
Implementation Of Digital Marketing Strategy for The Development of Spiritual Tourism In Bali Province

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Abstract

This research aims to explore the application of digital marketing strategies in the development of spiritual tourism in Bali Province, with a focus on Griya Taman Beji Waterfall. By analyzing the role of social media in influencing tourist behavior and preferences, this research provides insight into the potential and challenges in promoting spiritual tourism in Bali. Through case studies involving interviews with managers, tour guides, and tourists, findings show that digital marketing, particularly through social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook, has helped increase exposure and interest in Griya Taman Beji. The use of visual content and comprehensive information about tourist sites, as well as the involvement of local communities as tourist guides, also play an important role in attracting visitors. Thus, the conclusions of this study confirm the importance of digital marketing strategies in the development of spiritual tourism in Bali, while offering suggestions for improving digital marketing at Griya Taman Beji Waterfall through better collaboration with local stakeholders and in-depth research on digital marketing concepts in Bali Province.

Keywords: digital marketing, spiritual tourism, Bali, social media

INTRODUCTION

Bali Province, as one of the most popular tourist destinations in the world (Priatmoko, Kabil, Magda, Pallas, & David, 2021), has become a center of attention for travelers from both domestic and international origins. Its enchanting natural beauty, rich arts and culture, and profound spiritual heritage have made Bali a magnet for those seeking unique and memorable travel experiences.

For a long time, Bali has been known as a destination offering more than just white sandy beaches and stunning landscapes (Wajdi et al., 2023). Its distinctive paintings, sculptures, and dances, along with its rich traditional ceremonies and religious rituals, are the main attractions for tourists who wish to experience Bali's cultural richness.

However, amidst the rapid development of digital technology (Okoye, Rodriguez-Tort, Escamilla, & Hosseini, 2021), Bali has also embraced the use of social media as a tool to promote and develop its spiritual tourism. In this era of digitalization, digital marketing strategies have become key in reaching stakeholders in tourism,

both locally and internationally (Aziz, Noorman, Riyanto, & Usman, 2023).

This study aims to investigate the implementation of digital marketing strategies in the development of spiritual tourism in Bali Province. By delving deeper into how social media influences tourists' behavior and preferences in choosing spiritual tourist destinations (Horner & Swarbrooke, 2020), it is hoped that this research can provide a better understanding of the potential and challenges in promoting spiritual tourism in Bali.

In this context, a case study on Griya Beji Waterfall in Bali will be the focus of the research, analyzing how the use of social media has affected the promotion and development of spiritual tourism at that location. Through a deeper understanding of effective digital marketing strategies, it is expected to make a positive contribution to efforts to preserve and develop Bali's valuable spiritual heritage.

There are several theoretical frameworks applied in this study, including E-Business, Digital Marketing, Tourism, and E-Tourism (Reinhold, Zach, & Laesser, 2020). In this digital era, businesses have undergone significant transformations, particularly in the form of e-business or electronic

commerce. E-commerce, as one of the main forms of e-business, has become the foundation for various business activities that utilize electronic data. Business transactions over the internet, primarily through websites, are the primary focus of e-commerce (Yahya & Haryadi, 2023). Its main goal is to increase company revenue by utilizing knowledge management systems. Additionally, e-commerce also encompasses data integration, processing, and distribution of information to various parties. Through digital technology and the internet, e-commerce facilitates two-way communication and transaction processing between consumers, vendors, and other business partners.

Besides e-business, digital marketing also plays a crucial role in modern business strategies (Nurjaya, Erlangga, Iskandar, Sunarsi, & Haryadi, 2022; Özöglu & Topal, 2020). Digital marketing, with its specific, measurable, and interactive approach, aims to increase brand awareness, consumer engagement, and revenue. By using various digital tools such as social media, websites, email, and online advertising, digital marketers are increasingly involved in promoting their products and services to target markets. In this context, digital marketing strategies such as SEO, content marketing, marketing automation, and PPC are key to achieving marketing goals effectively.

However, it's not just businesses experiencing digital transformations. The tourism industry has also seen significant changes with the emergence of e-tourism (Raza, Hamid, & Cavaliere, 2021). E-tourism is a digital platform that allows travelers to search, book, and plan their trips online. Through e-tourism, travelers can easily access information about tourist destinations, accommodations, transportation, and activities. This provides convenience and comfort for travelers in planning their trips, while also opening up new opportunities for tourism industry players to market their products and services digitally.

Overall, digital transformation has changed the landscape of businesses and industries, including e-business, digital marketing, and tourism. The use of digital technology not only improves efficiency and productivity but also opens doors to innovation and new opportunities in various sectors. By understanding and leveraging these developments, companies and industry players can continue to thrive and succeed in this digital era.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research employs a qualitative descriptive approach with an inductive analysis

method. Ramsay (2019) describes qualitative research as an analysis of the scientific framework of various social phenomena. The approach used is phenomenology, aiming to understand phenomena through the researcher's direct experience.

The research focus in phenomenological studies includes experiences, feelings, and meanings. Experience is what someone undergoes, serving as the basis for social interaction. Feelings, in the context of emotions, play a significant role in individual experiences. Meaning, situated within individuals, influences their interpretation of language and actions. The research setting is not limited to a specific location but can be in a particular place or dispersed, depending on the selected informants. The research is conducted at Griya Taman Beji Waterfall.

Data collection techniques are a crucial aspect of the research aiming to generate accurate data to answer research questions. According to Sugiono (2020), this stage is the most strategic as it provides data for further analysis. In this study, data collection techniques include interviews, observations, and documentation.

In this research, informant selection employs purposive sampling, where informants are chosen based on specific considerations. The selected informants are tourism site managers, tour guides, and tourists, deemed capable of representing in addressing the research problem formulation.

After data collection through observation, interviews, and documentation, the next stage is data analysis. Data analysis is conducted by systematically searching and arranging the obtained data to draw easily understandable conclusions. The data analysis process refers to the Miles and Huberman data analysis model, involving data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. NVivo 14 Plus software is used to analyze qualitative data using features such as Word Cloud, Hierarchy Chart, and Cluster Analysis. NVivo 14 Plus facilitates the collection of references from various sources, document management, and exploration of topics and patterns in texts efficiently.

Verification of the validity of the analysis results is conducted using triangulation techniques, comparing data from several different sources or techniques. In this study, two triangulation techniques are used, namely source triangulation and technique triangulation. Source triangulation is performed by comparing interview results from several informants, while technique triangulation is conducted by examining data from sources using

observation, interviews, and documentation techniques.

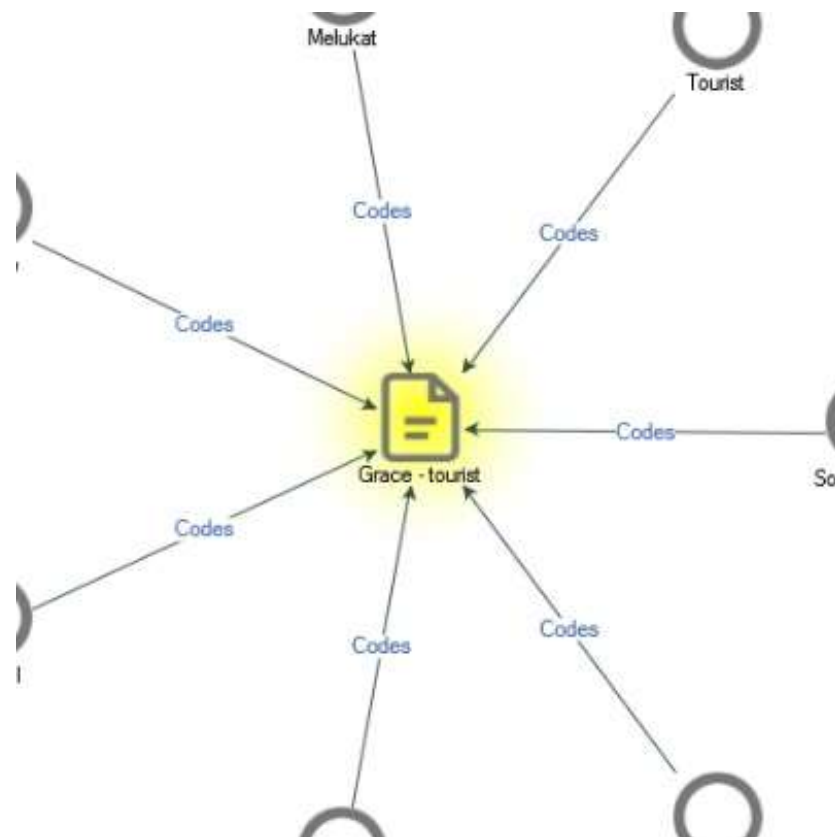
RESULT AND DISCUSSION

On September 8, 2023, an observation was conducted at Griya Taman Beji Waterfall. The area is adorned with masks, statues, and keris (traditional daggers). Dining and refreshment facilities are available in wooden and bamboo structures, accompanied by Balinese rindik music. Visitors are advised to rent lockers for IDR 15,000 for the security of their belongings. The ritual of purification involves the use of holy water, pejati (sacred threads), yellow coconut, and canang (Balinese offerings). Guides lead visitors to the cave behind the waterfall, where they are encouraged to shout and laugh to release and dispel their worries. Afterwards, visitors return to the worship area to drink yellow coconut water and change clothes after completing the purification ritual.

The research continued in November 2023 with in-depth interviews with several predetermined informants. The informants include the management

of Griya Taman Beji Waterfall, visitors, and tour guides. The first informant in this study is Ni Made Sri Widyasari, a woman who has been working since the opening of Griya Taman Beji Waterfall to the public in 2018. Mrs. Sri has served as the operational manager at Griya Taman Beji Waterfall for approximately 6 years.

The results of the coding analysis using NVivo 14 application on the interview with Ni Made Sri Widyasari revealed that the marketing strategy of Griya Taman Beji Waterfall consistently relies on digital marketing and social media. Emphasis on the use of digital marketing techniques and social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, and others aligns with the researcher's strategy in the development of spiritual tourism in Bali Province. The success in attracting local and international tourists is supported by the presence of Griya Taman Beji Waterfall's official website, which provides comprehensive information to prospective visitors. By implementing this digital strategy, Griya Taman Beji Waterfall has effectively utilized digital platforms and social media in its marketing efforts.



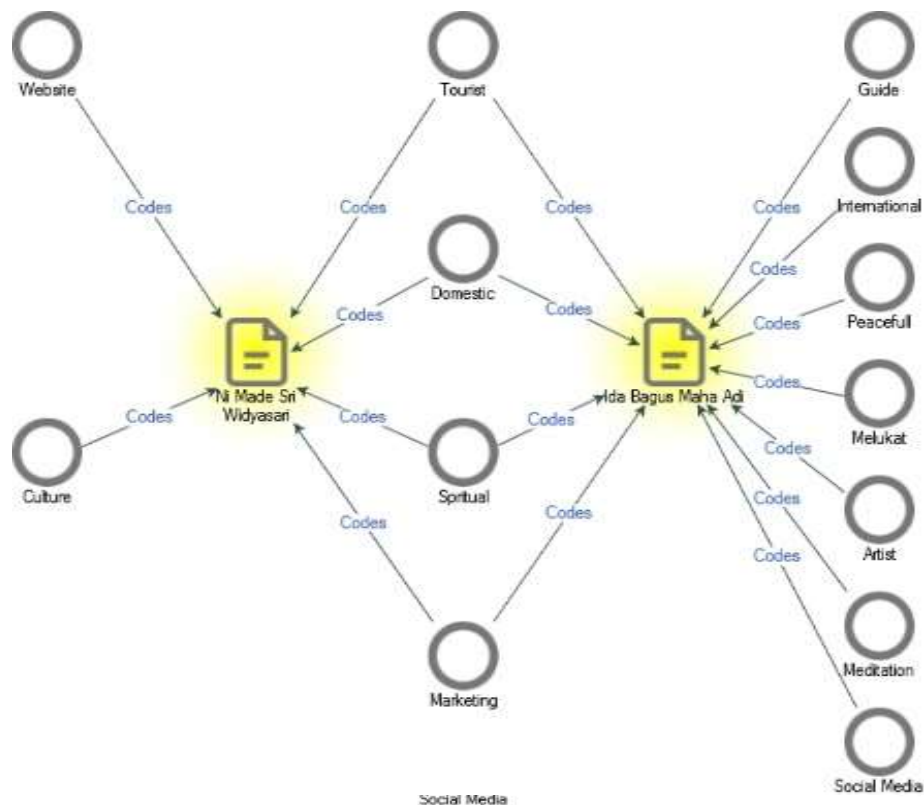
The second informant in this study is a man named Ida Bagus Maha Adi, who has been working as a tour guide for approximately 6 years since 2017. The coding diagram analysis using NVivo 14 application from the interview with Ida Bagus Maha

Adi, a tour guide, confirms that social media is one of the highly effective digital platforms in the marketing strategy of spiritual tourism in Bali Province. With the presence of social media, both local and international tourists can easily access

information about activities and attractions at Griya Taman Beji. This indicates that the use of social media plays a significant role in enhancing the exposure and appeal of spiritual tourism in Bali.

Grace, a woman who serves as the third informant in this study, is a tourist visiting Griya Taman Beji Waterfall. She has engaged in spiritual tourism at Griya Taman Beji three times. Based on the coding diagram analysis using NVivo 14 application from the interview with Grace, a foreign tourist, it was found that social media is a highly effective digital platform in the marketing strategy of

spiritual tourism in Bali Province. Grace stated that she first learned about Griya Taman Beji Waterfall through social media such as TikTok and Instagram. She became interested in visiting the place after seeing video clips on those social media platforms. Furthermore, Grace mentioned that she searched for reviews about the place on reputable platforms such as TripAdvisor before deciding to visit. This demonstrates that social media plays a crucial role in facilitating tourists to obtain information about tourist destinations and influencing their decisions to visit a particular destination.



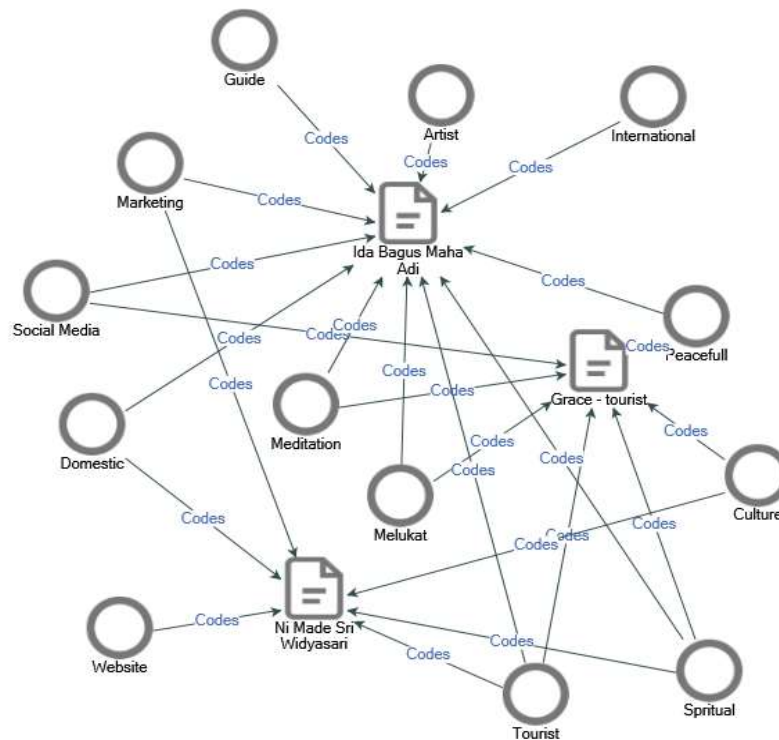
From the coding diagram analysis, there is a consensus between Ni Made Sri Widyasari and Ida Bagus Maha Adi regarding the effectiveness of digital marketing as one of the strategies in developing spiritual tourism at Griya Taman Beji Waterfall. Both affirm that digital marketing can attract the interest of both local and international tourists to visit the place. The use of digital platforms such as websites and social media is considered effective as marketing tools because they make it easier for tourists to access information about the tourist destination directly. This indicates consistency in the use of digital marketing strategies to increase exposure and appeal of Griya Taman Beji Waterfall to tourists. Furthermore, there is a consensus between Grace

and Ida Bagus Maha Adi regarding the effectiveness of social media as one of the important marketing tools in attracting tourist interest. Both agree that social media provides convenience for tourists to access information about the tourist destinations they want to visit.

Griya Taman Beji Waterfall has successfully implemented effective digital marketing strategies by utilizing social media as a means to promote spiritual activities such as rituals and meditation to tourists. This indicates that the use of social media has become an integral part of Griya Taman Beji Waterfall's marketing strategy and has successfully increased tourists' interest in visiting the place.

All informants agree that digital marketing using social media and websites is highly effective. Social media plays a crucial role in reaching both local and international target markets. Visual content such as videos and photos of spiritual activities at the tourist site serves as an attraction

for visitors. Additionally, creating a comfortable atmosphere at the tourist site is also important. Digital marketing is not only about photos and videos but also about providing comprehensive information about the requirements and regulations at the tourist site.



CONCLUSION

The conclusion drawn from the discussion above is that the implementation of digital marketing strategies in the development of spiritual tourism in Bali Province, particularly at Griya Taman Beji Waterfall, has a significant impact. The utilization of digital media such as websites, Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook has proven effective in promoting the tourist site. The information provided includes the ambiance, facilities, package prices, and the situation at the tourist site, providing a profound spiritual experience for visitors. The management also involves the local community as tour guides to lead cultural and spiritual processes while preserving the cultural and sacred aspects of the tourist site by implementing various regulations.

To enhance the digital strategy at Griya Taman Beji Waterfall, it is recommended to further optimize digital marketing to attract more tourists. Adding tourism packages to provide a variety of spiritual activities for visitors is also necessary. Good cooperation with drivers and tour guides can facilitate the introduction of the tourist site to tourists.

Additionally, in-depth research into digital marketing concepts in Bali Province can provide deeper insights for the development of marketing strategies in the future.

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