Branding Tourism's Image

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Abstract

The tourism development strategy through the digital economy in building a brand image is very important in developing the tourism industry business. The role of Marketing Public Relations through brand image is the spearhead in maintaining the minds of consumers to be loyal and different from increasingly high competitors. The reason the researchers took this theme is the importance of the uniqueness of packaged tourism to shape economic activity through the use of information and communication technology that can affect the economy. This research was conducted at Curug Gondoriyo Semarang. The waterfall is one of the new tourist attractions in Semarang and is starting to be known to the public as a neglected natural tourism, but has a unique beautiful waterfall area with a height of 15 meters and is more attractive after being laid out. then promoted. Sources of research data are primary and secondary data. This study uses a qualitative research method. Methods of data collection through direct observation to the field, interviews, questionnaires. The results of the research are marketing public relations through social media with brand image opinion leaders, carrying out word of mouth techniques, conducting events as a media promotion and an ecotourism concept approach that preserves natural resources as the main issue in human life, both economically and socially.

I. Introduction

The Semarang city government has begun to share its concentration both in handling Covid 19, but also focus on directing the tourism development process again. According to the Mayor of Semarang in Nazzala(1)stated that in 2022, the Semarang City Government will try to refocus on tourism development, because it is an equitable portion of development through a number of tourism development plans. Therefore, tourism economic activity in the city of Semarang must be ready to compete in finding opportunities for unique tourism as a new breakthrough in the concept of tourism promotion.

Pandemic conditions are still destroying the tourism industry in the city of Semarang, so a strategy is needed in developing tourism through how to revive the tourism sector. One of them is building a brand image and maintaining the concept of ecotourism for nature-based tourism.

The unique potential of Curug Gondoriyo is a new tourist attraction that attracts tourist visits. This tourist area was originally neglected, and is now arranged to have a contemporary trend, where the waterfall is equipped with dozens of glowing lights. The freshness of the water feels so delicious flowing at a height of about 15 meters. It is located in a village that

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originates from the new Semarang hill river which is connected to the Beringin River. This contemporary concept of nature tourism can become a brand image in the minds of consumers.

This research was carried out, because Curug Gondoriyo has the natural potential of a cold and refreshing waterfall, then there is a water channel made of teak wood that reaches 100 years and the local people call it Talang Londo. In addition, it has several instagenic photo spots and the most hits, namely the Mak Matchang Bridge made of bamboo, which is able to build a tourism brand image.

Digital Economy is all forms of economic activity that utilizes the help of information and communication technology. According to Pramusinto (2020) the power of technology including digitalization and automation continues to grow and change the pattern of production, distribution, and consumption. As with other areas of life, technology is used to make changes, so also with the legal system as technology in making changes (Hartanto, 2020). Meanwhile, the use of information technology is the benefit expected by users of information systems in carrying out their duties where the measurement is based on the intensity of utilization, the frequency of use and the number of applications or software used (Marlizar, 2021). This includes buying and selling transactions, marketing, and others that can affect the economy. In addition, every transaction process will run more smoothly, quickly and safely (2). The digital economy in Indonesia continues to experience significant development. This can be seen from the large number of e-commerce that is mushrooming. This economic digitization has also turned out to be an opportunity for the MSME industry, because MSMEs can market their products and services more broadly, more easily and cheaper. If this is applied as a special destination for existing tourist attractions, it can become a tourism brand image that is sought and enjoyed by tourists, and an increase in MSMEs in the community around Curug Gondoriyo.

The potential of SMEs in Gondoriyo Waterfall is oyster mushrooms, knitting crafts, etc. that need to be reviewed for the feasibility of marketing public relations to strengthen the surrounding economy. The existing obstacle is that the role of the leader, especially human resources, needs to be improved, such as the lack of personnel in promoting tourism products and community products.

The results of this research focus on nature, technology improvement, and economy & human resources. The people of Curug Gondoriyo still do not have a high sense of trust in promoting the uniqueness of their tourist attractions. Therefore, they must be built in their thinking, that the MPR's digital economy is able to grow a tourism brand image to improve the local community's economy. Interacting with tourists not only reflects what is in the tourist attraction, but also requires a promotional strategy, as well as strengthening the concept of ecotourism in protecting the natural resource environment.

II. Research Methods

This research is a solution to overcome the problems raised by the research, namely how tourist attractions / natural destinations develop through tourism, especially Curug Gondoriyo which has a unique special interest tourism based on ecotourism which is very attractive to tourists. However, it has not been managed by the local community properly and has not had the support of various parties, especially stakeholders. One way for tourism development that can be carried out by the community and managers of Curug Gondoriyo is through the digital economy stage, where of course the surrounding community wants tourism development to grow with the impact of consumer confidence in the marketing and packaging of tourist attraction/destination products.

Previous research has made the strength of research by combining the concept of positioning strategy through PIB (Positioning-Image-Branding) as an important concept that must be mastered by tourism destination organizations in collaboration with various parties to communicate the brand image of unique tourist destinations and in accordance with marketing targets. The concept of Brand Image becomes important again when it is used for the development of natural tourism attractions/destinations (ecotourism) which is strengthened through marketing public relations to achieve successful tourism development.

This research was conducted through qualitative research with data collection methods using interviews, observations, documents and FGD (Focus Group Discussion). Data sources are government, community organizations, local communities and tourists.

Based on the description above. This study illustrates the role of MPR (Marketing Public Relations) as the most important spearhead in maintaining products to always be in the minds of consumers to be loyal and of course different from competitors who are getting higher around us. Furthermore, the uniqueness of tourism must be packaged properly, because all economic activities with the use of information and communication technology can have an impact on the local community's economy. Brand Image is important to be applied in tourism development, so that tourist attractions/destinations will be more easily recognized by the public to communicate the uniqueness of destinations in their respective regions.

2.1 MPR's Digital Economy in Building a Tourism Brand Image Includes

Digital Economy according to Kemenparekraf (6) Creativity is one of the capital that must be owned by creative economy entrepreneurs. Creative Economy actors must always update their ideas to attract the attention of consumers or audiences. In addition, it can provide benefits for creative and creative actors, namely to prove research, if the transformation to the digital world will make a business unit more efficient and stable, simplify operational processes much more effectively, make the company more developed and to increase turnover.

The digital economy is a sign of future economic development and growth, marked by the rapid development of business or trade transactions that use internet services as a medium for communicating, collaborating and collaborating between companies or individuals.(7).

MPR (Marketing Public Relations) is making various efforts to build or increase brand awareness of the company so that it becomes the choice of the audience. It takes a continuous effort to build brand awareness so that it reaches the highest level, namely top of mind (8). Thus, building a strong and trusted image that has beneficial values and provides solutions to the needs of the community as well as the growing awareness of consumers has significant implications for the success of a company in winning people's minds and at the same time being able to win business competitions.

MPR strategy according to Daud(3)by doing promotions through social media, namely Instagram with opinion leaders, doing word of mouth techniques, conducting events as promotional tools.

a. Social Media

Ardianto in Wattie(9)revealed, that online social media, called online social networks, is not online mass media because social media has social power that greatly influences public opinion that develops in society. Raising support or mass movements can be formed because of the power of online media because what is in social media is proven to be able to shape public or community opinions, attitudes and behavior.

b. Word of Mouth

Consumers as individuals in obtaining or buying goods have gone through processes or stages first, such as getting information either through advertisements or references from other people (word of mouth) then comparing one product with another product until finally consuming it and based on experience. The consumer will buy the same product (3).

c. Events

Events in the narrow sense of exhibitions, performances or festivals, provided that there are organizers, participants and visitors. But in a broad sense, the event is defined as a period of activity carried out by an organization by bringing people to a place so that they obtain important information or experience as well as other goals expected by the organizers according to Kennedy and Rahma in Juwita (10)

d. Brand Image: Ecotourism Zoning

Destination Brand Imageaims to introduce destination products to sell them in the tourism market. As with other products, in order to sell, the product is not only portrayed as carrying out a social construction process, the product must also be communicated to the public. In communicating products, it is necessary to understand several concepts of communicating a product to the public (11).

Ecotourism according to Goodwin in Sastrayuda(12)is "Natural tourism has a mild impact that causes the preservation of species and their habitats directly with their role in conservation and or indirectly by providing views to the local community, to enable local communities to value, and protect nature tourism and other life as a source of income. Meanwhile, the ecotourism area zoning approach (12), including:

1. Core Zone: where the main ecotourism attractions/attractions are.
2. Intermediate Zone (Buffer Zone): where the strength of ecotourism attraction is maintained as the characteristics and characteristics of ecotourism, namely based on the environment as to be avoided from the development and development of other technological elements that will damage and reduce the carrying capacity of the environment and is not commensurate with ecotourism.
3. Service Zone: an area where various facilities needed by tourists can be developed, commensurate with the needs of ecotourism.
4. Development Zone: an area where it functions as a location for cultivation and research for ecotourism development
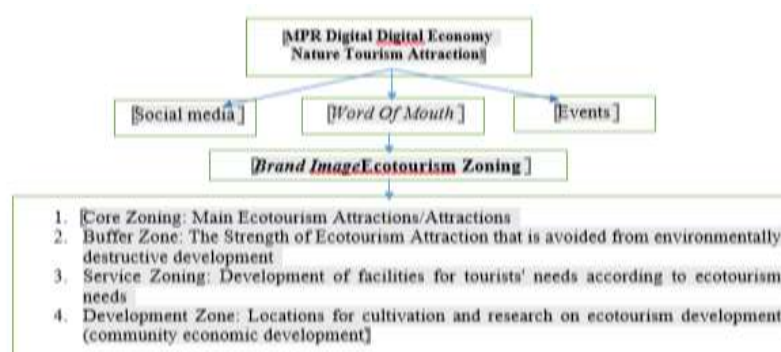
2.2 Research Flowchart

Figure 1. *Flowchart of Research on the Role of MPR's Digital Economy in Building a Tourism Brand Image in Curug Gondoriyo Semarang*

The research stages were carried out through collecting research study data, analyzing concepts and carrying out field observations. Furthermore, to strengthen the research data, the distribution of research data will be carried out to be processed as research data and materials.

IV. Discussion

Based on the results of research for marketing public relations through social media with brand image opinion leaders, carrying out word of mouth techniques, conducting events as promotional media and approaches to the concept of ecotourism that preserve natural resources as the main issue in human life, both economically and socially. So, to be able to win the branding business, image tourism must be strong for tourism to develop and be sustainable

The final result is the creation of a value proposition that is suitable and appropriate in the reason for tourism branding image why target consumers to a destination can win the trust and credibility of the destination requested by the target customer, through trust is obtained by creating a value proposition from the point of view of marketing public relations and create an image from the point of view of the target consumer, on:

4.1 Social Media

Public opinion that is used as a tourism brand in social media is Curug Gondoriyo which comes from a connected/interrelated river flow. This becomes attractive for tourists for educational tourism reasons. What is the education? Where the waterfall development model utilizes the flow of flowing rivers and dams, then it is channeled into a form of waterfall that is useful by the community for village nature tourism. Gradually, the community's creative ideas became the tourism branding of the waterfall, the twinkling lights of the water flowing beautifully on the edge of the waterfall.

Source: https://www.topwisata.info/2019/04/6-potret-keindahan-malam-curug.html

Branding is based on social media, that Curug Gondoriyo is popular among millennials, because tourists can capture beautiful moments of sparkling waterfall lights. Light decorations are deliberately made to create a tourism branding image. This nuance can be enjoyed when at 19.00 to 23.00. While the opening hours are from 09.00 to 23.00. Gondoriyo waterfall is about 20 meters high. Entrance tickets are very cheap around Rp. 5000,-.

4.2 Word Of Mouth

Information from references from other people is important for improving the tourist experience, so the information from field observations states that the people's livelihood is mushroom farmers which can be processed from mushrooms with various products. In addition, there are many creative communities around the Curug Gondoriyo area such as culinary, handicrafts, etc.

Some consumer experiences are very important as a branding image of Gondoriyo waterfall tourism where this review can increase tourist visits from time to time and be

sustainable, so that Gondoriyo waterfall will be increasingly known in the community, and among domestic and foreign tourists. Of course, this can be achieved with the promotion power of tourism branding image. Although Curug Gondoriyo is a new destination in Semarang, which only displays a waterfall that glows through colorful lights, it has been able to create a tourist brand, that this place creates a lot of beauty and comfort when in the location of attraction. The condition of this area was originally very neglected and has now become beautiful, where the scenery around the waterfall is beautiful and green, combined with the installation of 16 lamps at the bottom of the waterfall. This idea makes Gondoriyo look very beautiful.

Source: https://travelingyuk.com/curug-gondoriyo/182774/

The nuance of developing tourism is a combination of contemporary natural tourism, with a brand image that provides several instagenic spots. The Matchmaker Bridge made of bamboo is the most popular, where the bridge is decorated with umbrellas and colorful lights.

4.3 Events

Opinions or ideas expressed can be done by organizing events by inviting stakeholders who know about tourist destinations. Furthermore, the event can make tourism destinations can develop well by discussing the initial steps with questions about our tourist destinations.

a. What makes your travel destination unique?
b. What will consumers experience when they experience a trip to the destination we are visiting?
c. How is your destination different from other destinations in Asia or around the world?

The three questions above are used to clarify the problems that will be known by destination managers for destination development in strengthening tourism branding. This technique is easiest to collect a list of ideas from several discussion groups by doing brainstorming. One magic diagram displays to receive answers to the overall question what makes your destination unique?" during the process the diagram must be visible to all participants, thereby stimulating the emergence of various ideas for the development of an event. The most important part in improving the tourism brand image is the existence of performance activities that are displayed to tourists as a source of tourist information, especially in the tourist experience and keeping tourists from enjoying the beauty and activities of tourists. The activities that can be offered are:

1) Susruk Wangan in the month of Suro
   This activity is cleaning the river flow and then praying, salvation and a festive harvest continue praying
2) Dimples Music/Kotek
   Music made from the mortar played by simbah or old people wearing traditional clothes
3) Fishing mania
   Fishing around the waterfall that is in demand by tourists while enjoying the view
4) Community events such as singing competitions, UMKM bazaars, etc

1. *Brand Image*: Ecotourism Zoning
   This ecotourism zoning is to achieve several zoning targets that are adapted to attractive environmental conditions in forming a tourism brand image
2. Core Zone: where the main ecotourism attractions/attractions are.
   The core zone of attraction is Curug Gondoriyo which is very interesting to enjoy as a beautiful natural attraction. Furthermore, there are other supporting attractions, namely:

1) Sego Bledug and Wedang Sinom
   During the colonial era, rice as a staple food for local people became expensive, the average population ended up eating corn to increase nutrition. How to cook in Pawon by using firewood and making a sound of ash belt. So this food menu is a combination of rice plus corn.
   Wedang Sinom is a young tamarind leaf mixed with turmeric and palm sugar with a fresh and delicious taste. This drink is beneficial for digestion and also for people who want to lose weight / diet. Usually packaged in bottles that are packaged at a price of Rp. 6,000 or Rp. 7,000.
2) Cave
   This cave has primate statues that have existed since time immemorial. Usually children like to play in this cave, but now it is no longer due to the many changes in the natural environment.
3) Watu Tumpang
   Stones that don't touch the ground or float by 10%.
4) Talang Londo
   Relics from the Dutch era that have existed since ancient times that have existed for hundreds of years and are still functioned as water connectors
5) Swimming pool
   The swimming pool water comes from the river Anyes, usually long ago for bathing and washing. But now it is no longer and is used as a flow of water to the swimming pool
6) Rice fields
   As a waterfall trekking area

1. Intermediate Zone (Buffer Zone): where the strength of ecotourism attraction is maintained as the characteristics and characteristics of ecotourism, namely based on the environment as to be avoided from the development and development of other technological elements that will damage and reduce the carrying capacity of the environment and is not commensurate with ecotourism.
   In this zone, tourists are expected to be able to maintain the natural environment and also the ecotourism environment that has been formed and maintained, packaged by the manager as a tourist attraction that can be offered to tourists. So to maintain this, a tourism management community organization was formed with the chairman: Mr. Arifin, Secretary: Mba Atun, Treasurer: Mba Fujiati, Guide: Mba Suci, Mba Fitri, Culinary: Ms Hayati. Hygiene and security department etc.
2. Service Zone: an area where various facilities needed by tourists can be developed, commensurate with the needs of ecotourism.
   Facilities for service needs at Curug Gondoriyo are: bathrooms, prayer rooms, health centers, food and beverage stalls.
3. Development Zone: an area where it functions as a location for cultivation and research for ecotourism development
   Development for the cultivation of processed mushrooms, various processed cassava, handicrafts and others. This development area is located in RT 03. Research and

development that can be carried out are community economics (MSMEs), culinary, culture, education, natural development models, attraction planning and ecotourism.

Destination products that have been achieved in the tourism market, including pokja ngaliyan, posyandu tambak aji, Podomoro Village, PKK Tambak Aji, PKK Griya Lestari, PKK Gondoriyo etc.

The next step is to communicate and consult with all of our destination stakeholders. This is important because the brand image of a tourism destination cannot be built by one party, but must be built together by all stakeholders of the existing destination. In addition, this is also useful so that all stakeholders involved in advancing the destination feel they have each other and feel they have an obligation to manage and build it. Consultation with stakeholders should be carried out at all steps in building a tourism branding image.

V. Conclusion

The way to be able to maintain high business competitors is to maintain the tourism branding image in the minds of consumers. This strategy is very useful to penetrate the perception of competition in seizing the minds of target customers, so that consumer products and services can be associated with always being the target of the customer's mind on an ongoing basis. The target is through marketing public relations, namely social media with brand image opinion leaders, using word of mouth techniques, conducting events as promotional media and approaches to the ecotourism zoning brand image concept that preserves natural resources as the main issue in human life, economically and socially.

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