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SOCIAL MEDIA PROMOTION STRATEGY APPROACH (CASE STUDY OF UBUD MONKEY FOREST TOURIST ATTRACTION'S INSTAGRAM ACCOUNT)

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine the promotional strategies undertaken by Monkey Forest in promoting its tourist attraction. Monkey forest is one of the tourist attractions in Bali which is located in Gianyar regency. In its development, a promotional strategy must always be considered in promoting a destination. The promotion strategy referred to in this study is a promotion strategy through Instagram account. Nowadays Instagram is one of the social media that is very widely used. The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative method. Data collection methods were obtained from direct observation, interviews with the monkey forest and observation of promotional strategies on social media Instagram @monkeyforestsanctuaryubud. Interviews were conducted with one of the monkey forest managers named Mr. Dwija. Then the data is processed and described descriptively through writing and pictures. The result of this research is that Monkey Forest uses 5 promotional strategies, namely strategic planning, situation analysis, communication process analysis, IMC program planning and Monitoring and Evaluation.

Keyword : *Promotion Strategy; Social media strategy; Monkey Forest*

INTRODUCTION

The development of technology not only changes the way humans obtain information, but also changes their thinking patterns and lifestyles. In the past, before information technology developed rapidly, we did not have a place to socialize. However, over time various kinds of social media such as Twitter, Facebook, Tiktok and Instagram have been created, which have had such an impact on our lives. Social media is a platform used by individuals to socialize online by creating news, content, or photos for other people (Taprial & Kanwar, 2012). Social media can make it easier for everyone to participate, interact, and network socially through a virtual world whose communication networks are limitless by distance and time. The existence of social media makes the dissemination of information between individuals and groups more interactive. Apart from that, social media also has a gap that can be used by its users, namely as a medium for promotion that is

quite effective. This happens because every user is free to update their status anytime and anywhere according to their wishes. One of the social media that is currently being loved by the public and used as a promotional media is Instagram. Johansson & Wallsbeck (2014) states that Instagram connects the world through snapshots in a unique way to share stories with friends through a series of pictures, snapshots and filter options to embellish images and make them a memory. Currently, Instagram has various features that can be used for fun as well as promotional media. Among them are #hashtag, instastory, and explore.

Social media Instagram ranks 3rd as the media that has the most active users in Indonesia after Youtube and Whatsapp (Reportal Data, 2020). This is arguably quite high. In January 2021, there are approximately 82 million Instagram users in Indonesia with a percentage of 52.6 women and 47.4 men. The majority of the largest users are students and college students aged 18 to 24 years (NapoleonCat, 2021). It cannot be denied that the presence of Instagram has become a part of the life of Indonesian society. This is none other than because Instagram has advantages that other social medias don't have. One of them is that there is a gallery display feature that makes users free to share content with followers in the form of photo and video documentation. The categories that are often shared by users are descriptions of daily activities and travel trips. It is not uncommon for the shared content to go viral in certain circles, thus arousing the interest of anyone who sees it to visit and do the same thing. The massive use of Instagram social media among the public can make this the right promotional strategy for Indonesian tourism destinations. According to Moekijat (2000) a promotional strategy is a company-specific activity undertaken to drive sales by providing convincing communication to potential buyers. Through Instagram, tourist destination managers can observe things that are trending and also interact directly with visitors. This of course will benefit both parties because the manager can indirectly reduce the costs that must be spent on promotional media while tourists can access the information they need very easily. Social media has strong relationship toward decision to visit where expressing positive feeling and economic incentive were involved (Yudhistira, P., 2018)

There are various things that make Bali Island attractive to tourists. We can see this from the phenomenon of posting photos, videos and also live broadcasts that are shared when visiting tourist destinations, one of which is in the Monkey Forest area of Ubud, Gianyar Bali. The Sacred Mandala Wenara Wana or commonly known as Monkey Forest is a nature reserve forest which has approximately 1500 monkeys of various types. This place is one of the most popular tourist destinations visited by many domestic and foreign tourists. The activity that becomes a trend when tourists visit this place is to take selfies with the monkeys. Not just an ordinary selfie, this requires a special trick that is usually done by the manager. The trick is to distract the monkeys from using food during the photo-taking process, so this will make it seem as if the monkeys are taking photos of themselves or selfies. The management is also no less active in promoting its tourism potential through the Instagram account @monkeyforestsanctuaryubud. Until early 2021 the account had shared 1,040 uploads of content and had approximately 6,500 active followers.

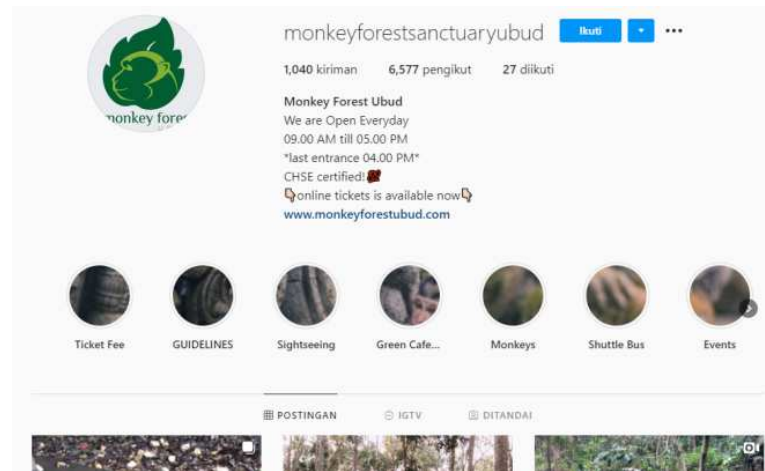


Figure 1: Monkey Forest Ubud Official Instagram Account

Source: [instagram.com/monkeyforestsanctuaryubud](https://www.instagram.com/monkeyforestsanctuaryubud) accessed on February 23, 2021 at 14:00 Wita

Based on previous research conducted by Nur Dewi Setyowati et al in 2018 with the title "*Promotion Strategy through Instagram Medium by Wisata Ujung Kulon Janggan, Magetan Regency*", it was found that several stages of promotional strategies were found to evaluate their target market, especially through social media Instagram. In the Instagram application, there are features for uploading photos, reposting, tagging, and hashtags that can be used as tourist destination managers as a reference in re-evaluating what their target market wants.

In terms of dependent situation, this research main purpose is to give recommendations on the potential person in charge in Monkey Forest to give an exact and just evaluation based on the promotional strategy to achieve or acquire the most relevant goal for the management. So that in this way tourists' expectations regarding the tourist attraction concerned can be fulfilled and also the manager can maximize the potential of the destination so that more visitors come. Therefore this study is designed to analyze the social media promotion strategy approach of Ubud Monkey Forest tourist attraction through its Instagram account due to their consistency in creating Instagram content from time to time until present.

METHODOLOGY

This research was conducted at the tourist attraction of Ubud Monkey Forest, Gianyar Regency, Bali. The method used in this study is a qualitative method. As stated by Sugiyono (2005) a qualitative approach is the study of interactive and flexible strategies based on the views of the participants. Qualitative research aims to understand social behavior or phenomena from the perspective of participants. The subject of this research is the manager of the Instagram account @monkeyforestsanctuaryubud. The focus of the object of this research is a strategy to promote the tourist attraction of Monkey Forest Ubud - Bali, through social media Instagram.

Lofland (2013) states that the main data sources in qualitative research methods are words and behavior. The rest are additions such as sound documents, pictures, writings and so on which can be used as evidence of information. The data sources were taken from the document interview results, field notes and the results of observations. Primary data in this study is based on the results obtained through integrated interviews with the Instagram account manager @monkeyforestsanctuaryubud. Meanwhile, secondary data and the results of field notes were taken and obtained through documentation activities as well as official observations at the tourist attraction of the Monkey Forest, Ubud Bali.

Data collection techniques in this study are direct observation and observation of promotional strategies on social media Instagram @monkeyforestsanctuaryubud. Apart from that, this study also uses interview techniques. The interview is a dialogue for a specific purpose. Dialogue is carried out by two parties, namely the interviewer who asks the question and the interviewee who provides the answer to the question (Moleong, 2012). The data analysis in this study is based on tracing the potential of the Monkey Forest tourist attraction. Where this research was conducted by observation when data collection in the field took place. The data from this research were obtained through interviews with resource persons, observation, and documentation. While the data analysis stage is carried out by combining the results of research data obtained from content analysis, frameworks and grounded theory.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Gianyar Regency is one of the nine regencies / cities in Bali Province. Its strategic location makes Gianyar Regency save a variety of tourism potential that is so amazing both from natural tourism, history, and special interests. No wonder many tourists are willing to come from various countries to experience tourism in Gianyar Regency. Of the many tourist destinations that exist, there is one very unique destination, namely the Monkey Forest. Monkey Forest is the original habitat of the *Macaca Fascicularis* long-tailed monkey which is managed directly by the local government of Gianyar Regency. This place first became a tourist destination in the 1970s. At first, tourists who came could only see the temple because there were still very few monkeys. However, over time and the increasing number of tourist visits, employees were formed to manage these tourist destinations. Until now, in early 2021, there have been approximately 1,500 monkeys of various types.

To increase the number of tourist visits, Monkey Forest managers use social media as a means of supporting their tourism promotion. According to Morissan (2010) process promotion planning is as follows: a) Strategic Plan and Tactical Plan, b) Situation Analysis, c) Analysis of the Communication Process, d) Determination of the Budget, e) Planning the IMC (Integrated Marketing Communication) and f) Monitoring and Evaluation. It aims to increase the reach of a wider audience without having to think about large operational costs. In addition to Facebook and the Website, Monkey Forest also uses Instagram as a means of promotion with the username @monkeyforestsanctuaryubud. Monkey Forest Tourism began sharing its content on Instagram on July 8, 2016. Based on an

interview on March 03, 2021 with the resource person, Mr. Dwija, the following analysis results were obtained:

1. Strategic and Tactical Plans

Strategic plans include long-term goals and are universal. When formulating a strategic plan, it must carry out the following stages:

a. Research to assess basic needs

Research conducted by Monkey Forest is to see what platforms are being loved and often used by today's society. As stated by Mr. Dwija that: *"Before deciding to use Instagram, the sales and marketing team looked for information related to what social media was most widely used besides Facebook. After that everyone agreed to use Instagram"*. From this statement, it can be concluded that Monkey Forest has previously conducted research and discussions on media that are currently favored and used by the wider community, only then have they decided to use it.

b. Setting Goals

Determination of promotional objectives using Instagram media here, based on the research that has been done by the Monkey Forest before, it can be said that the use of Instagram media today is much favored by the community. Based on the answer from Mr. Dwija regarding the selection of Instagram as one of the promotional media that: *"Nowadays, many people use Instagram, especially young people. From us it can also be a promotional event, such reviews"*. From these answers, the informants said that the background for Monkey Forest managers was for promotion in order to increase the number of visits as well as for a forum for visitors to provide reviews or assessments. Because the level of use of Instagram social media is considered quite high.

c. Work Program Planning

In increasing the Monkey Forest visit rate, managers must also be able to create something new and interesting in the eyes of tourists. One of them is by making a work plan. Based on the results of interviews with resource persons related to work program planning by the manager, it was stated that: *"Actually, there is no such thing as a special work program at the moment. Because we usually rely on word-of-mouth promotion by tourists who have visited. But for the promotion part, the planning is only in the form of sharing unique photos of monkeys here to attract the attention of tourists. Besides that, also social media promos"*. From these answers, the monkey forest manager currently does not have a work program for both the short and long term. In Monkey Forest itself, there was a trend known as monkey selfie tourism, but according to the source, it was considered a bit dangerous, as they said: *"Before Covid, it was quite famous monkey selfie, but there was an incident that a visitor was bitten by a monkey because the interaction with monkeys is too close. But we admit it is good, many are interested and suitable"*

as promotional material, but yes, it is a bit dangerous because we also prioritize the comfort and safety of tourists even though many visitors are disappointed when they find out that the program has been terminated."

2. Situation Analysis

In analyzing the situation, attention to the factors that influence the preparation of a promotion must be considered. One situation analysis that can see an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of a destination is by looking at the perspective of the image it has. For Monkey Forest itself, the image that is offered or owned is the concept of a nature reserve supported by a forest atmosphere along with thousands of monkeys there. Apart from image, there are other aspects that must be considered in the situation analysis, namely market segmentation, competitor consumer characteristics and positioning strategy. According to the results of interviews conducted, market segmentation based on places of origin visiting the Monkey Forest said that: *"For normal conditions before Covid, most of the tourists were foreigners. The countries with the most number are Australia, then India, China and Russia, because for the local ones, it is still lacking if it is ranked or the ranking list is in the 8th out of 10 for local tourists. However, during a pandemic like this, it is precisely what dominates local tourists, because international visits to Bali are still closed"*. Meanwhile, for market segmentation based on age, the informant said that: *"For the age of visitors, the average age of visitors is that they are young, such as those aged 25-35 years or the millennial generation. There is also a family, but the majority are still young productive ages"*. In addition to market segmentation, the characteristics of visitors who are prioritized or targeted to visit the Monkey Forest according to the informants are: *"The main characteristics are those who like nature, nature because the concept of tourism is very natural"*. Based on the results of the interview, it can be said that the market segmentation owned by Monkey Forest Tourism is mostly from millennials and aged 25-35 years.

In analyzing the situation, it is also necessary to make observations regarding the condition of competitors or competitor analysis in terms of promotion to determine the advantages and disadvantages of the Monkey Forest tourism promotion strategy. In competing with competitors, promotion is very important to always pay attention to. As explained by the source, that: *"the first is we are promoting via Instagram by distributing or posting photos of monkeys with a unique style, so that they can attract tourists. Then secondly, we also emphasize in terms of service, cleanliness and safety of tourists"*. Because the concept of tourism that is directly related to nature and living things such as monkeys is quite risky, security will be very much needed by Monkey Forest in terms of its services.

3. Communication Process Analysis

To find out the effectiveness of the promotion, the manager of a tourist destination must carry out this analysis so that the manager also knows what needs to be improved. On the Monkey Forest tour itself, the management also checks the audience reached through Instagram promotions. The timing of posting photos on

Instagram is also important because it is based on the target market and is interested in Monkey Forest tourism, which are foreign tourists and most of them have a considerable time difference from those in Indonesia. As said by the source, *"because our market is foreign tourists, we tried to post during the curfew following the productive times of foreign tourists using Instagram. And it is precisely when posting at night, the number of viewers or profile visits increases compared to upload time in the afternoon or evening"*. From there, it can be said that Monkey Forest managers are also trying to adapt to the appropriate market segmentation, so that the promotion process can run effectively. From the management itself, if the audience starts to decline, the manager will be more aggressively promoting by looking for the best picture of monkey so that it can be uploaded to Instagram and can attract tourists to visit. As the source said: *"When the audience starts to fall, we usually look for unique and unusual monkey poses or activities and then immortalize them either in photos or videos."* so that the promotion process can run effectively.

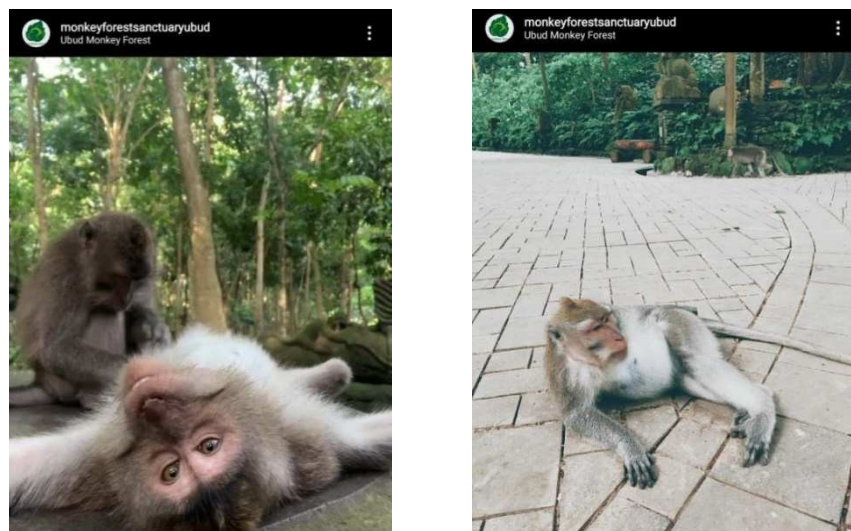


Figure 2: Unique Photos of Monkeys via Instagram Monkey Forest

Source: Instagram account @monkeyforestsanctuarybud

Because it is seen by quite a lot and effective Instagram users, Monkey Forest also has an Instagram account with the username *@monkeyforestsanctuarybud*. The Instagram account has 1,050 posts with 6,591 followers as of April 1, 2021. Monkey Forest tourism itself uses Instagram media starting in 2012 which is managed by PR or Public Relations of Monkey Forest itself. As said by the source that: *"the beginning of making Instagram in 2012. For the admin, it was directly by the PR because sometimes there were also questions about cooperation, tickets, etc."*

Based on observations through the Instagram Monkey Forest media, managers use four features in Instagram, namely Upload, Highlight (InstaStory), IG TV and Tag (Tag).

- a. Upload

In the main use of Instagram, which shares stories through photos and videos, the Instagram account @monkeyforestsanctuaryubud uses this feature to upload photos of monkeys that are unique in their promotional strategy. In addition, on the Instagram feed there are also various promotions such as promotions during Valentine's, Chinese New Year, Mother's Day and many others. In the posting, Monkey Forest also uploaded the packages offered and the guidelines for potential visitors who would come to Monkey Forest.



Figure 3: Special Day Offers

Source: Instagram account @monkeyforestsanctuaryubud

b. Highlight (InstaStory)

In addition to the upload or upload feature on the Instagram homepage, Monkey Forest also uses the Insta Story feature to carry out promotions. When viewed on the Instagram account page, there are eight highlights that are posted on the Monkey Forest Instagram account. The 8 highlights contain information on ticket prices, guidelines, sightseeing, green cafeteria, monkeys, shuttle buses, events and information about the destination opening hours. The advantage of using Insta Story is that visitors don't have to bother scrolling far to see the Instagram Monkey Forest homepage, because with the help of highlights visitors can see it more easily.

c. IGTV

IGTV or Instagram TV is also used in the promotional media for Monkey Forest, there are 2 IGTV videos that have been uploaded by the Monkey Forest account. The advantage of IGTV is that managers can upload videos with a longer duration. Because if it's only in the story, per video is only limited to a maximum of 15 seconds, while uploading on feeds is a maximum of 1 minute per video.

d. Mark (Tag)

This feature is a feature that is used to make it easier for people to find Monkey Forest accounts on photos of people using the tag feature. This feature will be very useful especially if there are visitors who have a high

number of followers. With this feature, if a visitor uploads a photo by tagging the Monkey Forest account, of course, it will add or expand the target market.



Figure 4: Photo using the Tag Feature

Source: tagged post @monkeyforestsanctuaryubud Instagram account

4. IMC Program Planning

IMC or Integrated Marketing Communication is a communication process that introduces the main concepts in Monkey Forest. In planning, having the main attraction in a tourist destination is important. For Monkey Forest itself, the main attraction that can be offered is of course a strategic location which is supported by the presence of monkeys in it. By offering interesting photo spots and also the monkeys there, it is the main attraction for Monkey Forest tourism in the eyes of visitors. The attraction of monkeys, which according to foreign tourists who become the Monkey Forest market, is very attractive for tourists to visit. Compared to local tourists, the characteristics of foreign tourists tend to prefer natural things because they are very difficult to find in their home countries. Add more, not only does it offer a place with a cool and natural atmosphere, there are also monkeys that support the natural atmosphere in the Monkey Forest. One of the photo spots or photo spots that has become the icon of the Monkey Forest is Drgaon Bridge Monkey Forest.



Figure 5: Dragon Bridge Monkey Forest
Source: Instagram Highlights @monkeyforestsanctuaryubud

5. Monitoring and Evaluation

Based on an interview with a source who said that: *“Usually, the number of audiences is checked periodically to find out how effective the promotions are being carried out on Instagram. And if the audience starts to decline, we will be more incessant to upload unique monkey photos and provide special offers on special days”*. So, it can be concluded that Monkey Forest managers also evaluate the number of audiences on Instagram media. If the number of audiences decreases, the manager will try to increase the number of audiences by providing promotions such as Mother's Day, Valentine's Day, etc.

Based on the finding that have been stated above, it is considered to be the same as the theory that have been proven by Morissan (2010) such as Strategic Plan and Tactical Plan, Situation Analysis, Analysis of the Communication Process, Determination of the Budget, Planning the IMC (Integrated Marketing Communication) and Monitoring and Evaluation that emphasizes the possibilities of the need of social media nowadays can replace the promotion strategy which the management of Monkey Forest has proven the exact idea that has been stated by Morissan (2010).

CONCLUSION

In implementing the promotional strategy carried out by Monkey Forest, managers use 5 main strategies, namely strategic (strategic planning) and tactical planning (tactical planning), situation analysis, communication process analysis,

planning IMC (Integrated Marketing Communication) programs, monitoring and evaluation.

1. The strategic plan

In its implementation, there are three stages, namely the first is to conduct research, and the result is that the management team conducts research on social media users who eventually also use Instagram as a promotional media. The second is to determine goals, in terms of promotion through Instagram, of course, to increase visitors as well as a forum for providing reviews. The last one is program planning, for program planning is still not done continuously. For now, only rely on word of mouth promotion by visitors and also social media by providing unique monkey photos uploaded on Instagram.

2. Situation Analysis

In the situation analysis, it is supported by several factors including image, market segmentation, characteristics of consumers and competitors. The image that is owned by the Monkey Forest is a Nature Reserve. Then for market segmentation, foreign tourists from Australia, India, Russia and China are foreign tourists from the area of origin. In terms of age, it is in the range of 25-35 years. The characteristics of consumers who visit are of course who like the natural atmosphere. To be able to compete, Monkey Forest often uploads photos of monkeys with unique styles and emphasizes service, cleanliness and safety of visitors.

3. Communication Process Analysis

For the communication process using Instagram media, there are 4 features used, namely the first is upload (upload), Highlight, IGTV and Tag (Tag). The four features help managers carry out promotions and make it easier for potential visitors to get information about Monkey Forest.

4. IMC Program Planning

The main attraction offered by Monkey Forest is the natural concept of being cool and comfortable. Supported by the atmosphere and also the presence of monkeys in it, adding to the natural impression on this tour. One of the spots that has become the icon of Monkey Forest is Dragon Bridge.

5. Monitoring and Evaluation

The Monkey Forest management also conducts an evaluation by checking the number of audiences on Instagram media. If you feel that the number of audiences is decreasing, then promote by giving special prices to potential visitors. As well as uploading unique photos of other monkeys at the right time and hour.

Based on this explanation, it can be concluded that the promotional stages carried out by Monkey Forest are quite good. However, more attention should be

paid to the work program in the future, it should be noted, both in the long and short term. In addition, during a pandemic like this, Monkey Forest must be able to further increase its promotion so that the tourism can survive. Various new concepts should also be applied during a pandemic like this, for example by offering virtual tour packages so that visitors from outside Indonesia can experience or enjoy the atmosphere online at Monkey Forest.

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