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Instagram-Based Promotional Strategy and Digital Brand Visibility at Gunsas Resto

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Abstract

The increasing competition in the culinary industry requires restaurants to manage digital promotion through measurable and audience-oriented strategies. This study aims to examine Instagram promotional content effectiveness as an indicator of digital brand visibility and early-stage digital brand awareness at Gunsas Resto. A descriptive quantitative approach with a case study design was applied. The study used secondary data from Instagram performance reports of Gunsas Resto and Gunsas Duren, covering posts published from January 2025 to May 2026. After data cleaning, 117 valid Instagram posts were analyzed using social media analytics indicators, including views, likes, saves or reposts, shares, direct messages, comments, profile visits, follower growth, and engagement rate. This study does not directly measure consumer brand recall or brand recognition; instead, it uses Instagram analytics indicators as proxies for digital exposure, audience response, and early signals of brand awareness. The findings show that the analyzed content generated 126,908 views and 7,339 interactions, with a weighted engagement rate of 5.78%. Gunsas Duren achieved stronger performance than Gunsas Resto, indicating that product-focused content generated higher digital exposure and audience response. Reels produced the highest average views, while photo-based content generated the highest weighted engagement rate. These results indicate that short-form video is effective for expanding reach, whereas product-oriented visual content is more effective in strengthening engagement. Practically, this study helps Gunsas Resto develop a more measurable Instagram strategy by aligning content formats with promotional objectives and using analytics to evaluate content performance regularly.

Keywords: instagram promotional content, digital brand awareness, social media analytics, engagement rate, restaurant marketing, culinary business

Introduction

The development of social media has transformed the marketing orientation of the culinary industry from one-way communication into a more visual, interactive, and experience-based digital communication system. Instagram has become one of the most important platforms in this transformation because it offers strong visual features through photos, videos, carousels, stories, and reels. This visual character is highly relevant to culinary businesses because food and beverage products are evaluated not only through functional consumption, but also through appearance, ambience, experience, and

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emotional meaning constructed through content. Studies in casual dining, coffee, wine, and other culinary contexts show that Instagram marketing activities are associated with brand awareness, brand equity, consumer engagement, and purchase intention (Aqilla & Chandra, 2023; Bitakou et al., 2023; J. Li et al., 2019; Park & Namkung, 2022; Patria et al., 2023; Rasty & Filieri, 2023). These findings indicate that Instagram can no longer be viewed merely as a supplementary promotional channel, but rather as a strategic medium that shapes consumer perceptions of culinary brands.

The urgency of using Instagram becomes stronger in the culinary industry because restaurant competition continues to intensify and consumers are exposed to many choices of brands, menus, prices, locations, and service experiences. Digital brand awareness becomes a fundamental asset because consumers tend to consider brands that are recognizable, memorable, and associated with positive meanings. (Park & Namkung, 2022) found that Instagram marketing activities, through interaction, entertainment, customization, and trendiness, can influence brand awareness, brand image, perceived quality, brand love, and re-use intention. (Rasty & Filieri, 2023) also explain that consumer engagement with restaurant brands on Instagram can strengthen e-WOM, brand knowledge, perceived enjoyment, and social interaction. This literature demonstrates that the effectiveness of Instagram promotion does not depend only on posting frequency, but also on the ability of content to generate exposure, interaction, brand memory, and consumer interest.

The main research problem in restaurant digital promotion lies in the tendency of businesses to actively produce content without conducting systematic effectiveness evaluation. Instagram activity is often assessed through likes, comments, or followers, although these indicators are not sufficient to explain the contribution of content to digital brand awareness. Content with high interaction does not necessarily build brand memory, strengthen brand image, or encourage visitation intention if the brand message is inconsistent and not evaluated through measurable indicators. This problem is relevant to Gungsas Resto because the success of Instagram promotion should be assessed not only by the presence of content, but also by the extent to which the content reaches audiences, attracts attention, generates responses, and strengthens consumer awareness of the Gungsas Resto brand.

A general solution to this problem is the implementation of promotional evaluation based on social media analytics. Analysis of reach, impressions, views, engagement, profile visits, likes, comments, shares, and saves can help restaurants identify which content is more effective in generating exposure and audience response. (J. Li et al., 2019) show that social media in the casual dining context can function as a lead-generation and engagement mechanism that shapes brand awareness and business performance. The use of digital metrics enables restaurant managers to make more objective promotional decisions instead of relying solely on intuition or temporary trends. This evaluation is important because Instagram effectiveness is contextual and is influenced by audience characteristics, visual quality, content type, posting time, and the alignment between message and brand identity.

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A more specific solution in the literature emphasizes visual storytelling as a central strategy in culinary promotion on Instagram. Food content has sensory power because it can display color, texture, portion size, plating, restaurant atmosphere, and consumption experience. (Bitakou et al., 2023) show that visual formats such as photos, videos, and reels can influence engagement and consumer response. Studies on image quality also indicate that high-quality visuals can enhance credibility and purchase intent; thus, these findings can be applied to menu photos, restaurant interiors, and culinary product visuals (Darmawan et al., 2024; Ryu, 2024). Gunsas Resto's content strategy should therefore focus on consistent, attractive, and audience-relevant visual presentation so that brand awareness is formed not only through exposure but also through memorable visual experience.

Scientific literature also emphasizes that Instagram promotional effectiveness is strengthened by interaction and source credibility. (Rasty & Filieri, 2023) describe consumer engagement as a multidimensional process associated with e-WOM and brand outcomes. (Arief et al., 2022) show that employee influencers can help organizations build authentic relationships with younger audiences through more personal and credible voices. (Aqilla & Chandra, 2023) explain that influencers can affect purchase intention through brand image and customer engagement, while (Ju et al., 2024) add that virtual influencers can also generate engagement through perceived credibility and authenticity. These findings suggest that Gunsas Resto's Instagram promotion should not only display products, but also manage narratives, message sources, audience interaction, and consumer trust consistently.

Previous studies have provided a strong foundation regarding the relationship between Instagram marketing, consumer engagement, brand equity, and purchase intention in various culinary contexts. Research on the coffee industry, restaurant brands, wineries, and tourism-linked culinary campaigns shows that Instagram can enhance brand awareness and loyalty when content is designed visually, interactively, and authentically (Bitakou et al., 2023; Park & Namkung, 2022; Patria et al., 2023; Rasty & Filieri, 2023). A research gap remains in the limited number of studies that specifically evaluate the effectiveness of Instagram promotional content in local restaurants by using social media analytics indicators as proxies for digital brand awareness. Many previous studies still focus on consumer perception through surveys or on larger brands, while research based on actual Instagram content performance data in local culinary businesses remains underdeveloped. This gap is important because local culinary businesses require a more practical, measurable, and capacity-sensitive evaluation model for their digital promotion.

Although survey-based studies are valuable for measuring consumer perceptions, brand recognition, and brand recall, they are not always sufficient for evaluating daily promotional performance on social media. Surveys tend to capture consumer responses at a specific point in time, whereas Instagram promotional activities operate continuously through posts, reels, stories, audience interactions, and platform-generated responses. For local culinary businesses, daily performance indicators such as views, likes, comments, shares, saves, profile visits, and engagement rate provide practical evidence of how each content unit performs in attracting attention and generating audience response. Therefore,

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the use of actual Instagram analytics data is important as a complementary approach to survey-based brand awareness studies, particularly for evaluating measurable and routine promotional effectiveness in local restaurant contexts.

Gunsas Resto is a culinary business unit under Gunsas Group, which also includes Gunsas Villa and Gunsas Durian. Based on Gunsas Group's official website, Gunsas Resto offers Indonesian cuisine with a modern touch, while Gunsas Durian focuses on selected durian products with distinctive sensory and visual appeal. Gunsas Durian is included in this study because it belongs to the same Gunsas Group brand ecosystem and represents a product-focused promotional account. The inclusion of both accounts enables a comparison between general restaurant branding content and product-specific promotional content in shaping digital exposure, audience response, and brand visibility.

In the case of Gunsas Resto, Instagram has been used as one of the main digital channels for communicating restaurant-related promotions, product visuals, customer experiences, and brand information. The available Instagram performance reports show that Gunsas Resto and Gunsas Duren published various types of content during the observed period, including photo-based product displays, videos, Reels, testimonials, location information, and store-opening announcements. These activities indicate that Instagram is not only used as a promotional display platform, but also as a medium for generating audience exposure, interaction, and digital visibility. Therefore, evaluating the performance of each content type is important to understand how Gunsas' Instagram activities contribute to digital brand visibility in a local culinary business context.

This study aims to analyze the effectiveness of Instagram promotional content as an indicator of digital brand visibility and early-stage digital brand awareness at Gunsas Resto. The novelty of this study lies in the use of actual post-level Instagram analytics to evaluate early digital brand awareness signals in a local culinary business context. Unlike studies that rely mainly on consumer perception surveys or aggregate account-level metrics, this study examines the performance of individual Instagram posts based on views, audience interactions, engagement rate, content format, and thematic patterns. This approach provides a more practical and measurable way to understand how daily promotional content contributes to digital exposure, audience response, and brand visibility. The justification of this study is based on the assumption that Instagram content with stronger visual quality, clearer message relevance, and higher audience response can generate stronger early signals of digital brand awareness. The scope of this study is limited to Instagram promotional content from Gunsas Resto and Gunsas Duren, with a focus on post-level content performance, engagement patterns, and their implications for digital brand visibility. The findings are expected to contribute academically to digital marketing and brand awareness studies, while also providing practical recommendations for Gunsas Resto in developing a more measurable, effective, and brand-oriented Instagram content strategy.

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Method

Research Design

This study employed a descriptive quantitative approach with a case study design. The descriptive quantitative approach was selected because the study aimed to measure, describe, and compare the performance of Instagram promotional content using numerical indicators derived from social media analytics. The case study design was considered appropriate because the research focused on a specific digital marketing context, namely the Instagram promotional activities of Gunsas Resto and Gunsas Duren as part of the broader brand communication strategy of Gunsas. The study did not seek to establish causal relationships between Instagram content and consumer purchasing behavior. Instead, it examined how Instagram content performance can be interpreted as an early indicator of digital brand awareness.

The methodological orientation of this study was grounded in the view that digital brand awareness can be approached through measurable exposure and engagement indicators. Brand awareness is traditionally associated with consumers' ability to recognize and recall a brand in a particular product category. In a digital environment, this awareness may be reflected at an initial stage through content exposure, audience interaction, and behavioral responses toward brand-related content. Previous studies have shown that Instagram marketing activities are associated with brand awareness, brand equity, consumer engagement, and purchase intention in culinary and hospitality contexts (Bitakou et al., 2023; J. Li et al., 2019; Park & Namkung, 2022; Rasty & Filieri, 2023). This study therefore used social media analytics as a practical basis for evaluating the effectiveness of promotional content.

Research Setting and Period

The research setting was the digital promotional space of Gunsas Resto on Instagram. The study focused on two Instagram accounts, namely Gunsas Resto and Gunsas Duren. Gunsas Resto represents the general restaurant brand, while Gunsas Duren represents a more specific product-oriented account with stronger emphasis on durian-based offerings. The inclusion of these two accounts allowed the study to compare content performance between a general restaurant communication approach and a more product-focused promotional approach.

The period of analysis covered Instagram posts published from January 2025 to May 2026. This period was determined based on the availability of Instagram performance reports provided for the study. The digital setting was treated as the primary research site because the interaction between the brand and its audiences occurred through Instagram content, audience responses, and platform-generated performance indicators. The physical location of the business served only as the organizational context and was not used as the unit of spatial analysis.

The January 2025 to May 2026 period covered the regular Instagram posting activities recorded in the available performance reports of Gunsas Resto and Gunsas Duren. The dataset includes various forms of promotional content, such as product displays, restaurant-related information, customer testimonials or reviews, location-based

information, and store-opening announcements. Therefore, the observed period reflects both routine promotional activity and several identifiable promotional moments or special events. However, this study did not separate the analysis into regular posting periods, seasonal campaigns, or event-based campaigns because the available reports were structured as post-level performance data rather than campaign-level records. As a result, the findings should be interpreted as an evaluation of overall Instagram promotional performance during the observed period, not as a comparison between routine content and specific campaign periods.

Population, Sample, and Sampling Technique

The population of this study consisted of all Instagram posts from Gunsas Resto and Gunsas Duren recorded in the available Instagram performance reports during the research period. The unit of analysis was an individual Instagram post that contained measurable performance data, particularly views and audience interaction indicators. The initial dataset consisted of 141 rows containing view values from the two Instagram reports.

To ensure that each observation represented a valid Instagram post, a data cleaning process was conducted before analysis. The process removed duplicated entries, summary rows, and invalid or incomplete observations. The final dataset consisted of 117 valid Instagram posts, as summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Data Cleaning Process

Data Cleaning Stage	Number of Rows/Posts	Description
Initial data	141	Total rows obtained from Instagram performance reports of Gunsas Resto and Gunsas Duren
Duplicated posts removed	22	Duplicate entries identified based on account name, caption, format, views, and interaction indicators
Summary rows removed	2	Rows representing monthly summaries or total rows, not individual Instagram posts
Invalid or incomplete rows removed	0	Rows without required post-level performance indicators
Final valid posts	117	Instagram posts included in the final analysis

The sampling technique used in this study was total sampling with data eligibility criteria. Total sampling was applied because all posts that met the inclusion criteria were included in the analysis. The inclusion criteria were: posts originating from Gunsas Resto or Gunsas Duren Instagram reports, posts published within the January 2025–May 2026 period, posts containing views data, and posts containing identifiable interaction indicators. The exclusion criteria included monthly summary rows, copied sheets, empty or incomplete rows, and duplicated posts. After the data cleaning process, the final sample consisted of 117 valid Instagram posts, comprising 77 posts from Gunsas Duren and 40 posts from Gunsas Resto.

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Data Sources and Research Indicators

This study used secondary data derived from Instagram performance reports. The data were documentary in nature because they were obtained from existing records of social media activity rather than direct surveys or interviews. The indicators collected from the reports included account identity, posting period, content format, caption or content theme, views, likes, saves or reposts, shares, direct messages, comments, profile visits, and follower growth.

The main variable in this study was the effectiveness of Instagram promotional content. Content effectiveness was operationally defined as the ability of a post to generate brand exposure and audience response. Brand exposure was represented by views, while audience response was represented by likes, saves or reposts, shares, direct messages, comments, profile visits, and follower growth. Digital brand awareness was operationalized as the initial level of audience exposure and digital response toward brand-related content. This operationalization was consistent with the nature of the dataset, which consisted of social media analytics rather than consumer perception survey data.

Data Collection Procedure

Data collection was conducted through documentation of Instagram performance reports. The two reports were examined to identify all posts that contained measurable content performance. The documentation method was appropriate because the study relied on actual digital trace data generated from Instagram activity. This approach allowed the study to examine audience behavior as recorded by platform analytics, rather than relying exclusively on self-reported perceptions.

The use of social media analytics is relevant to the evaluation of Instagram promotion because previous studies indicate that reach, impressions, engagement, and related indicators are important signals of brand exposure and audience response (J. Li et al., 2019; Rasty & Filieri, 2023). Studies on Instagram marketing also emphasize that content format, visual quality, interaction, entertainment, customization, and trendiness may influence brand-related outcomes (Bitakou et al., 2023; Park & Namkung, 2022). For this reason, the data collection process was designed to capture not only the volume of content, but also the measurable responses generated by each content format.

Ethical Considerations

This study used secondary data derived from organizational Instagram performance records of Gunsas Resto and Gunsas Duren. The data consisted of aggregate and post-level performance indicators, such as views, likes, saves or reposts, shares, direct messages, comments, profile visits, follower growth, and engagement rate. The study did not collect, identify, analyze, or disclose personal user identities, account names, private profiles, private messages, or any other personally identifiable information from Instagram users.

All data were treated as organizational performance records and were used only for academic analysis of Instagram promotional performance. The analysis focused on

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content-level and account-level performance indicators rather than individual audience behavior. Therefore, the study maintained confidentiality and minimized privacy risks by avoiding the use of personal data. This ethical consideration is important because the research used digital trace data generated from social media activity, even though the data were analyzed in aggregated and non-identifiable forms.

Data Cleaning and Validation

Data cleaning was conducted before analysis to ensure that each observation represented a valid Instagram post. Rows that did not represent individual posts, such as monthly summaries and total rows, were removed. Duplicate posts were identified through a manual verification process supported by comparison of key post-level attributes. The duplicate detection process examined similarities in account name, posting period, caption or content theme, content format, views, likes, saves or reposts, shares, direct messages, comments, profile visits, and other available performance indicators. Posts were considered duplicates when they showed identical or highly similar content information and the same or nearly identical metric values across the dataset. This procedure was used to prevent double counting and to ensure that each Instagram post was represented only once in the final analysis.

The cleaning process resulted in the removal of 22 duplicated observations and 2 summary rows from the initial dataset. No invalid or incomplete rows were removed because all remaining observations contained the required post-level performance indicators. The final dataset consisted of 117 valid posts. Data validation was conducted by checking the consistency of numerical indicators, ensuring that all posts included views data, and confirming that interaction indicators were recorded in comparable formats. This process strengthened the reliability of the descriptive analysis and reduced the possibility of inflated performance results.

Data Analysis Technique

The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The analysis was conducted in three stages. The first stage examined the aggregate performance of all Instagram posts to describe the overall effectiveness of Gunsas promotional content. The second stage compared the performance of Gunsas Resto and Gunsas Duren to identify differences between general restaurant branding content and product-focused content. The third stage analyzed content performance by format, including photo, video, reels, poster, and post categories.

The indicators analyzed included number of posts, total views, average views, median views, total interactions, weighted engagement rate, median engagement rate, and follower growth. Total interaction was calculated by adding post-level audience response indicators, including likes, saves or reposts, shares, direct messages, comments, and profile visits. These indicators were treated as a broad descriptive interaction index because they represent observable forms of audience response recorded in the Instagram performance reports. Equal weighting was applied because the study used descriptive

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analytics and did not aim to construct a hierarchical or psychological engagement scale. Each indicator was therefore counted as one measurable response to promotional content.

However, the authors acknowledge that different types of interaction may reflect different levels of audience involvement. Likes may indicate a simple and low-effort response, while comments, shares, direct messages, saves, and profile visits may indicate more active engagement. To avoid subjective assumptions about the relative importance of each interaction type, this study did not assign different weights to the indicators. Follower growth was analyzed separately as an account-level outcome because it does not always originate from a single post-level interaction. The engagement rate was calculated by dividing total interactions by total views and multiplying the result by 100 percent. Weighted engagement rate was used to evaluate aggregate performance, while median engagement rate was included to reduce the influence of extreme values or outlier posts. Therefore, total interaction and engagement rate in this study should be interpreted as broad descriptive measures of audience response, not as direct measures of consumer psychological engagement or brand awareness.

Data Presentation and Interpretation

The results were presented in tables and analytical narratives. Tables were used to summarize the data cleaning procedure, account-based performance, content-format performance, and posts with the highest views. Analytical narratives were used to interpret the meaning of the numbers, compare performance patterns, and relate the findings to digital brand awareness and consumer engagement concepts.

The interpretation did not claim that Instagram content directly caused consumer awareness or purchasing behavior. The study positioned views and engagement indicators as early digital signals of brand awareness. This interpretation is consistent with the literature stating that Instagram content can support recognition, memory, engagement, e-WOM, and brand equity, while acknowledging that digital engagement does not automatically translate into actual business outcomes without further measurement (Aqilla & Chandra, 2023; Park & Namkung, 2022; Rasty & Filieri, 2023). The findings were therefore interpreted as evidence of promotional performance in the digital environment and as a basis for improving Instagram content planning for Gunsas Resto.

Result and Discussion

Descriptive Overview of the Dataset

The final dataset consisted of 117 valid Instagram posts published by two Instagram accounts associated with Gunsas, namely Gunsas Duren and Gunsas Resto. The sample included 77 posts from Gunsas Duren and 40 posts from Gunsas Resto. These posts were selected after removing duplicated entries, summary rows, copied sheets, and observations that did not represent individual Instagram posts. The analysis therefore focused only on content units that had measurable performance indicators, particularly views and audience interaction metrics.

Overall, the 117 posts generated 126,908 views and 7,339 total interactions. The weighted engagement rate reached 5.78%, while the median engagement rate was 2.34%.

The difference between the weighted engagement rate and the median engagement rate indicates that Instagram content performance was not evenly distributed across all posts. Several posts produced substantially higher exposure or interaction than others, which increased the aggregate engagement rate. This pattern suggests that the effectiveness of Instagram promotional content should not be interpreted through a single metric. Views, total interactions, weighted engagement rate, and median engagement rate need to be read together to obtain a more balanced understanding of digital brand performance.

Table 2. Overall Instagram Content Performance

Indicator	Value
Number of valid posts	117
Total views	126,908
Total interactions	7,339
Weighted engagement rate	5.78%
Median engagement rate	2.34%

Source: Processed Instagram performance reports of Gunsas Resto and Gunsas Duren.

The overall results show that Instagram promotional content contributed to the formation of early digital brand awareness through two measurable mechanisms: exposure and interaction. Views reflect the extent to which audiences were exposed to brand-related content, while interactions reflect the audience's behavioral response after exposure. This interpretation is consistent with the digital marketing literature, which positions social media as a platform that not only distributes messages but also facilitates engagement, brand association, and consumer response (BİLGİN, 2018; Godey et al., 2016). In this study, Instagram analytics provide empirical evidence of how promotional content performs in the digital environment before consumer awareness is further examined through survey-based recognition or recall measures.

Account-Based Performance: Gunsas Duren and Gunsas Resto

The account-based analysis shows a clear performance gap between Gunsas Duren and Gunsas Resto. Gunsas Duren generated 105,129 views, representing 82.84% of total views. This account also produced 7,022 interactions, equivalent to 95.68% of all interactions in the dataset. Its weighted engagement rate reached 6.68%. In contrast, Gunsas Resto generated 21,779 views and 317 interactions, with a weighted engagement rate of 1.46%.

The content format analysis highlights an important distinction between reach and engagement. Reels produced the highest average views, showing their effectiveness in expanding digital exposure, while photo-based content generated the highest weighted engagement rate, indicating stronger audience interaction. This finding suggests that Instagram promotional effectiveness cannot be assessed through views alone. Reach reflects visibility, whereas engagement reflects a deeper level of audience response. Therefore, different content formats should be used strategically: Reels for awareness expansion and photos for engagement strengthening.

Tabel 3. Instagram Performance by Account

Account	Number of Posts	Total Views	Average Views	Median Views	Total Interactions	Weighted Engagement Rate	Follower Growth
Gunsas Duren	77	105,129	1,365	517	7,022	6.68%	167
Gunsas Resto	40	21,779	544	390	317	1.46%	0 / not recorded
Total	117	126,908	1,085	420	7,339	5.78%	167

Source: Processed Instagram performance reports of Gunsas Resto and Gunsas Duren.

The dominance of Gunsas Duren indicates that product-focused content was more effective in generating digital exposure and audience response than general restaurant branding content. Gunsas Duren focuses on durian-related products, which have strong sensory, emotional, and experiential associations. Durian is a distinctive culinary product because it is linked to taste intensity, aroma, texture, seasonality, and strong consumer preference. These characteristics make the product easier to communicate visually and emotionally through Instagram.

A key empirical contribution of this study lies in the distinction between reach-oriented effectiveness and engagement-oriented effectiveness. Reels achieved the highest average views, indicating their strength in expanding digital exposure and attracting broader audience attention. However, photo-based content generated the highest weighted engagement rate, suggesting that static product visuals were more effective in encouraging active audience responses. This finding shows that reach and engagement should not be interpreted as identical outcomes. High views indicate visibility, but they do not automatically lead to deeper audience interaction. Conversely, content with lower reach may generate stronger engagement when the product image, message clarity, and visual appeal are more relevant to the audience. Therefore, Instagram promotional effectiveness should be evaluated through multiple indicators, because different content formats serve different strategic functions in building digital brand visibility.

Gunsas Resto, by comparison, represents the broader restaurant identity. Its content themes are more diverse, including menu variety, beverages, catering, greetings, restaurant ambience, and general promotional messages. This broader scope is useful for presenting a complete brand identity, but it may reduce message clarity if content planning is not supported by a consistent communication architecture. (Keller, 1993) argues that brand knowledge is formed through associations stored in consumer memory. From this perspective, the stronger performance of Gunsas Duren can be interpreted as the result of clearer and more specific brand associations. The audience is exposed to a focused product identity, making the content easier to recognize, remember, and respond to.

The finding also supports (Park & Namkung, 2022) argument that Instagram marketing activities can influence customer-based brand equity through interaction, entertainment, customization, and trendiness. Product-focused content that is visually clear and emotionally appealing may be more capable of producing such effects than content with a broad and less concentrated message. For Gunsas Resto, this implies that the main restaurant account needs stronger thematic differentiation so that the wider

restaurant brand does not become overshadowed by the stronger digital appeal of Gunsas Duren.

Content Format Performance

The analysis by format reveals that each type of content had a different strategic role. Photo content was the most frequently used format, with 79 posts. This format generated 54,076 views and 6,628 interactions, producing the highest weighted engagement rate at 12.26%. Video content consisted of 23 posts, generated 29,520 views, and reached a weighted engagement rate of 1.33%. Reels consisted of only 9 posts but generated 42,111 views, with the highest average views per post at 4,679. However, reels had the lowest weighted engagement rate at 0.61%. Poster and general post categories contributed smaller volumes of views and interactions.

Table 4. Instagram Performance by Content Format

Content Format	Number of Posts	Total Views	Average Views	Median Views	Total Interactions	Weighted Engagement Rate	Median Engagement Rate
Photo	79	54,076	685	389	6,628	12.26%	2.90%
Video	23	29,520	1,283	532	394	1.33%	1.61%
Reels	9	42,111	4,679	477	257	0.61%	3.35%
Poster	3	466	155	101	19	4.08%	4.95%
Post	3	735	245	284	41	5.58%	6.06%

Source: Processed Instagram performance reports.

The results suggest that reels were most effective for expanding reach, while photos were most effective for generating interaction. Reels achieved the highest average views, indicating that short-form video content has strong potential to increase brand exposure. This is consistent with Instagram's platform logic, where short-form videos are more likely to circulate beyond existing followers. For brand awareness purposes, reels can function as an entry-point format because they increase the probability that new audiences will encounter the brand. However, the content format findings should be interpreted with caution because the number of posts across categories was not evenly distributed. Photo content had the largest number of observations, while Reels, posters, and general posts consisted of relatively small category sizes. In particular, Reels included only 9 posts, whereas posters and general posts included only 3 posts each. Small category sizes may produce unstable averages and can be strongly influenced by one or two high-performing or low-performing posts. Therefore, the comparison across content formats should be understood as a descriptive indication of performance patterns rather than a definitive generalization about the superiority of one format over another.

The low weighted engagement rate of reels indicates that high exposure does not automatically generate active engagement. Audiences may watch or encounter reels during fast-scrolling activity without proceeding to like, comment, share, save, or visit the account profile. This distinction is important because views represent exposure, whereas engagement reflects a deeper level of audience involvement. (Dessart et al., 2015) define engagement as cognitive, emotional, and behavioral participation in brand

interaction. From this perspective, reels in the Gunsas dataset were effective in creating exposure but still need stronger interactive elements to transform attention into participation.

Photo content produced the highest total interactions and the highest weighted engagement rate. This finding confirms the continuing relevance of static visual content in culinary promotion. Food photography allows audiences to examine product details such as color, texture, portion, plating, and visual attractiveness. (Ashley & Tuten, 2015) argue that creative strategies in branded social content play an important role in encouraging consumer engagement. The high engagement performance of photo content in this study supports this view. Strong product visuals appear to stimulate more active responses, especially when the object being promoted is clear and visually appealing.

Video content occupied an intermediate position. It generated higher average views than photos but lower engagement than photos. This pattern suggests that video content has narrative potential, but its effectiveness depends on execution. Videos may communicate testimonials, product preparation, customer experience, or restaurant atmosphere more comprehensively than photos. However, videos require a strong opening, concise duration, clear storyline, and visible product cues from the beginning. Without these elements, video content may generate views without creating sufficient interaction.

High-Reach Content and Thematic Patterns

The five posts with the highest views were all from Gunsas Duren. The highest-performing content included testimonial and review videos, information about a durian store at Summarecon Bogor, and reels announcing store openings at TipTop Pondok Gede and TipTop Bogor.

The effectiveness of testimonial, location-based, and store-opening content can be explained through their different communication functions. Testimonial and review content may generate high reach because it provides credibility and social proof. Audiences may perceive customer experiences as more authentic than direct promotional messages, making this type of content more persuasive and relatable. Location-based content may work because it reduces informational barriers and supports consumer action. By showing where the product can be accessed, this content helps audiences connect digital exposure with possible offline visits or purchase decisions. Store-opening content may attract attention because it communicates novelty, business expansion, and timely information. These themes indicate that high-reach content is not only visually attractive but also functionally relevant, credible, and action-oriented.

Table 5. Top Five Posts by Views

Account	Period	Format	Content Theme	Views	Interactions	Engagement Rate
Gunsas Duren	May 2025	Video	Durian testimonial and product review	15,191	186	1.22%
Gunsas Duren	December 2025	Photo	Durian store at Summarecon Bogor	12,900	624	4.84%

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Gunsas Duren	May 2026	Reels	Opening at Pondok Gede	TipTop	12,200	47	0.39%
Gunsas Duren	May 2026	Reels	Opening at Bogor	TipTop	9,900	34	0.34%
Gunsas Duren	May 2026	Reels	Opening at Pondok Gede	TipTop	9,500	46	0.48%

Source: Processed Instagram performance reports.

The thematic pattern of high-reach content reveals three important elements: product experience, location information, and novelty. Testimonial and review content performed well because it presented product experience in a way that may be perceived as more credible and relatable. Location-based content also gained high attention because it provided practical information about where the product could be accessed. Store-opening content attracted high views because it communicated novelty and expansion.

These results are consistent with the literature on Instagram as a visual and experiential platform for culinary promotion. (J. Li et al., 2019; Rasty & Filieri, 2023) showed that social media marketing in casual dining settings can function as a lead-generation and engagement mechanism. Rasty and Filieri (2023) further emphasized that consumer engagement with restaurant brands on Instagram is shaped by brand knowledge, perceived enjoyment, and social interaction. The Gunsas Duren findings reflect these mechanisms because testimonial, review, and location-based content combine information, experience, and practical relevance.

However, the top-viewed reels had relatively low engagement rates. This indicates that reach-oriented content did not always encourage active participation. Store-opening information may have been useful for awareness, but it may not have offered enough emotional or interactive stimulus to encourage comments, shares, saves, or profile visits. This finding confirms the need to distinguish between informational reach and relational engagement. Content that seeks to build digital brand awareness should not only inform audiences but also encourage them to respond, remember, and interact.

Implications for Digital Brand Awareness

The findings demonstrate that digital brand awareness should be interpreted as a layered process. The first layer is exposure, represented by views. The second layer is audience response, represented by likes, comments, shares, saves or reposts, direct messages, profile visits, and follower growth. The third layer is brand association, which can be strengthened when exposure and interaction are supported by consistent visual identity, clear product messages, and memorable content themes.

The strong performance of Gunsas Duren shows that product-specific content can function as a driver of digital brand awareness. The account's high views and interactions indicate that audiences were more responsive to a clear and distinctive product identity. explains that brand awareness is one of the main dimensions of brand equity because it helps consumers recognize and consider a brand within a category. In this case, Gunsas Duren's content may help audiences recognize the durian product category associated with the Gunsas brand.

(Keller, 1993) customer-based brand equity perspective also helps explain the findings. Brand knowledge is built through associations in consumer memory. On Instagram, such associations may emerge from repeated visual exposure, product-specific cues, caption style, content format, and interaction patterns. Gunsas Duren appears to have stronger associative cues because its content is centered on a distinctive product. Gunsas Resto needs to strengthen its associative structure by consistently communicating restaurant ambience, menu identity, service experience, and customer value.

The results also support prior findings that social media marketing activities contribute to brand awareness and brand equity. (Godey et al., 2016) argued that social media marketing efforts influence brand equity and consumer behavior. (BILGİN, 2018) found that social media marketing contributes to brand awareness, brand image, and brand loyalty. The present study adds a local culinary business perspective by showing how actual Instagram analytics can be used to evaluate early-stage digital brand awareness.

Discussion in Relation to Culinary Instagram Marketing

The findings are consistent with the broader literature that positions Instagram as a strategic platform for culinary promotion. Instagram's visual logic allows restaurants to communicate sensory aspects of food, including texture, color, presentation, and consumption experience. (Bitakou et al., 2023) found that visual formats such as photos, videos, and reels influence engagement and consumer response. (Darmawan et al., 2024; Park & Namkung, 2022) also showed that Instagram marketing activities affect brand equity in the coffee industry. The current study supports these findings by showing that different content formats produced different patterns of exposure and engagement.

The high engagement performance of photo content reinforces the importance of product clarity and visual quality in food promotion. Studies on visual content and image quality suggest that high-quality visuals can enhance credibility and purchase intention (Darmawan et al., 2024; Ryu, 2024). Although this study did not directly measure credibility or purchase intention, the interaction performance of photo content indicates that visually clear product presentation can stimulate digital response.

Instagram performance should be interpreted with caution because it is influenced not only by content quality, but also by platform algorithms, posting time, hashtag use, possible paid boosts, and audience behavior. High views or engagement may reflect both the attractiveness of the content and the way Instagram distributes it to audiences. Therefore, the findings should be understood as platform-based performance patterns rather than direct evidence that content characteristics alone determine promotional effectiveness.

The high average views of reels show the strategic value of short-form video for expanding awareness. Nevertheless, the low weighted engagement rate of reels suggests that visibility alone is insufficient. Reels should be supported by narrative hooks, emotional cues, and explicit calls to action. For example, reels may invite audiences to comment on favorite menu items, save location information, share promotional announcements, or visit the profile for ordering details.

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The results also indicate the relevance of credibility-oriented content. The highest-viewed content included testimonial and review themes. (Aqilla & Chandra, 2023) explain that influencer-related content can influence purchase intention through brand image and customer engagement. (Arief et al., 2022) also show that employee influencers can help organizations build authentic relationships with audiences. Although this study did not examine influencers directly, the performance of testimonial and review content suggests that credibility, experience, and authentic voices may strengthen audience attention.

Managerial Implications

The findings provide several managerial implications for Gunsas Resto. First, reels should be used as a primary format for awareness expansion. Their high average views indicate that short-form video is suitable for introducing new menu items, store locations, product availability, and campaign announcements. Reels should be designed with a strong opening, clear product visuals, concise information, and a call to action.

Second, photo content should be maintained as an engagement-strengthening format. The high weighted engagement rate of photo content indicates that visually clear product images can generate stronger audience responses. Gunsas Resto should develop consistent visual standards for product photography, including lighting, composition, background, brand color, and caption tone.

Third, Gunsas Resto and Gunsas Duren should have different but connected content roles. Gunsas Duren can function as a product-awareness driver because it has a strong sensory appeal and high audience response. Gunsas Resto should function as the broader brand identity account by emphasizing restaurant ambience, menu diversity, service experience, customer stories, catering, coffee service, and the overall dining experience. This distinction can strengthen brand architecture and prevent message overlap.

Fourth, content evaluation should be conducted through a monthly analytics dashboard. The dashboard should include total views, average views, total interactions, weighted engagement rate, median engagement rate, profile visits, follower growth, and content performance by format. This data-driven approach is consistent with the direction of digital marketing research, which emphasizes measurable strategy, platform-specific evaluation, and continuous learning (Dwivedi et al., 2021; F. Li et al., 2021).

Theoretical Contribution

This study contributes to the literature on digital brand awareness by demonstrating the analytical value of Instagram performance data in evaluating promotional content within a local culinary business context. Previous studies on brand awareness have commonly relied on consumer surveys to measure recognition and recall. The present study does not replace survey-based measurement, but complements it by showing that exposure and engagement indicators can serve as early signals of digital brand awareness. Views represent the extent of audience exposure, while interactions indicate audience responses to brand-related content. These indicators provide an empirical basis for

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understanding how promotional content begins to shape brand visibility and audience involvement in digital environments.

The study also extends the social media marketing literature by distinguishing between exposure effectiveness and engagement effectiveness. Reels showed stronger performance in generating views, while photo-based content produced higher interaction. This distinction indicates that each Instagram format may serve a different communication function. Short-form videos are more suitable for expanding audience reach, whereas product-oriented photos are more effective in strengthening audience engagement. Promotional effectiveness therefore cannot be assessed through a single metric because content performance depends on the interaction between format, message clarity, product identity, and audience response.

The findings indicate that Instagram promotional effectiveness is shaped by the alignment between content format, brand objective, product appeal, and audience behavior. The strong performance of Gunsas Duren suggests that specific, visually appealing, and emotionally resonant product content can support digital brand awareness. The lower performance of Gunsas Resto indicates the need for stronger brand storytelling, clearer content positioning, and more consistent communication of the restaurant's broader identity. These findings provide a practical and theoretical basis for developing a measurable, differentiated, and brand-oriented Instagram content strategy for local culinary businesses.

Conclusion

This study examined the effectiveness of Instagram promotional content as an indicator of digital brand visibility and early-stage digital brand awareness at Gunsas Resto using social media analytics. The findings show that 117 valid Instagram posts generated 126,908 views and 7,339 interactions, with a weighted engagement rate of 5.78%. These results indicate that Instagram functions as a relevant promotional channel for producing measurable digital exposure and audience response, although the findings should be interpreted as early digital indicators rather than direct measures of consumer brand recall or recognition.

The account-based analysis showed that Gunsas Duren performed more strongly than Gunsas Resto, generating 105,129 views and 7,022 interactions compared with Gunsas Resto's 21,779 views and 317 interactions. This result suggests that product-focused content has stronger digital appeal than broader restaurant branding content. The distinctive sensory and emotional characteristics of durian-based products may make Gunsas Duren easier to communicate visually, while Gunsas Resto needs clearer content positioning and more consistent storytelling to strengthen its broader restaurant identity.

The content format analysis also demonstrates that different formats serve different promotional functions. Reels generated the highest average views, indicating their usefulness for expanding reach and attracting broader audience exposure. In contrast, photo-based content produced the highest weighted engagement rate, showing its strength in encouraging audience interaction and product recognition. Therefore, a balanced

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Instagram strategy should use Reels for awareness expansion and product-oriented photos for engagement strengthening.

From a practical perspective, Gunsas Resto should develop a more structured Instagram content strategy by aligning each content format with specific promotional objectives. Gunsas Duren can be positioned as a product-awareness driver, while Gunsas Resto should emphasize menu variety, restaurant ambience, customer experience, service quality, catering, and coffee services. Gunsas Resto should also implement a monthly social media analytics dashboard to monitor views, total interactions, engagement rate, profile visits, follower growth, and performance by content format. This routine evaluation can help identify effective content patterns, improve promotional planning, and support more data-driven decisions in managing digital brand visibility.

This study has several limitations. The analysis was limited to Instagram data and did not include other social media platforms, sales records, or direct consumer perception data. Digital brand awareness was measured through analytics indicators rather than direct measurement of brand recall and brand recognition. Future research should adopt a mixed-methods approach by combining social media analytics with consumer surveys, interviews, sales data, and cross-platform analysis. A follow-up survey among Instagram audiences could measure brand recall, brand recognition, purchase intention, and visitation intention to examine whether digital exposure and engagement are associated with actual consumer perceptions and behavioral intentions in the culinary sector.

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