



Actor's Role in Developing Creative Rural Tourism Marketing in the Digital Era: A Case Study in Ponggok, Central Java

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Abstract. Digital marketing is the key to doing business, including in the context of rural tourism. Unfortunately, digital transformation in rural areas is tough due to lack of human resources knowledge and skill capital. To fill in the gap, this study explores further to what extent the efforts are made by local actors in developing creative marketing of rural tourism in the digital era, especially in developing countries like Indonesia. This research exploits a qualitative research design. Data collection is through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. The in-depth interviews are with four actors working directly and indirectly in developing rural tourism and using information technology media. These findings reveal that the actor's efforts in developing creative marketing of rural tourism in the digital era are augmenting digital literacy, boosting market demand and uniqueness/authenticity, and elevating the availability of internet network infrastructure.

Keywords: Actor's Role · Rural Tourism Marketing · Digital Era · Ponggok Rural Tourism

1 Introduction

Digital marketing is the key to doing business, including rural tourism. Business-people can leverage the internet and global networks to reach consumers worldwide by marketing local products, such as traditional paintings and toys, in a digital format and uploading them on websites [1]. Adopting digital marketing makes it easier for tourism service providers to do their business, including rural tourism. The digital literacy ability of rural tourism actors becomes a powerful thing in marketing.

Effective digital marketing will ensure the production process runs sustainably. Internet and e-marketing through the website become essential for the sustainability of rural tourism [2]. Most rural tourism provides a reservation system but is still limited in providing electronic payment systems. Inevitably, rural tourism must adjust and quickly adapt to the 'ICT era' to survive the disruption of information technology.

Digital marketing provides opportunities for developing rural tourism to reach the target market (tourists) widely. The use of global Internet-based reservation systems, such as Booking.com, has a substantial role and is beginning to dominate rural tourism reservations. Digital marketing needs to be done by rural tourism to reach new and larger target audiences more efficiently and effectively [3]. In addition, sharing experiences through photos and short video impressions (vlogs) on social media also influences tourists to visit.

Through social media, digital marketing (in rural tourism) can improve destinations' image. The focal points of digital marketing are how to develop a positive image of rural tourism destinations and make the image impact tourists' decisions to visits [4]. Today's tourists are information technology (digital) - literate. They seek information on their needs before and during the visit and compare prices, ratings, and reviews of tourist products. Therefore, to market to information technology-savvy tourists, rural tourism actors must utilize social media platforms more effectively and regularly update tourist destinations' websites [5]. Social media make it easier for tourists to find destinations, even in remote areas.

Compared to urban tourism, rural tourism tends to be slower in transforming or adapting to information technology (digital) when there is a need for capable actors in digitalization in responding to the rapid ICT in the 4.0 industrial revolution era. Rural tourism actors face challenges in adopting information technology (digital) or in mastering digital literacy. Most rural tourism actors are farmers who start the business in response to the decline in agricultural production. Rural tourism generally carries out other time-consuming activities, cutting their time to develop rural tourism, including marketing activities, so the management becomes less professional [6]. Digital marketing activities in rural tourism are considered less strategic. For example, in Malaysia, actors in rural tourism tend to rely on word-of-mouth recommendations in marketing [7]. In other words, digital marketing transformation in rural tourism tends to be slow, the development of which, accordingly, is stagnant.

The demand for rural tourism tends to be very specific (niche market) and seasonal by character. The market demand for rural tourism is unique and different from that for other tourist destinations. Rural tourism is a particular interest tourism product with agricultural activities and a seasonal character with specific requests [8]. The rural tourism actors are typically farmers and pensioners with limited knowledge capital. As such, it is often difficult to find what rural tourism offers, what kind of tourist segment it belongs to, and how to reach it, including by adopting information technology. Consequently, rural tourism only duplicates other rural tourism products, deleting its uniqueness and authenticity.

Infrastructure development, such as internet networks, is crucial to rural tourism in digital marketing [9]. Nevertheless, there is still a high gap in urban-rural internet connectivity in developing countries, such as Indonesia. In 2019, The World Bank reported that only 36% of rural adults could access the internet, or the percentage was half of that in urban areas (The World Bank, Press Release, July 28, 2021). In 2021, the Special Staff of the Ministry of Communication and Informatics of the Republic of Indonesia mentioned that 12,548 villages did not have internet access (Inscription, Liputan6.com,

February 12, 2022). Internet access (internet service provider connection, WiFi, and coverage area) is vital to meet tourists' needs and support the community's needs to keep up with the development of information technology and digital marketing activities in rural tourism. Without adequate internet network infrastructure, digital marketing in rural tourism cannot run even with optimal human resource knowledge and skills. The availability of infrastructure, especially internet networks, strongly influences digitalization in rural tourism.

The digital transformation of rural tourism in developed countries is different from that in developing countries. In a study of rural tourism in European countries, such as Romania, the innovation of local communities is substantial in developing rural tourism [10]. As argued in a study of rural tourism in Germany, 'smart villagers' are innovators or actors of digital social innovation in developing rural tourism through information technology (digital) [11]. Rural tourism researchers in the United Kingdom mention that the best practices of local leaders are through 'leaders' contributing to rural tourism through various tourism projects and establishing cross-sectoral cooperation [12]. In a study of rural tourism in Japan, rural tourism can build interaction with tourists and help the sale of local souvenirs through e-hospitality [13]. In the research on rural tourism in China, virtual tours encourage the productivity of rural tourism [14]. In developed countries, digital marketing in rural tourism is easier on the grounds of high human resources and knowledge capital and the availability of internet networks. Nevertheless, how is digital transformation in developing countries, such as Indonesia? What do the local actors do considering the digital information there is more dependent on the knowledge of individuals or related groups who are generally less knowledgeable and in a less supportive environment?

2 Objectives

To what extent the efforts are made by local actors in developing creative marketing of rural tourism in the digital era, especially in developing countries, such as Indonesia, still rarely analysed. This research is essential in that most rural tourism development in Indonesia still stagnates. Human resources actors in rural tourism should have knowledge and skills capital (digital literacy) and a supportive environment, such as the availability of internet network infrastructure. In that case, it will be easy to transform information technology (digital) and become the driving force of the creative local economy. Therefore, this research aims to explore further to what extent the efforts are made by actors in developing creative marketing of rural tourism in the digital era.

3 Theoretical Review

3.1 Actors in Rural Tourism Marketing

Competition in the tourism industry is tough, encouraging rural tourism actors to package their products uniquely to open a niche market (niche market). Information technology requires, creative ideas and innovation, averting disrupted and stagnant rural tourism.

Therefore, local individuals and groups (rural tourism actors) are an indispensable foundation in packing rural tourism creatively and innovatively to increase added value. The influence of actors, namely how actors play and play a role, is very substantial in the digital marketing of rural tourism. Actors are individuals and are not tied to institutions. In the digital marketing of rural tourism, actors know the resource uniqueness, ability, and capital owned. They must understand what role they play in improving the performance of rural tourism. The actors' contribution and ability largely determine what kind of digital marketing activities to do. Actors play a role in exploring new opportunities in the market to create products or services of value to consumers. The capital gains of ideas or creative insights from actors are substantial in identifying market opportunities [15]. Actor contributions also play a role in understanding what changes occur through sensemaking owned by actors as a basis in strategizing and responding to the environment, such as the existence of new information technology, tourist trends, and others [16]. For example, the application of feature in information technology media is important to consider how to collect information and make reservations and payments, making it easier for potential tourists to reach rural tourism [17]. The primary 'driving force' or lead actor must have business skills, concoct long-term ideas, and quickly adapt to environmental changes [18]. The idea, creativity, innovation, or knowledge capital of actors is essential in the digital marketing of rural tourism. It is easy to package authentic local superior products and increase the added value of rural tourism.

4 Methods

This research uses a qualitative research design through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. The determination of informants is non-probability - purposive sampling of four key actors as informants. The informants are chosen because of their roles as actors and local leaders, indirect/ direct engagement with rural tourism development, and information technology media - literacy. They are very representative as informants. — They are Junaedhi Mulyono (the head of Ponggok Village and key actors), Ratnasari Irawati (the head of PKK Ponggok), Kristanto Joko Raharjo from the Wisata Ponggok Digital Project Community, and Triyono (the chairman of Pokdarwis Wanua Tirta Ponggok). The in-depth interviews were conducted on February 2, 2022, March 30, 2022, March 31, 2022, and April 1, 2022, in Ponggok Rural Tourism. The data analysis techniques consist of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. The research area is located in Ponggok Rural Tourism, Central Java, Indonesia. Ponggok is chosen as the research area by virtue of its accessibility via internet #ponggok 24.9K post (Instagram, 16 June 2022), already using information technology (digital) media, which are social media [19], having promotions on its websites (www.umbulponggok.co.id), and creative-based development. Further, Ponggok Rural Tourism is one of the creative-based rural tourism in Central Java whose development focuses on the creativity of its local people (water tourism is creatively packaged) (Fig. 1).

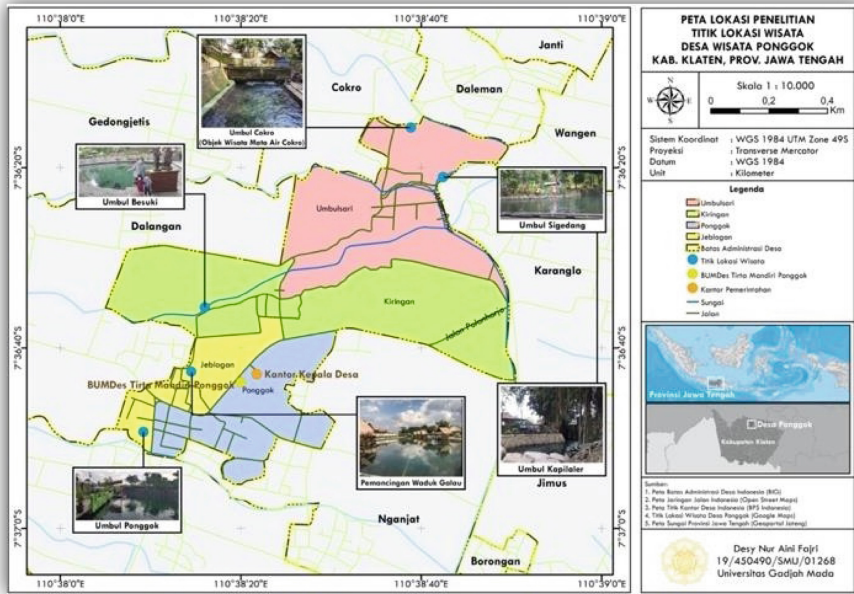


Fig. 1. Map of Pongkok Rural Tourism, Klaten Regency, Central Java Province

5 Findings and Discussion

5.1 Pongkok’s Long Journey Process to Be ‘Independent’

In the early 2000s, Pongkok Village was considered left behind and poor, and had various complex problems, such as low education levels, high unemployment rates, the entanglements of its community in loan sharks’ debt, a dirty environment, lots of garbage, and others. In its development, Pongkok’s local community began to explore and map the potencies to improve the economic condition. They embarked on cooperating in cleaning the river, repairing roads, and organizing and developing tourist attractions in Pongkok (in-depth interview with Triyono, the chairman of Pokdarwis Wanua Tirta Pongkok, on March 30, 2022, in Pongkok Rural Tourism).

The role of the universities (Universitas Gadjah Mada, Universitas Negeri Semarang, Universitas Diponegoro, and so forth) is very substantial in the development of Pongkok. They assist in mapping problems, extracting potentials, and improving human resources through training and mentoring (in-depth interview with Junaedhi Mulyono, the head of Pongkok Village, on February 2, 2022, in Pongkok Rural Tourism). In 2009, BUMDes Tirta Mandiri Pongkok was established to build appropriate management. The condition of the Pongkok community was then changing in light of various programs, including revitalizing Umbul Pongkok in 2010. As a result, the Pongkok Village Revenue and Expenditure Budget (APBD) reached 3.9 billion Rupiah per year. The head Pongkok Village had implemented some programs, which were ‘One House, One Bachelor’,

Smart Card, the Village Health Insurance Card (Jamkesdes) as health insurance for the Ponggok people, and various other programs.

According to the Head of Ponggok Village the development of Ponggok is inseparable from the #pongkokwanisinau that focuses on developing spatial planning, Village-owned Enterprises (BUMDes), human resources, and information technology. Still, the most formidable challenge is to change the mindset of the local people on how they can act as 'good marketers' for their villages. Today, Ponggok rural tourism has changed from a lagging village to an independent one, and all Ponggok people have jobs in both formal and informal sectors. Ponggok can utilize its potency (water tourism) and package it creatively and innovatively as superior products, all of which are made from, by, and for the community. That is, local leaders may think of creative and innovative ideas for rural tourism, but they need good knowledge capital to improve its performance.

According to the in-depth interview, there are at least three contributing factors that support local actors in developing creative digital marketing of rural tourism which consist of 1) digital literacy, 2) *Market Demand*, and 3) *Uniqueness/ Authenticity*.

5.2 Digital Literacy

Rural tourism eager to develop amid information technology disruption must improve their abilities through digital literacy. Therefore, the capacity of rural tourism actors needs to be increased, one of which is through marketing communication on social media [20]. To respond to the rapid development of ICT, Ponggok adapts technology information to conduct Ponggok marketing intensively through information technology (digital) media, namely social media, websites, Google My Business, and Wisata Ponggok Digital Project.

5.2.1 Social Media

Ponggok Rural Tourism has a digital team that regularly upload photos and videos about Ponggok through social media. The leader of Ponggok Rural Tourism, is Junaedhi Mulyono, who since 2006, has been voted to be the head of Ponggok Village. The leader should be willing to learn, exchange ideas, quickly adapt, and make breakthroughs by utilizing information technology (digital) [21]. Junaedhi Mulyono encourages local people to be actively involved in marketing village products through his program of distributing Android-based devices (smartphones) to village institutions (BPD, PKK, and RT-RW) which are expected to serve as the village's marketers. He is actively uploading various activities and programs in Ponggok Rural Tourism through social media, namely Facebook (Junaedhi Mulyono, 4963 friends), Instagram (@umbul_ponggok_juned, 2069 followers) (Facebook and Instagram, April 26, 2022), and Tik Tok (@djuned00, 3842 followers and 54.5K likes) (Tik Tok, April 27, 2022). As a key actor, he upload images and videos about Ponggok, opens a discussion associated with 'the use of digital platform for the development of local SMEs,' waste management activities, and fisheries harvests, introduces Ponggok's typical culinary 'Sate Sultan,' make documentary films with Peppy the Comedian, arranges an Indonesian independence ceremony event, 'Study Desa' activities #wanisinau, and various other rural tourism activities (Facebook account of Triyono Bin Purwosuparjo, 27 April 2022). In other words, rural tourism needs to

Table 1. Ponggok Rural Tourism Marketing Development through social media and Websites

No. Social Media and Websites	
1 Instagram	
@umbul_ponggok	7571 followers dan 465 posts
@pongkok_village	2848 followers dan 888 posts
@wisata.ponggok	2197 followers dan 250 posts
@umbul.sigedang	1679 followers dan 218 posts
@umbul_besuki_official	2468 followers dan 517 posts
2 Tik Tok	
#pongkok	24.8K post dan 25.5M views
3 YouTube	
http://www.youtube.com/c/DesaPongkok 28K views	
4 Facebook	
Ponggok Lestari	Pokdarwis Wanua Tirta
Umbul Besuki	Bumdesa Ponggok
5 Twitter	
@desa_pongkok	2.546 Tweets
6 Websites	
	http://pongkok.desa.id/
Umbul Ponggok	https://umbulpongkok.co.id/
Umbul Sigedang-Kapilaler	https://umbul-sigedang-kapilaler.business.site/
Umbul Besuki	https://umbul-besuki.business.site/

Source: Instagram, Tik Tok, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter and Websites Ponggok, April 27, 2022

need to adapt through creative marketing by combining social media platforms to reach the market broadly. It shows that local leaders of rural tourism need to be technologically literate, making their products widely known and attracting visiting tourists.

5.2.2 Websites

In addition to using social media, Ponggok Rural Tourism marketing also uses websites. Digital marketing adoption by rural tourism is done by improving web presentation, namely improving websites design and implementation [2]. Improving web presentations can increase the number of rural tourism web visitors and consumer interaction. Ponggok rural tourism websites are pongkok.desa.id and [www.umbulpongkok.co.id](https://umbulpongkok.co.id/).

Ponggok's local leader, Junaedhi, encourages the local community through various programs to develop and become marketers for their rural tourism. The use of information technology (digital) media is directly developed and managed by the local community through social media, such as Instagram, Tik Tok, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, and Websites.

Table 1 shows that through social media and websites, various photos, short videos, and various village product information (entrance tickets, tour packages, and outbound) are uploaded to social media to reach the market and build tourist interaction. Tourists can easily search for tourist information and make reservations (online and offline).

5.2.3 Wisata Pongkok Digital Project (Using Google My Business)

Pongkok Rural Tourism has also developed the Wisata Pongkok Digital Project community since 2016. It was established by a local community member, Kristanto Joko Raharjo. Wisata Pongkok Digital Project is a tourism information service provider or Pongkok Tourism Information Center. It boosts Pongkok marketing. Kristanto Joko Raharjo is one of Pongkok's local people who is passionate about learning and increasing digitalization knowledge through 'Google Gapura Digital' training in Yogyakarta and Solo, including Google My Business training. In addition to social media and websites, the Google My Business application is essential in developing Pongkok Rural Tourism marketing in the digital world.

Google My Business is crucial in developing rural tourism because it can search for data, create analytics, and build interaction with tourists. All incoming notifications (tourist reviews) are always presented and responded to through Google My Business in less than 24 h. Fast responses and good reviews and ratings may increase engagement with tourists, demonstrating the high integrity exhibited by the local community in Pongkok (in-depth interview with Kristanto Joko Raharjo, the Wisata Pongkok Digital Project and Google My Business and Websites administrator, on April 1, 2022, in Pongkok Rural Tourism). The advantages of Google My Business in developing rural tourism are easier to create analytics, including finding out the tourists' origin when they ask for directions through Google. Besides, Google My Business will act as a database that registers the sequence data on tourist destinations visited by tourists, visitor traffic cycles, especially during the holidays and the end of the year, the visit increases in number, and fast response to reviews. In general, tourists who will conduct their first visit to a destination (in this case, Pongkok) always use the search engine Google, especially maps, to acquire the latest information, products offered, reviews and ratings, and booking procedures. Pongkok rural tourism has 17 locations, including several spots of tourist destinations set up on Google My Business to make it easier for tourists to communicate directly, find information, and make reservations (WhatsApp Hotline). Tourist reviews and ratings through Google Review and Rating serve as information source which enhanced the pre-eminence of Pongkok. Even though the local community is the party assigned to execute the management, they can create analytics from Google and respond quickly to reviews, improving the image of rural tourism. Digitalization training is substantial to increase the ability and knowledge capital of human resources of rural tourism actors (Table 2).

5.3 Market Demand

By optimizing Google My Business, rural tourism actors can manage the existence of tourist attractions or business services. Pongkok collaborates with 17 tourist attraction and business services using Google My Business. Through Google My Business, rural

Table 2. Wisata Ponggok Digital Project Activites

No.	Routine activities	Activities
1.	Daily Activities	Reply to reviews and incoming messages, upload photos on your Google My Business Profile, post comments on Instagram and reply to email.
2.	Midweek Activities	Upload photos on social media.
3.	Weekly Activities	Upload a post on the Google My Business, websites
4.	Monthly Activities	Download Google Business and Instagram profile insights/ performance.
5.	Others	Update products in your Google My Business profile and edit profile (when needed)

Source: in-depth interview, Kristanto Joko Raharjo, Wisata Ponggok Digital Project, April 1, 2022, in Ponggok Rural Tourism

tourism actors can find out the traffic analysis of visit times, the number of tourists who are searching through Google Search, the peak of tourist season, and so. Ponggok offers some specific tourist interests, e.g., swimming at ‘*umbul*’, taking a picture underwater, and enjoying local cuisine, which is generally on Sundays and National Holidays. In general, tourist traffic increases dramatically during the holidays and by the end of the year.

Google My Business can also serve as a digital guest book that enables tourists to efficiently provide impressions, comments, and input on attractions managed by local communities. For example, Umbul Ponggok reviews received 4.4/5 of 19K visitor reviews, with more than 36000 photo uploads (Google Review, April 27, 2022). The performance of the Google My Business profile requests for routes to the location of Ponggok Rural Tourism (Umbul Sigidang) in January -- March 2021 by tourists is as follows (Fig. 2).

5.4 Uniqueness/Authenticity

5.4.1 Underwater Photography

Ponggok Rural Tourism has water potencies creatively packaged into tourist locations favoured by tourists. One of the top and favourite is the freshwater sea walker (underwater photography) rides. A certified diving coach will guide tourists at the *umbul*. One of the specific requests from tourists is to do underwater maternity photoshoots and underwater prewedding photoshoots that not all rural tourism are ready and able to serve. ReZa Baik’s YouTube accounts (14.3K subscribers) uploaded a video of the process of taking underwater maternity photoshoots that has been watched 7.2K times (YouTube, April 26, 2022). Besides, the local people uploaded various creative photos and videos through Ponggok’s Instagram @umbulponggok with 9613 followers and @umbul_ponggokwalker with 1942 followers. Because of its uniqueness, Ponggok (Umbul Kapilaler, for example) is often used as a filming location. Various media



Klaten: 578	Sukoharjo: 75	Yogyakarta: 107
Surakarta: 498	Bojolali: 45	Depok: 417
Grogol: 167	Karanganyar: 12	Banguntapan: 23

Fig. 2. Google My Business Profile Performance: Request a Route by Tourists to the Location of Pongkok (Umbul Sigidang) in January – March 2021. **Source:** in-depth interview, Kristanto Joko Raharjo, Wisata Pongkok Digital Project and Google My Business and Websites administrator, on April 1, 2022, in Pongkok Rural Tourism (downloaded from Google My Business Pongkok).

also cover travel activities (in-depth interview with Triyono, the chairman of Pokdarwis Wanua Tirta Pongkok, on March 30, 2022, in Pongkok Rural Tourism).

In addition, Pongkok also has a variety of unique tour packages ready for tourists to visit. The tour packages offered are camping ground, outbound, and Pongkok tour packages as uploaded on Instagram @ponggok_village. The Instagram account has uploaded 888 posts and has 2828 followers (Instagram, April 26, 2022). Pongkok rural tourism packages are as follows (Table 3).

5.4.2 Pongkok's Signature Culinary

One of the Pongkok culinary products, the 'Pongchips' snack, is made from fish tilapia processed into meatballs, cheese tilapia cendol, and tilapia dumplings. Other typical culinary of Pongkok is Sate Sultan and Suketi drinks. Pongkok's local specialties are managed by the women's community PKK (Family Welfare Development) in Pongkok Rural Tourism. Related to digital marketing, the local people of Pongkok, especially PKK members, are fostered to weekly upload Pongkok tourist or culinary destinations on social media both through Instastory, Instagram, and the like (in-depth interview with Ratnasari Irawati, the head of PKK Pongkok on March 31, 2022, in Pongkok Rural Tourism). PKK programs are in line with the Pongkok Village Government program, i.e., training-based woman empowerment to improve human resources to increase the women's income, elevating their family economy and participation activeness in development.

Table 3. The Uniqueness of the Ponggok Tourism Package (in 000,- Rupiah)

Tourism Package	Information	Price
Besuki Camping Ground		
Ksatria Package	One person	40
Punokawan Package	Four people	125
Tent Rental	Capacity for 4 people	105
	Capacity for 6 people	125
Besuki Outbond Package		
Adult Package	Entrance ticket, equipment, operations, meals, and drinks, trainers	120
Child Package	Entrance ticket, equipment, operations, eating and drinking, trainers	90
Sinau Ambyuurr Package	At least 20 people	250
Sunset to Sunrise Ponggok	Umbul Ponggok, Umbul Sigedang-Kapilaler, Umbul Besuki	Strats from 2000
Ponggok Tour Packages		
Cultural Nature Package	Dance studio, lodging, dining, coffee break, live music	
Nature & Creative Economy Package	Craft arts, lodging, dining, coffee break, live music	
Survival Package	Lodging, dining, coffee break, live music	

Source: Ponggok Rural Tourism, 2022

Through their Community Service Program (KKN), universities contribute to training and education for PKK members. Universitas Negeri Surakarta afforded photography and video editing training to PKK members, allowing them to market SME package products through digital platforms. Furthermore, they can also market the traditional drink of ponggok, 'Suket Tea' through short videos uploaded on YouTube account *Desa Ponggok* (Fig. 3).

5.5 Internet Network Infrastructure Availability

The internet network infrastructure is relatively stable and reaches the entire area of Ponggok. The best 4G internet access is in Umbul Ponggok (in-depth interview with Kristanto Joko Raharjo, Wisata Ponggok Digital Project, on April 1, 2022 in Ponggok Rural Tourism). Internet network infrastructure (signal and coverage area) in Ponggok has reached all areas, especially in tourist attraction locations. Hence, digital marketing can run well even when there are still several blank spot points.

The local community's innovation, creativity, and readiness to pack Ponggok rural tourism in such a way have implications for many tourists who visit. They impel the tourist to share experiences in photos and short videos on social media, reviews, and comments on Google profiles. In addition to tourists, media also contributes to marketing



Fig. 3. E-Flyer Pongok. Source: Instagram and Facebook Pongok, 27 April 2022

Table 4. The List of Media Uploaded Video about Pongok on YouTube

No.	Media	Number of views	YouTube Link
1	Buletin iNews	4.1M	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1yISAp_5AQc
2	Trans7 Najwa Shihab	2.1M	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DtbUNcTaiwQ
3	Trans7 Official	31K	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uOAFz90JT7k
4	NET TV Net.Biro	248K	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ef3Pz_LeRtU
5	Kumparan	111K	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Uu2n_ak328
6	Tribun Jogja Official	9K	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dpojQ2O5XXg
7	Tribun Travel	290	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HiLtqa5Kz9Y
8	TvOneNews	3K	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ptn1m9FD3x0
9	KompasTV	586	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L-qJN0MsT88

Source: YouTube, 26 April 2022

Pongok rural tourism digitally. The list of the number of the views of some videos uploaded on YouTube are:

Table 4 features the significant contribution of seven national media's to Pongok's digital marketing. In addition to tourists and media that uploads various photos and videos of Pongok in the digital world, some influencers/celebrities also take action. One of the influencers and celebrities who uploaded videos about Pongok was Irfan Hakim

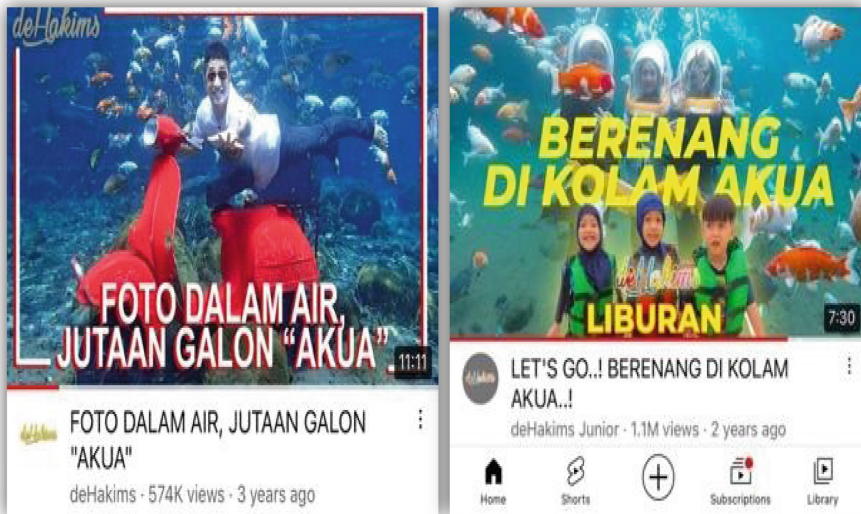


Fig. 4. Video about Ponggok by Influencer/ Celebrity Irfan Hakim on YouTube. Source: YouTube, April 26, 2022

through his two YouTube account, “deHakims” and “deHakims Junior’s”. The related videos were watched 574K times (deHakims) and 1.1M times (deHakims Junior’s) (YouTube, April 26, 2022) (see Fig. 4).

Figure 4 shows that posts from influencers/celebrities are ‘free publicity’ for Ponggok rural tourism which can reach the market widely and attract tourists to visit. Millennials are active in using the internet. It, in so doing, calls for a new way to attract tourists to visit the rural tourism through social media platforms, namely by collaborating with influencers [20]. Albeit limited in professional human resources in digitalization, in the future, rural tourism actors can collaborate with influencers so that marketing becomes more effective.

6 Conclusion

Rural tourism may not survive without digital marketing. In developing creative marketing for rural tourism in the digital age, local actors should master digital literacy, examine the market demand and unique/authenticity of rural tourism, and guarantee the availability of internet network infrastructure there (coverage area and signal). This research has limitations, one of which is not measuring the economic, social, and cultural effects of digital marketing on actors in rural tourism and on the image of rural tourism. Nonetheless, the research expands insights on rural tourism digital marketing development. In the future, in marketing, rural tourism can collaborate with influencers or celebrities to improve its performance in the digital era. Ponggok Rural Tourism marketing has not been optimal on account of its limitations. However, Ponggok Rural Tourism can be used learning curve for the development of rural marketing tourism digitally. Rural

tourism can still survive information technology disruption through digital marketing. Despite the existence of sophisticated information technology, unless the actors have the capabilities and master digital literacy, the information technology will be useless for developing rural tourism.

Authors' Contributions. All authors are equally contributing in writing this paper.

Competing Interest Statement. The authors confirm that there is no conflict of interest in regard with this article data, writing process, review process, and publication process.

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