

# Impact of Digital Content Marketing on Tourist Visit Interest to Melasti Beach: The Mediating Role of Social Word of Mouth

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## Abstract

**Objective:** This study aims to determine the role of social word of mouth in mediating the influence of digital content marketing on visiting interests.

**Design/Methods/Approach:** This research uses a purposive sampling technique on 385 respondents who used social media and had never visited Melasti Beach tourist attractions. The data collection technique uses a questionnaire. This research uses SmartPLS 4 to test the validity, reliability, and various tests.

**Findings:** As a result of the study, it is found that digital content marketing has a positive effect on visiting interest, digital content marketing has a positive effect on social word of mouth, social word of mouth has a positive effect on visiting interest, and social word of mouth mediates digital content marketing on visiting interest.

**Originality:** The development of digitalization has led to new ways for tourists to look for references through social word of mouth on social media. This research topic becomes very important for marketers considering that the application of content marketing strategies presents social word of mouth on social media. This is important, especially for a tourist attraction, to generate interest in visiting.

**Practical/Policy implication:** Identification of social word of mouth on social media can be used as a benchmark in mediating digital content marketing and visiting interest. The results of this study have implications for the tourist attraction of Melasti Beach to create interesting content.

**Keywords:** Digital Content Marketing, Social Word of Mouth, Visiting Intention

**JEL Classification:** M30, M31



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## I. Introduction

Technology and information play an essential role in all aspects of human life. Along with the presence of technology, the emergence of the internet makes it easy for everyone to exchange information. The rapid advancement of the internet has brought more people to connect virtually (Charlesworth, 2020). The presence of the internet causes a revolution in the order of people's lives, and this causes changes in people's behaviour and habits to spend more time connected to the internet (Santos & Silva, 2019). The human need for the internet increases internet use from year to year. Based on data from Hootsuite (2022), the world's Internet users in 2022 reached 4.95 billion, an increase of 4% compared to 2021, which only reached 4.66 billion.

The rise of the internet in the world has led to the emergence of trends in the use of social media in everyday life so that social media creates various opportunities to develop relationships between social media users (Rana et al., 2020). Social media helps people remove boundaries from each other and provides a space to communicate freely, provide comments, and share content to research (Sponder & Khan, 2017). The participation of social media also helps marketers to be able to achieve sales targets both with advertisements and personal promotions. The presence of social media provides effective and efficient steps to reach customers. On the other hand, marketing by utilizing social media is one way to interact with customers, target customers, and business partners (Deiss & Henneberry, 2020). Bu et al. (2020) explained that the development of the function of social media created the need for strategies to increase user interest. One of the marketing strategies that can be done to attract customers on social media is using a content marketing strategy (Krasniak et al., 2021).

Hanlon (2019) defines content marketing as a marketing strategy that consistently creates and distributes content. Content marketing strategy includes developing content that will be opened in social media format, aiming to increase the number of visits to social media pages (Charlesworth, 2020). The role of social media as a communication media and content marketing media aims to attract social media users and bring consumers to visit a tourist attraction. Content marketing on social media provides space to create sustainable customer interactions (George, 2021). The existence of content on social media presents a new form of communication, social word of mouth (sWOM). Directly social word of mouth is a new electronic word of mouth, allowing marketers to connect more with consumers (Tan & Lee, 2019). Wood and Muñoz (2017) define sWOM as visual and textual communication on social media about an individual or company. Social word of mouth is an essential source of information for exchanging experiences when visiting a tourist attraction (Santos & Silva, 2019). The creation of social word of mouth affects every stage in the decision-making process and affects the sales level (Wood & Muñoz, 2017).

This form of communication has become very important, followed by content marketing strategies on social media (Abubakar & Ilkan, 2016). Currently, social word of mouth also influences tourists in attracting their interest to visit a tourist attraction (Pike, 2020). Communication on social media is considered valuable to a tourist attraction's image (Chang et al., 2018). One of the tourist attractions that utilize social media platforms and content marketing strategies as a promotional strategy is the Melasti Beach tourist attraction located in Ungasan Village, South Kuta District, Badung Regency, Bali Province. As time passes, all tourist attractions are starting to take advantage of content marketing as promotion media and paying for paid advertising on social media platforms. This causes social media diffusion to vary the way tourists search for information and visit a destination (Buhalis et al., 2019).

Based on previous research conducted by Mahendra & Nugroho (2013) about the effect of content marketing on purchase intention mediated by customer engagement, it shows results that content marketing has a positive and significant effect on purchase intention and also customer engagement can mediate the relationship between content marketing and purchase intention, while subsequent research conducted by Thanh Ha & Thu (2020) showed the results that sWOM have a significant effect on tourist visiting interest, in contrast to research conducted by Nyoman & Wisudawati (2022) which showed that digital marketing content had no significant effect on purchase intention. Thus, based on the differences in these studies, this study has a novelty in the social word of mouth that mediates the use of digital content marketing strategies in generating interest in visiting. The existence of space for users to share more information makes this research topic essential for marketers who implement digital content marketing strategies. Thus, the social word of mouth variable is different from other mediators considering that marketers need to pay attention to reviews on social media and their implications in creating sustainable relationships, especially for tourist attractions, which implement promotional strategies to attract more tourists to visit.

Our research makes several important contributions. First, we strengthen the sustainability literature by considering reviews on social media against digital content marketing on social media. Thus, we add quantitative literature on the nascent concept of sWOM, namely the social word of mouth aspect of social media users in increasing interest in visiting a tourist attraction. Second, by using a digital content marketing strategy, we expand the application of content marketing to increase interest in visiting a tourist attraction. Third, we depart from previous studies, which were limited to studies on the influence of digital content marketing on visiting interest. This provides a unique perspective on understanding the processes that enable digital content marketing variables to influence the sustainability attitudes of social media users. Fourth, we add a control variable on the influence of age and gender on attracting interest in visiting a tourist attraction. Fifth, our research contributes to the overall marketing literature on the factors that directly and indirectly affect interest in visiting a tourist attraction. A set of actionable guidelines based on empirical

evidence is provided for practitioners and marketers to implement digital content marketing strategies on social media and the implications of sWOM in bringing tourists to a tourist attraction, especially for local tourists. The remainder of this paper is structured in the following manner. The next section describes and discusses conceptually the main parts of digital content marketing and their relationship with the emergence of social word of mouth on social media and their application in the context of tourism to generate interest in visiting tourists. The hypotheses in this study are summarized in each relationship between variables. Section 3 outlines the research methodology, followed by a presentation of the study results. Section 4. Finally, contains conclusions and discussions about the implications and limitations of the research described at the end.

## 2. Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

### Digital Content Marketing on Visiting Interests

Content marketing aims to distribute, plan, and create exciting content to attract the target market, encourage them to become customers, and establish sustainable relationships (Karr, 2017). The development of content marketing technology appears when looking at user experience and optimization on social media; content is also part of the approach to digital branding (Charlesworth, 2020). Content marketing provides quality content for an interactive target market. Hence, understanding how content can be used in marketing for customer engagement is critical to developing effective marketing (Tuten, 2019).

This causes social media diffusion to vary the way tourists search for information and visit a destination (Buhalis et al., 2019). Visiting interest is tourists' willingness toward the tourism objects offered by tourism destination management as a tourism destination (Yacob et al., 2019). This is supported by Abid et al. (2020) research, which examines the relationship between marketing using digital content and shows positive and significant results. This is supported by research conducted by (Mathew & Soliman 2021) which examines the influence of digital content marketing on tourist behaviour, showing that digital content marketing has a positive and significant effect on choosing products and services. This research is also supported by Hollebeek & Macky (2019), showing that digital content marketing has a positive and significant influence on creating customer relationship sustainability. Thus, it shows that the ultimate goal of digital content marketing is to create interest in visiting a tourist attraction. Based on the literature and previous study, we therefore propose.

**H<sub>1</sub>: Digital Content Marketing Has A Positive Effect On Visiting Interest**

### Digital Content Marketing Towards Social Word Of Mouth

The importance of a marketing strategy using content shows that there is an excellent opportunity to be able to carry out a promotional plan by utilizing content marketing. Marketing strategy by utilizing social media is an important thing to note. Usually, publishing content in the afternoon and evening is seen as the best time to post content (Olof Lagrosen & Grundén, 2014). Currently, all companies use social media as a medium for promotion. Tourist attractions also carry out using social media for promotion. This has resulted in the importance of social media as a communication medium and content marketing media (George, 2021). Through content creating relationships with customers that lead to direct forms of social communication by word of mouth, sWOM is part of the electronic word of mouth that reviews explicitly on social media (Wood & Muñoz, 2017). In this case, sWOM does not only share opinions but also influences media users in making decisions. In many ways, the essence of WOM is about being social. So there is a difference between WOM communication via social media and other eWOM tools, such as instant communication chat rooms, websites, and newsgroups. sWOM is any visual or textual posting about a company or product offering independently created by consumers, companies, or created by consumers who work with companies and shared publicly on personal social media accounts (Wood & Muñoz, 2017). Before buying a product or customer service, the customer will directly see reviews of other people's experiences who purchased the product (Yudhistira, 2018). This research is also supported by Bu et al. (2020), which show that digital content marketing affects electronic word of mouth in the food industry. Based on the literature and previous study, we therefore propose.

**H<sub>2</sub>: Digital Content Marketing Has A Positive Effect on Social Word Of Mouth**

### Social Word Of Mouth Affects Visiting Interest

Wood & Muñoz (2017) define social word of mouth (sWOM) as part of electronic word of mouth. The importance of sWOM for marketers can lead to two main facts. First, almost everyone who implements digitization uses social networks. Second, sWOM affects every stage of social media users' decision-making process and sales. Like WOM and eWOM, social word of mouth is an essential source of information on social media's pre-decision and post-decision processes (Wood & Muñoz, 2017). Yaghtin et al. (2020) said that currently, tourists tend to look at reviews on social media pages before deciding to visit a tourist attraction. Social word of mouth is an essential source of information for exchanging experiences when visiting a tourist attraction (Santos & Silva, 2019). Tourists visiting interest is translated as buying interest because the same various indicators measure so that buying interest can be applied to visiting interest

in several categories. Nowadays, it is easy for tourists to find information and be interested in visiting, thanks to the help of social media (Kotler et al., 2021).

This is also supported by research conducted by Thanh Ha & Thu (2020), which shows results that social word of mouth affects the motivation of tourists to visit tourist attractions, as well as research conducted by Schoner-Schatz et al. (2021) proves that communication and emotions on social media affect tourists in visiting a tourist attraction so that social word of mouth can have an influence on social media users in generating interest in visiting. Based on the literature and previous study, we therefore propose.

**H<sub>3</sub>: Social Word Of Mouth Has A Positive Effect on Visiting Interest**

### Digital Content Marketing, Social Word Of Mouth, and Visiting Interest

The development of social media functions creates the need for strategies to increase user interest. One of the marketing strategies that can be done to attract customers on social media is digital content marketing strategies (Krasniak et al., 2021). The existence of digital content marketing causes product reviews and recommendations on social media, most of which play an essential role in consumer purchasing decisions (Cheng et al., 2021). Compared to information provided directly by the company, electronic word of mouth (eWOM) is considered a trusted and trusted source of information on social media, and the emergence of a trading community on the internet eliminates traditional word of mouth (Cheng et al., 2021). The ease of spreading social word of mouth on social media provides a space to easily share positive or negative experiences that have been felt before to influence a person's decision, including interest in visiting (Herrando, C. et al., 2018). This is also reinforced based on previous research conducted by Kajtazi & Zeqiri (2020) that electronic word of mouth positively impacts purchasing decisions, both directly and indirectly, through brand image, and digital content marketing has a negative and significant effect on purchasing decisions. Its influence indirectly through brand image has a positive and significant impact. Based on the literature and previous study, we therefore propose

**H<sub>4</sub>: Social Word Of Mouth Positively Mediates The effect of Digital Content Marketing and Visiting Interest**

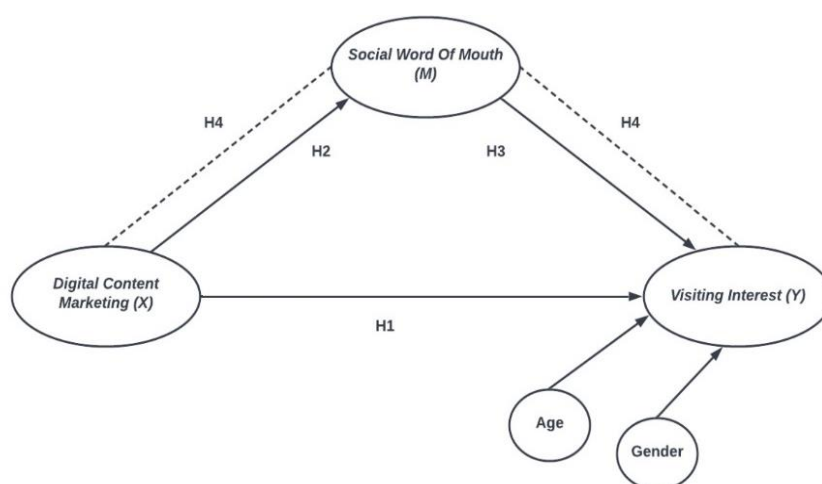


Figure 1. Research Model

### 3. Method

This type of research is causal associative research with a quantitative approach. According to Sekaran & Bougie (2020) Research, causal studies are researchers interested in explaining one or more factors that influence cause problems. Primary data (primary data) refers to the information obtained directly related to the variable of interest for the particular purpose of the study. Secondary data refers to information from certain sources such as websites (Sekaran & Bougie, 2020). The data collection method was carried out using a purposive sampling method by distributing questionnaires to social media users who had never been to the Ungasan Melasti Beach tourist attraction. This research is located in Bali Province, covering respondents throughout Indonesia. This study chose the Ungasan Melasti Beach Tourism Object because of its interesting social media content. The number of followers on Instagram reached 13.4 thousand with 135 posts, then social media Tiktok Melasti Beach reached 11.6 thousand followers with 235.4 likes. The total population in this study is unknown, so the number of samples was calculated using Cochran (2017), and the results

obtained were 385 respondents. Data were analyzed using SmartPLS 4 (Ringle et al., 2022). The variables used in this study are the independent variable, digital content marketing, the dependent variable, visiting interest and the word of mouth social mediation variable, and control variables such as age and gender.

### 4. Results and Discussion

#### Characteristics of Respondents

Respondents in this study were social media users who had never visited the Melasti Beach tourist attraction, with the coverage of respondents residing in Indonesia. The characteristics of a total of 385 respondents classified by gender and age can be seen in Table I below:

Table I. Characteristics of Respondents

		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Female	231	60%
	Male	154	40%
Age	18 - 25	196	51.8%
	26 - 35	81	20.7%
	36 - 45	83	21.2%
	46 - 55	22	5.6%

Source: Processed data (2022)

231 respondents were women (60%), and 154 respondents (40%) were men. The key is that the respondents in this study were female (60%). Most respondents were 18-25 years old, as many as 196 people (51.8%). There are no respondents under the age of 18 years. This relates to the terms and conditions of the social media use policy.

#### Outer Model Evaluation Results

The evaluation of the measurement of the external model uses two tests, namely the validity test and the reliability test. The validity test was tested using convergent validity, while the reliability test was tested using Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, and AVE. The results of the convergent validity test were declared to have passed the indicator value test resulting in a loading factor value of > 0.6 (Hair et al., 2017), while the reliability results used Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability. The data is declared to have passed the test if the results show > 0.70 (Hair et al., 2017). Then if the AVE value is above 0.5, the data can be reliable. The following is a picture of the measurement of the output model.

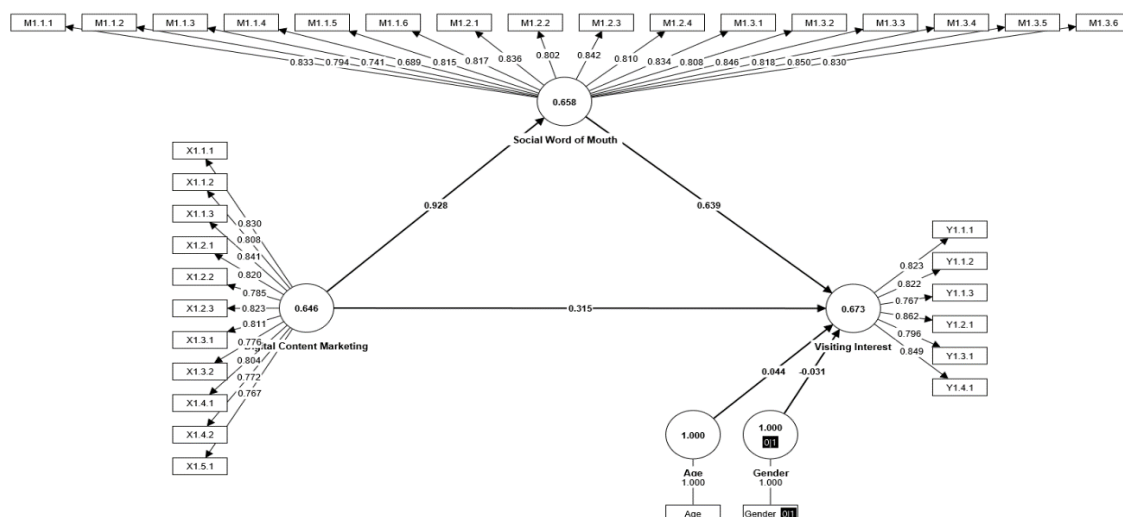


Figure 2. PLS Path Model

#### Convergent Validity Test

The result of the convergent validity value is the loading factor value on the latent variable with its indicators, namely the expected value > 0.7. Several indicators produce a loading factor > 0.60, which is still acceptable (Hair et al., 2022) with a t-statistical value > t- the table is more than 1.96.

Table 2. Operational Definition Variable and Convergent Validity Test Results

Variable	Dimension	Indicators	Source	Outer Loading	Remarks	
Social Word Of Mouth	Intensity	By following Melasti Beach's social media to get the latest information about the products offered	Goyette in Saputra (2020)	0.833	Valid	
		Through Melasti Beach's social media, I get information about other people's positive experiences.		0.794	Valid	
		Social Media Facilitates Word Of Mouth Regarding Melasti Beach Tourist Attractions		0.741	Valid	
		I feel that social media is an effective promotion tool at this time.		0.689	Valid	
		Through Melasti Beach's social media, I see other people's interest in helping publish Melasti Beach Tourist Attractions.		0.815	Valid	
		Through social media, I feel the desire of others to make Melasti Beach more known to many people.		0.817	Valid	
		I feel the pleasure of other people visiting Melasti Beach		0.836	Valid	
		I feel the pride of other people who visit Melasti Beach through social media.		0.802	Valid	
		Through social media, Melasti Beach, I feel that the tourist attraction of Melasti Beach is the right choice.		0.842	Valid	
		Through Melasti Beach's social media, I get information about other people's positive experiences.		0.810	Valid	
	Valence of Opinion	Content		I often interact with other users to get more information about the tourist attraction of Melasti Beach.	0.834	Valid
				There are many reviews from tourists on Melasti Beach's social media accounts.	0.808	Valid
				Reviews about Melasti Beach Tourist Attractions became my research tool for visiting.	0.846	Valid
				I feel the pleasure of other people visiting Melasti Beach through social media.	0.818	Valid
				I feel other people's pride when visiting Melasti Beach through social media.	0.850	Valid
		Through social media, Melasti Beach, I feel that the tourist attraction of Melasti Beach is the right choice.	0.830	Valid		

Digital Content Marketing	Reader Cognition	The content delivered by Melasti Beach's social media is interesting.	Karr (2017)	0.830	Valid		
		You can trust the submitted content.		0.808	Valid		
		The content submitted contains the value of life.		0.841	Valid		
	Sharing Motivation	The content delivered by Melasti Beach's social media is easy to reach		0.820	Valid		
		The content delivered by Melasti Beach's social media is easy to remember.		0.785	Valid		
		The content delivered by Melasti Beach social media deserves an education.		0.823	Valid		
	Decision Making	The content delivered can represent the brand.		0.811	Valid		
		Interactive, delivered content.				0.776	Valid
		The content delivered is motivating.				0.804	Valid
	Persuasion	The content presented encourages you to make decisions.		0.772	Valid		
Visiting Interest	Factors	The content that has been presented you like	0.767	Valid			
		I want to visit Melasti Beach to find a new travel experience.	0.823	Valid			
	Exploration Interest	I Want to enjoy new sights and new activities.	0.822	Valid			
		I will look for the experiences of people who visit Melasti Beach.	0.767	Valid			
	Preferential Interest	I will make Melasti Beach a priority for tourist attractions and disperse other places.	0.862	Valid			
Transactional interest	I will visit Melasti Beach shortly.	0.796	Valid				
Referential Interest	I will recommend Melasti Beach to others	0.849	Valid				
Age		1.00	Valid				
Gender		1.00	Valid				

Source: SmartPLS 4 Output (2022)

### Composite Reliability, Cronbach's Alpha and AVE

Composite reliability, Cronbach's Alpha, and AVE are used to measure the construct's reliability. If all constructs are feasible  $>0.7$ , then composite reliability is reliable. At the same time, Cronbach's alpha is used to measure the lower limit of the value of a construct and declared reliable if feasible  $>0.7$ . Then the value of the accounted variance extract (AVE) must be feasible  $>0.5$  to pass the test (Hair et al., 2017). Table 3 below shows the value of composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha  $>0.7$  so that it is declared valid. Then the AVE value is  $<0.5$ , so the total construct passes the reliability test.

Table 3. Reliability Test Results

	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Digital Content Marketing	0.945	0.968	0.658
Social Word of Mouth	0.965	0.952	0.646
Visiting Interest	0.903	0.925	0.673
Age	1.000	1.000	1.000
Gender	1.000	1.000	1.000

Source: SmartPLS 4 Output (2022)

Based on the results of the validity test using the convergent validity test in Table 2. the results show a value of  $<0.7$  which means the whole construct is valid. Then the results of the reliability test using Composite reliability and Cronbach Alpha results are shown in Table 3. The overall construct is worth  $<0.7$ , which means the construct is reliable, and the AVE value is  $<0.5$ , which means it passes the test.

### Inner Model Evaluation Results

The structural model, also called the inner model in PLS-SEM, describes the relationship between the latent variables and the measurement models, which describe the relationship between the latent variables and their measures (Hair et al., 2017). In the structural model test (inner model), using the help of Bootstrapping procedures in SmartPLS 4.

Table 4. Inner Model Evaluation Results

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics ( O/STDEV )	P Values
MI.1.1 <- Social Word Of Mouth	0.833	0.831	0.021	40.486	0.000
MI.1.2 <- Social Word Of Mouth	0.794	0.794	0.022	35.833	0.000
MI.1.3 <- Social Word Of Mouth	0.741	0.741	0.026	28.214	0.000
MI.1.4 <- Social Word Of Mouth	0.689	0.689	0.032	21.854	0.000
MI.1.5 <- Social Word Of Mouth	0.815	0.815	0.022	37.760	0.000
MI.1.6 <- Social Word Of Mouth	0.817	0.815	0.019	42.226	0.000
MI.2.1 <- Social Word Of Mouth	0.836	0.837	0.017	49.472	0.000
MI.2.2 <- Social Word Of Mouth	0.802	0.801	0.025	31.608	0.000
MI.2.3 <- Social Word Of Mouth	0.842	0.841	0.016	51.731	0.000
MI.2.4 <- Social Word Of Mouth	0.810	0.812	0.021	39.230	0.000
MI.3.1 <- Social Word Of Mouth	0.834	0.834	0.019	45.028	0.000
MI.3.2 <- Social Word Of Mouth	0.808	0.808	0.020	39.740	0.000
MI.3.3 <- Social Word Of Mouth	0.846	0.845	0.018	47.742	0.000
MI.3.4 <- Social Word Of Mouth	0.818	0.818	0.019	42.225	0.000
MI.3.5 <- Social Word Of Mouth	0.850	0.849	0.017	48.790	0.000
MI.3.6 <- Social Word Of Mouth	0.830	0.829	0.019	43.526	0.000
XI.1.1 <- Digital Content Marketing	0.830	0.830	0.015	55.069	0.000
XI.1.2 <- Digital Content Marketing	0.808	0.809	0.026	31.247	0.000
XI.1.3 <- Digital Content Marketing	0.841	0.842	0.017	50.559	0.000
XI.2.1 <- Digital Content Marketing	0.820	0.820	0.017	47.031	0.000
XI.2.2 <- Digital Content Marketing	0.785	0.786	0.022	35.339	0.000
XI.2.3 <- Digital Content Marketing	0.823	0.822	0.018	44.775	0.000
XI.3.1 <- Digital Content Marketing	0.811	0.812	0.022	36.654	0.000
XI.3.2 <- Digital Content Marketing	0.776	0.778	0.021	37.764	0.000
XI.4.1 <- Digital Content Marketing	0.804	0.803	0.021	37.858	0.000
XI.4.2 <- Digital Content Marketing	0.772	0.773	0.029	26.360	0.000
XI.5.1 <- Digital Content Marketing	0.767	0.765	0.029	26.645	0.000



Y1.1.1 <- Visiting Interest	0.823	0.823	0.017	48.104	0.000
Y1.1.2 <- Visiting Interest	0.822	0.822	0.019	42.795	0.000
Y1.1.3 <- Visiting Interest	0.767	0.770	0.026	29.061	0.000
Y1.2.1 <- Visiting Interest	0.862	0.862	0.014	59.715	0.000
Y1.3.1 <- Visiting Interest	0.796	0.796	0.020	39.876	0.000
Y1.4.1 <- Visiting Interest	0.849	0.849	0.017	50.929	0.000
Age <- Age	1.000	1.000	0.000		
Gender <- Gender	1.000	1.000	0.000		

Source: SmartPLS 4 Output (2022)

Based on table 4 above, it can be concluded that, indeed, all reflexive construct indicators are valid with the resulting T-statistics value  $> 1.96$ . In assessing the evaluation model, it is done by looking at the criteria for the R-Square value and the significance value. R-square values are the amount of explained variance of endogenous latent variables in the structural model. The higher the R-square values, the better the construct is explained by the latent variables in the structural model that point at it via the structural model path relationship. If the R-Squares values are 0.75, 0.50, and 0.25, it can be said that the model is substantial, moderate, and weak (Hair et al., 2017).

Table 5. Coefficient of Determination

	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Visiting Interest	0.862	0.862
Social Word Of Mouth	0.860	0.860

Source: SmartPLS 4 Output (2022)

Based on table 5 above, the value of Social Word of Mouth is 0.860. Therefore, 86.0% of variances in the Social Word of Mouth are determined by Digital Content Marketing. In other words, 14.0% of the variances are determined by other factors which are not included in the model. R-square value of Visiting Interest is 0.862. Therefore, Digital Content Marketing and Social Word of Mouth determine 86.2% of variances in the Visiting Interest. In other words, 13.8% of the variances are determined by other factors which are not included in the model.

### Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis testing aims to determine the role of social word of mouth in mediating the relationship between digital content marketing and interest in visiting, either directly or indirectly. This hypothesis testing uses partial least squares in testing the path coefficients so that this test is divided into three parts: direct testing, indirect testing, and mediation testing. Direct effects are the relationships linking two constructs with a single arrow, and indirect effects are those relationships that involve a sequence of relationships with at least one intervening construct involved (Hair et al., 2017). The results of the direct and indirect tests are in table 6 below.

Table 6. Results of the Direct and Indirect Effect Hypothesis Testing Analysis

Hypotheses	Path	Std. Beta	Std. Error	t-value	p-value	Bias	Confident Interval Bias Corrected	
							5.0%	95.0%
Direct Effect								
H1	Digital Content Marketing -> Visiting Interest	0.315	0.063	4.985	0.000	0.001	0.210	0.419
H2	Digital Content Marketing -> Social Word of Mouth	0.928	0.010	88.998	0.000	0.000	0.907	0.942
H3	Social Word of Mouth -> Visiting Interest	0.639	0.062	10.238	0.000	-0.001	0.538	0.742

Indirect Effect								
H4	Digital Content Marketing -> Social Word of Mouth -> Visiting Interest	0.593	0.059	10.001	0.000	-0.000	0.497	0.691
	Gender -> Visiting Interest	0.031	0.040	0.780	0.218	0.001	-0.098	0.033
	Age -> Visiting Interest	0.044	0.020	2.247	0.012	0.000	0.012	0.078

Source: SmartPLS 4 Output (2022)

The results showed that the respondent's intention to have an interest in visiting tourist attractions was influenced by digital content marketing. Thus, the better the content created, the better the social word of mouth that appears on social media. Indirectly social word of mouth on social media affects an interest in visiting. Based on the table above explains that the influence of digital content marketing on visiting interest has a value ( $p = 0.000 < 0.05$ ) with a t-statistic of 4.985, which is above 1.96, then H1 is accepted, meaning that there is a positive and significant influence between digital content marketing and visiting interest as well as the influence of digital content marketing on sWOM shows the results ( $p = 0.000 < 0.05$ ) with a t-statistic of 88.998 then H2 is accepted. Then seen from the value ( $p = 0.000 < 0.05$ ) with a t-statistic of 10.238, H3 is accepted, meaning that there is a positive and significant influence between social word of mouth and visiting interest. In determining the indirect effect, if the P-Values value is  $< 0.05$ , it means significant (Hair et al., 2017). Based on table 6 above, it can be seen that the P-Values results are 0.00. Hence, the results show  $< 0.05$ , meaning that H4 is accepted that social word of mouth positively mediates the effect of digital content marketing and visiting interest. Among the control variables, there is a tendency that the higher the age, the greater the interest in visiting. This is indicated by the t value  $< 1.96$  and also seen from the gender control variable with a p-value of  $0.218 < 0.5$ , which means that both men and women do not influence visiting interest.

## Discussion

### The Effect of Digital Marketing Content on Visiting Interests

As social media advances and digital content marketing strategies emerge, tourism practitioners and marketers have shifted from driving sales to focusing on developing relationships with tourists. It aims to generate positive emotions in tourists and strengthen their interest of tourists to be able to visit a tourist attraction. As time passes, all tourist attractions use content marketing as a promotional medium and pay for paid advertising on social media platforms to increase tourist interest in visiting a tourist attraction (Chen et al., 2014). The Path Analysis test results in the results of the Path Analysis test conducted in this study. It was found that digital content marketing has a positive and significant effect on the interest of visiting tourists. This can be seen from the test results variables directly showing that digital content marketing has a significant ( $0,000 < 0,05$ ), meaning that there is a direct relationship with the better the digital content created, the more interested tourists visit a tourist attraction.

The results of this study are also supported by research conducted by Hollebeek & Macky (2019), which shows that digital content marketing has a positive and significant influence on tourist interest in visiting. Tourists use social media to find information in line with current digital developments. Therefore, tourist attractions must implement content marketing to attract tourists.

### The Effect of Digital Content Marketing on Social Word Of Mouth

Digital content marketing delivers value and engaging content that fits the user's journey (Rowles, 2017). Good content marketing will cause diverse responses to customers, both positive and negative, based on research conducted by Holliman and Rowley (2014). Content is a key component of marketing techniques. How content is used to engage customers is important to building sustainable interactions. Thus, in content marketing, with the emergence of social word of mouth, good content will cause a positive response and vice versa. Based on the Path Analysis test conducted in this study, it was found that digital content marketing has a positive and significant effect on word-of-mouth promotion. This can be seen from the test results variables directly showing that digital content marketing has a significant value ( $0.000 < 0.05$ ). The better the digital content creation variable, the better word-of-mouth socialization.

The results of this study are supported by research conducted by Bu et al. (2020), which shows that content marketing affects E-WOM in the food industry. After being tested partially, the results of this study indicate that the digital content marketing variable has a positive and significant effect on social word of mouth. The importance of digital

content marketing shows the existence of social word of mouth on social media. This is very important for the Tourism Industry, especially in Bali, to always pay attention to the quality of content on social media.

### **The Effect of Social Word of Mouth on Visiting Interest**

Currently, there are social media that reach more users, so positive or negative information that appears on social media account pages makes information easier to spread. The emergence of positive word of mouth will reach more potential customers and strengthen the perceived value (Grewal et al., 2020) with social word of mouth on social media able to generate interest in visiting a tourist attraction.

Based on the Path Analysis test conducted in this study, it was found that social word of mouth positively and significantly affected the interest of visiting tourists. This can be seen from the test results variables directly showing that digital content marketing has a significant value ( $0.000 < 0.05$ ). The better word of mouth, the more social news appears on social media, and the more interest in visiting a tourist attraction.

The results of this study are also supported by the research of Schoner-Schatz et al. (2021), which shows that communication and emotions on social media affect tourists in the intensity of visiting a tourist attraction so that social word of mouth can have an influence on social media users in generating interest in visiting a tourist attraction. A tourist attraction. Future tourism developments need to pay attention to every review on social media because it will be a tourist consideration.

## **5. Conclusion**

This study aims to determine and analyze the extent to which the social role of word of mouth in mediating the relationship between digital content marketing and interest in visiting. After testing and interpreting, the results of the data analysis can be concluded as follows. Simultaneously, digital and word social content marketing of mouth has a positive and significant effect on interest in visiting the tourist attraction of Melasti Beach, Ungasan. Partially, digital content marketing and social word of mouth have a positive and significant effect on interest in visiting the tourist attraction of Melasti Beach, Ungasan. The path analysis shows empirical evidence that social word of mouth content marketing on the variable of interest in visiting. Based on this analysis, digital content marketing has an indirect effect on the interest of tourists visiting through social word of mouth. These indirect promotion bootstrap results are significant, so digital marketing can directly or indirectly affect content through word-of-mouth promotion of visiting interest.

This research provides several contributions to research in the field of tourism and marketing and its relation to increasing tourist visits to a tourist attraction. First, digital content marketing strategies theoretically help increase tourist interest in visiting (Holliman & Rowley, 2014). Second, we expand the existing literature on content marketing which gives rise to social word of mouth from social media users. Third, the existence of social word of mouth on social media raises several responses, one of which is interest in visiting tourists (Grewal et al., 2020), so this research expands on previous research related to digital content marketing and also social word of mouth in mediating interest in visiting tourists. This study has important practical and managerial implications. First, the study results show that tourist attractions can use digital content marketing strategies, such as utilizing reels on Instagram, trend-setting content such as mini vlogs and creating ongoing interactions to generate interest in visiting. Second, the packaging content needs to pay attention to quality because social word of mouth is important in considering the interest in visiting a tourist attraction. Therefore, tourist attraction managers need to pay attention to the quality of content by creating useful and valuable content such as tips and tricks when visiting a tourist attraction to produce good reviews and comments on every post on social media. Third, good content marketing needs to be maintained and developed, which will have a positive impact on the company going forward. These can include improving relationships with social media users through interactive question-and-answer content or promotions. Fourth, gender does not affect the interest in visiting that appears, but age does. Therefore, the higher the age, the higher the tendency to visit interest so that the segmentation of content created on social media is better at targeting the age range of adults

Research limitation in this study the scope used in the study only covers one tourist attraction, namely Melasti Beach, which is not too large and broad in scope, so the research results cannot be generalized to a wider population. In this study, the data generated was only from the questionnaire instrument, which was based on the perception of the respondent's answers, so the conclusions drawn were only based on the data collected through a written questionnaire instrument without being equipped with interviews and interviews. In addition, future researchers are expected to expand their research by developing and using other methods to learn more about the social role of word of mouth and interacting with tourists.

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### Author Contribution

Author 1: conceptualization, writing original draft, data curation, formal analysis, investigation, methodology. Author 2: review and editing, writing review and editing, supervision, validation, visualization.

Author 3: review and editing, writing review and editing, supervision, validation, visualization.

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### Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that the research was conducted without any commercial or financial relationships construed as a potential conflict of interest.

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