

## Developing a Sustainable Tourism Promotion Strategy for Cultural Events on Sibandang Island

**Nukeu Novia Andriani\*<sup>1</sup>, Bernadet Sihombing<sup>2</sup>, Cecilia Stevani Br Sembiring<sup>3</sup>**

Politeknik Wilmar Bisnis Indonesia<sup>123</sup>

Email: [nukeu.andriani@wbi.ac.id](mailto:nukeu.andriani@wbi.ac.id)

### Abstract

*Sibandang Island, part of the Toba Caldera UNESCO Global Geopark, possesses significant cultural and natural potential, yet faces substantial challenges in tourism promotion. Previous research indicated that marketing feasibility was only 8%, despite cultural and natural potential reaching 98%. This disparity highlights the absence of a targeted and sustainable promotional strategy. This study aims to design a sustainable tourism promotion strategy for cultural events on Sibandang Island through an appreciative inquiry lens, emphasizing local cultural authenticity and community empowerment. The methodology employed is qualitative descriptive research with purposive sampling of 12 key informants including local government officials (n=3), community leaders (n=4), tourism managers (n=3), and tourists (n=2). Data were collected through semi-structured in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis, then analyzed using thematic analysis with NVivo 12 software. Methodological rigor was ensured through triangulation of data sources, member checking, and peer debriefing. The study utilizes the SOAR (Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, Results) framework, chosen specifically for its alignment with appreciative inquiry principles and community-based tourism development, which emphasizes asset-based rather than deficit-based planning. The novelty lies in integrating sustainable tourism promotion matrices with SOAR analysis to create a community-centric promotional strategy model. Findings reveal four strategic themes: (1) authentic cultural storytelling through digital platforms, (2) year-round engagement strategies addressing event-driven patterns, (3) community-based content creation capacity building, and (4) strategic partnerships leveraging UNESCO geopark status. The proposed integrated promotional strategy model demonstrates how internal cultural assets can be systematically connected to external opportunities through community aspirations, resulting in measurable sustainability outcomes. This research contributes to sustainable tourism marketing theory by demonstrating how appreciative strategic planning can transform community assets into effective promotional strategies while maintaining cultural authenticity and environmental sustainability.*

**Keywords:** Sustainable tourism; Promotion; Cultural events; Geosite

### A. INTRODUCTION

Sibandang Island, as part of the Toba Caldera UNESCO Global Geopark, holds significant potential for developing culture-based tourism. Its rich cultural heritage and natural attractions, including scenic beauty, cultural legacy, and event-based attractions, represent primary assets with a feasibility score of 98% in prior research (Andriani et al., 2024). However, a critical challenge lies in the marketing aspect, which recorded only 8% feasibility. This striking disparity between high inherent potential and low marketing effectiveness indicates a critical market failure, despite abundant intrinsic assets. This is not merely a matter of 'poor marketing' but a systemic issue of promotion misaligned with the destination's true value and community capabilities (Choi & Sirakaya, 2006; Jamal & Stronza, 2023). Without an effective strategy, the island's rich heritage remains underexploited, hindering local economic development and cultural preservation efforts, despite its UNESCO status.

\*Nukeu Novia Andriani

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Previous research revealed that the majority of tourists prefer authentic cultural experiences, yet no specific segmentation strategy exists to reach this potential market segment (Andriani et al., 2024). This situation is exacerbated by marketing strategies limited to social media, which remain sporadic and unfocused on the needs of specific market segments. The use of irregular, occasional, or circumstantial marketing strategies, rather than a comprehensively planned approach, has resulted in low tourist visits and limited promotion of the destination to both domestic and international markets. This phenomenon reflects what Donaldson and Preston (1995) term as 'stakeholder misalignment,' where promotional efforts fail to integrate the interests and capabilities of local communities, resulting in unsustainable tourism development patterns (Yotsumoto & Vafadari, 2022).

In the context of national tourism development, which emphasizes social and economic transformation, market segmentation management is a crucial aspect supporting the sustainability of tourist destinations (Hall, 2019). Furthermore, various policies at national, North Sumatra Province, and North Tapanuli Regency levels regulate the development of Sibandang Island based on sustainability principles. National policy designates the Lake Toba area as a National Strategic Area (KSN) with an environmental interest perspective (Peraturan Presiden Republik Indonesia Nomor 60 Tahun 2021). North Sumatra Province policy emphasizes community roles in maintaining environmental function and natural resource sustainability (Peraturan Daerah Provinsi Sumatera Utara Nomor 2 Tahun 2017). North Tapanuli Regency government policy states that development is carried out based on sustainability encompassing religious tourism, ecotourism, agrotourism, geotourism, and cultural tourism through strategic partnerships (Peraturan Daerah Kabupaten Tapanuli Utara Nomor 02 Tahun 2020).

These policies consistently align with the four main pillars of sustainable destination development: Sustainable Management, Socio-Economic Development, Culture, and Environment (Global Sustainable Tourism Council, 2019). This research specifically focuses on strengthening the 'Culture' pillar through promotional strategies that not only attract tourists but also support the preservation of local culture and encourage community participation (Richards, 2018; Zeppel & Hall, 1992). The 2019 Sustainable Tourism Council (STC) matrix demonstrates that successful promotion must portray cultural authenticity while conveying messages supporting environmental and social sustainability (Peregrine Global Services, 2020).

Recent scholarship in sustainable tourism marketing emphasizes the need for destination branding that authentically represents local communities while addressing sustainability concerns (Chhabra, 2023; Font & McCabe, 2017). However, a persistent gap exists in understanding how to operationalize these principles in destinations with strong cultural assets but limited marketing infrastructure, particularly in the context of UNESCO geoparks (Farsani et al., 2022). This research addresses this gap by developing a comprehensive promotional strategy framework that integrates sustainability principles, community empowerment, and digital innovation. The theoretical foundation of this research integrates three main concepts: sustainable tourism marketing theory (Font & McCabe, 2017), community-based tourism development (Blackstock, 2005; Mtapuri & Giampiccoli, 2019), and appreciative inquiry approach to strategic planning (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005).

Traditional strategic planning frameworks, particularly SWOT analysis, have dominated tourism planning for decades (Ghaderi et al., 2018). However, SWOT's problem-centric approach, focusing on weaknesses and threats, often leads to defensive strategies and overlooks community assets essential for sustainable tourism development (Stavros & Hinrichs, 2009). In community-based tourism contexts, where local empowerment and participation are fundamental, deficit-

based planning can inadvertently reinforce feelings of inadequacy and dependency rather than building on existing community strengths (Blackstock, 2005).

This study employs the SOAR (Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, Results) framework, representing a paradigm shift from deficit-based to asset-based strategic planning (Stavros & Hinrichs, 2009). The philosophical rationale for choosing SOAR over SWOT is grounded in appreciative inquiry theory, which posits that organizations and communities grow in the direction of what they study and that focusing on strengths catalyzes positive change more effectively than analyzing problems (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005). In the context of Sibandang Island, where community participation and cultural preservation are paramount, SOAR's strength-based approach enables:

1. Recognition and amplification of existing community assets (cultural heritage, local knowledge, community networks) rather than focusing on resource deficits
2. Connection of internal strengths with external opportunities in ways that align with community aspirations, ensuring strategies are both contextually relevant and future-oriented
3. Emphasis on measurable results that reflect community values, moving beyond purely economic metrics to include cultural preservation and community wellbeing
4. Facilitation of inclusive dialogue that empowers local stakeholders by asking what they aspire to achieve rather than what problems they face

While SOAR has been applied in various organizational contexts (Stavros et al., 2010), its application in sustainable tourism promotion, particularly integrated with standardized sustainability assessment tools like the STC matrix, represents a novel methodological contribution. The novelty of this research lies in three interconnected dimensions:

First, methodological integration: This study develops an integrated analytical framework that combines the STC sustainable promotion matrix (providing objective sustainability benchmarks) with SOAR strategic planning (enabling community-centered strategy development). This integration ensures promotional strategies are both sustainability-compliant and community-driven—addressing a critical gap identified by Choi and Sirakaya (2006) regarding the lack of practical frameworks for operationalizing sustainable tourism principles at the community level.

Second, theoretical contribution: The study advances sustainable tourism marketing theory by demonstrating how appreciative strategic planning can be systematically applied to transform community cultural assets into effective promotional strategies. It provides empirical evidence for the theoretical proposition that asset-based approaches yield more sustainable outcomes in community-based tourism contexts than problem-focused approaches (Blackstock, 2005; Mtapuri & Giampiccoli, 2019).

Third, contextual innovation: Applied specifically to UNESCO geopark cultural event promotion, this research addresses the unique challenge of marketing destinations that possess exceptional cultural-natural heritage but lack promotional infrastructure. It demonstrates how digital technologies can be leveraged within an appreciative framework to amplify community voices and cultural narratives, contributing to literature on digital destination marketing in resource-constrained settings (Chhabra, 2023; Yotsumoto & Vafadari, 2022).

Therefore, the theoretical framework positions this research at the intersection of sustainable tourism marketing, community development, and appreciative inquiry, offering both theoretical insights and practical tools for destinations facing similar challenges worldwide.

## B. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative descriptive design (Sandelowski, 2000) to explore and characterize the current state of tourism promotion on Sibandang Island. Qualitative descriptive research aims to provide a comprehensive summary of phenomena in everyday terms while maintaining interpretive validity (Colorafi & Evans, 2016). This approach is appropriate for understanding complex social phenomena involving multiple stakeholders, cultural contexts, and sustainability considerations, allowing for in-depth exploration of how local communities and tourists perceive and experience cultural promotion (Miles et al., 2020).

Purposive sampling was employed to select information-rich participants who could provide diverse perspectives on tourism promotion (Palinkas et al., 2015). The final sample consisted of 12 key informants, selected based on their direct involvement and experience with Sibandang Island tourism. Sample composition was as follows:

1. Government officials (n=3): Head of North Tapanuli Tourism Office, two tourism development staff with minimum 5 years experience in destination marketing
2. Community leaders and representatives (n=4): Village head of Sibandang Island (15 years in position), manager of Sibandang Island tourist village (8 years experience), two Pokdarwis (Tourism Awareness Group) members actively involved in cultural event organization
3. Tourism business operators (n=3): Manager of BUMDesma (Village-Owned Enterprise) focusing on cultural tourism products, homestay owner operating for 6 years, local tour guide with 10 years experience
4. Tourists (n=2): One domestic cultural tourist who had visited Sibandang Island three times over two years, one international tourist interested in indigenous culture and geopark tourism
5. Sample size was determined using the concept of information saturation, where data collection continued until no new themes emerged from interviews (Saunders et al., 2018). Saturation was achieved after 12 interviews, as confirmed through constant comparison during concurrent data collection and analysis.

Data were collected through multiple methods to ensure comprehensive understanding and enable triangulation:

1. In-depth semi-structured interviews: Individual interviews lasting 45-90 minutes were conducted between June-August 2024. All interviews were audio-recorded with participant consent and conducted in Indonesian or local Batak language with translation assistance when necessary. Interview guides were developed based on the study objectives and STC sustainable promotion indicators, covering topics including: current promotional practices and challenges, perceptions of cultural authenticity in promotion, community participation in tourism marketing, aspirations for future tourism development, and use of digital platforms for promotion. Interview questions were pilot-tested with two community members not included in the final sample.
2. Participant observation: Researchers conducted field observations during the 2024 Mango Festival on Sibandang Island (3 days) and regular community activities (5 separate visits totaling 10 days). Detailed field notes documented promotional activities, community-tourist interactions, and cultural event management. Observation protocols focused on how cultural elements were presented, tourist engagement patterns, and informal promotional behaviors.

3. Document analysis: Systematic review of promotional materials including: social media content (Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, TikTok) posted between June 2024-June 2025; printed materials (brochures, flyers); policy documents (national, provincial, and local tourism development plans); and existing research reports on Sibandang Island tourism.
4. Digital media monitoring: Using social listening tools, all digital mentions of Sibandang Island were tracked and analyzed over a 12-month period (June 2024-June 2025) to identify patterns in online conversation, sentiment, reach, and engagement metrics

### **Data Collection Techniques**

Data analysis employed a systematic multi-phase approach combining content analysis, thematic analysis, and SOAR strategic framework development:

Phase 1 - Content Analysis of Promotional Materials: All promotional materials were systematically assessed against STC sustainable promotion matrix indicators using a structured coding protocol. Two researchers independently coded materials as 'fully met' (4), 'partially met' (3), 'minimally met' (2), or 'not met' (1) for each indicator. Inter-rater reliability was calculated using Cohen's kappa ( $\kappa = 0.84$ , indicating strong agreement). Discrepancies were resolved through discussion and consensus. Digital media content was analyzed quantitatively for volume of mentions, reach, sentiment (positive/negative/neutral), and platform distribution.

Phase 2 - Thematic Analysis of Interview Data: All interview recordings were transcribed verbatim in the original language, resulting in 187 pages of single-spaced transcript. Thematic analysis followed Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase process using NVivo 12 software: (1) Familiarization through repeated reading of transcripts and listening to recordings; (2) Initial code generation: 142 initial codes were identified through line-by-line coding, focusing on promotional practices, cultural representation, sustainability aspects, and community participation; (3) Theme identification: Initial codes were organized into 23 potential themes; (4) Theme review: Themes were reviewed against coded extracts and entire dataset, resulting in refinement to 12 themes; (5) Theme definition: Each theme was clearly defined and named; (6) Final analysis and interpretation connecting themes to research objectives and theoretical framework.

Coding process followed both deductive and inductive approaches. Deductive codes were derived from the STC matrix and SOAR framework, while inductive codes emerged from the data itself. A coding manual with definitions and examples was developed and refined iteratively. Regular coding meetings (weekly) were held between researchers to discuss emerging codes, ensure consistency, and refine the coding scheme.

Phase 3 - SOAR Framework Development: Results from content and thematic analysis were synthesized to develop the SOAR strategic framework. This process involved: (1) Identifying internal Strengths from interview themes, observation notes, and policy analysis; (2) Mapping external Opportunities from digital media analysis, stakeholder mapping, and policy environment; (3) Articulating community Aspirations based on interview narratives and observation of community priorities; (4) Defining measurable Results aligned with sustainability principles and community aspirations. The SOAR matrix was developed through iterative consultation with key stakeholders to ensure authenticity and feasibility.

### **Analysis Method**

Credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability were ensured through multiple strategies (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Nowell et al., 2017):

- Triangulation: Multiple data sources (interviews, observations, documents, digital media) and multiple analyst perspectives were used to cross-verify findings. Methodological triangulation combined qualitative approaches (content analysis, thematic analysis, SOAR framework development).
- Member checking: Preliminary findings were presented to four key informants (village head, tourism office representative, Pokdarwis member, and BUMDesma manager) who confirmed accuracy and provided additional insights that enriched interpretation.
- Peer debriefing: Regular meetings with two external researchers experienced in tourism studies provided critical feedback on analysis process and interpretation, enhancing analytical rigor.
- Audit trail: Detailed records were maintained documenting all research decisions, including interview guides, field notes, coding schemes, analytical memos, and decision logs, ensuring process transparency and enabling external review.
- Reflexivity: Researchers maintained reflexive journals throughout the study to document personal biases, assumptions, and how researcher positionality might influence data collection and interpretation. The lead researcher's 20-year background in event management was acknowledged as both a strength (providing insider understanding) and potential bias (risk of imposing external frameworks), addressed through conscious bracketing and team discussions.

### **SOAR (Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, Results) Method**

After the content and thematic analysis are complete, the results will be converted into a promotional strategy using the SOAR approach, an appreciative strategy development method. SOAR can be used to develop sustainable tourism promotion strategies based on local cultural and community strengths and to increase community involvement in tourism marketing. This analytical model is considered effective in developing appreciation-based strategies by exploring potential internal strengths and linking them to external opportunities and long-term expectations. (Irrobby, 2023).

The combination of content analysis (evaluating existing material against standards like STC), thematic analysis (capturing nuanced human perceptions and experiences), and SOAR (a strategic planning tool) creates a powerful methodological synergy. Content analysis provides an objective baseline of current performance, thematic analysis adds the subjective experiences lived by stakeholders, and SOAR then translates these insights into actionable, forward-looking strategies. This triangulation ensures that the proposed strategies are not only theoretically sound but also empirically grounded and contextually relevant. This rigorous methodological design enhances the credibility and validity of the research findings and subsequent recommendations, making the report more persuasive to policymakers and practitioners.

## **C. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS**

This section integrates findings from policy analysis, digital media content analysis, STC compliance, interview analysis, and concludes with the SOAR analysis as a strategic output.

### **Policy Analysis and the Context of Sustainable Tourism Promotion on Sibandang Island**

Sibandang Island, located in Muara District, North Tapanuli Regency, is part of the Toba Caldera Geosite, which has been recognized as a UNESCO Global Geopark. Its unique Batak culture, ulos weaving traditions, and geological landscape make it a cultural tourism destination with

sustainable value. To support an appropriate promotional strategy, a policy analysis based on national and local planning documents is essential.

**Table 1**  
 Summary of Policy Documents and Their Relevance  
 to Sibandang Island Tourism Promotion

| No | Policy Document                                                           | Strategic Plan                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Relevance to Sibandang Island Promotion                                                                                                                                          |
|----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1  | Peraturan Presiden No. 89 Tahun 2024 tentang rencana Induk DPN Danau Toba | Lake Toba as a National Tourism Destination emphasizes integrated cross-sectoral planning (tourism, infrastructure, environment, socio-cultural, etc.) to accelerate regional development.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Through integrated cross-sectoral planning, DTW management must be professional and sustainable; able to overcome environmental challenges and increase public awareness.        |
| 2  | Integrated Tourism Master Plan Danau Toba Tahun 2020 – 2045               | The Integrated Tourism Master Plan for Lake Toba (2020–2045) outlines a holistic strategy for sustainable tourism development, emphasizing cross-stakeholder collaboration to address environmental challenges and boost public awareness. Key initiatives include expanding international market reach to Europe and non-ASEAN Asia via improved accessibility like Silangit flights, and branding Lake Toba as the world's unique "eco-supervolcano" to attract nature enthusiasts through its biodiversity and conservation efforts. The plan also focuses on leveraging local Batak cultural heritage, including traditional houses and ulos cloth, with Sibandang Island highlighted as a unique geosite and ulos producer, ensuring cultural education promotes authenticity. Furthermore, it details strategic cluster and | Integrated and sustainable development; international market expansion; local cultural branding through cluster and destination development through cultural and sporting events |

- destination development supported by infrastructure improvements and empowered Tourism Information Centers, alongside diversifying cultural and sports events to off-season periods to ensure balanced visitation and enrich tourist experiences through local community participation.
- 3    Rencana Induk Pengembangan Daerah (RIPPARDA) Provinsi Sumatera Utara 2017 – 2025  
 The Rencana Induk Pengembangan Daerah (RIPPARDA) Provinsi Sumatera Utara 2017–2025 outlines a strategic vision for North Sumatra as a "cultural and competitive tourism destination," prioritizing the promotion of local cultural elements like Batak art and traditions, alongside enhancing overall tourism service quality and competitiveness. This plan emphasizes strengthening promotional synergy through integrated campaigns, fostering collaboration between the provincial government, local districts (especially in the Lake Toba region), and the private sector, notably leveraging the Toba Caldera Geopark's UNESCO Global Geopark status as a global promotional tool to attract international visitors. Furthermore, RIPPARDA actively encourages the involvement of local communities and creative industries in promotional activities.  
 North Sumatra's tourism branding is focused on cultural uniqueness; Utilizing UNESCO Global Geopark status; and actively involving the community in "packaging" local culture.
  
  - 4    Rencana Induk Pengembangan Daerah (RIPPARDA) Kabupaten Tapanuli Utara 2020 - 2025  
 (RIPPARDA) Kabupaten Tapanuli Utara 2020–2025 outlines a comprehensive tourism development strategy centered on a thematic tourism zoning system, which divides the region into four zones with a focus on ecotourism and agrotourism, each designed to highlight unique local characteristics and culture, including rural nature tourism, agricultural attractions, and Batak culture. Notably, Sibandang Island is specifically identified as a key geotourism attraction within this framework. The plan's policy and strategy direction aims to enhance regional tourism marketing by strengthening the role of marketing communication media and  
 Thematic tourism zoning, Sibandang Island as a geotourism attraction; interactive & theme-based promotion; responsible marketing partnerships for the community, environment & tourists.



fostering marketing partnerships through interactive, theme-based promotional activities. A crucial aspect of this strategy is the development of marketing partnerships based on responsible marketing principles, ensuring benefits for the community, environmental resources, and tourists. To facilitate these efforts, the establishment of the North Tapanuli Regency Tourism Promotion Agency (BP2K) is also a key component of the plan.

|   |                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                        |
|---|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 5 | Design Strategi Rencana Aksi Pengembangan Desa Wisata Terpadu Kawasan Pulau Sibandang Tahun 2025 - 2029 | The "Design Strategi Rencana Aksi Pengembangan Desa Wisata Terpadu Kawasan Pulau Sibandang Tahun 2025 - 2029" emphasizes developing tourist villages to preserve cultural heritage, enhance community well-being, and create employment through sustainable geotourism that promotes local customs. Sibandang Island's UNESCO Global Geopark status offers a significant advantage for international promotion without extensive funding, necessitating enhanced branding and social media efforts highlighting sustainability and conservation values. The plan leverages strong local cultural values, including clan solidarity, the Toba Batak language, and traditional practices, to create compelling cultural tourism experiences through festivals and visits to traditional houses. A key strategy involves fostering intensive host-guest interactions to deepen cultural understanding and build community capacity in tourism management, while strengthening the destination brand through targeted promotion, improved entry facilities, and collaborative development of unique icons. Finally, innovative marketing through integrated online and offline networks is crucial to expand reach, increase attractiveness, and boost visitor numbers. | Promotion of sustainability and conservation values; Increased interaction for meaningful and educational experiences. |
|---|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Source: Research data, 2025

All these policies are consistently aligned with the four main pillars of sustainable destination development: Sustainable Management, Socio-Economic, Cultural, and Environmental. This research specifically focuses on the "Culture" pillar. The integration of these policies creates a highly conducive environment. If the proposed promotional strategy aligns with these principles, it will gain legitimacy, potential funding, and support from various levels of government (Nunkoo & Bramwell, 2021). Conversely, a strategy that ignores these principles will face significant obstacles

(Hall, 2019). This demonstrates that the promotional strategy for Sibandang Island is not simply a marketing effort, but rather a crucial instrument for implementing broader regional and national sustainable development goals. Marketing that promotes local uniqueness, culture, and tourism products (Budeanu et al., 2016). Therefore, the promotional strategy must explicitly integrate these policy objectives into its messaging and operational framework, ensuring that the promotion contributes to long-term sustainability (Font & McCabe, 2017). The integration of sustainability principles into a tourism marketing strategy cannot be symbolic or cosmetic, but must be embedded in the content, narrative, and operational approach (Mihalic, 2016).

### Stakeholder Mapping

The success of tourism promotion on Sibandang Island depends heavily on collaboration and synergy between various stakeholders. Each stakeholder has a role and expectations that can be integrated into the promotional strategy. The following is a stakeholder mapping for Sibandang Island tourism promotion.

**Table 2**  
The Role and Expectations of Stakeholders in  
the Promotion of Tourism on Sibandang Island

| No | Stakeholder Groups                                                            | Role in Sibandang Island Tourism Events & Promotion                                                 | Needs/Expectations from Promotion                                                                                                                                                             |
|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1  | Village government (Sibandang village, Papande village, dan Sampuran village) | Provides local regulations, directs policies, and supports event facilities                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improves village image and community engagement.</li> <li>- Increases community welfare.</li> <li>- Increases the Village Budget (APBDes)</li> </ul> |
| 2  | Pokdarwis Pulau Sibandang                                                     | Technical implementation of cultural events, local promoters, and liaisons with other stakeholders. | Increased tourist visits                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 3  | BUMDesma of Sibandang Island                                                  | Village economic partners, managers of tourism support services and facilities.                     | Increased village income                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 4  | Cultural Actors (Artists, Musicians, Dancers)                                 | Performers at cultural events, guardians of cultural values                                         | Preservation of ancestral traditions and culture                                                                                                                                              |
| 5  | MSMEs and ulos weavers                                                        | One of the economic beneficiaries of the event                                                      | Product promotion and high sales potential through the event.                                                                                                                                 |

|    |                                              |                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|----|----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 6  | Tourism Bureau of North Tapanuli             | Technical supervisor for tourism promotion and facilitator for broader promotion | Integration of events into the national calendar and ongoing support from various parties.                                                                                                                                |
| 7  | Rumah Karya Indonesia (local community)      | Initiator of cultural space                                                      | Collaboration and sustainable arts and culture practices                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 8  | Domestic tourists                            | Promotion targets: direct consumers of tourism products and attractions.         | Access information and gain authentic tourism experiences through local culture.                                                                                                                                          |
| 9  | Local Media and Influencers                  | Channels for disseminating narratives and promoting cultural events              | Engaging content and long-term collaborations with various stakeholders                                                                                                                                                   |
| 10 | Sustainable Tourism Initiative (STRIVE/ NGO) | Sibandang Island Tourism Village Facilitator                                     | Sibandang Island's promotion is carried out in a sustainable, targeted manner, and based on local potential, thereby increasing tourist attraction without sacrificing cultural values and environmental sustainability.. |

Source: Research data, 2025

This stakeholder mapping reveals a collaborative ecosystem. No single entity can effectively promote Sibandang Island in isolation. Each stakeholder brings unique resources, knowledge, or reach (Timur & Getz, 2009). The absence of coordinated efforts among them can lead to fragmented, inconsistent, and inefficient promotional activities, ultimately contributing to sporadic marketing issues (Beritelli et al., 2015). Conversely, strong collaboration can create synergistic effects, expanding the reach and impact of promotions. Therefore, the proposed promotional strategy should be collaborative and inclusive, by defining clear roles and encouraging partnerships among all identified stakeholders (Dredge & Jenkins, 2011). It is important to identify how the needs and expectations of each stakeholder can be met through their involvement in the promotional strategy, thereby ensuring their continued engagement and commitment (Tang, 2014).

### **Digital Media Content Analysis of Sibandang Island**

Digital media monitoring (June 2024-June 2025) reveals a paradoxical pattern: overwhelmingly positive sentiment (93% of 33 mentions) combined with sporadic, event-driven engagement. Total reach was substantial (167,535 across social and non-social media), yet highly

concentrated in May-June 2025, with zero mentions in most months. This temporal clustering indicates promotional effectiveness is episodic rather than sustained, directly contributing to the identified 8% marketing feasibility (Andriani et al., 2024).

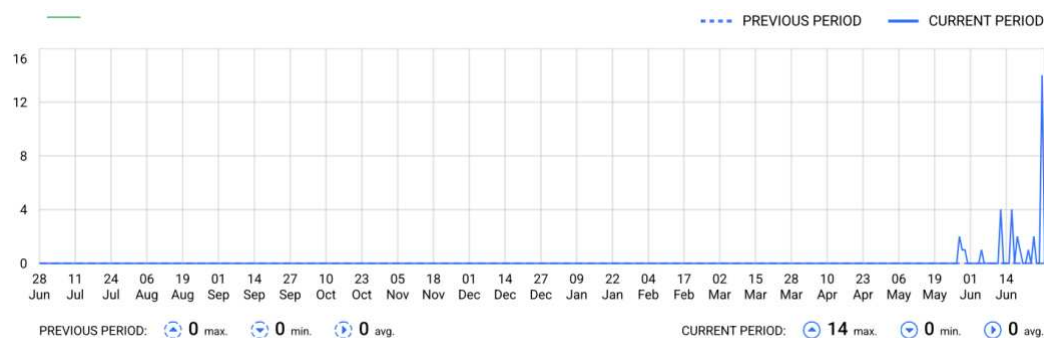
Platform analysis shows Facebook (13 mentions) and YouTube (9 mentions) dominate social media engagement, with emerging presence on TikTok (6 mentions). Critically, non-social media sources (news sites, blogs: 7 mentions) generated disproportionate reach (159,000 vs. 8,535 for social media), suggesting traditional digital journalism provides superior audience penetration. This finding has strategic implications: while social media enables community participation and authentic storytelling, securing coverage in established digital media outlets should be prioritized for awareness building (Tussyadiah & Fesenmaier, 2017).

Discourse analysis of content reveals three dominant narrative themes: (1) Sibandang as 'hidden paradise' emphasizing pristine natural beauty; (2) Authentic Batak cultural experiences centered on traditional practices; (3) Adventure tourism opportunities, particularly kayaking and exploration. Terms like 'bonapasogit' (local legendary figure) and specific cultural practices signal strong local identity in existing narratives. Importantly, 17 instances of user-generated content (UGC) demonstrate visitors' intrinsic motivation to share experiences—a critical asset for organic promotional growth. However, sustainability messaging remains largely absent from existing digital narratives, representing a significant gap given. The following is a descriptive analysis based on digital media data related to Sibandang Island:



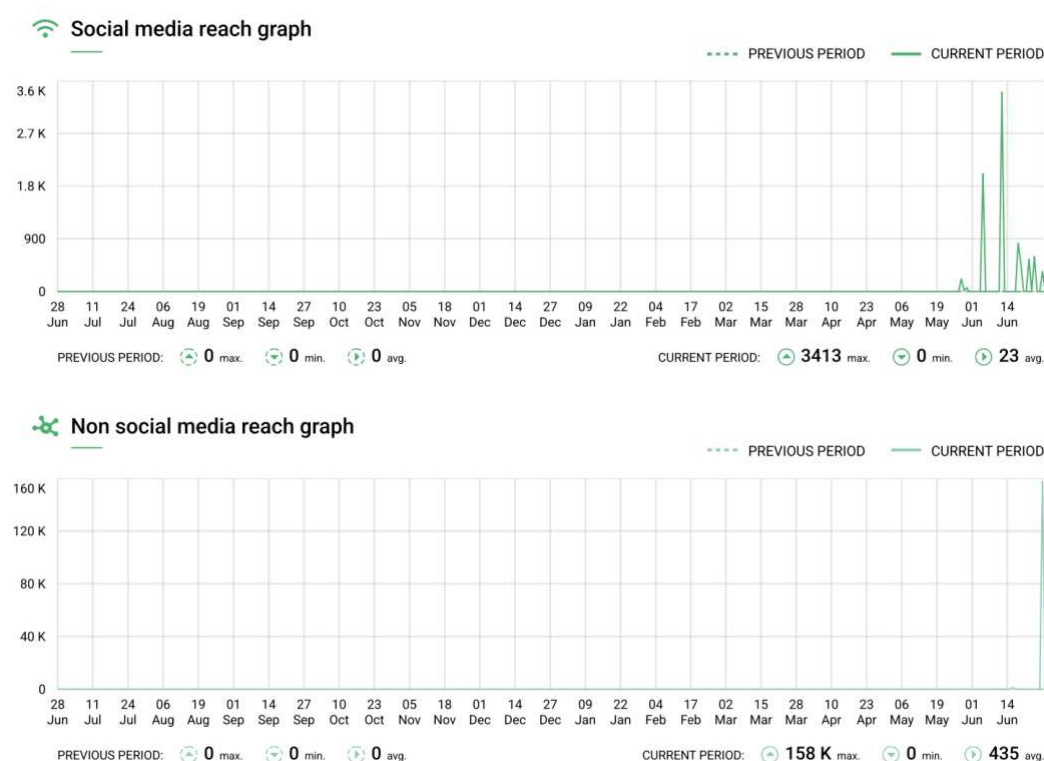
**Figure 1**  
 Summary of mentions  
 Source: Research data, 2025

The volume of mentions totaled 33 mentions over the past year, with a social media reach of 8,535 audiences and a non-social media reach of 159,000 audiences. This indicates that, although not yet massive, the potential for information reach is very high with very positive sentiment. Therefore, it can be concluded from the annual mention summary data that although the number of mentions is not massive, the reach is very significant, especially from non-social media sources (news sites, blogs). This indicates that more formal media coverage has a much greater audience impact than regular social media conversations. The overwhelmingly positive sentiment (93% positive) is a major asset, indicating that the image of Sibandang Island in the digital space is very good.



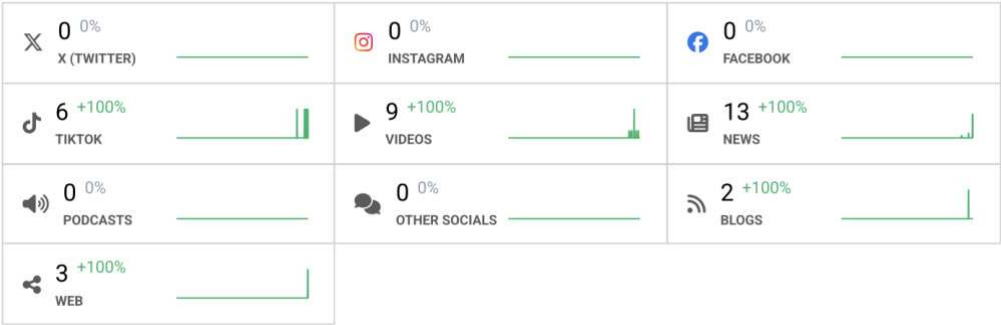
**Figure 2**  
 Graph of mentions volume  
 Source: Research data, 2025

Figure 2 shows no mentions from June 2024 to April 2025, but a significant spike in activity concentrated in the May-June 2025 period, with 14 mentions in a single day. This pattern suggests that conversations about Sibandang Island are event-driven, triggered by specific events or content, rather than sustained year-round conversations. All public attention occurs within a short period. This directly contributes to the low marketing feasibility.



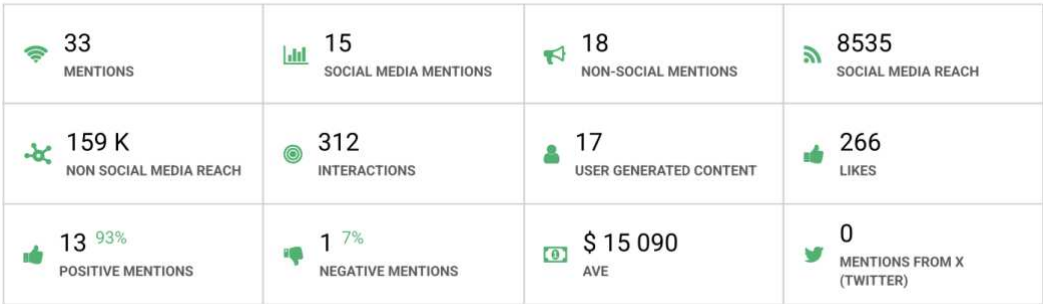
**Figure 3**  
 Reach of social media and non social media  
 Source: Research data, 2025

Figure 3 shows the same pattern as the volume of mentions, meaning that in certain periods it is flat throughout the year with a sharp spike at the end of the period, namely in June 2025. However, there is a massive difference in scale between social media and non-social media; the peak of social media reach is 3,413, while the peak of non-social media reach reaches 158,000. Based on this data, it confirms the importance of media coverage. One or several articles on news sites or blogs can influence and reach an audience 46 times larger than the peak reach on social media platforms. Therefore, to build widespread awareness of Sibandang Island, it is necessary to focus on Public Relations (PR) and pay attention to digital media reach



**Figure 4**  
Mentions per Category  
Source: Research data, 2025

Based on the data in Figure 4, the platforms with the most mentions were Facebook with 13 mentions and YouTube with 9 mentions. However, TikTok was also a significant platform with 6 mentions. Formal media coverage came from news outlets with 2 mentions, blogs with 2 mentions, and websites with 3 mentions. Considering that TikTok and YouTube are the most active social media platforms, this reinforces the importance of video formats and visual narratives in promoting the appeal of Sibandang Island. On the other hand, there were no mentions on major platforms like Facebook and Twitter (X), indicating an untapped digital content distribution gap. Video content (YouTube and TikTok) and social media (Facebook) are the primary drivers of conversation. Success on YouTube, the most active site, demonstrates the effectiveness of narrative visual content (vlogs, short documentaries). Strategies should prioritize the creation of engaging video content for distribution on these platforms.



**Figure 5**  
Mentions per Category  
Source: Research data, 2025

From the 33 total mentions, the composition is quite balanced between 18 non-social mentions and 15 social media mentions with public interactions recording 312 total engagements, with 266 likes, 17 original content from users, and only one negative mention — indicating that

public perception of Sibandang Island tends to be positive and has the potential to be expanded digitally. Although the reach of non-social media is superior, the almost equal number of mentions indicates that both channels (formal and social) are equally important to explore. The UGC (user-generated content) figure of 17 is a very positive signal; this means that visitors are motivated to create and share their own content, which is the most authentic form of promotion.

#travel jalan terbaik objek danau samosir #pulausibandang sibandang voluntourism hentinya #foryourpage pantai pulau runding  
alami nama indahnya budaya kali umur air tahan sumatera pulo puncak kaya #short #vlog surga mukim struktur meat  
sipinsur kecamatan #exploresumatera #beranda bentuk geopark wisata negeri muka tinggi del tengah-tengah destinasi  
tapanuli teman batak wilayah #explorebonapasogit you upaya membangun youtube tawar bukit #penikmatsenja ginjang remaja utara  
moral gunung lupa see #eksplore 213 permata letak laut ciri anak udara muara tonton geosite jelajah salah kayaking toba  
sembunyi bonapasogit wenak posisi pukau yuk tebing khas morfologi interaksi meter indah pelabuhan kabupaten huta sondang  
alam explore kawasan #fyp morning

**Figure 6**  
Context of discussion  
Source: Research data, 2025

The dominant keywords are Sibandang Island, Lake Toba, tourism, nature, Batak culture, hidden paradise, exploring, kayaking, and vlog. Terms reflecting local identity such as "bonapasogit" and "muara" emerged, indicating a strong local touch. Based on this data, the narrative formed in the digital space is very ideal and aligned with the desired identity, the image of Sibandang Island is a combination of; Pure natural beauty reflected in the words "Hidden Paradise", "Peak" and "Beach". With typical tourist activities such as "kayaking" and "Jelajah" and the strength of local culture reflected in "Batak Culture" and "Bonapasogit". Therefore, the promotional strategy must be able to adopt and strengthen this narrative. Describing Sibandang Island as a "hidden paradise in the land of Bonapasogit" that offers authentic natural and cultural experiences will be very appropriate to current public perception.

**Analysis of the Conformity of Sibandang Island Tourism Promotion Messages Based on Sustainable Destination Indicators**

The following data analyzes the conformity of tourism promotion messages with a structured approach based on the criteria and indicators contained in the Sustainable Tourism Council (STC) matrix:

| Table 3                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                       |                                |                                             |                           |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Promotional message indicators based on STC indicators                                                                                                                                                                                      |                       |                                |                                             |                           |
| Criteria A.14 : Promotion that accurately reflects the destination and its products and services, as well as ensuring sustainability recognition. Promotional content treats local communities and tourists authentically and with respect. |                       |                                |                                             |                           |
| Indicator                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Data Source           | Description                    | Results of Data Collection                  | STC Compliance Level      |
| Messages in destination                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | The use of social and | Sibandang Island's promotional | While this promotion is authentic, it still | Level 4 (Fully fulfilled) |

|                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                  |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| promotions portray local communities and visitors authentically and respectfully.        | digital media to promote Sibandang Island includes Instagram, TikTok, and print media such as brochures and flyers.                                         | message includes local cultural aspects, such as Batak traditions and cultural activities performed by the local community (e.g., Batak dance and music). This reflects an authentic representation of local life.               | lacks consistency and messaging throughout the year. The promotions are irregular and not comprehensively planned, occurring only at specific times or based on special events.                                                                                                                                                                 |                                  |
| The message in the destination promotion describes its products and services accurately. | Promotional materials, including brochures and digital content, featuring tourism products such as "ulos" (traditional Batak woven fabric) and agrotourism. | The tourism products promoted include natural and cultural tourism, such as visits to tourist villages, cultural festivals, and outdoor activities (kayaking).                                                                   | The product descriptions are realistic and accurate, but the relationship between the products and environmental and social sustainability, which are key principles of sustainable tourism, has not been clearly promoted.                                                                                                                     | Level 3<br>(Partially Fulfilled) |
| Promotional media (campaign media and content) used                                      | Analysis of Sibandang Island's digital content for the period 2024–2025, measuring mentions and reach on social media and news sites.                       | Social media platforms like Instagram and TikTok were actively used for visual promotion, but there was no consistency throughout the year. A spike in mentions occurred only in May–June 2025, coinciding with specific events. | The promotional campaign had high reach, particularly on non-social media platforms (such as news sites), with an audience of 159,000 reached. However, despite lower social media reach (8,535 audiences), TikTok and YouTube proved highly effective in generating buzz about Sibandang Island. The significant difference between social and | Level 3<br>(Partially Fulfilled) |



non-social media  
reach suggests the  
need for greater  
synergy between the  
two media types.

Source: Research data, 2025

Based on the 2019 STC matrix, successful promotions must portray local communities and visitors authentically and respectfully. The report's findings indicate that Sibandang Island's promotion met this indicator quite well, reflecting authentic local culture and incorporating local communities as part of the narrative. The STC compliance level was at level 4 (Fully Fulfilled). The messages conveyed in the promotional materials were highly authentic and respectful of local cultural diversity.

Based on the data, the accuracy and completeness of product and service descriptions, including cultural attractions such as 'ulos (clothes worn by local women) and agrotourism activities, reflected local cultural values fairly accurately. However, the promotion did not fully emphasize environmental and social sustainability, which are key elements in promoting sustainable tourism. Therefore, for this indicator, the STC compliance level remained at level 3 (Partially Fulfilled) because the promotional messages included accurate information about products and services, but did not sufficiently highlight sustainability aspects.

The promotional media used by the Sibandang Island tourism village management included campaign media and distribution strategies. Social media (especially TikTok and YouTube) has significant reach in promoting Sibandang Island, but promotional message distribution remains inconsistent throughout the year. Therefore, the STC fulfillment level is at level 3 (partially met). Despite high social media reach, the irregularity in message distribution indicates that social media has not been optimally utilized to maintain promotional sustainability throughout the year.

It can be concluded that promotional strategies must intentionally and explicitly embed sustainability narratives into all promotional content (Font & McCabe, 2017). This means not only showcasing ulos but also explaining the sustainable production of ulos, or not only showing kayaking activities but also linking them to environmental conservation. Furthermore, a consistent content calendar throughout the year is crucial to maintain awareness and reinforce sustainability messages beyond specific events (Tussyadiah & Fesenmaier, 2017).

### Interview Analysis

This section discusses the results of interviews with key informants regarding sustainable tourism promotion on Sibandang Island. The interview sample was selected from individuals with in-depth knowledge and direct involvement in tourism development on Sibandang Island. This indicates that interviews were conducted with key informants with relevant experience, such as village heads and managers of Sibandang Island tourist villages involved in tourism and cultural promotion activities in the area. The following table summarizes the coding of the interview results.

**Table 4**  
 Summary of Thematic Interview Findings

| Category Code         | Sub-Category                            | Interview Results                                                                                                                       | Interview Results                                                                                                                                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                       |                                         | (Informant 1)                                                                                                                           | (Informant 2)                                                                                                                                           |
| A1                    | Cultural Attractions                    | "The legacy of Batak villages, the legacy of the Dutch era, the village head, the abtu chair where the village elders used to discuss." | "Artificial tourism packages such as kayaking, cycling, glamping, Bolon solutions, and cultural tourism packages such as the legacy of Batak villages." |
| A2                    | Local Traditions & Practices            | "Stories about the legacy of the kingdom, the Dutch colonial era, and the manggombur tradition."                                        | "The manggombur tradition, the ritual of summoning rain, and the place of Martua Situnggunng for ancient beliefs."                                      |
| A3                    | Local wisdom                            | "The community maintains local wisdom through traditions, such as making mats from bayon and weaving ulos."                             | "There is mangalettek, ulos weaving, and the hoda hoda dance performed in Sampuran village."                                                            |
| A4                    | Cultural Involvement in the Event       | "Mango Festival and Charisma Event Nusantara in Aritonang Village."                                                                     | "Sibandang Island Folk Festival with Flute Workshop for Children, Marhata Competition, Flute Competition, and Hoda Hoda Performance."                   |
| A5                    | Cultural Representation in Promotion    | "The promotion has been well-described through brochures and social media."                                                             | "The tour package promotion is through brochures, events, and social media on Jadesta's account."                                                       |
| C                     | Community Involvement in Promotion      | "The community actively posts about Sibandang Island without being asked."                                                              | "Mengajak masyarakat berperan dalam promosi, terutama yang memiliki homestay, untuk ikut mempublikasikan."                                              |
| Hopes and Suggestions | Pengembangan Promosi Budaya dan Ekonomi | "Harapannya, Pulau Sibandang terpromosikan dengan baik dan menggambarkan desanya."                                                      | "Inviting the community to play a role in promotion, especially those who own                                                                           |

|                       |                      |                                                                                                             |                                                                                                       |
|-----------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                       |                      |                                                                                                             | homestays, to participate in publicizing."                                                            |
| Hopes and Suggestions | Economic Improvement | "The success of promotion is seen from the preservation of culture and economic improvement from tourists." | "Economic improvement through tourism that involves the younger generation in cultural preservation." |

Source: Research data, 2025

Based on the results of thematic interviews with key informants, including the village head and the manager of the Sibandang Island tourist village, these interviews highlighted the island's rich cultural heritage as a key strength, encompassing historic Batak villages, Dutch colonial heritage, and vibrant traditional practices such as the manggombur, mangalettek, and hoda hoda dances, along with ulos weaving. The integration of these cultural elements into local events such as the mango festival and the People's Festival was also noted. A significant finding was the high level of community engagement, with local residents actively posting about Sibandang Island without being explicitly asked, demonstrating strong local pride and a willingness to participate in promotional efforts. There was also an expressed desire to involve homestay owners more directly in promotions. Aspirations expressed by respondents included achieving better promotions that accurately portray the village, ensuring cultural preservation, and realizing increased economic benefits for the community, particularly through the active involvement of the younger generation. A key suggestion from these discussions was the need to "package culture with modernity," potentially by directly engaging tourists in cultural experiences while strictly ensuring the preservation of traditional values.

It can be concluded that Sibandang Island possesses immense cultural strength and attractive natural potential for development as a tourist destination. Significant opportunities lie in utilizing social media and collaborating with external parties, as well as the hope of boosting the local economy through tourism. However, to achieve this, improvements in promotional management and greater involvement of the local community, especially the younger generation, in cultural preservation and sustainable promotion are needed (Moscardo, 2011).

S-O-A-R Analysis

This analysis will identify internal strengths and external opportunities, long-term aspirations, and desired measurable outcomes to formulate a sustainable tourism promotion strategy for Sibandang Island.

| Table 5<br>List of S-O-A-R Factors |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Strength                           | S1: Rich Cultural Heritage: Unique Batak culture, living traditions (ulos, manggombur, mangalettek, hoda hoda), historical relics, Toba Batak language, clan solidarity<br><br>S2: UNESCO Global Geopark Status: International recognition as part of the Toba Caldera Geosite. |

|               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|---------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|               | <p>S3: Stunning Natural Landscape: Pristine natural beauty, suitable for ecotourism and adventure activities (kayaking, trekking).</p> <p>S4: Very Positive Digital Image: 93% positive sentiment, high non-social media reach, significant UGC, effective video platforms (TikTok, YouTube).</p> <p>S5: Active Community Engagement: Active community posting, tourism groups (Pokdarwis) and MSMEs play a role, and a desire for cultural preservation and economic growth.</p> <p>S6: Existing Promotional Infrastructure: Use of brochures, social media (Facebook, YouTube, TikTok), and event framework (Pesta Rakyat)</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Opportunities | <p>O1: Leveraging UNESCO Global Geopark Status: For low-cost global promotion, attracting international eco-tourism and cultural tourism.</p> <p>O2: Maximizing Non-Social Media Reach: Focusing on PR for coverage on news sites and blogs (46x higher reach).</p> <p>O3: Capitalizing on Video-Based Platforms: Prioritizing proven effective TikTok and YouTube content.</p> <p>O4: Developing a Sustainable Content Strategy: Shifting from being event-driven to creating consistent content throughout the year.</p> <p>O5: Strategic Market Segmentation: Reaching market segments seeking authentic cultural experiences.</p> <p>O6: Policy Support and Stakeholder Collaboration: Strong policy support and a network of stakeholders ready to collaborate.</p> <p>O7: Potential for Cultural and Sporting Events: Increasing events during the off-season to ensure equitable distribution of visits.</p> |
| Aspirations   | <p>A1: Effective and Representative Promotion: Sibandang Island is well-promoted and accurately depicts the village.</p> <p>A2: Cultural Preservation: Successful promotion is linked to cultural preservation, without eroding local traditions.</p> <p>A3: Economic Improvement for the Community: Promotion generates economic growth from tourists and village income.</p> <p>A4: Modernization of Cultural Presentation: Culture is presented in a contemporary way, potentially engaging tourists directly.</p> <p>A5: Youth Involvement: Economic improvement through tourism that involves the younger generation in cultural preservation.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

A6: Sustainable Development: Promotion of Sibandang Island is sustainable, targeted, and based on local potential without sacrificing cultural and environmental values.

- Results**
- R1: Comprehensive Sustainable Promotion Strategy Document: The final document serves as a reference for local governments, tourism groups (Pokdarwis), and tourism stakeholders.
- R2: Increased Promotion Effectiveness: A significant increase in marketing feasibility from 8%, as evidenced by increased tourist visits and broader awareness.
- R3: Enhanced Cultural Preservation: Contributing to the long-term preservation of local culture through authentic representation and community engagement.

Source: Research data, 2025

The SOAR analysis serves as an analytical bridge that transforms findings such as policy gaps, stakeholder fragmentation, "event-driven" digital patterns, and shortcomings in STC compliance into a coherent and actionable strategic roadmap. By systematically linking Sibandang Island's internal strengths and external opportunities with long-term aspirations and measurable outcomes, this framework provides a clear path to addressing the initial challenge of low marketability. This ensures that formulated strategies are not ad-hoc but strategically designed for tangible impact, allocating resources and collaborative efforts toward specific, measurable outcomes that directly address the core problem and research objectives.

**Table 6**  
S-O-A-R Analysis Matrix

| <b>Internal</b>                     | <b>Strength</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <b>Opportunities</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>External</b>                     | <b>List of internal strength</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <b>List of external opportunities</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Aspirations</b>                  | <b>SA Strategies</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <b>OA Strategies</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>List of internal aspirations</b> | 1. Development of an "Authentic Cultural Immersion" Digital Content Series: Leveraging the rich Batak culture of Sibandang Island and aspirations for contemporary cultural packaging. This will be done by creating high-quality, narrative video content (vlogs, mini-documentaries) for YouTube and TikTok. These videos will showcase daily life, traditional ceremonies, ulos weaving, and historical sites, emphasizing authenticity and direct | 1. Targeted Global PR Campaign Leveraging UNESCO Status: Proactively engaging international travel media, ecotourism blogs, and cultural heritage publications, leveraging the Toba Caldera Geopark's UNESCO Global Geopark status and the "eco-supervolcano" narrative to attract new international markets (Europe, Asia Pacific beyond ASEAN). This aligns with the aspiration for broader and more effective promotion. This initiative activates an |

|                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|---------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                   | <p>interaction with the community. This directly leverages the digital resonance of authenticity by transforming cultural power into engaging digital assets, aligning with aspirations for "contemporary" cultural presentation and higher engagement.</p> <p>2. Community-Based Digital Storytelling Program: Empowering local community members, especially youth, with training in digital content creation (photography, videography, social media management) to tell their own stories. This will leverage existing active community posts and aspirations for youth engagement. This program will foster "intergenerational cultural entrepreneurship," ensuring cultural preservation through active youth participation and the production of authentic UGC (user-generated content).</p> | <p>"untapped digital amplifier" by focusing on high-impact non-social media channels for global reach.</p> <p>2. Year-Round Cultural Events Calendar &amp; Digital Promotion: Developing a diverse cultural events calendar (outside of peak seasons) and implementing a consistent year-round digital content distribution plan on Facebook, YouTube, and TikTok. This addresses the "event-driven" digital landscape and the aspiration for consistent promotion. This directly addresses the issue of sporadic marketing by ensuring ongoing engagement and visibility, fostering a sustainable narrative about Sibandang Island.</p> |
| <b>Result</b>                                     | <b>SR Strategy</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <b>OR Strategy</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>List of measurable outcomes to be achieved</b> | <p>1. "Sibandang Island: An Authentic Journey" Branding Campaign: Develop a strong brand identity that embodies "a hidden paradise in the land of Bonapasogit," emphasizing the unique blend of pristine nature and deep Batak culture. This brand will be applied consistently across all promotional materials. This aims to produce a comprehensive strategy document. By leveraging positive digital narratives and existing cultural strengths, this strategy aims to create a cohesive brand that enhances overall marketing effectiveness and provides a clear framework for future promotions.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                          | <p>1. Partnerships with Tourism Influencers and Media Outlets: Establish strategic partnerships with leading travel influencers and media outlets (local and international) to produce high-quality, authentic content and secure consistent coverage, leveraging both the high reach of non-social media platforms and effective social media platforms. This aims to increase promotional effectiveness. This leverages external channels to expand reach and credibility, directly addressing low marketing viability by expanding exposure to target segments.</p> <p>2. Development of "Sustainable Tourism Experience"</p>         |

- |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>2. Capacity Building Program for Sustainable Tourism Promotion: Provide training to Pokdarwis (Tourism Groups), Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDesma), and local businesses on sustainable tourism principles, digital marketing tools, and quality service delivery, leveraging existing community engagement. This contributes to the final strategy document and enhanced cultural preservation. It strengthens the internal capacity of stakeholders, ensuring long-term strategy implementation is rooted in local expertise and a commitment to sustainability.</p> | <p>Packages: Design and promote specific tourism packages that explicitly highlight the sustainable aspects of activities (e.g., ulos production, eco-kayaking) and the benefits to local communities, addressing the STC gap in explicit sustainability messaging. This aims to increase effectiveness and cultural preservation. This directly addresses the "authenticity-sustainability communication gap" by integrating sustainability into the product itself, making it a key selling point for an increasingly conscious traveler market.</p> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Source: Research data, 2025

The interconnected SOAR strategies (e.g., SA digital storytellers feeding OA year-round promotion, which reinforces SR branding, and OR sustainable packages addressing STC gaps) signify a holistic and systemic approach to promotion. This is crucial for sustainability as it moves beyond one-off campaigns to build lasting capacity and a mutually reinforcing promotional ecosystem. For instance, empowering local youth (SA strategy) not only preserves culture but also creates a continuous stream of authentic content, which is far more sustainable than relying on external agencies or sporadic efforts. The success of these strategies hinges on integrated implementation, where resources and efforts are coordinated across these interdependent domains. This implies the need for robust governance and collaborative platforms to ensure these synergistic effects materialize, ultimately leading to a stronger and more resilient tourism promotion system for Sibandang Island.

#### D. CONCLUSION

This research has highlighted significant disparities on Sibandang Island: a remarkable 98% potential in cultural and natural attractions contrasts sharply with marketing effectiveness of only 8%. This substantial gap is primarily due to current promotional efforts being sporadic, uncoordinated, and lacking explicit integration of sustainability principles. Despite these challenges, the island benefits from strong policy support at the national, regional, and local levels, providing a conducive environment for strategic interventions. Furthermore, the digital footprint, while inconsistent, reveals overwhelmingly positive sentiment and a strong capacity for non-social media outreach, suggesting a strong foundation for enhanced promotion. Critical factors in overcoming existing fragmentation are the active engagement and collaboration of various stakeholders, in addition to the inherent strengths of authentic cultural representation. However, the analysis also underscores the need to move beyond mere authenticity by explicitly weaving sustainability narratives into all promotional messages.

Based on a comprehensive analysis, the following scientific recommendations are proposed to enhance Sibandang Island tourism promotion and ensure its long-term sustainability:

- **Strategic Digital Content Development:** To overcome the current "event-driven" digital landscape, a fundamental shift towards a sustainable, year-round digital content calendar is crucial. This proactive approach will maintain consistent visibility and engagement beyond specific events. Priority should be given to the creation of high-quality, narrative-rich video content, such as vlogs and mini-documentaries, specifically for platforms like YouTube and TikTok, given their proven effectiveness in generating public interest and buzz. Simultaneously, a cohesive "Sibandang Island: An Authentic Journey" branding campaign should be developed and implemented consistently across all digital and traditional media. This branding should encapsulate the island's unique identity as a "hidden paradise" offering immersive Batak cultural experiences, ensuring a unified and compelling message.
- **Strengthening Sustainability Messaging:** Explicitly embedding sustainability narratives into all promotional content is crucial. This involves detailing the environmental and social benefits of tourism activities, moving beyond mere descriptive accuracy. For example, promotions should not only showcase ulos weaving but also explain the sustainable practices involved in its production. Similarly, activities such as kayaking should be linked to environmental conservation efforts. To further operationalize this, a "Sustainable Tourism Experience" package should be developed and promoted, explicitly highlighting these sustainable aspects as key selling points for an increasingly conscious tourist market. This would address the identified gap in explicit sustainability communication in current promotional messaging.
- **Fostering Community-Based Promotion and Capacity Building:** Leveraging active community engagement and existing local pride, a "Community-Based Digital Storytelling Program" should be implemented. This program will empower local community members, especially youth, with the necessary skills in digital content creation (e.g., photography, videography, social media management). By enabling them to tell their own stories, this initiative will generate authentic user-generated content, foster "intergenerational cultural entrepreneurship" and strengthen promotional efforts from within the community. Complementing this, a comprehensive capacity building program should be provided for Pokdarwis, BUMDesma, and other local businesses. These programs will focus on sustainable tourism principles, digital marketing tools, and quality service delivery, thereby strengthening the internal capacity of stakeholders and ensuring the implementation of sustainable and locally driven promotional strategies.
- **Maximizing Reach Through Strategic Partnerships:** To expand Sibandang Island's global reach, a targeted public relations (PR) campaign is crucial. This campaign should strategically leverage the island's UNESCO Global Geopark status to attract international ecotourism and cultural heritage markets, particularly in regions such as Europe and the Asia-Pacific. Furthermore, building strategic partnerships with leading travel influencers and media outlets, both local and international, is crucial. Such collaborations will facilitate the creation of high-quality, authentic content and secure consistent media coverage, particularly on non-social media channels that have demonstrated superior reach. These partnerships will directly address low marketing viability by expanding exposure to targeted segments and enhancing credibility.



- **Event Diversification and Integration:** To ensure a more equitable distribution of tourist visits throughout the year and reduce the "event-driven" pattern, a more diverse calendar of cultural events should be developed. These events should extend beyond peak seasons, creating sustainable appeal. Most importantly, these diverse events should be fully integrated into a broader digital promotional strategy, ensuring that each event serves as a consistent trigger for digital engagement and narrative building.

The success of Sibandang Island's sustainability promotion transformation hinges on a multifaceted approach that not only refines marketing techniques but also fundamentally strengthens collaborative governance among stakeholders, actively empowers local communities as authentic storytellers, and explicitly embeds sustainability principles into every promotional message. By strategically leveraging its unique cultural heritage, UNESCO status, and already positive digital image, Sibandang Island can significantly enhance its marketing effectiveness. This enhanced promotion will not only lead to increased tourist visits and boost the local economy but will also ensure the long-term preservation of its invaluable cultural and natural assets, aligned with broader regional and national sustainable development goals.

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