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Research Article

The Effect of Social Media Marketing and Word-of-Mouth on Tourist Loyalty: The Mediating Role of Revisit Intention at PT Bali Hai Mandiri Sakti, Bali

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Abstract: Consumer loyalty reflects customers' commitment to repurchase preferred products or services despite competing alternatives. This study aims to examine the effects of social media marketing and word of mouth on tourist loyalty, with revisit intention serving as a mediating variable at PT. Bali Hai Mandiri Sakti, Bali. The study employed a quantitative approach involving 150 tourists selected using Hair's sampling formula. Data were collected through questionnaires, interviews, and documentation and analyzed using Partial Least Squares (PLS). The findings reveal that social media marketing and word of mouth have positive and significant effects on revisit intention. Both variables also positively and significantly influence tourist loyalty. In addition, revisit intention has a positive and significant effect on tourist loyalty and partially mediates the relationships between social media marketing and tourist loyalty, as well as between word of mouth and tourist loyalty. These findings indicate that effective social media marketing and positive word of mouth enhance tourist loyalty both directly and indirectly by strengthening tourists' intention to reuse the services of PT. Bali Hai Mandiri Sakti. The study highlights the importance of integrating digital marketing and customer recommendations to foster sustainable tourist loyalty.

Keywords: Digital Marketing; Revisit Intention; Social Media; Tourist Loyalty; Word of Mouth.

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1. Introduction

The tourism industry has experienced rapid growth alongside advances in digital technology and increasing competition among tourism service providers. Under these conditions, companies are required not only to attract new tourists but also to retain existing customers by strengthening tourist loyalty. Tourist loyalty is considered a strategic asset because it reflects tourists' willingness to revisit, recommend the company to others, and maintain long-term relationships. One of the most widely adopted strategies for enhancing loyalty is social media marketing, which enables companies to communicate, promote, and interact with tourists while increasing customer engagement and strengthening brand image. Previous studies have reported that social media marketing positively influences tourist loyalty (Arevin et al., 2024; Ding, 2022; Listyarti et al., 2023). However, Liu et al. (2022) found no significant effect, indicating that the relationship between social media marketing and tourist loyalty requires further investigation.

In addition to social media marketing, word of mouth is another important factor influencing tourist loyalty because tourists generally perceive recommendations from other tourists as more credible than company-generated promotional messages. Previous studies have demonstrated a positive effect of word of mouth on tourist loyalty (Alshreef et al., 2023; Azhari, 2023; Nasution et al., 2023; Seijas-Díaz et al., 2023). Where as Suleman (2024) reported no significant relationship. These inconsistent findings suggest that the relationship remains inconclusive. This study therefore introduces revisit intention as a mediating variable, as tourists with stronger intentions to reuse a company's services are more likely to exhibit loyal behaviors. Previous studies have also confirmed the positive influence of revisit intention on tourist loyalty (Camilleri & Filieri, 2023; Manyanga et al., 2022; Pradnyadewi & Giantari, 2022; G. Singh et al., 2017). Although contradictory findings were reported by (Setiawan et al., 2023).

The urgency of this study is reinforced by the empirical conditions observed at PT Bali Hai Mandiri Sakti, a travel agency operating in Bali. Company data indicate fluctuations in the number of tourists throughout 2024, suggesting that tourist loyalty has not been fully stable. Interviews with tourists further revealed that the company's social media marketing has not been optimally implemented, as its content remains largely informational and has not effectively encouraged tourist engagement. In addition, negative word of mouth arising from service experiences has reduced some tourists' intention to reuse the company's services, potentially weakening tourist loyalty. These conditions highlight the importance of identifying the factors that influence tourist loyalty within the company.

These phenomena can be explained by Customer Behavior Theory, which argues that consumer behavior is shaped through a psychological process involving perception, evaluation, attitude formation, behavioral intention, and actual behavior. In this study, social media marketing and word of mouth function as external stimuli that influence tourists' perceptions of the company. Positive perceptions strengthen revisit intention, which subsequently promotes tourist loyalty. Accordingly, revisit intention serves as the underlying mechanism linking digital marketing activities and interpersonal communication to tourist loyalty.

Based on the inconsistencies identified in previous studies and the empirical issues observed at PT Bali Hai Mandiri Sakti, this study aims to examine the effects of social media marketing and word of mouth on tourist loyalty, with revisit intention as a mediating variable. The study contributes to the tourism marketing literature by providing a more comprehensive explanation of how revisit intention mediates the relationship between digital marketing, interpersonal communication, and tourist loyalty. The findings are also expected to provide practical recommendations for PT Bali Hai Mandiri Sakti in developing more effective marketing strategies to enhance revisit intention and strengthen tourist loyalty.

2. Literature Review

Customer Behavior Theory

Customer Behavior Theory explains that consumer behavior encompasses a series of processes involving the selection, purchase, use, evaluation, and disposal of products or services to satisfy individual needs and preferences. Consumer decision-making is shaped by internal factors, including motivation, perception, attitudes, learning, and personal experiences, as well as external factors such as marketing activities, social influences, cultural values, and environmental conditions. Understanding consumer behavior enables organizations to identify customer expectations, predict purchasing decisions, and develop marketing strategies that encourage favorable behavioral outcomes, including repeat purchases, revisit intention, and long-term loyalty. Therefore, Customer Behavior Theory provides a relevant theoretical foundation for explaining how marketing stimuli influence consumer responses in the tourism industry (Kotler et al., 2022; Schiffman & Kanuk, 2021).

Social Media Marketing

Social media marketing refers to the strategic use of social media platforms to promote products or services while facilitating communication and interaction between companies and consumers. Unlike traditional marketing, social media marketing enables two-way communication, allowing companies to engage directly with consumers, obtain immediate feedback, and build long-term relationships. Through interactive content, online communities, and continuous customer engagement, organizations can strengthen brand

awareness, improve customer trust, and create positive experiences that encourage favorable behavioral intentions. Consequently, social media marketing has become an essential marketing strategy for enhancing consumer engagement and fostering customer loyalty in the digital era (Gurnelius, 2021; Kim & Ko, 2012).

Word of Mouth

Word of mouth (WOM) is an interpersonal communication process through which consumers voluntarily share information, opinions, and personal experiences regarding products or services with others. Compared with company-generated promotional messages, WOM is generally perceived as more credible because it is based on actual customer experiences rather than commercial interests. Positive WOM can enhance consumer confidence, influence purchase decisions, and encourage repeat usage and long-term loyalty, whereas negative WOM may reduce consumer trust and discourage potential customers from using a product or service. Therefore, WOM is widely recognized as an influential source of information in shaping consumer behavior, particularly in the tourism and service industries (Priansa, 2022; Sitorus & Utami, 2022)(Priansa, 2022; Sitorus & Utami, 2022).

Revisit Intention

Revisit intention refers to a consumer's willingness or behavioral intention to reuse a product or service after evaluating previous consumption experiences. According to the Theory of Planned Behavior, behavioral intention is the strongest predictor of actual behavior and is influenced by attitudes toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. Consumers who perceive high service quality, satisfactory experiences, and superior value are more likely to develop stronger intentions to revisit or reuse the same service provider in the future. Accordingly, revisit intention represents an important behavioral outcome that reflects customers' positive evaluations and serves as a precursor to long-term loyalty (Kotler et al., 2022).

Tourist Loyalty

Tourist loyalty refers to a tourist's commitment to repeatedly use the same tourism products or services and to recommend them to others despite the availability of competing alternatives. Loyal tourists demonstrate not only repeat visitation but also positive attitudes toward the service provider through favorable recommendations and long-term relationships. Such loyalty contributes to organizational sustainability by reducing customer acquisition costs, increasing repeat purchases, and generating positive word of mouth. Therefore, tourist loyalty is considered one of the most important indicators of successful relationship marketing and long-term business performance within the tourism industry (Griffin, 2022; Kotler et al., 2022).

3. Materials and Method

This study employed a quantitative research approach using an explanatory research design to examine the relationships among social media marketing, word of mouth, revisit intention, and tourist loyalty at PT Bali Hai Mandiri Sakti. The study was conducted at PT Bali Hai Mandiri Sakti, Bali, with the population consisting of all tourists who had used the company's services. Since the population size was unknown, the sample size was determined using the (Hair et al., 2021) approach, resulting in 150 respondents selected through purposive sampling. Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire based on the indicators of each research variable, while secondary data were obtained from company documents and related literature. The questionnaire items were adapted from established studies and measured using a five-point Likert scale. Prior to data analysis, the measurement instrument was evaluated for validity and reliability, and the results confirmed that all indicators met the required validity and reliability criteria, indicating that the instrument was appropriate for subsequent analysis.

The proposed research model consists of two exogenous variables, namely social media marketing (X_1) and word of mouth (X_2), one mediating variable, revisit intention (Y_1), and one endogenous variable, tourist loyalty (Y_2). Data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS software because this approach is appropriate for simultaneously examining complex relationships among latent variables and testing mediation effects (Hair et al., 2021). The analysis included descriptive statistics, evaluation of the measurement model through convergent validity, discriminant

validity, and composite reliability, followed by evaluation of the structural model using the coefficient of determination (R^2), predictive relevance (Q^2), and bootstrapping procedures to test both direct and indirect effects. Hypothesis testing was considered significant when the p-value was less than 0.05.

4. Results and Discussion

Inferential Analysis

Evaluation of Measurement Models

a. Convergent Validity

Table 1. Results of the Outer Loading Calculation.

Variable	Instrument	Statement Item	Outer Loading
Social Media Marketing	Customer communication	X1.1	0.863
	Close relationship	X1.2	0.908
	Interaction	X1.3	0.933
	Prompt response	X1.4	0.848
	Attractive content	X1.5	0.873
	Usefulness	X1.6	0.940
	Information accessibility	X1.7	0.940
	Easy to find	X1.8	0.952
Word of Mouth	Sharing positive experiences	X2.1	0.974
	Obtaining information	X2.2	0.921
	Encouraging others	X2.3	0.924
	Encouraging service usage	X2.4	0.961
	Receiving recommendations	X2.5	0.967
	Accepting recommendations	X2.6	0.798
Revisit Intention	Willingness to reuse	Y1.1	0.946
	Intention to reuse	Y1.2	0.914
	Preference for using the service	Y1.3	0.927
	Best service quality choice	Y1.4	0.920
	Recommending to others	Y1.5	0.938
	Recommending to friends or family	Y1.6	0.911
	First choice	Y1.7	0.919
	Best travel agency choice	Y1.8	0.904
Tourist Loyalty	Reusing the service	Y2.1	0.876
	Consistent usage	Y2.2	0.852
	Ignoring negative information	Y2.3	0.825
	Continued usage	Y2.4	0.802
	Commitment	Y2.5	0.877
	Long-term consistency	Y2.6	0.835

Based on Table 1, the results show that the outer loading values of all indicators for the social media marketing, word of mouth, revisit intention, and tourist loyalty constructs are greater than 0.50. This indicates that all indicators used to measure the latent constructs are valid.

b. Distriminant Validity

Table 2. Disriminant Validity Calculation Results.

Construct	Tourist Loyalty	Revisit Intention	Social Media Marketing	Word of Mouth
Tourist Loyalty	0.845			
Revisit Intention	0.705	0.922		
Social Media Marketing	0.675	0.642	0.908	
Word of Mouth	0.701	0.677	0.622	0.926

Table 2 hows that the Fornell–Larcker criterion values for the social media marketing, word of mouth, revisit intention, and tourist loyalty constructs are higher than their corresponding inter-construct correlations. These results indicate that each construct has adequate discriminant validity and is empirically distinct from the other constructs.

c. Reliability

Table 3. Reliability Test Results.

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Remark
Social Media Marketing (X_1)	0.969	0.970	Reliable
Word of Mouth (X_2)	0.966	0.970	Reliable
Revisit Intention (M)	0.975	0.975	Reliable
Tourist Loyalty (Y)	0.920	0.922	Reliable

Based on Table 3, all constructs, namely social media marketing, word of mouth, revisit intention, and tourist loyalty, have Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability values greater than 0.70, indicating that all constructs satisfy the reliability criteria.

Structural Model Evaluation

a. Evaluation of Structural Models Through R-Square

Table 4. Results of R-Square Calculations.

Construct	R Square	Adjusted R Square
Revisit Intention	0.539	0.532
Tourist Loyalty	0.629	0.622

Based on Table 4, the R^2 value for revisit intention is 0.539, indicating that 53.9% of the variance in revisit intention is explained by social media marketing and word of mouth, while the remaining 46.1% is explained by factors outside the research model. According to Chin (Lathan & Ghozali, 2022:80), an R^2 value of 0.539 is classified as moderate.

The R^2 value for tourist loyalty is 0.629, indicating that 62.9% of the variance in tourist loyalty is explained by social media marketing, word of mouth, and revisit intention, whereas the remaining 37.1% is attributable to factors outside the research model. According to Chin (Lathan & Ghozali, 2022:80), an R^2 value of 0.629 indicates a strong model.

b. Evaluation of Structural Models Through R-Square

Table 5. Q-Square Test Results.

Construct	R Square	Adjusted R Square
Revisit Intention	0.539	0.532
Tourist Loyalty	0.629	0.622

$$Q^2 = 1 - (1 - R_1^2)(1 - R_2^2)$$
$$= 1 - (1 - 0{,}539)(1 - 0{,}629)$$
$$= 1 - (0{,}461)(0{,}371)$$
$$= 1 - (0{,}171031)$$
$$= 0{,}828969$$

Based on the Q^2 calculation, the predictive relevance value is 0.829 (82.9%), indicating that 82.9% of the variance in tourist loyalty can be explained by the relationships among social media marketing, word of mouth, and revisit intention, while the remaining 17.1% is attributable to factors outside the research model. According to the Q-Square criterion, this result indicates that the structural model has very strong predictive relevance.

Hypothesis Testing

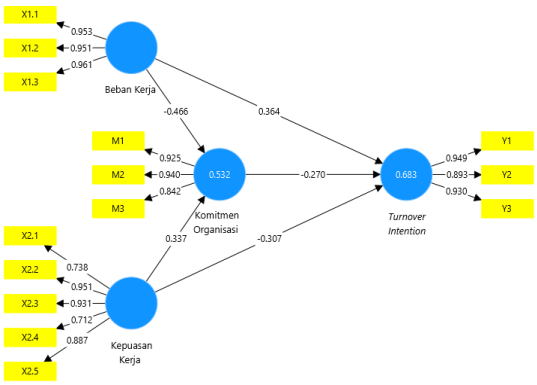


Figure 1. Path Diagram of the Relationships among Social Media Marketing, Word of Mouth, Revisit Intention, and Tourist Loyalty.

Based on the data processing results obtained using SmartPLS 3.0, as illustrated in Figure 1, the relationships among the research variables are presented in Table 6:

Table 6. Relationships among Social Media Marketing, Word of Mouth, Revisit Intention, and Tourist Loyalty.

Construct	Original Sample (O)	t-Statistics	p-Values	Decision
Direct Effects				
Social Media Marketing → Revisit Intention	0.361	4.823	0.000	Accepted
Word of Mouth → Revisit Intention	0.453	6.110	0.000	Accepted
Social Media Marketing → Tourist Loyalty	0.278	4.644	0.000	Accepted
Word of Mouth → Tourist Loyalty	0.316	4.265	0.000	Accepted
Revisit Intention → Tourist Loyalty	0.312	4.175	0.000	Accepted
Indirect Effects				
Social Media Marketing → Revisit Intention → Tourist Loyalty	0.113	3.103	0.002	Accepted
Word of Mouth → Revisit Intention → Tourist Loyalty	0.142	3.480	0.001	Accepted

Based on Table 6, the hypothesis testing results can be summarized as follows:

(1) H1: Social media marketing has a positive and significant effect on revisit intention ($\beta = 0.361$, $t = 4.823$, $p < 0.001$). Therefore, H1 is accepted.
(2) H2: Word of mouth has a positive and significant effect on revisit intention ($\beta = 0.453$, $t = 6.110$, $p < 0.001$). Therefore, H2 is accepted.
(3) H3: Social media marketing has a positive and significant effect on tourist loyalty ($\beta = 0.278$, $t = 4.644$, $p < 0.001$). Therefore, H3 is accepted.
(4) H4: Word of mouth has a positive and significant effect on tourist loyalty ($\beta = 0.316$, $t = 4.265$, $p < 0.001$). Therefore, H4 is accepted.
(5) H5: Revisit intention has a positive and significant effect on tourist loyalty ($\beta = 0.312$, $t = 4.175$, $p < 0.001$). Therefore, H5 is accepted.
(6) H6: Revisit intention partially mediates the relationship between social media marketing and tourist loyalty ($\beta = 0.113$, $t = 3.103$, $p = 0.002$). Therefore, H6 is accepted.
(7) H7: Revisit intention partially mediates the relationship between word of mouth and tourist loyalty ($\beta = 0.142$, $t = 3.480$, $p = 0.001$). Therefore, H7 is accepted.

Discussion

Effect of Social Media Marketing on Revisit Intention

The results indicate that social media marketing has a positive and significant effect on revisit intention at PT Bali Hai Mandiri Sakti. This finding suggests that improvements in the company's social media marketing activities increase tourists' intention to reuse its services. Interactive and informative social media content enables tourists to obtain relevant information, engage with the company, and develop more positive perceptions of the services offered. In line with Customer Behavior Theory, marketing stimuli received through social media influence tourists' perceptions and attitudes, which subsequently strengthen their behavioral intention to revisit the company.

These findings are consistent with those of (Fetais et al., 2023), who reported that social media marketing has a positive and significant effect on revisit intention. Similar findings were also reported by (Banerji & Singh, 2024; Khan et al., 2024; Smith et al., 2024; Zhang & Kim, 2025), demonstrating that effective social media marketing enhances tourists' intention to reuse tourism services. Collectively, these studies indicate that digital marketing strategies that promote engagement and meaningful interactions can strengthen tourists' revisit intention.

Effect of Word of Mouth on Revisit Intention

The analysis shows that word of mouth has a positive and significant effect on revisit intention at PT Bali Hai Mandiri Sakti. This result indicates that positive recommendations and experiences shared by previous tourists increase the likelihood that tourists will intend to reuse the company's services. Positive word of mouth reduces uncertainty, enhances trust, and strengthens tourists' confidence in the quality of the services provided. According to Customer Behavior Theory, information received from other consumers serves as an external stimulus that shapes tourists' perceptions and encourages favorable behavioral intentions, including revisit intention.

The findings support the study conducted by (Saleem et al., 2022), which found that word of mouth positively influences revisit intention. Similar evidence was reported by (Joudeh et al., 2024; Luu Thi Thuy et al., 2024; Rasheed & Rashid, 2024), who concluded that positive word of mouth significantly increases tourists' intention to revisit. These consistent findings suggest that recommendations and positive experiences shared by previous customers play an important role in encouraging repeat usage of tourism services.

Effect of Social Media Marketing on Tourist Loyalty

The findings reveal that social media marketing has a positive and significant effect on tourist loyalty at PT Bali Hai Mandiri Sakti. This indicates that more effective social media marketing contributes to higher levels of tourist loyalty. By delivering attractive content, maintaining continuous communication, and encouraging customer engagement, social media marketing strengthens tourists' emotional attachment to the company and encourages repeat use of its services. From the perspective of Customer Behavior Theory, positive experiences generated through digital interactions shape favorable attitudes that ultimately develop into loyal behavior.

These findings are in line with the study of (Listyarti et al., 2023), which demonstrated that social media marketing positively and significantly influences tourist loyalty. Similar results were also reported by (Arevin et al., 2024; Ding, 2022; Park et al., 2018; Yalçınkaya & Çataldaş, 2025), confirming that effective social media marketing enhances tourist loyalty. These studies collectively indicate that social media has evolved beyond a promotional tool and has become an important platform for building long-term relationships and sustaining tourist loyalty.

Effect of Word of Mouth on Tourist Loyalty

The results demonstrate that word of mouth has a positive and significant effect on tourist loyalty at PT Bali Hai Mandiri Sakti. This finding indicates that positive recommendations and experiences shared by tourists contribute to stronger loyalty toward the company's services. Positive word of mouth enhances tourists' trust, reduces perceived risk, and reinforces favorable perceptions of service quality, encouraging repeat usage and long-term relationships. According to Customer Behavior Theory, information received from other consumers serves as a credible external stimulus that shapes tourists' attitudes and strengthens their commitment to a service provider, ultimately fostering tourist loyalty.

These findings are consistent with those reported by (Nasution et al., 2023), who found that word of mouth positively and significantly influences tourist loyalty. Similar results were also reported by (Alshreef et al., 2023; Azhari, 2023; Seijas-Díaz et al., 2023), confirming that positive recommendations from previous tourists play a crucial role in building long-term loyalty. The consistency of these findings suggests that encouraging positive customer experiences is essential for sustaining tourist loyalty in the tourism industry.

Effect of Revisit Intention on Tourist Loyalty

The analysis indicates that revisit intention has a positive and significant effect on tourist loyalty at PT Bali Hai Mandiri Sakti. This result implies that tourists with a stronger intention to reuse the company's services are more likely to become loyal customers. A high revisit intention reflects positive evaluations of previous experiences, satisfaction with the services received, and confidence in the company's ability to meet future expectations. In accordance with Customer Behavior Theory, behavioral intention represents the immediate antecedent of actual behavior, indicating that tourists who intend to revisit are more likely to demonstrate loyal behaviors through repeat purchases and long-term commitment.

The findings support those of (Manyanga et al., 2022), who reported that revisit intention positively affects tourist loyalty. Similar conclusions were reached by (Camilleri & Filieri, 2023; Nguyen & Chen, 2025; Pradnyadewi & Giantari, 2022; P. Singh et al., 2023), all of whom found that stronger revisit intention leads to higher tourist loyalty. These consistent findings emphasize that revisit intention is an important predictor of long-term customer loyalty within the tourism sector.

Mediating Effect of Revisit Intention on the Relationship between Social Media Marketing and Tourist Loyalty

The results reveal that revisit intention significantly mediates the relationship between social media marketing and tourist loyalty at PT Bali Hai Mandiri Sakti. This finding indicates that effective social media marketing not only strengthens tourist loyalty directly but also enhances tourists' intention to reuse the company's services, which subsequently increases their loyalty. Interactive social media content, timely communication, and meaningful customer engagement create positive perceptions that encourage revisit intention before ultimately developing into loyal behavior. This finding supports Customer Behavior Theory, which proposes that external marketing stimuli first influence behavioral intention before leading to actual consumer behavior.

These findings are consistent with those reported by Daya et al. (2022); Ervinna et al. (2023); Lee et al. (2025); Nugraha & Dwita (2022); Wang et al. (2024), who found that revisit intention mediates the relationship between social media marketing and tourist loyalty. The consistency of these findings confirms that revisit intention serves as an important behavioral mechanism through which digital marketing strategies translate into long-term tourist loyalty.

Mediating Effect of Revisit Intention on the Relationship between Word of Mouth and Tourist Loyalty

The findings indicate that revisit intention significantly mediates the relationship between word of mouth and tourist loyalty at PT Bali Hai Mandiri Sakti. Positive word of mouth enhances tourists' trust and confidence in the company's services, which subsequently strengthens their intention to reuse those services. This stronger revisit intention ultimately contributes to higher tourist loyalty. In line with Customer Behavior Theory, information obtained from previous customers influences tourists' perceptions and behavioral intentions before resulting in loyal behavior, highlighting the mediating role of revisit intention in this relationship.

These findings support the studies conducted by Layli et al. (2025); Marcos & Choelo (2022); Rivai et al. (2023) which concluded that revisit intention mediates the relationship between word of mouth and tourist loyalty. These studies consistently demonstrate that positive interpersonal communication encourages tourists to revisit, and this behavioral intention subsequently strengthens their long-term loyalty toward tourism service providers.

5. Conclusion

The findings demonstrate that social media marketing and word of mouth have positive and significant effects on both revisit intention and tourist loyalty at PT Bali Hai Mandiri Sakti. Revisit intention also has a positive and significant effect on tourist loyalty and partially mediates the relationships between social media marketing and tourist loyalty as well as between word of mouth and tourist loyalty. These findings suggest that effective digital marketing strategies and positive interpersonal communication not only directly strengthen tourist loyalty but also indirectly enhance loyalty by increasing tourists' intention to reuse the company's services. The study therefore confirms the relevance of Customer Behavior Theory in explaining how external marketing stimuli influence tourists' behavioral intentions and ultimately shape loyal behavior within the tourism service industry.

From a practical perspective, PT Bali Hai Mandiri Sakti should strengthen its social media responsiveness, encourage positive word of mouth through memorable customer experiences and referral programs, and continuously improve service quality to enhance tourists' revisit intention and long-term loyalty. This study contributes to the tourism marketing literature by providing empirical evidence on the mediating role of revisit intention in explaining tourist loyalty. Nevertheless, the findings should be interpreted with caution because the study was limited to tourists of a single travel agency, and data collection was constrained by respondents' availability and the diversity of their backgrounds. Future research is therefore recommended to examine different tourism sectors and incorporate additional variables, such as tourist satisfaction, service quality, destination image, or sales promotion, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the determinants of tourist loyalty.

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