it not only to those from similar backgrounds but also to people from diverse cultures, as a result they often adapt original recipes to suit a broader range of tastes and preferences (Khan et al., 2025). These modifications can lead to the creation of new flavors while still preserving the cultural essence of the dishes. Despite such changes, the distinctive cuisine of each country or community continues to represent its history, lifestyle, values, and beliefs (Partarakis et al., 2021).

Contemporary culinary terminology increasingly focuses on ingredients and their origins. Concepts such as local, organic, sustainable, and fair trade have become more widely used. This change reflects a growing awareness of making responsible food choices, including supporting local producers, taking environmental impacts into account, and emphasizing ethical sourcing practices (Ossowska et al., 2024). As a result, this terminology influences cultural perspectives by fostering a more thoughtful and accountable approach to food consumption, while promoting sustainability and ethical values (Cozma & Şaganean, 2023). The modernist cuisine movement, which applies scientific principles and techniques to achieve creative outcomes, occupies a distinctive position within the culinary arts and it has

facilitated the exchange of innovations that were once closely guarded similar to practices in the scientific field and this openness has influenced the culinary world through the widespread use of new techniques and ingredients (Hall & Sharples, 2004). Nevertheless, the result of research noted that the use of scientific approaches is often viewed as conflicting with creativity and may attract criticism for being perceived as lacking authenticity (Madeira et al., 2022).

Previous researchers showed that traditional cuisine serves as a foundation to represents cultural identity, history, cooking techniques passed down from generation to generation, as well as the use of distinctive local ingredients and its value lies in authenticity, continuity, and social significance (Surya et al., 2023; Arifin et al., 2026). Meanwhile, neo cuisine or modern and innovative cuisine develops from that foundation by reinterpreting tradition (Abidin et al., 2020; Guiné et al., 2021; Lee et al., 2022). Neo cuisine still draws inspiration from traditional recipes, ingredients, or philosophy, but prepares them with: modern techniques such as molecular gastronomy, more contemporary presentation, or adjustments to global tastes and trends. The correlation between traditional and neo are the traditional cuisine as inspiration source for development, transformation one, and conservation culture (Rahmat et al., 2025).

According to Khan et al. 2025, traditional cuisine can become a tourist attraction if it is packaged well without losing its authenticity. Thus, preserving traditional cuisine also means preserving the local culture and collective history. The other examples for the traditional cuisine development such as traditional cuisine like *nasi tuntung oncom* from Tasikmalaya culinary and Pork Wielkopolska traditional Poland culinary into neo cuisine (Niedbała, 2020; Rahmat et al., 2025). Culinary tourism plays an important role in supporting the creative economy and sustainable tourism, especially in the Lake Toba region, culinary tourism is one of the strategies for strengthening the identity of the destination. Batak traditional cuisine reflects the philosophy of life of its people, which is closely connected to nature and the value of togetherness. Foods such as *arsik*, *saksang*, *mi gomak*, and *sambal andaliman* are not just dishes, but also representations of social and spiritual identity (Darwis et al., 2021; Simanjuntak, 2022; Rakhman et al., 2024).

2.3. Cultural Tourism in Gastronomy

Cultural tourism is generally understood as a type of tourism that emphasizes experiencing cultural settings, encompassing heritage, arts, traditions, and the way of life of local communities (Alnaim, 2026). While other researchers said that cultural tourism refers to a form of travel in which the primary motivation of visitors is to explore, understand, and engage with both tangible and intangible cultural attractions or products at a destination (Partarakis et al., 2021; Cozma & Şaganean, 2023; Del Soldato & Massari, (2024). These attractions reflect the unique material, intellectual, spiritual, and emotional characteristics of a society, including elements such as art and architecture, historical and cultural heritage, culinary traditions, literature, music, creative industries, as well as living cultures expressed through lifestyles, values, beliefs, and traditions (Richards, 2018). Culture, as a key component of gastronomic tourism, is often reflected in individuals' intrinsic desire to explore and understand different cultures. Although gastronomic tourism is categorized as a special-interest form of tourism, it also enables visitors to learn about the cultural characteristics of a destination through its local cuisine, making gastronomic tourists simultaneously cultural tourists (Rachman et al., 2024; Khan et al., 2025). Furthermore, gastronomic tours designed to showcase regional dishes and food traditions play a significant role in influencing destination choice and enhancing tourist experiences, while also contributing to the promotion of the region (Sormaz et al., 2016).

The gastronomic identity of a country or region reflected in the types of food and beverages produced and consumed along with its specific culinary features such as local dishes, restaurants, and specialties,

is closely linked to gastronomic tourism, which centers on food and beverage experiences (Yıkımsı et al., 2024).

Gastronomy has increasingly become one of the most important factors influencing tourists in selecting their holiday destinations (Khan et al., 2025). For the example *pempek* (Surya et al., 2023; Wargadalem et al., 2023) has gastronomy like historical and culture that has been branding of Palembang to attract tourist. However, clearly defining the relationships among these aspects remains complex as gastronomic tourism can be understood as a form of travel that involves exploring the consumption, preparation, and presentation of food, as well as meal patterns and eating practices within different culinary cultures it represents the overall experience individuals have with food and cuisine, while also encompassing the study of the relationship between culture and food as both a science and an art of good eating (Lin & Selim, 2026). In essence, gastronomic tourism captures people's experiences with food in a broad sense. Furthermore, gastronomic tourism plays a significant role in supporting economic and social development, given the importance of food and beverages within the tourism industry (Saksono et al., 2022).

2.4. Digital Technology in Promoting Gastronomy Tourism

According to Dawson, (2023) there are three type of technological adaptation in the business sector, namely those based on the platforms utilized, payment systems, and the age segmentation of digital technology users. First, in terms of the platforms utilized by business actors across the three sectors examined in this study, most rely on marketplaces. A marketplace is a digital platform that facilitates interactions between sellers and buyers, enabling them to carry out transactions involving goods or services. Secondly, regarding payment methods, the three businesses examined in this study predominantly offer Cash on Delivery (COD) as an option. This system enables customers to make payments directly to the courier upon receiving the goods it provides convenience, particularly for individuals who do not use electronic payment systems. However, not all consumers have access to digital payment facilities such as credit cards or bank accounts. Third, the adoption of digital technology based on user age segments is largely driven by millennials and Generation Z. Millennials in particular, tend to be more accustomed to technology and social media, as they grew up alongside the rapid development of information technology and the Internet (Bhatnagar & Shah, 2026; Hernandez et al., 2026; Upe, 2023). Several researchers however, has found some mistake in using digital promotion, first, unconsistence corporate visualization, the corporate identity is a visualization tool that differentiates a business from other businesses with a symbol with a unique philosophy (Adino & Wardaya, 2023). Secondly, uncreativity, creative advertisements will touch the subconscious of consumers (Zhang et al., 2023). Third, marketing copywriting style that is still too explicit (Armutcu et al., 2023).

Advances in technology and their application in food science have a direct impact on gastronomic practices, encouraging chefs and culinary researchers to continuously develop innovative approaches to improve flavor, texture, and overall dining experiences. As a result, the use of advanced technologies has become increasingly important (Blayone, 2019). Gastronomy extends beyond the mere act of eating, encompassing the social, historical, and cultural dimensions associated with food (Bayhan & Yaman, 2025). As destinations strive to highlight their distinctive culinary identities, technology plays a crucial role in increasing visibility, promoting local cuisine, and enhancing consumer experiences for example, digitalization and social media enable local foods to reach a global audience, allowing destinations to effectively market their culinary heritage (Seyitoğlu, 2026).

Digital technology expands the reach of traditional culinary promotion through visual content, short videos, and collaborations with local influencers, platforms such as Tik Tok, Instagram, and YouTube are the main media for attracting tourists (Gross & Von Wangenheim, 2022; Zhang et al., 2023). According to Sulaiman et al., (2022), digital media-based promotion strategies increase visibility and

positive perceptions of local products. However, their effectiveness depends on the ability of business actors to create informative and interesting content without losing the cultural meaning (Blayone, 2019).

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research design

The research approach used in this study is a qualitative descriptive approach. This approach was chosen because the study aims to understand and describe in depth the social phenomenon that occurs, namely how digital technology plays a role in promoting traditional Batak cuisine as a tourist attraction in Simalungun Regency. Through this approach, the researcher seeks to uncover the meanings, perceptions, and experiences of culinary business actors, local government, and tourists in the digital promotion process. Qualitative research does not emphasize numbers or statistics, but rather the interpretation of data obtained through interviews, observation, and documentation (Creswell, 2016).

3.2. Data collection procedure

The research used primary and secondary data, that was collected by triangle method such as interviews, observation and documentation (Sugiyono, 2020). The interview was conducted semi-structured interviews guided by a predefined interview protocol as the primary data collection instrument. The interview protocol was designed based on the study objectives and relevant literature by give 15 questions about form digital wass used in Simalungun, their strategy to promote by digital, their opinion about effectivity of digital promotion, role of digital promotion, enabling and constraining factors to used digital promotion. The interviews was conduct in 2 months, in addition audio recording sand field notes were used to enhance the reliability and completeness of the collected data.

3.3. Research Informant Profile

Table 1. Research Informant Profiles

No	Informant Code	Informat Category	Old (years)	Gender	Informat information
1	PKU-01	Culinary Business Operators	45	Woman	Owner of Arsik Restaurant in Parapat
2	PKU-02	Culinary Business Operators	38	Man	Owner of Arsik Restaurant in Parapat
3	PKU-03	Culinary Business Operators	52	Woman	Sambal Tuktuk Seller in Pematang Raya
4	PKU-04	Culinary Business Operators	33	Man	Owner of Cafe Mie Gomak Modern
5	PKU-05	Culinary Business Operators	41	Woman	Batak Culinary Catering Manager
6	WD-01	Domestic Tourists	29	Woman	Tourists from Jakarta
7	WD-02	Domestic Tourists	35	Man	Tourists from Bandung
8	WM-01	Foreign Tourists	42	Man	Tourists from the Netherlands
9	WM-02	Foreign Tourists	31	Woman	Tourists from Malaysia
10	DP-01	Tourism Office	48	Man	Head of Tourism Promotion Section
11	DP-02	Tourism Office	36	Woman	Creative Economy Staff
12	KK-01	Content Creator	27	Man	Food vlogger with 50K followers
13	KK-02	Content Creator	24	Woman	Local culinary Instagram influencer (35K followers)

Source: Primary Data, (2025)

This study involved 13 informants who were selected purposively based on the criterion of direct involvement in the phenomenon under study, The complete profile of the research informants can be seen in Table 1.

3.4. Data analysis techniques

Data analysis is conducted by referring to the Miles and Huberman (2014) model, which includes three main stages: data reduction, data display, and drawing/verifying conclusions. This model is chosen because it is interactive and iterative, meaning the analysis process occurs continuously from data collection to conclusion drawing, and provides a comprehensive picture of the phenomenon being studied, namely the role of digital technology in promoting Batak traditional cuisine as a tourist attraction in Simalungun Regency.

The first stages is the process of selecting relevant data, simplifying, focusing and grouping data. During the interview, much of the information obtained was not in accordance with the topic of discussion. For example, in the question about social media used for promotion, two of the informants answered using WhatsApp, Instagram, Tik Tok and explained the frequency of use of each social media platform. The use of WhatsApp in this interview was not the social media intended. The author chose Instagram and Tik Tok as the answers in the interview and also simplified the informants' answers.

The second stages is display data, the result of interview was grouping and displayed by table and the last stage is interpretation. The data was analysed about the supporting and inhibiting factors in its utilization. The third stages, data was validation used triangulation and member checking techniques. Triangulation was conducted by comparing information obtained from different informants and supporting documentation. Meanwhile, member checking was performed by reconfirming the interview results and interpretations with the participants to ensure the accuracy and consistency of the collected.

4. RESULT

4.1. Forms of Digital Technology Utilization in Traditional Batak Culinary Promotion

Based on the results of observations and in-depth interviews, there are five forms of digital technology utilization used by traditional Batak culinary business actors in Simalungun Regency Namely Instagram, Tik Tok, YoutTube, Tourism websites and blogs, and Google business and review platforms. These forms of utilization can be categorized into platforms and strategies in using social media as the primary promotion platform (Table 2).

Table 2. The result of interview digital form technology in Batak Culinary Promotion

Form of Digital Technology Utilization	The Result of Interview
Instagram	<p><i>"I started actively using Instagram in 2020, initially out of necessity due to the pandemic. But the impact has been remarkable. Every time I post a photo of arsik with Lake Toba as the background, many people comment and ask for the address. Now, nearly 40% of my customers come because they saw it on Instagram first." (Interview, October 15, 2025).</i></p> <p><i>"Instagram is really powerful for promoting culinary delights. Visuals are everything. I often collaborate with Batak restaurants to create content. I usually photograph the food from a good angle, describe the taste, and provide the location. In a day, hundreds of people can save my posts." (Interview, October 18, 2025).</i></p>

Tik Tok	<p><i>"I focus on Tik Tok because it's easier to go viral. I once made a video showing how to make mie gomak while dancing a little, and it got 500,000 views. After that, it was really busy with customers. Tik Tok is great because its algorithm promotes local and authentic content." (Interview, October 16, 2025).</i></p> <p><i>"Tik Tok has democratized content creation. You don't need an expensive camera or professional editing. The important thing is to be authentic and engaging. I've made more than 50 videos about Batak cuisine, and they've gotten millions of views. This has really helped raise awareness about Batak food among a national audience." (Interview, October 17, 2025).</i></p>
Youtube	<p><i>"I have a small YouTube channel that I fill with Batak cooking tutorial videos. It doesn't have as many viewers as Tik Tok, but they are more engaged. Many watch until the end and comment asking for detailed recipes. YouTube is also good for building authority as a Batak cuisine expert." (Interview, October 19, 2025).</i></p>
Tourism websites and blogs	<p><i>"Last year, I created a simple website for my restaurant. It contains the menu, prices, a photo gallery, and a little bit about the history of arsik. This website helps when people search for 'arsik Parapat restaurant' on Google. Although the traffic is not as high as Instagram, it gives a more professional impression." (Interview, October 15, 2025).</i></p> <p><i>"We at the Tourism Office have developed an official website that includes a special section for cuisine. We list all verified traditional restaurants with complete information: address, menu, price range, and contact details. This website is also available in English for international tourists." (Interview, October 20, 2025).</i></p> <p><i>"I sell bottled tuktuk chili sauce through Shopee and Tokopedia. At first, I was hesitant because this chili sauce is a local product, and I wondered if anyone would buy it online. Turns out the response was great—buyers from Jakarta, Surabaya, even Kalimantan. They're usually Batak people who've moved away and miss the taste of home." (Interview, October 16, 2025).</i></p>
Google business and review platforms	<p><i>"I registered with Google My Business and diligently asked customers to leave reviews. Now when people search for 'mie gomak Parapat' on Google, my cafe appears on the first page with a 4.7 rating from over 200 reviews. This is very helpful in attracting new customers, especially tourists who are visiting Parapat for the first time." (Interview, October 16, 2025).</i></p>

4.2. The Key Enabling Factors for the Use of Digital Technology

Based on interview, several factors support the effective use of digital technology in promoting traditional Batak cuisine in Simalungun Regency. Data from the Simalungun Tourism Office shows that Internet penetration in the Parapat area and its surroundings has reached 75%, with smartphone ownership among business actors reaching 90% (Table 3).

Table 3. Enabling factors for use of digital technology

Enabling Factors	The Result of Interview
Product	<p><i>"Culinary Batak content goldmine. Many angles can be explored: the unique ingredients andaliman, traditional cooking methods, cultural significance, even the 'weird' factor of raw naniura. This uniqueness makes content about Batak cuisine stand out in a feed full of mainstream culinary content."(Interview, October 18, 2025).</i></p> <p><i>"As a local content creator, I feel a responsibility to promote culinary and Batak culture. It's not just about views or followers, but also about preserving our heritage and helping local</i></p>

	<i>businesses. Many fellow creators here have the same mindset, so there is a sense of collective mission.</i> "(Interview, October 17, 2025).
	<i>"After eating at some of the recommended Batak restaurants, I definitely post on Instagram Stories and feeds. Many of my friends are also interested in going to Lake Toba after seeing my post. Word-of-mouth through social media is powerful.</i> "(Interview, October 21, 2025).
Infrastructure	<i>"The Internet infrastructure in Parapat is quite adequate, with 4G and 5G available in some areas. This supports business actors to be active on social media, upload video content, and even live stream. The government also continues to upgrade digital infrastructure as part of the development of the Lake Toba Special Economic Zone."</i> (Interview, October 20, 2025).
Human Resources	<i>"Since 2021, we have been regularly holding digital marketing training for culinary SMEs. The material ranges from basic social media management, content creation, product photography, to digital advertising. We also collaborate with local practitioners and influencers as trainers. The response has been very positive, with high enthusiasm from business owners."</i> (Interview, October 20, 2025) <i>"I participated in several training programs from the Department. The most helpful one was the photography workshop. Before, my photos were just random, but after the training, I learned about composition, lighting, and editing. The improvement was significant, and my Instagram engagement increased after that."</i> (Interview, October 15, 2025).
Promotion	<i>"We have a WhatsApp group for culinary entrepreneurs in Parapat. There, we share tips, event information, and even collaborate on joint promotions. For example, we created 'Parapat Culinary Week' and promoted it together on social media with the same hashtag. Collective effort is more powerful than promoting individually."</i> (Interview, October 16, 2025).

4.3. Constraining Factors for the Use of Digital Technology

Based on interview, several factors support the effective use of digital technology in promoting traditional Batak cuisine in Simalungun Regency (Table 4).

Table 4. Constraining factors for the used of digital technology

Constraining Factors	The Result of Interview
People	<i>"I'm old, so it's a bit difficult with technology. Instagram and Tik Tok that I'm still confused. I posted a picture of my son asking for help. Especially if you have to make a video editing or digital marketing strategy, it's beyond my capabilities. That's why I rely heavily on my children to handle the digital side of the business."</i> (Interview, October 16, 2025). <i>"The biggest Challenge in the MSME digitization program is the digital literacy gap. Older generation entrepreneurs are often resistant or intimidated by technology. They are more comfortable with the traditional word-of-mouth, banners, or physical brochures. It takes intensive and sustained mentoring to truly adopt a digital mindset."</i> (Interview, October 20, 2025).
Equipment	<i>"To make good content, it takes equipment-a decent camera, lighting, and editing software. It all takes capital. Not to mention that if you want paid ads on Instagram or collaborate with big influencers, it can be millions. For a small business like mine, this is quite a burden. That's why I only rely on organic reach with the smartphone I have."</i> (Interview, October 15, 2025).

Infrastructure

"I live in a small town, far from the suburbs. The Internet is often slow or completely dead. Sometimes I want to upload photos or videos, but loading takes too long. It's frustrating and discourages me from being active on social media. Finally, I had to go to an area closer to Parapat if I wanted to upload content."(Interview, October 16, 2025).

"Running a restaurant is already taking up full-time - from the morning to buy ingredients, cook, serve customers, until the night can rest. To consistently post on Instagram or Tik Tok is challenging. Sometimes I have to sacrifice sleep or family time just to create and post content. Ideally, I need to hire someone specifically for social media management, but haven't been able to."(Interview, October 15, 2025).

"The Instagram or Tik Tok Algorithm is constantly changing. Sometimes my content goes viral, sometimes it sinks, even though the quality is the same. It's unpredictable and frustrating. Also, competition was high—a lot of Culinary Content competed for attention. You need an updated strategy to stay relevant."(Interview, October 16, 2025).

"As a content creator, I've noticed that algorithms now heavily favor short-form videos. So, content creators or businesses that still rely on photo posts that his reach decrease significantly. They must adapt to video content, which requires different skill sets and equipment. Not everyone is ready for this transition."(Interview, October 17, 2025).

"I'm active on Instagram and sometimes do sponsored posts, but I don't really know if my effort and expense are worth it. I see the number of likes and followers increasing, but does that translate to an actual sales increase? Difficult to track. I wish there were a clearer way to measure the ROI of my digital marketing activities."(Interview, October 19, 2025)

"There is a tension between maintaining authenticity and meeting digital audience expectations. Audiences now expect everything to look perfect and pretty. But the traditional cooking process is messy, and traditional food colors are sometimes not photogenic. There is a temptation to alter things for the sake of better content, but this can compromise the authenticity that actually becomes our selling point."(Interview, October 15, 2025).

"One of the challenges is the lack of coordination. Business actors promote themselves; content creators create content based on individual interest; the government has its own program. If all of this can be coordinated in one integrated strategy with consistent branding, the impact will be greater. But the reality is, this coordination is difficult and requires sustained effort."(Interview, October 20, 2025).

5. DISCUSSION

5.1. Enabling Influencing Its Utilization Among Local Culinary Businesses

The interview findings revealed that Simalungun Regency has several supporting factors in the development of digital promotion, including its distinctive culinary heritage and the participation of various stakeholders, such as local communities, culinary business actors, government institutions, and content creators. These stakeholders exhibit commitment, awareness, and digital capabilities in utilizing technology to promote traditional Batak cuisine. These supporting factors strengthen the role of digital technology in promoting traditional Batak cuisine. The rich culinary heritage of Simalungun provides attractive promotional content, while the involvement of local communities, business actors,

government institutions, and content creators enhances the dissemination of culinary information through digital platforms. The commitment, awareness, and digital capabilities possessed by these stakeholders facilitate the promotional process, increase audience engagement, and expand the visibility of traditional cuisine in the digital space. This phenomenon is in line with the study conducted by Veseli et al. (2025), which found that the presence of attractive local objects and active community participation contributed to the effectiveness of digital promotional activities. It also a line with the digital marketing theory proposed by Smith, 2022 which states that digital technology not only serves as a channel for information distribution, but also as a platform to build engagement, create community, and facilitate co-creation of value between producers and consumers. In the context of traditional Batak culinary, digital technology plays a role in several dimensions:

First, visibility amplification as social media such as Instagram, Tik Tok, and YouTube allow traditional Batak Culinary that was previously only known locally to gain national and even international exposure. Digital technology allows a niche or local product to find its audience spread across various geographies, which was previously uneconomical to reach through traditional media. The finding that 68% of travelers get culinary information through digital media confirms the dominance of digital platforms in the modern traveler's customer journey, this findings in line with the research of Widjanarko et al. (2024), who found that social media is becoming an important channel for local culinary promotion, where communication strategies and visual aesthetics are key success factors.

Digital technology lowers the barrier to entry for promotion. Culinary SMEs with limited capital can now promote their products through free platforms such as Instagram or Tik Tok, without having to spend big on traditional advertising such as TV or billboards. The findings revealed that micro-entrepreneurs can reach hundreds of thousands of views through organic content on Tik Tok demonstrates the democratization of this access. This supports Evans et al. (2021) argument that social media creates a level playing field where small businesses can compete with big brands for consumer attention and engagement, provided they are able to create authentic and engaging content.

Unlike traditional media that are one-way communication, digital platforms allow two-way interaction between business actors and audiences. Comments, direct messages, live streaming, and user-generated content create a dialogue that builds relationships and trust. The finding that user-generated content from customers who share their culinary experiences becomes a powerful promotion confirms the theory of word-of-mouth marketing in the digital age (Blayone, 2019). Digital word-of-mouth or electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) has proven to have a great influence on consumer decision-making, especially in the context of tourism and culinary, where trust and social proof are important factors (Vaseli et al., 2025).

Digital technology enables the delivery of a richer and multilayered narrative about traditional cuisine. Videos, photos, captions, and interactive content can convey not only the visual and sensory aspects of food, but also the cultural context, history, and philosophical values. The finding that content that integrates cultural storytelling is more effective in building appreciation and influencing visiting decisions supports the theory of narrative transportation which stated that engaging narratives can transport audiences into stories, creating a stronger emotional connection and behavioral impact than mere factual information. In the context of Batak culinary, digital storytelling that explains andaliman philosophy, the meaning of saksang in traditional ceremonies, or the traditional process of making Archives not only promotes products, but also transfers cultural knowledge and builds cultural appreciation. This is in line with the concept of gastrodiploamacy where food is used as a medium of cultural diplomacy to introduce and build appreciation for a culture (Jenkins & Green, 2013; Abidin et al., 2020; Cozma & Şaganean, 2023; Seyitoğlu, 2026).

One of the important findings of this study is the ambivalent role of digital technology in the authenticity of traditional culinary. On the one hand, digital platforms facilitate documentation,

dissemination of knowledge, and preservation of culinary traditions. The demands of commercialization and instagramability create pressure to adapt or even change the authentic characteristics of the culinary.

The findings also support between maintaining authenticity and meeting digital audience expectations illustrates the dialectic described by MacCannell (1973) in the concept of staged authenticity. MacCannell argues that in the context of tourism, authenticity is often constructed and staged to meet tourist expectations, creating a so-called front stage that differs from the more genuine back stage. In the context of digital culinary, businesses face pressure to create Instagram-worthy front stages of photogenic food, aesthetic presentations, and picturesque settings that may differ from the authentic way the food is served and consumed in its original cultural context.

However, this study also found that authenticity is actually a unique selling proposition sought by tourists, especially more sophisticated tourists. Hall and Sharples (2004) explained that in food tourism, there is a segment of tourists who specifically seek an authentic culinary experience, not just food that is tasteful but also the genuine aspects. The finding that content that emphasizes the authenticity of traditional processes, interviews with senior chefs, and documentation of culinary rituals actually gets high engagement shows that there is a market appetite for authenticity, not just superficial visuals.

5.2. Digital Documentation as Cultural Preservation

A positive aspect of digital technology is its function as a tool for documentation and preservation. YouTube videos documenting traditional cooking techniques, interviews with senior generations who still hold recipes for generations, or digital archives about the evolution of local culinary traditions serve as an accessible and searchable "living archive". Like the uniqueness of Batak cuisine with andaliman spices. An interview with a business community member there stated,

"Batak culinary content is a gold mine. There are many angles that can be explored: unique ingredients like andaliman, traditional cooking methods, cultural meanings, even the 'strange' factor of raw naniura. This uniqueness makes content about Batak cuisine stand out among feeds filled with mainstream culinary content." (Interview, October 18, 2025).

Its use on YouTube or other digital promotions attracts the audience's attention, broadens the spread of information, and increases public interest in traditional Batak cuisine. One of the business community said:

"After eating at some of the recommended culinary and Batak restaurants, I definitely post on youtube, Instagram an Stories and feeds. Many of my friends are also interested in going to Lake Toba after seeing my post. Word-of-mouth through social media is powerful." (Interview, October 21, 2025).

This is in line with the concept of digital heritage technology that can be used to preserve and disseminate intangible cultural heritage such as traditional culinary practices (Deb et al., 2022; Gonçalves et al., 2022; Del Soldato & Massari, 2024). Research from Arifin et al., (2026) also stated that social media and digital exposure can increase young people's interest in traditional food, digital technology helps revitalize culinary heritage by making traditional food more visible, attractive, and relevant to the younger generation. Research from Zheng, (2023) also showed that social media such as Tik Tok strengthen the documentation of food culture, increase the exposure of local culture, and expand cross-cultural understanding in the convention for the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage, also emphasizes the importance of documentation and dissemination as a preservation strategy. Digital platforms allow culinary knowledge previously handed down orally and limited to

family circles or small communities to be documented, archived, and accessed by a wider audience, including younger generations who may be geographically separated.

The finding that educational content is effective at building appreciation without changing the authenticity of the product suggests a potential balancing strategy. Instead of changing products to suit the tastes of the market, businesses can educate the market to appreciate authenticity. This approach is in line with the concept of market education in marketing theory where producers not only respond to existing market needs but also actively shape market preferences through education (Hernandez et al., 2026). In a traditional culinary context, education about the cultural value, health benefits, or uniqueness of traditional ingredients and techniques can change consumer perceptions from this is strange/unattractive to this is unique and valuable.

5.3. Supporting and Inhibiting Factors: Digital Ecosystem Analysis

The effectiveness of the use of digital technology cannot be understood in isolation, but must be seen in the context of a complex ecosystem involving multiple stakeholders and enabling and constraining factors (UNDP, 2024). This study found that the success of digital promotion of traditional cuisine depends on the ecosystem that involves culinary entrepreneurs as content creators and service providers, local governments as regulators and enablers through programs and infrastructure, content creators and influencers as intermediaries expanding reach, social media users as co-creators of content through UGC and reviews, social media platforms such as Instagram, Tik Tok, Google, facebook. as infrastructure, and local communities as support systems and knowledge holders

The interactions between these elements form refer to as a technology-enhanced tourism experience ecosystem where technology is not only a tool, but an integral part of experience creation and value co-creation . However, this study also reveals the existence of a digital divide that creates inequalities in access and benefits from digitization. As stated by several communities regarding the constraining factor that he is old and needs his child's help to operate social media. Other statements are that small businesses are unable to have adequate camera equipment, and so on . The finding that senior business actors struggle with digital literacy, businesses in rural areas face limited Internet infrastructure, and small SMEs are constrained in capital for digital investment shows that the benefits of digital technology are not evenly distributed. This is in line with the critical perspective on digital technology proposed by Armutcu et al. (2023), which states that although digital technology promises democratization, in practice it often magnifies existing inequalities. Those who already have the resources-financial capital, human capital on digital literacy, and social capital networking are more better to utilize digital technology effectively, while the marginalized are increasingly left behind. In the context of culinary promotion in Simalungun, this means that if there is no deliberate intervention, the gap between tech-savvy and well-resourced business actors and traditional and resource-constrained ones will widen. Government digitalization programs are crucial to bridging this gap.

The findings also found that the training program from the government has a positive impact, but coordination among stakeholders is still weak, underscores the importance of the government's role not only as a provider of training, but also as a coordinator and orchestrator of the digital tourism ecosystem. Hall and Sharples, (2004) emphasizes the importance of governance in sustainable tourism development. In the context of digital tourism, governance roles include infrastructure provision by ensuring equitable access to the Internet and digital infrastructure. Create systematic capacity building and sustained training programs. Creating policy framework as regulations that support the digital economy but also protect local businesses and cultural authenticity, facilitating collaboration between multiple stakeholders, and maintaining quality assurance as standards and certifications to ensure quality and authenticity.

Another things to be highlight is business actors promote in a fragmented manner, without unified branding or coordinated campaigns, shows the opportunity cost of a lack of coordination. Destination branding theory states that coordinated branding at the destination level is more effective than individual business promotion because it creates collective identity and economies of scale in marketing efforts (Huete-Alcocer & Hernandez-Rojas, 2022).

5.4. Implications for Sustainable Cultural Tourism

The use of digital technology in the promotion of traditional culinary has important implications for the development of sustainable cultural tourism in Simalungun Regency. In the context of sustainable tourism, the triple bottom line concept emphasizes the balance between economic prosperity, social equity, and environmental protection.

This research findings reveals that economically, digital technology is proven to bring multiplier effect benefits through increased visibility and market access, which translates to increased visits and revenue, opening of new markets in online marketplace for packaged products, job creation in the creative economy such as content creators, digital marketers, and the success of the culinary sector encourages other tourism sectors such as transportation, accommodation, and souvenirs. However, to ensure inclusive economic benefits, it is necessary to address the digital divide and ensure that small and traditional businesses are not left behind in the digital transformation.

From a socio-cultural perspective, digital technologies create both opportunities and challenges in the preservation and promotion of traditional culinary heritage. On the positive side, digital platforms contribute to the documentation and preservation of traditional culinary knowledge by enabling recipes, cooking techniques, and cultural narratives to be stored and widely shared. In addition, digital media help revitalize younger generations' interest in traditional foods by presenting culinary heritage in more attractive, modern, and accessible formats. External recognition through digital exposure also strengthens local communities' pride and appreciation of their own cultural identity. Furthermore, digital technologies function as platforms for cultural exchange, allowing people from different regions and backgrounds to learn about, understand, and appreciate diverse culinary traditions.

There are also some risks to be consider such as commodification and simplification of culture for tourist consumption, loss in authentic meaning when food is removed from its original cultural context, pressure for adaptation that can erode cultural integrity, and finally over-tourism if demand increases without proper management. Richards (2018) stated that in the concept of creative tourism, emphasizes the importance of ensuring that tourism development empowers local communities and respects cultural authenticity, not just exploiting culture for commercial gain.

The findings of the study also touched on concerns about environmental sustainability, particularly related to the sustainability of local raw material supplies, such as andaliman and fish from Lake Toba. If digital promotion succeeds in significantly increasing demand, it must be balanced with sustainable sourcing practices, conservation efforts for endemic ingredients, controlled harvest to avoid overexploitation, and supply chain management that ensures fair benefits for local farmers/fishermen. Hall and Sharples, (2004) emphasizes that gastronomy tourism must be integrated with food system sustainability, ensuring that promotion does not create pressure that threatens ecological balance or traditional livelihood systems.

5.5. CARE Model for Culture-Based Traditional Culinary

Based on the findings and analysis, this study produces a conceptual model for digital promotion of sustainable and culturally sensitive traditional culinary which is Model CARE (see figure 1) consist of Cultural, Authenticity, Reach Enhancement, Engagement Building, and Economic Empowerment. The first and second elements is cultural and authenticity layer which is prioritize content that showcases

authentic practices, ingredients, and cultural context, integrate storytelling that explains cultural significance, collaborate with cultural experts and elders to ensure accuracy, and resist pressure to over-commercialize or distort for the sake of visual appeal.

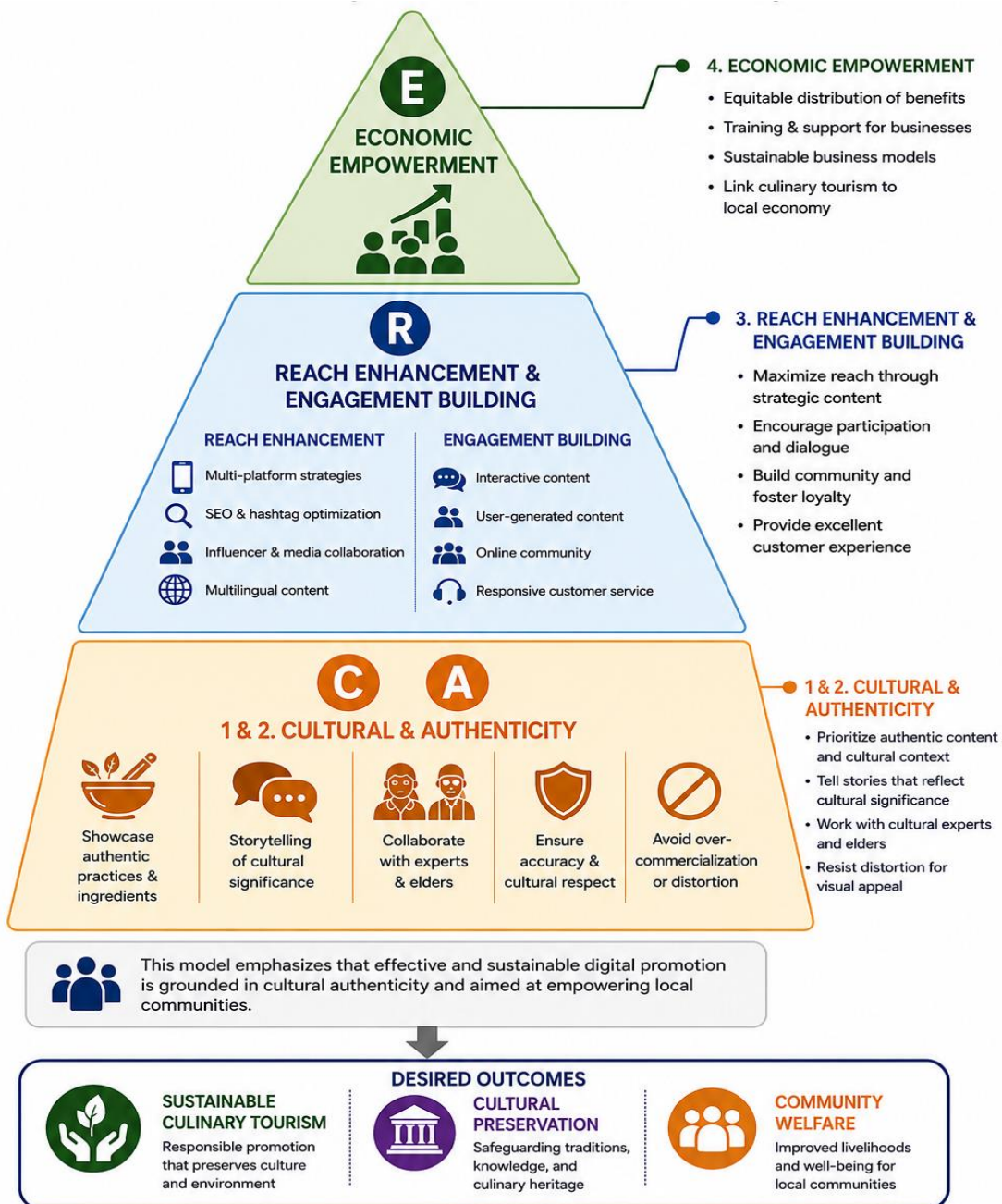


Figure 1. Cultural, Authenticity, Reach Enhancement and Engagement Building, and Economic Empowerment (CARE) model

The third element is reach enhancement and engagement building layer, by utilize multiple digital platforms with tailored content strategies, leverage SEO and hashtag strategies to improve discoverability, collaborate with influencers and media partners to amplify reach, and develop multilingual content to attract diverse tourist segments. For the engagement building layer this can be in form of creating interactive content that encourages participation and dialogue, foster user-

generated content through experiential offerings, build an online community around cultural culinary appreciation, and maintain responsiveness and excellent customer service.

The fourth element is economic empowerment by ensuring the benefits of digital tourism are distributed equitably, provide training and support to digitally underserved businesses, develop sustainable business models that balance profit and cultural preservation, and create links between culinary tourism and the broader local economy. This Model emphasizes that effective and sustainable digital promotion is not only about maximizing reach or engagement, but must be grounded in cultural authenticity and aimed at empowering local communities.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that digital technology plays a role in preserving authenticity through digital documentation as a living cultural archive, digital storytelling that transfers traditional culinary knowledge to young people and a wide audience, and educational content that builds appreciation for authenticity without having to change culinary characteristics.

Digital technology has become an important enabler in promoting traditional Batak cuisine, supported by a favorable digital tourism ecosystem. This support is driven by three key factors: the growing penetration of internet access and smartphone ownership, strengthened by improving digital infrastructure; government-led digitization and training initiatives that regularly promote culinary products; and tourists themselves, who act as organic brand ambassadors by sharing their culinary experiences through social media. However, several constraints still limit the full potential of this digital promotion effort. These include limited time for managing social media and producing content, intense content competition and rapidly changing platform algorithms, difficulties in measuring return on investment due to limited understanding of analytics and tracking, and the risk of compromising culinary authenticity under pressure to create viral, culture-based marketing content.

Overall, the success of digital promotion for traditional Batak cuisine depends not only on technological adoption, but also on adaptive strategies, stakeholder collaboration, and a careful balance between digital innovation and cultural authenticity. In conclusion, the authors formulate the CARE Model as a conceptual guide for digital promotion of traditional culinary tourism that is both sustainable and culturally responsible. By integrating cultural authenticity, strategic digital reach, meaningful engagement, and economic empowerment, the model provides a balanced framework for promoting traditional cuisine without undermining its cultural integrity.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The author would like to express their sincere gratitude to all parties who have contributed to this research. Special thanks are extended to colleagues and reviewer for their valuable comments and suggestions that significantly improved the quality of this manuscript.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS (CrediT)

Iwan Riady: Conceptualization, Methodology, Investigation, Data Curation, Writing – Original Draft, Supervision.

Zulkhaidir Pohan: Conceptualization, Methodology, Validation, Formal Analysis, Writing – Review & Editing, Project Administration. Visualization.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares that there no commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

REFERENCES

- Abidin, M. R. Z., Ishak, F. A. C., Ismail, I. A., & Juhari, N. H. (2020). Modern Malaysian cuisine: Identity, culture, or modern-day fad?. *International Journal of Gastronomy and Food Science*, 21, 100220. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijgfs.2020.100220>
- Adino, T. F. L., & Wardaya, M. (2023). Analysis of startup business promotion mistakes and solutions through digital media. In *Sustainable Development in Creative Industries: Embracing Digital Culture for Humanities* (pp. 226-230). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.1201/9781003372486-42>
- Alnaim, M. M. (2026). Environmental and Sustainability Indicators Cultural tourism as a driver for sustainable urban development in Hail City , Saudi Arabia. *Environmental and Sustainability Indicators*, 30, 101135. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.indic.2026.101135>
- Aracil-Jordá, J., Clemente-Almendros, J. A., Jiménez-Zarco, A. I., & González-González, I. (2023). Improving the social performance of women-led microenterprises: The role of social media marketing actions. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, 191, 122484. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2023.122484>
- Arifin, A., Safuan, M., Latip, A., Sulong, S. N., Ismail, S. N., Najmi, M., & Radhi, M. (2026). Community intentions to learn traditional delicacies (kuih) for the preservation of intangible cultural heritage in Malaysia. *Discover Food*, 6(98), 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s44187-025-00702-1>
- 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>
- Bayhan, İ., & Yaman, Z. Ö. (2025). Gastronomy and social media: Female influencers' experiences and insights on creating culinary contents. *International Journal of Gastronomy and Food Science*, 42, 101342. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijgfs.2025.101342>
- Bhatnagar, D., & Shah, J. (2026). Integrating interdisciplinary learning in hospitality and tourism education: the role of social media in building resilience and future-ready skills. *Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes*, 18(1), 30-43. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1108/WHATT-12-2025-0318>
- Blayone, T. J. B. (2019). Theorising effective uses of digital technology with activity theory. *Technology, Pedagogy and Education*, 28(4), 447-462. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1475939X.2019.1645728>
- Cozma, C. P., & Şaganean, G. (2023). The Evolution of Cuisine Terminology across Cultures. In *Gastronomia în textul (non) literar-o abordare interculturală*, (pp. 237-244). <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.10053639>
- Darwis, R., Lohjiwa, V., Trihayuningtyas, E., Sophian, T., & Hutahahean, R. (2021). Gastronomy Tourism in Danau Toba, Samosir Regency. In *Proceedings of the 1st NHI Tourism Forum (NTF2019)-Enhancing Innovation in Gastronomic for Millennials* (pp. 123-134). <https://doi.org/10.5220/0009882701230134>
- Dawson, M. (2023). The accountability of non-governmental actors in the digital sphere: A theoretical framework. *European Law Journal*, 29(1–2), 78–90. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/eulj.12420>
- de Silva, T. M. (2021). The role of customer engagement in cultivating relationships with automotive Facebook brand pages. *Online Information Review*, 45(7), 1362–1380. <https://doi.org/10.1108/OIR-11-2019-0352>

- Deb, S. K., Nafi, S. M., & Valeri, M. (2024). Promoting tourism business through digital marketing in the new normal era: a sustainable approach. *European Journal of Innovation Management*, 27(3), 775–799. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EJIM-04-2022-0218>
- Del Soldato, E., & Massari, S. (2024). Creativity and digital strategies to support food cultural heritage in Mediterranean rural areas. *EuroMed Journal of Business*, 19(1), 113-137.. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EMJB-05-2023-0152>
- Evans, D., Bratton, S., & McKee, J. (2021). *Social media marketing*. AG Printing & Publishing.
- Guiné, R. P., Florença, S. G., Barroca, M. J., & Anjos, O. (2021). The duality of innovation and food development versus purely traditional foods. *Trends in food science & technology*, 109, 16-24. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tifs.2021.01.010>
- Fransiska, D. S. (2025). Efektivitas Promosi Digital Dan Promosi Konvensional Dinas Pariwisata Aceh Tenggara Dalam Meningkatkan Jumlah Wisatawan. *Applied Multidisciplinary Science*, 1(2), 118–127. <https://doi.org/10.64276/ams.v1i2.61>
- Gonçalves, A. R., Lou, L., Dorsch, P., & Figueiredo, M. (2022). Digital Tourism : An Alternative View on Cultural Intangible Heritage and Sustainability in Tavira , Portugal. *Sustainability*, 14(5), 2912. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su14052912>
- Gross, J., & Von Wangenheim, F. (2022). Influencer marketing on Instagram: empirical research on social media engagement with sponsored posts. *Journal of Interactive Advertising*, 22(3), 289-310. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15252019.2022.2123724>
- Hall, C. M., & Sharples, L. (2004). The consumption of experiences or the experience of consumption? An introduction to the tourism of taste. In *Food tourism around the world* (pp. 1-24). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780080477862>
- Hernandez, C. T., Appio, F. P., & Platania, F. (2026). Innovation in climate adaptation technologies: A catalyst for financial market dynamics?. *Technovation*, 153, 103514. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.technovation.2026.103514>
- Herrada-Lores, S., Iniesta-Bonillo, M. Á., & Estrella-Ramón, A. (2022). Weaknesses and strengths of online marketing websites. *Spanish Journal of Marketing-ESIC*, 26(2), 189-209. <https://doi.org/10.1108/SJME-11-2021-0219>
- Huete-Alcocer, N., & Hernandez-Rojas, R. D. (2022). Does local cuisine influence the image of a World Heritage destination and subsequent loyalty to that destination?. *International Journal of Gastronomy and Food Science*, 27, 100470. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijgfs.2022.100470>
- Jenkins, H., Ford, S., & Green, J. (2013). Spreadable media: Creating value and meaning in a networked culture. In *Spreadable media*. New York University Press..
- Khan, J., Ayed, S., Jaeed, A., Zhang, Q., & Li, M. (2025). Gastronomic tourism and tourist hedonic well-being : A moderated mediation model based on perceived authenticity , emotional connection , and tourist food neophilia. *International Journal of Gastronomy and Food Science*, 42, 101294. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijgfs.2025.101294>
- Lee, C., Pung, J. M., & Del Chiappa, G. (2022). Exploring the nexus of tradition, modernity, and innovation in restaurant SMEs. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 100, 103091. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2021.103091>
- Lin, Q., & Selim, G. (2026). Cross examination of gastronomy tourism and urban regeneration : An integrated review. *Cities*, 173, 106958. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2026.106958>
- MacCannell, D. (1973). Staged authenticity: Arrangements of social space in tourist settings. *American Journal of Sociology*, 79(3), 589–603. <https://doi.org/10.1086/225585>
- Madeira, A., Palrão, T., Mendes, A. S., & Ottenbacher, M. C. (2022). The culinary creative process of Michelin Star chefs. *Tourism Recreation Research*, 47(3), 258–276. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02508281.2021.1958170>

- Niedbała, G., Jęczmyk, A., Steppa, R., & Uglis, J. (2020). Linking of traditional food and tourism. The best pork of Wielkopolska—culinary tourist trail: a case study. *Sustainability*, 12(13), 5344. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12135344>
- Ossowska, L., Janiszewska, D., Kwiatkowski, G., & Oklevik, O. (2024). Local Food Production Based on Culinary Heritage — A Way to Local Sustainability. *Sustainability*, 16(24), 11310. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su162411310>
- Partarakis, N., Kaplanidi, D., Doulgeraki, P., Karuzaki, E., Petraki, A., Metilli, D., ... & Zabulis, X. (2021). Representation and presentation of culinary tradition as cultural heritage. *Heritage*, 4(2), 612-640. <https://doi.org/10.3390/heritage4020036>
- Plangger, K., Grewal, D., de Ruyter, K., & Tucker, C. (2022). The future of digital technologies in marketing: A conceptual framework and an overview. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 50(6), 1125-1134. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-022-00906-2>
- Rahmat, S. W., Pramudya, W., Ramadhan, D. R., Jagat, G., Rahmatul, R., Millah, R. S. (2025). Transforming Traditional Cuisine Into Technopreneurial Innovation : Nasi Tutug Oncom (NTO) as a Gastronomic Tourism. *Journal of Science and Social Research*, 8(4), 4418-4427. <https://doi.org/10.54314/jssr.v8i4.4785>
- Rakhman, C. U., Elmia, A. S., Suganda, S. A., & Rahman, A. E. A. (2024). Utilization of Lake Toba culinary identity for gastronomic tourism development. *Journal of Applied Sciences in Travel and Hospitality*, 7(2), 127-144. <https://doi.org/10.31940/jasth.v7i2.127-144>
- 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>
- Saksono, H., Hidayat, B. A., Yuliana, E., Wicaksono, B., Wulandari, S. N., Momon, M., ... & Amri, N. H. (2022, January). The Impact of Tourism and The Creative Industry on The Economy of The Community. In *International Conference on Sustainable Innovation Track Accounting and Management Sciences (ICOSIAMS 2021)* (pp. 22-25). Atlantis Press. <https://doi.org/10.2991/aebmr.k.211225.004>
- Sartika, S., Abbas, B., Supriaddin, N., Nur, M., & Tambunan, R. (2024). Analisis promosi pariwisata dan budaya masyarakat lokal dalam meningkatkan kunjungan wisatawan di Kota Baubau Provinsi Sulawesi Tenggara. *Syntax Idea*, 6(7), 3164-3180. <https://doi.org/10.46799/syntax-idea.v6i7.4087>
- Seyitoğlu, F. (2026). The role of technology and digitalisation in the sustainability of the gastronomy cultures of destinations. *International Journal of Gastronomy and Food Science*, 44, 101469. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijgfs.2026.101469>
- Sormaz, U., Akmeshe, H., Gunes, E., & Aras, S. (2016). Gastronomy in Tourism. *Procedia Economics and Finance*, 39, 725-730. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2212-5671\(16\)30286-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2212-5671(16)30286-6)
- Sugiyono. (2020). *Metode Penelitian Pariwisata (Kuantitatif, kualitatif, kombinas, R&D)* (1st ed.). Alfabeta.
- Surya, R., Destifen, W., & Stephanie, S. (2023). Review on pempek, a traditional fishcake from South Sumatra, Indonesia: History, nutritional aspects, current development, and innovation. *International Journal of Gastronomy and Food Science*, 34, 100828. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijgfs.2023.100828>
- UNDP. (2024). *Study Report: Indonesia Digital Ecosystem Assessment 2024*. United Nations Development Programme.
- Upe, A. (2023). Innovation and Technological Adaptation of Business Actors in the Digital Age : A Digital Sociology Perspective. *Indonesian Journal of Innovation and Applied Sciences (IJIAS)*, 3(3), 218-227. <https://doi.org/10.47540/ijias.v3i3.737>
- Veseli, A., Bytyqi, L., Hasanaj, P., & Bajraktari, A. (2025). The impact of digital marketing on promotion and sustainable tourism development. *Tourism and Hospitality*, 6(2), 56. <https://doi.org/10.3390/tourhosp6020056>
- Wargadalem, F. R., Wasino, & Yulifar, L. (2023). Pempek Palembang: history, food making tradition, and ethnic identity. *Journal of Ethnic Foods*, 10(1), 45. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s42779-023-00209-z>

- Widjanarko, W., Lusiana, Y., Istiyanto, S. B., Novianti, W., & Evgenievna, L. N. (2024). Promoting local cuisine on social media: A strategic communication approach. *Komunikator*, 16(1), 53-66. <https://doi.org/10.18196/jkm.20763>
- Smith, P. (2022). *Digital Marketing Excellence: Planning, Optimizing and Integrating Online Marketing* (6th ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003009498>
- Sulaiman, A.I., Pangestu, S., Sugito., T., & Sabiq, A. (2022). Community Empowerment in Culinary Tourism as Sustainable Rural Development. *Sustainable Development Research*, 4(1), 1-11. <https://doi.org/10.30560/SDR.V4N1P1>
- Yanti, D. (2020). Pengaruh Digital Marketing Terhadap Peningkatan Kunjungan Wisata Di Danau Toba. *Jurnal Khatulistiwa Informatika*, 11(1), 16-26. <https://doi.org/10.31294/khi.v11i1.7607>
- Yıkıms, S., Türkol, M., Abdi, G., Imre, M., Alkan, G., Aslan, S. T., ... & Aadil, R. M. (2024). Culinary trends in future gastronomy: A review. *Journal of Agriculture and Food Research*, 18, 101363. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jafr.2024.101363>
- Zhang, W., Zhang, W., & Daim, T. U. (2023). Investigating consumer purchase intention in online social media marketing: A case study of Tik Tok. *Technology in Society*, 74(1), 102289. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techsoc.2023.102289>
- Zheng, S. (2023). Safeguarding food heritage through social media? Between heritagization and commercialization. *International Journal of Gastronomy and Food Science*, 31, 100678. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijgfs.2023.100678>