

## The Influence of Social Media Marketing on Interest in Halal Travel among Millennials

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**Abstract:** This study aims to analyze the effect of social media marketing on interest in halal travel among millennials using the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach. The literature used comes from Scopus, DOAJ, and Google Scholar, with a publication range of 2015-2025. The results showed that social media marketing has a significant impact on millennials' interest in choosing halal tourism, especially through digital strategies such as storytelling, Delta Model Marketing Strategy, electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), and the role of social media influencers (SMIs). Psychological factors, including attitudes, subjective norms, and destination attractiveness, also influence tourists' decision to choose halal tourism. However, there are several challenges in marketing halal tourism through social media, such as cultural sensitivity, broad market segmentation, and the absence of formal halal standards, which can hinder the effectiveness of marketing strategies. In addition, there is a research gap regarding the effectiveness of each social media platform in building halal traveler loyalty and the long-term impact of digital marketing strategies on the sustainability of the halal tourism industry. Therefore, this research recommends further studies on digital marketing models based on artificial intelligence (AI) and content personalization to increase the effectiveness of halal tourism promotion and expand market reach globally.

**Keywords:** Social Media Marketing, Halal Tourism, Millennial Generation, Storytelling, Social Media Influencer, Electronic Word-of-Mouth, Halal Branding.

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### A. INTRODUCTION

Halal tourism is growing rapidly globally as the Muslim population and awareness of sharia principles increase (Adinugraha et al., 2021). Indonesia, as a country with the largest Muslim population, has great potential in this industry (Izzudin & Adinugraha, 2021). Global Muslim Travel Index (GMTI) data shows the growth of Muslim travelers who choose destinations with Muslim-friendly facilities, such as halal-certified hotels and easy access to worship (Hanafiah et al., 2021). This trend is supported by government policies and private initiatives, but still faces challenges such as low public understanding and lack of effective marketing strategies. Therefore, digital marketing innovations are needed to increase the attractiveness of halal tourism at the domestic and global levels.

Millennials are a key segment in the tourism industry, including halal tourism (Salam et al., 2019). They tend to choose destinations that offer personalized, flexible, and digital-based experiences. Increased religious awareness is also driving demand for destinations with halal facilities. Millennials rely more on social media, travel reviews and online communities in planning trips (Starčević & Konjikušić, 2018). Therefore, halal tourism marketing strategies should be tailored to their digital preferences to be more effective in increasing interest and engagement with the concept of shariah-based tourism.

The development of digital technology has made social media marketing a key strategy in the tourism industry (Hysa et al., 2021). Platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube are effective in reaching millennials through visual content and experiences shared by influencers (Liu, 2020). In halal tourism, social media plays an important role in introducing the concept of sharia-based tourism and educating the public about halal facilities (Ummah et al., 2023). With the right digital marketing strategy, the halal tourism industry can expand its market reach and increase millennials' interest in destinations that match their Islamic values (Bello & Muazu, 2023).

The link between social media marketing and interest in halal tourism is growing stronger, especially among millennials. Platforms such as TikTok and Instagram are effective in promoting halal tourism through storytelling and content that emphasizes the value of sharia, increasing engagement as well as tourists' repeat visit intentions (Nurmaizar & Widodo, 2024; Setiawan et al., 2024). Digital strategies enable real-time interaction and more personalized marketing than conventional methods (Zamrudi & Hyun, 2022). However, challenges such as inaccurate information dissemination and the need for quality content must be addressed to maintain interest in halal tourism.

Promotion of halal tourism through social media faces challenges such as lack of understanding of travelers, negative stereotypes towards Muslim travelers, and competition with conventional tourism (Moshin et al., 2020; Rasul, 2019). However, social media has the potential to be an effective education and promotion platform through the dissemination of accurate information, storytelling to build emotional attachment, and targeted digital campaigns to reach specific market segments (Nurmaizar & Widodo, 2024; Setiawan et al., 2024). With the right strategy, social media can increase awareness, reduce misconceptions, and strengthen the attractiveness of halal tourism at the global level.

Recent research shows that halal tourism and social media marketing play an important role in influencing millennials' travel intentions. Halal experiences increase Muslim traveler satisfaction (Suhartanto et al., 2021), while luxury travel content on social media can trigger visit intentions (Liu et al., 2019). Digital marketing is also effective in increasing interest in nature-based destinations (Gaffar et al., 2022). However, halal tourism research is still limited, with challenges in authenticating halal services (Vargas-Sánchez & Moral-Moral, 2019). Therefore, further studies are needed related to social media marketing and halal tourism preferences among millennials.

Previous research shows that social media plays an important role in increasing interest in halal tourism among millennials through storytelling and sharia value-based content. However, challenges such as lack of understanding, negative stereotypes, and competition with conventional tourism are still an obstacle. The research gap is seen in the lack of specific studies related to the impact of social media marketing on millennial halal tourism interest. Therefore, this study uses a Systematic Literature Review approach to analyze effective marketing strategies, overcome promotional challenges, and provide recommendations for the tourism industry in optimizing digital marketing for millennial Muslim tourists.

## B. RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach to analyze the effect of social media marketing on interest in halal travel among millennials. The purpose of this study is to identify effective digital marketing strategies in attracting millennial Muslim tourists, examine challenges in promoting halal tourism, and formulate recommendations for the tourism industry in optimizing social media as a marketing tool. The literature search was conducted through academic databases such as Scopus, DOAJ, and Google Scholar using keywords such as "halal tourism", "social media marketing", "millennial travelers", and "digital marketing strategy". The articles used included publications within 2015-2025, in English or Indonesian, and relevant to the relationship between social media and halal tourism interest.

The inclusion criteria in this study include articles that discuss the relationship between social media marketing and halal tourism, are available in full text, and have relevance to the context of the millennial generation. Meanwhile, the exclusion criteria included articles that were not relevant, focused on non-digital aspects of halal tourism marketing, or were not available in full text. Data selection and extraction were carried out through the stages of title and abstract screening, followed by full content analysis to assess the suitability of the article with the research objectives. The data obtained were analyzed thematically to identify patterns, trends, and research gaps related to the influence of social media marketing in increasing interest in halal tourism among the millennial generation. The research procedure can be seen in Figure 1.



Figure 1. Research Procedure

This research procedure begins with the identification of the problem and research objectives, which focus on how social media marketing affects interest in halal travel among millennials. Next, inclusion and exclusion criteria were determined to screen the literature based on relevance, year of publication, and full text availability. The literature search was

conducted through academic databases such as Scopus, DOAJ, and Google Scholar, followed by literature selection and screening to ensure suitability with the research focus. Afterwards, content analysis and data extraction processes were conducted to identify effective digital marketing strategies and trends in halal tourism. The results obtained are classified in the classification and synthesis stage of the findings, which are then further analyzed in the interpretation and compilation of results to understand the patterns and challenges in marketing halal tourism through social media. Finally, this research is concluded in the preparation of conclusions and implications, which provide strategic recommendations for the tourism industry in optimizing social media as a halal tourism marketing tool for the millennial generation.

### C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the research results obtained, the influence of Social Media Marketing on Interest in Halal Travel among the Millennial Generation can be grouped into five main focuses: social media marketing strategies, the influence of social media on interest in halal tourism, the role of influencers and electronic word-of-mouth, challenges in halal tourism marketing, and branding and market segmentation. These categories reflect the main aspects that influence the effectiveness of digital marketing in the halal tourism industry, from storytelling techniques and the use of digital platforms to the obstacles faced and the role of branding in shaping the perception of Muslim tourists.

**Table 1.** Focus and Insight into Research Outcomes according to Eligibility Criteria

No	Field or Focus	Author Name	Research Insights or Variables
1	Social Media Marketing Strategy	Setiawan et al. (2024), Rahmaningsih et al. (2021), Nurmaizar & Widodo (2024)	Storytelling, Delta Model Marketing Strategy, digital platforms (Instagram & TikTok) in increasing interest in halal tourism.
2	The Influence of Social Media on Halal Tourism Interest	Saifudin & Puspita (2020), Ilham et al. (2024), Rahim et al. (2024)	Attitudes, subjective norms, and knowledge of halal tourism as factors that influence tourist interest.
3	Peran Influencer dan Electronic Word-of-Mouth	Cooley & Parks-Yancy (2019), Moorthy et al. (2020), Liu et al. (2019)	The influence of social media influencers (SMIs) and electronic word-of-mouth on millennial travel decisions
4	Challenges in Halal Tourism Marketing	Nurmaizar & Widodo (2024), Setiawan et al. (2024), Zamrudi & Il-Hyun (2022), Handayani et al. (2024)	Cultural sensitivity, content engagement, market segmentation, lack of halal standards, high cost, and limited promotion.
5	Branding and Market Segmentation in Halal Tourism	Junaidi et al. (2019), Kasdi et al. (2019), Ainin et al. (2020), Slamet et al. (2022)	Branding strategies such as the 'Wali City' concept and different interpretations of halal tourism in digital marketing.

Based on Table 1 it covers social media marketing strategies, the influence of social media on halal tourism interest, the role of influencers and electronic word-of-mouth, marketing challenges, and branding and market segmentation. The scope of this research highlights how storytelling strategies, the Delta marketing model, and the use of digital platforms can increase the attractiveness of halal tourism. In addition, the research also addresses psychological and social factors, such as attitudes, subjective norms, as well as the role of influencers in shaping Muslim travelers' perceptions. Challenges identified include cultural sensitivity, content engagement, and the absence of clear halal standards, which affect marketing effectiveness. In terms of branding, the study highlights how concepts such as "Wali City" as well as market differentiation can help position halal tourism destinations more competitively in the global market. Overall, the findings emphasize the importance of a flexible, innovative and digital-based marketing approach in advancing the halal tourism industry.

### **1. The Most Effective Social Media Marketing Strategy in Increasing Millennial Generation Interest in Halal Tourism**

Effective social media marketing strategies in increasing millennial interest in halal tourism include storytelling, Delta Model Marketing Strategy, and utilization of digital platforms. Storytelling builds emotional attachment and increases halal travelers' repeat visit intentions (Setiawan et al., 2024). The Delta Model, with its Best Product, Total Customer Solutions, and System Lock-In approaches, attracts millennials through a comprehensive marketing strategy (Rahmaningsih et al., 2021). Instagram and TikTok are also effective in increasing halal tourism visibility and engagement (Nurmaizar & Widodo, 2024). However, since not all millennials prioritize halal tourism, a broader marketing strategy is needed to reach the diverse preferences of tourists.

Social media marketing plays an important role in attracting millennial and Gen Z travelers, especially in halal tourism. Sharing luxury travel experiences can trigger benign envy and increase visit intentions (Liu et al., 2019). Halal experiences are more influential in domestic than international travel (Suhartanto et al., 2022), while digital marketing also strengthens brand loyalty in tourism festivals (Mandagi & Aseng, 2021). Instagram has proven effective for social campaigns, such as fundraising with high response rates through strategic content (Firdhaus et al., 2023). These findings emphasize the importance of tailored social media strategies to increase the attractiveness of halal tourism.

The results confirm that social media marketing plays a strategic role in increasing interest in halal tourism among millennials and Gen Z through storytelling, targeted marketing strategies, and utilization of digital platforms. Storytelling strengthens emotional attachment, while Delta Model Marketing Strategy offers a comprehensive approach to attract halal travelers. Instagram and TikTok are also effective in increasing traveler visibility and engagement. However, challenges remain, such as diverse traveler preferences and not all millennials prioritizing halal tourism. Therefore, digital marketing strategies must be flexible and adaptive to reach a wider audience and ensure the effectiveness of halal tourism promotion in the digital era.

## **2. Factors In Social Media Marketing That Are Most Influential On Millennials' Decision To Choose Halal Tourism**

Social media marketing has a significant effect on millennial decisions in choosing halal tourism through attitudes, knowledge, and the role of social media influencers (SMIs). Positive attitudes and subjective norms increase visit intentions (Saifudin & Puspita, 2020), while better knowledge about halal tourism drives higher interest (Ilham et al., 2024). Social media becomes a key platform in shaping perceptions, with SMIs playing a role in providing credible recommendations that influence traveler preferences (Rahim et al., 2024). However, not all millennials rely on social media, as some still consider personal recommendations and conventional marketing.

Social media is a major influence in millennials' travel decisions, with Instagram and YouTube as the main sources of information, although personal recommendations are more trusted (Cooley & Parks-Yancy, 2019). Electronic word-of-mouth is dominant in domestic vacation planning in Malaysia (Moorthy et al., 2020). Luxury travel experiences shared on social media can increase visit intentions through positive envy (Liu et al., 2019). For Muslim millennials, destination attractiveness influences perceived value, satisfaction and traveler loyalty more than halal experiences, especially in international destinations (Suhartanto et al., 2021).

The results show that social media plays an important role in shaping millennials' halal travel interests through attitudes, knowledge, and the influence of social media influencers (SMIs), although personal recommendations remain dominant. Electronic word-of-mouth is effective in trip planning, while luxury experiences shared on social media increase visit intentions through positive envy. Destination attractiveness influences Muslim traveler satisfaction more than halal experiences, especially in international destinations. However, further research is needed to optimize social media marketing strategies that suit millennial Muslim travelers' preferences and decision patterns.

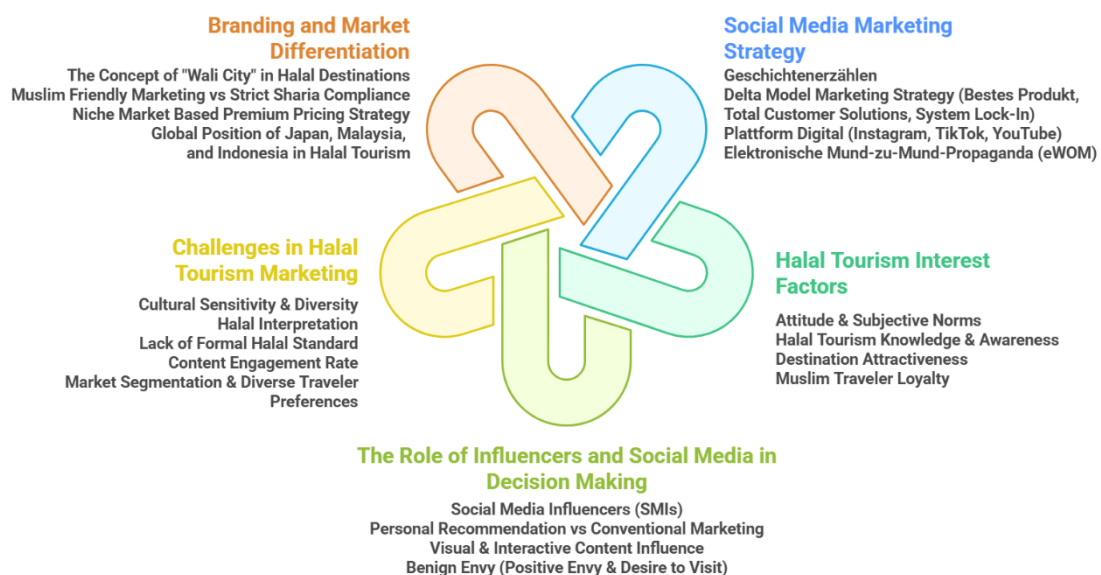
## **3. Key Challenges in Halal Tourism Marketing Through Social Media, and Strategies to Overcome Them**

Halal tourism marketing through social media faces challenges of cultural sensitivity, content engagement, and market segmentation. Proper cultural understanding prevents misunderstandings (Nurmaizar & Widodo, 2024), while compelling storytelling increases traveler engagement (Setiawan et al., 2024). Effective strategies include campaigns tailored to target segments (Zamrudi & Il-Hyun, 2022) and collaboration with halal influencers to strengthen credibility (Handayani et al., 2024). Innovations that remain respectful of cultural values are necessary for sustainable growth in this sector.

Halal tourism marketing through social media faces challenges such as the absence of formal halal standards, high costs, lack of Shariah-competent labor, and limited promotion (Junaidi et al., 2019). Proposed solutions include Muslim-friendly approaches and niche market-based pricing strategies (Junaidi et al., 2019). Branding such as the "Wali City" concept in Demak can strengthen the position of halal destinations (Kasdi et al., 2019). Social media

analysis shows Japan, Malaysia and Indonesia as popular halal destinations, providing insights for marketing strategies (Ainin et al., 2020) However, different interpretations of halal tourism among stakeholders demand a more flexible branding and promotion approach (Slamet et al., 2022).

The results show that marketing halal tourism through social media faces challenges such as cultural sensitivity, content engagement, market segmentation, and the absence of formal halal standards. Cultural understanding, storytelling, and collaboration with halal influencers are key strategies in increasing traveler engagement. Muslim-friendly approaches and strong branding, such as the "Wali City" concept, help build the image of halal destinations. Social media analysis shows Japan, Malaysia, and Indonesia as popular halal destinations, but different interpretations of halal tourism require a more flexible branding approach. Therefore, digital marketing innovations that respect cultural values are key to the sustainability of the sector.



**Figure 2.** Development of Research Variables

Figure 2 illustrates how social media marketing influences millennials' interest in halal tourism through five main aspects: digital marketing strategies, traveler psychological factors, the role of influencers, marketing challenges, and branding and market segmentation. Effective marketing strategies include storytelling, Delta Model Marketing Strategy, and utilization of digital platforms such as Instagram and TikTok to increase traveler engagement. Psychological factors such as attitude, subjective norms, knowledge, and destination attractiveness also play a role in increasing Muslim traveler loyalty. In addition, social media influencers (SMIs) and electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) help shape traveler perceptions through visual and interactive content, although challenges such as the diversity of halal interpretations, lack of formal standards, and market segmentation remain barriers to marketing. Strong branding strategies, such as the "Wali City" concept, as well as Muslim-

friendly marketing approaches vs. strict sharia compliance, are key in building halal tourism competitiveness on a global level. Therefore, to optimize the growth of this industry, a flexible, innovative, digital and influencer-based marketing approach is required to reach a wider and more diverse audience.

#### D. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the results of the research evaluation, it shows that social media marketing has a significant impact on millennials' interest in choosing halal tourism, especially through digital strategies such as storytelling, Delta Model Marketing Strategy, electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), and the role of social media influencers (SMIs). Psychological factors, such as attitudes, subjective norms and destination attractiveness, also influence travelers' decisions. However, key challenges include cultural sensitivity, broad market segmentation, and the absence of formal halal standards, which could potentially hinder marketing effectiveness. The research gap found is the lack of studies on the specific effectiveness of each social media platform in building halal traveler loyalty and the long-term impact of digital marketing strategies on the sustainability of the halal tourism industry. Therefore, more in-depth research is needed to develop digital marketing models based on artificial intelligence (AI) and content personalization in attracting Muslim tourists, as well as exploring the relationship between halal branding and non-Muslim tourist perceptions in order to expand the halal tourism market globally.

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