

# Analysis of the Implementation of Integrated Marketing Communication in Supporting the Sustainability of the Lumbung Strawberry Tourist Attraction in Pandanrejo Tourism Village

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## **Abstract**

This study focuses on analyzing the implementation of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) in supporting the sustainability of the Lumbung Strawberry tourist attraction in Pandanrejo Tourism Village. Lumbung Strawberry serves as an example of a tourist destination that has successfully maintained its existence amid the challenges that have caused many other tourism villages to struggle with sustainability. One crucial factor in maintaining the sustainability of a tourist attraction is the management's strategy in introducing and promoting its potential to prospective visitors. This effort can be optimized through the application of an integrated marketing communication strategy. The purpose of this study is to identify and analyze how the management of Lumbung Strawberry implements the concept of IMC in supporting tourism sustainability. The research employs a descriptive qualitative approach, with data collected through interviews, observation, and documentation. The findings indicate that the implementation of IMC at Lumbung Strawberry plays a significant role in sustaining the attractiveness of the destination. The management effectively utilizes various communication elements, particularly social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube, to reach a wider audience and build a positive image of the destination. Moreover, external support from visitors and mass media further strengthens promotion efforts through publicity and word of mouth. Although the IMC practices have not yet been formally structured, the marketing communication strategies applied reflect the fundamental principles of IMC and contribute meaningfully to the sustainability of Lumbung Strawberry.

**Keywords:** *Integrated Marketing Communication; Tourism Sustainability; Tourist Attraction; Tourism Village.*

## **A. INTRODUCTION**

The tourism sector has made a significant contribution to the growth of the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Data show that in 2022, the sector contributed approximately 3.26% to Indonesia's GDP. However, during the Covid-19 pandemic period (2020–2021), its contribution declined to 2.24% and 2.4%, respectively. In contrast, in 2018 and 2019, the tourism sector demonstrated stronger performance, contributing 4.5% and 4.8% to the national GDP (Fitriaty et al., 2024). Both in Indonesia and at the global level, the tourism sector has experienced rapid growth and serves as an important instrument for driving and enhancing a country's economic development (Parmawati & Hardyansah, 2020). On the other hand, the tourism sector also contributes to the growth of employment

opportunities and income (Purwahita et al., 2021). This condition indicates that tourism not only affects the macroeconomic sector but also directly impacts people's lives.

In responding to various emerging dynamics, the current direction of tourism development is no longer solely focused on economic growth but also emphasizes the importance of sustainability. According to (Mussadad et al., 2019), the present development of the tourism sector is oriented toward realizing sustainable tourism practices. The concept of sustainable tourism development has become a widely recognized idea in both the study and implementation of tourism development (Wibowo & Belia, 2023). In recent years, the term "Sustainable Tourism" has gained increasing attention and has evolved into a significant concept in both tourism discourse and industry practices (Azzahra, 2024). This development indicates that sustainability has now become a fundamental principle in formulating tourism destination development strategies across various regions.

The United Nations (UN) has recognized the strategic role of the tourism sector in supporting sustainable development by designating 2027 as the International Year of Sustainable and Resilient Tourism (Velandia, 2024). Although tourism contributes positively to the economic growth of a region, it also has the potential to generate negative impacts if not properly managed. Unsustainable tourism activities can lead to various environmental issues, including a decline in biodiversity and the overexploitation of natural resources (Kusumawardhana, 2023).

The concepts, principles, and practices of sustainable tourism have been the focus of discussion and study among tourism scholars for several decades. The growing attention to this issue is influenced by two main factors. The first is the strong impetus from the Brundtland Commission Report in 1987 titled *Our Common Future* and the 1992 Rio Earth Summit, both of which emphasized the importance of sustainable development (World Tourism Organization, 2024). According to UN Tourism (formerly the World Tourism Organization), sustainable tourism is a form of tourism that comprehensively considers economic, social, and environmental impacts, both in the present and the future, while addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment, and local communities (World Tourism Organization, 2024).

In 2017, UN Tourism declared the tourism sector as a "catalyst" for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and promoting sustainable development. This declaration outlined five main pillars positioning tourism as a strategic element, namely: sustainable economic growth, inclusivity and social equity, environmental conservation and climate change mitigation, protection of cultural diversity and heritage, and strengthening mutual understanding and international peace (UNWTO, 2017). UN Tourism emphasizes the role of tourism as a key instrument in realizing the SDGs (Boluk et al., 2019). The SDGs, established through the United Nations 2030 Agenda, comprise 17 sustainable development goals and 169 associated targets, serving as a global framework to guide the transition toward sustainable development (Weiland et al., 2021).

One form of sustainable tourism that contributes to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is the development of tourism villages (Krisnawati, 2021). Currently, the development of tourism villages as tourist destinations has become a significant focus of attention and discussion within Indonesia's tourism sector (Yudhiasta et al., 2023). A tourism village is a rural area that offers authentic experiences across various dimensions, including local culture, community traditions, daily life activities, vernacular architecture, and village spatial planning (Diwyarthi, 2023). These areas integrate various tourism elements, such as tourist attractions, accommodation facilities, and supporting infrastructure, in a cohesive destination system. Indonesia is known as a country with a vast number of villages distributed across diverse geographic regions, totaling 83,971 villages in 2023 (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2024). However, not all villages possess adequate tourism potential. According to the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, the number of tourism villages in Indonesia reached 6,111 villages in 2024 (Jadesta, 2024).

Currently, the government, through the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, has launched several programs, one of which is the Indonesian Tourism Village Award (ADWI). ADWI is a strategic innovation that functions as a recognition mechanism for outstanding tourism villages, with

assessments conducted based on indicators and criteria officially established by the ministry (Nurwanda et al., 2022). Through this program, tourism villages in Indonesia are classified into several categories: initiating, developing, advanced, and independent villages (Jadesta, 2024). The ADWI program is expected not only to serve as a recognition platform but also as a learning medium, providing motivation and inspiration for villages in Indonesia to explore and identify local potentials. Furthermore, this initiative aims to enhance the quality of community welfare by positioning tourism villages as a sustainable driver of regional economic development (Jejaring Desa Wisata, 2024a).

Tourism villages represent a form of tourism product that has experienced growing interest from both domestic and international tourists (Abidin et al., 2022). This trend has contributed to the rapid development of tourism villages in Indonesia over the years. The development programs for tourism villages are believed to provide a significant contribution to improving the welfare of local communities (Setiadi & Pradana, 2022). In addition to enhancing community welfare, the concept of tourism villages also offers diverse tourism experiences for visitors. Tourism villages can serve as destinations for tourists seeking to escape the bustle of urban life, daily routines, and competitive environments, while also aiming to enhance social interaction and self-actualization through creative activities, knowledge-seeking, and exploration (Khartishvili et al., 2019).

As with other challenges in the tourism sector, there are still several tourism villages that struggle to maintain their existence and achieve sustainability. This is evident from various operational and strategic constraints, particularly in Super Priority Destinations (DSP) such as Lake Toba, Borobudur, Komodo National Park, Likupang, and Mandalika (Pitanatri & Pitana, 2023). Many tourism villages demonstrate high initiative in developing destinations and tourism programs at the initial stage, yet fail to formulate long-term conservation and sustainability strategies (Yulianto, 2025).

In the context of tourism village development, a critical aspect that requires attention is the capacity of managers to oversee the destination sustainably, ensuring its continuity while enhancing the village's presence amid the dynamics of the tourism sector (Yulianti et al., 2023). Tourism village managers play a key role and hold the responsibility of introducing new or lesser-known tourist destinations, directly supporting the achievement of sustainable tourism destination development goals (Yudhiasta et al., 2023). The development of potential tourism destinations, such as tourism villages, requires a communication approach that is not only informative but also strategic and capable of fostering an emotional connection with the audience (Anggraeni et al., 2025).

One of the potential tourism villages currently classified as an advanced tourism village is Pandanrejo Tourism Village. According to data from (Jejaring Desa Wisata, 2024b), Pandanrejo Tourism Village is ranked among the top 300 in the Indonesian Tourism Village Award (ADWI). The village possesses a key tourist attraction that contributes to its continued sustainability, namely Lumbung Stroberi. Lumbung Stroberi serves as an iconic attraction that enhances the popularity and recognition of Pandanrejo Tourism Village (Luksiyah et al., 2024). Managed by BUMDES Raharjo, Lumbung Stroberi is located in Dusun Pandan, Pandanrejo Village, Bumiaji District, Batu City. Established at the end of 2018, Lumbung Stroberi represents the realization of the "Cultural Village, Prosperous City" vision initiated by the Mayor of Batu (Admin JSN, 2024).

In an effort to maintain the sustainability of its tourist attraction, Lumbung Stroberi implements various strategies to introduce the destination to the public. One of these strategies involves the utilization of marketing communication elements to promote its tourism appeal. This communication approach can be realized through tourism information systems, which serve as an effective promotional tool for introducing tourist destinations. Accordingly, marketing communication becomes a crucial element in conveying comprehensive information regarding the potential, location, accessibility, culture, as well as tourism products and services (Sutiksno et al., 2020). In this context, managers play a vital role in presenting the village's tourism attractions through the application of appropriate marketing communication strategies. Marketing communication itself serves as a means for organizations to inform, persuade, and remind consumers, either directly or indirectly, about the products and brands offered (Kotler et al., 2022). This approach can be further strengthened through

the application of marketing communication theories, one of which is Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC), where every communication activity is designed to deliver a consistent message across all channels used.

Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC), known in Indonesian as komunikasi pemasaran terpadu, aims to integrate all elements of the marketing communication mix synergistically in order to enhance the effectiveness of achieving marketing objectives (Sutiksno et al., 2020). The integrated marketing communication approach encompasses eight main methods that can be implemented through various activities, namely advertising, online communication, social media, mobile communication, events and experiences, word of mouth, publicity and public relations, and packaging (Kotler et al., 2022).

In the context of sustainable tourism, the implementation of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) at the Lumbung Stroberi Tourist Attraction, Pandanrejo Tourism Village can serve as a significant supporting factor. This approach aids in the sustainability of the tourist destination by ensuring that it remains well-known and continues to attract visitors. This is achieved through the creation of a unified message that effectively conveys a strong brand image to the target audience (Halim et al., 2021). The marketing communication practices implemented by the managers of Lumbung Stroberi can serve as a model or reference for similar tourist attractions to optimize appropriate and effective marketing communication strategies.

Based on initial observations, Lumbung Stroberi has utilized social media as the primary channel for its marketing communication activities targeting tourists. The platforms used include Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube, which serve to convey information about tourism activities, product promotions, and to build the destination's brand image in a visual and interactive manner. In addition to social media, several other elements of the Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) model have also been implemented, including events and experiences, word of mouth, publicity and public relations, and packaging. In some of these IMC elements, there is contribution from external parties, namely volunteers who indirectly participate in promoting Lumbung Stroberi.

In line with this phenomenon, several previous studies have examined the relationship between Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) and tourism sustainability. A study by (Yudhiasta et al., 2023) explored the integration of marketing communication within the framework of sustainable tourism in Kampung Adat Segunung. The findings indicated that marketing communication could be integrated into sustainable tourism initiatives with the support of local SMEs, although this integration still requires further strengthening to better attract tourists. The distinction from the present study lies in the focus of the research: Yudhiasta's study emphasizes the integration of marketing communication in an indigenous village context, whereas this study analyzes the implementation of eight IMC elements in a specific tourist attraction, namely Lumbung Stroberi.

This indicates that the marketing communication practices implemented by Lumbung Stroberi have begun to adopt an integrated communication approach, although a more comprehensive analysis is needed to assess the extent to which the IMC elements are strategically synergized to support the sustainability of the tourist attraction. Therefore, this study is important for conducting an in-depth analysis of how the implementation of Integrated Marketing Communication contributes to the sustainability of the Lumbung Stroberi tourist attraction.

## **B. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Sustainable Tourism**

According to UN Tourism (formerly UNWTO), sustainable tourism is defined as a tourism development approach that holistically integrates economic, sociocultural, and ecological considerations, both from a contemporary and prospective perspective, while maintaining a balance between meeting the needs of tourists, industry stakeholders, environmental capacity, and local community welfare (World Tourism Organization, 2024). This approach emphasizes not only economic growth but also responsibility for environmental preservation and the social well-being of local communities. The concept of sustainable tourism emerged as a response to the various negative impacts

of mass tourism, such as environmental degradation, cultural commodification, and unequal distribution of economic benefits (Kurniansah, 2025). The implementation of these principles can assist the management systems of tourist attractions in providing economic benefits for local communities while supporting the sustainability of the tourist destination.

According to (Peraturan Menteri Pariwisata Dan Ekonomi Kreatif Republik Indonesia Nomor 9 Tahun 2021 Tentang Pedoman Destinasi Pariwisata Berkelanjutan, 2021) , sustainable tourism is defined as a form of tourism that considers economic, social, and environmental impacts, both in the present and in the future, while meeting the needs of visitors, industry stakeholders, the environment, and local communities. This concept can be applied to all types of tourism activities across various destinations, including mass tourism and other forms of tourism. According to (Putri, 2022), there are five fundamental principles underlying every aspect of sustainable development: active participation, cross-sector integration, equitable benefit distribution, biodiversity conservation, and a long-term orientation. The implementation of these five principles is expected to foster tourism practices that are both high-quality and sustainable.

The concept of sustainable tourism refers to the development of the tourism sector that is capable of meeting the needs of contemporary tourists while preserving the environment and ensuring that its benefits can be enjoyed sustainably by both current and future generations (Sulistiyadi et al., 2017). The primary objective of this approach is to achieve a balance between destination environmental conservation, the fulfillment of local community needs, and tourist satisfaction (Sulistiyadi et al., 2021). Therefore, the concept of sustainable tourism serves as an instrument for stakeholders in managing tourist attractions to ensure their long term sustainability.

### **Integrated Marketing Communication**

According to (Kotler et al., 2022), Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) is a strategic approach to managing communication campaigns through the use of various coordinated communication tools that complement and reinforce one another to help organizations achieve their strategic objectives. This approach ensures that all communication activities are carried out consistently, enabling communication goals to be achieved effectively and efficiently, both in terms of messaging and cost. Meanwhile, (Halim et al., 2021) define IMC as a managerial strategy that synergistically integrates various communication channels and instruments in the execution of marketing campaigns. The primary goal of this approach is to create message alignment across all communication platforms to strengthen the attainment of the organization's strategic objectives. Furthermore, IMC plays a crucial role in ensuring the consistency of messages delivered to the audience, thereby optimizing communication effectiveness and efficiency in terms of both outcomes and resource utilization.

According to (Firmansyah, 2020), Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) is a marketing communication planning concept that integrates various communication disciplines, such as advertising, sales promotion, and public relations, to create consistent and impactful messages. The implementation of IMC aims to ensure message alignment across multiple media channels, thereby generating a retention effect that strengthens consumer memory and attachment to the message or brand. Integrated marketing communication essentially consists of eight methods for integrating various marketing communications, namely advertising, online communication, social media, mobile communication, events and experiences, word of mouth, publicity and public relations, and packaging (Kotler et al., 2022).

#### **a. Advertising**

Advertising is a paid promotional activity conducted by an identifiable party to communicate ideas, products, or services to a target audience through various media such as television, radio, print, and digital platforms (Kotler et al., 2022). Fundamentally, advertising functions as a marketing communication tool aimed at introducing and promoting products, services, or ideas to the intended public (Firmansyah, 2020).

#### **b. Online Communication**

Online communication in marketing is a strategy that utilizes digital platforms to effectively reach consumers by considering their behavior and preferences through media such as websites, search engines, and other digital channels to enhance the effectiveness of marketing messages (Kotler et al., 2022).

c. Social Media

Social media is a crucial component of digital marketing, enabling the two-way exchange of information in the form of text, images, audio, and video between consumers and companies (Kotler et al., 2022).

d. Mobile Communication

Mobile communication is a marketing strategy that leverages the ubiquity, personalization, interactivity, and transactional capabilities of mobile devices to reach consumers effectively, often through channels such as advertisements, applications, or contextually relevant messages (Kotler et al., 2022).

e. Events and Experiences

Consumer engagement in personally relevant moments through the organization of events, sponsored activities, or experiences has the potential to strengthen and expand the relationship between a company or brand and its target market (Kotler et al., 2022).

f. Word of Mouth

Word of mouth marketing refers to the activity of sharing information about a product by consumers with others, encouraging them to disseminate content in the form of audio, video, or text regarding the company's products and services, either online or face to face (Kotler et al., 2022).

g. Publicity and Public Relation

Publicity focuses on obtaining free editorial coverage in the media to draw attention to a particular entity, whereas Public Relations (PR) has a broader scope, aiming to manage overall reputation and foster positive relationships with various stakeholders (Kotler et al., 2022).

h. Packaging

In the context of marketing, packaging is not merely a protective container but also a strategic tool that plays a crucial role in attracting consumer attention and influencing purchasing decisions (Kotler et al., 2022).

### **Tourist Attractions**

Tourist attractions are defined as elements that possess uniqueness, beauty, and natural, cultural, or human-made richness capable of attracting attention and serving as destinations for tourists (Novra et al., 2024). This concept encompasses various factors that play a role in shaping an individual's interest in visiting a particular location (Dewi et al., 2024). Furthermore, according to (Novra et al., 2024), tourist attractions can be classified into several categories as follows:

a. Natural Tourist Attractions

Natural tourist attractions originate from natural environmental potentials, including proximity to unique ecosystems and landscapes, encompassing flora, fauna, natural phenomena (such as waterfalls and lakes), as well as activities utilizing natural resources, such as agriculture, plantations, and fisheries.

b. Socio-Cultural Tourist Attractions

Socio cultural tourist attractions refer to tourism objects derived from the social and cultural aspects of a community, including traditions, customs, social life, and historical heritage, which are manifested in museums, traditional ceremonies, performing arts, and handicrafts.

c. Special Interest Tourist Attractions

Special interest tourism is a type of tourism that has recently developed in Indonesia, aimed at tourists with specific motivations and skills, such as hunting, mountain climbing, white-water rafting, or traveling for medical or health purposes.

### Village Tourism

A tourism village is a concept of tourism development that integrates natural, cultural, traditional, and local community potentials to provide visitors with an authentic, educational, and meaningful experience (Murni et al., 2025). According to UN Tourism, rural tourism is defined as a type of tourism activity in which visitors' experiences are associated with various products typically linked to nature-based activities, agriculture, rural lifestyle or culture, fishing, and other tourism activities.

Rural tourism activities take place in non-urban (rural) areas characterized by:

- a. Low population density
- b. Landscapes and land use dominated by agriculture and forestry
- c. Social structures and lifestyles that remain traditional

### C. RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a qualitative method with a descriptive approach to examine the implementation of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) in supporting the sustainability of the Lumbung Stroberi tourist attraction in Pandanrejo Village Tourism. The qualitative approach allows for in-depth and contextual data collection, focusing on meanings, behaviors, and experiences related to promotional strategies and tourism management (Lune & Berg, 2017)(Abdussamad, 2021).

The research was conducted at the Lumbung Stroberi Agro-tourism site, Dusun Pandan, Pandanrejo Village, Batu City, East Java, from January 2025 to the present. The research subjects include the Lumbung Stroberi management, marketing division, and tourists who contribute to spreading information about the destination. The object of the study is the integrated marketing communication strategies applied to maintain the sustainability of the Lumbung Stroberi tourist attraction.

Data were collected using observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation as primary data sources, complemented by secondary data from literature, internal documents, and online sources to strengthen the analysis (Fiantika et al., 2020)(Ratnaningtyas et al., 2023). Observations were conducted to understand the actual marketing conditions and tourist behavior, while in-depth interviews were used to obtain information from management, marketing personnel, and tourists. Documentation included promotional media, visual recordings, and internal documents.

Data analysis followed the interactive model by Miles and Huberman, consisting of three main stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification (Abdussamad, 2021). Data reduction simplifies and focuses the data to identify themes and patterns, while data display organizes information systematically for easier analysis. Conclusion drawing employed comparative and relational approaches to understand relationships among data and strengthen the interpretation of research findings.

### D. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

#### Identification of the Sustainability of the Lumbung Stroberi Tourist Attraction

Lumbung Stroberi demonstrated significant resilience in facing challenges, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. The presence of social media, particularly Instagram, proved to be crucial for the continuity of the business. When direct tourist visits were prohibited, the management relied on online marketing for processed products and fresh strawberries.

Interview findings with the management stated:

*"During the pandemic, we even got higher revenue than the previous year. Because before that, we had a loss of around ninety-seven million. At that time, we were fighting for community empowerment and we were still confused about the right management system for Lumbung Stroberi. Even before the pandemic, we had experienced a significant loss, so we had to make a new breakthrough. At that time, we branded our strawberries with the tagline 'strawberries can boost immunity'. With that branding, sales in one day could reach 400 to 500 kilograms. We were also assisted by volunteers from the Garda Pangan Instagram account to promote our strawberries through their Instagram account."*

This result indicates that Lumbung Stroberi successfully survived by expanding new market opportunities through digital distribution channels, which serves as an indicator of its ability to maintain existence amidst a crisis in the tourism industry.

After facing the crisis, Lumbung Stroberi introduced innovations in the form of new tourist attractions to diversify its products and respond to changing post-pandemic tourist preferences, which lean towards nature-based destinations. The innovation developed is glamping (glamorous camping).

The Lumbung Stroberi management explained the motivation for the innovation:

*"We want a new innovation at Lumbung Stroberi, so that tourists don't just come to pick strawberries. We saw an opportunity in the vacant land we have near the fruit picking area, and we plan to develop it into a glamping tourism site."*

This innovation aligns with the popular trend of nature tourism, where tourists seek comfortable natural lodging experiences. The management stated:

*"Nowadays, nature tourism is highly sought after, one of which is glamping. Many tourists look for the experience of staying in nature with comfortable facilities. So, we thought this could be an additional attraction for Lumbung Stroberi."*

The glamping attraction, named "Campa", was introduced in June 2025. Although Campa is managed as a separate unit, it remains under the same institutional umbrella of BUMDes Raharjo, along with Lumbung Stroberi, as conveyed: "Campa itself is actually under the same umbrella as Lumbung Stroberi but is a different unit. So, BUMDES Raharjo oversees both Lumbung Stroberi and Campa."

Lumbung Stroberi operates based on the principle of local community empowerment, which is a strategic goal of the management. Community involvement is realized through active roles as farmers or fresh strawberry providers. Community involvement was explained by the manager:

*"In the tourism activities at Lumbung Stroberi, the local community is also involved as a supplier of strawberries, either through the land they own or by selling directly to Lumbung. So, even though some community-owned strawberry fields are located quite far away, we still cooperate with them so that there is no fruit shortage at Lumbung. Tourists can ride the shuttle provided by Lumbung Stroberi to go to the community's land. Furthermore, Lumbung Stroberi is also based on the principle of community empowerment, which is why we emphasize how the community can be helped by the existence of Lumbung Stroberi in Pandanrejo village."*

Lumbung Stroberi significantly contributes to the local economy through its policy of purchasing strawberries at a price relatively higher than the Cost of Goods Sold (HPP) and higher than the price offered by middlemen: "Initially, before Lumbung Stroberi existed, during the strawberry harvest season, the price of strawberries in Pandanrejo Village was very low, below the HPP, which was ten thousand Rupiah, even though the HPP for strawberries is above twenty thousand Rupiah. The middlemen would offer a choice, if you don't want the ten thousand price, then so be it. Ultimately, we wanted to cut the middlemen distribution chain by buying farmers' strawberries above the price offered by the middlemen."

The mechanism for profit sharing with the involved farmers:

*"The ticket price for fruit picking is twenty-five thousand Rupiah. The farmers will then receive five thousand Rupiah per ticket. For the sale of the strawberries themselves, the price is sixty thousand Rupiah per kilogram. The farmers receive fifty thousand Rupiah, while ten thousand Rupiah per kilogram goes to Lumbung."*

In addition, Lumbung Stroberi creates opportunities for surrounding businesses, fostering a mutually beneficial business ecosystem:

*"For example, the strawberry sellers around Lumbung Stroberi are now affected (positively). Usually, after visiting Lumbung Stroberi, tourists will visit other strawberry sellers. Because it is unlikely for people from Surabaya to go directly to that place, their main destination is definitely Lumbung Stroberi. Sometimes, if the strawberries owned by Lumbung Stroberi run out, we offer them to other strawberry providers. Because our goal is community empowerment."*

The management also plans a cut-flower tourism package to further support flower farmers:

*"We are also planning a flower package because there are many flowers here. White and purple cut flowers, that's what we plan to make a package for. Because when farmers plant flowers and it doesn't coincide with the wedding season, they usually don't sell. That's why we want to help."*

Lumbung Stroberi initiated the application of the sustainable tourism concept in terms of preserving local culture by showcasing a regional dance to foreign tourists. This was demonstrated through collaboration with local artists:

*"We provide a hall for friends who don't have a place to practice for dancing. We invite them so we can both benefit. They created a special dance for the welcoming of Lumbung Stroberi, and it's already done. So, we performed the dance for the foreign tourists."*

However, the distinctive local art of Bantengan has not been openly introduced to regular visitors:

*"As for the Bantengan art, it is indeed not openly introduced to visitors of Lumbung Stroberi. We usually hold this art performance only during certain events. So, we are not introducing it to visitors of Lumbung Stroberi."*

Nevertheless, Lumbung Stroberi has become a gateway for foreign tourists to learn about local culture, indicating an international reach:

*"Our scope is already international. On July 2nd, Lumbung Stroberi will receive twenty-five foreign guests who want to learn about the Bantengan art. We don't know why they chose Lumbung Stroberi, maybe because of the tourism, the culture, and the role of the community too."*

Lumbung Stroberi's competitive edge lies in the scale of its land and the distinctive quality of the strawberries produced. This uniqueness was affirmed by the management:

*"Perhaps there are many strawberry-picking tourism sites elsewhere. However, usually, the picking is only in one place or not throughout the whole village. Whereas in Lumbung Stroberi, the average resident is a strawberry farmer, so the land owned is wider. The taste and aroma of the strawberries owned by Lumbung Stroberi are also distinctive and different from other places. That is based on feedback from the visitors themselves."*

This combination of quantitative (wider land availability) and qualitative (product quality) advantages strengthens Lumbung Stroberi's competitiveness as a leading agrotourism icon. The sustainability of this attraction is also reflected in the relatively high and stable trend of tourist visits, the data for which (Table 1) will be presented subsequently.

Table. 1 The number of Lumbung Stroberi Visitor Data

Month	2023 (People)	2024 (People)	2025 (People)
January	1081	978	1066
February	987	989	911
March	890	530	324
April	902	1200	1960
May	1383	1690	1674
June	3126	2500	
July	2011	2062	
August	1715	2122	
September	1889	2335	
October	1537	1885	
November	956	1870	
December	1200	1333	
Total	18677	19494	5935

The tourist visit data for Lumbung Stroberi shows a total of 18,677 visitors in 2023, increasing to 19,494 visitors in 2024. In both years (2023 and 2024), the peak visit period consistently occurred in June,

with 3,126 and 2,500 visitors, respectively. Conversely, March consistently recorded the lowest number of visits, at 890 (2023) and 530 (2024). Partial data for 2025 (until May) recorded a total of 5,935 visits, with the peak occurring in April (1,960 visitors) and the lowest in March (324 visitors). Generally, the high visitation in June is influenced by the school holiday season and the strawberry harvest period, while March tends to be the period with the lowest number of visits.

### Elements of Lumbung Stroberi Marketing Communication

Lumbung Stroberi's marketing communication activities are focused on online marketing strategies using the main media channels: TikTok, Instagram, WhatsApp, and Google Business. Although there are plans to optimize offline marketing, this effort is hindered by limited human resources (HR), with the marketing division being managed by a single person.

#### Marketing Division Quotes:

*"for now, the promotions we carry out are through social media like Instagram and TikTok. We are indeed focusing more on online marketing."*

*"in the future, we plan to maximize offline marketing, but we are limited in terms of HR to realize that."*

Despite internal limitations, Lumbung Stroberi receives significant support from external sources, namely voluntary contributions from tourists (via social media / Word of Mouth) and mainstream media coverage (Publicity). Overall, the implementation of Lumbung Stroberi's Marketing Communication remains partial and is constrained by structural HR issues.

### Analysis of Integrated Marketing Communication Implementation at Lumbung Stroberi

The implementation of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) elements at Lumbung Stroberi shows a dominant focus on digital strategies, though its execution is suboptimal and heavily influenced by internal Human Resources (HR) limitations. Lumbung Stroberi partially utilizes the eight IMC elements (Kotler et al., 2022), prioritizing online media.

- a. **Social Media:** The main and most effective communication channel. Instagram has been the primary consistent medium since 2019, chosen for its ease of use, cost-free nature, and proven ability to attract the majority of tourists. TikTok and YouTube are suboptimal; TikTok only features reposts of Instagram content, and YouTube has been inactive since 2022/2024. The management of all three platforms, including content creation, is handled by a single person, which impedes consistency and optimization. The strategy of reposting organic content created by visitors helps overcome HR limitations and effectively builds credibility and trust with potential tourists.
- b. **Online Communication:** Google Business/Google Maps serves as a vital tool for location search, reviews, and evaluation, drawing visits due to positive reviews and easy navigation. In contrast, the Lumbung Stroberi Website functions only as a passive information medium; features like booking and detailed pricing are not maximized, and its development is stalled due to HR constraints.
- c. **Mobile Communication:** Conventional methods (SMS, email, phone calls) are not used due to lack of appeal and the potential to overburden the limited HR. The alternative is the passive use of WhatsApp Status to relay information to saved contacts. However, this strategy is inconsistent (only when strawberry stock is abundant) and proves ineffective, as most interviewed tourists were unaware of any promotions via WhatsApp.
- d. **Advertising:** Implementation is limited and unsustainable. Conventional ads (brochures) were used once during an exhibition to raise awareness but were not continued. Paid digital ads (Instagram Ads) were halted because they did not significantly contribute to visit numbers, only to engagement. The majority of tourists were not influenced by the ads, but by organic promotion and recommendations.
- e. **Events and Experiences:** Proven effective as a promotional tool and for creating unique experiences. Success heavily relies on external collaboration with universities (e.g., UMM) and government agencies (Batu Tourism Agency), which is key to overcoming internal resource

- limitations. Events like the Strawberry Festival serve to integrate promotion, education, and cultural preservation (e.g., Bantengan performance).
- f. Word of Mouth (WOM): Contributes significantly. Tourists voluntarily recommend Lumbung Stroberi due to real experiences that align with their digital expectations. This acts as an effective solution to limited promotional budgets.
  - g. Publicity and Public Relation: Publicity is obtained freely through local and national media coverage (local newspapers, NET TV, Kompas TV). This is effective in building brand credibility and public awareness. However, its effectiveness in driving direct visits is lower than social media. A major vulnerability is the absence of a dedicated Public Relation (PR) division, which poses a long-term threat to the positive brand image in the event of a communication crisis.
  - h. Packaging: The paper-based packaging for fresh strawberries serves as a marketing tool and differentiator, creating a premium impression and attracting purchases.

Based on the research findings, the marketing communication elements implemented by Lumbung Stroberi can be categorized within the framework of integrated marketing communication according to their respective components. The integrated marketing communication elements used by Lumbung Stroberi can be seen in table 2 below.

Table 2. Tabel Elemen Komunikasi Pemasaran Lumbung Stroberi

Integrated Marketing Communication Chanel	Available	Not Available
Elements		
Advertising	✓	
online communication	✓	
Social Media	✓	
Mobile Communication		✓
events and experiences	✓	
word of mouth	✓	
publicity and public relation	✓	
packaging	✓	

The IMC implementation at Lumbung Stroberi is characterized by the dominance of online strategies driven by social media (Instagram), which proves to be the most effective channel for reaching tourists and building awareness. Reposted content from visitors serves as a credible form of digital Word of Mouth. IMC implementation is not yet optimal due to structural problems, namely limited Human Resources (HR) in the marketing division. This limitation led to the discontinuation of the Advertising and Mobile Communication elements as they were deemed ineffective, and resulted in the passive management of the Website and YouTube elements.

Despite internal constraints, the sustainability of Lumbung Stroberi's marketing communication is supported by external factors through:

- a. External Collaboration to execute Events and Experiences.
- b. Voluntary contributions from tourists in Word of Mouth and Publicity (free media coverage).

Overall, Lumbung Stroberi successfully maintained its marketing presence by adapting and leveraging the power of social media and external collaboration to overcome internal HR limitations.

## Discussion

### Sustainability of Lumbung Stroberi Tourist Attraction

The concept of sustainable tourism has become a strategic issue in the development of modern tourist destinations. This aligns with the directives of UN Tourism (2025), which emphasize the importance of integrating the tourism sector into national and global development agendas as an instrument for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through poverty alleviation, job creation, and the improvement of community welfare.

Lumbung Stroberi in Pandanrejo Village serves as a prime example of the implementation of sustainable development principles in the tourism sector. The management collaborates with local farmers through strawberry-picking agro-tourism, which not only provides added economic value but also strengthens the local agricultural supply chain and ensures destination sustainability. This finding is consistent with the study by (Salsabilla & Susanti, 2024), which revealed that community empowerment in Lumbung Stroberi is a key factor in management, as local residents are actively involved in farm management, crop processing, and cultural activities.

The management of Lumbung Stroberi continues to innovate by introducing various activities, including educational tourism, strawberry-picking experiences, cultural attractions, and integrated village-based tourism packages. This is in line with the statement by (Yudhiasta et al., 2023), who emphasize that one of the most important elements in maintaining the sustainability of tourist attractions is the provision of diverse attractions. Furthermore, (Nurdiana & Santoso, 2023) and (Njurumana, 2024) support this notion by stating that a tourist attraction with uniqueness and added value can effectively encourage tourists' interest in visiting.

In addition, the existence of the Lumbung Stroberi thematic café represents an important strategy in providing a culinary experience consistent with the agro-tourism theme. Culinary products made from strawberries, such as fresh juice and ice cream, serve as a medium for promoting local gastronomy while supporting the creative economy of the community. The sale of fresh strawberry products also strengthens the local agricultural supply chain.

Another innovation implemented by the management is the development of Glamour Camping (Glamping), which combines the natural beauty of the area with the comfort of modern tourism. The growing interest of tourists in nature-based tourism activities has encouraged the management to create new and environmentally friendly experiences (Hapsari et al., 2024). This adaptive strategy reflects an innovative approach to tourism that aligns with current market needs (Achmad, 2023).

Through the integration of agro-tourism, local culinary experiences, and nature-based tourism (glamping), Lumbung Stroberi has successfully maintained the sustainability of its tourist attractions by emphasizing community participation and environmental stewardship. This management model stands as an example of sustainable tourism practice capable of delivering integrated economic, social, and ecological benefits.

### Integrated Marketing Communication at Lumbung Stroberi

Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) is a strategic approach designed to ensure the alignment and consistency of marketing messages in building a destination's brand image. For Lumbung Stroberi, the implementation of IMC plays a crucial role in strengthening its image and fostering tourist trust through consistent messaging across multiple communication channels.

Based on IMC elements, advertising and online communication are managed internally by the operator, while social media, word of mouth, and public relations are significantly supported by tourists, mass media, and government agencies. The event and experience elements are facilitated through collaborations with universities and government institutions. This aligns with (Kotler et al., 2022), who describe external integration as the coordination of communication activities between organizations and external parties, including media, agencies, and event sponsors.

Although not formally outlined in a marketing plan, Lumbung Stroberi's IMC strategy functions effectively through external support. This demonstrates that integrated marketing can develop organically without large financial resources. However, the lack of human resources and the absence of a dedicated public relations division pose challenges to maintaining communication consistency.

The strength of IMC at Lumbung Stroberi is evident in the high visitor loyalty and the emergence of organic promotional content across social media platforms. Tourists voluntarily share their positive experiences, which are then reposted by the management as official promotional content. This aligns with the findings of (Siallagan & Abidin, 2024), who state that reposting user-generated content effectively extends audience reach and strengthens customer relationships.

Consistent communication has significant implications for the sustainability of the tourist attraction, as it maintains tourist trust and ensures that the conveyed messages match the on-site reality. This supports (Charisty, 2021), who emphasizes that the accuracy and credibility of tourism information sources significantly influence tourists' visit intentions. Therefore, the combination of internal strategies and external contributions serves as a key factor in sustaining Lumbung Stroberi as a credible and adaptive tourist destination.

### **The Role of Integrated Marketing Communication in Maintaining the Sustainability of Lumbung Stroberi**

The implementation of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) at Lumbung Stroberi plays a crucial role in maintaining the sustainability of the tourist attraction. IMC functions not only as a promotional tool but also as a strategic framework to build a positive image, increase tourist visits, and strengthen the destination's position in a competitive market. By applying eight marketing communication elements—advertising, online communication, social media, mobile communication, events and experiences, word of mouth, publicity and public relations, and packaging—Lumbung Stroberi has succeeded in delivering consistent messages and expanding market reach. This finding aligns with (Azzahra, 2024), who stated that IMC enhances tourist interest and strengthens destination branding.

Social media, particularly Instagram, serves as the most dominant element in Lumbung Stroberi's IMC strategy due to its cost-effectiveness and ability to foster two-way communication. Through visual storytelling and regular updates, Instagram helps build emotional engagement with visitors. This approach proved effective during the Covid-19 pandemic, as IMC via digital platforms enabled Lumbung Stroberi to adapt and remain connected with tourists despite declining physical visits.

Although IMC at Lumbung Stroberi is not formally structured, external contributions from tourists, media, and government agencies organically expand its promotional reach. This indicates that IMC operates in a participatory and adaptive manner, supporting sustainability by fostering visitor loyalty, repeat visits, and cost efficiency. Therefore, IMC serves as a strategic instrument for ensuring the long-term existence and sustainability of Lumbung Stroberi as a community-based tourist attraction.

### **E. CONCLUSIONS**

This study reveals that the sustainability of the Lumbung Stroberi tourist attraction in Pandanrejo Tourism Village is supported by the implementation of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC), which, although unplanned, has proven to be effective. The synergy among the management, tourists, media, and government has created a communication system that integrates various marketing elements, including social media, online communication, tourism events and experiences, publicity, and word of mouth. Social media, particularly Instagram, serves as the main platform for strengthening the attraction's image, building engagement with visitors, and enhancing tourist loyalty and repeat visits.

However, several challenges remain, such as limited human resources in digital marketing management and a lack of technology-based innovation. Therefore, improving human resource

capacity and strengthening digital communication strategies are essential to maintaining competitiveness in the modern tourism landscape.

Based on the research findings, the management of Lumbung Stroberi is advised to continue innovating in digital marketing strategies, conduct regular evaluations of IMC effectiveness, and provide training for marketing teams in creative content and social media analytics. The local community of Pandanrejo Tourism Village should remain actively involved as creative partners through the production and storytelling-based promotion of local products. Collaborative efforts between the community and management are key to achieving sustainable tourism that balances economic growth, social inclusion, and environmental preservation.

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