

Branding Strategy for Tourism Industry Development Talun District, Cirebon Regency

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Abstract. Branding is essential for tourist attractions and government agencies, one of which is improving the image and reputation of a tourist attraction or institution so that the wider community can know it. There needs to be an appropriate strategy from the Talun District government, which is the authority in tourism development in Talun District, so the author is interested in examining the branding strategy carried out by Talun District in developing the tourism sector as a tourist destination. This research uses a descriptive type of research with a qualitative approach. The Talun District Government of Cirebon Regency plans the construction of the "Wisata Talun Ngangeni" to improve the welfare of rural communities and stimulate the regional economy. In addition to promotion through digital tourism, the participation of local communities is needed to maintain and develop innovations in the area. However, it is only possible to have a positive impact on branding tourism culture with digital tourism. Several forms of digital tourism promote tourism using inappropriate and deviant nuances. Usually, children and adolescents often receive such adverse effects.

Keywords: Branding, Local Tourism, Publication Strategy

INTRODUCTION

Branding is an inherent part of the development of regional competitiveness. The low competitiveness of the region is often related to the need for more knowledge of investors and tourists about the potential possessed by the area, which is why many regions realize the importance of branding to attract as many investors and tourists as possible.

Talun District is known for the beauty of its resources and tourism potential that will be able to change the paradigm of the community. Talun District is an area that must be visited for tourism activities. Utilizing social medicine allows local governments to make existing tourist attractions into national and even international destinations.

Of course, to achieve all that, there needs to be good digital media management, for example, starting from determining what themes will be brought, what content will be raised, and what tourism icons will be branded so that they can become superior and advanced tourist attractions that are not only known by domestic tourists but also to foreign countries. Therefore, there is a need for the right strategy from the Talun District government as the authority in developing tourism in Talun District, so the author is interested in researching the branding strategy carried out by Talun District in developing the tourism sector as a tourist destination.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In tourism, brands are considered marketing weapons and information signals for destination marketers (Fatihudin, 2019). Based on tourist behavior, brands significantly affect the satisfaction and loyalty obtained. Tourism destinations are just like any other consumer product in which brands must have equity, a set of brand assets and liabilities used to identify and differentiate themselves from other products and convey positive messages. Brand equity consists of five categories: brand loyalty, awareness, perceived quality, association, and other propriety of brand assets.

Branding Strategy Theory was presented by Schultz and Barnes in 1999 as a brand management that regulates all elements that aim to form a brand. Branding strategy is also defined as brand management that aims to regulate all brand elements with consumer attitudes and behaviors (Kotler P., Marketing Management, 2002). The objective of a branding strategy is to convey the message clearly, confirm the credibility of the brand owner, connect more personal marketing targets, motivate buyers, and create customer loyalty.

RESEARCH METHOD(S)

This research uses a descriptive type of research with a qualitative approach. Bogdan & Taylor in Moleong (2012: 4) define qualitative methodology as a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words of people and observable behavior. Qualitative research describes a phenomenon that occurs because of existing conditions in the field. Where the data is obtained through observations such as behavior, perception, action, or direct interview with someone who is the source of data information needed by researchers. Then, the data obtained is described using words or language to produce a writing. Researchers use this qualitative approach because it is the purpose of the study, namely wanting to obtain and describe profoundly and thoroughly the branding strategy for the development of the tourism industry in Talun District, Cirebon Regency, as a tourist destination.

This research is a field study by observing and interviewing the Talun sub-district government regarding branding strategies to develop the tourism industry in the Talun sub-district. The results of observations and interviews conducted with the Talun sub-district government will be described qualitatively. Researchers collecting data used several techniques, namely observation, and interviews with the Talun sub-district government regarding branding strategies, after which it was described in a qualitative descriptive manner based on observations and interviews.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Talun is a sub-district in Cirebon Regency, West Java Province, Indonesia. Formerly, this sub-district was called the South Cirebon sub-district. Four villages in the western part of Talun District merged with Sumber District; the four villages now merged with Sumber District are Kemantren, Sendang, Pejambon, and Gunung. After merging with the Sumber sub-district, the four villages became a ward. Two villages located in the Sumber sub-district merged with the Talun sub-district. The two villages that have now merged into the Talun sub-district are Kubang Village and Sarwadadi.

There are four tourist villages in Talun District, Cirebon Regency. The four villages in question are Cempaka, Krandon, Ciperna, and Kubang. Tourism development is welcome to the village and Pokdarwis in each village. All issues in the field must be resolved, especially in terms of formal legal land status. Much potential can be developed, for example, Cimandung ptisan. There are several sacred springs. Then, Pedadaran Stone, Pakungwati Well Shower Well. Balong Biru Site, Nyi Endang Geulis Site, Cimanuk Site, and other potentials. All of that has become religious tourism that runs traditionally and is managed by Kuncen.

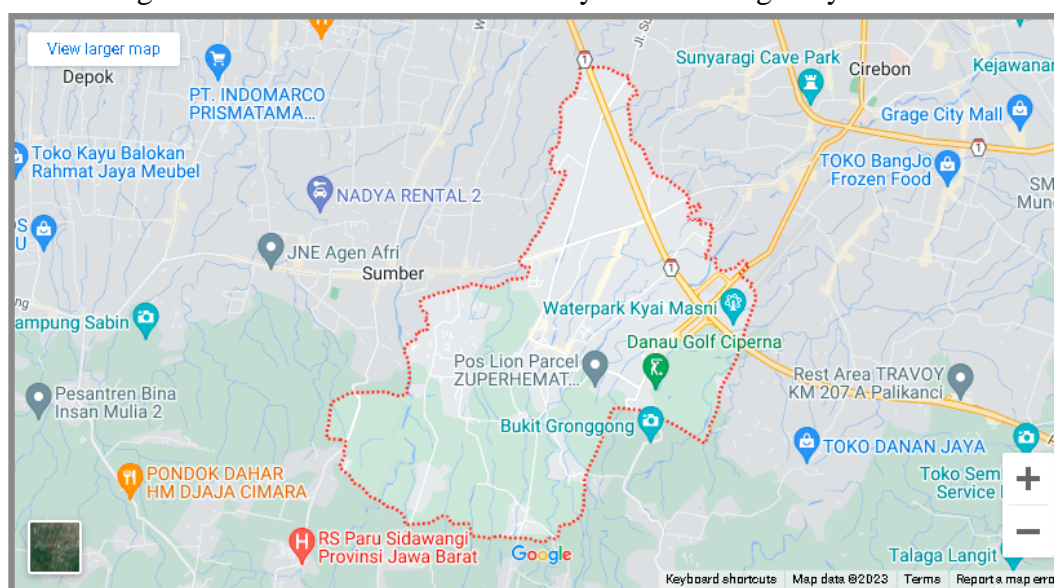


Figure 1: Map of Talun sub-district.

Source: <http://sigi.cirebonkab.go.id/wilayah/detil/32.09.14/1/>

Krandon Village has abundant tourism potential, but what has been running is just religious tourism. Even that is not optimal; the reason is that so far, it is still managed by the palace. Thus, the village could only be built after the permit from the palace was issued. However, now these villages have received a Tourism Village Decree from the Culture and Tourism Office (Disbudpar) so that improvements can be made for development in the future.

As for the potential of natural tourism, a kind of playground will be made after being developed. So that visitors do not just make a pilgrimage. Now, the decree has been issued so that each village can apply for assistance to Disbudpar in the future. One of the priorities is in Balong Biru. There is already a pond, and then there is land to develop. It is planned to build parks and bridges to be used as photo spots.

Branding is a strategic technique to help tourism marketing become more effective and efficient. Tourism branding is generally done in the form of exciting sentences accompanied by logo images that can be found and read through the web or digital publication form plates on various social media. Isdarmanto (2020: 3) states that branding as image management of a place uses strategic changes and economic composition, profitability to society, customs, and government. According to Julia Winfield-Pfefferkorn (2005), in branding a particular area, the use of excellent and appropriate branding techniques can help the area be more liked and even loved, while if you use inappropriate branding techniques, it will realize a particular area to be less popular, and even less noticed. Many culinary centers, cafes, and restaurants have been along Soekarno Street, from the Mountoya red light to the Ciperna T-junction.

The head of Talun Sub-District, Mr. Abadi, asked the heads of villages (*kuwu*) to sharpen and strengthen the preparation of tourism concepts based on the potential of their respective villages. A mapping picture will be obtained aligned with the District Tourism Master Plan prepared by the Cirebon Regency Government. Therefore, branding is one of the critical factors for success in government programs that aim to support the development of tourism in a country. Digital tourism branding is needed for foreign and local tourists who want to visit tourist areas, one of which is in Talun District, Cirebon Regency.



Figure 2: Discussion with Mr. Abadi (Head of Talun Sub-District)

Source: Documentation, 2023

Tourism branding will further develop with digital tourism. The form of digital tourism in Indonesia to develop tourism is by joining the Indonesian Enchantment Generation (GenPI) by forming an innovative destination or modern tourist attraction. The implementation of the Indonesian Enchantment Generation as a digital tourism promotion community has become one of the marketing strategies (branding) of tourism in Indonesia that has entered the international arena.

Generasi Pesona Indonesia is a community formed by the Indonesian Ministry of Tourism consisting of foreign and local tourists interested in the scope of tourism. Tourists will more easily access the Indonesian Enchantment Generation with GenPI.co application via smartphone. GenPI.co application has features that are easy for users to use and have manageable capacity. In this application, there are tourist destinations, from culinary to cultural.

The Talun Sub-District Government of Cirebon Regency plans to construct the "Talun Ngangeni" tourism area to improve the welfare of rural communities and stimulate the regional economy. With the diverse potential of the village, we will build Talun sub-district with a tourism approach," Head of Talun Sub-District, Mr. Abadi when holding the "Wisata Talun Ngangeni" (WAG) Forum Group Discussion (FGD) at Royal Golf Ciperna. In the FGD event, a Team for the Acceleration of the Development of the Talun Sub-District was also formed. This team was established through a Decree of Talun involving elements of the government, academics, media, entrepreneurs, and community leaders. The Pentahelix concept initiated by Talun can trigger the development of Cirebon Regency tourism from the sub-district level. Talun sub-district hopes to realize "Wisata Talun Ngangeni jointly."



Figure 3: Forum Group Discussion of Talun Sub-District

Source: <https://talunngangeni.blogspot.com/>

The figure above is a social media account for introducing tourism in Talun to brand tourism; in addition to collaborating with bloggers, influencers, and journalists, Talun District also uses social media accounts consisting of Instagram, Twitter, Blog, and Facebook accounts. Social media is used as one of the strategies and supporting promotional media in introducing tourism potential in the Talun Sub-District.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The development of increasingly sophisticated digital technology makes facilities and infrastructure easier in promoting tourism. This can be done using a branding system that introduces a brand, name, logo, or slogan. By branding tourism culture 4.0 through digital tourism in Talun District, foreign and local tourists know more about the culture, tourism destinations, and cuisine in Talun District. One way to brand the tourism culture in Talun District is by joining the Indonesian Enchantment Generation (GenPI) community.

The factor that influences media branding for the development of the tourism sector in Talun District, in this case, is the role of each stakeholder, ranging from the community, especially young people, photographer communities, and local social media account groups who have hobbies in the field of tourism. At the same time, the inhibiting factor is the limited human resources from the internal Talun District itself, both in terms of quality and quantity, so the mismatch between the workload and the number of workers causes overlapping work.

Recommendations that can be given by researchers related to media branding strategy research for tourism sector development in Talun District are as follows: Talun District creates a media in the form of an application that can later be used as a tool to make it easier for prospective tourists to get information on tourism destinations in Talun District. Conducting special training on communication and information media (poster design training, ways to take exciting pictures and videos, video editing training using applications, etc.) is done to support the development of tourism media branding strategies in Talun District so that they can make cinematic videos and short videos related to Talun District tourism. Focus on promoting tourism destinations massively using digital media through social media accounts (Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, and Blog) so prospective tourists will be more interested in traveling to Talun District.

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