

# **Museum TikToks and their Influence on Visitors' Destination Image Perception:**

How does the production and consumption of  
TikTok videos affect museum destination image representation?

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### **ABSTRACT**

The following research examines how tourist destination images are projected through art exhibition and art museum TikTok short videos, and how such depictions are perceived and interpreted by museum audiences. So far, existing destination image research concerning destination image creation on social media platforms has predominantly focused on social media platforms that allow textual or pictorial posts. However, with the recent arrival of social media platforms that operate purely on short video content, there is a need to investigate how this format impacts the creation of destination images from both a production and consumption perspective. Furthermore, tourist destination image research has mainly highlighted the official travel-related platforms within the tourism industry, and little attention has been paid to less-obvious organizations that are also part of the tourism sector, such as museums. The gathering of data was accomplished through a mixed-method approach of online content analysis in the form of TikTok short video analysis, and semi-structured interviews with museum professionals and museum visitors. The results of the content analysis reveal that museum TikToks are composed of overlapping elements, including similar content, attention to cinematography, intentional text additions, and specific TikTok-related features. From the analysis of the interviews, it was concluded that the production side uses TikTok as a successful marketing tool. While destination images were deliberately manipulated through cinematographic aspects, the overall production of destination images was authentic to the offline experience. From the consumer perspective, audiences were positively engaged with the destination images projected through the museum TikToks, demonstrating changed perceptions and increased willingness to travel. Overall, there was more active viewer engagement amongst younger participants who were familiar with TikTok trends. The combination of the short-video format and the inclusion of human interaction with the destinations were most influential in changing tourist destination images. Finally, this thesis has found that the destination image projection on TikTok differs from other social media platforms because content providers can use the specific TikTok features to connect to online communities that exist within the borders of the social media app, catering their content to these audiences and communicating with them on an equal level. Simultaneously, museums can provide and democratize art and history knowledge for younger TikTok audiences and people who are not able to visit museums.

**KEYWORDS:** tourist destination image, social media, TikTok, museums, audience perception

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## 1. Introduction

The world we live in today cannot be imagined without the inclusion of digital tools such as smartphones and social media. The digital era has infiltrated almost every part of our societal fabric, whether it is casually Face-timing from different corners of the earth or using chat GPT as a personal assistant. The digital era has had an immense influence, not only on how we operate in everyday life but also on how we consume and perceive things. Especially social media platforms like Instagram and Facebook seem to have played a huge part in altering people's perceptions and visual representations of countless things, from beauty to food to traveling (Xiang & Gretzel, 2010; Patricia et al., 2020). Naturally, such visual representations consciously and subconsciously form images in the minds of the viewer. For instance, travel images on Instagram produce certain expectations and predetermined views of how to 'gaze' upon a destination (Patricia, 2020). Online images can constitute multiple categories of experiences that establish media engagement, such as information, interaction, identification, transportation and pastime (Voorveld, 2018). The influence of visual representation within travel has become so significant that it is a well-researched phenomenon within tourism, marketing, and media studies. This does not come as a surprise, as tourism is a predominantly visual experience and images are significant factors in destination marketing (MacKay & Fesenmaier, 1997; Garrod, 2008, as cited in Maouni, 2020).

The images that influence the perception, ideas, and behavior of potential tourists are also referred to as 'tourist destination images', and they are powerful destination marketing tools for cultural institutions and the tourism industry (Li et al., 2020). While the relations between destination images and content marketing have been researched from the tourist industry perspective, there is still insufficient attention towards the cultural institutions that also attract millions of international tourists each year (Suh, 2022). An essential market that represents the literal synthesis of image representation and tourism is the art museum industry. Attracting tourists from all over the world, art museums and exhibits play a big part in the tourism industry. However, especially those exhibiting classical art like 17th-century oil paintings are usually considered high-brow or stuck in time, meaning that they are often not associated with social media presence (Mason & McCarthy, 2006). Nevertheless, in recent years, classical art museums and exhibits have slowly started to implement social media advertising in their marketing strategies to target tourists and are slowly catching up with contemporary social media apps. This social media advertising refers to placing either textual, pictorial, or short video ads on social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, or YouTube. In comparison to traditional mass media advertising, they have a more informative, interactive, and communicative nature towards their customers, which makes them more engaging (Alalwan, 2018).

Given that social media engagement is very relevant and influential nowadays, examining art museums and exhibition participation on popular social media platforms renders the ideal subject for this research. This thesis will take the TikTok accounts of three Dutch art museums/exhibitions, (1)Rijksmuseum, (2)Moco Museum, and (3)VincentmeetsRembrandt immersive art exhibition, as well as interviews with museum visitors and professionals as case studies to analyze the production and consumption of destination images on social media.

## 1.1 Problem Formulation

### 1.1.1 Academic Relevance

Although the concept of destination image has already been thoroughly studied within the tourism field (Chon, 1990; Chon, 1991; Jenkins, 1999; Choi, 2007; Schwaighofer, 2014), it has thus far only gathered limited consideration within the context of social media representation. Most research focuses on websites that operate through image or text-based content, such as Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram (Choi et al., 2007; Xiang & Gretzel, 2010, Garay & Cànoves, 2017; Maouni, 2020; Patricia et al., 2020; Maouni, 2020). Specifically regarding newer, under-researched social media platforms, it is important to continue investigating how these visual representations influence tourist destination images, what tools content creators use to create destination images, and how audiences react to and reflect on the changing interaction between museums and social media presence. As TikTok is currently one of the fastest-growing online content-sharing platforms, it is the ideal case study to investigate modern destination representations (Choudhary et al., 2020). Currently, research concerning TikTok videos in relation to tourist experiences is still superficial, and present debates surrounding the TikTok platform primarily center around other aspects, such as its influence on the spread of medical knowledge, profit mode, and operation mode (Chenchen et al., 2020, p.116; Basch et al., 2022; Du et al., 2022; McCashin & Murphy, 2023). Given the increasing power of social media marketing, there is a need to examine the explicit actors and components that dominate within these social media platforms and discover how these new players influence social media communities (Garay & Cànoves, 2017, p. 36).

On an operational level, past research demonstrates that qualitative research methods are utilized very scarcely, and thus deserve further exploration (Garay, 2019; Chenchen et al., 2020; Nautiyal et al., 2022). Adopting a qualitative approach within this field is beneficial because it provides a more contextual perspective on the image-creation motivations and processes of museum marketing departments, subjective meaning-making between images and viewers, as well as unraveling how visitors make sense of visual representations. Furthermore, what is lacking in current debates surrounding TikTok and destination image is a detailed content analysis of TikTok video features. Thus far, articles have mainly highlighted food or health videos and stereotypical tourist-related imagery such

as sunsets and beaches (Li et al., 2020; Zhang & Kler, 2020; Basch et al., 2022; McCashin & Murphy, 2023). However, other, and sometimes overlooked tourist attractions such as art museums have also begun to engage with short video advertising (Camarero, 2011; Chen et al., 2019, Yang & Zhang, 2022). Scholars have mainly researched the implementation of social media networks within museums from a top-down approach, focusing on the digitization process of cultural heritage itself and highlighting social media use for financial purposes (Navarrete, 2013; Fredheim, 2020; Suh, 2022). Therefore, there is still room for exploring the social media engagement of museums from a bottom-up angle. On assessing the value of museums, Falk (2021a) stated: “What is needed is not a measure of value that makes sense to museum professionals but rather a precise and persuasive accounting of the value of museum experiences that rings true to nonprofessionals, to users and would-be users” (p. 8). The same is necessary for accounting the influence of popular social media platforms on museum audiences. Social media is often overlooked when discussing the interaction between cultural institutions and tourists. However, for some audiences, it is an important step in their decision-making process (Maouni, 2020). Given that active social media engagement relies on successful communication between audiences and content, it is crucial to understand the experiences and interactions of these social media audiences (Kidd, 2010). Nevertheless, existing studies have based their findings on frequency factors, such as the number of likes and posts, and few researchers have delved deeper into the actual content depicted on social media, which is an important factor to consider when looking at audience motivation (Romolini, 2020; Khan, 2022; Lau, 2022).

Museum engagement with TikTok is worth studying not just because it is a recent and new phenomenon, but also because it offers insight into the contemporary, cultural, societal, and technological changes that impact the experiences and perceptions of museum audiences, which are often neglected in, or excluded from academic discourse (Anderson, 2019, p. 91). It is interesting to analyze how art museums and exhibitions use TikTok as a promotional tool, especially considering the unique format of the platform, which includes short videos that are presented to individuals through a smart algorithm that tailors content to their indicated preferences and previously liked content (Anderson, 2020, as cited in McCashin & Murphy, 2023, p.280). As the operational mode of short video content differs from other social media platforms such as Instagram, which operate on primarily picture-based content, the projection and perception of destination images may be influenced accordingly. Therefore, this research is relevant by uncovering how the visual representation of art exhibitions and museums influences the destination images of visitors.

### 1.1.2 Societal Relevance

Why study the tourist destination image production and consumption? As Jenkins (1999) argued, it provides insight into the decision-making behavior of potential tourists and the satisfaction levels of tourist experiences, which is not only interesting for researchers concerned with tourist destination images, but also for the people in charge of marketing within tourist organizations (Jenkins, 1999, p. 1). Just like society, marketing strategies need to constantly be re-evaluated in light of the evolving tourist behaviors (Jenkins, 1999, p.13). This means that there is a constant need to investigate whether, and more importantly *how* the changing destination advertisement strategies are influencing the perception of tourists. Moreover, this thesis is valuable for social media content creators looking to increase their following and influence, as the findings reveal which video aspects viewers notice and relate to the most.

### 1.1.3 Research Question

It is my opinion that tourists' authentic experiences and perceptions of cultural institutions are equally as valuable and deserving of scrutinization as the voices of museum professionals. Museums are institutions with public-facing missions, meaning they aim to convince the public opinion of the meaningful benefits that result from investing in and consuming arts and culture (Anderson, 2019, p.92). As such, museum audiences are irreversibly linked to the impact and success of museums. Therefore, mapping and understanding the audience and the audience experience matters as it both justifies the institution's ongoing presence and the reason for public and financial support (Anderson, 2019). This research will investigate both museum audiences' experiences and impressions and examine whether the public gained the benefits the museum professionals hoped they would from social media advertising (Falk 2021b, p. 15-16).

Taking the previous points into consideration, this research addresses the question of "*How does the production and consumption of TikTok videos affect museum destination image representation?*" through the following sub-questions:

1. What are the elements that make up the content of museum TikToks?
2. Why are museum professionals engaging with TikTok?
3. What are the underlying representation goals that museum content creators want to convey through their videos?
4. How do museum visitors react to and perceive museum TikToks?

With these questions, I expect to gain insight that will aim to add to the discourse surrounding modern methods of attracting tourists, as well as reveal whether the application of such methods has significant effects on visitor numbers and visitors themselves.

## 1.2 Chapter Overview

This research is divided into five main parts, starting with the introduction to the research topic, the problem formulation, and stating the research question. The second part introduces existing literature on tourist destination image, destination images on social media, social media engagement by museums, museum audience research, museum visitor motivations, and TikTok research. The methodology will follow the literature review, where the research design will be explained in detail, as well as the justification for using qualitative research in the form of content analysis and semi-structured interviews. The fourth part includes the analysis of the completed research, in which the findings will be presented accordingly and aligned with the theoretical framework. This chapter is divided into discussing the online content analysis and examining the semi-structured interviews. The thesis concludes by answering the research question and presenting a final discussion on the results, as well as offering an explanation of how the findings contribute to the research fields of tourism and museums and proposing directions for future research. These four sub-questions will be answered through the analysis of the results, while the main question will be discussed in the conclusion section.

## 2. Theoretical Framework

The following literature review is divided into three parts. The first part discusses the concept of destination image and contextualizes it within the tourism and online media field. The second part examines the changing marketing strategies of museums through the implementation of social media networks. In the third part, museum audience research that explains people's decisions to visit museums and visitor experiences is discussed. On one hand, the present literature review showcases the growing role of social media in constructing destination images, how new social media platforms such as TikTok impact and change the formation of destination images, and how museums can use the power of social media advertising to influence potential travel motivation, as well as gather crucial information about museum audiences. On the other hand, the literature review reveals an underdeveloped comprehension of digital service platform usage amongst museums and the influence of contemporary social media platforms on museum audiences, as well as exposing the insufficient application of in-depth qualitative research.

### 2.1 Defining the Destination Image

A picture is worth a thousand words, that is how the well-familiar saying goes. Indeed, a single image's power can evoke a lavish novel's combined effect. An image can be referred to as the sum of a person's beliefs, ideas, and impressions of a destination (Crompton, 1979, p.18). The relationship between images and perceptions is of such a complex nature that it can be studied through various disciplines. From a



sociological perspective, the correlation between imagery and decision-making has gathered significant attention from scholars. Specifically, within the context of travel, decision-makers tend to rely on images when envisioning and planning their travel (Crompton, 1979, p.18; Chon, 1990). In this case, the images that trigger the travel motivation are referred to as ‘destination images’ (Mak, 2017, p. 291). The term destination image builds upon Crompton’s definition by adding the value of a cause-effect relationship; meaning that the sum of beliefs, ideas, and impressions of a destination is based on information processing from multiple sources over time (Choi et al., 2007, p. 119). In the past, researchers have tried to theorize destination image more clearly, however, as Tasci and Gartner (2007) concluded in their research on the various conceptualizations of destination image, an actual comprehensive definition seemed to be lacking due to the multidimensional nature of destination images (p.423). Therefore, destination image can be defined as more of an umbrella term and applied across multiple fields of research.

When destination image is contextualized within the tourism field, the decision-makers that are influenced by images are most like the tourists, hence, the ‘destination image’ turns into the ‘tourist destination image’. The tourist destination image is referred to as “the sum of all the ideas (such as belief, opinion, and evaluation) generated by tourists in the tourist destination” (Li et al., 2020, p. 2). Sun et al. (2021) differentiated two types of tourist destination images; the projected and the perceived destination image (Sun et al., 2021, p.2). The projected image refers to “the image that a destination intends to create in the mind of tourists through tourism marketing activities”, while the perceived image indicates “the understanding and impression of the destination formed by tourists” (Kotler et al., 1993, as cited in Sun et al., 2021, p.2). The term tourist destination image has been used in various contexts over the past years, for instance, in relation to the destination images projected by tourism promoters, the stereotypical image of destinations, and the destination images held by individuals (Jenkins, 1999, p.1). However, some scholars noticed an unequal distribution between the research on projected and perceived destination images within the academic research field of tourism (Sun et al., 2021). This thesis will highlight both forms of tourist destination images in order to contribute towards more equal distribution and obtain a more in-depth perspective on the creation of destination images.

## 2.2 Tourist Destination Images on Social Media Networks

Before the rise of the digital era, tourist destination image was mostly created through tourist-targeted operations, such as travel agencies, marketing departments, travel websites, brochures, or written travel blogs and books. But the development of the internet and online communication tools created a boom in social media websites that center around “unfiltered” image sharing and connecting people around the world (Reyna et al., 2018). This development is also referred to as *Web 2.0* (Warren & Leitch, 2012).

Web 2.0 not only initiated the overwhelming accessibility to online information but also catalyzed a new form of sharing travel experiences. Some scholars dubbed this phenomenon ‘Travel 2.0’, as it involved a “high level of social interaction and exchange of travel-related content between tourists on the Internet” (Leung, Lee, & Law, 2012, as cited in Mak, 2017, p. 280). The phenomenon of sharing online content on social media platforms was not only beneficial for travel organizations, but social media platforms also benefited from this heightened activity through a so-called ‘network effect’ (Verdegem, 2021, p.302). In the network effect, the value of a network is determined by its size, which means that an increase in active participants attracts other people, creating an accelerated circle that constantly feeds on content sharing and production (Verdegem, 2021, p.302).

Through the examination of past literature, it is clear that researchers have acknowledged the importance of the Internet as an image-formation agent (Choi et al., 2007; Tasci & Gartner, 2007; Dwivedi, 2009; Kim et al., 2014; Iglesias-Sánchez et al., 2020; Nautiyal et al., 2022; Du et al., 2022). While earlier research mainly focused on conceptualizing destination images, later studies highlighted how destination images were created on various online platforms. Garay & Cànoves compared the tourist destination image creation on the media website Tripadvisor with the official website of the Destination Management Organization in order to highlight the differences between catered marketing and subjective representation (2017). Similarly, through a comparative study between traveler-generated and NTO (National Tourism Organization) social media content, Sun et al. (2021) found that tourists pay more attention to exhibiting cognitive attributes in social media content, for instance, tourist attractions, while NTOs are more preoccupied with showcasing features like culture, art, history, tourism environment, tourist leisure and recreations, and general infrastructure (Sun et al., 2021, p.11). In another article, Garay (2019) also examined Twitter hashtags to identify the stakeholders in the image formation process of Spain and found that attributes like tourism offers and products, landscapes, gastronomy, and climate were most likely to effectively influence viewers’ destination images of Spain.

The utilization of quantitative Twitter hashtag analysis appeared to be a popular method among scholars, Nautiyal et al. (2022) also explored the different communication techniques and destination image projections through Twitter hashtags. Their findings not only confirmed previous notions on how social media platforms such as Twitter or TripAdvisor influence the perceived destination image but also provided knowledge about how these websites create a destination image. On Twitter, for instance, destination images were created and, in a way, gatekept by a few popular destination characteristics that were repeatedly included in hashtags to promote a certain destination image (Nautiyal et al., 2022). Kuhzad and Ghasemi (2019) reviewed the pictorial destination image creation of Portugal through Instagram posts and found that images featuring nature, food, and drinks had the most impact on people’s engagement.

While research concerning social media accounts such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter exposes the influence of static information sources (text and image), another medium on social media platforms has entered the field and attracted academic attention: short videos. In the early 2000s, before the further development of mobile and media technology, short videos were a popular tool for advertising thanks to their ability to successfully attract people's attention, the advantages of easy controllability, and low investment and cost (Chenchen, 2020, p.116). Short videos differ from images because they combine technological and artistic elements to create more artistic and immersive projections (Chenchen et al., 2020, p. 119). These elements combined produce the ideal climate for effective visual storytelling, which is why the short video format is extremely effective in shaping destination images and increasing the number of visits (Du et al., 2022, p. 3420; Zuo et al., 2023). Even more so than pictures, videos are advantageous for destination marketers because they have an "enormous capacity to portray the destination's culture, people, and identity in a compelling manner" (Yan & Santon, 2009, as cited in Zuo, 2023, p. 1). For companies, industries, and the public sector, short videos are a strategic form of promotion as they can be applied by targeting their market's favorite content, thus establishing emotional connections and creating more opportunities for interaction with potential visitors (Chenchen et al., 2020, p. 116).

The above-discussed literature predominantly highlights how official travel organizations depict popular tourist destinations through social media platforms, utilizing picture and textual formats. In doing so, scholars acknowledged the differences in destination image projection through various platforms, for instance, image creation on Instagram was dominated by images while Twitter relied more on hashtags. However, most of these findings do not cover tourist destination image creation through short videos, nor do they pay attention to organizations that don't typically fall under the "tourism" label, but are nonetheless part of the tourism industry, organizations like museums for instance. This thesis will examine a social media platform that operates purely on short video content, seeking to shed light on the difference between destination image creation through image and video format as well as representing organizations that may inevitably be linked to the tourism industry.

### 2.3 Museums and Social Media Engagement

The implementation of digital platforms for the promotion of destinations is not just visible within the public tourism sector. Private and non-profit organizations have also incorporated technology into their marketing strategies and started participating in social media networks, which allows them to reach new markets or create new expectations, and interests and enhance the visitor experiences (Camarero, 2011, p. 250, Massari et al., 2022). Especially since the Covid-19 pandemic, when all direct contact was extremely limited and many organizations were forced to mobilize online communication tools, non-

profit organizations' presence on social media platforms grew (Kist, 2020). The utilization of online communication during and since the pandemic has led to "a change in museums' investment in digital content, engagement, and infrastructure, raising important questions about the role of social media and the museum" (Kist, 2020, p. 347) Since this thesis focuses on social media interaction between museums and their visitors, the following section discusses research concerning these changing marketing strategies within the museum sector.

In the past years, scholars studying the changes within the museum sector have noticed how tourism has become a core product of museums and, accordingly, they have paid special attention to the digitization and the implementation of smart tourism technologies in museums (Yang & Zhang, 2022; Suh, 2022). According to the research, these non-profit organizations have shifted their advertising strategies to online platforms not only as a tool for fundraising, advocacy, and building relationships with important stakeholders but also in order to adapt to the changing tourism behaviors and expectations and to improve the visitor experience (Yang & Zhang, 2022, p. 1012; Suh, 2022, p.272). While this attention to tourist expectations contradicts the opinion of scholars who argue that institutions like museums are less concerned about 'appealing to tourist's tastes', the increased presence of museums on social media websites indicates a desire or potential need to be active within these modern communication platforms that utilized by many tourists nowadays (Richards, 2020, as cited in Yang & Zhang, p.1011). Social media platforms enable museums to cultivate contact with the audience, thereby attracting additional visitors such as younger audiences who are accustomed to social media engagement (Toural-Bran et al., 2022, as cited in Massari et al., 2022, section "Towards a Conceptualization," para. 2). The use of social media could furthermore improve the communication between organizations and local communities and actively involve them in sustainable development projects (Massari et al., 2022, section "Towards a Conceptualization," para. 2). According to Massari et al. (2022), digital platforms can be described as "valuable interfaces capable of enabling interactions and strengthening the role of the museum as an 'interaction platform' at the heart of destination development" (section Introduction, para. 3). In other words, online social media platforms are able to transform destination development by focusing on communication, interaction, and engagement with tourists.

According to Kidd (2010), by being active on social media, museums respond to the perceived demand/social pressure for different forms of engagement and explore what this engagement represents for audience development, marketing, and "proving" vitality, diversity, and relevance (Kidd, 2010, p. 65). While most of the research presented the implementation of online communication tools in museums as a positive or fruitful development, others voiced their concern about the social media use of museums. Some people within the museum community believe that social media engagement has created "dramatic changes in the ways knowledge is shared, created, and co-created, as well as in the ways that visitors interact not only with the museum but also with each other (Camarero, 2011; Massari

et al., 2022; Kidd, 2010, p. 65). However speculative such claims may be, the point that communication and knowledge sharing on social media is achieved through different formats, and the implications and challenges that these formats bring along is a well-supported one. For instance, another article by the same author refers to the ethical issues that come paired with social media use (Kidd, 2019). In this article, it is pointed out that museum's social media websites often become places of memorialization, and the moderation of such content becomes an issue when the majority of those who curate social media content are predominantly junior members of the staff, whose judgments "can be ambiguous at best" (Kidd, 2019, p. 197). In order for museums to successfully participate in this new era of communicating with visitors, Kidd (2010) advocates for understanding and framing the use of social media, because misunderstandings can lead to frustration, alienation, or appropriation (p. 73) Understanding frameworks of different social media platforms provides a tool for researchers to grasp the notion of "experience", to understand how online experiences extend or complement "offline" museums (Kidd, 2010, p.73).

The above-mentioned articles all recognize the lack of exploration into digital service platform usage amongst museums and thus aim to shed light on some of the practices and practical implications. However, their research misses important dimensions of museums' social media engagement, which are necessary to get a more complete picture of the phenomenon. Yang and Zhang's (2022) research focused more on digital platforms in the form of online exhibitions and virtual reality use inside the museum, and barely touched upon museum activity on social media platforms. While they concluded that 'service scapes' (meaning platforms that provide services) such as exhibitions and virtual reality can improve the visitor experience, I argue that social media platforms can also be included in these crucial service scapes that impact consumers and are therefore deserving of more attention (Yang & Zhang, 2022, p. 1012). Suh's research did provide more insight into social media; however, it approached the financial perspective and examined the communication tools to reach stakeholders, thus providing some practical implications that illustrated how social media could improve the communication of organizations (Suh, 2022, p. 272). Massari et al. (2022) examined the digital adoption inside museums, only briefly mentioning social media as an enhancer of the relational dynamics within the destination. Up until this point very few museum researchers have provided an in-depth analysis of museum destination image creation on individual social media platforms, let alone include the promotion on newer platforms such as TikTok. The present research aims to fill the research gap by zooming in on a specific social media platform and diving deeper into the audience's perspective.

## 2.4 Museum Audiences

For museums that are planning to implement social media networks or have already begun integrating social media into their marketing strategies, understanding how audiences themselves experience, encourage, and navigate social media engagement is crucial to the success of social media activity (Kidd, 2010, p. 72). In order to do that, it is necessary to carry out research into museum audiences. The impulse to comprehend and react to visitor behavior has been a great driving force within museums since the mid-20th century (Anderson, 2019, p.81). Museum audience research used to be occupied by the singular question: “Why do people visit museums?”. Accordingly, scholars developed theories and models to showcase overlapping motivational factors that determined tourists’ traveling behaviors. Most of these factors were situationally contingent, meaning the motivation to travel was dependent on both the museum setting and the immediacy of the visitor’s social settings (Prentice et al., 1997, p.47). Considering a period when most modern technology, such as smartphones, was not present yet, it is no surprise that museum visitors were motivated by more personal or social factors: “Visitors seek social or recreational experiences from their visit to a museum; for satisfying their general interest and curiosity, for informal education and for social interaction” (Prentice et al., 1997, p.48). Evidently, such studies were rather one-dimensional and did not provide insight into various other dimensions that could influence visitor motivation. As Hanquinet (2013) indicated, museum studies failed to propose a way to fully understand the meaning-making processes by only focusing on the ways visitors made sense of their immediate experiences. She argued that past research conceptualized visitors as disconnected from their social lives, failing to relate to other aspects beyond the museum that may impact the relationship between audiences and museums (p.16).

Cotter et al. (2022) also provided further insight into museum visit motivations by focusing on the entirety of the visit, not just the travel motivations or what visitors took away from their visit. Their study expanded on the different types of museum visitors by considering how different types of institutions attract visitors with different motivations (Falk, 2016, as cited in Cotter et al., 2022). According to their findings, art museums tend to attract ‘explorers’, visitors that are driven by curiosity and interest to explore (Cotter et al., 2022, p.291). Since curiosity-inspired motivations most commonly apply to art museum visitors, the authors acknowledged the likeliness that people view art museums as “institutions that allow visitors to satisfy their curiosities and interests” (Cotter et al., 2022, p.291). Despite this knowledge, they noted that the ways in which art museums may appeal to visitors with other identity-related motivations might not be as obvious, which is why they suggested further exploration of museum offerings that can appeal to people with alternative motivations.

In today’s digital era, media convergence has enabled museum communication to occur online, through social media platforms and official websites, thereby directly placing museums in the same communication space as other types of media (Sun, 2014, as cited in Anderson, 2019, p.82). While the

level of museum engagement with social media platforms is still very limited compared to the activity of other sectors on social media, researchers have found that the museum's social media use does impact visitor engagement to a certain extent. In their article, Romolini et al. (2020) described participation on digital platforms as either passive or active. Passive participation refers to solely browsing institutional websites to get information about onsite experiences, not contributing to online content sharing and communicating experiences to other visitors. Active participation means that visitors are very engaged with social media and contribute by creating and sharing content. For the successful development of a digital environment that appeals to people, the authors highlighted the crucial nature of converting passive members to active participants (Kang et al., 2014, as cited in Romolini et al., 2020, p. 39). However, despite the growing consciousness of the important role social media can have in creating successful relationships between online communities and organizations, museums exhibit low publication frequencies and little interaction between museums and users (Romolini et al., 2020, p. 46-47). The authors determined that these findings echoed previous studies regarding museums and social media use and concluded that museums use social media as “unidirectional tools, with a limited level of interaction” (Romolini et al., 2020, p.47).

While this thesis recognizes that museum presence on popular social media platforms is still scarce, it questions Romolini's conclusion about the low level of engagement and interaction. Since previous museum TikTok research papers examined only the frequency of posts, the number of likes, and the number of comments, these findings say little about hidden engagement between audience and content, which cannot be interpreted from numbers. For instance, what about the audience's personal thoughts and reactions to certain posts? It was noticeable that the discussed museum audience research mainly focused on profiling the visitors to determine visitor motivations. However, few of the present studies highlighted the actual social media content of museums, nor did they focus on what the content was depicting and how these depictions influenced the audience. In order to expand the picture about potential motivational factors, it is important to delve deeper into social media and look beyond qualitative data like numbers and likes, analyze the actual content that is presented to social media users, and discover their reactions, interpretations, and takeaways.

## 2.5 TikTok as a new Marketing Platform

Within this new market of image-formation agents, one player has established itself as the secret ace: the social media app TikTok. Unlike other social media platforms, TikTok is a highly unique video-based app with “distinct technical structures and unparalleled user adoption, thereby making it a specific online network wherein imitation and memetic features further accelerate its diverse user interactivity” (Zulli & Zulli, 2020, as cited in McCashin & Murphy, 2023, p.280). TikTok provides a constant stream of sharing and consuming short videos by allowing its users to create short videos of approximately one minute; using a variety of filters, music, and lip-syncing templates (Anderson, 2020, as cited in

McCashin & Murphy, 2023, p.280). One aspect that stands out for TikTok is its uniquely designed algorithm, which guarantees that the supply of content is always based on individuals' previously liked content and indicated preferences (Anderson, 2020, as cited in McCashin & Murphy, 2023).

Aligning with other social media research, scholars have also identified TikTok's impacts on destination image projection and perception. Chenchen et al. (2020), found that the impact of TikTok videos on users' destination image greatly influenced the tourism intention and perception of architecture and food (p. 118). Li et al. (2020) also noticed this increased effect of TikTok videos on destination images in their research concerning food-inspired TikTok shorts. According to their results, short food videos have increased potential tourists' attention to the destination image through audio-visual sensory experience (Li et al., 2020, p. 6). Other research explored the role of TikTok in producing alternate destination images for the viewers, by using frequency analysis of video captions or video attributes to determine the main projected/alternative destination images of a destination (Zhang & Kler, 2020). Noticeably, the articles concerning TikTok place great emphasis on the positive effects of the short videos on viewers' destination image. However, this raises the question of what negative effects are produced in return. It has already been acknowledged in the past that internet utilization can have a negative effect on tourists due to possible information overload, making it less likely that people travel to a destination (Frías et al., 2008). As TikTok is highly accessible in nature, with both its ready-to-use smartphone application and availability of videos of users all over the world, the question is whether this over-accessibility of content can impact viewers to become desensitized to the content, making it harder for organizations and content creators to appeal to users. The availability of global content could even result in the loss of creativity and uniqueness of content creators copying each other's ideas and creating easy-to-replicate formulas for "attractive content".

The discussed literature within the theoretical frameworks demonstrates how, with so many varying social media platforms nowadays, there is a need to examine the explicit actors and components that dominate the destination image production in these specific platforms (Garay & Cànoves, 2017, p. 36). While articles concerning the new social media platform have slowly increased in the past two years, research concerning TikTok videos in relation to tourist destination image creation is still underdeveloped, and present debates surrounding TikTok short videos primarily center around their profit and operation mode, or how the platform has become a source for health information for adolescent viewers (Chenchen et al., 2020; Du et al., 2022; Basch et al., 2022; McCashin & Murphy, 2023). Furthermore, it is noticeable that the majority of literature uses a quantitative approach to research destination images on social media accounts. Garay (2019), Chenchen et al. (2020), and Nautiyal et al. (2022) were a few of the studies that utilized qualitative methodological approaches in their research. However, the number of quantitative approaches in the tourist destination image research field is still extremely dominating at present. This imbalance advocates the need to apply more qualitative methods to analyze precisely how different online social media platforms project destination images and how



they differ between the various platforms. What also appears to be lacking in current debates surrounding TikTok and destination image is the analysis of a variety of video content. Thus far, articles surrounding social media and destination images have mainly highlighted food videos or stereotypical tourist-related imagery such as sunsets and beaches (Li et al., 2020; Zhang & Kler, 2020).

Other tourist attractions such as museums have also been engaging with short videos as a promotional tool in attracting more tourists (Chen et al. 2019). Only recently have scholars started paying attention to the role of TikTok as a platform for museum heritage promotion (Khan, 2022; Lau, 2022). Their research approaches a more exploratory analysis of content posted on official museum accounts, finding that TikTok is mostly used as an educational tool or as “infotainment”- a combination of information and entertainment (Khan, 2022; Lau, 2022, p. 118). However, despite providing more insight into actual TikTok content, the papers were not very transparent on how they obtained their results and excluded audience perceptions, making it unclear how certain conclusions were drawn and providing an incomplete picture of the projection and perception of museum TikToks (Lau, 2022). While the present research draws inspiration from this existing museum TikTok research; it aims to offer more knowledge by providing methodological transparency, expanding on the actual content of the videos, gathering museum professional motivations behind engaging with the TikTok platform, and investigating museum visitor’s reactions to and engagement with museum TikToks.

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1 Research design

This paper relied on a philosophical research method in the form of a phenomenological approach in order to examine how museum audiences react to the TikTok videos of museum TikTok accounts. Phenomenology seeks to understand the relational structure of experience as they present themselves to us, as conscious human beings (Dibley et al., 2020, p. 4; Engelland, 2020, p.6). It studies appearance beyond the surface level and connects the appearance of things to the way that people experience those things (Engelland, 2020, p.3). The deciphering of experiences allows researchers to present their arguments with grounded evidence, rather than assumptions (Ibid.). Because phenomenology concerns itself with exploring subjective experiences and meaning-formation, it relies on description and interpretation to present evidence (Dibley et al., 2020, p.6). This approach was also used by Du et al. (2022) in their research concerning TikTok and destination image and it enabled them to gather valuable insight into the subjects’ perspectives, which in turn, helped the researchers understand “the lived experiences of consuming, producing, and sharing TikTok videos” (p. 3415). The phenomenological

approach was adopted by the current study as it also focuses on the consumption, creation, and lived experiences of TikTok videos.

In order to obtain an in-depth perspective on how museum TikTok videos impact the destination image and experience of museum visitors, this thesis made use of a mixed methods approach, combining online content analysis and semi-structured interviews. This combined-method approach was chosen because “empirical phenomenology considers verbal interaction as central to understanding the meaning of a particular phenomenon and it encourages researchers to use combined methods to generate a complete picture of the phenomenon” (Du et al., 2022, p. 3415). The addition of in-depth interviews to the content analysis allowed for a more contextual understanding of how the various elements of video advertising communicate certain images to its viewers and elaborate how visitors make sense of things that are communicated to them through social media video content.

### 3.2 Sampling and data collection

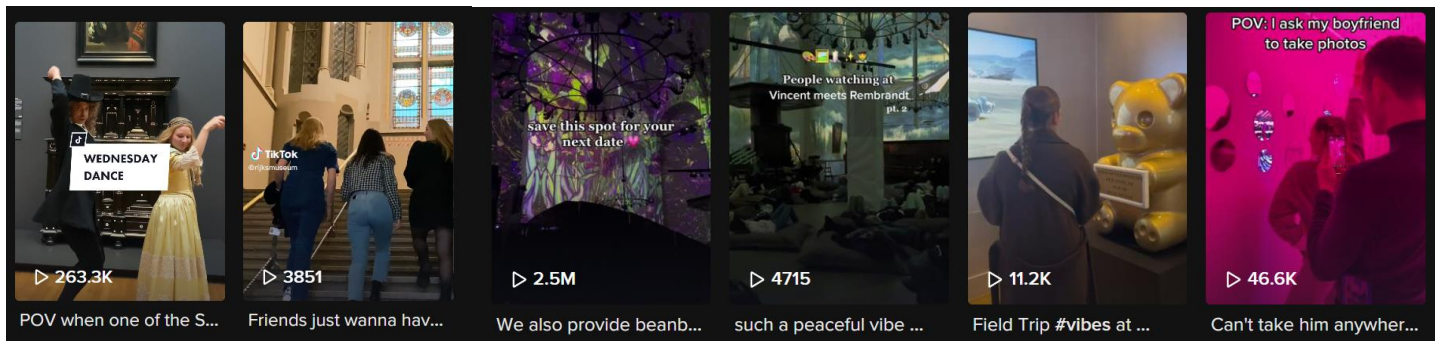
The online content data was gathered through the TikTok accounts of three Dutch art institutions located in Amsterdam: the Rijksmuseum, the Moco Museum, and the VincentmeetsRembrandt (hereafter “VmR”) immersive art exhibition. Given the incomplete picture of art museum visitor motivations, this study chose to explore three art-based operations that embody different branches within the art exhibition world (Cotter et al., 2022). The Rijksmuseum represents the classical idea of a high-brow art institution, the Moco Museum represents a modern art museum, and the VmR exhibition represents the commixture of classical art and modern technology. This thesis wanted to uncover an in-depth look at the creation of destination images within art museum TikToks, therefore, the deliberate selection of three tourist art attractions would allow for a multidimensional perspective on art museum TikToks. These accounts were also chosen based on availability; this research concerns TikTok accounts of Dutch art museums and exhibitions, therefore only art institutions that possessed an active TikTok account and showed a high posting frequency were taken into consideration. Furthermore, a reasonable number of samples was necessary to properly identify patterns within the videos, therefore, only TikTok accounts with 20 TikToks or more were chosen. After careful consideration of all the TikTok videos present on each of the TikTok accounts, a selection of videos was chosen that represented the majority of video content on the accounts. In other words, if for example, a TikTok account had over 20 videos concerning background information about paintings, one or two of such videos were selected for the online content analysis. The final selection of gathered online content consisted of 50 videos from the Rijksmuseum, 30 videos from the Moco Museum, and 20 videos from the VincentmeetsRembrandt exhibition, accumulating into a combined sample size of 100 TikTok videos. The length of the videos varied from 15 seconds to two minutes.

The interviews were conducted with both professionals and tourists. Considering both sides allowed for a deeper interpretation of the destination image created by museums, as interviews can reveal the subjective viewpoints of both the museum's desired image and the viewer's obtained image (Flick, 2009, p.153). The interviews with professionals were conducted in order to gain insight into the projection and creation of destination images, as well as to investigate the success factor of short-video advertising. Interviewing the top-down perspective on social media network use facilitated a multidimensional inspection of destination image creation, as well as allowed to draw a comparison between the institutional desired destination image and the museum audience's perceived destination image. The aim of the interviews was to allow participants to openly communicate their subjective experiences, thoughts, and opinions, therefore, the interviews followed a semi-structured format, steering interviewees in the desired direction of the research subject, but leaving enough freedom to prompt follow-up questions and spontaneous answers. Given that the interviews were additional data to the content analysis, and therefore not the only source of primary data, the number of interviews was limited to a handful of participants. Nevertheless, an equal amount of time was allocated to both interview groups to ensure a fair comparison of answers.

The interviews included two one-on-one interviews with a museum professional (Jasper Jaspers, in charge of marketing and staff at the VmR exhibition) and a content creator (Ying Yang, 22, content creator for VmR and former employee at the Rijksmuseum), lasting approximately 40 minutes each, and twelve interviews with museum visitors, ranging from 5-15 minutes each. Some of the interviews were conducted in small groups of 2-4 people. The interviews with visitors were done anonymously and participants were not required to state their name and age to avoid having to request consent forms and risking losing their interest and participation. The approaching and gathering of participants working at the museum was realized through direct contact via email or social media, or through a snowball effect of acquaintances. Visitors, on the other hand, were approached on-site. The interviews with museum visitors were conducted via face-to-face conversations at the Museumplein and the Noorderkerk in Amsterdam. The professional interviews were conducted remotely using a Zoom video call and on-site at the exhibition location.

During the interviews with museum visitors, participants were asked about their motivation for visiting the museum or exhibition, as well as their familiarity with TikTok and the request to watch and react to some of the museum TikToks. This adoption of video elicitation allowed participants to (re-)experience certain thoughts and emotions, enabling them to provide more detailed insights into their experiences during the interviews (Du et al., 2022, p. 3415). Participants were shown a selection of six TikTok videos, with two videos from each organization, however, as some interviewees exhibited impatience or had little time, some interviewees only reacted to the TikTok videos of one or two of the organizations. For each institution, one video was selected that exhibited an overview of the whole

museum/exhibition, in order to get participants' reactions to the depicted destination image of the whole experience, and one video was selected that included a specific TikTok trend or sound, in order to see how and whether audiences would react to specific TikTok features (Figure 1). The first few interviews included a third video, concerning the museum garden at the Rijksmuseum, however, the interview responses quickly revealed that this video gathered little useful insight, therefore, it was left out for the remaining interviews.



**Figure 1.** Screenshot of selected TikTok videos for Interviews. In order of appearance per pairs: Rijksmuseum, VmR, Moco Museum. Screenshot by author.

As visible in Figure 1, the first Rijksmuseum TikTok depicted three young girls walking through the museum and interacting with the art; taking pictures, echoing poses, and standing in front of famous paintings like *Nightwatch* and admiring it. The second Rijksmuseum TikTok showed two staff members dressed up in costumes and dancing in front of a part of the museum exhibition, as part of a popular TikTok dance trend based on the Netflix show *Wednesday* (Wednesday addams dancing, n.d.). The first VmR TikTok included a compilation of shots depicting the art projections on the walls and visitors sitting or laying on the floor while looking up at the ceiling. The second video specifically focused on showing the visitors; zooming in on their faces and exposing their habits while admiring the exhibition. This video featured a popular TikTok sound that was often used for art or travel-related short videos (Gonzalez, & Bernal, n.d.). The first Moco Museum TikTok showed a group of young girls visiting the museum, focussing on the various art pieces within the exhibition that showcase the variety of exhibition material within the museum. The second Moco Museum TikTok depicted a couple taking pictures in one of the exhibition rooms within the museum, the girl being annoyed at the man's incapacity to take decent pictures. This sound that accompanied the TikTok (“you make me un poco loco”) was part of a TikTok trend that used the sound of the Disney movie *Coco* (Alcocer, n.d.).

### 3.3 Operationalization

The interviews with museum audiences were guided by the main four questions: ‘Can you describe for me what you just saw in this video?’; ‘Was there something particular in the video that caught your eye?’; ‘What image does this video give you about the museum?’ (If the person had already visited the museum); and ‘How does the image you got from the video compare to your real-life experience at the museum?’. This line of questioning allowed for an organic conversation flow that enabled natural follow-up questions. The interview questions were repeated and sometimes adjusted according to the respondent’s understanding until there was no new information produced related to the specific research question (Du et al., 2022, p. 3416). The chosen questions aimed to explore the perception of destination images in an indirect manner by openly asking participants about their reactions to TikToks. By asking these questions, the interviewer tried to discover what short-video attributes activated the engagement of viewers, which is connected to the existing discourse on short-video format advertising and its impact on destination image perception and engagement. The theories surrounding projected and perceived destination images were further represented by aiming to understand how the institutionally desired and produced destination image translated to audiences, whether this image correlated with the museum's goals, and how audiences interpreted the museum's entanglement with modern social media apps. By asking participants who had already visited the destination whether they believed that the visual representations in the TikToks were honest or idealistic, the interviewer was able to further link this research to travel destination representation on social media.

The questions for the professional interview with the head of marketing of VmR concerned their social media marketing strategies, the reason for implementing social media and TikTok, the possible impact of TikTok on actual visitor numbers, and the creation process of the TikTok videos. The interview with the content creator went deeper into the short video production process, with questions like: ‘Did you pay attention to TikTok trends when searching for new ideas?’; ‘What were the elements you wanted to highlight in your TikToks?’; and ‘Do you pay attention to certain filming methods while filming TikTok videos?’. A full guide of the questions is provided in the Appendix. By inquiring about the creation process, the interviewer was able to elicit what kind of destination images are being exhibited by the supply side, which is connected to social media being platforms for storytelling, newer social media platforms altering the ways destination images are being showcased online, and museum professionals adapting their marketing strategies to increase audience engagement.

### 3.4 Data analysis

All data were analyzed following Braun and Clarke's (2022) reflexive thematic analysis approach. This approach was chosen because it allows researchers to give their own interpretation and meaning to gathered data, allowing new perspectives and patterns to emerge, thus broadening the understanding of certain phenomena, and allowing other researchers to reflect on them (Byrne, 2012, p.1393). The TikTok videos were transcribed on the bases of four categories: sound, text on screen, visual, and text in the caption. These categories were selected to provide coverage of all the main categories included in TikTok videos; sound, text, and visual. While previous museum TikTok research also included the length of the videos and the number of likes and comments, this research chose to disregard such data, as it would add nothing new to existing research and would only provide a more basic analysis of viewer engagement (Lau, 2022). The qualitative data analysis software Atlas.ti (2023) was utilized to execute the coding progress. All transcriptions were coded using semantic coding, meaning that the surface data was reformulated into short open codes (Braun & Clarke, 2012, p. 58). These codes were then organized around noticeable commonalities to produce overarching themes. This process of categorization and theme development was illustrated in a thematic code tree, facilitated by Atlas.ti. While the prominence of recurrence during the code production was acknowledged, multiple-counter codes were not prioritized over single-counter codes, and the final interpretation of the codes and themes was led predominantly by reflective meaning-making.

All interviews with visitors were processed via voice-recorded reflections done by the interviewer immediately after each interview. This method ensured that both the interviewer and the participant would not be distracted during the interview, as well as for the interviewer to pay attention to the interviewee's verbal and nonverbal reactions to the TikToks. The interviews with professionals were audio-recorded. All interviews and voice-note reflections were manually transcribed and read multiple times to gain an overall understanding of the collected data. Then, all sentences that reflected the interviewees' engagement and experience with museum TikToks were coded with semantic and latent coding. Semantic coding refers to coding the explicitly expressed meaning, with no own interpretation, while latent coding refers to coding the deeper, more implicit or conceptual level of meanings (Braun & Clarke, 2022, p. 57-58). In line with Braun & Clarke's reflexive thematic analysis guidelines, no prioritization was given to either version on producing codes; semantic codes were created when meaningful semantic information was interpreted, and latent codes were created when meaningful latent information was interpreted (Byrne, 2012, p.1397). The coding process of the interviews followed a mostly inductive approach, meaning data was open-coded and respondents' meanings were emphasized. However, a certain degree of deductive analysis was also applied in order to ensure that the loose nature of open coding contributed to producing themes that were relevant to the research questions (Byrne, 2012, p.1397). The demonstrative codes were then bundled into interpretive

themes. For example, the three descriptions ‘describing content as relatable and recognizable’, ‘describing video as accurate promotion’, and ‘describing content as accurate’ were combined to be ‘destination image recognition’.

### 3.5 Limitations

While this research successfully gathered enough data to extract results beneficial for the present and future research, the process of data collection and analysis was restricted by a few circumstances that should be briefly mentioned in order to maintain full transparency. First, the interviews with museum professionals only covered the VmR exhibition, not the perspectives of the Rijksmuseum and Moco Museum. Despite efforts to contact museum professionals from both institutions, the researcher received either rejections or no responses at all. While this means that the supply angle of TikTok videos was only represented to a certain extent, enough data was gathered to answer the research question, especially considering the fact that other scholars have already covered the perspectives of museums and their motivations for engaging with social media platforms, as illustrated in the theoretical framework. The present research adds to the existing knowledge by shedding light on the voice of the lesser-represented art exhibitions that are also attractive to art audiences and tourists.

Second, during the interviews with museum audiences, the researcher was only able to present a few TikToks to audiences, which means that the destination image perception of participants was not formed by the entirety of the social media content. Ideally, participants would have been exposed to more TikTok videos before being asked about their opinions, however, such participation would take more time and effort, which is not always possible during field research. Third, this research mostly gathered the opinions of international students, thereby providing less insight into the local perspective. While such results can be expected from tourism research, it did exacerbate the language barrier issue, causing interviewees to misunderstand or misinterpret certain questions, have trouble responding to questions, or properly articulate their thoughts and feelings. While such issues were rarely noticed during the interviews, the researcher acknowledges that it is impossible to predict whether participants properly conveyed what they wanted to convey. This means that the analysis of the responses was based on the subjective interpretation of the researcher, and any drawn conclusions are open to reinterpretation and scrutinization.

## 4. Analysis and Results

In the following chapter, the data that was collected through online content analysis and semi-structured interviews and examined through Braun and Clarke's (2022) reflexive thematic analysis will be presented. The data analysis will help to map the production and perception of destination images created by museum TikToks by answering the sub-questions proposed in the introduction. The first part of the data analysis will cover the TikTok video analysis, which sheds light on the elements that make up short video content. The second part concerns the interviews with museum professionals and answers the question of why museum professionals are engaging with TikTok, and what type of destination images they aim to project through short video advertising. The third part reveals how museum audiences react to and perceive museum TikToks by diving into the interviews with museum visitors. The recurring themes and supporting quotes that arise from the content and interviews analysis will add to the scholarly debates surrounding constructed and perceived social media destination images.

### 4.1 TikTok video analysis

The coding process resulted in the development of 271 codes that were categorically summarized into the following six groups: sound, video content, visual cinematography, video text descriptions, content marketing, and unique TikTok features. These groups will be referred to as themes that represent the different elements that TikTok videos are composed of. Each theme consists of multiple sub-themes that were also found through the process of coding and categorization. The systematic categorization of the relevant themes and subthemes is illustrated in the following graph:





Graph 1. TikTok video themes and sub-themes. Created by author.

The first thing that is important to analyze within the short videos is the content. In this research, the video content refers to what the video is generally about: what is visible on the screen that summarizes the majority of the video. Combining video content examination and code grouping, the content of the TikTok videos was categorized into the following types: *human-based content*, such as the behavior of visitors, employee interactions, and behind-the-scenes footage of curators; and *object-based content* such as the architecture, the exhibited material, items in the museum shop, and natural scenery (for all sub-themes, see Graph 1). The human-based content concentrated on portraying intimate close-ups of the interactions between the visitors, employers, and the museum space, such as people taking pictures of and with the exhibited material, visitors admiring the works of art, curators cleaning the exhibition pieces, or employees teaching audiences about the exhibited artworks (Figure 2). The object-based content mainly displayed the exhibition rooms, detailed close-ups of art pieces and paintings, architectural focal points, and the natural beauty surrounding the buildings (Figure 3).

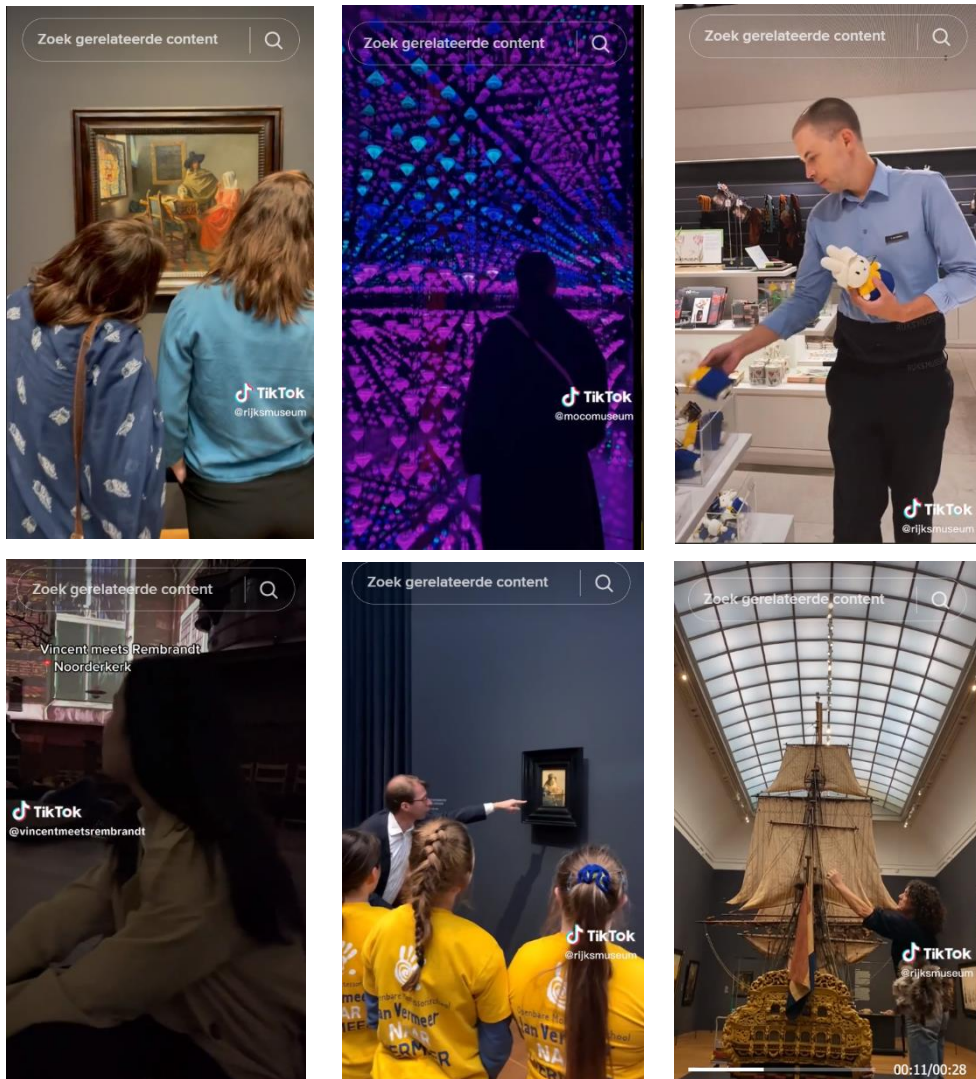


Figure 2. Screenshots of TikTok videos showing human-based content. Screenshots by author.

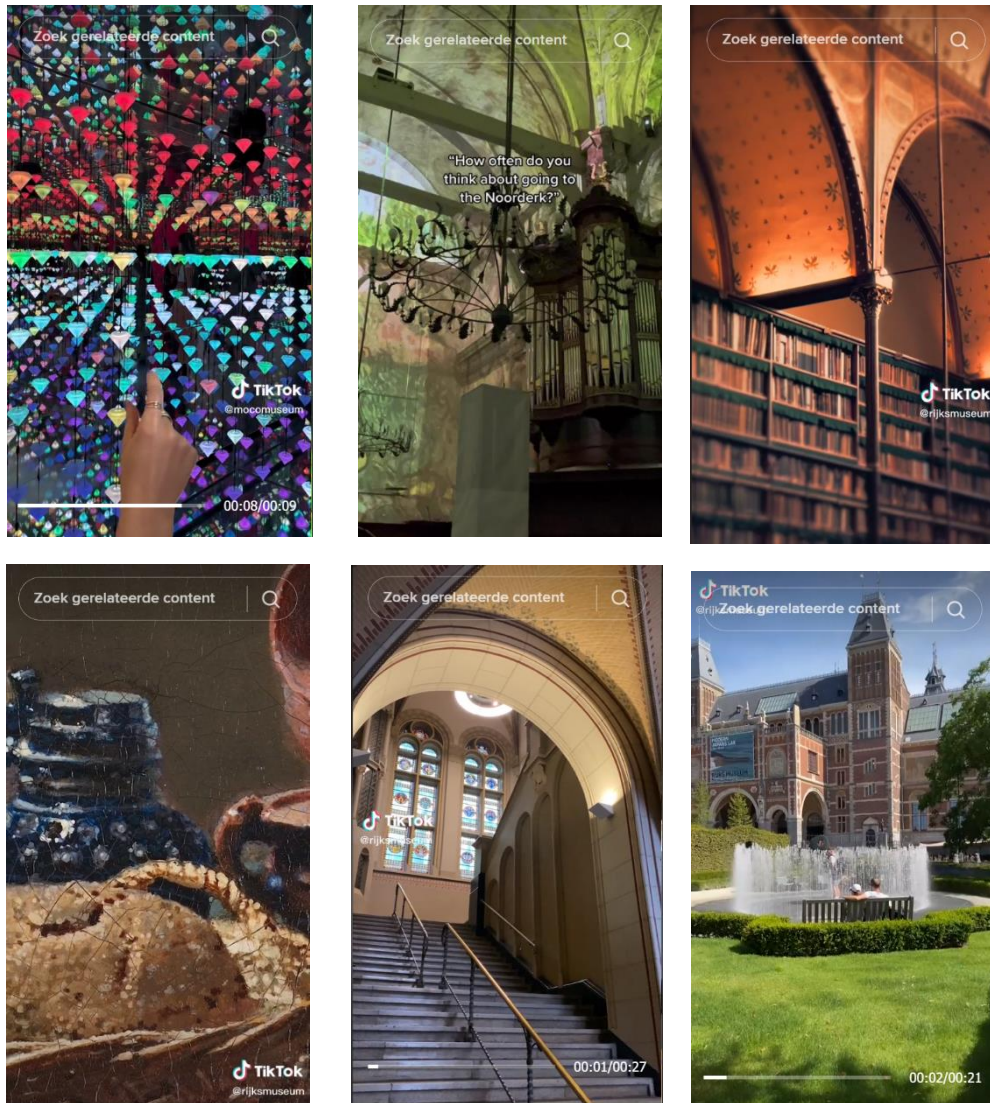


Figure 3. Screenshots of TikTok videos showing object-based content. Screenshots by author.

Generally, tourism-related advertising on social media platforms such as Instagram mainly focuses on sharing nature, architecture, and food-related content (Kuhzad and Ghasemi, 2019). A quick look into the social media posts of the selected art organizations on other platforms reveals a concentration of similar, non-human-based content. The Facebook page of the Rijksmuseum, for instance, primarily exhibits architecture, art, or history-related pictures (Rijksmuseum, n.d.). On the other hand, the analysis of the TikTok videos revealed that the content of the TikTok videos provided more depth by devoting lots of attention to capturing the visitor experience and behavior. The TikToks virtually placed the audience inside the collection by not only showing how visitors interact with the art in real time but also how the artworks are exhibited within the museum space. As a result, audiences are able to gain a more comprehensive understanding of what can be expected from their visit, rather than simply seeing the picture of a painting they can assume will be exhibited somewhere inside the museum.

Additionally, exposure to the various ways visitors experience the space creates a livelier and more approachable museum image. The TikTok account of VincentmeetsRembrand, for instance, included several videos explicitly dedicated to ‘people-watching’; showing how visitors behave within the exhibition space by filming visitors laying in beanbags and expressing their excitement (Figure 4). In the previously discussed literature, it was pointed out that representing positive tourist experiences online and setting “transparent” visiting expectations by showcasing a more complete picture of the experience can help museums improve or change visitor expectations and experiences, which is directly linked to visitor numbers and societal relevance (Camarero, 2011; Massari et al., 2022; Suh, 2022). The examination of the short-video content reveals that there was active contemplation by the supply side regarding the type of content that should be included. The fact that all three TikTok accounts displayed similar content themes hints at a possible “TikTok formula” used by art institutions to appeal to the social media masses.

In addition to highlighting human interactions, the videos still paid tribute to the exhibition content and museum space by exposing (hidden) details inside the architecture and paintings. The TikToks that centered around architecture and natural scenery were mostly shot from various angles, allowing natural sunlight to highlight the unique features of the building's architecture. Given that showing the architecture and buildings from the outside can be a success factor that influences visitors' likeness to visit a place, the inclusion of such content may have been a deliberate decision to increase potential visitors' engagement with the content and willingness to travel (Chenchen et al., 2020, p. 118). Noticeably, the majority of object-based content was linked to depicting the art that can be found within the exhibition, ranging from wide-angled shots that provided an overview of the entire exhibition to extreme close-ups of the artworks. The utilization of various camera angles was another prominent feature within the TikToks. In the analysis of the short videos, specific filming methods were categorized as ‘visual cinematography’. Visual cinematography refers to cinematic filming and editing techniques that draw in the eyes of the viewers, such as filter effects to match the artwork or mood of the video, filming from various angles, or symmetrical framing; all to enhance the visual to make it more pleasing to the eye (Film Analysis, 2023). The examination of the cinematography within the TikToks revealed that the videos featured multiple cinematographic effects, such as filters, high-quality filming, symmetric framing, close-up scale shots, and color accentuation. This format conforms to the general notions of social media image creation, which is understood to be manipulated to fit the creator's needs and advantages or create the best-looking version of things (Fitzpatrick, 2018). This includes curating camera angles so that the frame erases unwanted parts, like too many other visitors in the frame. Unsurprisingly, most TikTok videos that did not focus on exhibiting visitor behavior only showed a handful of people inside the spaces and did not depict overcrowded rooms and hallways. In reality, of course, it can be expected that superstar museums such as the Rijksmuseum definitely attract rows of people both outside and inside the building.

Another visual element that was distinctive about the TikTok videos consisted of textual elements, including text additions within the video and descriptions in the captions below the video. The text additions included interactive questions that invited the viewer to respond, thereby actively triggering the viewer's engagement. Noticeably, these texts often featured prominent connections to popular culture, including popular slang such as 'TGIF' (Thank God It's Friday) and 'This is your sign to...', the addition of memes, or simply referencing popular culture. For instance, one Rijksmuseum TikTok featured the added caption 'Just a night at the museum', which refers to the movie franchise *Night at the Museum*. The inclusion of such popular culture references indicates an organizational understanding of the format of specific social media platforms, as well as an accurate estimation of the type of audiences that dominate such platforms (Kidd, 2010). Applying such communicative techniques not only enables contact with younger audiences but also proves diversity by presenting the prioritization of interacting with various audiences (Kidd, 2010; Massari et al., 2022).

The video captions were often associated with content marketing or linking the videos to topics found on TikTok by including topic tags related to art, museums, education, and tourism in Amsterdam. The description texts were categorized as content marketing because of the advertising nature of the texts. These included visitation encouragement by adding phrases like "come visit us", museum app advertisement, distinguishing the experience by adding descriptions like "must-see" or "once-in-a-lifetime experience", and activity suggestions by labeling the destination as a perfect date or holiday activity. As already noted by Chenchen et al. (2022), such implicit text marketing could be a significant factor in influencing people's destination image and willingness to travel. On the other hand, both the descriptive and in-video texts showcased an educational nature by giving information about the exhibitions, artworks, and creators. Especially the TikToks that highlighted the detailed depictions of the artworks included hashtags like #learnonTikTok, #arttok, and #museumtok, making these videos visible for anyone searching for or clicking on these hashtags. Coincidentally, the same hashtags were found in Lau's (2022) museum TikTok analysis. Perhaps, this signals an institutional practice of using the TikTok platforms as an educational tool. After all, education remains one of the biggest justifications for continuing presence and maintenance of museums (Falk, 2021). Creating informational short videos about art and history on TikTok allows viewers to learn and collaborate creatively, which means that museums are able to kill two birds with one stone by educating their viewers whilst simultaneously drawing in viewer engagement and increasing their social media presence among younger audiences (Faktor, 2021, as cited in Khan. 2022, p.454 ).The intentional utilization of specific TikTok hashtags; blending the TikTok name with the themes to create hashtags like 'arttok', indicates the specificity of TikTok as a social media platform used to spread information. Given the fact that museums usually attract lots of schools, posting educational content on social media that is frequently used by adolescents can prepare viewers for their visit or provide information that may have been overlooked inside the museum. Furthermore, spreading online information about art and culture can democratize the museum

visit and experience for viewers who are not able to visit cultural institutions due to financial concerns or other external factors. It is noteworthy that the analysis of the three TikTok accounts revealed that the inclusion of educational information and the 'learnonTikTok'- hashtags were mostly present in the two museum TikTok accounts, and the VmR exhibition included more popular culture references and contemporary slang within their videos. This could be explained by the fact that the VmR exhibition is not an institutionalized organization and has different motivations for engaging with social media outside the educational motive (as will be demonstrated later in the interview analysis).

The final feature that will be discussed in this analysis is the audible element within the TikTok videos. Either background music or diegetic sounds<sup>1</sup> accompanied all TikToks, and no videos were uploaded on mute. For the majority of the TikToks, the music was presented in a manner that echoed the content of the video itself, thereby enriching the general feeling or "vibe" of the video. For instance, the Rijksmuseum videos mostly featured classical instrumental music to accompany the classical feeling of the old building and oil paintings. On the other hand, the background music of the Moco Museum TikTok consisted of trendier and more modern pop-culture renditions of instrumental songs. The utilization of music was aimed at increasing the engagement factor of audiences, as the addition of recognizable songs or calming instrumental music can evoke the brain's pleasure-response, thus subconsciously compelling the viewer to keep watching (Koelsch, 2014, p.170). Noticeably, the music for the Moco Museum and VmR was generally more modern and recognizable than the music used in the Rijksmuseum TikToks. These findings suggest that cultural institutions utilize the advantages of video-format advertising by adding music that enhances the feeling of the content or message that the video is meant to portray, thereby increasing the audience's willingness to keep watching. Furthermore, the utilization of TikTok allowed the organization to benefit from the success of certain 'TikTok trends' by implementing popular TikTok sound and music fragments into their own content. TikTok videos are often created using or "stitching with" sound fragments, meaning that TikTok users have an endless supply of sounds they can put over their own videos or use to copy certain content. In doing so, the platform frequently experiences waves of trending TikTok sounds that flood and dominate the 'For you'-pages for a couple of weeks or months. These sounds are often accompanied by trends, such as specific dances, point-of-view conversations, or other random content. The analysis of the TikTok videos revealed that art organizations are also taking part in these TikTok trends, either by taking a popular sound or a specific trend as the basis for their content. This proves how museums are changing their advertising strategies to online platforms in order to adapt to changing tourism behavior, in this case, the gradual development of online communities and using social media as sources for travel information (Yang & Zhang, 2022).

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<sup>1</sup> 'Diegetic sound' is a film-theory term that refers to all the sound that comes from within a film, therefore all the sound that the viewer hears is the sound that comes from within the world of the screen and is not added in through external sources (Oxford References, 2023).

In addition to increasing their visibility on contemporary social media platforms and spreading knowledge through education and art-related TikTok pages, the utilization of trending TikTok sounds allows art museums and exhibitions to further improve or deepen their interaction with younger audiences and put art exhibitions into their daily environment, in the hopes of altering their perceptions and expectations. While all three TikTok accounts included trend-based videos, the Rijksmuseum TikTok was least active in adopting the TikTok sounds and trends, showcasing the hesitation of classical art institutions to fully embrace social media as an interactive tool (Romolini et al., 2020). Perhaps, art endeavors that receive less societal/institutional pressure to represent certain historical and cultural norms are more willing and free to implement contemporary social media platforms because they experience lesser judgment. In a way, the Rijksmuseum has always represented a high and cultured status and is perhaps still expected to uphold such standards. In this case, their advertising should reflect the same demeanor, and indulging in youthful social media platforms may be frowned upon by its core visitors. Nevertheless, with the changing tourism behavior and social expectancy to engage in the online world, classical art museums like the Rijksmuseum are forced to engage with such platforms in order to keep up and stay relevant in future society.

The content analysis of the TikTok videos has revealed how art museums and exhibitions supply a wider range of content on the TikTok platform compared to other platforms by not just highlighting the artworks, architecture, and natural beauty, but also emphasizing art audience behavior and behind-the-scenes footage of museum employees. By amplifying the human factor of museum visits, the videos create a livelier destination image. Adopting such an approach may appeal to audiences outside the art audience field, thus drawing in more diverse visitors. Furthermore, the short videos included the depiction of obscure details within artworks, thus encouraging potential visitors to (re)experience such details with their own eyes. In most cases, there was evidence of conscious destination image creation by applying attractive cinematographic aspects to exhibit content. The textual elements were either entertaining, advertising, or educational, and hinted at an organizational awareness about the TikTok platform format and audience. In the case of the museum accounts, TikTok appears to be utilized as a creative tool to transmit knowledge to the younger audiences that dominate the platform. The latter was amplified by adopting specific TikTok trends that are able to increase engagement with TikTok audiences.

## 4.2 Interview analysis

The following section explores both the consumption and the production side of TikTok videos to obtain a fuller picture of the creation of destination images through TikTok. First, the production side will be highlighted through the interviews with Jasper Jaspers, head of marketing and staff at VmR, and Ying Yang, content creator and former Rijksmuseum employee (TikTok handle @invitasians). Then, the interviews with various museum visitors will be analyzed. From the examined interviews, it seems very clear that TikTok plays an important role in the advertising and exposure of small-scale art exhibitions. In the case of VmR, the exhibition gains profit from TikTok engagement in the form of increased exposure, a boost in ticket sales, and frequent word-to-mouth recommendations. The findings of the visitor interviews suggest that the consumption of museum TikTok videos broadens and deepens people's understanding of museums, thereby altering their destination image and increasing their willingness to travel. Tourists' perceptions of museums seem to be predominantly formed through pre-existing knowledge and consumption of various marketing tools. While TikTok advertisement appears to still exist under the radar for big cultural institutions like the Rijksmuseum, the application of contemporary social media trends successfully alters some visitors' pre-existing perspectives and re-establishes classical art as trendy amongst society.

### 4.2.1 Production side: Marketing perspective

The interview with the head of marketing provided insightful knowledge necessary to answer the question of why museum professionals are engaging with TikTok.

During the interview with Jasper Jaspers, he explained that the VmR exhibition was created during the Covid-19 pandemic, as a passion project to 'remove classical art from the dusty attic and rejuvenate it whilst remaining respectful to the artists'. This means that, while it exhibits projections of art from famous Dutch painters Van Gogh and Rembrandt, the exhibition is detached from any governmental interference. In regard to marketing and advertising the exhibition, Jasper elaborated that he preferred social media advertising because of the niche/targeted audience it attracts. These targeted audiences are reached through social media algorithms, which, according to him, ensures that the advertisements reach potential visitors who enjoy either classical art, church architecture, or immersive projected art experiences. Initially, the decision to partake on the TikTok platform was executed more out of necessity to prioritize social media advertisement due to the Covid-19 pandemic and accompanying socially restricting measures. There was no prior expectation that TikTok would increase ticket sales or boost popularity, nor was there a necessity to attract younger audiences to the platform. However, with an increasing number of visitors creating their own TikToks inside the exhibition and posting them on the platform, Jasper simultaneously witnessed growing engagement on the official VmR



website and increased ticket sales, thereby quickly recognizing the potential of TikTok as a successful marketing tool. As this growing success was initiated by some of these visitor-generated videos, Jasper approached content creator Ying Yang, whose TikTok video about the exhibition had attracted more than 400 thousand views within a few days. This decision to collaborate with content creators outside the museum industry correlates with Kidd's (2010) advice for museum industries, which stated that genuine content sharing online could only be achieved by "letting go of some authority" (p.73). It highlights that the marketing department of VmR is not afraid to actively collaborate with museum audiences, creating more fluid boundaries between the organization and its visitors, as well as allowing creativity to flourish.

Since the exhibition's engagement on TikTok, Jasper noted that he only observed positive effects, like the increased exposure and ticket sales, but also positive viewer engagement on the platform itself: "On TikTok, I have to say, it is really only positive, you actually only see comments like 'Where is this?' or 'Oh we have been there, it was really nice'. The comments on other marketing platforms like TripAdvisor, on the other hand, are a bit of an issue sometimes." When I asked him why he believed there was a difference in visitor comments on different online websites he referred to the difference in audiences. He explained that travel websites like TripAdvisor operate less on algorithms and have a very different format compared to platforms like TikTok, which means that they attract all types of audiences, whereas social media tends to attract more targeted viewers whose interests align more with the exhibited content.

"When you sell tickets, there is an option you can select where everyone who has bought a ticket receives an email with an invitation to review you on TripAdvisor. We decided to do this once, but then you get the opinion of everyone who has visited, also the people who have something to say about it, and then you also come across very unfriendly comments and one-star reviews." (Jasper)

Here, Jasper alluded to the differences in the type of audiences and content-based interactions, which were already argued by scholars to be way more curated on TikTok due to the app's recommendation algorithm (Klug et al., 2021, p.85). He once again commended the successful formula of the TikTok platform by mentioning that the algorithm and the longevity of the videos on TikTok were the cause of the large number of views for the VmR TikTok videos.

Despite acknowledging that TikTok engagement was a smart marketing move, Jasper mentioned that they occasionally experienced challenges with the format of short video advertisements due to the limited content of the exhibition: “It’s very much highs and lows. It is very difficult to really get stuck on that high, especially because we only have one product, and, while you can always show different images from the church, at some point you have shown everything”. To counteract this struggle, the organization is already planning future marketing strategies to maintain TikTok engagement by involving advertisements outside the exhibition, for example, placing Van Gogh-themed bikes around the city and posting videos of that on TikTok. Apparently, despite the struggle of the video format showing a lot of the exhibition in a single post (something that could be more diluted through picture posting on social media to have more content to share via multiple posts), the marketing department still regards TikTok as a valuable source for exposure, interaction, and revenue, to such an extent where they consider TikTok when contemplating new marketing strategies. Furthermore, Jasper added how TikTok can be a tool for attracting more tourists, especially international tourists, something that is essential for the longevity of the project. In the beginning, TikTok advertisement was primarily directed toward local Dutch visitors due to the Covid-19 pandemic. But now, there is a shifting focus toward attracting a balanced 50/50 division between Dutch and foreign tourists. Still, Jasper expressed uncertainty about the extent to which TikTok could act as a decisive factor in attracting international visitors:

“I couldn't say exactly which or how big of an impact TikTok has in attracting international tourists, but we certainly do have a number of TikToks that are viewed by many people, not just Dutch people. We also work with English text in order for non-Dutch speaking people to understand them better, so in that respect, TikTok videos can reach a wide audience. Also because of the algorithm, of course, which I also talked about earlier, videos keep appearing on people's pages, and there will probably be younger international tourists who also use TikTok and come across our videos and think ‘hey, this looks fun, let’s go there’”. (Jasper)

When the interviewer asked whether there was a change in visitors after the implementation of TikTok advertisement, Jasper noted that he did indeed notice a difference in tourists; mainly younger adults or young kids alone or with parents, which he marked noteworthy considering the classical art content of the exhibition. “If your child says to you ‘Mom, dad, can we go to the Van Gogh exhibition’, those parents don't know how quickly they have to buy those tickets, because normally kids are only preoccupied by video gaming and football. So that worked very well for us”. This statement suggests that TikTok changed the perception of some younger audiences who are usually less inclined to visit classical art galleries or exhibitions (Mason & McCarthy, 2006). In this regard, VmR seems to have

found an effective communication tool to achieve its organizational goal, which is blowing new life into classical art. What audience groups are better to target when aiming to create renewed perceptions about stereotypically viewed “old and boring” art than the younger generation (Suh, 2022, p.271)?

#### 4.2.2 Production Side: Creator Perspective

The previous section discussed the implementation of TikTok from an organizational and marketing perspective. Jasper was very knowledgeable about the motivations behind engaging with TikTok and the fruits that bore from such interaction. However, he was less involved with the actual creation process of the videos. The following part highlights the creation process of the VmR TikTok videos, which will be more relevant to the question of how destination images are created and projected through TikTok videos, and what the underlying representation goals are that museum content creators want to convey through their videos.

In the interview with Ying, she explained that she started creating TikToks because it presented her with a creative outlet to show unique spots in Amsterdam, reach people, help small businesses grow, and give credit for their hard work. She preferred the short video format over the picture format because it allowed her to provide a more complete picture of the travel experience. Regarding VmR, she elaborated that she posted the first TikTok video because she was impressed by the experience and wanted to share it with others. She expressed how she was fascinated by the interaction between the story, the building, and the movement of the art, as well as the unique location and calm atmosphere of the church, elements that she purposefully aimed to convey through her TikTok videos as well: “I think it's just a really nice experience so I wanted to show that to people, like hey, you can go here and it's really cool”.

Ying was extremely commended about the freedom she received from the organization: the absence of specific requirements for the content of the videos allowed her free creative reign without the pressure of having to remain too professional or serious. She later added that if she had to decide between creating content for VmR and other art museums, she would prefer working for VmR because of the freedom, but also the modernity and accessibility. She added that she would probably not work for big museums like the Rijksmuseum because she associates higher art institutions with a certain degree of professionalism that hinders creativity and the creation of spontaneous TikTok. Therefore, she prefers creating content for either modern art museums like the Moco Museum or art exhibitions with modern twists like VmR.

When explaining the creation process of the TikTok videos, Ying first elaborated on the different sources of inspiration that she gathered before filming. For the VmR TikToks, Ying took inspiration from three sources: 1) looking at examples from American museum TikTok accounts, how they portrayed their art and employees; 2) on-site observations of fun or special things that people should see; and 3) observing and keeping up with TikTok trends and sounds. Upon asking why she looked at the American museum TikTok for inspiration, she clarified that it was because of the lack of TikTok engagement by Dutch art museums. However, she added that the country was not the deciding factor, instead it was the content similarity that was important. Regarding efforts to keep up with TikTok trends, Ying explained that she was always guided by the algorithm; more frequent searches for museum and art TikTok led to repeated offers of similar content, which means that she was automatically exposed to art TikTok. She stated: "You never know what you're searching for until you see it".

After gathering inspiration, she tried to put her spin on the already existing TikTok museum content and aimed to convey the on-site observations in a "FOMO-ish" (fear of missing out) manner. She mentioned that she did not have a specific target audience in mind while creating TikToks, because she argued that the exhibition was relevant for everyone, although she did possess awareness about the generally younger age demographic of TikTok viewers. In terms of attention to cinematography during the filming process, Ying elaborated that she always wants to make sure that the whole picture overlaps with the story you want to tell. That being said, the filming process was not planned out to the very last detail. She added that, while the composition is not incredibly important to her during the filming process, the lighting is a very important aspect to consider as it greatly influences the quality of the video, which is preferably always high quality. This showcases a certain degree of conscious destination image creation: purposefully aiming to make the content appeal to audiences and ensure high-quality images. At the same time, Ying's filming process seems relatively natural and unbothered by "unappealing" aspects: "I'm not going to re-take a shot because there is a banana peel laying on the floor, that is not important to me."

Generating appropriate TikTok content did not come without its challenges. Ying experienced particular difficulties while trying to come up with new ideas. Maintaining originality and avoiding repetitiveness were in her opinion the most difficult to uphold, especially for the VmR TikToks due to its limited exhibition content: "I really struggled with showing new aspects of the exhibition because there is just one room, it's not like a museum where you have multiple rooms to film in". She also regretted the limited engagement between the viewers and her own video creations, as the videos did not receive a lot of comments, she sometimes struggled with figuring out what aspects appealed to viewers and what they wanted to see from the videos. Nonetheless, the interview with Jasper revealed that Ying's TikTok videos were effective pull factors, increasing visitor engagement and ticket sales. Ying seemed rather critical towards the effectiveness of TikTok for museums like the Rijksmuseum. As

she recalled from her personal experience working at the reception of the Rijksmuseum, the type of people who visit such institutions come there for educational purposes, not because of TikTok. She added that the Rijksmuseum already attracts lots of visitors due to its international status, regardless of social media marketing, and speculated that the museum was engaging on the popular social media platform to gain exposure amongst diverse audiences:

“I think that a lot of people go to the Rijksmuseum anyway just because it is a national museum, and they also have a lot to offer. So, I think for the Rijksmuseum social media advertising is just something for the side but it's not necessarily to attract people because they've always had a lot of visitors. I also worked at the Rijksmuseum as an employee, so ticket sales and information desk, that's why I know people don't go there because they saw it on TikTok, they go there because there is so much to learn, so to speak. It really is a regular place that people go to, regardless of whether or not the marketing is there. Even if they would quit TikTok and Instagram, people will still come.” (Ying)

#### 4.2.3 Consumption Side

Having explored the production side of TikTok videos and the thought processes behind the projection of destination images, the next chapter dives into the consumption side of museum TikToks: museum audiences. The analysis of the interviews with museum visitors answers how museum visitors react to and perceive museum TikToks.

##### a. The consumers

The majority of interviewees had not visited any of the museums prior to the interview and were thus guided by perceptions formed outside the TikTok context. Those who had visited were also predominantly motivated to visit based on other sources, such as poster advertisements around the city, knowledge about the content of the museum, the status of the museum, or because of solicited organic sources (word-of-mouth). Therefore, most interviewees were unsurprisingly not familiar with museum TikToks and oblivious to Dutch museum participation on the social media platform. Most interviewees were even shocked or surprised to see a classical museum participating in modern TikTok trends. As one girl (early 20s, England) remarked: “I'm actually really surprised that the Rijksmuseum did a TikTok like that because it feels so different from the image I had of the museum.” Generally, younger participants consumed TikToks more frequently in their leisure time, while older participants remarked that they were not that active on social media platforms.

## b. First impressions

Participants who were familiar with the museum prior to watching the TikToks described the general image they obtained after watching the videos as ‘accurate’ and ‘representative’, showing the transparency of the content and the successful transmission of destination images between medium and consumer. Respondents expressed destination image recognition for both space and behavioral aspects, mentioning that ‘the behavior of visitors is pretty recognizable’ and ‘the video is very accurate, it feels like a promotional video of what you can expect inside the museum’.

From the interviews with people who were not familiar with the museum or exhibition content, it seems clear that the TikTok videos effectively influenced people's perceptions and willingness to travel to a certain extent. When asking participants who had not visited the museum to describe their perception, they generally used words like ‘classical’, ‘old-fashioned’, ‘not my style’, or ‘boring’. However, after being exposed to the short videos, most participants described the experience on screen as ‘fun’, ‘cool’, ‘artsy’, ‘trendy’ or ‘original image of the experience’. An interview with a middle-aged woman from Spain revealed how the TikTok content transcended pre-existing perceptions of modern art and positively changed viewers' minds to visit modern art museums. When asked whether she had visited the Moco Museum, the woman mentioned having no interest in the museum due to her lack of interest in modern art exhibitions. However, after being shown the Moco Museum TikTok depicting the exhibition spaces within the museum, she expressed willingness to visit the Moco Museum because she argued that ‘it looked like fun’. In fact, in many cases, the excitement projected in the museum TikToks was experienced as a mental pleasure for the participants. Other factors that caught people’s gaze were mostly content and sound related.

Participants described the following element when being asked what caught their eye in the videos: the people in the video, professional filming style, small details (famous painting, clothing of person), colors, video content, and portrayal of the unusual visitor experience. Overall, the factor that received the most mention was the people in the TikToks. For example, several participants referred to the human as the subject of the video when being asked to describe what they just saw. Descriptions included ‘girls having fun at the museum’, ‘girls having a fun day out’, ‘a couple fighting over taking pictures’, etc. While most participants enjoyed the heavy featuring of human-based content, some argued that the videos were almost too focused on visitors and that there was a lack of representation of the museum collection: “The TikTok didn't really show much of the museum itself. I still don’t really have a good idea what the museum is about because there was more focus on the girls and showing that they were having a good time”. Two participants argued that, in order to receive a well-informed perspective on what the museum depicts, there needed to be repeated engagement with the video, which goes against

the usual one-time watching format of TikTok: “Maybe if we watched the video more times, we would get a better idea of what the museum is about, but usually people only look at a TikTok once anyway”.

### c. Engagement factors

For some interviewees, the consumption of museum TikToks stimulated a longing for real-life engagement with the art shown in the videos. One interviewee elaborated that “the TikTok account was actually one of the reasons that I was excited to go to the museum...the videos showed details in the artwork and that made me excited to see the paintings in real life and see the small details myself”. In this case, the Rijksmuseum TikToks acted as anticipatory factors pre-visit.

Noticeably, the younger participants demonstrated a consistent preference for the TikTok trends inclusions within the videos in terms of consumption and engagement. A young girl from Germany elaborated: “I like that museums use these trends to appeal to younger people on a platform like that and maybe also appeal to people using the popular trends, even if it did not work on me per se, it did look fun.” This point of view furthermore demonstrates the duality of museum TikTok participation. While most interviewees agreed that the museum’s decision to make TikTok videos alone is very progressive and very appealing to younger audiences, videos that went outside the general or popular TikTok format failed to keep engagement with some of the younger viewers. In these cases, it was not the use of the TikTok trend that put viewers off, but rather the content of the museum itself. As the German girl explained: “I think I wouldn’t visit the Rijksmuseum based on these TikToks alone but that is related to the content of the museum itself, not the TikTok videos.” On the other hand, older viewers expressed opposite sentiments and lost engagement because of the trendy nature of some of the videos. One respondent was particularly confused about the dance trend interaction on TikTok and did not understand the relation between the video and the museum: “I guess nowadays you have to reach other people like this, with all their smartphones and constantly being glued to the screen, it’s difficult haha, you have to do these challenges to speak to younger people but personally they do not really speak to me”. On a TikTok that featured a popular TikTok sound that was frequently recognized by younger audiences, an older participant commented on the context of the content rather than recognizing the trend: “I guess nowadays younger people they all want to find the perfect angle in museums and it’s all about pictures”. As TikTok is a platform generally used by younger audiences, it was not surprising that there was more active viewer engagement amongst younger participants and participants who are familiar with TikTok trends and sounds. Many participants revealed that they were charmed by the cinematic aspects, music, and subjects; elements that made the TikToks more youthful and approachable for younger audiences: “It makes the museum a lot younger and trendy because of the way it was shot and also with the trendy music, it looks very approachable for younger people.” The appeal of the TikTok videos was not only based on content and sound but also substantiated by video editing tools.

Many interviewees expressed positive remarks about the TikTok video editing style, in particular, the fast pacing, different angles, high-quality filming, and overall professional feeling of some of the videos.

The degree of engagement with the videos was not only prevalent in terms of enjoyment, but also in its influence on willingness to travel. Several participants remarked “I would actually go there” after watching the TikToks. When asked what about the video made them inclined to go, participants usually referred to the people in the video making it look like a fun experience based on their happy demeanor or the video content giving a nice overview of what is inside the museum. However, not all participants were affected by the content of the video. For some, the willingness to visit the museum seemed to be more affected by the content of the museum itself. A younger interviewee explained:

“I did like the videos and how they showed younger people inside the museum. But the museum itself is more boring, dull and repetitive compared to the Moco Museum, which is why we are less interested in going there.”

#### d. TikTok as a communication tool for younger audiences

As previously mentioned, the majority of participants were surprised by the museums’ TikTok engagement with trends because of the already high status of certain museums or previous conceptions of the museum as classical or old-fashioned. While the TikTok videos did influence the destination image of the museum for its visitors, the Rijksmuseum appeared to lack the proper exhibition content to speak to younger audiences. In some cases, younger participants remarked that the Rijksmuseum TikToks, while being trendy for existing on TikTok, still only confirmed its classical, toned-down image with the content shown in its TikToks. Nevertheless, all participants expressed a positive attitude towards museum participation with TikTok trends and sounds.

In terms of the institutional motivation behind partaking in TikTok, interviewees mostly speculated that it was due to a need to diversify and attract younger audiences. Participants generally recognized an institutional need to keep up with social media trends, especially museums that exhibit classical art: “Museums are probably engaging with TikTok because they have to, especially the Rijksmuseum, for the Moco Museum, it’s natural that they are on TikTok but for the Rijksmuseum it’s different”. This argument was also made based on observing the age of the people in the TikToks. One participant (male, mid-20s, Netherlands) argued that incorporating young subjects in their videos



increases the appeal and fun factor for younger audiences: “The age of the girls stood out to me because the Rijksmuseum generally has a reputation for attracting older visitors and not groups of teenage girls or girls in their 20s. So, the fact that the TikTok shows younger girls makes it more appealing and fun for younger audiences to watch.” In this regard, participants argued that the TikTok videos were very clever advertising, because the combined use of TikTok trends and the visibility of the museum collection can speak to both younger and older audiences.

#### 4.2.4 Destination image production and consumption: a combined effort

The analysis of the interviews demonstrates that the creation of tourist destination images by museum TikToks is a co-production between supply-side projections and receiving-side interpretations. From a production perspective, advertising on social media platforms is preferred over other platforms due to the social media algorithm, which attracts targeted audiences necessary for successful exposure. While TikTok is not the only platform to integrate this algorithm, what differentiates TikTok from other social media platforms is the longevity by constantly recommending videos to a new stream of potential visitors, as well as the short-video format, which was preferred by both the museum visitors and the content creator thanks to its ability to portray a fuller picture of travel experience. With these assets, TikTok has emerged as a successful marketing tool by boosting website engagement and ticket sales, increasing online exposure, and encouraging productive viewer engagement, which was visible through the positive online comments and participants' positive reactions to the videos.

For the VmR exhibition, the engagement with TikTok attracted lots of adolescent visitors, even though the exhibited content can be considered irrelevant for younger audiences (Mason & McCarthy, 2006). Compared to its famous neighbors, the VmR marketing team appears to be one step ahead in terms of successful social media implementation by letting go of authority and collaborating with museum audiences. This strategy has enabled a lucrative collaboration between the content supplier and content creator, resulting in a creative process that honors honest and genuine destination image projection. That being said, the creation of destination images was deliberate and calculated to a certain extent, for instance, through attention to lighting and filming quality. However, in the case of VmR projected destination images, there was a clear prioritization of highlighting the uniqueness of the exhibition and letting the content of the exhibition itself persuade people's willingness to visit. While the production side recalled minor challenges concerning TikTok advertisement, none of the issues were related to the Tiktok platform itself and were more related to the limitations of the size of the exhibition.

From a consumer perspective, participants' general oblivion to museum TikTok accounts illustrates how museum TikTok engagement happens relatively under the radar, confirming previous findings regarding the limited interactions between museums and TikTok users (Romolini et al., 2020). However, such engagement was only measured by the frequency of comments or likes. This research

found that there is indeed interaction between museums and audiences, however, such interactions occur outside the online network spaces. Instead, user engagement manifests itself through expressing enjoyment and showcasing increased willingness to travel.

The interviews with museum visitors revealed that the museum TikTok advertising projects accurate destination images of both spatial and behavioral aspects. For viewers that were unfamiliar with the destinations, the videos effectively changed people's perceptions from old and boring to fun and trendy. The factors that influenced viewer engagement the most were the depiction of human interactions with the exhibition spaces and artworks, attention to cinematography, and the utilization of popular TikTok sounds. The TikTok videos were furthermore able to stimulate longing for real-life engagement with the depicted experiences, acting as a crucial actor in the anticipatory pre-travel stage. Broadly speaking, there was more active viewer engagement amongst younger participants and participants who were familiar with TikTok trends and sounds because they felt more familiar with the TikTok content. At the same time, this inclusion of trends created a duality for younger audiences who felt that the videos were not engaging enough. Such opinions were mostly directed at the TikTok videos of the Rijksmuseum. According to younger participants, the Rijksmuseum lacked the proper exhibition content to speak to younger audiences. Older participants, on the other hand, lost engagement with the TikTok trend-based videos because they were not relatable or too abstract. Nevertheless, participants agreed that advertising through the TikTok platform was beneficial for museums because the combined use of TikTok trends and the exposure to the museum collection was able to engage both younger and older audiences. Both museum visitors and the content creator of the VmR TikToks speculated that the increased presence of museums on TikTok signals both the changing communication between museums and audiences, and an institutional desire to attract more diverse audiences.

## 5. Conclusion

The purpose of this research was to explore the projection and perception of destination images on the contemporary social media platform TikTok, focusing on the short video content of art museums and exhibitions in Amsterdam. Through the combination of content analysis and semi-structured interviews, the author has established a multidimensional understanding of the destination images that are created through the TikTok platform.

The analysis of the TikTok videos has demonstrated that there are common elements within the content of the three TikTok accounts, suggesting a hidden formula for museum TikToks. Such elements included similar content (visitor interactions with art, behind-the-scenes footage with employees, information about art pieces, featuring architecture and nature), attention to cinematography (different angles, high quality, symmetric framing), intentional text additions (references to popular culture, information, content marketing), and premeditated music choices. Most noteworthy, however, was the adoption of specific TikTok-related elements, such as TikTok sounds and trends and topical TikTok hashtags. These features, along with the general short video-only content, make TikTok stand out as a platform compared to other social media apps. By utilizing TikTok-specific features, content providers are able to tap into the online communities that exist within the perimeters of social media apps, catering their content towards these audiences and communicating with them on an equal level. At the same time, museums can provide and democratize art and history knowledge for younger TikTok audiences and people who are not able to visit museums.

The interviews with professionals revealed that marketing teams engage with the TikTok platform because it can be used as a successful marketing tool, boosting website engagement and ticket sales, increasing online exposure, and encouraging productive viewer engagement. TikTok was preferred over other social media platform due to its smart algorithm and the continuous re-suggestion of past videos, thereby ensuring the longevity of content. In the case of the VincentmeetsRembrandt exhibition, the collaborating with museum audiences to create official social media content established a creative process that is grounded in honest and genuine destination image projection, highlighting the uniqueness of the exhibition, and letting the content of the exhibition itself persuade people's inclination to visit. At the same time, the production of destination images was deliberately manipulated to a certain extent, mostly through attention to cinematography. While the production side recalled minor challenges concerning TikTok advertisement, none of the issues were related to the TikTok platform itself, highlighting the prosperity of TikTok as a marketing tool.

In theory, successful social media participation should manifest itself through increased viewer engagement with both the online content and the offline exhibition. While this author did not measure a

precise degree of success, the findings are able to showcase successful engagement in terms of personal judgments, changed opinions and increased willingness to travel. As the interviews with museum audiences have demonstrated, viewers were pleasantly surprised about museum's implementation of TikTok and TikTok trends within their advertising. Participants interacted with the short videos as a form of entertainment and expressed positive attitude towards the projected destination images. While the results indicate increased visitor engagement amongst both older and younger audiences, there was more active viewer engagement amongst younger participants and participants who were familiar with TikTok trends and sounds because they felt more familiar with the TikTok content. The factor that activated audiences the most was the portrayal of human experiences within the museum space. Embedding human interactions in short videos communicates that art museums are more than just white walls framed oil paintings; museums are places that people visit to connect to and get inspired by art, places they use to socialize, unwind, and escape, and places where employees interact with art through research and conservation. Allowing human interaction to become the basis of the museum experience gives the museum an air of familiarity and comfort, thus reinventing the static stereotype of art museums into a more home-like destination.

## 5.1 Theoretical Implications

Based on the completed research, this thesis is able to partake in existing discussions surrounding tourist destination images, museum visitor experiences, and the implementation of social media platforms by museums. The results contribute to the main gaps in destination image research by 1) delving into social media destination image projection through short videos by looking at the short video-based social media platform TikTok 2) exposing lesser explored organizations within the tourism industry: museums, and 3) expanding on the side of perceived destination images by investigating the perceptions of museum audiences. By connecting the theories related to the destination image, visitor engagement, and museum audiences to the social media content (in this case, the TikTok platform), this thesis has made it possible to grasp how art organizations apply modern communication tools for advertising purposes, and how these projections influence both TikTok users and museum visitors' perceptions of art museums and exhibitions.

The results contribute to existing research in multiple ways. First, by shedding light on both the projected and perceived destination image, this research contributes to the imbalance within destination image research, which has paid more attention to the production side of destination images. Overall, the findings of this thesis are consistent with previous research that labeled the internet as an important image-formation agent (Choi et al., 2007; Dwivedi, 2009; Kim et al., 2014;). Previous online destination image research highlighted how destination image formation on social media is very dependent on the

specific format of the social media platform. (Garay & Cànoves, 2017; Kuhzad and Ghasemi, 2019; Nautiyal et al., 2022). For instance, the authors demonstrated the difference between textual and image-related destination image creation. Through the conducted research, this author agrees that the destination image creation on the TikTok platform indeed differs from other social media platforms due to the short video format. The results of this thesis confirm the conclusions drawn by Chenchen et al. (2020) concerning the statement that short videos are strategic forms of promotion as they can be applied by targeting their audience's favorite content, thus establishing emotional connections and creating more interaction with potential visitors.

While the destination image creation on social media has been explored plenty in the past, this author agrees with Garay & Cànoves (2017) that further research into the specific social media platforms is necessary. Furthermore, this author wants to explicitly point out the need to dive deeper into newer social media platforms, such as TikTok. Given the fact that lots of research has already been dedicated to investigating travel websites and social media platforms such as Twitter and Instagram, it is time to shed light on the relevant newcomers. Those articles that focused on destination image creation on TikTok either analyzed typical travel-related content, such as natural scenery, architecture, and gastronomy, or medical related content (Chenchen et al., 2020; Li et al., 2020; Basch et al., 2022; McCashin & Murphy, 2023). However, there are many other organizations within the tourism industry that are mostly overlooked by destination image researchers. Within these underrepresented organizations, art exhibitions and museums have gathered some attention, although still only limited. In their articles regarding destination image creation by museum TikToks, Lau (2022) and Khan (2022) presented very general conclusions, stating the positive influence on destination image, but not elaborating on what type of positive influence this alluded to. These conclusions lacked contextual understanding of what audiences find engaging about the short videos, which is how this thesis contributes to the gap in knowledge. This author did, however, agree with their statements regarding TikTok being used as a tool for educational, informative or entertainment purposes, but mainly in the case of art museums. The results of this study indicate that art exhibitions use TikTok more as a marketing tool because they are forced to rely on online exposure to attract audiences, instead of depending on historical or institutional status like museums can.

Second, this research contributes to museum studies by shedding light on the changing museum social media practices and visitor behaviors. Past research has indicated how official organizations are more preoccupied with showcasing features like culture, art, history, and the tourism environment on their social media platforms, while tourists mostly exhibit tourist attractions (Sun et al., 2021). This research has demonstrated that official organizations are slowly starting to integrate the visitor perspective into their social media content by collaborating with individual content creators. This means that audiences are becoming both producers and consumers of social media content, thereby gaining an

active position in influencing the destination image that is projected towards other audiences. The conclusion of this thesis therefore concedes with Romolini et al., (2020) and Kidd (2010), in which the authors argued that social media use is transforming visitors from passive observers to active content creators. In this research, such collaboration was only identified through smaller art exhibitions. However, if museums proactively use this approach and involve the public opinion into their destination image projection, they can create the proper communication necessary to connect with younger and future museum audiences. In doing so, successful social media engagement can further enhance the popularity and social performance of museums.

This thesis further agrees with Yang and Zhang (2022) and Suh's (2022) findings on museums implementing social media for the purposes of building relationships with audiences and changing visitor expectations, especially in the case of classical art museums. However, this author recognizes that further research into the motivations of museum marketing departments is necessary in order to confirm such statements. This research was merely able to identify that art exhibitions use social media platforms to build relationships with audiences by collaborating with them and molding their social media content to the preferences and expectations of TikTok audiences. Moreover, this author expands on Yang and Zhang's (2022) research concerning the changing museum practices by demonstrating how social media platforms can be used as service scapes that impact consumers. While other scholars reported low levels of engagement and interaction between museums and social media users, the interviews with museum audiences demonstrated how TikTok successfully altered consumer's perspectives and travel intentions (Romolini et al., 2020). Therefore, this thesis calls for a re-interpretation of viewer engagement with social media content that is not based on the frequency of posts, the number of likes, and the number of comments, and suggests that museum professionals and researchers should further investigate social media as a successful tool in influencing consumer behavior and expectations.

Finally, past research has pointed out the negative consequences of social media on the destination image of audiences, arguing that the over-accessibility of content can impact viewers to become desensitized to the content, making it harder for organizations and content creators to appeal to users (Frías et al., 2008). Based on this statement, this author has questioned whether the availability of global content could also result in the loss of creativity, as well as the uniqueness of content. After careful consideration of the findings presented in this thesis, this author concludes that these negative consequences are present within the context of the TikTok destination images, however, not yet to such an extent where they are a cause for concern. The interviews with the professionals did confirm that certain content fails to create a connection with audiences, and that there were challenges regarding coming up with new ideas. The interviews also revealed that the failure or success factor of social media content was linked to the creator of the content. While there was no indication from the supply side that

the TikTok videos failed to engage users, the question is how long organizations can produce relevant content that speaks to its users, especially considering this over-accessibility of content on social media platforms like TikTok. In terms of lost creativity, this author found that it is very open to interpretation. On the one hand, taking inspiration from existing TikTok content indicates a continuous duplication of similar content, offering nothing new or original to the users. Especially concerning the TikTok trends, which are basically pre-made formulas that can be copied and pasted, they can quickly turn into over-used trend, and making it repetitive and boring and desensitizing the audiences. On the other hand, altering exiting content with a personal touch means that there is never an exact duplication of images. From this perspective, it can be argued that TikTok features an abundance of creativity by allowing creators from all over the world to inspire the content of others.

## 5.2 Limitations & Proposition for Future Research

While limitations concerning the methodological approach of this study were already explained earlier on in the thesis, this author wants to elaborate on a few limitations that were present for the rest of the study. First, while there is plenty of existing research concerning tourist destination image creation on social media, the amount of literature focusing on the TikTok platform is still scarce. Especially in relation to museum TikToks and qualitative analysis of TikTok short videos, there were only a few studies that could be referenced for the theoretical framework. Given that TikTok is relatively new platforms, the number of publications is not surprising. However, for this thesis, it means that the approach to qualitatively examining the TikTok platforms is not based on well-established research and grounded theories. Despite this, the author believes that the adoption of methodological approaches visible other destination image-related studies has also led to the production of insightful knowledge. Second, the author aimed to provide more in-depth knowledge about de creation and perception of destination images, which means that there was less focus on elaborating the operational side of TikTok. As such, this thesis has disregarded the more technical factors that influence the projection of destination images on TikTok, such as the logistics of the TikTok algorithm, which could be expanded on more in further research. Third, this research presented Dutch museum TikToks as a case study, which means that the results cannot be generalized for other contemporary social media platforms or the TikTok videos of other museums or organizations.

The results of this thesis indicate similar findings compared to other museum TikTok accounts regarding common content themes. In relation to this, the author has suggested a hidden TikTok formula that is being implemented by cultural institutions worldwide. However, diving into this formula lay beyond the scope of this research. Therefore, further research could investigate the framing of such a TikTok short video formula, and test whether it can be successfully applied by museums and exhibitions

that have not yet started implementing social media advertising into their marketing strategies. As this research has demonstrated, smaller art exhibitions have profited from the TikTok engagement, continuously growing their online presence and visitor numbers. It would be interesting to see whether a TikTok formula can be a successful advertising tool for other organizations as well. Results could be further spread amongst museum professionals, social media marketing agents, and content creators as creative advice.

This thesis was not able to investigate the production side voices of museums. While previous research has already dedicated plenty attention to the production side of destination images, they mostly covered official travel organizations. This author believes that it would still be interesting to examine why and how museum professionals are implementing TikToks, what their motivations are for utilizing specific TikTok trends, and how they interpret the shifting communication between museums and social media users. Moreover, the interviews with museum visitors covered mostly international tourist who had not visited the museums before. It is the authors' belief that, whilst traveling, perceptions are sometimes influenced to a certain extent because people are surrounded by things they are not usually exposed to, making the experience more special. Locals, on the other hand, are constantly surrounded by these destinations, which means that the general hype has usually cooled down significantly. Analyzing the local perspective more thoroughly may provide even more nuances to the creation of destination images by highlighting whether the projected destination image correlates with the actual destination.



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## Appendix A. Visitor Interview Question Guide

### Introduction

1. Introduction + Explanation research
2. Where are you from?

### Museum visit

3. Have you visited the Rijksmuseum/Moco Museum/VincentmeetsRembrandt exhibition?
  - 3a. If yes, what made you decide to visit the museum/exhibition?
  - 3b. What do you remember about the museum/exhibition?
  - 3c. If the person is going to visit later that day, why did you decide to visit the museum today?

### Museum TikTok accounts

4. Were you aware that these museums/exhibitions have a TikTok account?
  - 4a. If yes, did you watch a few of their TikToks? What do you remember about them or what impression did they give you?
5. Are you active on TikTok?

### Museum TikTok video observations

6. Showing the museum TikToks
  - 6a. Can you describe for me what you just saw in this video?
  - 6b. Was there something particular in the video that caught your eye?
  - 6c. What image does this video give you about the museum?
  - 6d. If the person had already visited the museum, how does the image you got from the video compare to your real-life experience at the museum?

### Motivation behind museum TikToks

7. Why do you think museums are active on TikTok nowadays?

## Appendix B. Professional Interview Question Guide

### Interview Guide Jasper Jaspers (Head of marketing at VincentmeetsRembrandt)

1. Could you please introduce yourself and tell me a little bit about your role at the exhibition?
2. Was there a reason or goal behind creating the exhibition?
3. What are the marketing strategies that are employed for this exhibition?
4. Why did you decide to use TikTok as an advertising platform?
5. Did you notice a difference in the type of visitor after the employment of TikTok?
6. In your experience, what are the positive and negative sides of using social media platforms as advertising tools?

### Interview Question Guide Ying Yang (Content creator)

1. Could you please introduce yourself and tell a little bit about what you do for work?
2. How did you end up working for the VincentmeetsRembrandt exhibition?
3. Why did you decide to create TikToks for the VincentmeetsRembrandt exhibition?
4. Were there certain elements that the employer wanted you to include in the videos?
5. Can you explain your process of making a TikTok video?
6. Did you experience any difficulties during the making of the videos?
7. Did you pay attention to TikTok trends when searching for new ideas?
8. For you personally, what were the elements you wanted to highlight in your TikToks about the VincentmeetsRembrandt exhibition?
9. Do you pay attention to certain filming methods while filming TikTok videos? For instance, are you aware of the angles you are filming from?
10. Did you notice whether people visited the exhibition due to the TikTok videos?
11. Was there a certain target group in mind when creating the TikToks?

## Appendix C. TikTok Video Guide

### TikToks used during interviews with visitors:

Rijksmuseum video #1	<a href="https://www.tiktok.com/@rijksmuseum/video/7169207083022159110">https://www.tiktok.com/@rijksmuseum/video/7169207083022159110</a>	23.11.2022
Rijksmuseum video #2	<a href="https://www.tiktok.com/@rijksmuseum/video/7179957170962763014">https://www.tiktok.com/@rijksmuseum/video/7179957170962763014</a>	22.12.2022
Rijksmuseum video #3	<a href="https://www.tiktok.com/@rijksmuseum/video/7122712136140295430">https://www.tiktok.com/@rijksmuseum/video/7122712136140295430</a>	21.07.2023
VincentmeetsRembrandt video #1	<a href="https://www.tiktok.com/@vincentmeetsrembrandt/video/7153176797075524869">https://www.tiktok.com/@vincentmeetsrembrandt/video/7153176797075524869</a>	11.10.2022
VincentmeetsRembrandt video #2	<a href="https://www.tiktok.com/@vincentmeetsrembrandt/video/7164312206157384965">https://www.tiktok.com/@vincentmeetsrembrandt/video/7164312206157384965</a>	10.11.2022
Moco Museum video #1	<a href="https://www.tiktok.com/@mocomuseum/video/7174704588224810246">https://www.tiktok.com/@mocomuseum/video/7174704588224810246</a>	08.12.2022
Moco Museum video #2	<a href="https://www.tiktok.com/@mocomuseum/video/7172570552455007494">https://www.tiktok.com/@mocomuseum/video/7172570552455007494</a>	02.12.2022

### TikToks used for the content analysis

Rijksmuseum Amsterdam

Link to Tiktoks: <https://www.tiktok.com/@rijksmuseum>

Tiktok #1. 02.04.2020

Tiktok #2. 03.04.2020

Tiktok #3 03.04.2020

Tiktok #4 06.04.2020



Tiktok #4 12.05.2020  
Tiktok #5. 16.05.2020  
Tiktok #6 03.06.2020  
Tiktok #7. 1906.2020  
Tiktok #8 22.06.2020  
Tiktok #9. 30.06.2020  
Tiktok #10 17.11.2020  
Tiktok #11 13.01.2021  
Tiktok #12 20.01.2020  
Tiktok #13: 25.05.2022  
Tiktok #14 28.06.2022  
Tiktok #15 21.07.2022  
Tiktok #16 01.08.2022  
Tiktok #17 05.08.2022  
Tiktok #18 08.08.2022  
Tiktok #19 09.08.2022  
Tiktok #20 17.09.2022  
Tiktok #21 24.09.2022  
Tiktok #22 06.10.2022  
Tiktok #23 13.10.2022  
Tiktok #24 14.10.2022  
Tiktok #25 18.10.2022  
Tiktok #26 15.11.2022  
Tiktok #27 15.11.2022  
Tiktok #28 23.11.2022  
Tiktok #29 14.12.2022  
Tiktok #30 15.12.2022  
Tiktok #31 13.04.2023  
Tiktok #32 24.12.2022  
Tiktok #33 27.12.2022  
Tiktok #34 05.01.2023  
Tiktok #35 10.01.2023

Tiktok #36 11.01.2023  
Tiktok #37 19.01.2023  
Tiktok #38 22.01.2023  
Tiktok #39 25.01.2023  
Tiktok #40 06.02.2023  
Tiktok #41 09.02.2023  
Tiktok #42 22.12.2022  
Tiktok #43 10.02.2023  
Tiktok #44 08.03.2023  
Tiktok #45 14.03.2023  
Tiktok #46 21.03.2023  
Tiktok #47 07.04.2023  
Tiktok #48 04.01.2023  
Tiktok #49 12.03.2023  
Tiktok #50 13.04.2023

VincentmeetsRembrandt Tiktoks

Link to videos: <https://www.tiktok.com/@vincentmeetsrembrandt>

Tiktok #1 20.09.2022  
Tiktok #2 22.09.2022  
Tiktok #3 25.09.2022  
Tiktok #4 27.09.2022  
Tiktok #5 29.09.2022  
Tiktok #6 01.10.2022  
Tiktok #7 03.10.2022  
Tiktok #8 06.10.2022  
Tiktok #9 09.10.2022  
Tiktok #10 11.10.2022  
Tiktok #11 14.10.2022  
Tiktok #12 17.10.2022  
Tiktok #13 21.10.2022  
Tiktok #14 23.10.2022

Tiktok #15 25.10.2022  
Tiktok #16 27.10.2022  
Tiktok #17 30.10.2022  
Tiktok #18 01.11.2022  
Tiktok #19 03.11.2022  
Tiktok #20 06.11.2022  
Tiktok #21 08.11.2022  
Tiktok #22 10.11.2022  
Tiktok #23 13.11.2022  
Tiktok #24 16.11.2022  
Tiktok #25 25.12.2022  
Tiktok #26 27.12.2022  
Tiktok #27 16.02.2023  
Tiktok #28 21.02.2023  
Tiktok #29 24.02.2023  
Tiktok #30 01.03.2023

#### Moco Museum Tiktoks

Link to videos: <https://www.tiktok.com/@mocomuseum>

Tiktok #1 03.09.2022  
Tiktok #2 09.09.2022  
Tiktok #3 20.09.2022  
Tiktok #4 29.09.2022  
Tiktok #5 31.10.2022  
Tiktok #6 09.11.2022  
Tiktok #7 18.11.2022  
Tiktok #8 02.12.2022  
Tiktok #9 08.12.2022  
Tiktok #10 19.12.2022  
Tiktok # 11 27.12.2022  
Titok #12 29.12.2022  
Tiktok #13 03.01.2023

- Tiktok #14 15.03.2023
- Tiktok #15 20.03.2023
- Tiktok #16 24.03.2023
- Tiktok #17 27.03.2023
- Tiktok #18 03.04.2023
- Tiktok #19 14.04.2023
- Tiktok #20 18.04.2023

## Appendix D. Codes

Document Group	Codes	Code
Sound	39	Instrumental music Instrumental music: academia style instrumetal music Instrumental music: calming song Instrumental music: celebratory instrumental music Instrumental music: chill music Instrumental music: Christmas instrumental music Instrumental music: classical music Instrumental music: generic instrumental music Instrumental music: generic instrumental music with cat sound Instrumental music: generic upbeat music Instrumental music: historical sounding instrumental music Instrumental music: Instrumental lounge music Instrumental music: Instumental runway music Instrumental music: low-fi music Instrumental music: peaceful instrumental piano music Instrumental music: relaxing piano music Instrumental music: relaxing pianomusic & water fountain sounds Instrumental music: sentimental instrumental music Instrumental music: upbeat instrumental music Music with lyrics Music with lyrics: dutch song Music with lyrics: dutch summer pop song Music with lyrics: funky coffeehouse music instrumental Music with lyr...
Video Content	151	Architecture Architecture: Museum building and surrounding Architecture: showing details of museum library Architecture: showing off architecture of museum Architecture: showing off stained glass Architecture: showing outside and entrance of the building

Document Group	Codes	Code
		Architecture: timelapse museum restauration Behind-the-scenes Behind-the-scenes: BTS cleaning paintings Behind-the-scenes: BTS creating a painting Behind-the-scenes: BTS creating new museum merch Behind-the-scenes: BTS employee cleaning boat model Behind-the-scenes: BTS employees putting down bean bags Behind-the-scenes: BTS employees working on research and restauration Behind-the-scenes: BTS Rembrandt paintings Behind-the-scenes: BTS technological devices used to research paintings Behind-the-scenes: BTS text about japanese museum collection Behind-the-scenes: filling museum with artworks Behind-the-scenes: showingmuseum storage with old fashion Bringing art to life Bringing art to life: artwork transformed into real life Collection items Collection item...
Unique Tiktok Features	4	Popular music Popular music: Popular sound fragment Topic tag Topical trend
Visual Cinematography	29	Close-up shot scale Close-up shot scale: close up luggage band schiphol with vermeer paintings on them Close-up shot scale: close up pictures of differenent paintings Close-up shot scale: close up ship model Close-up shot scale: close up visitor visibly enjoying experience Close-up shot scale: close-ups of visitor expressions, mannerisms, and ways of experiencing Close-up shot scale: detailed close up of artwork Close-up shot scale: detailed close up of painting Close-up shot scale: detailed close-up prints Close-up shot scale: moving close-ups of various famous van Gogh pictures Color Color: filming bright and colorful projections Filters Filters: colour filter to fit old vibes Filters: digital disco lights filter

Document Group	Codes	Code
		<p>Filters: digital glitter/sparkle filter</p> <p>Filters: filming with special filter to make painting come alive</p> <p>Filters: snow filter</p> <p>Framing</p> <p>Framing: aesthetic pan shot of empty library</p> <p>Framing: different angled shots from exhibition</p> <p>Framing: filming people from behind riding bicycles</p> <p>Framing: filming p...</p>
Video Text Descriptions	30	<p>Activity suggestion</p> <p>Activity suggestion: describing as field trip</p> <p>Activity suggestion: recommending visiting exhibition</p> <p>Activity suggestion: suggesting bucket list item</p> <p>Activity suggestion: suggesting date activity</p> <p>Activity suggestion: suggesting day activity for friends</p> <p>Activity suggestion: suggesting holiday activity</p> <p>Activity suggestion: suggesting way of experiencing/interacting with art</p> <p>Connection to popular culture</p> <p>Connection to popular culture: if you haven't yet, run</p> <p>Connection to popular culture: relating artworks to popular culture</p> <p>Connection to popular culture: relating text to popular night at the museum film</p> <p>Connection to popular culture: TGIF</p> <p>Connection to popular culture: this is your sign to</p> <p>Connection to popular culture: TS play on popular movie line (run forest run)</p> <p>Connection to popular culture: TS relating artworks to modern time</p> <p>Distinguish experience</p> <p>Distinguish experience: describing as a must see experience</p> <p>Distinguish experience: labeling experience as journey of a lifetime</p> <p>Distingui...</p>
Content Marketing	17	<p>Activity suggestion</p> <p>Activity suggestion: recommending visiting exhibition</p> <p>Activity suggestion: suggesting bucket list item</p> <p>Activity suggestion: suggesting date activity</p> <p>Activity suggestion: suggesting day activity for friends</p> <p>Activity suggestion: suggesting holiday activity</p> <p>Activity suggestion: suggesting way of experiencing/interacting with art</p> <p>Distinguish collection</p> <p>Distinguish collection: curator labeling painting as "one of</p>

Document Group	Codes	Code
		<p>the greatest paintings ever made"</p> <p>Distinguish experience</p> <p>Distinguish experience: describing as a must see experience</p> <p>Distinguish experience: labeling experience as journey of a lifetime</p> <p>Museum app advertisement</p> <p>Museum app advertisement: advertizing museum app to interact with artwork</p> <p>Visitation encouragement</p> <p>Visitation encouragement: Invitation to come to museum</p> <p>Visitation encouragement: inviting visitors to try new feature</p>