

# Digital Marketing Strategy in Promoting the City's Brand

**Kadar Nurjaman**

*UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, Indonesia*

*Email: [kadarnurjaman@uinsgd.ac.id](mailto:kadarnurjaman@uinsgd.ac.id)*

Academic Editor: Nguyen Ngoc Anh

Copyright © 2022 Kadar Nurjaman. This is an open access article distributed under the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

**Abstract:** This project intends to build a digital marketing plan to promote a city brand containing a marketing manual or guide and an elaboration of the digital system for mobile and online apps. This research is based on city branding in the city of Samarinda, East Kalimantan Province, which aims in addition to increase the selling value of tourism and business but also to be an attraction in seizing potential resources so that, in turn, it is expected to be able to drive the development of the city itself. The technique is qualitative; organized and semi-structured interviews and direct observation of visitors. Consequently, digital marketing guidelines and digital apps are produced, which represent simply one click to access the world without limits and boost cities' competitiveness.

**Keywords:** *Digital Marketing, Strategy, Tourism, Competitiveness, City Brand.*

## A. INTRODUCTION

A city's digital marketing strategy is established via the promotion of City Brand, which includes the construction of a marketing manual or guide as well as a digital system for mobile applications and web portals (Kumar, 2016). Information and communication technology (ICT) has become more ubiquitous in the tourist sector, serving as a critical tool and ally in attracting visitors for a variety of purposes marketed through mobile applications and online portals or websites (Puspawati & Ristanto, 2018).

Tourism organizations and companies are increasingly relying on the Internet to market their products and services. Price comparison and timely information about different tourist services have been revolutionized by new technology, forcing communities to position themselves as commodities (Mingkid, 2015). City marketing is an active policy consisting of a series of activities aimed, on the one hand, to identify and define the needs of different, real, and potential audiences; and, on the other hand, to develop a range of products and services in cities to meet these needs, thereby creating and promoting their demand (Kolb, 2006).

The Internet is becoming an increasingly important marketing tool for tourism businesses and organizations. New technology has revolutionized price comparison and timely information about diverse tourism services, causing towns to become commodities (Bramwell, 1998). Michael Porter, an American economist, professor at Harvard Business School, and the world's foremost expert on competitiveness said that cities need competitive ideas and programs to achieve equality among their residents (Porter, 2015). The most developed nations should compete based on intangibles such as brand, quality, design, technology, and after-sales service (Zaichkowsky et al., 2010).

Recognizing that innovative capacity has become a defining feature of competitiveness for many businesses today, this phrase has taken on new meaning (Porter, 2015). If competitiveness is defined as an entity's capacity, public or private, taken as a starting point, profitable or not, to achieve and maintain a comparative advantage that makes it easier to achieve, maintain, and enhance a clear position in the socioeconomic context, it is critical to comprehend the relationship between government, innovation, and technology (Porter, 2011). In a scenario reflecting an urban environment with a continual demand for efficiency, sustainable development, quality of life, and effective resource management, city management

prototypes must undergo a revolution. The use of ICT is critical in this respect (Singh et al., 2020).

As a result, the tourism industry is no stranger to ICT; when the World Wide Web first arrived, Internet use was limited to reading news, sending emails, and making one-time purchases of products and services (Isdarmanto, 2020). As a consequence of the broad use of networking, new technologies for simple content development and delivery emerged. Database-based utilities and services that may be customized in terms of content and appearance (Sukirno & Irfan, 2019). As the Internet advances, travelers take on the role of content producers, posting photographs, videos, and travel comments on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube—even promoting the sites or destinations they visit and the services they use (Oktaviani & Fatchiya, 2019).

The Internet is a fantastic tool for removing distance since it enables sharing of network information by anybody, anywhere in the world, using current computing technologies such as web pages, mobile apps, social networking forums, emails, and so on. It may be argued that the Internet is more than just a technology; it is a critical mode of communication for all forms of tourism: pleasure, business, study, science, work, culture, religion, gastronomy, health, and so on (Arifin (2017).

## **B. METHOD**

The study that was conducted was of the descriptive kind, and it used a qualitative approach. This type of research describes an existing phenomenon by describing the problems studied in depth with data obtained through interviews and conveying the data in a narrative or with various texts. The research describes an existing phenomenon by describing the problems studied in depth with data obtained through interviews (Sugiyono, 2011). This study tries to acquire true and real facts regarding the settings and situations present in the research topic, which is why the researcher utilizes this sort of descriptive research in conjunction with a qualitative method. The literature that is relevant to the topic that is being researched is searched to acquire the necessary data.

## **C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **1. Brand Concept of a country**

Knowing what happens when the brand idea is put into practice in different countries, cities, and regions throughout the globe is critical. This is because it will make it simpler to embark on the subsequent conceptual journey regarding issues associated with the topic. Builders are companies, leading brands, and benchmarks in society; they are used to represent elements that differentiate one country from another. Country brands reflect a holistic vision of a region's image that is strengthened and enriched by investments in communications from the home country to the rest of the world (Utami & Gaffar, 2016).

The concept of a country's unique identity in the context of the global marketplace gave rise to the phrase "country brand" (also spelled country brand). This need was felt by both the private sector and the public sector. Utilizing the nation of origin of goods, firms, and people is part of the objective of a country's positioning strategy, which is part of the purpose of utilizing these factors in the global market (Florek, 2005). The following is what he has to say about the topic: "while the image of a country is the perception of the country by direct, indirect, real, and potential consumers; and it is equivalent to the sum of all the elements that make up the state, plus the elements generated to communicate its characteristics; This perception contains a distinguishing connotation." Even if some nations have similarities, they are all distinct in their ways.

By combining a country's commodities, organizations, and the image that the nation conveys, Country Brands may effectively make territorial marketing visible. It represents the core of a firm or product's existence, which is its identity. Every aim and target from beginning to finish is framed, attempting to establish a style that enables it to place itself in the market and secure its reputation and recognition by virtue of its distinguishing qualities (Fetcherin, 2010).

Nations, towns, and regions must have an effective way to market themselves in today's increasingly interconnected and competitive global marketplace, where websites strive to attract visitors, investors, and business travelers. Customers purchase their goods and services (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003). Because competition exists in practically every sector of the global economy, almost every country is searching for new methods to promote its own culture, attractions, and products.

There is usually a correlation between a country or region's culture and its particular set of skills. France is known for its cheese, Switzerland for its watches, Italy for its pasta, Australia for its wine, and Indonesia for its natural beauty are just a few examples. However, in recent years, studies have shown that consumers in various countries respond in a variety of different ways to the characteristics of the country of origin, and these responses may change over time. These findings have been observed in several different countries.

## **2. City Brand creation and development**

In the first place, people's ideas give cities their structure, substance, and meaning; in the second place, individuals know and grasp the city via their own senses and interpret it by the images it offers. For a long period of time, items, services, and businesses have been successfully managed as a brand using this same method of image development (Moilanen, 2009).

Marketing presents the notion of urban markets, which leads to new ways of thinking and consideration of the city, its investors, and its tourists. The notion requires a fresh mindset and management philosophy. The city is changing as a result of its participation in the exchange process, which produces transactions between its services and attractions and a variety of its target audiences, including inhabitants, investors, companies, and tourists. Consequently, a tight network of customer-satisfaction interactions is formed, in which citizens as consumers are of paramount significance (Braun, 2008).

As with any commodity or consumer item, a city's qualities serve to distinguish and compete with others. The brand's image, as well as its registered trademark, is one of the most significant characteristics. These intangible assets cannot be handled arbitrarily; they must comply with a comprehensive strategic marketing plan, at which point the communication strategy becomes crucial. "A strategic marketing strategy must address the definition of a powerful, unique, identifiable, coherent, and, most importantly, the image that generates positive attitudes among the various target audiences" (Saez, 2010).

City Brand was created primarily to advertise the city as a tourist attraction, a business hub, and a desirable location to live. However, developing a city brand involves more than simply redefining its visual identity (Dinnie, 2010). Increasingly, city brands are seen as valuable assets for urban development; they also serve as an effective means for cities to identify themselves and enhance their standing. Cities in different regions utilize various methods to advertise themselves to relevant audiences, such as investors, tourists, and residents. They also incorporate outstanding accomplishments and compelling slogans on welcome websites and national and international media advertising campaigns.

### 3. Digital Marketing Strategy in promoting City Brand

As firms compete in the marketplace to provide value to clients, marketing has been incorporated into the company's strategy to become an integral part of their DNA. The marketing role has been expanded to include all organizations and businesses, regardless of size. Almost everyone engages in marketing, whether unaware of it or mindlessly or mechanically (Panuju, 2019).

Market rules are rapidly changing for firms, and "technology is changing everything." It should be noted that this is about more than simply technology; it is also about how the use of new technologies changes customer attitudes and actions. Similarly, the digital world pervades society, spawning new lifestyles and spending habits. The real and the virtual, analog and digital, coexist and mingle in modern society to create a new reality: "the virtual is real, and the reality is virtual as well." This is causing a dramatic shift in the digital world, notably the capacity to connect at any time and from any location. "Digital marketing" is constantly emerging and changing in this new context.

Organic positioning, Search Engine Optimization (SEO), keywords, inbound, social networking, outbound, SEM or search engine marketing, AdWords, Display Ads, Facebook Ads, and more have all been introduced into the digital marketing language, reflecting the fact that marketing is no longer what it once was: The list is vast, and these are only a few new terms, but the inventory continues to grow, prompting concern and unease in light of recent events.

Why should digital strategies be used for marketing management? Today, organizations have great opportunities in digital media, from ICT-based companies to traditional businesses. In this case, everyone can take advantage of digital opportunities. It is noteworthy that the digital strategy provides direction and measurable steps on how to use the means and techniques to achieve the vision and goals of each company. Likewise, there are many reasons to use this type of strategy:

- a. The use of digital strategies makes it possible to turn data into market intelligence, both from clients and from competitors, and it is clear that such information is necessary to compete in the market (Ideas and Consultancy Projects, 2012).
- b. Digital strategies allow companies to improve customer relationships and see how they interact with brands.
- c. Customers are becoming more and more knowledgeable about digital media, and the ICT market is developing at an ever-increasing pace nowadays.
- d. Additionally, you must have a strategy for promoting and selling your digital items.

The following is a digital marketing strategy in managing a city's brand that can be carried out by stakeholders in the city:

- a. Establish your online presence. A user's digital identity is the impression left on the Internet by their interactions with other users or the development of new material. Internet groups and services form an individual's digital identity, which cannot be predetermined. Brands are recommended to build their digital identity by participating in various social networks and ensuring that they are in sync with their goods and services.
- b. Focus on legal work. Marketing's most potent premise is to keep a brand's name in the minds of potential customers. Successful brands are those that have the ability to conjure up a term in the thoughts of their target audience members.
- c. Ensure that your website appears in search results. In order to be noticed by their intended audience and to do so fast, brands must devise search engine optimization methods.

- d. SEO implementation. In order to guarantee that your brand's website ranks well in search engine results with phrases that define your product or service, this is an essential step.
- e. Inbound Marketing. All of them are marketing methods in which "you don't have to spend." According to Internet Republica's site, inbound marketing is built on three fundamental pillars: SEO, content marketing, and social media marketing. Whether on Twitter, Facebook (with the development of a company profile), or YouTube.
- f. Outbound Marketing. It's a marketing approach in which you pay in exchange for a return on investment (conversion)." It seeks consumers by real activities and focuses on identifying and "attracting new leads by distributing a big number of messages through multiple ways to have a different effect on more individuals."

An Internet community manager or a digital strategist is the best person to lead these proposals, which include a variety of instructional programs, product launches and positioning as well as brand upkeep across new media and digital platforms. -websites and mobile apps-. Anyone may be in cyberspace thanks to the implementation of a smart and successful communication plan through online channels on a worldwide platform that is synced with entities.

#### D. CONCLUSION

The study focuses on the city of Samarinda, but it can be expanded and will serve as a guide for future studies, as well as providing travelers with a tourism marketing office where they can get all the information they want. About what to see, where to stay, what to eat, what to purchase, recreational activities, events, services, maps with geographically located points of interest, where to take users, and the history of the city. The objective of Kota Samarinda brand management, which began some years ago with City Branding, is to increase the city's competitiveness. Therefore, they constructed the city as it exists now. Local Branding takes years to create correctly and involves the participation of all city stakeholders (rulers, institutions, ordinary people, etc.). Emerging competition among tourist destinations has revealed the need to emphasize digital marketing strategies to create an intangible added value for potential customers, with the goal of promoting a positive image of the area being promoted. Having a tourist office accessible on your smartphone or tablet has social advantages. Similarly, it boosts the efficiency with which travelers seek for the information they need to make pertinent judgments. With no need for paper, the environment is conserved, and the expense of advertising the city is decreased by eliminating posters and other promotional materials.

#### REFERENCES

1. Arifin, S. (2017). Digitalisasi Pariwisata Madura. *Jurnal Komunikasi*, 11(1), 53-60.
2. Bramwell, B. (1998). User satisfaction and product development in urban tourism. *Tourism Management*, 19(1), 35-47.
3. Braun, E. (2008). *City Marketing: Towards an integrated approach* (No. EPS-2008-142-ORG).
4. Dinnie, K. (2010). *City branding: Theory and cases*. Springer.
5. Fetscherin, M. (2010). The country brand's strength index is the determinant and measurement of a country brand. *International Marketing Review*.
6. Florek, M. (2005). The country brand is a new challenge for Poland. *Place branding*, 1(2), 205-214.
7. Isdarmanto, I. (2020). Strategi Branding Pengembangan Industri Pariwisata 4.0 melalui Kompetitif Multimedia di Era Digital. *Journal of Tourism and Creativity*, 4(1), 1-20.



8. Kolb, B. (2006). *Tourism marketing for cities and towns*. Routledge.
9. Kumar, R. (2016). Digital marketing campaigns to promote the City Branding. *Network*, (4), 127-133.
10. Mingkid, E. (2015). Penggunaan media komunikasi promosi pariwisata oleh pemerintah Kota Manado. *Sosiohumaniora*, 17(3), 188-192.
11. Moilanen, T. (2009). *How to brand nations, cities, and destinations*. Palgrave Macmillan.
12. Oktaviani, W. F., & Fatchiya, A. (2019). Efektivitas Penggunaan Media Sosial sebagai Media Promosi Wisata Umbul Pongok, Kabupaten Klaten. *Jurnal Komunikasi Pembangunan*, 17(1), 13-27.
13. Panuju, R. (2019). *Komunikasi pemasaran: pemasaran sebagai gejala komunikasi komunikasi sebagai strategi pemasaran*. Prenada Media.
14. Porter, M. (2015). The competitive advantage of the inner city. In *The city reader* (pp. 358-371). Routledge.
15. Porter, M. E. (2011). *The competitive advantage of nations: creating and sustaining superior performance*. Simon and Schuster.
16. Puspawati, D. P. H., & Ristanto, R. (2018). Strategi Promosi Digital Untuk Pengembangan Pariwisata Kota Magelang. *Jendela Inovasi Daerah*, 1(2), 1-20.
17. Ritchie, J. B., & Crouch, G. I. (2003). *The competitive destination: A sustainable tourism perspective*. Cabi.
18. Singh, S., Sharma, P. K., Yoon, B., Shojafar, M., Cho, G. H., & Ra, I. H. (2020). Convergence of blockchain and artificial intelligence in IoT network for the sustainable smart city. *Sustainable Cities and Society*, 63, 102364.
19. Sugiyono, P. (2011). *Metodologi penelitian kuantitatif kualitatif dan R&D*. Bandung: Alfabeta.
20. Sukirno, Z. L., & Irfan, E. (2019). Teknologi Komunikasi Informasi dan Dekonstruksi Tren Pariwisata. *Journal of Tourism and Creativity*, 3(2), 179-192.
21. Utami, S., & Gaffar, V. (2016). Pengaruh strategi nation branding “Wonderful Indonesia” terhadap proses keputusan berkunjung wisatawan australia ke indonesia. *THE Journal: Tourism and Hospitality Essentials Journal*, 4(1), 693-704.
22. Zaichkowsky, J. L., Parlee, M., & Hill, J. (2010). Managing industrial brand equity: Developing tangible benefits for intangible assets. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 39(5), 776-783.