

Tourism sustainable development: The role of digital media branding

R Susanti^{1*}, S Purwandari² and B H Prilosadoso¹

¹ Politeknik Indonusa Surakarta, Surakarta, Indonesia

² Institut Seni Indonesia Surakarta, Surakarta, Indonesia

*Corresponding author email: ratnasusanti19@poltekindonusa.ac.id

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to determine the implementation of media branding strategies in the development of the tourism sector in Sukoharjo Regency, Indonesia as an international tourist destination, supporting and inhibiting factors that affect media branding in the development of the tourism sector. This research uses a qualitative research type. The data collection method used to be used as primary data by the author is the in-depth interview method (depth interview) with key informants (key informants). Data analysis techniques using data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. Meanwhile, in this study, researchers conducted data validity using triangulation of data sources through examination of other sources, in this study Sukoharjo's tourism villages. Sukoharjo Regency's branding that is closely related to tourism is "The House of Souvenir". This branding is based on the fact that Sukoharjo Regency, Indonesia has a variety of local souvenir products that are in great demand by tourists, including rattan, *jenang*, and herbal medicine (*jamu*). These local products are produced by the managers of tourist villages in Sukoharjo Regency, Indonesia as supporters in promoting tourist villages in their respective areas so that they become the strength and attraction of tourists. These local products are also a tourist branding for tourism in Sukoharjo Regency, Indonesia which is promoted through digital media. The results showed that the knowledge and skills of tourism stakeholders had significantly increased, especially in the management of social media and digital communication for tourism marketing. The implication of this research is that tourism stakeholders can apply digital communication as a promotional strategy for tourist villages on a regular and measurable basis.

Keywords

Tourism sustainable development, Branding, Digital media

Introduction

In the present era, tourism has become an essential requirement for nearly everyone due to the rise in their activities and businesses. The primary purpose of travelers visiting a tourist destination is often for recreational and leisure purposes, in addition to several other objectives. The rapid advancement of tourism has the potential to contribute to

Published:
October 20, 2024

This work is licensed
under a [Creative
Commons Attribution-
NonCommercial 4.0
International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/)

Selection and Peer-
review under the
responsibility of the 5th
BIS-HSS 2023 Committee

the economic establishment of countries serving as tourist destinations throughout the medium and long term [1]. Indonesia possesses significant potential in its tourist sector, encompassing maritime tourism, culture, history, gastronomic offerings, and various other aspects. Indonesia's current approach to promoting tourism development involves the utilization of information technology. Information technology is the latest breakthrough in Indonesia for developing sustainable tourism [2]. This strategy is also good for supporting the people's welfare so that every foreign and domestic citizen who comes to visit Indonesia will discover various interesting tourism destinations in Indonesia, for example, tourism in Sukoharjo Regency, Central Java, Indonesia. The concept of sustainable development is widely regarded as the most effective development philosophy, frequently employed as a guiding principle in the field of tourism development. Tourism has a significant impact in the economic, social, and environmental domains. The tourism sector plays a significant role in the economy by generating foreign exchange from international tourist visits and contributing to the Gross Regional Domestic Product (GRDP) and its various components. In order to enhance the economic growth of the community, it is imperative to implement development planning that incorporates a sustainable idea [3].

The Sukoharjo Education and Culture Office initiated the formation of "Sukoharjo, The House of Souvenir". The goal is to promote Sukoharjo tourism to the outside world using digital media platforms. The Sukoharjo Education and Culture Office will increase the use of digital media as a platform to drive tourism promotion. The collaboration of the Government of Sukoharjo, in this case, the Education and Culture Office, with the digital creative industry community involves presenting integrated information management and tourism promotion, which has a wider impact based on digital platforms [4].

One potential solution to address the issue of product diversification development is the establishment of a tourism village. This initiative aims to broaden the range of tourism products available in a specific area or tourist destination, thereby directly engaging the local community. By doing so, it can effectively mitigate the trend of community urbanization from rural to urban areas. The development of a tourism village is an ongoing process that involves the continuous enhancement, advancement, and preservation of resources within a specific region. These resources, including human, natural, and cultural resources, are utilized to create and enhance tourist attractions. The implementation of various techniques in the development of tourism villages encompasses enhancing infrastructure services, safeguarding and conserving tourism potential, augmenting tourism promotion efforts, and consolidating all tourism potential into a cohesive tour package. Implementing digitization in tourism marketing is crucial as a key strategy for tourism development. Digital marketing plays a crucial role in enhancing tourism promotion within the digital economy. In certain cases, digital marketing can have a substantial impact on boosting tourist visits. The augmentation of information accessibility on social media platforms has the potential to enhance the

perceived convenience of social media and its association with locating travel-related resources. Commonly utilized digital marketing applications encompass websites, social media platforms, online advertising channels, web forums, and mobile applications [5].

The implementation of promotion and marketing strategies is vital to the effective management of a tourism enterprise. Tourism promotion plays a crucial role in enhancing the distribution network and reaching a larger customer base, thereby increasing awareness of a tourism location among potential tourists. Similarly to traditional marketing, digital marketing necessitates the implementation of appropriate procedures to ensure effective execution, encompassing the phases of situation analysis, goal establishment, strategic planning, and action and control. There are four distinct dimensions pertaining to the utilization of digital technology in the tourism industry. These dimensions encompass the provision of information regarding tourist sites, the capacity to share information, the understanding of contextual factors, and the ability to mark. One of the responsibilities of managers within the local community is to effectively incorporate the culture of charm as a means of promoting the concept of digital tourism in tourist destinations [6].

Methods

This research uses qualitative research as its methodology. The data was given in a descriptive format, allowing for comprehensive and adaptable analysis that may be adjusted based on the field conditions and study goals. Researchers typically adhere to guidelines rather than established regulations. The conducted research is subject to modification based on the requirements, the circumstances in the field, and the emergence of new hypotheses throughout the research process. The research took place in Sukoharjo Regency, located in Central Java, Indonesia. Data were collected through the methods of observation, interviews, and documentation. By thoroughly mapping, an appropriate branding strategy for promoting tourist destinations can be determined and ultimately utilized for the advancement of tourism villages.

The selection of data collection methods is based on the specific data requirements. Primary and secondary data are necessary for this investigation. This study utilizes primary data, which is derived from informants who possess an in-depth understanding of the research problem. The data collection approach employed is observation, which involves directly observing the research subject and conducting open structured or unstructured interviews. Secondary data refers to information obtained via the review of several papers, literature, and relevant notes. Photographs or video recordings of the subject under study can also serve as documentation.

The primary subject matter of the research refers to Sukoharjo Regency, located in Central Java, Indonesia. The data collection from observations and interviews was carried out at various locations and time periods. The interviews were performed on a single day that was mutually agreed upon with the informants. The process of observation encompasses the evaluation and active involvement in tourism initiatives,

as well as the analysis of social media platforms that serve as platforms for promoting tourist destinations. The method employed for selecting informants involves the utilization of purposive sampling, which involves selecting data sources based on the belief that individuals understand the most relevant knowledge and expertise related to this research topic. This approach facilitates the investigation of the research subject by researchers. Two key informants and two supporting informants were selected by the researchers. The selection of informants was conducted in a deliberate manner, wherein informants were chosen based on their experience and expertise in relation to tourism attractions, specifically those originating from nature and cultural preservation officers (See Table 1).

Table 1. Research informants

No	Full names	Information's
1	Dodik Tri Nugroho	Staff of The Educational and Culture Office
2	Bambang Minarno	Head of The Karangasem's Village
3	Saryadi	Sukoharjo Regency Community
4	Okky M	Sukoharjo Regency Community
5	Dwi Fitriyanto	Sukoharjo Regency Community

Sources: Author's work

Research instruments, also known as research tools, are researchers themselves. Therefore, researchers are required to undergo validation. This validation process involves assessing researchers' understanding of qualitative research methods, their mastery of insight into the field being studied, and their readiness to engage with the research object both academically and logically [7].

Data analysis was conducted using a descriptive qualitative and interpretative approach. Additionally, the data was processed through a series of stages, including data reduction, data selection, and data conversion. The collected data will be compiled and organized into an integrated database. Furthermore, the results will be reviewed and presented in a narrative format.

The researchers require knowledge regarding the field conditions related to the research object in order to facilitate the planning of data collection. This can be achieved by conducting visits to research locations located in Sukoharjo Regency. Based on the data obtained, the subsequent phase involves identifying potential participants based on the study's characteristics. This involves developing interview protocols, which include the following components: (a) an introduction; (b) an opening statement; (c) key questions; and (d) probing. The entire data obtaining strategy was designed based on the preparations made in the first to third stages of the procedure. This strategy includes the comprehensive planning of data collecting, encompassing the initial conditions, approach strategies, and methodology employed for data collection.

Results and Discussion

Overview tourist destination in Sukoharjo Regency, Central Java, Indonesia

The Sukoharjo Regency is a district that exhibits significant potential for tourism. The potential of natural resources and human resources can be seen in this environment. Sukoharjo Regency consists of 12 districts, with 17 sub-districts and 150 villages, from an administrative perspective. Karangasem Village, located in the Bulu District, offers significant potential for tourism. Karangasem Village boasts a variety of tourist attractions, such as Mount Pegat and Cuwono Land. Karangasem Village contains a total land area of 114 acres, which presents potential opportunities for agricultural activities, specifically the cultivation of giant prawns and tilapia fish. One additional advantage of Karangasem Village is the keen interest it receives from both the village government and the local community in its growth.

The problem of integrated environmental management in Sukoharjo Regency has been previously identified as a complex issue that requires the participation of multiple stakeholders for an effective solution. The enactment of Law No. 23/2014 has resulted in the provincial government imposing restrictions on local (regency) governments for the management of coastal areas. This has led to a situation of excessive overlap in the handling and management of these areas. The governance of coastal areas by local (regency) governments, including law enforcement inside their own areas, is ultimately impacted by this phenomenon. The aforementioned observation highlights the influence of sectoral egos among stakeholders when making decisions and making commitments towards the establishment of sustainable environmental governance [8].

In managing the growth of a tourist village, it is important to take into consideration certain significant characteristics that will facilitate the development of a tourism village that brings advantages to the community. The factors encompassed in this research are attraction, accessibility, public facilities and tourism facilities, community empowerment, and marketing or promotion [3]. Tourist destinations and attractions are the main assets that must be owned by a tourism development area.

Digital branding tourism in Sukoharjo Regency, Central Java, Indonesia

The process of digitalization has impacted all sectors of the economy, requiring a transformation in the way mass media disseminate information. The widespread use of digital promotion strategies is significant particularly within the tourism industry. Digital tourism aims to enhance accessibility for all parties involved in the tourism sector in Indonesia. This includes supporting licensing procedures, promoting tourism activities and events, and providing visitors with convenient access to information about tourism destinations in Indonesia [9].

A website that is functional, informative, and engaging has the potential to encourage and promote visitors to visit a tourism destination. The field of digital tourism focuses on the utilization of digital technologies to enhance the overall tourist experience. The act of offering recommendations on a tourist website may appear ordinary, but it is

becoming increasingly popular as an approach to integrating the real world with digital content with the aim of boosting the visitor's experience. In order to implement digital education for the community and tourism stakeholders, it is necessary to undertake a number of procedures. These procedures namely development preparations, tourism stakeholders' development, development program evaluation, and sustainable development of digital promotion in the tourism village [10].

The alignment between the development of tourism facilities and the development of tourism villages is essential. Having access to both primary and secondary amenities, such as accommodation, dining options, souvenir stores, and other facilities, is necessary for enjoying tourist activities at a specific location. The tourist locations in Sukoharjo Regency are equipped with numerous facilities, including food cuisine stalls, prayer rooms, and garbage cans [4].

Community involvement in all aspects of tourism is an important aspect of the development of a tourist village. The engagement of the community might manifest through managing and providing of tourism services. The implementation of this community empowerment initiative is anticipated to have favorable outcomes in terms of economic, social, and cultural aspects of society [2]. The initiative of community empowerment in Sukoharjo Regency is evident through the establishment of a tourism village, organized by the Pokdarwis group and supported by governments.

Promotional activities cover a wide range of procedures implemented to improve the attractiveness of tourism-related products to prospective tourists. At present, only the hotels and attractions of the tourist destination are being utilized in the implementation of the promotion. It is important for all stakeholders engaged in the marketing of tourism villages to undertake this promotional initiative. The promotional activities of the Karangasem community have been inadequately structured and planned. This phenomenon happened because of the Pokdarwis group's inability to properly integrate advertising campaigns into its routine daily operations. Tourist villages have traditionally relied on conventional media promotions, including the distribution of pamphlets and using the method of word-of-mouth advertising. Tourism village managers might employ digital technology as a promotional tool in this situation. Tourism promotion using digital media can be achieved by sharing contents on popular social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, and others. Applying social media for tourism promotion strategies may effectively bring in a substantial number of potential tourists from various locations, including foreign tourists.

Indonesia is recognized for its wide variety of potentials, including natural resources, cultural heritage, historical value, and culinary delicacies. Therefore, the government persistently promotes the prioritization of the tourist sector as a key development program. Indonesian tourism has contributed significantly to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in recent years. Furthermore, the tourism sector has proven efficacy in reducing unemployment by facilitating the establishment of business enterprises and job opportunities. Simultaneously, the ongoing advancement of technology,

information, and communication has led to a consistent rise in the number of internet users annually.

The implementation of digitization within the tourism sector has the potential to create numerous advantages across various industries. From the service provider's perspective, the internet has significantly reduced operational costs and time consumption. An instance of advertising and promotion targeting the European market may be observed [11]. Therefore, in order to effectively reach the potential market, particularly in regions with exceptional tourism prospects, it is necessary to set up solid, well-developed, and purposeful marketing infrastructure and strategies. Social media platforms play a significant role in the promotion of tourist destinations in Indonesia. Hence, the implementation of Instagram-friendly tourist destinations emerges as an appealing method for promoting tourist attractions without incurring any costs, thereby encouraging an increase in the number of tourists. Given the increasing popularity of digital technology, it is essential to ensure convenient accessibility for tourists to visit various tourist destinations. The process of purchasing travel tickets, selecting transportation options, deciding suitable accommodations, and accessing information about the tourist location can all be conveniently assisted through the use of a smartphone. In modern society, there is a growing demand to be fast, easy, and safe in all aspects, including the area of payments. As a result, many tourists and creative economy sectors have transitioned towards implementing a cashless payment system, specifically digital payments facilitated by QRIS (Quick Response Code Indonesian Standard) [1].

Digital tourism is an effective strategy for promoting the exceptional potential of an area by utilizing a technology-driven platform that specifically targets to the millennial generation. Tourists visiting Indonesia have predominantly engaged in digital activities such as browsing, booking, and making payments. This alteration in lifestyle involves a transition from traditional to digital strategies.

The millennial generation has the potential to maintain significant influence over both the present and future markets. Furthermore, it is essential for the millennial generation to possess a positive mindset towards digital technology, because the key is that the more digital, the more global, so they are demanded to be more interactive, mobile, and personal. The rise in the number of tourists visiting Indonesia has been supported by the active engagement of the millennial generation in online browsing and sharing activities within cyberspace. On the other hand, the millennial generation has grown accustomed to digital connectivity. Implementing digital strategies can serve as a significant advancement in promoting tourist destinations in the region, particularly to effectively reach the substantial millennial generation. Nevertheless, within the field of tourism, some tourist destinations are still showing a sense of unpreparedness, particularly in relation to their access to the internet.

Indonesia ranks among the countries with the highest number of tourist visits internationally. Despite being lower than Thailand in terms of regional tourism revenue,

it is widely acknowledged that there is considerable opportunity for development in the regional tourism potential of this country. However, in the event that the government shows indifference towards the regional tourism marketing strategy, it may lead to a reduction in state revenue earned from the tourism industry. It is important to acknowledge that the presence of both domestic and international tourists plays an important part in ensuring the long-term sustainability of tourism in Indonesia. Tourists are one of the country's foreign exchange sources, which are targeted to continue to increase every year.

Conclusion

Digital communication has emerged as a potent promotional tool in the modern era of information technology and the internet, facilitating the introduction of products to the market. Various studies have demonstrated that digital communication has successfully introduced tourist attractions in the region, particularly for undiscovered tourism purposes. The utilization of digital communication for the purpose of promoting tourism is of utmost importance for tourism villages in Indonesia, particularly in the Sukoharjo Regency, located in the Central Java region, which possesses significant potential for tourism development. The research findings indicate that the successful implementation of digital communication in the tourism industry necessitates the completion of many stages by various stakeholders. The development of tourism promotion via digital media, including websites and social media, requires a comprehensive understanding of each stage involved. Furthermore, it is important to consistently implement and evaluate the use of digital communication as a promotional strategy for tourism villages. Tourism stakeholders, including village governments and communities, are required to have the capability to provide promotional content, text, images, and videos on digital platforms. The evaluation and measurement of the implementation of tourism village promotion through digital communication have identified several follow-up suggestions for developing a digital-based tourism village. These suggestions include encouraging effective collaboration and communication among stakeholders in the development of digital devices, enhancing the digital capabilities of human resources, implementing digital promotion strategies with measurable evaluation, promoting sustainability through websites, social media, and other digital tools, and effectively managing the potential of sustainable tourism villages through technology.

References

- [1] M. M. Purwaningwulan and T. D. Ramdan, "Digital Promotion of Local Tourist Destinations in the New Normal Era and Its Effect on the Economy in Indonesia," *J. East. Eur. Cent. Asian Res.*, vol. 9, no. 1, pp. 29–40, 2022, doi: 10.15549/jeecar.v9i2.873.
- [2] F. Firmansyah, T. Fadhilah, A. Catur, E. Nurmelia, and R. Rachmansyah, "Application of Digital Communication to Increase The Tourism Promotion in Dayeuh Kolot Village, Subang," *Mediat. J. Komun.*, vol. 14, no. 1, pp. 54–65, 2021, doi: 10.29313/mediator.v14i1.7627.
- [3] J. Lantowa, N. Pakaya, and D. Talib, "Development of Community and Digital Marketing Based Bongo

- Religious Tourism Village,” ABDIMAS J. Pengabdi. ... , 2022.
- [4] R. Susanti, S. Purwandari, and B. H. Prilosadoso, “Penta Helix as Strategy of Tourism Village Development in Karangasem Village , Bulu District , Sukoharjo Regency,” *Int. J. Soc. Sci.*, vol. 2, no. 4, pp. 1979–1984, 2022.
- [5] O. Vianti, D. Kagungan, and D. Yulianti, “Strategi Media Branding Pengembangan Sektor Pariwisata Kabupaten Pesisir Barat sebagai Destinasi Wisata Internasional,” *Adm. J. Birokrasi, Kebijakan. dan Pelayanan Publik*, vol. 3, no. 1, pp. 103–110, 2021, doi: 10.23960/administrativa.v3i1.68.
- [6] B. Andari and H. Suprayitno, “the Branding Strategy of Tanjungsari Batok Tourism Village in Blitar City As a Tourist Destination,” *JARES (Journal Acad. Res. Sci.*, vol. 5, no. 2, pp. 39–47, 2020, doi: 10.35457/jares.v5i2.1035.
- [7] B. F. Bichler and M. Lösch, “Collaborative governance in tourism: Empirical insights into a community-oriented destination,” *Sustain.*, vol. 11, no. 23, 2019, doi: 10.3390/su11236673.
- [8] T. Kurniawan, I. Suaidi, S. N. Hidayati, and Ermawati, “Local-made Craft as Tourist Village Souvenirs: Challenges and Opportunities,” *J. Pendidikan, Sos. dan Keagamaan*, vol. 21, no. 2, pp. 941–952, 2023.
- [9] K. Ulfa, M. Zaenuri, D. E. Rahmawati, S. Rasanjani, M. Mukhrijal, and A. Imanullah, “Branding Strategy ‘The Light Of Aceh’ Through E-Tourism On Sustainable Tourism Development in Aceh Province,” *J. Gov. Public Policy*, vol. 8, no. 3, p. PROGRESS, 2021, doi: 10.18196/jgpp.v8i3.11034.
- [10] N. K. Arismayanti, “Branding Strategy of Tourism in Bali Based on Cultures and Heritage,” *Int. Sci. Soc. Sci. Eng. Energy Conf.*, no. Table 1, pp. 1–14, 2017.
- [11] O. Jayabaya, H. Bekti, R. W. S. Sumadinata, and I. Widianingsih, “Digital Tourism Strategy In Indonesia,” *Vegueta. Anu. la Fac. Geogr. e Hist.*, vol. 23, no. 1, pp. 58–67, 2023, doi: 10.5281/zenodo.7565463.