

INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATION OF ECOTOURISM AND TURTLE CONSERVATION IN THE BANGGAI DISTRICT

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Abstract: This study aims to determine the integrated marketing communication of ecotourism and turtle conservation in Banggai Regency. This research was conducted in Sinorang Village, South Batui District, Banggai Regency. The research time was from March to August 2023. The method used in this research is using a qualitative research method with a descriptive approach. Research data were obtained through observation, interviews, and documentation. Types and sources of research data using primary data and secondary data. The results of this study indicate that integrated marketing communication of ecotourism and turtle conservation in Banggai Regency, which consists of: video advertising, print and electronic media advertising, social media advertising and advertorial advertising. Direct marketing conveys information by word of mouth or the term word of mouth marketing, which is delivered face-to-face. Sales promotion using brand ambassadors from Luwuk. Personal selling using Facebook social media which is carried out personally by the community, business actors and village government. And sales promotion with the presence of digital marketing and social media using the AISAS model (attention, interest, search, action, share). Interactive marketing, marketing through social media (facebook, instagram, youtube) and electronic word of mouth (E-Wom). Community relations through the turtle ecotourism soft opening event program held on April 21-26, 2023. Green marketing, through green marketing with environmentally friendly conditions so that the focus of nature and environmental conservation continues to run optimally. And experience marketing, through this marketing experience is a way to advertise to tourists based on the extraordinary and unique experiences they experience, tell and share with others.

Keywords: Integrated marketing communications, ecotourism, conservation.

1. Introduction

Banggai Regency in the Sinorang beach area is an ideal place for sea turtles to lay their eggs, but this area is starting to change, with people converting the surrounding vegetation. There are several other threats to sea turtles that are currently a problem, including the illegal collection of sea turtles and their eggs still occurs by people around the area. Both meat and scales are for souvenirs, and eggs are for consumption. The collection is based on the low income and education of the community, as well as a lack of knowledge of the importance of these animals, a weak system, and a lack of public awareness of the importance of preserving sea turtles.

Based on that, Muhammadiyah University of Luwuk Banggai collaborates with the Joint Operating Body Pertamina-Medco E&P Tomori Sulawesi (JOB Tomori) as a form of concern for this endangered animal by making efforts to protect and preserve the turtle by conducting an initial study of turtle potential in Sinorang Beach. This activity requires local government support to help develop a database, information, and documentation of sea turtle potential in Sinorang beach, South Batui District, and Banggai Regency. This study is expected to reference sea turtle conservation management in Sinorang beach. Ecotourism activities are expected to generate economic benefits for the local community and increase the sense of ownership and concern for sea turtle conservation.

The concept of ecotourism was developed by applying a concept that utilizes the existence of turtle and turtle habitats as objects and tourist attractions; planning will provide knowledge to tourists about the importance of turtle conservation, as well as an appeal to preserve the environment in a sustainable manner, is an ecotourism concept developed at Sinorang beach.

Ecotourism development in Sinorang Beach is based on the principle of developing tourist destinations with the aim of producing sustainable economic, social and environmental growth. Pelangi Penyu is the name of this ecotourism. A turtle ecotourism manager has been formed under the name Pelangi Penyu; the Pelangi Penyu ecotourism manager consists of local people who will be mentored and assisted by Muhammadiyah University of Luwuk Banggai and Joint Operating Body Pertamina-Medco E&P Tomori Sulawesi. Previously, an ecotourism organization was formed consisting of people who are competent in the field of ecotourism, as well as involving the community in implementing partnership-based ecotourism services.

Previous research by Susana Mendes, Joana Martins and Teresa Mouga (2019) wrote, "Ecotourism based on the observation of sea turtles - A sustainable solution for the touristic promotion of São Tomé and Príncipe." This study aims to determine the potential of São Tomé and Príncipe as an ecotourism destination based on sea turtle tourism. Although there is already awareness among the population about sea turtle conservation, the results showed that the population did not immediately accept the ban on sea turtle fishing. However, most Morro de Peixe residents accepted societal changes regarding their protection.

In fact, the population is beginning to realize that tourism, due to the protection afforded to these endangered species, can (in the medium term) be a sustainable source of income. Regarding the profile of tourists, most are Portuguese, with a high level of education and income. The community is well informed about the need for turtle conservation and seeks to carry out tourist activities that pursue this protection. This also shows the potential that the country has as a turtle-based ecotourism destination (Mandes et al., 2019).

Sinorang Beach is beautiful and attractive, turtle ecotourism with various types of turtles, this program has the full community support, the location is easy to reach, there is culinary on this beach. However, the problem at Sinorang beach besides these factors, there are still other factors, namely the lack of turtle management training, the road infrastructure to Sinorang Beach which is still inadequate, the unavailability of lodging so that for traveling the community is still unable to enjoy it, the beach is still filled with scattered household garbage, to meet their daily needs the community still uses well water.

Besides that, vigilance in facing the rainy season and strong winds impacts people who cannot fish and are still looking for turtle eggs for consumption and sale with the presence of turtles. The availability of human resources and those with skills only exist outside Sinorang beach, community education is still low, and traders come from outside to enter to market their products.

In line with this, the beauty of the ecotourism potential and turtle conservation of Banggai Regency is certainly not only good management, but requires communication. Ecotourism managers are not only enough by building a good and qualified product, because as good, unique and beautiful as the product is if no one knows about it, of course no one will visit it. Through communication, a good ecotourism message is conveyed as a whole to the community so that it gets a good response. In addition, through communication, conveying messages as a conservation effort can be conveyed well, so that both can run together.

Marketing communication accomplished separately is certainly no longer effective in today's modern era. The concept of integrated marketing communication, also known as integrated marketing communication (IMC), combines and integrates all communication channels to deliver clear, consistent, and convincing messages about its products. This research aims to explain the integrated marketing communication applied in marketing ecotourism and sea turtle conservation in Banggai Regency.

2. Literature review

Kotler and Armstrong (2014) say that integrated marketing communication is a concept where companies integrate and coordinate communication channels to convey clear, consistent and convincing messages about the company and its products (Hasnindar et al., 2021). Meanwhile, Kotler and Armstrong (2001) define integrated marketing communication (IMC) as a concept where a company carefully integrates and coordinates its many communication channels to deliver clear, consistent, and convincing messages about the company and its products. Furthermore, according to Kotler and Armstrong (2001), integrated marketing communication (IMC) is a combination of

advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, public relations, and direct marketing used by companies to achieve advertising and marketing objectives. (Bambang et al., 2018).

Integrated marketing communications include coordination efforts from promotional elements and other marketing activities. The promotional elements and other marketing activities are called the marketing communication mix, which consists of advertising, direct marketing, sales promotion, personal selling, interactive marketing, and public relations (Priansa, 2017).

Wahjono (2010) says that advertising is a form of promotion carried out in the form of impressions, images, or words that are repeated in the form of brochures, banners, billboards, newspapers, magazines, television, radio, or banners, or other public media such as the internet, cable television, airport television, and others (Pantri, 2022). Meanwhile, according to Hermawan (2012), advertising is part of fulfilling the marketing function where advertising does not just provide information to the audience but is also intended to influence the feelings, knowledge, meaning, beliefs, attitudes, and images of consumers related to a product or brand. Advertising is intended to influence consumer affection and cognition evaluation, feelings, knowledge, meaning, beliefs, attitudes and consumer images regarding products and brands (Riri, 2022).

Kotler and Keller (2008) say direct marketing is using consumer channels to reach and deliver goods and services to customers without marketing intermediaries. Direct marketing can use several channels to reach potential and individual customers, such as interactive television, kiosks, websites, and mobile equipment. The communication that is done directly is done to get a response that is obtained in a short time (Heriyati & Kurniatun, 2019).

Hermawan (2012) says that sales promotion is a form of direct persuasion through the use of incentives that can be arranged to stimulate immediate product purchases and or increase the number of items purchased by customers. Peter and Olson (2014) suggest that sales promotion is an action-focused marketing event that directly impacts a company's customer behavior. Furthermore, Abdurrahman (2015) says that sales promotions are short-term incentives to encourage the purchase or sale of products or services. Sales promotion is a direct "form of persuasion" through various incentives that can be arranged to stimulate immediate product purchases and increase the amount of goods purchased by customers (Riri, 2022).

Abdurrahman (2015) says that personal selling is a personal presentation by a company's salesperson to make sales and build customer relationships. Meanwhile, Assuari (2015) suggests personal selling as an oral presentation in a conversation with one or more prospective buyers to realize sales. It can be said that personal selling is an interaction between individuals verbally in a conversation aimed at creating, improving, controlling, or maintaining a profitable reciprocal relationship in the company's sales to consumers (Riri, 2022).

The initial model of the stages of communication impact is referred to as the AIDA model proposed by E.K. Strong (1925). Developed to reflect the stages a marketer must go through in promoting a product as a personal selling process. These stages include how to create attention (attention), create interest (interest), foster interest (desire), and encourage action (action) to consumers about the product being sold (Sunarto & Rudi, 2017).

The presence of digital marketing and social media has shifted the paradigm of business and social marketing from the AIDA model to the AISAS model, namely attracting customer attention (attention), attracting customer interest (interest), encouraging customers (search) to search and compare advertised products, encouraging customers (action) to buy advertised products and encouraging customers to share experiences about advertised products (share) to create two-way communication (Ria et al., 2022)

Interactive marketing, or internet marketing, uses the internet and related digital technologies to achieve marketing objectives and support modern marketing concepts (Sunarto & Rudi, 2017). Furthermore, interactive media allows for a reciprocal flow of information that allows users to participate and modify the form and content of information at that very moment. In addition to functioning as a promotional medium, the internet is an independent marketing communication instrument (Priansa, 2017).

Frank Jefkins (1998) states that public relations is a communication system to create goodwill. Toni Grenner (1995) says that public relations positively represents the organization aimed at the entire public (Kriyantono, 2021).

Furthermore, Boone and Kurtz (2010) state that public relations refers to an organization of business organization communication that is not paid directly, which involves various parties interested in business organizations, such as customers, sellers, news media or press, employees, shareholders and government (Wibowo & Priansa, 2017).

Carter (1992) states that green marketing is a holistic, strategic responsibility management process that identifies, anticipates, satisfies and fulfills the needs of stakeholders to provide reasonable rewards that do not cause harm to humans or the health of the natural environment. Furthermore, Polonsky (1994) states that green marketing is all activities designed to generate and facilitate all changes expected to satisfy human needs and desires with minimal impact on damage to the natural environment. This occurs due to the fulfillment of human needs and desires that can potentially negatively impact the natural environment (Priansa, 2017). Experiential marketing is a term used to describe the process of identifying and satisfying customer needs and aspirations to ensure profitability, taking into account their engagement and interaction to bring to life the brand's personality and add value to the target audience. It will be an advanced marketing strategy that successfully creates two-way experiential marketing (Widita et al., 2021).

Tourism consists of travel to relatively undisturbed or contaminated natural areas for the specific purpose of studying, admiring, and enjoying the scenery and its wild plants and animals, as well as the existing cultural manifestations (both past and present) in the area (Dang, 2023). Ecotourism comes from the English language, namely ecotourism, which consists of the words eco and tourism. The word eco, translated into Indonesian, means not harming the environment, and tourism means tourism. Thus, ecotourism means tourism that does not harm the environment, and ecotourism is a concept developed from tourism activities in general. The concept of ecotourism has developed meaning so that it is understood differently depending on the background and management basis that will be developed (Fauziah, 2021).

According to Yoeti, there are at least five elements that are considered the most decisive for managing ecotourism areas, namely: first, education; second, protection or defense; third, local community involvement; fourth, supervision; fifth, conservation. Furthermore, the principle of ecotourism-based development is based on the ideas of sustainable tourism the three pillars on which tourism rests are: First, ecology, and travel based on nature by applying conservation principles. Second, economically, there is prosperity for the community from ecotourism activities, especially the community around the destination. Third, socio-cultural, maintaining the local community, even being another attraction besides the beautiful natural conditions, can be termed cultural tourism (Dian, 2020).

Conservation can be translated into preserving or maintaining the environment's natural balance, quality, function, and capability. The act of conservation has two main objectives, namely, to support and improve the well-being and quality of human life. Second, to utilize natural resources and ecosystems without disturbing the dynamic balance of the ecology (L.Y et al., 2022).

3. Research method

This research was conducted in Sinorang Village, South Batui District, Banggai Regency. The research time was from March to August 2023. The method used in this research is using a qualitative research method with a descriptive approach. Research data were obtained through observation, interviews, and documentation. Types and sources of research data using primary data and secondary data.

4. Results and discussions

Based on the research results on integrated marketing communication of ecotourism and turtle conservation in Banggai Regency, which consists of advertising, direct marketing, sales promotion, personal selling, interactive marketing, public relations, green marketing, and experiential marketing. Advertising to inform the ecotourism and turtle conservation of Banggai Regency in the area is certainly not only the responsibility of the community, business people, and ecotourism managers but also that of the local government. In this effort, the Sinorang Village government has made efforts, among others, to promote new ecotourism through videos, not yet having social media owned by the village government. However, the village government, community and business actors have personally advertised through Facebook social media. In addition to other forms of advertising: advertising through print and electronic media, advertising that ecotourism managers have done through social media (facebook,

instagram, youtube) facebook Sinorang turtle ecotourism, facebook pelangi turtle, instagram @ pelangi turtle, youtube pelangi turtle. Existing advertisements are delivered by the community and business actors and are carried out personally. As well as other forms of advertising in the form of news, namely advertorial advertisements.

Direct marketing, forms of direct marketing that exist, among others, by conveying information directly about the existence of turtle ecotourism and turtle conservation in Banggai Regency to people who visit, or even those who have not visited, information conveyed by word of mouth or the term word of mouth marketing when meeting face-to-face. Besides being able to travel, you can also educate and gain new knowledge about the existence of sea turtles and conserve sea turtles through stories from one person to another.

Sales promotion efforts have been made in this case sales promotion by using brand ambassadors from Luwuk to help promote turtle ecotourism, in addition to the community or visitors themselves who carry out personal promotions and social media owned by turtle ecotourism which can increase sales of turtle ecotourism in Banggai Regency.

Personal selling, a form of personal selling carried out using social media facebook has conducted personal selling through social media which is carried out personally by the community, business actors and village governments to introduce ecotourism and turtle conservation in Banggai Regency. With the presence of digital marketing and social media using the AISAS model, turtle ecotourism and turtle conservation in Banggai Regency attract the attention of tourists through advertisements that are seen and attention. This attracts interest with attractive advertisements, will arouse curiosity about the information so that it attracts tourists to visit, and looking for information (search) related to ecotourism and turtle conservation in Banggai Regency, which encourages tourists to visit from the information obtained, of course, thus encouraging tourists (action) to make visits and encouraging tourists to share (share) experiences about what is felt to create two-way communication.

Interactive marketing using interactive media, namely social media and electronic word of mouth (e-WOM). The social media used are Facebook, Instagram and YouTube. Social media for managing ecotourism and turtle conservation are Facebook Sinorang Turtle Ecotourism, Facebook Pelangi Turtle, Instagram @ Pelangi Turtle, YouTube Pelangi Turtle. Interactive marketing using interactive media, namely social media and electronic word of mouth (e-wom). The social media platforms used are facebook, instagram, and youtube. Social media for turtle ecotourism and conservation management are facebook sinorang turtle ecotourism, facebook pelangi turtle, instagram @ pelangi turtle, youtube pelangi turtle.

Public relations. The form of marketing communication of turtle ecotourism and conservation of Banggai Regency, in this case, building public relations that has been carried out with the soft opening event program for turtle ecotourism held on April 21-26, 2023, with approximately two hundred people visited the turtle ecotourism. By applying the concept of green marketing, not only prioritizing economic benefits but also having other goals, such as ecotourism and turtle conservation of Banggai Regency, concern for the environment becomes essential. Therefore, the purpose of brand communication is to raise awareness of the importance of the environment as the initial stage of implementing the green marketing concept. Enjoying Banggai Regency turtle ecotourism is a green marketing effort to change the culture of tourists enjoying tourism other than mass tourism. By still enjoying the beauty of nature and ensuring environmental preservation, Banggai Regency turtle ecotourism is different from other mass tourism.

Through the concept of turtle breeding and tourism, as a combination of both into turtle ecotourism. Forms of conservation through turtle hatchery breeding and the availability of information boards at the entrance to become a means of education. Adequate facilities and infrastructure certainly provide comfort in traveling, for existing facilities, although still in the process of building and maintaining existing ones slowly, these facilities can already be enjoyed by tourists.

The completion of the welcome gate will be used as a photo spot icon with the concept of a boat, a photo spot from a former fishing boat that is not used because of its damaged condition, and then utilized with a natural impression that has artistic value with the beach concept. The availability of facilities and infrastructure for turtle ecotourism in Banggai Regency with this description is an environmentally friendly condition so that the focus on nature and environmental conservation continues to run optimally.

Tourists get personal experience and satisfaction by contributing to a good environment. Moreover, the experience can be shared with others, and the feeling of loving and being one with nature can automatically be felt. Hence, there is a need for green brand attributes as brand-specific attributes and relationships that provide travel benefits. The marketing experience of turtle ecotourism and conservation in Banggai Regency not only provides information and opportunities for tourists to gain experience for the benefits obtained but also creates feelings and evokes emotions so that it impacts marketing, especially sales.

Turtle ecotourism provides benefits in terms of education because, in addition to giving tourists the opportunity to enjoy the beauty of nature and preserve nature, tourists also get engaging experiences because the presence of turtles is the main attraction and uniqueness of Banggai Regency turtle ecotourism and provides new knowledge. In addition, ecotourism helps conservation. One consequential way to change tourists' minds about ecotourism and turtle conservation in Banggai Regency is through experiential marketing. This is a way to advertise to tourists based on their extraordinary and unique experiences, telling about them and sharing them with others.

Telling the experience can be done through utilizing the use of promotion by conveying information by word of mouth or using the media as the most effective marketing tool to bring in more tourists with an experience marketing approach to tourists. It will increase tourists' impressions of ecotourism and turtle conservation in Banggai Regency.

5. Conclusions

Integrated marketing communications of ecotourism and turtle conservation in Banggai Regency consisting of: advertising, direct marketing, sales promotion, personal selling, interactive marketing, public relations, green marketing and experiential marketing. Advertising, by the village government has made efforts to promote ecotourism only through videos, because it does not yet have social media owned by the village government, however the village government, community and business actors have advertised through Facebook social media personally. In addition, other forms of advertising: advertisements through print and electronic media. Advertising that has been done by ecotourism managers through social media (facebook, instagram, youtube), facebook Sinorang turtle ecotourism, facebook pelangi turtle, instagram @ pelangi turtle, youtube pelangi turtle. As well as other forms of advertising in the form of news, namely advertorial advertisements.

Direct marketing conveys information by word of mouth or the term word of mouth marketing, when meeting face-to-face. Sales promotion using brand ambassadors from Luwuk. Personal selling using facebook social media which is carried out personally by the community, business actors and village government. And sales promotion with the presence of digital marketing and social media using the AISAS model (attention, interest, search, action, share). Interactive marketing, namely social media (facebook, instagram, youtube) and electronic word of mouth (E-Wom). Community relations through the turtle ecotourism soft opening event program held on April 21-26, 2023. Green marketing, through green marketing with environmentally friendly conditions so that the focus of nature and environmental conservation continues to run optimally and experience marketing, through this marketing experience is a way to advertise to tourists based on the extraordinary and unique experiences they experience, tell and share with others.

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