



Utilization of New Media in Tourism Marketing Communication: Marketing Strategy Conducted by Government Tourism Office of West Sulawesi

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Abstract. Tourism is one of the leading sectors that can promote a region's economy. An innovative marketing strategy is needed to increase tourist awareness of destinations in West Sulawesi. This study aims to analyze the marketing strategy conducted by the Tourism Office of West Sulawesi. The method used in this research is a case study. The results of this study indicate that the strategy conducted by the Tourism Office in promoting the tourism potential in West Sulawesi is to create a calendar of events with various themes of activity capable of attracting tourists. In addition, the West Sulawesi Tourism Office also maximizes the use of new media, including websites and several social media such as Youtube, Facebook, and Instagram.

Keywords: Marketing Communication · Marketing Strategy · New Media · Tourism

1 Introduction

West Sulawesi Province, commonly abbreviated as SULBAR, is a division of South Sulawesi Province formed based on Law Number 26 of 2004 and was inaugurated on October 5, 2004, as the 33rd Province, with its capital in Mamuju Regency.

The West Sulawesi region includes 6 (six) regencies, namely: Mamuju, Central Mamuju, Mamasa, Majene, Polewali Mandar and Pasangkayu Regencies. It has a wealth of natural resources and tourism potential that is quite large, diverse, beautiful, unique, and exciting to visit. Start from the beauty of nature tourism, the uniqueness of exotic community culture, and the presentation of various types of particular interest and alternative tourism scattered in various coastal and mountainous areas that require special skills to conquer them.

The long coastline of West Sulawesi also includes the potential for marine tourism, which is the character of West Sulawesi tourism. Its inhabitants from 5 regencies are located along the coast (Jazira Mandar) and, in the past, known as the “Bahari or “Seafarers” community which is marked by the “Means of Transportation” fishing boats called SANDEQ. Sandeq is a monumental work of Mandar sailors. From 2017 to 2020, the Ministry of Tourism of the Republic of Indonesia has established the Sandeq Race as one of the Calendars of Events “100 Top National Events”.

Pitu Ba'bana Binanga and Pitu Ulunna Salu are two regional mapping strengths that illustrate West Sulawesi's tourism potential in coastal and mountainous areas. All this potential needs to develop to become a superior tourist attraction.

Tourism is one of the leading sectors developed in West Sulawesi. Apart from having considerable tourism potential, tourism is also a source of local revenue. Apart from being the economy's engine, tourism is an attractive vehicle for reducing unemployment, especially for people living in areas or locations that are tourist destinations.

Tourist visits are the main indicator of tourism performance. Based on data from the West Sulawesi Provincial Tourism Office, it is known that the number of tourists visiting West Sulawesi in 2020 will be more than 467 thousand people, consisting of 140 foreign tourists (tourists) and 327 domestic tourists (wisnus).

In the development and sustainability of the tourism sector, communication is an important aspect, especially in the marketing process. The marketing process for tourism potential plays a vital role in informing tourists and helping them choose their destination. The marketing process is also influenced by the development of information technology and the rapid progress of digital [1].

New media allows tourism business managers to market their products massively and quickly in marketing tourism potential. An innovative marketing strategy is needed, such as using new media in marketing the tourism potential in West Sulawesi to be known by the wider community and increase the number of tourists visiting West Sulawesi.

2 Marketing Communication

Kotler and Keller say that marketing communication is a means companies use to convey, remind and persuade consumers directly or indirectly about a product and brand they sell [2]. Marketing communication is a form of communication that strengthens the marketing strategy to reach a broader segmentation. There is the marketing communication mix in marketing communication, which has several components, namely advertising, sales promotion, personal selling, word-of-mouth, events and experiences, public relations and publicity, interactive marketing, and direct marketing [3].

Furthermore, Tuckwell also explained that various marketing communication elements have strategic roles. The elements in question are (1) Advertising, a persuasive form of Integrated Marketing Communication Theory (IMC) designed to stimulate a positive response from the defined target market. Advertising consists of mass communication through print media, electronic media, and other media (billboards, internet, etc.), (2) Direct Marketing is sending messages to the target audience directly either through direct mail, interactive telephone via television, or telemarketing, (3) Sales Promotion, is a sales promotion that involves special incentives to stimulate direct reactions from consumers and distributors, (4) Personal Selling, is a personal sale that involves a personal message from the seller to the buyer, (5) Public Relations, is the overall planned communication, both internally and externally, between a company and all its audiences to achieve specific goals, and (6) Event Marketing and Sponsorship, are two different things. Events involve planning, organizing, and marketing as an integrated event from other communication activities. At the same time, sponsorship is a company that provides a budget for holding events with the ultimate goal of promoting the company or brand itself [4].

Advances in technology and the development of the internet have made it possible to obtain new ways of marketing goods and services. Companies that use traditional communication tools influence customers through groups of representatives, agents, or retailers. The approach has no direct interaction. Just communicating with the consumer is very important. Meanwhile, producers or marketers dominate the modern communication concept using new communication media (digital media), interactive, and digitalization-based media. Digital marketing communication is a process of two-way message exchange. The two-way marketing communication process is understood as a form of dialogic marketing. Dialogic marketing is a form of communication between marketers or sellers, consumers or buyers, activities that direct the decision process in marketing, and direct mutually satisfying exchanges through awareness or understanding of the parties involved (two-way interactive) [5].

Marketing communication is targeted through prospects to consumers using communication media (digital), for example, TV, newspapers, magazines, radio, billboards, internet networked telemarketing networks, and others. Referring to the concept of the marketing process, communication or promotional elements can achieve the following functions: (1) Information function, namely as a function of introducing products, especially new products known, and other information in the form of determining the suitability of customer needs, desires, and requests; (2) The function of persuasion, namely as a function of persuasion to maintain the brand, to selectively product through brand supremacy, emotional appeal, repetition, and identifying effective products; (3) The function of combining information and persuasion, namely the function of marketers combining or unifying information and being persuasive through promotional messages, trying to develop, and product selectivity at the same time.

2.1 Promotion

One of the activities carried out by marketing communication is promotion. Promotion is a form of communication used to inform, remind, and persuade people about a product produced by individuals, organizations, and households. In essence, promotion is a form of marketing communication that is one of the determining factors for the success of a marketing program. Promotion or marketing communications can affect the viability of a company. Without promotion, consumers will not know and or even use the products or services offered by a company, whether large, medium, or small [6]. The basic instrument used to achieve the company's communication objectives is called the *promotional mix* [7]. Traditionally, the promotion mix includes four elements, namely: advertising, sales promotion, personal selling, public relations/publication, direct marketing, and interactive media. Each element of the promotional mix can take various forms, and each has its advantages and disadvantages. All promotional mix elements are seen as an integrated marketing communication instrument that plays a vital role in the IMC program.

2.2 Interactive Marketing

The massive development of the internet has led to changes in marketing. It allows for interactive communication through mass media. With interactive media, it is possible to

have a reciprocal flow of information so that users can participate and modify the form and content of information in real-time. The presence of the internet and new media has changed how companies design and implement business and marketing strategies. Currently, new media has become an attractive advertising medium. It can be said that new media are media used to carry out all elements of the promotional mix. Besides being used for advertising, new media can also carry out other promotional activities such as sales promotions with coupons, contests, and online sweepstakes. Because it is interactive, new media is an effective way to communicate with consumers.

3 Digital-Based Tourism

Tourism is one of the new industries capable of rapidly increasing economic growth in terms of employment opportunities, income, the standard of living, and activating other production sectors in the tourism-receiving country. Today's technological advances in the tourism sector have resulted in the emergence of the tourism 4.0 era, which impacts the 4.0 industrial revolution. This era is marked by the ease of access to information through digital media. Tourism era 4.0 is also the cause of the emergence of the phenomenon of shifting management of tourist destinations around the world. All developments and changes from this revolution lead to the same key, namely through the power of digitizing information. Tourism 4.0 is a form of developing the tourism industry by utilizing the technology used in industry 4.0 to enable the tourism industry to be more innovative. The application of smart tourism is an innovation in various types of tourism businesses in various locations so that distance and time are not a problem. This condition can also be an opportunity to open various job opportunities. The purpose of smart tourism is to focus on meeting the needs of tourists by combining the development of communication and information technology to promote tourism, improve the quality of tourism services, improve tourism management and enlarge the scale of the industry to be more comprehensive [8].

4 New Media

New media is digital media that is interactive, combines two-way communication, and involves several forms of computing. New media in the context of the digital era as it is today is media based on information and communication technology that relies on speed in terms of content dissemination. In developing new media, hardware and software technology are determining factors. Laptops, tablets, and smartphones have become the primary means of accessing new media [9]. New media are all forms of media that combine the three C elements: (1) Computing and Information Technology (IT), (2) Communication networks, (3) Convergence (Digitized Media and Information Content) [10].

The main characteristic of new media is interactivity. Interactivity is a colloquial term in which the use of new media involves two or more participants who produce, distribute, and simultaneously receive messages facilitated by computer technology. Computer-mediated communication is based on the principle of interactivity, which is also the difference between new media and old media. This interactivity will become unclear if human language and computer language cannot be communicated through hypertext.

5 Research Method

Researchers used qualitative research methods with a case study approach in this study. Creswell (2016) states that research with a case study approach is a series of scientific activities carried out intensively, in detail, and in-depth regarding a program, event, and activity, either at the individual level, a group of people, institutions, or organizations to gain in-depth knowledge about an event. The subject of this research is the Tourism Office of West Sulawesi Province. The research object is new media in tourism marketing communications carried out by the Tourism Office of West Sulawesi Province [11]. Determination of resource persons in this study using a purposive sampling technique. This technique includes selected people based on specific criteria made by researchers based on research objectives. This study's data collection techniques used three stages: observation, interviews, and documentation. To test the validity of the data in this study, using data triangulation, namely, source triangulation, technical triangulation, and time triangulation.

6 Findings and Discussion

From a marketing perspective, the implementation of tourism in West Sulawesi can be analyzed using a SWOT analysis (*Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats*).

(1) *Strengths*. The advantage of tourism in West Sulawesi is its diversity of potential tourism resources, local wisdom, and stakeholder and community support. (2) *Weaknesses*. The weakness of West Sulawesi tourism is the low management of tourism activities and human resources, the lack of support for facilities and infrastructure, and the connectivity of destinations is still low. (3) *Opportunity*. Several things become great opportunities for tourism in West Sulawesi, namely, the opening of a new National Capital City (IKN) located in East Kalimantan and directly adjacent to West Sulawesi, the high commitment of local government leaders to develop tourism, the geographical position located in West Sulawesi. in the middle of the island of Sulawesi. (4) *Threats*. The main threats to West Sulawesi tourism are competition between the buffer zones of the State Capital (IKN), limited budget availability, and the lack of access to transportation to West Sulawesi.

After knowing the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats of West Sulawesi tourism through a SWOT analysis, the West Sulawesi Provincial Tourism Office, in marketing its tourism potential, uses two forms of promotion, namely by holding various activities guided by the event calendar such as Mamasa Fair, Festival Creative Bands, Bulu Tourism Festival, Tourism Object Promotion, Echo Ramadan,

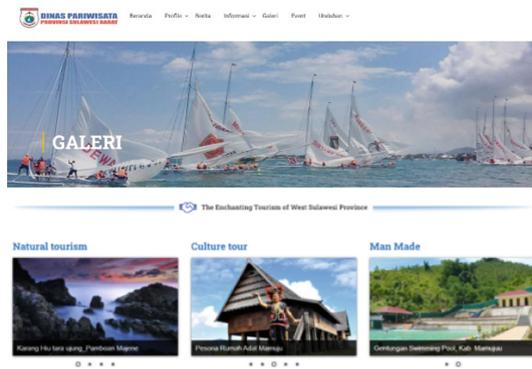


Fig. 1. Website of the West Sulawesi Provincial Tourism Office

Banua Kayyang/Tamajarra Festival, Majene Old Town Festival, Literary Tourism Festival, Selection of Putera Puteri West Sulawesi, Manakarra Fair, Acoustic Festival, Lalla Tassisara Festival, and Gema Marasa. In addition to holding various activities that can bring in tourists, another form of promotion carried out by the Tourism Office of West Sulawesi Province utilizes new media as promotional media. One of the steps taken by the West Sulawesi Provincial Tourism Office is to create a website and various social media to promote tourism potential in West Sulawesi (Fig. 1).

This website was created in 2018 to make it easier and faster for people to access information about tourism in West Sulawesi. This website displays a variety of tourism potentials in West Sulawesi, including nature tourism, cultural tourism, religious tourism, and culinary tourism. In addition, this website also displays the agendas carried out by the West Sulawesi Tourism Office. With this website, it is hoped that it will bring in more domestic and foreign tourists. To maximize tourism potential using new media, the West Sulawesi Tourism Office also has several social media accounts such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram to YouTube (Fig. 2).

Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram social media accounts are integrated. The purpose of making social media is because people are much more familiar with social media. It is hoped that interaction and communication with the broader public can be established by using social media facilities. Messages conveyed on social media accounts are usually about tourism activities, tourism products (souvenirs typical of West Sulawesi), tourist attractions, arts, historical sites, special foods, and information about tourism and cultural developments in the province of West Sulawesi. For social media, YouTube is used by the West Sulawesi Tourism Office to do live streaming so that all activities carried out by the West Sulawesi Tourism Office can be enjoyed by the public [12].

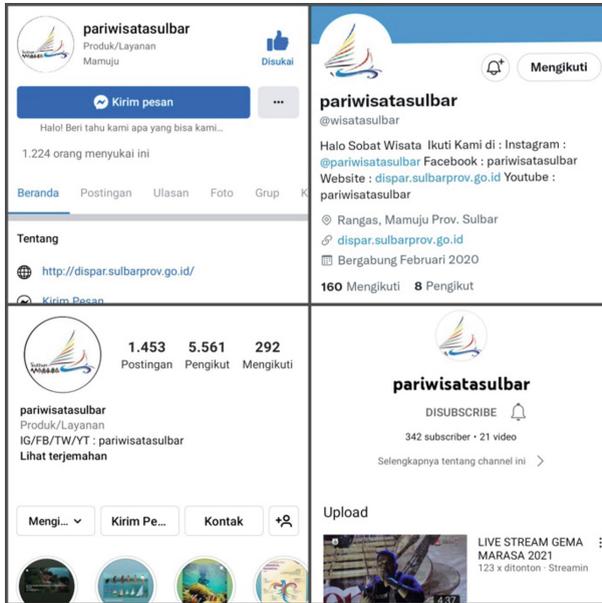


Fig. 2. Social Media of the West Sulawesi Province Tourism Office

7 Conclusion

The development of information and communication technology certainly significantly influences the tourism industry. Technology makes the tourism industry more competitive. Competition does not only occur between countries but also between regions in their respective countries. With the increasingly competitive tourism industry, every tourism actor must provide innovation in marketing their products or services, using traditional methods and modern methods such as the use of new media. It is marked by the demands of tourists from time to time which changes in line with current conditions influenced by technological advances. Departing from this, the West Sulawesi Tourism Office utilizes new media to market the tourism potential in West Sulawesi [13].

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that the presence of new media has changed social media not only as a friend page but has now become a marketing medium and is one of the supporting factors so that the marketing process can run effectively and efficiently as has been done by the West Sulawesi Provincial Tourism Office, using new media in the form of websites and several social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube as media in introducing and marketing tourism products and potential to the public. With the use of new media in marketing and introducing the existing tourism potential, it is hoped that West Sulawesi will become the primary destination for world-class tourist destinations.

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- Concept and Research Question: Milawati, Hafied Cangara.
- Conducting Research and Report Writing: Milawati.
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