
**MARKETING COMMUNICATION STRATEGY TO INCREASE TOURISM POTENTIAL
IN KUNINGAN, WEST JAVA****Oleh****Mercynda Tshania****Program Studi Pariwisata, Fakultas Ekonomi dan Bisnis, Universitas Nasional Indonesia
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Region Special Capital City Jakarta, 12520, Indonesia****E-mail: tshaniaa15@gmail.com****Abstrak**

Located in Kuningan Regency, Putri Palutungan Waterfall is a major cultural and tourist attraction. The tourism potential of Kuningan Regency is also supported by accessibility and excellent transportation infrastructure. Several bridges were built to make it easier for tourists to access the tourist attraction area which was once divided by many rivers. With mountain forests, clear waterfalls, and fresh mountain air, Curug Putri Palutungan has a lot to offer tourists, both in terms of natural beauty and adventure. In conducting a descriptive study of the object of writing, the author uses a qualitative method, which is suitable for searching the social and communication fields in particular. In order to better understand the psychological aspects, behavior, attitudes, responses, opinions, feelings and desires of a person or group. Qualitative writing method will be used. The Youth, Sports and Tourism Office at Curug Putri Palutungan, Indonesia, uses a variety of marketing tools to promote the region's tourism potential, including banners and billboards, print media advertisements, online media advertisements, and Kuningan FM radio advertisements.

Keywords: Marketing Communication, Tourism Potential, Brass.**PRELIMINARY**

The tourism sector in Indonesia has experienced rapid development and has transformed into one of the forces driving the national economy. Many countries in the world today are very concerned about the tourism industry. Economic growth can be driven by the travel and tourism industry, foreign exchange earnings will be replaced by the tourism sector which is seen as a positive development. Among the advantages of the tourism industry is that it boosts the country's economy by bringing in more tourists and money from abroad. As a result, countries in both developed and developing countries are working hard to increase the level of tourism in their respective regions.

The tourism industry in Kuningan Regency has a lot of room to develop. Kuningan

Regency is located at latitude 108° 23 - 108° 47 N, and longitude 6° 47 - 7° 12 W, at the

foot of Mount Ciremai. Meanwhile, the capital city is located between 6° 45 and 7° 50 N and 105° 20 and 108° 40 W. At an altitude of 3,076 feet above sea level, Mount Cermi (the highest point in the district) is on the border with Majalengka Regency. The highest point in West Java is Mount Ceremai.

Putri Palutungan waterfall is one of the leading cultural attractions of Kuningan Regency and the most popular tourist destination in the region. In Cigugur District, there is Putri Palutungan Waterfall.

To get there requires an uphill and winding road like climbing a mountain, because it is located at the foot of Mount Ciremai. 'Palutungan' is the Sundanese word for monkey's nest. Palutungan has a number of waterfalls in addition to being a campground. Curug Putri and Curug Mangkok are the two closest waterfalls. The tourism potential of this area is further enhanced by the ease of access and

transportation. Several rivers are used to separate the path to this location.

Several bridges, on the other hand, have been built to help tourists reach popular tourist destination. In addition, the government has done a good job of building a causeway to Kuningan Regency. There is a lot of tourism potential at Curug Putri

Palutungan because of the mountain forests and crystal-clear waterfalls and the refreshing cool air. Rafters can enjoy rafting and camping in designated areas, as well as guard posts and work huts as well as signage and clean water installations. You can also unwind and eat some of the snacks provided.

The long-term vision of Kuningan Regency as an advanced and prosperous tourist destination is set by the Kuningan Regency Government. In order to achieve the objectives of managing, fostering, and promoting the tourist attraction of Kuningan Regency, the Department of Youth, Sports and Tourism was formed. However, the results of these efforts are far from ideal. There is a lot of untapped potential that is not widely known. The number of visitors has not increased significantly in the last six years. There were only 30,000 to 35,000 visitors between 2010 and 2016. According to the data, the Kuningan Regency tourism industry did not experience an increase in demand.

As a means of conveying the unique tourism potential of a destination to the general public, marketing plays an important role in the growth of the tourism industry. In a highly competitive market, marketing communication becomes a strategic alternative to promote business to consumers. That is, the positive impact of tourism can be obtained by using innovative marketing communications, especially through social media. Despite the fact that the attraction has been well accessible and reasonably priced, it will be of no use unless it is communicated to consumers. It is also important to note that tourism is a service business, which means it has its own advantages over the product business. Therefore, a mature communication

strategy is needed in the marketing of tourist attractions.

The Department of Youth, Sports, and Tourism assigned by the Kuningan Regency Government organizes Kuningan tourism marketing promotions, and is expected to be active in creating effective promotions to achieve the goals that have been set. Therefore, researchers conducted a study to find out how the local government of Kuningan promotes Kuningan tourism as a tourism destination based on natural potential through the Department of Youth, Sports, and Tourism.

There are many similarities between promotion strategy and communication science. Publicity, word of mouth marketing, direct selling, and other promotional methods can all be studied in a communications science class such as advertising.

RESEARCH METHODS

Descriptive study was used in this study, which used qualitative methods. Social scientists use this approach because of the emphasis on communication in their research. People or groups are interviewed using qualitative methods to gain a better understanding of what is going on in their minds and how they react to it.

Instagram has been studied as a marketing tool to attract consumers. As a result of their exclusion from marketing activities, researchers were never included in the instrument. The meaning of the respondent is the focus of this research. Therefore, selected participants were interviewed to view specific descriptive studies. Observations and in-depth interviews may have been used in this qualitative research to investigate events (process of events), certain behaviors, or attitudes. Meanwhile, data were collected using descriptive methods and analyzed based on real-world conditions. The purpose of this descriptive qualitative research is to gain a general understanding of social reality from the perspective of the respondents.

However, their understanding was not predetermined,

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Kuningan Youth, Sports and Tourism Office uses various promotional methods (mix promotion). Communication tools are used in marketing communications to promote a product or service. Different promotional mix models are shown in the mixed promotion model. In this case the Kuningan Youth, Sports and Tourism Office uses a marketing communication mix.

Publicity as a tool for marketing communication

- Advertising on Billboards & Banners

Prior to the Kuningan event, large banners and billboards were placed in strategic locations. Researchers found large tourism marketing billboards along Jalan Kuningan, especially before big events.

- Media Relations for Publications in Printing

To promote tourism in Curug Putri Palutungan, Kuningan Regency, the Department of Youth, Sports, and Tourism placed advertisements in local and national print media, such as the People's Mind newspaper "Kuningan Tourism is supported by Curug Putri. Many young women were photographed in front of the Palutungan Putri Waterfall as a backdrop.

- Advertise on the Internet

The popularity of "back to nature" holidays and other outdoor activities has increased recently. The Kuningan Youth Sports and Tourism Office collaborates with several local and national online media to promote its tourism, especially nature tourism, and report on interesting tourism programs. You can see an example of our collaboration on the YouTube channel entitled "Say hello to "Jelajah Kuningan Exploration" on our channel.

- Ads that appear on Radio Kuningan FM Radio broadcasts from Kuningan FM which is headquartered on Jl. Aruji Kartawinata No. 3 Kuningan, Postal Code 45511, Tel (0232) 8894507, promoting the tourism potential of the Palutungan Putri Waterfall. Every day at 5 pm.

and at 12 pm local time, the show was broadcast. Ucup Supratman is a radio broadcaster who is responsible for promoting the tourism potential of Curug Putri Palutungan. As part of the effort to socialize Kuningan tourism, a talk show format was used which presented representatives from the Youth, Sports, and Tourism (YST) Office. The Kuningan Youth, Sports and Tourism Office sent representatives to Majalengka, Cirebon, and Kuningan to provide direction to those who would travel to Kuningan Regency.

Direct marketing as a method of distributing marketing messages

- Turn off the TV

"Nature" or "back to nature" tours have become increasingly popular in recent years. Many television stations broadcast interesting tourism programs, especially nature tourism, as evidenced by their broadcasts. Curug Putri Palutungan can take advantage of this opportunity to expand its natural tourism offerings.

Welcome to Jelajah Kuningan, This is a channel that focuses on Kuningan Regency, cultural tourism spots and West Java, as well as the culinary specialties of Kuningan. Putri Palutungan waterfall, a tourist attraction in Palutungan village, Cigugur, Kuningan regency, West Java, is located at the foot of Mount Ciremai.

- Advertise via the Internet

All of Kuningan's tourism potential has been promoted through internet marketing, which can be viewed at <https://www.kuningankab.go.id/government/skpd/dinas-pemuda-olahragadanpariwisata/kabupaten-kuningan>. Kuningan Youth, Sports and Tourism Office In addition, the Kuningan Youth, Sports and Tourism Office uses Instagram to promote regional tourism potential, including the Palutungan Putri Waterfall. It is widely believed that Internet promotion is a key component in the promotion of Kuningan as a tourist destination. Studies find that Internet

advertising is very effective in promoting a product.

Personal selling as a communication strategy for marketing

- Travel Dialogue

Increased cooperation between tourism organizations is one result of the partnership development program of the Kuningan Youth, Sports and Tourism Office. The tourism business partnership forum, Kuningan Regency tourism service certification, and tourism service business partnership development are all included in the program.

- Workshop

Youth, Sports and Tourism Office staff gather for a training session for tourism operators in Kuningan Regency. Instead of a five-star hotel or conference center, a popular tourist attraction hosts workshops. An agency chaired by Jaka Chaerul recently held a workshop on the topic of tourism. Surprisingly, the workshops took place in tourist spots rather than in luxury hotels. The number of visitors to various attractions continues to increase, according to records kept by the manager of the attraction. In addition, with the increase in the number of restaurants around tourist attractions, the need for hotels also increases.

- Training as a tour guide

Tour guide training is provided by the Department of Youth, Sports and Tourism. The purpose of this training is to help visitors from other countries. Thus, they can enjoy the beauty of Kuningan longer. Youth, Sports and Tourism in Kuningan trained 50 youths to make Kuningan a popular tourist destination.

Sales Promotion is an important part of marketing strategy.

- Reduced costs

Visitors who want to camp at the attraction can get everything they need from the manager, including tents, mattresses, mats, and beds, as well as electricity, firewood, and snacks. According to Agus, visitors are required to pay an entrance ticket of Rp. 22,000 per person, not including the vehicle they bring.

For national holidays, visitors can enjoy discounts at natural attractions in Palutungan, such as 13,000 per person (including insurance), 20,000 per person for flying fox tickets, 10,000 per person for outbound/fun game prices.

- The official launch of Ayo Wisata

Ayo Wisata was just released not too long ago. Dr. H. Toto Toharuddin, M.Pd, Secretary of the Youth, Sports and Tourism Office, stated that the Minister of Youth and Sports is scheduled to attend a multi-event tournament organized by his institution. The bamboo festival, underground parade, traditional sports, youth volleyball, and the launch of Ayo Wisata were part of the tournament which was officially opened by the Minister of Youth and Sports.

Public relations can be used as a tool for marketing communications.

- Information Center

Cibuntu Pasawahan Kuningan District Tourism Village and the Youth, Sports and Tourism Office are both equipped with a tourist information center. In 2018 to realize "an independent, religious, and prosperous Kuningan through advanced, superior, and sustainable culture and nature-based tourism" is the goal set by Kuningan Regency.

- Cooperating The development and management of the attraction will be handled in partnership with the Youth, Sports and Tourism Office of Perhutani after a thorough evaluation of the current marketing campaign. Internal harmony is the goal here.

- A group of tourism supporters.

Community empowerment, including the formation of Tourism Activist Groups, plays a very important role in tourism growth. The Tourism Activist Group makes residents more aware of the importance of tourism development. They play a role in promoting tourism and raising awareness in the Palutungan area. The findings of this study indicate that public relations plays an important role in a company's marketing efforts. Research findings indicate that public relations activities are carried out in three categories: information centers,

cooperation, and the formation of tourism drivers. According to the results of this study, tourist destinations are driven by relational public managers, which is in line with previous research

CONCLUSION

The advertising strategy of the Department of Youth, Sports, and Tourism to promote Curug Putri Palutungan Kuningan includes the use of billboards, print advertisements, and online advertisements, as well as radio broadcasts on FM Kuningan radio. TV blocking and internet marketing such as the use of websites and Instagram are used by the Kuningan Regency Youth, Sports and Tourism Office to increase the tourism potential of the Palutungan Putri Waterfall.

Increasing the tourism potential of the Palutungan Putri Waterfall in Kuningan Regency through personal selling is achieved through travel dialogue, workshops, and training of tour guides. The Department of Youth, Sports and Tourism used price reductions and the launch of Ayo Wisata as part of a marketing communication strategy to increase tourism potential in Curug Putri Palutungan, Kuningan Regency.

Suggestion

It is recommended that the Department of Youth, Sports, and Tourism should further optimize the increase in potential that is more updated according to the times.

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