

Promotion Strategy of Tourist Visit at Bhumi Merapi Agrotourism in Sleman District

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Abstract: Agrotourism Bhumi Merapi is a tourism destination based on agriculture, plantations and livestock, located on Jl. Kaliurang, Sawangan, Hargobinangun, Pakem, Sleman, Special Region of Yogyakarta. Visitors can relax and study at the same time in a cool and comfortable place. The purpose of this study was to determine the promotion strategy applied by the manager of Agrotourism Bhumi Merapi in increasing tourist visits. The type of the research is descriptive qualitative research which is a research method that utilizes qualitative data and describes descriptively. The reason for choosing the topic was because the researchers want to describe the conditions observed in the field more specifically, transparently and in depth. Meanwhile, in collecting the data, the researchers conducted interviews and observations. Those who were chosen as informants were the managers of agrotourism Bhumi Merapi and 10 domestic tourists. The data analysis method employs the John W. Creswell model, which uses the following steps: data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and affirmation of conclusions. The results of the study indicate that promotional strategy used by the manager of agrotourism Bhumi Merapi is through social media called Instagram and Facebook and doing sales promotions assisted by Sleman Regency Tourism Office. It can be summed up that after the emergence of Instagram social media, the manager prefers to use it as promotional tools rather than using Facebook because Instagram is considered more effective, easier and faster in the process of using and disseminating information.

Keywords: agrotourism; promotion strategy; tourist destination; tourist visit

RESEARCH BACKGROUND

Yogyakarta is an area that has great potential in terms of developing the tourism business industry. Besides being called a city of education and culture, Yogyakarta is also a tourist city. This can be proven by the increasing number of tourist visits every year, both domestic and foreign tourists. Tourism business actors continue to develop their business in the tourism sector. Because they see Yogyakarta as a promising area for business, especially in terms of its tourism business.

One of the tourist attractions in Sleman Regency is the Bhumi Merapi Agritourism tourism object. Bhumi Merapi Agrotourism is located on Jalan Kaliurang Km. 20 in Sawungan Hamlet, Hargobinangun, Pakem, Sleman, Yogyakarta. The concept of agrotourism is very unique and interesting, because the concept of tourism is quite rare in various regions in Indonesia.

Combining tourism with agriculture is not something easy. Moreover, packing two destinations at once, traveling is also learning or the cool term is edutourism.

The area around the tourism object has good potential with the backdrop of the view of Mount Merapi, which makes the place suitable for camping, outbound, field trips, nature tours, reunions, makrab or just to unwind with family. Because it is located not far from the slopes of Mount Merapi. In addition, this tourist spot carries the concept of educational tourism, very suitable for school children who want to take a vacation while studying. Although the distance is quite far from the city of Yogyakarta, now it has begun to be visited by tourists.

The researchers know that the comparison of data on tourist visits to Bhumi Merapi Agrotourism in each year is always unstable. For this reason, the manager needs to pay attention to the amount of data, because to maintain the stability of the number of visitors it is very important. And the problem with the current manager is how to get tourists to be interested in visiting these tourist destinations and so that the number of tourist visits remains stable.

Several promotional strategies are definitely used by managers to increase tourist visits in order to get sufficient income as before. Therefore, the researchers are interested in researching the strategies used by agrotourism Bhumi Merapi to increase the tourist visits.

From the description above, the researchers are interested in conducting research on "Promotional Strategies in Increasing Tourist Visits in Bhumi Merapi Agrotourism, Sleman Regency".

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Tourism

Tourism is a variety of tourism activities that are supported by various facilities and services provided by the community, businessmen, government and local governments. (Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 10 of 2009). Tourism is a phenomenon caused by the departure and return of people from their places of residence for reasons that can be disclosed or not disclosed, including services (hospitality), meetings and communication with other people, companies that offer services and technology so that access is available and convenient (Sarhini Mbah Ben, 2018:113).

Tourism is a social, cultural and economic phenomenon which entails the movement of people to countries or places outside of their usual environment for personal or business/professional purposes. Those people are called visitors (which may be either tourists or excursionists; residents or non-residents) and tourism has to do with their activities, some of which involve tourism expenditure (www.unwt/o.org).

Tourist attraction

A tourist attraction is anything that has uniqueness, beauty, and value in the form of a diversity of natural, cultural, and man-made resources that are the target or purpose of tourist visits (Law of the Republic of Indonesia article 1 paragraph 5 No 10. Year 2009 concerning Tourism). Nicolaus Got, (2013: 273), a tourist attraction must meet three requirements, namely: a. Something to do; b. Something to see; c. Something to buy. Tourist attraction is a place that people visit for pleasure and interest, usually while they are on holiday (Cambridge Business English Dictionary @ Cambridge University Press)

Strategy

According to Jauch and Gleuck (in Amirullah, 2015:5), strategy is a unified, comprehensive and integrated plan that links the company's strategic advantages with environmental challenges and which is designed to ensure that the company's main goals can be achieved through proper implementation by the company. Strategy is understood not only as a variety of ways to achieve goals but also includes the determination of the various goals themselves.

The formulation of a strategy is based on the concept of strategy where, according to Freddy Rangkuti (2015: 4) the strategic concepts are:

a. Distinctive Competence

Actions taken by the company in order to perform activities better than its competitors.

b. Competitive Advantage

Specification activities developed by the company to be superior to its competitors.

Agrotourism

According to Bagus and Ruspendi (2015: 84), agritourism is defined as a combination of tourism and agriculture where visitors can visit gardens, farms or wineries to buy products, enjoy performances, take part in activities, eat a meal or skip a meal. night together in a plantation area or park.

In Indonesia, agrotourism or agritourism is defined as a form of tourism activity that utilizes agribusiness as a tourist attraction with the aim of expanding knowledge, experience, recreation and business relations in the agricultural sector.

National Ag Law Center NACL, Agritourism can be defined as a form of commercial enterprise that links agricultural production and/or processing with tourism in order to attract visitors onto a farm, ranch, or other agricultural business for the purposes of entertaining and/or educating the visitors.

Tourist

According to Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 10 of 2009-chapter VII article 20 concerning Tourism, it is stated that every tourist has the right to:

- 1) Accurate information about tourist attractions
- 2) tourism services according to standards;
- 3) Legal protection and security;
- 4) Health services
- 5) Protection of personal rights; and
- 6) Insurance protection for high-risk tourism activities.

A tourist is a person who is visiting a place for pleasure and interest, especially when they are on holiday. Synonyms of tourist are: traveler, journeyer, voyager, tripper (British), globetrotter, holiday-maker, sightseer, excursionist (COBUILD Advanced English Dictionary. Copyright @ HarperCollins Publisher).

People who travel for fun are called “tourists”. Places where many tourists stay are sometimes called ‘resorts’. Places that people go to for tourism are called destinations (www.simple.m.wikipedia.org)’

RESEARCH METHOD

The type of the research used in this research is descriptive qualitative. The location of this research was carried out in agrotourism Bhumi Merapi, Jl. Kaliurang, Sawangan, Hargobinangun, Pakem, Sleman, Special Region of Yogyakarta. The sampling technique used is purposive sampling and the informants of this research are the manager of agrotourism Bhumi Merapi and tourists visiting agrotourism Bhumi Merapi. The data collection techniques in this study were observation, interviews, and documentation. Meanwhile, the data analysis method used in this study are data reduction, data presentation, and conclusions

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Bhumi Merapi Agrotourism

Bhumi Merapi's agrotourism was originally just an ordinary plantation area, which was planted with chilies and tomatoes. Until 2010 when Mount Merapi erupted, the plantation area was abandoned, due to the severe damage. This condition occurs because the area is close to Mount Merapi, where in 2010 Mount Merapi erupted. In 2011, exactly one year after Mount Merapi erupted, the area was rebuilt. It was planted with rice which was built for rice fields at that time, and one year after. Precisely from 2012 to 2013 the area was developed by planting *segon* trees, ginger plants and a catfish pond was also built. Especially for catfish ponds, at that time there was a lot of fishing theft. Until the harvest time was unexpected, a large number of fish were lost, and it was estimated that the fish in the catfish pond were stolen by local residents. In 2012 to 2013 developments continued, one of which was adding planting, and at that time ginger plants were also added through polybag planting media. Until 2014 there were suggestions from several management colleagues to open a Tourism Village, this is because the area is a promising area. The existence of a plantation area being built, and also supported by the availability of a large enough land.

Building a Tourism Village seems unlikely, the response from the manager at that time. Until in the end the manager had other thoughts, namely by building tourist attractions. With the advantages of having a plantation area and adding a livestock area, the manager ventured to open a tourist area, and Bhumi Merapi Agrotourism was built. The overall construction was carried out during the fasting month of 2015, during which one month the construction of the Bhumi Merapi Agrotourism area was carried out on a large scale. Until the end of the fasting month the construction was completed and in December 2015 Bhumi Merapi Agrotourism was officially opened.

At the inauguration of the opening of the Bhumi Merapi Agrotourism, the company continues to add to the rides provided, so that outbound and camping rides are also built. Ginger, which was only planted and added through polybag planting media, was finally completely replaced

into a special hydroponic vehicle, of course with various kinds of plants in the hydroponic vehicle.

With the historical story of Bhumi Merapi Agrotourism, the management hopes that the company will continue to grow, present new rides and of course make the company a leader in the available markets.



Figure 1. Bhumi Merapi agrotourism

Source: Field Observation (2022)

1. Promotion Strategy in Increasing Tourist Visits in Bhumi Merapi Agrotourism, Sleman Regency

An effective promotional strategy is one of the techniques used to break through the tastes and desires of consumers, creating an image that is able to influence a number of people who are expected to have an interest in the products or services offered. The activity carried out by the Bhumi Merapi Agrotourism Manager is a work program that aims to inform the public about tourism objects in Sleman Regency so that audiences or potential tourists are interested in visiting. Bhumi Merapi agritourism promotion activities are carried out by its managers. According to Denny, General Manager of Agritourism, Bhumi Merapi, the most dominant forms of promotion used are Instagram and Facebook because the majority of people currently prefer to use social media rather than print media. And social media makes it very easy for users to find various information. In social media there is all the information needed by its users. This was confirmed by informants, namely tourists who said that tourists use their social media, especially Instagram to find out information about Bhumi Merapi Agrotourism. In addition, other sources said that Instagram and word of mouth were more trusted. In addition, in order to attract tourist visits, the manager of Bhumi Merapi agrotourism chooses a form of sales promotion by providing a discounted price for entrance tickets in collaboration between the manager of Bhumi Merapi agrotourism Merapi and the Department of Tourism to promote these tourist destinations.

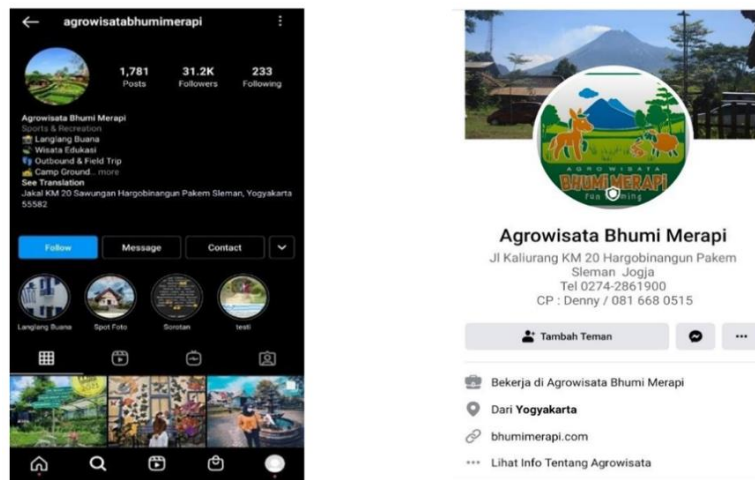


Figure 2. Instagram Social Media (left), Facebook Social Media (right)

Source: Bhumi Merapi agrotourism's Instagram and Facebook

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of qualitative research by conducting observations, interviews and documentation conducted by researchers at Bhumi Merapi agrotourism, Sleman Regency regarding Promotion Strategies in Increasing Tourist Visits, several conclusions can be drawn, including:

1. Social Media

The promotional strategy used by the manager of Bhumi Merapi agrotourism with social media is very good and effective, because technology, especially the internet, is increasingly advanced and developing. And for now, promotion through social media or online media is believed to be the most effective way to introduce products and services in any field, especially tourism. Instagram social media users are not only young people or can also be called millennials, even parents already understand the use of social media.

2. Sales Promotion

Bhumi Merapi Agrotourism uses the form or Sales Promotion method, namely by lowering the entrance ticket price which is also very influential in the process of increasing the number of tourist visits, besides that, tourists are also interested in visiting Bhumi Merapi Agrotourism because the price is cheaper than usual days. According to him, apart from promoting with social media, sales promotion media are also very effective and powerful in increasing tourist visits.

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