

# TikTok's utilization as the Pangandaran tourism promotion media during COVID-19 pandemic

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## ABSTRACT

**This** article aims to find out the use of TikTok social media as a promotional medium for Pangandaran Tourism during the COVID-19 pandemic, carried out by the @kelilingpangandaran account. This study uses a qualitative method. Data was collected by in-depth interviews with eight informants and observations of the social media accounts for two months. The results and discussion in the study were relevant to Berger and Luckman's theory of social construction. This research found a social construction process carried out by the @kelilingpangandaran account. This process uses TikTok social media through audio-visual content packaged creatively and trends to attract more attention. In addition, the TikTok feature is used to facilitate the spread of promotions. The use of Tiktok social media as a promotional medium for Pangandaran Tourism was carried out because it saw the advantages and opportunities that Tiktok social media could utilize to increase promotion. During the tourism promotion activities carried out during the COVID-19 pandemic, of course, experienced various obstacles, but the @kelilingpangandaran account has a strategy to continue maintaining Pangandaran Tourism's existence. It is even used as a good opportunity to get wider engagement. These processes are included in the construction, which was built to influence the audience to be interested in visiting tourism in Pangandaran during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Keywords:** TikTok; tourism; promotion; COVID-19 pandemic; social construction

## *Pemanfaatan TikTok sebagai media promosi pariwisata Pangandaran di masa pandemi COVID-19*

## ABSTRAK

*Artikel ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui pemanfaatan media sosial Tiktok sebagai media promosi Pariwisata Pangandaran di masa Pandemi COVID-19 yang dilakukan oleh Akun @kelilingpangandaran. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode studi kasus. Pengumpulan data dilakukan dengan wawancara mendalam bersama 8 orang informan dibantu dengan observasi akun media sosial berupa jumlah pengikut, like, komentar, hingga hashtag selama rentang waktu dua bulan. Hasil dan pembahasan dalam penelitian dikaji bersama dengan teori konstruksi sosial milik Berger dan Luckman. Hasil penelitan ini ditemukan bahwa adanya proses konstruksi sosial yang dilakukan oleh Akun @kelilingpangandaran. Proses tersebut dilakukan dengan memanfaatkan media sosial Tiktok melalui konten-konten audio visual yang dikemas secara kreatif dan mengikuti tren yang ada hingga menarik atensi lebih. Selain itu terdapat penggunaan fitur Tiktok digunakan hingga memudahkan penyebaran promosi. Penggunaan media sosial Tiktok sebagai media promosi Pariwisata Pangandaran dilakukan karena melihat adanya kelebihan dan peluang yang bisa dimanfaatkan dari media sosial Tiktok untuk meningkatkan promosi. Selama kegiatan promosi pariwisata yang dilakukan di masa Pandemi COVID-19 tentunya mengalami berbagai kendala, namun Akun @kelilingpangandaran memiliki strategi untuk terus dapat menjaga eksistensi Pariwisata Pangandaran bahkan dimanfaatkan menjadi peluang baik untuk mendapatkan engagement lebih luas. Semua proses itu termasuk ke dalam konstruksi yang dibangun untuk mempengaruhi audiens untuk tertarik berkunjung ke Pangandaran pada masa Pandemi COVID-19.*

**Kata-kata kunci:** TikTok; promosi; pariwisata; pandemi COVID-19; konstruksi sosial

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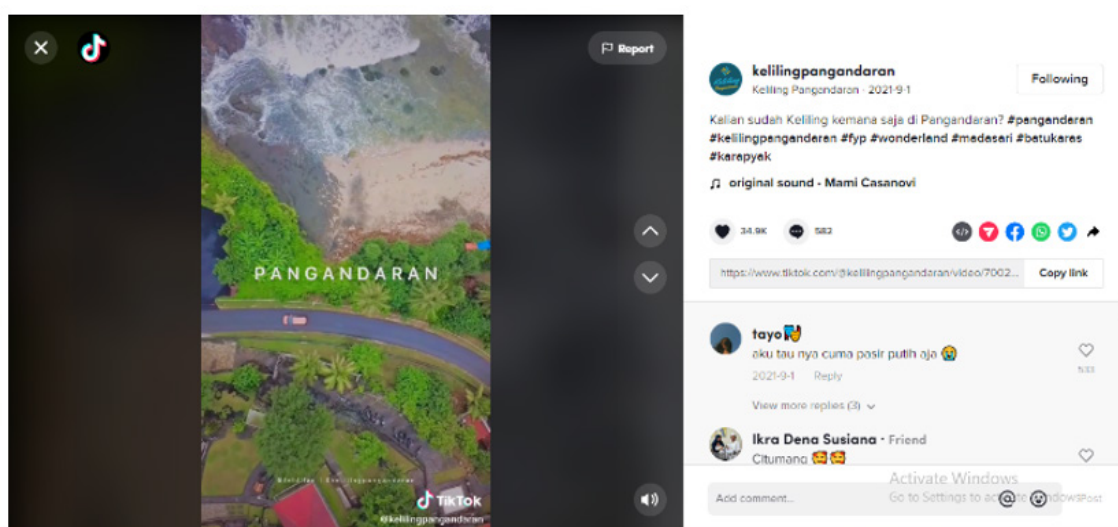
## INTRODUCTION

@kelilingpangandaran is an account that utilizes TikTok social media as a medium for tourism promotion in the Pangandaran Regency. This account already has more than 159.5 thousand followers and actively uploads video content packaged creatively about tourism in the Pangandaran Regency. The @kelilingpangandaran account can help with promotions by introducing tourism potential in Pangandaran Regency through videos showing the beauty of Pangandaran. Having a high level of access quickly and easily can be why social media is used as a promotional medium in tourism. Tourism promotion activities need to be done to inform about tourism in an area in order to increase tourist visits. In line with the COVID-19 pandemic, the tourism sector experienced a detrimental impact. The current

COVID-19 pandemic situation has gradually recovered, and the new normal (new normal) adaptation has started to be intensive. However, promotion is still important to support tourism recovery during the COVID-19 pandemic.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, tourism in Pangandaran was also affected. Pangandaran Regency has closed its tourism several times to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus. This policy is a follow-up to instructions related to steps to reduce community mobility in anticipation of the spread of the COVID-19 virus. The Pangandaran Regency Government officially closed its tourism three times, namely the first closure on March 18, 2020, to June 5, 2020; the second closure on May 16, 2021, to May 18, 2021; the third closure on June 29, 2021, to September 3, 2021.

Nonetheless, the promotion of Pangandaran tourism continues to be carried out through



Source: TikTok @kelilingpangandaran, 2022

**Figure 1 Content Upload Screenshoot**

social media TikTok by an account with the username @kelilingpangandaran. This account, during this pandemic, uploaded a lot of tourist information in the form of short cinematic videos with currently popular music. The social media content of TikTok @kelilingpangandaran helps tourists by providing the latest information regarding Pangandaran tourism during the Pandemic period. There is a comment column that can be used as a means of exchanging information between account managers and followers. It can add to Pangandaran's tourist attraction because of the ease of obtaining information. The clips in each video also pay great attention to their aesthetics, adding attractive and comfortable value to the audience.

Content on the TikTok account @kelilingpangandaran gets an average of tens of thousands of views to millions. The content created is very interesting, including the latest information on tourism conditions during the COVID-19 pandemic, the latest tourist entry prices, recommendations for tourist attractions, culinary, lodging, tour packages, history of locations or buildings in Pangandaran, and much more. Each video is accompanied by popular music or comedy voice actors so that it can entertain the audience.

Unlike other applications, TikTok displays content in short videos lasting 15 seconds to 10

minutes with songs as accompaniment that can attract the public's attention. Its users are invited to be creative with various features such as filters, effects, stickers, and background songs. TikTok presents a selection of quality content ideas to attract more users. The feature of TikTok is that the algorithm for disseminating content on TikTok provides video shows according to user needs, causing information to spread more widely or go viral quickly (Hasiholan et al., 2020). There has been a lot of trending information coming from TikTok social media. It shows that TikTok social media can be used as a promotional medium.

As social restrictions were imposed during the pandemic, social media TikTok experienced increased users. This restriction makes TikTok social media an alternative entertainment for the community. According to APJII data (Association of Indonesian Internet Service Providers), there has been an overall increase in internet use during the pandemic, starting from various genders, ages, and social groups. Most internet content frequently accessed is social media 89.15% (APJI, 2022). Reported by katadata.co.id, sourced from a survey conducted by Apptopia, the TikTok application was ranked first as the most downloaded in 2021 on the Google Play Store, and the App Store beat Facebook and Instagram (katadata.co.id, 2022).

Researchers found interesting things to

explore in a study where there is a phenomenon that opens up great opportunities for the tourism industry in utilizing TikTok social media to provide tourist information to increase promotion. Social media allows users to create or share knowledge/information between people with similar goals and behavior. The interaction and exchange of information that occurs can be a motivation for using social media (Qiyang & Jung, 2019) ranging from a few seconds to a few minutes, have become a popular form of learning and sharing creative skills such as cooking, drawing, and crafting. Short videos in social media platforms are reshaping the experience of learning creative skills with visually engaging materials and communication features to socialize with other users who have similar interest. However, regardless of their popularity and potential, user behaviors in short video platforms have been under investigated yet when it comes to learning and practice creative skills. This study analyzed 1.

Previously, the use of TikTok had also been carried out as a promotional culinary media in Yogyakarta during the COVID-19 pandemic. Promotion is carried out by the @javafoodie account, which packages content through parody videos or storytelling in providing culinary information in Yogyakarta. TikTok is considered suitable as a promotional medium because the content displayed is packaged

creatively and adapted to the millennial generation. In addition, TikTok has a unique algorithm system that makes content spread more widely (Dewa & Safitri, 2021). Likewise, @kelilingpangandaran is an account that uses TikTok as a medium for tourism promotion in the Pangandaran Regency. Researchers are interested in further researching the use of TikTok in promoting tourism amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

At the end of 2019, the world was shaken by the emergence of Corona Virus Disease, shortened to COVID-19. Years on, the COVID-19 pandemic is still a big problem for the whole world. Even though the situation is improving now, the COVID-19 pandemic continues. WHO stated on the website that the COVID-19 virus, which was declared a pandemic outbreak, has not ended, COVID-19 which continues to mutate, will threaten and does not rule out the possibility that the number of cases will continue to rise and face another state of emergency (Unit Pelayanan Kesehatan Kementerian Kesehatan, 2022).

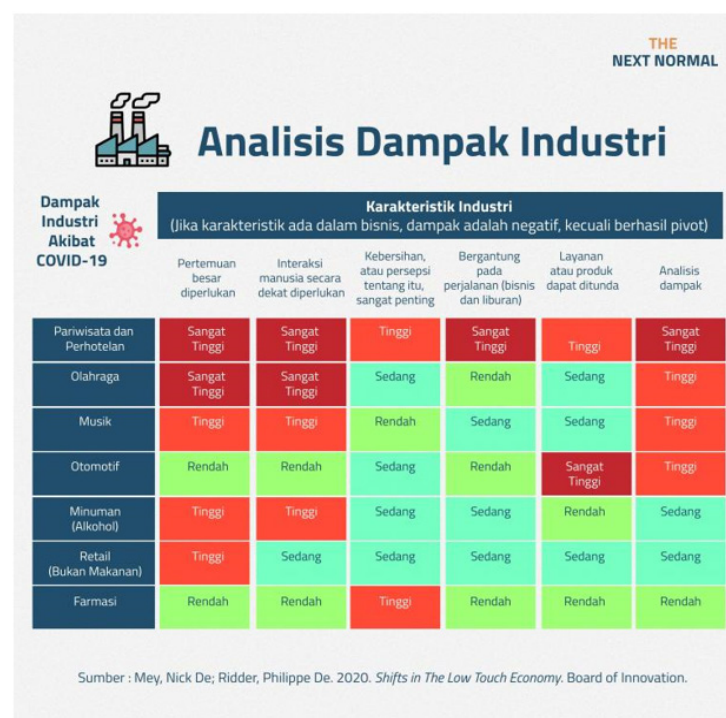
As one of the efforts to prevent the spread of COVID-19, the Indonesian government has implemented policies that suppress community mobility by implementing PSBB (Pembatasan Sosial Berskala Besar) and PPKM (Pemberlakuan Pembatasan Kegiatan Masyarakat). The government uses these two

terms with different scopes and parameters. The policy automatically has a big impact on many things.

These regulations are now relaxed because they account for the number of positive daily cases in Indonesia that have been sloping. In addition, cases of death from COVID-19 have also been low compared to patients who have successfully recovered. Other preventions, such as vaccinations, are also being carried out. Currently, the COVID-19 vaccination in Indonesia is in its third stage. The government issues regulations so that vaccination is evenly distributed and suppresses the spread of the virus. This situation makes people believe and adopt new habits to carry out their activities as before.

However, the COVID-19 pandemic has caused losses in many sectors. The COVID-19 pandemic has shaken the whole world, disrupting the global economy. Tourism is one of the industries badly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The spread of the COVID-19 virus has made most people choose to stay at home for fear of contracting it. In addition, the government's policies during the PSBB and PPKM caused tourism to experience a decrease in the number of tourists.

Figure 2 is sourced from the Shifts in The Low Touch Economy article, which Kompasiana reported; the tourism and hospitality industry is the first place that is vulnerable to being affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Analysis of the tourism and hospitality sector has a



Source: Kompasiana, 2020

**Figure 2 Industrial Impact During COVID-19**



very high impact due to activities requiring large-scale gatherings, close interaction, high hygiene guarantees, depending on travel, and the urgency of services or products that can be postponed (Kompasiana, 2020).

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a long-term detrimental impact on the tourism industry. The peak of the crisis most felt in this pandemic was when the lockdown was implemented. Almost all countries apply restrictions and even a total closure of their territory. It makes tourists unable to visit other countries/regions. As a result, tourism suffers huge losses due to the loss of visitors. The world tourism sector experienced a decrease in tourists by 23% when the lockdown was implemented in various countries (Škare et al., 2021).

For regions that rely on the tourism sector as their primary income, the COVID-19 pandemic is a significant disaster, such as Pangandaran Regency, which has advantages in the tourism sector. One of the areas in West Java has much natural potential wealth. Various tourist destinations are available in Pangandaran, ranging from marine tourism, hills, nature reserves, caves, waterfalls, rivers, fauna, and culture to culinary delights.

The decline in tourists certainly has an impact on the economy of the Pangandaran people. The downturn and crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic cannot continue. WHO

(World Health Organization) stated that the COVID-19 pandemic could not be predicted to disappear quickly. According to researchers, this virus may not disappear even though the vaccine has been done. Under these conditions, it is necessary to adapt to new habits. Moreover, this pandemic has haunted the earth for more than two years. Applying the new normal or adapting to new habits must be carried out to recover the affected aspects, especially socio-economic ones.

Likewise, the Pangandaran government restored the situation. Having opened the lid for tourism during the PSBB and PPKM periods, Pangandaran Regency is starting to reopen tourist destinations with several regulations established according to health protocol guidelines. Tourists are urged to comply with health protocols such as wearing masks, keeping their distance, and washing their hands diligently to travel safely and comfortably. After reopening, the Pangandaran tourist destination is still not fully back to normal as usual. Visitor capacity is limited to 75%; visitors must have received vaccines and are in good health, and of course, must be willing to comply with health protocols.

During the pandemic, Pangandaran Regency was in the public spotlight due to the spread of videos on social media during the Eid holiday season in May 2021. In the video,

tourists can be seen crowding the beach and not adhering to health protocols. It made the public angry with the situation in the video. Becoming a commotion on social media, the Pangandaran Regency government acted quickly by closing Pangandaran tourism again. This incident had a destructive impact on the image and loss of the people of Pangandaran, who rely on tourism.

The tourism sector began to recover during the implementation of the new adaptation. Tourist attractions are starting to be revisited, even with many predetermined health protocols. Extensive activities have begun to be allowed to be held again. This recovery process certainly still needs to be supported by promotional activities. In addition to increasing visits, promotions can be carried out to encourage visitors to comply with health protocols to prevent a resurgence of COVID-19 cases.

These things are the reasons for the need for promotional activities that attract the attention of the broader community so that Pangandaran continues to be a favorite tourist destination. The promotion is carried out to give confidence that Pangandaran Regency is a safe tourist destination during the COVID-19 pandemic. Communication media is needed to share important information about traveling in Pangandaran during the COVID-19 pandemic to create safe and comfortable tourism. It will undoubtedly affect the public's interest in

tourism and the recovery of the Pangandaran tourism sector. Tourism promotion efforts have been made not only by the government but also by several tourism activist communities. One of the most widely used promotional media is social media. The use of social media in tourism can create relationships with other tourists through the experiences they share. Therefore, promotions carried out through TikTok social media with various features can be an option as promotional media. Social media can handle problems in a crisis, such as during the COVID-19 pandemic, because the communication that is carried out does not require face-to-face contact (Venus et al., 2020).

Based on this description, this study aims to determine how the TikTok account @kelilingpangandaran is used and the reasons for using the TikTok account @kelilingpangandaran as a medium for tourism promotion in Pangandaran during the COVID-19 pandemic.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a qualitative method. Qualitative research is scientific data collection to interpret a phenomenon where the researcher is part of the vital research instruments. The results of qualitative research will emphasize meaning rather than generalizations. Qualitative research, according to Meleong, aims to explain, interpret, and control phenomena through data

collection. Qualitative research methods will produce descriptive data from observations and analysis. Qualitative research methods refer to the background and individuals holistically, whole, and comprehensively.

Case studies are used as a research approach. The case study is a method used in intensive and detailed. In-depth scientific activities related to a program, event, or activity can occur on an individual, group, institutional, or organizational scale in order to obtain in-depth information and knowledge about the events that occurred. The phenomena discussed in case study research are actual (real-life events), which are ongoing, not past events. Case study research is exploratory because the data collected is an integrated whole. Research with case studies will analyze as much data as possible obtained by various methods, namely interviews, observations, reviewing related documents, survey results, and supporting data that can describe a case in detail. The researcher tries to understand the case from the outside and within as a complete and detailed entity (Mulyana, 2010).

In this case study approach research, the researcher conducted interviews with the research subjects to obtain data in the form of information. Research subjects are people, places, or objects observed for a study. The subject in the research concept can

be interpreted as a respondent or informant who will be asked for information (Fitrah & Luthfiyah, 2017). The subjects of this study are (1) Owners and admins of the TikTok @kelilingpangandaran social media account. The selection of this TikTok account is based on a large number of followers, the number of views for each uploaded content, and the appearance of exciting content. (2) Tourists who obtain tourist information from the TikTok social media account @kelilingpangandaran.

In addition to interviews, data was also obtained through observation, known as direct observation. Observations are essential in order to get accurate information and true certainty. Observations made by researchers by observing the social media TikTok @kelilingpangandaran in carrying out Pangandaran tourism promotion activities during the COVID-19 pandemic. The researcher made direct observations referring to the uploaded information content, followers, viewers, the total of likes, information on hashtags in the content, and interactions with followers through the comments column. Document studies obtained are also used as a source of research data, including related documents such as written documents, photographs, and works.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

During the COVID-19 pandemic, tourism



was one of the sectors considered to be badly affected. Social restriction policies such as PSBB and PPKM have resulted in limited tourism activities and even the closure of tours. One way to maintain the existence of a tourist area during the COVID-19 pandemic is to continue promoting it through social media.

Promotional activities are carried out by informing potential tourists who use TikTok about various tourism potentials in the Pangandaran Regency. The presented content displays the beauty of tourism and information supporting tourism activities. It is an effort to influence people to be interested in visiting Pangandaran and to believe that Pangandaran is a safe and comfortable tourist spot to visit during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In carrying out promotional activities online through TikTok social media, the @kelilingpangandaran account provides all information related to Pangandaran tourism, such as recommendations for tourist

destinations, culinary, lodging, and activities that can be done. This information is also conveyed in detail, starting from the address to access to a tourist destination. Information related to tourism during the COVID-19 pandemic was also conveyed, such as notifications for the closing or opening of tourist attractions, health protocol calls, entry requirements, and daily updates on several Pangandaran tours. The ease and completeness of obtaining this information can attract potential tourists to visit an area.

Behind the uploaded content that can be seen on the TikTok Account @kelilingpangandaran, it has been prepared so that the purpose of creating content can be appropriately conveyed. The information used for promotion was obtained from various sources, namely the Pangandaran people, other mass media, the internal Pangandaran Roving Team, and the government of Pangandaran. The @kelilingpangandaran account provides information quickly because the team is spread

**Table 1 Informant Profile**

Nama	Keterlibatan
Taopik Kurrohman	Owner @kelilingpangandaran
Irfan Maulana Aziz	Admin @kelilingpangandaran
Miko Yusup Maulana	Admin @kelilingpangandaran
Tusiadi Setiawan	Followers @kelilingpangandaran
Yusmini	Followers @kelilingpangandaran
Renaldi Maulana	Followers @kelilingpangandaran
Reni Restina	Followers @kelilingpangandaran
Nurdin Alamsyah	Followers @kelilingpangandaran

Source: Processed by Researchers, 2022

across various Pangandaran tourist areas. Not only fast, but the information can be accounted for truth.

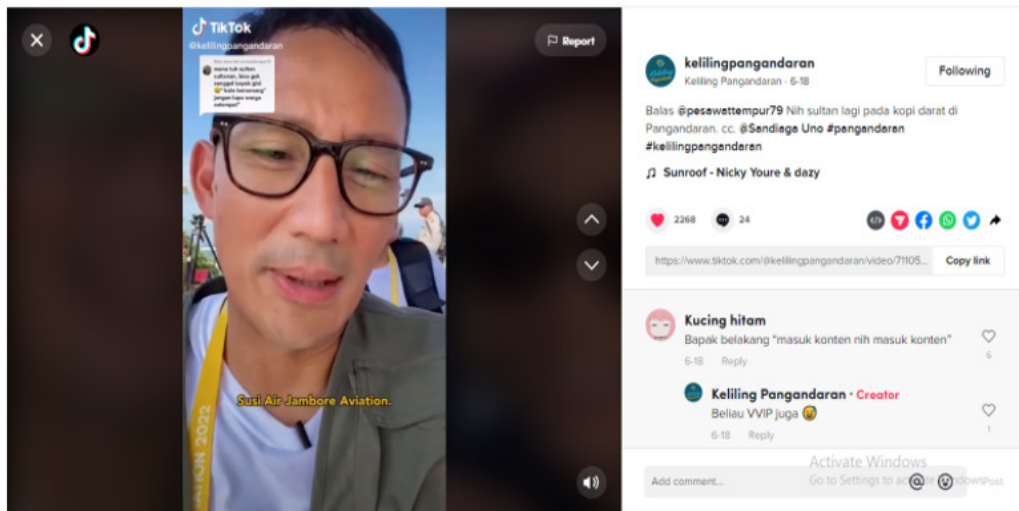
The following management process regarding content production in the @kelilingpangandaran TikTok Account. The content production carried out by the Pangandaran Mobile Team is not based on a particular task. Social media admin @kelilingpangandaran is free to create content ideas but is still under the monitoring of the owner. Some content is presented in the @kelilingpangandaran account, originating from external parties that are intentionally re-uploaded. Then, the content will be watermarked according to the name of the original content uploader.

The choice of TikTok as a promotional medium is inseparable from the role and features useful in tourism promotion in Pangandaran Regency. Through TikTok, tourism promotion accounts can introduce tourism destinations that are packaged attractively with short video footage so that these tourist attractions are fascinating to visit. The public has eyed the TikTok account @kelilingpangandaran as a promotional medium that provides Pangandaran tourism information. The reach of uploaded content shows that many people are interested in the information provided and interact with the TikTok account.

As of July 2022, the TikTok account @

kelilingpangandaran has 158.6 thousand followers and has received 2.6 million total likes from 439 uploaded content. Through TikTok's social media, users get information and interact with other users on issues they want to discuss. Interactions in the @kelilingpangandaran account can be through the comments column, including TikTok users exchanging information and commenting on jokes. The @kelilingpangandaran account also often replies to interact with their followers. TikTok provides a space that breaks down barriers for anyone to interact. The @kelilingpangandaran account is a medium that provides space for audiences to interact with each other according to the uploaded content.

The interactions built through the comments column, apart from building communication with followers, affect the engagement received by the @kelilingpangandaran account. According to the owner and manager of @kelilingpangandaran, comments made by followers can be used as content ideas and even reminders when the media uploads sensitive information. In addition, interaction features such as likes, comments, or shares can give more trust to the @kelilingpangandaran TikTok Account. Social media users will trust accounts with many followers, likes, comments, and shares. Therefore, the more interactions that occur in an account, the higher the engagement



Source: Tiktok @kelilingpangandaran, 2022

**Figure 3 Caption Language Style and Interaction**

will get.

In order to provoke followers to provide feedback on each upload, the @kelilingpangandaran account prefers to use a non-formal language style. It is explained because it adjusts to the domination of followers, namely young people, and gives the impression of being friendly and open. Of course, the use of language affects the impression of a social media account.

The use of the hashtag #kelilingpangandaran was also carried out to increase engagement and the spread of promotions carried out. This method successfully increased the awareness of Pangandaran tourists who use TikTok Italia media. It has been proven, according to observations, that in July 2022, content with the hashtag #kelilingpangandaran was watched 60 million times. Content tagged #kelilingpangandaran comes not only from uploaded accounts @

kelilingpangandaran, but many come from other tourists.

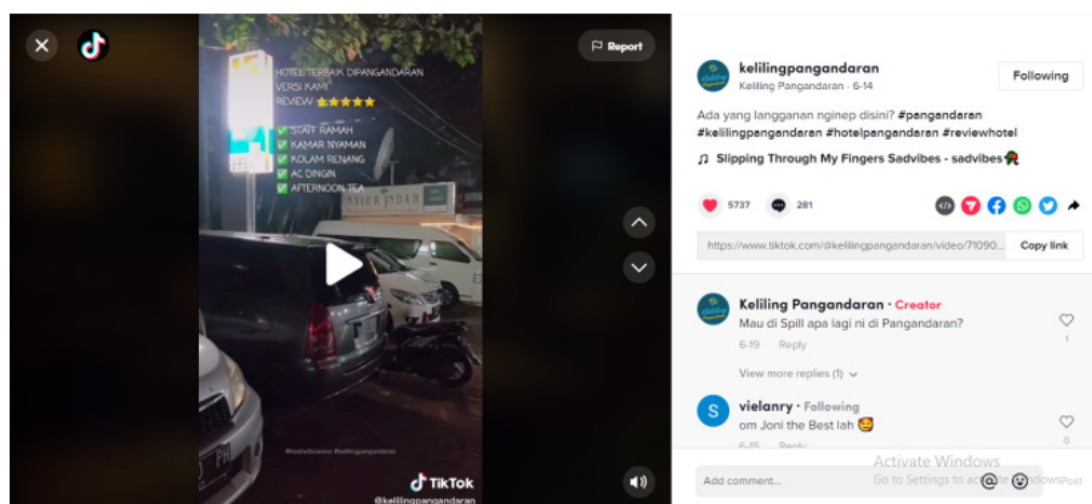
When starting promotional activities for the @kelilingpangandaran account, in addition to optimizing features, WOM (Word Of Mouth) and E-WOM (Electronic Word Of Mouth) are also carried out. In promotional activities, WOM involves consumers being willing to share attitudes, opinions, and reactions about products or services with others, also known as recommendations. The Pangandaran Roving Team also relies on its social network to share attitudes and opinions regarding the promotional account @kelilingpangandaran. This method is carried out by advocating to follow the TikTok social media @kelilingpangandaran for complete information regarding Pangandaran tourism. Personal social media by re-uploading content from the @kelilingpangandaran account is also carried out as a form of E-WOM. This

method will undoubtedly affect and spark interest in knowing the @kelilingpangandaran promotional account. Then, the influence also impacts engagement when visiting the profile and following the account. Collaboration in the form of endorsements and media partners 'is also carried out to increase account existence and support for promotions by other tourism actors.

The TikTok account @kelilingpangandaran strives to maximize the use of features that can be used as promotional media. Another feature used is live streaming; usually, the @kelilingpangandaran account displays Pangandaran tourist views or broadcasts Pangandaran specialties. Live streaming will provide another variation in promotions due to fundamental time interactions. Furthermore, the @kelilingpangandaran account also utilizes affiliate features that have a system such as

advertising. The @kelilingpangandaran account will upload a promotional video for a product and then get a 10-20% commission from sales. The results obtained are additional income for the TikTok @kelilingpangandaran account.

Each social media has its characteristics, including its content distribution system. TikTok has quite a unique distribution of content. TikTok account: If there are indications that the number of viewers you have when uploading content increases, the content is experiencing FYP (For Your Page) (Parameswara et al., 2021). The account's engagement will increase if content complies with the TikTok algorithm and enters the FYP system. The TikTok social media algorithm helps reach a broader range of users according to the user's interests or interests. The TikTok account @kelilingpangandaran explains the strategy used to match the algorithm. Even though we are still



Source: Tiktok @kelilingpangandaran, 2022

**Figure 4 Endorse Content**

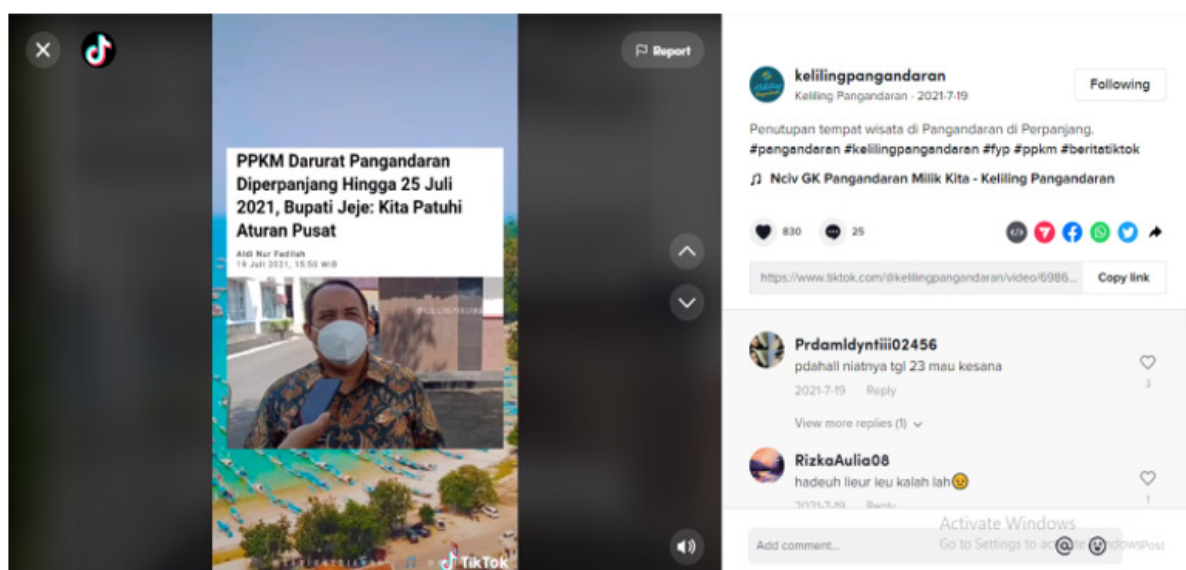
learning how the TikTok algorithm works, the @kelilingpangandaran account creates content by following ongoing trends. Such a method can make the @kelilingpangandaran account get high engagement and give a trendy impression.

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed many things, including the world of tourism. In order to survive, the tourism sector needs to adapt and take advantage of existing opportunities to continue. During the COVID-19 pandemic, promotional activities carried out by the TikTok social media account @kelilingpangandaran faced challenges. However, the obstacles faced by the TikTok Account @kelilingpangandaran did not stop the promotion from running. Instead, it brought profitable opportunities.

According to observations, the @kelilingpangandaran account provides information about Pangandaran tourism during

the COVID-19 pandemic. From closing and opening tours, local government policies related to tourism during the COVID-19 pandemic appeals to comply with health protocols, requirements for entering the Pangandaran tourist area during the COVID-19 pandemic, the current situation of tourism, and much more. Given the Pandemic situation in Indonesia, many government policies have emerged to break the rope of the spread of the virus. The amount of information during the COVID-19 pandemic made promotional media like @kelilingpangandaran have to be more active and responsive. It is a challenge so that all tourism actors can receive the information.

Facing these challenges, the @kelilingpangandaran account, as a Pangandaran tourism promotion media, has the responsibility to provide information that aims to attract



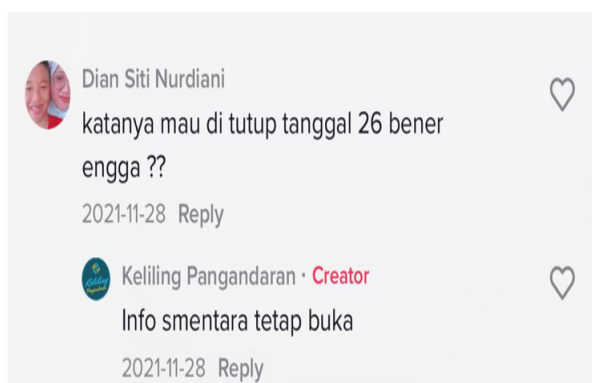
Source: Tiktok @kelilingpangandaran, 2022

**Figure 5 Covid-19 Information**



potential tourists to visit but upholds the rules given by the government. The sense that the @kelilingpangandaran account continues to carry out Pangandaran tourism promotion activities without ignoring the conditions of the COVID-19 pandemic by adhering to the established health protocol policies. The strategy carried out by the @kelilingpangandaran account is to be more selective in receiving information so as not to be consumed by hoax news and to be more careful in disseminating information. @kelilingpangandaran account made every effort so that the information provided made Pangandaran considered reasonable by the community so that it still had high attractiveness.

Some time ago, one of the tourist destinations in Pangandaran was in the public spotlight because of a video on social media showing the density of tourists ignoring health protocols. This incident resulted in many negative public comments and a bad image for Pangandaran Regency.



Source: TikTok @kelilingpangandaran, 2022

**Figure 6 Comments Regarding Hoaxes**

It is also by the formation of image construction. The opposite can also happen if the media needs to provide better information that will influence audiences in assessing or giving an image of something.

The amount of information during the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in confusing news that ended in hoaxes. During the COVID-19 pandemic, several times hoax news emerged related to Pangandaran tourism. Hoax news about the temporary closure of tours while Pangandaran tourism remained open. There are also hoaxes about the high wave conditions at Pangandaran Beach. Hoax information will worry potential tourists and make them hesitate to visit Pangandaran. This issue will cause losses to the Pangandaran Community, which depends on the tourism sector. The difficult conditions of the COVID-19 pandemic, coupled with hoax issues, had a terrible impact on Pangandaran Tourism.

Fighting hoax information circulating, the @kelilingpangandaran account how to provide accurate information through content. The information provided will automatically refute the circulating hoaxes. Apart from that, another way for the @kelilingpangandaran account to deal with hoaxes is to reply to comments from TikTok users who ask if the information is correct. The @kelilingpangandaran account will respond by refuting and providing correct

information.

Another challenge arose when the Pangandaran tour was closed during the PSBB and PPKM periods. Remember that the promotion carried out by @kelilingpangandaran is through content in the form of scenic video footage. The total closure of the tour resulted in difficulty for the Pangandaran Roving Team to retrieve video footage material for promotional content. This difficulty is overcome by looking for other tourist destinations that can be visited and introducing other tours that have yet to be widely exposed by the media. However, these difficulties did not hinder Pangandaran tourism promotion activities during the COVID-19 pandemic because the Pangandaran Tour Team are residents of Pangandaran, so they have a reasonably strong relationship.

Responding to the closure of tourism, which affects the creation of promotional content, is a different @kelilingpangandaran account that feels they have benefited. Closures at various Pangandaran tourist destinations have reduced visitors and no tourist activity. The quiet and conducive atmosphere makes the footage taken by the Pangandaran Roving Team look even more beautiful. The content produced for uploading to the TikTok social media looks aesthetic.

These contents showing the lack of tourism in Pangandaran attracted TikTok social media

users. Content showing views of Pangandaran Beach is in great demand because it is considered to cure the longing for traveling to Pangandaran, which cannot be done during the PSBB and PPKM quarantine policies. Then, for potential tourists who have never visited, it creates curiosity so that it will be persuasive.

Indeed, during the COVID-19 pandemic, this was a difficult situation, but some benefits could be obtained by the media, which were also felt by the @kelilingpangandaran account. While implementing the PSBB and PPKM policies, which limited and regulated all community activities, activities began to be carried out in droves through online media. People are becoming dependent on the internet, including social media. The @kelilingpangandaran account exploits this situation as a medium for Pangandaran tourism promotion to attract potential tourists. The speed and high engagement proved that the @kelilingpangandaran account got during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The informant was a follower of the @kelilingpangandaran account and stated that he prefers to seek information through social media. Then, another informant has more trust in social media accounts such as @kelilingpangandaran to get information about tourism during the COVID-19 pandemic. These reasons have made the @kelilingpangandaran

account get a lot of new followers. So, the @kelilingpangandaran account can be used as an information medium during the COVID-19 pandemic to support promotions with creative content.

In facing challenges as a promotional media during the COVID-19 pandemic, the @kelilingpangandaran account received support from the Pangandaran Regency Government. The support provided openly provides information on tourism policies during the COVID-19 pandemic to make it easier for the media to disseminate information and prevent hoaxes from occurring. The Pangandaran Regency Government also involves the role of social media, such as @kelilingpangandaran, by holding open discussions regarding several policies that will be implemented. Such a reciprocal relationship is very beneficial for both parties. The Pangandaran Regency Government will be assisted in disseminating information and increasing Pangandaran tourism promotion. In contrast, media, such as the @kelilingpangandaran account, will be assisted in obtaining credible information to prevent information difficulties during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Based on the description above, there are four stages of social construction. Starting from a construction material that is made and then distributed and consumed by the

community so that it can form a reality that impacts the community affected by the things conveyed. The results of this study indicate a social construction created by the TikTok social media account @kelilingpangandaran, starting from preparing the construction until a reality is formed that influences Pangandaran tourism promotion activities during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The first stage is the TikTok social media account @kelilingpangandaran, which provides information as a form of Pangandaran tourism promotion activity. Information is conveyed through content in the form of videos that display the beauty of tourist attractions in Pangandaran. At this stage, the message conveyed by the social media TikTok @kelilingpangandaran shows alignment with the public interest. In a real sense, the message conveyed is for the common good, but it is just jargon. The information submitted by the TikTok account @kelilingpangandaran intends to be a promotional media which will certainly persuade the public to visit Pangandaran and, in the end, will benefit the Pangandaran Regency Government and the people of Pangandaran Regency.

Furthermore, the @kelilingpangandaran account uses TikTok as a construction distribution. Communication will occur in the construction distribution phase in one direction (Bungin, 2008). It differs from the TikTok @

kelilingpangandaran account communication model, which consists of two directions between the communicator and the communicant. Even though TikTok social media allows for a one-way communication model by turning off the comments column, the @kelilingpangandaran account still applies a two-way communication model. Feedback obtained from followers as communicants is needed for various purposes.

At the stage of forming reality construction, followers of the @kelilingpangandaran TikTok account accept that the mass media construct their thoughts. Shown by followers who are informants of this study following the TikTok account @kelilingpangandaran voluntarily because they wish to learn about Pangandaran tourism. Apart from that, making TikTok social media is a consumptive choice, where currently, many people are used to being very dependent on social media. Then, there is also the formation of image construction. The TikTok account @kelilingpangandaran always displays the advantages points possessed by Pangandaran tourism during the COVID-19 pandemic to form a good image for Pangandaran tourism.

The final stage is confirmation, for the media will provide arguments for social construction. At the same time, the audience will also provide reasons for being involved in social construction. According to the research results, the TikTok account @kelilingpangandaran carries out

social construction to carry out promotions that influence audiences to be interested and to visit tours in Pangandaran during the COVID-19 pandemic. Likewise, the audience, followers from the @kelilingpangandaran account, chose to be involved in the social construction process because they needed information to support their needs about tourism through social media, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Therefore, it can be concluded that the TikTok Social Media Account @kelilingpangandaran disseminates construction so that reality is formed to achieve the objectives of Pangandaran tourism promotion during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, implementing a two-way communication model still provides public space for the community.

The use of social media for tourism promotion activities in Pangandaran Regency during the COVID-19 pandemic was not carried out for any reason. Choosing TikTok social media was carried out with various considerations that had been thought of by the Pangandaran Mobile Team. During the COVID-19 Pandemic, the use of TikTok increased according to a survey conducted by Apptopia, which was reported by katadata.co.id stating that social media TikTok was ranked first in the most downloaded in 2021 (katadata.co.id, 2022). TikTok is also considered to be used as an influential promotional media, as evidenced by the large number of uploaded

content shared through this platform. Not only does it share information, but TikTok's social media also allows its users to interact with each other. It makes perfect sense for TikTok to be a promotional medium, considering that many users are connected.

The effective use of TikTok was also seen by the owner of @kelilingpangandaran, who said he often saw content with the TikTok logo watermark appearing on other social media. With so many TikTok users, @kelilingpangandaran has used it to reach a broader range of promotions. TikTok trends also come with uniqueness and provide a different experience on social media. The @kelilingpangandaran account takes advantage of the trend of using TikTok during the COVID-19 pandemic to reach a wider range of Pangandaran tourism promotions.

Understanding where consumers interact on social media is essential (Lutrell, 2015). The @kelilingpangandaran account sees a change in trends in society in consuming information, which eventually becomes the background for using TikTok social media as a promotional medium.

Once known as negative social media because it contained many elements of violations until Kominfo blocked it, now TikTok comes with a variety of higher quality and educational content. There are three motivations for using

social media TikTok, namely as a medium for interacting, storing memories or archiving, and self-expression through video content (Parameswara et al., 2021). Three categories of content are most in demand: entertainment content, art content such as lifestyle, and marketing content that can persuade people to use these products/services. According to the research results obtained by TikTok users who are informants, on average, they choose TikTok social media to find information about their interest in something, viral news, and entertainment media.

This statement explains that TikTok social media can be used not only as a medium for seeking entertainment but as an information medium. It strengthens the reason for the @kelilingpangandaran account choosing TikTok social media as a medium for spreading Pangandaran tourism information to increase promotion.

Another factor that can be utilized in TikTok social media is the offer of convenience features provided. One is the TikTok algorithm system, which allows users to reach a broader range than other social media. Although no specific method addresses achieving or maintaining the algorithm, the @kelilingpangandaran account feels the influence of the TikTok social media algorithm. A relatively new account on social media TikTok, @kelilingpangandaran



can quickly gain followers and viewers after uploading content several times.

According to the interview results, @kelilingpangandaran decided to actively promote on TikTok because it allows new accounts to get high engagement. Even though the @kelilingpangandaran account did not have a large number of followers the first time, the uploaded content had reached high feedback.

The content on the TikTok @kelilingpangandaran account has been made in such a way as to make it look attractive. Of course, this creates mutual interaction between the @kelilingpangandaran account and potential tourists. Various information shared through the TikTok account @kelilingpangandaran contains a compelling invitation so that potential tourists are interested in visiting or revisiting tourist destinations in Pangandaran.

The @kelilingpangandaran account is not the only one actively promoting tourism in Pangandaran; eight other accounts are participating on the TikTok social media. However, according to observations made by researchers, other accounts appear less active in uploading their content. The @kelilingpangandaran account also has the highest followers for promotional accounts on TikTok social media. So, the TikTok account @kelilingpangandaran can be a trusted choice as a medium for tourism promotion in Pangandaran.

The informants, as the owners and managers account, are also aware of the advantages of the @kelilingpangandaran, such as being more consistent in uploading the latest promotional content and the quality of the content in terms of information to videos that are made neatly so that the aesthetics are maintained. Meanwhile, followers of the TikTok account @kelilingpangandaran decided to follow because it has unique content, quality information, and good video editing.

According to social construction theory, which assumes that the reality in the world is multiple or multiple things, the reality is formed from a specific arrangement of objects. So, it can be said that TikTok social media can be a channel for the community to construct a situation.

## CONCLUSION

The use of TikTok carried out by @kelilingpangandaran in Pangandaran Tourism promotion activities during the COVID-19 pandemic by providing tourism information is packaged creatively to add to the attractiveness of Pangandaran Regency. Using features such as likes, comments, shares, live streaming, and affiliates is optimized to get feedback that increases account engagement. In addition, the language style is also adapted to the dominant identity of followers to attract two-

way interactions. Then, the efforts made by @kelilingpangandaran to attract an audience by following trends on TikTok social media. TikTok account @kelilingpangandaran actively provides the latest information about COVID-19 in Pangandaran. Several challenges were faced in promoting Pangandaran tourism during the COVID-19 pandemic, such as the spread of hoaxes or difficulties creating content. However, the @kelilingpangandaran account makes efforts by providing precise and valid information to stop the spread of hoax news, then plays a responsive role through the comments column. Furthermore, the @kelilingpangandaran account took the opportunities from these difficulties to increase Pangandaran Tourism promotion activities.

The social media TikTok @kelilingpangandaran was used as a promotional medium for Pangandaran Tourism during the COVID-19 pandemic due to increased users from the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic until now. The ease of its features and advantages make TikTok able to be used as a suitable promotional medium to produce content that attracts tourists to visit Pangandaran Regency.

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