

Food Vlogger Reels Content @Makanbarengading on Instagram Social Media in Fostering Interest in Culinary Tourism in Cirebon City

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ABSTRACT

Cirebon City, with its diverse culinary and cultural richness, stands as a potential culinary tourism destination due to the uniqueness of its specialties, such as *empal gentong*, *nasi jamblang*, and *tahu gejrot*, which attract both local and foreign tourists. This study explores the influence of food vlogger @makanbarengading's Instagram Reels content in cultivating culinary tourism interest in Cirebon City. As digital media increasingly shapes consumer behavior—especially among millennials and Gen Z—visual content such as short-form videos has become a powerful tool for destination promotion. Using a qualitative descriptive approach, this research analyzes the thematic elements, visual strategies, and engagement metrics of selected Reels posted by @makanbarengading. The findings indicate that well-curated food content showcasing local Cirebon delicacies, combined with narrative authenticity and visual aesthetics, significantly attracts viewers and encourages culinary exploration. Furthermore, the strategic use of Instagram features such as location tagging, trending audio, and call-to-action captions enhances audience interest and interaction. This study underscores the role of digital influencers as key agents in tourism promotion and provides insights for stakeholders in Cirebon's tourism and food sectors to optimize their social media strategies.

INTRODUCTION

Cirebon City is one of the local areas in Indonesia that has a very diverse culinary and cultural richness. The uniqueness of Cirebon's culinary specialties, such as *empal gentong*, *nasi jamblang*, and *tofu gejrot*, makes this city have great potential as an attractive culinary tourism destination, both for local and foreign tourists. However, to optimize this potential, a marketing strategy is needed that is able to reach a wide audience and is relevant to current communication trends.

One strategy that can be used is to take advantage of technological developments. The development of information and communication technology has now brought significant changes in various aspects of life, including in the culinary industry. The digital world has opened up new opportunities for business actors to promote their products more effectively and efficiently. In this regard, social media plays a central role as an integral part of modern marketing strategies. According to Kartajaya & Setiawan (2017), it is explained that modern marketing no longer only focuses on products, but also on the experience that can be offered to consumers. This experience includes interactions, the story behind the product, the atmosphere of the place, and the emotional values that come with it.

Through social media, culinary business actors can build a more personal relationship with consumers (Berman, 2012; Hepworth et al., 2019; Ningrum & Roostika, 2021). The culinary industry

can show the uniqueness of the menu offered, display an interesting dining atmosphere, and share the food making process directly. On the other hand, food vloggers act as a liaison between business actors and consumers. The presence of food vloggers as public figures on social media can have a great influence in shaping opinions and increasing public interest in a culinary destination. As Sari and Rahmawati (2020) argue, information obtained through social media is one of the important factors that affect tourists' interest in visiting a place. This shows that social media is not just a communication tool, but has become a source of information that has a strong emotional and visual appeal.

One of the main advantages of social media is its ability to reach a wider audience at a relatively low cost. According to Tuten and Solomon (2017), social media facilitates business actors to promote their products organically through engaging content and sharing experiences from consumers. In addition, social media also allows business actors to get direct feedback from consumers. This is especially important in the culinary industry, where preferences and trends can change rapidly. By utilizing this feedback, businesses can adjust their marketing strategies to better meet consumer needs and desires. Therefore, the role of social media in culinary marketing cannot be ignored.

Social media, especially Instagram, has become a very popular platform for sharing experiences. In today's era, the use of Instagram is not limited to young people only, but also includes adults to the elderly (Putri et al., 2023). In this case, food vloggers like @makanbarengading can play an important role in promoting local culinary through engaging and informative content. In addition, the principle of consistency can also be seen in the behavior of food vloggers' followers. When someone has tried and enjoyed a food vlogger's recommendations, they are likely to continue following those recommendations in the future. This creates a cycle where food vloggers can continue to influence consumer decisions through the content they create. Therefore, this study will explore how social influence theory can be applied to understand the impact of Reels content from food vloggers @makanbarengading on culinary tourism interest in Cirebon City.

Reels content on Instagram has become one of the most popular formats for sharing information and entertainment, because with its short duration and the ability to display attractive visuals, Reels help food vloggers to convey messages in a fast and effective way. According to Instagram (2021), short video content has a higher engagement rate compared to static content, making it an ideal choice for culinary marketing.

Food vloggers like @makanbarengading, utilize visual elements in their content to create a strong appeal by displaying appetizing images and videos, thus arousing curiosity and interest among the audience. This is in line with visual rhetorical theory, which states that visuals can be used to convey messages and influence the emotions of audiences (Lester, 2013). Additionally, consistent and engaging visuals can help build a strong brand identity in consumers' minds. Food vloggers who manage to create a unique visual identity are able to differentiate themselves from competitors and attract more followers. This study will explore how the visual influence in Reels content from food vloggers can @makanbarengading affect culinary tourism interest in Cirebon City.

This research explores the role of social media, specifically Instagram Reels, in promoting culinary tourism in Cirebon City, Indonesia, by analyzing the influence of food vloggers, particularly @makanbarengading, on tourists' interest. Previous studies, such as Sari and Rahmawati (2020), have shown that social media significantly affects tourists' decisions to visit a place, especially when the content shared is engaging and visually appealing. Furthermore, Kartajaya and Setiawan (2017) emphasize that modern marketing focuses not only on products but also on the consumer experience, which can be amplified through digital platforms like Instagram. However, while these studies

highlight the importance of social media in marketing, they lack a comprehensive understanding of how specific content, such as Instagram Reels, influences consumer behavior in the context of culinary tourism.

The gap in these studies lies in the exploration of the visual impact of Instagram Reels produced by food vloggers and how they affect culinary tourism interest. This study aims to fill this gap by applying social influence theory and visual rhetorical theory to examine how the visual elements in Reels content influence consumer interest in Cirebon's culinary offerings. The findings of this research are expected to provide insights into the effectiveness of using Instagram Reels as a marketing tool for local culinary tourism, offering practical recommendations for businesses and tourism authorities in Cirebon.

By focusing on the impact of food vloggers and Instagram Reels, this research contributes to the understanding of modern culinary marketing strategies and the potential of social media platforms to boost tourism. The results can guide culinary businesses in Cirebon and other similar destinations to enhance their marketing strategies and leverage digital tools to attract a wider audience.

METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method to understand in depth how Reels content from the food vlogger @makanbarengading affects culinary tourism interest in Cirebon City. This approach allows the researcher to explore the audience's perceptions, experiences, and motivations regarding the content displayed, as well as observe the social interactions that occur on social media.

The subject of this study is the audience that follows the Reels content of @makanbarengading on Instagram, consisting of users interested in culinary and tourism in Cirebon City. The object of the research is the Reels content produced by @makanbarengading and its impact on culinary tourism interest in Cirebon City. The research will be conducted over two months, from February to March 2025, in Cirebon City, which is the operational area for @makanbarengading and the location where the audience interacts with culinary content.

The sampling technique used is nonprobability sampling with a purposive sampling approach. Participants are deliberately selected based on the following criteria: Instagram users who actively follow culinary content, follow the @makanbarengading account, have an interest in culinary tourism in Cirebon City, and are aged 18–35 with various occupational backgrounds.

Data collection is carried out through semi-structured interviews and direct observation. The interviews are designed to explore the audience's perceptions, experiences, and motivations in responding to the content. Direct observation of the Reels content published by @makanbarengading is also conducted to gain a deeper understanding of the visual and narrative elements that attract and stimulate audience interest. The combination of interviews and observations aims to provide a holistic understanding of the influence of Reels content on culinary tourism interest and to explain the relationship between visual message delivery and the psychological reactions of the audience.

The data obtained from interviews and observations are analyzed using thematic analysis. The process includes transcribing interview results, identifying main themes, grouping information based on those themes, and interpreting the results to draw conclusions about the influence of the food vlogger's Reels content on culinary tourism interest in Cirebon City.

RESULTS

Social media has developed into one of the most widely used communication channels by modern society in various aspects of life, including entertainment, education, and promotion. One of

the social media platforms that is familiar to users is Instagram. Instagram is widely used by its users as a medium to share various forms of information, ranging from images, photos, videos, to short writings in the form of captions. The main advantage of Instagram lies in its visual power that is able to attract the attention of the audience (Sutrisno & Mayangsari, 2021). One of the features that is quite prominent in Instagram is Instagram Reels. This feature provides a space for users to express themselves through the creation of short videos that are creative and entertaining. Instagram Reels makes it easy for users to create videos that are up to one minute long that can be combined with music, visual effects, and text, making the results more engaging and dynamic. Videos produced through Reels can be directly shared with followers and the public, so they have the potential to reach a wider audience (Nindya, 2023). Unlike other Instagram features, Reels offers a variety of editing tools such as effect options, speed control, and the ability to sync multiple clips to create smoother transitions.

Reels content on Instagram has become one of the most popular formats for sharing information and entertainment. Content with a short duration and attractive visuals, Reels can convey messages quickly and effectively, making them suitable for attracting the attention of the audience in a short time. According to Instagram (2021), short video content like Reels has a higher engagement rate compared to static content, making it an ideal choice for marketing strategies, including in the culinary industry.

In line with the development of technology and communication in the culinary industry, the phenomenon of food vloggers has also emerged. Food vloggers are individuals who create and share video reviews about food and beverages on various social media platforms. This profession is growing in popularity along with the development of social media that facilitates visual content to be accessed by a wider audience. In recent years, food vlogging has become a rapidly growing phenomenon, especially on platforms like Instagram, where visual-based content has a high appeal.

The content produced by food vloggers not only serves as entertainment but also becomes an effective marketing tool to attract consumer interest in culinary products. Food vloggers can present honest and visually appealing reviews, thus being able to build trust among their audience. Research by Nurfalalah and Wihayati (2015) shows that food vloggers can influence consumer decisions through engaging and authentic visual content. This is supported by findings from Contois and Kish (2021) which reveal that food visualization can increase consumer appeal and interest. Through the display of high-quality images and videos, food vloggers can create an appetizing virtual experience and encourage the audience to try the products reviewed.

One of the real examples of the use of this visual power can be seen from the @makanbarengading Instagram account, which consistently displays culinary-themed Reels content, especially foods in Cirebon City. This account has uploaded more than 424 posts and has around 17 thousand followers, which is an indicator of the audience's enthusiasm for the content presented.

Relevant to this, Social Influence theory can explain how such content can shape audience behavior and decisions. Social Influence Theory explains how individuals can be influenced by others in various aspects of social life, including in decision-making and behavior formation (Sopian et al., 2024). In this study, the theory was used to analyze how the Reels content uploaded by @makanbarengading account affects the interests and behavior of its followers, especially when it comes to trying new foods. The content acts as an effective source of social influence because it is able to shape the perception, interest, and decision of followers to explore the culinary display.

Most respondents revealed that they felt inspired to try new foods after watching content from @makanbarengading. Followers consider that the videos presented have a strong visual appeal and can convey information in a simple and easy-to-understand way. One of the respondents, Ulfah

Marwah, a follower of the culinary account @makanbarengading as well as a rice entrepreneur "Rifdi Kurnia" stated in an interview:

"The video is very clear, the video is clear HD, the way of delivery is really simple and really reaches us, it's not that difficult, use everyday language that doesn't twist, like you have to talk as it is."

This statement confirms that high visual quality and straightforward delivery are the main factors that make the content easy to follow and attract the attention of the audience.



Figure 1. Reels Instagram @makanbarengading

For example, in one of the Reels uploads published through <https://www.instagram.com/reel/DEEzS2DTq-O/?igsh=ZDBtm44YTZhcHJw> link, the video has attracted attention to more than 46 thousand views and received more than 90 likes. In the video, @makanbarengading recommends several culinary and tourist locations in Cirebon, such as empal gentong, tofu gejrot, savory sticky rice, and whole milk, which are packaged in a relaxed but informative narrative. The content shows the synergy between culinary promotion and local tourist destinations, which in the end is able to arouse the interest of the audience to not only taste typical food, but also explore the rich culture and tourist locations in Cirebon City.

Then, in addition to the visual factor and simple communication style, the main attraction of @makanbarengading content also lies in the concept of eating together involving several people. In an interview, a respondent highlighted this uniqueness by saying,

"It's interesting because visually in addition to food reviews, there are activities together to try and taste, because if one person is like that, now in this part of eating together we can know the assessment or review of each food from each person or participant," said Rodiyah, Social Media Manager at one of the National Companies.

Respondents assessed that the presence of several participants in one video provided a variety of perspectives in assessing food, so that reviews became more diverse and reliable. The statements from the respondents reflect how social influence through digital media can affect consumer behavior. The content served by @makanbarengading not only promotes food but also creates a sense of

community and wider social opportunities. The account managed to build a more personal relationship with its followers, thus influencing the decision to try recommended foods and participate in the community formed around the account.

Content presented with attractive visuals and creative delivery has a significant influence on shaping consumer interests and decisions, especially in the culinary world. This is in line with the concept in communication science, where the effective communication process starts from the success of the communicator in attracting the attention of the communicator (Nurfalah & Wihayati, 2015). When attention has been successfully raised through evocative visual and narrative elements, it will increase the interest of the audience to know more. This interest then develops into a desire to try or enjoy the products offered. From this desire comes the urge to make decisions, such as visiting a restaurant, buying food, or recommending it to others. This process is known as the AIDA (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action) stage, which describes a consumer's psychological journey from simply being interested to finally acting, and shows that the power of visual communication and creative narrative can significantly shape consumer perceptions and actions in the culinary world.

In this study, @makanbarengading account became an example of how social media communication can affect follower behavior through informative and entertaining Reels content. High-quality visuals, clear storylines, and straightforward delivery are the main factors that make followers interested in trying recommended culinary places. Many respondents admitted that attractive visuals play an important role in building their interest in visiting the culinary places on display. One of the respondents, Luthfi Lazuardi, an Empal Krucuk businessman who has been created content by @makanbarengading Instagram account and is one of the followers of the account, expressed his views as follows:

"Visually, to be honest, for the video shooting, it's good, the same for storytelling as I said at the beginning because it's quite interesting for the storytelling, so it makes us bring it into the flow and try the culinary."

This statement shows that good shooting techniques and flowing narratives can build curiosity and encourage the audience to follow the culinary recommendations presented. In addition to the alluring visuals, simple and direct delivery is also a special attraction for followers. A respondent who is a follower of @makanbarengading's Instagram account, namely Aulia, emphasized,

"Of course, this is also my concern, if it wasn't for the good, detailed, and interesting visualization, there would have been no way I would have been interested in participating in this activity. Ading packs it not too much gimmick, just looking at it, is enough to make me move. So want to go to the recommended places."

One of the Reels videos that is in the spotlight is an upload containing a promotion of Solo herbal medicine available in Cirebon, which can be accessed through the <https://www.instagram.com/reel/DBAuYkYgXHi/?igsh=Y2J5OXZsZjZrYXkw> link. The video attracted great attention from Instagram users, as evidenced by the number of impressions that reached 180 thousand and received more than 170 likes. In this video, the evocative visual presentation and simple but captivating narrative are important factors in attracting the audience's interest. Comments like "IHH mau" and "waaahhh... must slide" describes how the spontaneous reaction of followers shows immediate interest in the product displayed.

Furthermore, the visual elements in Reels not only attract attention but also provide a real picture of the culinary places displayed. This is in accordance with the principle of social proof, where individuals tend to trust and follow the actions of others whom they consider as references. Respondent Ulfah Marwah expressed his opinion that,

"The influence is really big in the Reels video, because people want to know where the place is, and it's more about the fact that the place is like this, the stall is next door, it's more interesting."

This statement shows that the location details are clearly conveyed and make it easier for the audience to decide to visit the recommended place. Based on the respondents' responses, it reflects how the power of visuals and authentic delivery can shape perceptions and encourage real action. Reels content from @makanbarengading manages to build an emotional connection with the audience through informative and direct presentation, in line with the principle of social proof that people are more likely to follow the decisions that have been made by others, especially if the information is conveyed in an interesting and credible way.

In this study, the interaction between the owner of @makanbarengading account and his followers reflects several aspects of this theory:

Social Norms

The content uploaded by @makanbarengading account not only serves as culinary recommendations but also creates social norms among its followers. This social norm is formed when followers see the account owner enjoying and recommending various places to eat, so they feel compelled to follow in their footsteps. In this case, an individual's decision to try a new food is no longer solely based on personal curiosity but rather influenced by the experiences of others who are trusted as references. This phenomenon shows that a food vlogger can act as an agent that shapes consumption behavior, where the credibility and trust built can significantly increase the exposure of a reviewed brand (Safitri et al., 2023).

One of the respondents revealed how content from food vloggers, such as @makanbarengading, provides additional perspectives that help in decision-making. The respondent stated,

"It is influential, because yes, in this day and age, to be able to know if food is interesting or not sure, we don't have to try it right away, we can try other people's perspectives as well. People who usually snack mean that they have an exploration of taste as well, and we also have a lot of references. I mean for me personally who rarely snacks, my references are limited, but if I follow content creators who are food vloggers, it means that I have more references, that's what makes me follow him." Said Rodiyah as a follower of @makanbarengading.

This statement suggests that followers rely on culinary reviews as a way to broaden their horizons regarding food choices, especially for those who have limitations in exploring the dining place in person. In addition to influencing individual preferences, the impact of content from @makanbarengading is also felt directly among culinary business owners. The speaker, Ulfah Marwah, as a rice entrepreneur whose stall was once promoted by the account, admitted that the effect of the content posted by @makanbarengading is long-term and continues to bring in new customers. He revealed,

"It's a lot, a lot. The effect of the post is long. Kak Ading visited my stall twice, the first time in May 2023 and the second in August 2024, so even now in February 2025 there are still people who come because of the content."

This testimonial shows how the influence of social media can have a long-term impact on businesses, where exposure from accounts that have high credibility is able to attract customers on an ongoing basis. Another respondent added that many customers use content from @makanbarengading as the main reference in making reservations or ordering certain menus. He said,

"There are even many who make reservations or what it is to screenshot the content @makanbarengading, ask here, ask in this place, ask for this menu, which is really the benchmark of

the content @makanbarengading." Said Luthfi Lazuardi as an entrepreneur of Empal Krucuk who has been made content by @makanbarengading.

Based on this, showing that the content served can influence individual decisions spontaneously is also an explicit guide used by consumers in determining culinary choices. This phenomenon illustrates how social norms formed through social media can encourage individuals to follow actions or decisions taken by others. When accounts like @makanbarengading share culinary experiences in an engaging and authentic way, followers feel more confident and motivated to try the recommendations for themselves.

Social Referrals

The content uploaded by @makanbarengading account plays an important role in shaping the interest and decision of followers to try various recommended culinary places. The trust that grows between followers and account owners arises because the account is considered a credible, honest, and authentic source of information. In a digital world filled with information, reviews from a food blogger are able to create culinary trends in just a short time, which ultimately provides benefits for various parties, both culinary business owners and consumers. For consumers, the content is a useful guide in choosing foods or restaurants that are worth trying (Adelia & Oktavianti, 2019). On this occasion, food bloggers carry out the role of Interactive Marketing Communication (Marcom), which is to establish two-way communication that not only informs but also influences the purchasing decisions of their followers. When an account owner shares a positive experience about a place to eat, it fosters a sense of trust and confidence in the minds of followers, which in turn encourages them to follow in the footsteps and visit the restaurant in question.

One of the respondents revealed how much the content from @makanbarengading influenced their desire to try new cuisine. When asked, "From a scale of 1-10, how much influence does Kak Ading's content have on being interested in trying new culinary?", the respondent Ulfah Marwah gave an answer,

"9.5. So, if there is new content, it will immediately be gassed. I also have a cousin who loves culinary, but he's shy to join (the community to eat together). So he likes to send reels @makanbarengading, let's come here. If Ading had posted, he would have sent it to me."

This statement shows that the content uploaded not only influences individual decisions directly, but also triggers social interaction among followers, who share recommendations with each other and invite each other to try the places shown in the restaurant. The influence of content from @makanbarengading is also evident in customer responses in the promoted place of business. Respondent Luthfi Lazuardi as a culinary business owner revealed that although he has not received direct feedback from customers regarding the content, many new customers have come and shown @makanbarengading content as the main reference in ordering menus or making reservations. He explained,

"To be honest, there has not been a response from customers. That's just right, new customers who come will usually show @makanbarengading content as a reference for buying menus and reservations for places at Empal Krucuk."

This opinion proves that the content presented by the account can attract attention and have a real impact on consumer decisions in the real world. As stated by Syahbani & Widodo (2017), food bloggers have now become an important reference for many people in determining whether a restaurant is worth visiting or not. Thus, it can be concluded that the social influence created through @makanbarengading content is able to increase the interest of followers to culinary tourism.

Recommendations delivered through personal experience and presented visually appealing give followers a sense of trust, which then encourages them to try the reviewed eateries.

The major changes brought by social media in daily life have become important from this phenomenon. This shift in interaction patterns is evident through the use of platforms such as Instagram that are easily accessible and not bound by space or time constraints (Nurfalalah et al., 2023). One of the real forms of this phenomenon can be seen in the Reels content produced by @makanbarengading accounts, which not only serve as a medium for conveying information about culinary places, but also as an emotional bridge between creators and audiences. Through the storytelling approach, account owners are able to present a more personal and immersive experience, so that the audience feels emotionally connected to each story conveyed.

The owner of the @makanbarengading account or Ahmad Nadzir Romadhon explained that since starting content creation in 2023, he has chosen the Reels format because it provides a wider space for expression than other formats. He revealed,

"As for Reels itself, from the very beginning I started watching Reels, I have started using Reels in 2023. Why make Reels? Because I think Reels can give us more content creator space to be able to express themselves, especially since I rely more on VO than the narrative and script I make. People say that Ading has characteristics as a storyteller, so the content is not only informational content, but packaged as a story. Reels are a suitable place, and I can use them as creators who are concerned about creating content based on storytelling, so it's more suitable for Reels."

This statement shows that account owners are focused on delivering information factually by trying to create an experience that flows like a story. Featuring a strong narrative and distinctive voice-over, Reels content becomes livelier and builds an emotional connection with the audience. The use of storytelling gives an authentic impression that makes the audience feel close and easily influenced to try the recommended place to eat.

Then, the person explained that Reels has a greater influence compared to photo-based or writing-based promotions. He stated,

"Reels are going up again, actually, because my exploration contains all Reels, and honestly Reels is also continuous with the TikTok platform, yes, because usually creators are mirroring, yes, so it's also going up," said respondent Luthfi Lazuardi.

Dominating the short video format on various social media platforms, Reels is an effective means to reach a wider audience. Eye-catching visuals and the ability to dynamically display stories make Reels have an appeal that is hard to match with text-based content or static images. In this study, some important points related to content theory are:

Visual and Aesthetic

The Reels content generated by @makanbarengading account features attractive visuals and appetizing aesthetics, so it is able to captivate the audience's attention. The appearance of food images taken from the best angles, supportive lighting, and strong story packaging, make this content succeed in building curiosity among followers. Eye-catching visuals help to showcase the deliciousness of the food and highlight a sensory experience that the viewer seems to be able to feel directly, even if they are only looking through the screen.

One of the respondents revealed how much the visual and storytelling style presented in Reels @makanbarengading influenced their curiosity. He stated,

"If it's rated from 1-10, Reels makes me curious to be at number 9, because yes, with the story style, the visual style that makes people wonder what is that delicious? Is it delicious? Or is it an

interesting place or comfortable to visit, that's it," said Rizky Yuldi as a follower of @makanbarengading.

Rizky Yuldi also added his opinion that "What makes this interesting is that this @makanbarengading has a complete package apart from the visuals, then the video editing, and also the way of telling the story describing the food and the place, which ultimately attracts people to try."

This statement shows that the combination of aesthetic visuals with captivating narratives is able to arouse a strong curiosity in the audience. They are encouraged to verify the experience themselves, both regarding the taste of the food and the atmosphere of the recommended place.

The main attraction of this Reels content lies in its ability to visualize the dining experience in an authentic and emotionally evocative way. So, by presenting a delicious display of food accompanied by a constructive storyline, account owners not only convey factual information about the food or location but also create imagination and expectations that encourage the audience to try it firsthand. This proves that visual aesthetics reinforced by compelling narratives play an important role in influencing the audience's decision to explore the restaurant being reviewed.

Narrative and Story

Account owners @makanbarengading have a knack for delivering Reels content through engaging narratives and authentic personal experiences. The narrative presented not only focuses on the taste of the food, but also delves into the story behind the dish, the atmosphere of the place, and the experience felt. This approach provides a deeper emotional dimension, making followers feel as if they are also experiencing the experience.

One respondent, Luthfi Lazuardi, highlighted that the main attraction of @makanbarengading content lies in the way it is delivered in detail and arouses curiosity. He stated,

"Interesting delivery, good video takes too, the recommendations are detailed, not just say it's delicious."

The account owner himself reveals that the identity and characteristics of his content evolve gradually over time. He explained,

"For me personally, based on experience, the characteristics of the content appear after a long time, take time. Now I feel that at the beginning of rich, there is an identity sentence that I always mention and usually always begins with a sentence like telling a story." Said Ahmad Nadzir Romadhon, the owner of the @makanbarengading account.

The approach made by the account owner, strengthens the emotional connection with the audience because each piece of content is not just an ordinary recommendation, but a story that invites curiosity and engagement. Respondent Rizky Yuldi added that the main strength of @makanbarengading lies in its distinctive way of communication. He said,

"This @makanbarengading has its attraction from the way it communicates, tells stories, explains, describes the places it recommends."

A combination of an in-depth narrative approach and an authentic way of delivery, the content produced by @makanbarengading can be informative and build strong emotional connections. This condition creates a significant influence on the decision of followers to explore new culinary experiences, because they feel connected to the stories shared.

Interaction with Content

As part of the development of information technology innovation, social media has opened up new spaces for people to express opinions and thoughts that may have previously been latent or not channeled into the public domain. These digital platforms have changed the communication

landscape to be more open, participatory, and democratic (Siraj et al., 2021). This is evident in the activities of @makanbarengading accounts on Instagram, especially through Reels content that manages to create emotional engagement as well as active participation from their followers. Not only being passive spectators, the account's followers also take part in shaping the dynamics of two-way communication, by liking, commenting, sharing videos, and even giving input or recommendations for places to eat.

One of the respondents revealed that they routinely share Reels from @makanbarengading with friends, especially those who are out of town. He stated,

"I love all of the packages, especially sharing this for friends who are outside the city, to give recommendations for places to eat or hang out in Cirebon City that are more popular or legendary, it is very helpful for me and my friends to try the foods in Cirebon." Said Rizky Yuldi.

This statement shows that content can be purely entertainment, as well as be a trusted culinary reference and shared as a valuable recommendation in social circles. In addition to sharing, some respondents also actively gave suggestions or requests for places to eat that they wanted to see reviewed. Followers feel appreciated because the account owner is open to input, even from those who don't come from a food vlogger background. One of the respondents, Rodiyah, said,

"Once, several times the response was that he was open to try. The rich person wants to get insight from even people whose background is not as a food vlogger like him, that's why I'm also happy, actively from his brother asking for feedback and I'm also the same in the end of a mutual chat that makes me finally connect to this day."

This openness creates a more personal and sustainable relationship between account owners and followers, which ultimately reinforces the sense of community within the platform. The account owner himself is aware of the high enthusiasm of followers in interacting with the content he creates. He explained that the most comments came when he shared a new restaurant that was known or had a unique value. He spoke, "So far, there have been more comments, especially if for example the place is something that they just knew or just opened and has interesting values such as the unique place, the food looks tempting, people must be in the comments, and most of them tag their friends for 'let's try' or 'gas' like that."

This explanation shows that the Reels uploaded not only invites curiosity but also trigger a direct invitation among followers to explore the recommended place. More than just visual content, @makanbarengading accounts have become dynamic interaction spaces. The account owner admitted that the video he made became a forum for followers to share with each other and invite his friends to try recommended places to eat. He added,

"So in my video, it is a forum for followers to invite their friends to try the recommended content that I make."

This kind of interaction strengthens community engagement and creates a two-way relationship, where the audience is not only a passive spectator but also a part of the process of sharing culinary experiences. Active participation is also seen in activities such as giveaways or polls held by @makanbarengading. One of the respondents said,

"So far, the giveaway or poll that has been interacted with the audience or followers @makanbarengading I always participate."

This shows that the strategy of engaging the audience through interactive activities further strengthens the bond and increases loyalty to the content produced. Thus, it is not only a source of culinary information, but also a space where followers feel heard, appreciated, and can contribute to the culinary exploration journey shared through Reels. Thus, the results of the study revealed that Reels content produced by @makanbarengading account had a real positive impact in encouraging

people's interest in culinary tourism in Cirebon City. Many followers feel inspired to try new foods and visit various culinary places displayed, indicating that the content is informative and arouses the interest of the audience.

These findings are in line with the results of previous studies that show that the presence of food vloggers and digital marketing strategies has a positive and significant influence on consumer buying interest and purchasing decisions. In fact, buying interest is known to play a mediator role in strengthening this influence, showing that attractive and trusted content can create a strong incentive to make a purchase (Netriani, 2024). @makanbarengading account has proven to be able to meet the audience's needs for accessible and credible culinary references. This was strengthened by the responses from several respondents who felt very helpful, one of them enthusiastically said, "It really helps," as a form of appreciation for the recommendations given.

The influence of this account can be seen from the number of places to eat that followers try after seeing the content. Several respondents mentioned that they had visited various recommended locations, such as AYCE Oharang Korean Barbeque, Laoban, Ayam Prista, Labbaik, Kaybun, Seblak Mang Adam, to snacks in the Moh area. Distribute. In fact, the recommendations from this account are not limited to culinary only but include shopping places such as UD Barokah. This phenomenon shows that the influence of @makanbarengading account extends to various aspects of the local experience in Cirebon, creating a real boost for the audience to try firsthand the places reviewed.

One of the respondents also highlighted how the content from this account made them more interested in exploring areas they had rarely visited before. Respondent Dinna Shauma Yasmin gave an example of how content about snacks in the Plered area opens up new insights for those who do not live in the area.

"If he makes snack content in Plered, now for those of us who are not his home there, we know that for example later through that road I have to try what snacks," he explained.

In addition, the account's initiative in forming a dining community also provides an opportunity for followers to meet new people and share culinary experiences. According to the same respondents, this account has a great influence in encouraging culinary exploration, even among locals who are not familiar with the various options available. He rated the influence of this account with a score of 9 out of 10, underscoring how much of an urge he felt to try the recommendations shared.

Not only does it encourage individual exploration, the content of @makanbarengading is also a topic of discussion that is often talked about among friends. Rizky Yuldi as a follower of @makanbarengading account revealed,

"Very often, because now this @makanbarengading is one of the media to promote the new place to eat," showing how this account has become the main reference in conversations about culinary in Cirebon. These discussions extend the reach of information from one person to their social circle, reinforcing the influence of accounts in shaping the opinions and eating habits of their followers. The presence of @makanbarengading account clearly contributes greatly to increasing awareness of various culinary options in Cirebon. The recommendations delivered in an interesting and informative storytelling style make followers not only aware of new places, but also motivated to try them out for themselves. Based on the combination of clear information, a friendly approach, and active interaction through the community, this account has succeeded in creating a closer connection between the digital world and real culinary experiences in Cirebon City.

Reels content posted by @makanbarengading account is a real example of an effective form of digital marketing, as it is able to leverage the visual power and wide reach of social media to attract attention and build engagement with the audience. These findings are in line with the results of a study (Mulianingsih et al., 2022) on @jktfoodbang's Instagram account, which also shows that social

media users tend to rely on Instagram as the main source for finding restaurant recommendations. Instagram not only features visually appealing photos and videos but also presents a comment column filled with reviews from other users, giving a clearer and more convincing picture before someone decides to visit the restaurant. Thus, confirming that Instagram has developed into a very influential marketing and decision-making tool in today's digital era, superior to other platforms in helping consumers make choices about where to eat.

Respondents affirmed that this approach is very influential, especially since social media helps information spread quickly and is easily accessible only in the palm of your hand. Respondents said that the packaging of attractive content from @makanbarengading directly helps promote local culinary in Cirebon, especially micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs). He said

"One handful of information can be obtained immediately, especially in terms of content packaging, it helps culinary in Cirebon, especially MSMEs, get more new customers, who initially didn't know so they knew." Said Rodiyah.

Food vloggers like @makanbarengading are considered to have an important role in introducing local culinary to more people. One of the speakers emphasized that in the current era of social media, visuals and content produced by food vloggers are an effective tool to spread information not only in Cirebon, but also throughout Indonesia. Rizky Yuldi emphasized the importance of this role by saying.

"It's very important, because in this era of social media, food vloggers like @makanbarengading have an important role in introducing local cuisine to more people."

So, with an engaging visual approach and a wide social media reach, food vloggers have the ability to introduce culinary places that may not have been previously known to a wider audience. In addition, the account owner highlighted the power of social media as the main means of promoting local cuisine. According to him, in this digital era, social media is the most powerful platform because it can be accessed by everyone for free with only internet quota.

"Now the only media that is powerful and used by everyone is social media, like it or not, the information that is disseminated must be through social media," he explained.

He also added that influencers or content creators play an important role in disseminating information about local and national culinary, especially about new places that are going viral or attracting attention. From their position as the main source of information flows, food vloggers like @makanbarengading have the ability to provide significant exposure to local culinary businesses.

The active interaction of followers with the uploaded content also shows how marketing through social media can form an actively engaged community. Through this platform, followers not only become passive spectators, but also share experiences and recommendations with others. Followers share information about what they are trying to eat based on recommendations from @makanbarengading, creating a domino effect where information spreads to a wider network. So it can be concluded that this account is not only a promotional medium, but also a forum for the culinary community to connect and share experiences, strengthening its influence in shaping local culinary trends in Cirebon and its surroundings.

CONCLUSION

The analysis of this study concludes that Reels content produced by food vlogger @makanbarengading positively influences interest in culinary tourism in Cirebon City, with attractive visual elements and engaging dining atmospheres successfully capturing audience attention and stimulating curiosity. The social influence of the vlogger and active interactions in the comments section foster a sense of community among followers, further encouraging them to experience

Cirebon's culinary offerings firsthand. High engagement rates indicate the effectiveness of short video content as a digital marketing strategy for promoting local culinary richness to a broader audience. It is recommended that culinary businesses and tourism managers collaborate with influential food vloggers or content creators to create more personalized promotions targeting millennial audiences, focusing on appealing visuals, authentic narratives, and community-building interactions. Given the study's limitations in respondent scope and observation duration, future research should involve more participants and adopt a longitudinal approach to assess the long-term development of culinary tourism interest. Further studies could also examine the effectiveness of other content formats, such as photos, Instagram Stories, and live streaming, in shaping tourist behavior.

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