

THE USE OF TOURISM WEBSITE AS A PROMOTIONAL MEDIUM FOR TOURISM AGENCIES IN KARIMUNJAWA

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Abstract. *The presence of digitalization, which is growing from year to year, has developed in all sectors, including tourism. This is a challenge for tourism agencies to collaborate between digital media and tourism with the concept of a digital tourism strategy, which can become an opportunity to increase public interest in visiting tourist destinations. This opportunity can be seen from consumer behavior before visiting tourist attractions, by searching for information on websites 1-2 months beforehand. This tourists behavior supports the need of effective strategies for tourism agencies by providing tourism information, content, products, and services that can attract tourists. This research aims to analyze the usage of digital tourism strategies, especially websites as promotional media in Karimunjawa. The method that the researcher used is a qualitative method with a descriptive approach. The researcher made direct observations supported by in-depth interviews and digital media analysis, which is the website. The research results show the website as a promotional media are considered effective in increasing public interest in visiting Karimunjawa tourism. The website not only provides company information but also what potential customers needs, such as offers information, travel tips, and other articles. Website as a promotional medium also allows consumers to establish digital interactions by participating in surveys and getting optimal service.*

Keywords : *Digital Tourism, Website; Promotional Media; Tourism Agencies.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The increase of people's literate lifestyles and direct contact with the internet has resulted in the tourism industry experiencing rapid digitalization in recent years. People tend to actively search for tourist destinations using online media, because it is easy to access various information (Hatapayo & Relubun, 2023). Before going on a trip, people usually plan it by looking for information 1-2 months before traveling via digital media (Wiweka et al., 2019). Along with people's behavior as potential tourists who are more likely to rely on the internet, it has become a challenge for tourism agencies to promote the products online.

The challenge of tourism agencies in introducing tourist attractions and spreading out about natural beauty is supported by publicizing tourist destinations through digital media. Often, tourists find tourism agencies that do not have innovation in developing products (Simanjuntak et al., 2021), for that the ability to adapt, innovate, and collaborate is needed so that Indonesian tourism develops for the better. Tourism agencies are the key to the success of digital tourism transformation by playing a role as media initiators to spread various information, including branding as well as promoting tourism destinations in Indonesia. This is a challenge and opportunity for tourism agencies to increase the number of foreign tourists that will visit Indonesia.

The opportunity for increasing the number of foreign tourists is increasingly visible through data from the Badan Pusat Statistik (BPS) that the number of foreign tourists who visited Indonesia in October 2022 reached 678.53 thousand visits, which increased

rapidly compared to the circumstances in October 2021. From January to October 2022, the number of foreign tourist visits to Indonesia reached 3.92 million visits (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2022). This is expected to continue to increase every year. One of the tourist destinations that is currently attracting the attention of domestic and foreign people is Karimunjawa Island. Karimunjawa, located in the province of Central Java, is an archipelago which is one of the marine tourism destinations. This place offers unrivaled beauty and comfort, especially the combination of enchanting sunlight.

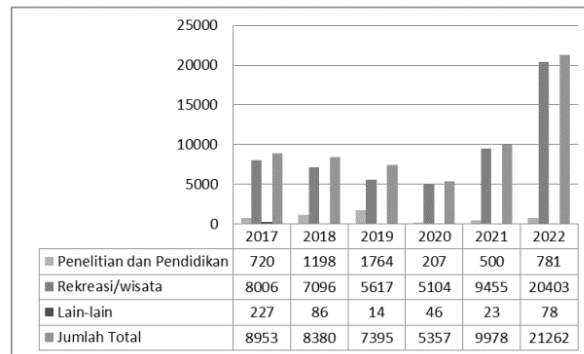


Figure 1. Karimunjawa Visitor Statistics Data
Source : : (Balai Taman Nasional Karimunjawa, 2022)

The image above is a statistical document from the Karimunjawa National Park Hall for 2022, recording the number of visitors to the Karimunjawa National Park area at 21,262 people (Balai Taman Nasional Karimunjawa, 2022). Based on visitor statistics in general, there were 19,513 domestic visitors and 1,749 foreign visitors. From the image above, it can be seen that there has been an increase in the number of visitors over the last 3 years. Statistical data shows the number of visitors in 2020 was 5,357 people, increasing to 2021 of 9,978 people. In 2022 the number of visitors will increase drastically, which means that Karimunjawa tourism is becoming a popular destination for tourists and is predicted to continue to increase.

Tourist interest in vacationing in Karimunjawa will increase in line with promotions carried out by tourism agencies. Promotion can be done directly or using existing media, such as digital media (Hasugian, 2018). This digital promotion is distributed by websites, social media, email, and other platforms which can create value. The main aim of carrying out product or service promotional activities is to achieve financial profits (Sunarto, 2020). In the tourism context, promotion aims to increase the number of visitors by utilizing media as promotion, and promotions must be presented attractively.

Promotion through digital media is considered effective when the goal is achieved. To ensure the effectiveness of the promotion process, it is necessary to carry out an analysis stage so that the promotion can attract attention, arouse interest, encourage desire, and generate action from potential tourists (Rizki et al., 2023). The analysis stage that can be used to measure promotional effectiveness is the AIDA model (*attention, interest, desire, and action*) (Oktaviani & Fatchiya, 2019a) which is applied to promotional content via digital media.

Technological advances have introduced various types of platforms as digital communication media for sharing information, one of which is websites. As a tourism promotion medium, websites are interactive multimedia that combine text, images, and animation in an integrated manner with the help of digital tools such as computers, smartphones, and so on. Websites that can provide information related to destinations, such as tour package prices, attractions, facilities, accessibility, and supporting services at tourist locations have become a medium that can fulfill all the needs and desires of potential tourists in a short time (Egger et al., 2020). Therefore, websites have an

important role in conveying information, promotions, communication, and supporting other online activities.

Research on the usage of websites as a tourism promotion medium has been studied by several researchers. First, Hasugian's (2018) research regarding Website Design as a Promotional and Information Media, can help market and publish news, products, activities, discounts, etc. Website design helps consumers to shop without having to come, making it more efficient and effective (Hasugian, 2018). Second, Putra's research (2021) regarding the use of websites to fulfill information needs in the case study of West Sumatra Travel. Websites are a medium for disseminating information by providing knowledge and entertainment to tourists. This research concluded that there is a significant relationship between the influence of websites and tourists' information needs (Putra et al., 2021). The difference between previous research and this research lies in the research subject which now focuses on tourism agency websites and different regions.

Research on the use of websites in Digital Tourism is important considering the rapid development of technology and positive views of the potential for marine tourism in Indonesia. The novelty in this research is that there has been no research that focuses on the use of tourism websites as tourism promotional medium for tourism agencies in Karimunjawa National Park Area.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Website

Website is a digital media that has unlimited distance in time and space. The website comes from the term world wide web, which refers to services that can be accessed by computer users with an internet connection. A website is an application that runs on a platform or browser operating system (Surentu et al., 2020). In general, a website consists of text, graphics, tables, video, audio, and other formats that are interesting to website visitors. To attract visitors by promoting the site and achieving goals, it is important to pay attention to the display design of the site such as the layout, colors, typography, and graphics used (Permatasari et al., 2020). A neat website design, legible writing, and good color combinations provide added value for users and encourage them to find out more information (Oktaviani & Fatchiya, 2019). The display of the website plays an important role in meeting tourists' needs in order to obtain information containing photos and introductions to tourist attractions.

The website functions as a source of information emphasizing quality through the content presented because its main purpose is as a medium or means to promote products, services, or events to users, especially potential tourists (Redy Susanto, 2021). Content is a description of the information content that is of interest to users. Content includes the entire contents of the information contained in it website tailored to user needs, supporting features, consistency, and diversity of information presented (Indryani et al., 2022). User Generated Content (UGC) is content based on the experiences, visits, and references of previous visitors, considered to be effective promotional content by increasing customer trust. The public's opinion is that the information on the website is very helpful in getting more detailed information, and is considered more credible than information on social media. According to Haryono (in Utomo, 2023) websites can increase tourists' interest in the products or services being promoted.

2.2 Promotion Media

Media is a tool used to send messages to audiences, using graphic communication elements such as text, images, or photos. On the other hand, promotion is marketing communication which aims to share information, influence, convince, and pay attention to target audiences related to the company or products offered (Hidayat et al., 2016).

Promotions are activities held by companies to attract the public's attention to carry out transactions as desired.

With promotional media, tourism agencies hope for an increase in sales figures, in this case including an increase in the number of tourist visitors. Therefore, a promotion must be based on 4 objectives. First, behavior modification, which means promotion aims to change the behavior and views of individuals who initially do not accept a product to become loyal to that product. Second, providing information, which aims to provide information to target tourists regarding tourism products. Third, persuading aims to encourage purchasing activities or activities that are closer to the product. Fourth, reminding is done to keep the product in the mind of the public (Puspitarini & Nuraeni, 2019).

To achieve the target of using promotional media in a tourism context which is increasing the number of visitors, it is important to present promotional content effectively. For the promotion presented to be effective, it needs to meet the characteristics of the AIDA model (Oktaviani & Fatchiya, 2019), as follows:

1. Attention, messages in promotional media must be interesting and attract the target's attention. Promotional media content can be presented with images, writing, songs, or a combination of audiovisuals.
2. Interest, promotions presented in the media must arouse interest or feelings of curiosity beyond the existing information so that the target gets to know the product or service more deeply.
3. Desire, The promotional media that is packaged must create a desire for the target to own, use, or do something.
4. Action, After a desire arises, an effective message must be able to persuade the target to take action by buying or visiting a place.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

The method used in preparing this research is descriptive qualitative. Qualitative is research that produces data in the form of written or spoken words from the behavior of individuals or groups that are observed and aims to provide a description or description of existing events, whether natural events or human engineering (Moleong, 2017). Primary data regarding the use of websites as promotional media for tourism agencies in Karimunjawa was obtained from direct observation supported by in-depth interviews, and digital media analysis which is website. In-depth interviews were conducted with three sources from tourism agency owners which are Karimunjawa Journey, Spot Karimunjawa, and Batu Putih Adventure. The interview process was carried out using an open interview method regarding website management as a promotional medium for tourism agencies in Karimunjawa through 2 different clusters of questions, which focused on tourism agency management, and focusing on website promotional media.

To obtain detailed data using secondary data, in this research Karimunjawa Tourism Agency website documentation, previous research, and literary sources such as archives, books, and scientific articles published online related to website use. The data obtained was then analyzed through three main activities according to Miles and Huberman which are data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification (Sugiyono, 2019). Data obtained through observation, interviews, and document analysis were selected and summarized into short sentences and tables.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The discussion in this research takes three tourism agencies in Karimunjawa, which are Karimunjawa Journey, Spot Karimunjawa, and Batu Putih Adventure. The three tourism agencies identified the use of website media as promotional media through three aspects which are the display of the website, the content of promotional content on the website, and the effectiveness of promotional content in website media. The following is

a discussion of website media as promotional media for each tourism agency in Karimunjawa:

4.1 Karimunjawa Journey

Website of Karimunjawa Journey with website address <https://www.karimunjawajourney.com/> displays tourism agency profile information, documentation of the beauty of Karimunjawa, tour packages with various variations, travel videos, travel tips, the latest information regarding Karimunjawa, and also customer testimonials using Karimunjawa Journey services.

The Karimunjawa Journey website is a site that creates an attractive first impression for users, which means this agency chooses layout aspects, logo images, colors, and typography correctly. The attractiveness of the Karimunjawa Journey website is a clear and structured navigation menu, optimal features, and consistency in the display of the website. A website display that leaves a good impression will have an impact on customer's decisions to use a travel agency.

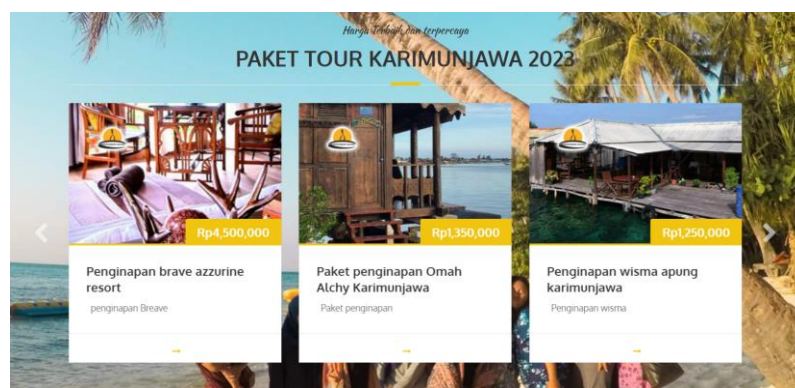


Figure 2. Display of the Karimunjawa Journey Website

Source: author's documentation

Fill in the information content on the Karimunjawa Journey website regarding the travel packages provided, as in the image above. The promotional content above contains details of facilities, services, tourist attractions, crossing schedules, tour schedules, equipment that needs to be brought, and also documentation of travel images. Apart from that, there are reviews from previous visitors who used the Karimunjawa Journey tour package service, this is part of user-generated content which can increase the sense of trust in site visitors to use the services of this agency (Muliawanti & Susanti, 2020). The Karimunjawa Journey website combines video, graphics, and text so that customers feel treated to a variety of interesting content. The completeness of the information supports the quality of the website as a promotional medium, apart from information about tourism packages and services, tips and tricks content is an advantage of the Karimunjawa Journey website.

The use of websites as promotional media is in line with its aim of providing information to target tourists through the content presented. Next, the promotion process uses the AIDA model on the website, to determine the effectiveness of the content in promotional media, First attention, Karimunjawa Journey can package promotional content through images, writing and videos so that it attracts the attention of tourists, Second interest, Promotional content increases tourist interest, especially in offering documentation facilities which are the advantages of Karimunjawa Journey, Third desire, promotional content on the website creates a desire to share in the experience of traveling using this service because of the testimonials, Fourth action, Karimunjawa Journey presents information content related to how to book tourist services. This then encourages prospective tourists to take action by contacting tourism agencies.

4.2 Spot Karimunjawa

The website of Spot Karimunjawa with the address <https://spotkarimunjawa.com/> gives a simple display. There is information on travel packages that customers can choose from facilities provided, tourist documentation, and contacts who can be contacted. The display of the Spot Karimunjawa website has several attractions which are using icons as illustrations well, optimizing social sharing features, and WhatsApp buttons which function to guide customers to other digital media. However, this agency's website still has many shortcomings compared to the other two tourism agencies not being good at selecting letter combinations, not maximizing action buttons, not using a comments feature, and a less structured navigation menu. Spot Karimunjawa wants to provide a simple display, but there are many shortcomings in the display of the website that will affect the user's impression and experience, thereby impacting customers' decisions in using this tourism agency

AVAILABLE TOUR PACKAGES

KARIMUNJAWA 2 HARI 1 MALAM (2H1M)

KAPAL PENYEBERANGAN		PENGINAPAN		
BERANGKAT	PULANG	HOMESTAY FAN	HOMESTAY AC	HOTEL BINTANG 3
SIGINJAI	SIGINJAI	650.000	850.000	1.200.000
SIGINJAI	EXPRESS JEPARA	710.000	900.000	1.300.000
EXPRESS JEPARA	EXPRESS JEPARA	810.000	1.000.000	1.370.000

Klik pada harga untuk keterangan lebih detail !

KARIMUNJAWA 2 HARI 2 MALAM (2H2M)

KAPAL PENYEBERANGAN		PENGINAPAN		
BERANGKAT	PULANG	HOMESTAY FAN	HOMESTAY AC	HOTEL BINTANG 3
PELNI	PELNI	200.000	800.000	1.200.000

Figure 3. Display of the Spot Karimunjawa Website

Source: author's documentation

Based on the content presented by Spot Karimunjawa, this agency only focuses on basic information regarding tour packages and the facilities provided as in the picture above. Spot Karimunjawa's detailed content does not have a variety of other content, such as articles or testimonials, which could help customers get more information. Completeness of information influences tourists' interest in finding out about this tourism agency and how its services are provided. However, the lack of information will limit customers from obtaining wider information and limit actions to carry out transactions at the Spot Karimunjawa agency.

In its implementation as promotional media, the content presented is less effective in attracting potential tourists to use Spot Karimunjawa's services. This is because in the AIDA model, there is an attention element which is influenced by the website display design, in this case, a simple display reduces customer interest and experience. In the interest element, messages that are less informative regarding legality, tourist destinations, and how to order reduce customer interest. Furthermore, this agency does not fulfill the elements of desire and action, due to the lack of content and previous tourist participation so it does not create a desire to carry out transactions through this agency. Even though the promotion process is considered ineffective, the Spot Karimunjawa website is a site to bridge interactions between customers and tourism agencies.

4.3 Batu Putih Adventure

Batu Putih Adventure website with address <https://batuputihadventure.com/> provides information to users regarding services with several contents which include company information, company commitments, travel documentation, articles, and partners who collaborate with Batu Putih Adventure. The display of the Batu Putih Adventure website has the advantage of a varied, clear, and structured navigation menu, optimized features (social sharing, WhatsApp buttons, and comments), and provides a good user experience by maximizing action buttons that direct visitors to the tour

package list. The shortcomings in the display of the Batu Putih Adventure website are the lack of use of icons as illustrations and the lack of consistency in display design. Even though it has several features and menus that can provide a good experience for users, this website is still not easy for customers to understand.

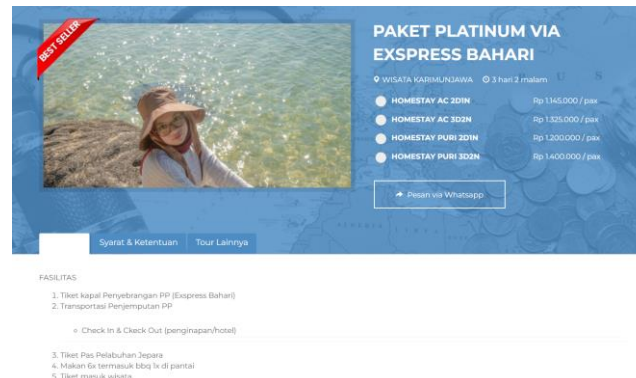


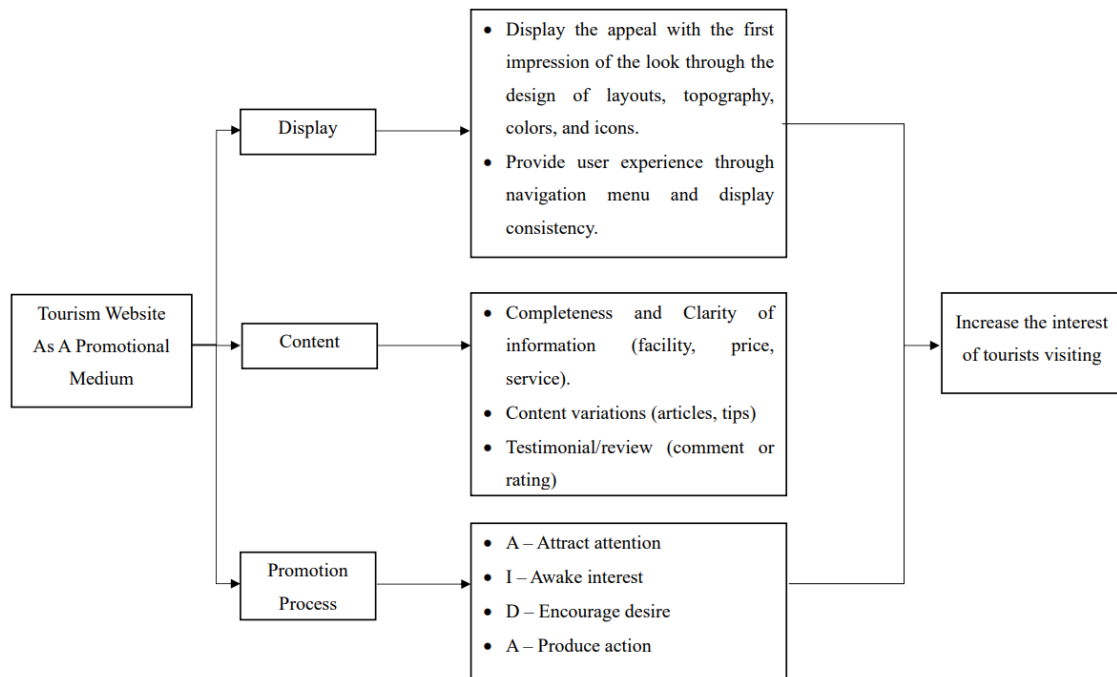
Figure 4. Display of the Batu PutihAdventure Website

Source: author's documentation

The image above contains detailed information regarding the facilities that customers receive, travel routes, participant terms and conditions, and other tour packages. Batu Putih Adventure has a variety of content that attracts customers, such as using a blog that provides the latest information, as well as other offers outside of tourism services. clarity of information arouses customer interest in using this service. Lack of content website Batu Putih Adventure does not optimize the comments feature to present testimonials, because this is what supports customer trust in making transactions with tourism agencies.

In using the website as a promotional medium, the content presented is effective in attracting potential tourists to use Spot Karimunjawa's services. The promotion process meets the characteristics of the AIDA model which aims to provide information to increase visitors who travel using Batu Putih Adventure services. The characteristics of the AIDA model that are met are; Attention, promotional content is presented in the form of a combination of images and writing, which attracts the attention of potential tourists. Interest, offers related to pick-up in your hometown are an attraction offered by Batu Putih Adventure, this is the content that can attract customers and generate interest in finding out about other facilities. Desire, even though there are no testimonial comments, the content of the service and security offered by this service create a desire for potential tourists to entrust their vacation to this service agency. Action, finally, an effective message or content must be able to persuade the target to take action to interact or purchase, in this case, the way to book's content supports this action.

The following is a matrix for using websites as promotional media for tourism agencies in Karimunjawa.



CONCLUSION

Websites as promotional media are effective in increasing public interest in visiting tourism in Karimunjawa. The aspects which can increase public interest through the usage of tourism websites are the display of the website, website content, and the promotional process that tourism agencies need to recognize. The display of the website creates a first impression through design's display increasing the attraction of tourists to use the services of a travel agency. Website content can increase tourist interest by providing completeness and clarity of information, variety of content, and reviews from other tourists which could increase customer trust. Meanwhile, in the promotion process, the tourism agency applies the AIDA model (attention, interest, desire, action) to recognize the use of websites and present content and displays that can increase Karimunjawa tourist visitors. In the tourism context, websites are proven to have an important role in conveying information, promotion, communication, and supporting other online activities.

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