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Reputation Management Strategy of Natural Bengkulu Logo as a Regional Tourism Brand

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Abstract - In an effort to overcome the weak tourism reputation management in Bengkulu Province, the Bengkulu Provincial Tourism Office has taken a bold step by launching a new tourism brand, namely the Natural Bengkulu logo. Although this effort is expected to provide a strong visual identity, new challenges arise when people only see the logo as an attractive visual element without understanding the deep philosophy that should be the foundation of a tourism brand. A tourism brand is not just a visual representation or logo, but includes values, stories, and experiences that can shape positive perceptions of a destination. This study aims to analyze brand reputation management strategies through a qualitative descriptive approach with a case study method. The focus of this study is the brand reputation management of the Natural Bengkulu logo as a visual identity that reflects the richness of local nature and culture. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with related parties, observations, and document reviews. The results of the study indicate that the Natural Bengkulu logo brand reputation management strategy implemented by the Bengkulu Provincial Tourism Office has succeeded in significantly increasing the visibility and attractiveness of regional tourism. By implementing seven components of reputation management including reputation template adjustment, reputation audit from internal and external perspectives, reputation capital goal setting, accountability formula, reputation management plan, annual audit and assessment, and stakeholder mapping, this strategy has created a positive and consistent image in the eyes of the public.

Keywords: Branding, Logo; Natural Bengkulu; Reputation Management; Tourism

Introduction

Tourism plays an important role in the development of the economy and social life of a region, including in Bengkulu Province. Bengkulu Province is legally designated as a province based on Law Number 9 of 1967 concerning the government's decision on the formation of a province, as well as the determination of Bengkulu City as the capital of Bengkulu Province. Bengkulu is a province in Sumatra located at 5 ° 40 '- 2 ° 0' LS 40' - 104 ° 0' BT with an area of 19,788.70 km2 (7,640.46) which borders West Sumatra, Lampung, the Indian Ocean, Jambi and South Sumatra. With a fairly strategic area, of course the potential for economic development in the tourism sector is very promising, the diversity of customs and cultures supported by the structure of the Bengkulu province which has oceans, land, and mountains can also add strength that Bengkulu Province has its own

appeal. Bengkulu Province can be the right province for investment as well as being a driving force for national economic activity. Bengkulu Province is also worthy of consideration as a competitive tourist destination when compared to other regions in Indonesia.

Bengkulu Arts and Culture has the art of *batik besurek*, namely *batik* cloth decorated with bald Arabic letters and recognized by the Indonesian government as one of the cultural heritages of the Republic of Indonesia and also enriches the cultural heritage in Indonesia. Bengkulu culture has several different characteristics because it is influenced by different tribes, namely the culture of South Bengkulu, the Serawai Tribe, the Rejang culture and the Coastal culture. Tabot culture is a unique culture that combines local traditions with Islamic Sharia culturally. Traditional dances from Bengkulu include; Tombak Kerbau dance, Putri Gading Cempaka dance, Pukek dance, Andun dance, Kejei dance, Penyambut dance, Bidadari Menimang Anak dance and Topeng dance. Musical arts in Bengkulu province include: Dol Music, Geritan (story telling while singing), Serambeak in the form of petatah - petitih, Andei-andei which is literary art in the form of advice, Sambei which is a vocal art typical of the Rejang Tribe usually for wedding parties.

The natural tourism potential in Bengkulu Province is; Panjang Beach, Pasir Putih Beach, Tapak Paderi Beach and Zakat Beach (Bengkulu City), Tikus Island (Bengkulu City), Dendam Tak Jadi Lake (Bengkulu City), Linau Beach, Way Hawang Beach, Laguna Beach (Kaur Regency), White Water Rafting Ketahun River (Lebong Regency), Tropical Rain Forest Park (Kepahiang), Sebelat Elephant Training Center (North Bengkulu), Mas Harum Bastari Lake & Suban Hot Springs (Rejang Lebong), Climbing Kaba Hill (Rejang Lebong), Suci River Beach (Bengkulu Middle). Cultural and Historical Heritage Tourism, namely; Marlboro Fort, Bung Karno's House of Exile, Fatmawati House, Tugu Parr and Hamillton Monument, Bengkulu Provincial Museum, Sentot Alibasyah Tomb.

In terms of forest wealth, Bengkulu Province has various kinds of forest wealth that can be found in Bengkulu such as Rafflesia Arnoldi Flowers, Vanda Hookeriana Water Orchids, *Medang* Wood, Meranti, Ratan and Damar. Other plants that are widely cultivated by the community are Palm Oil, Rubber Latex, Coffee, *Durian*, Orange, Vegetables and others. Several types of animals such as Sumatran Tigers, Elephants, Burgo Chickens and Hornbills are animals that inhabit the forests in Bengkulu Province (source: https://bengkuluprov.go.id).

Tourism as an economic sector has a very important role in the development of a region, not only as an attraction for tourists but also as a significant contributor to state revenue. According to the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), in 2022, the number of foreign tourist visits to Indonesia reached 16.11 million people, increased by 8.05% from the previous year. Indonesia's tourism foreign exchange earnings in 2022 also increased by 6.8% to USD 20.1 billion. This shows that tourism has great potential to boost the national economy.

Tourism in Bengkulu is not only a local potential, but can also be a major attraction on par with tourist destinations in other regions in Indonesia. However, reality shows that Bengkulu's tourism reputation is still relatively low. Tourists often only visit Bengkulu for certain activities and choose to travel as additional entertainment.

The Bengkulu Provincial Government, especially the Tourism Office as a regional apparatus organization tasked with managing tourism affairs, has a great responsibility in implementing improvements in the tourism sector. The tourism development policy in Bengkulu Province, namely by stipulating Bengkulu Provincial Regulation Number 8 of 2019 concerning the Bengkulu Provincial Tourism Master Plan for 2019-2024, as an initial step in integrated, applicable tourism development policies and instruments that are able to encourage the growth of tourism activities that will determine the direction of tourism development both on a national scale and on a regional or local scale.

One of the fundamental problems that requires serious attention is the weak reputation of tourism in Bengkulu. This weak reputation has a direct impact on the number of tourist visits and simultaneously has an impact on Regional Original Income (PAD). According to BPS data in 2022, the number of foreign tourist visits to Bengkulu was only 2,539 people, ranking 33rd out of 34 provinces in Indonesia. The original regional income (PAD) from the Bengkulu tourism sector in 2022 was also only IDR 1.77 billion, ranking 32nd out of 34 provinces in Indonesia. This shows that the reputation of the Bengkulu tourism brand is still not optimal and requires further improvement.

The study of the reputation management of the Bengkulu tourism brand from a communication science perspective is a fairly strategic study for the future, especially since this study includes one form of research on coastal community development which is the research umbrella of the University

of Bengkulu. As a study material and becoming a movement, the study of brand reputation management can ultimately help local governments, especially the Tourism Office, in building understanding and skills to form a better brand reputation so that tourism in Bengkulu can increase.

In an effort to overcome the weak tourism reputation management in Bengkulu Province, the Bengkulu Provincial Tourism Office has taken a bold step by launching a new tourism logo called Natural Bengkulu. Although this effort is expected to provide a strong visual identity, new challenges arise when people only see the logo as an attractive visual element without understanding the deep philosophy that should be the foundation of a tourism brand. A tourism brand is not just a visual representation or logo, but includes values, stories, and experiences that can form a positive perception of a destination. Tourism brands are currently important for a region that wants to promote a destination in the tourism sector. Tourism brands aim to introduce destination products so that they can be sold in the tourism market. Therefore, this study has a very important objective, namely to dig deeper into the reputation management of tourism brands in Bengkulu, with a special focus on the Natural Bengkulu logo.

Reputation Management is the process of managing public perception of an entity, whether individual, organization, or brand, with the aim of improving image, credibility, and trust in the eyes of stakeholders. Helm et al (2011) emphasize that reputation management is not only limited to marketing aspects, but includes all interactions and communications of the company with stakeholders. This is in line with the view of John Dorley & Helio Fred Garcia (2015) who highlighted the close relationship between reputation management, public relations, and successful corporate communications. Reputation management involves strategic communication activities, such as monitoring, analyzing, responding, and anticipating issues that can affect reputation.

This study will reveal how the reputation management of Bengkulu tourism brands is carried out on the Natural Bengkulu logo. The results of this study are expected to provide a deeper understanding to the public about the philosophy and values contained in the Natural Bengkulu brand. With stronger support from the community, it is hoped that the government's efforts to improve Bengkulu's tourism reputation as a whole can achieve greater success.

This study aims to analyze the reputation management strategy of the Natural Bengkulu brand logo as a visual identity that reflects the richness of local nature and culture, with the hope of providing strategic recommendations for local governments in improving public understanding and the effectiveness of tourism promotion efforts.

Theoretical Framework

Reputation Management

Reputation management consists of two words, namely management and reputation. The word management comes from French, namely “management”, which has the root word “ménager”, which means taking care of a household or managing. Management is interpreted as a series of activities related to planning, organizing, directing, and controlling resources with the aim of achieving certain goals. Meanwhile, the word reputation comes from the word “reputationem”, which is a Latin word. The meaning of the word “reputationem” is consideration. This term describes how people consider or label, good or bad, to someone or something (Patrianti, 2020).

Reputation has always been associated with Public Relations. Although it has been studied since the 1950s, the concept of reputation only approached its proper meaning after 1996 when marketing expert Grahame Dowling explained that reputation is the set of meanings by which an object is known and through which people describe, remember and relate to it. That is the result of the interaction of a person’s beliefs, ideas, feelings and impressions about an object (Holtz, 1999). In short, Dowling stated that reputation is a set of meanings about an object in which people describe, remember and relate meanings about the object. Dowling added that the word ‘object’ can be replaced with ‘brand’, ‘product’, ‘organization’, ‘company’, etc., to get the definition of the image to be studied. A good reputation has both intangible and tangible benefits. It is important for stakeholders, from customers to employees and consumer advocates, to feel positively about an organization.

A good reputation helps organizations survive through tough times (Alsop, 2004). However, Seitel & Doorley (2012) explain that reputation is worth more than that. Companies with a good reputation attract more and better candidates to work, pay less for supplies, get free media and social

coverage that can be worth more than advertising, and gain other benefits that actually contribute to profits.

According to Doorley and Garcia (2015), reputation is the result of a combination of organizational behavior, performance, and communication. They state that reputation is influenced by the perceptions and images formed in the eyes of various stakeholders, which are then combined with the company's performance and attitude, and how the company communicates. Communication in this context is how the company's performance and attitude are conveyed to stakeholders. If one of these aspects is not good, then a good reputation is difficult to achieve. This explanation shows that reputation is the result of synergy between the company's image, performance, and communication. John Doorley and Fred Garcia (2015) describe this concept in the form of a formula:

Reputation = Sum of Images = Performance + Behavior + Communication

Based on this formula, communication plays an important role in shaping a company's reputation. What needs to be communicated is the company's performance, both from the top management level and from employees at the bottom line, to the public.

Simply put, communication carried out by the company must be in line with the behavior and performance of all members of the organization. As explained by John Doorley and Fred Garcia in their reputation mapping concept, this definition makes it clear that performance and behavior must be in line, consistent, and equal to the communication carried out. Otherwise, it can lead to an inauthentic image, even creating a false impression in the eyes of the public.

Reputation management is the process of managing public perception of an entity, whether it is an individual, organization, or brand, with the aim of improving image, credibility, and trust in the eyes of stakeholders. Helm et al. (2011) emphasize that reputation management is not limited to marketing aspects but includes all interactions and communications between a company and its stakeholders. John Dorley and Helio Fred Garcia (2015) identify seven main components of comprehensive reputation management.

First, the Customized Reputation Template is a framework tailored to each organization for measuring and managing its reputation. The reputation criteria commonly used in this template encompass various aspects, including innovation, management quality, employee talent, financial performance, social responsibility, product quality, global competitiveness, communication or transparency, governance, and integrity, which includes responsibility, reliability, credibility, and trust. These criteria are often employed in various reputation assessments and can be customized based on the organization or company because each stakeholder group has different concerns regarding specific attributes of an organization's reputation. By adhering to this template, a company or organization can determine how far their reputation management has progressed.

Second, Reputation Audits of Internal and External Constituencies involve two stages. The first stage is an internal audit that measures employees' perceptions of the organization’s intrinsic identity and compares them with the views of senior leadership. Differences between these perspectives are analyzed, and a plan is developed to reconcile them as part of the Reputation Management Plan. The second stage is an external audit that assesses how external constituencies perceive the organization, which influences the organization’s reputation. Differences between identity and reputation are analyzed, and a plan is created to reconcile them as part of the Reputation Management Plan.

Third, Setting Reputational Capital Goals involves establishing goals for performance within a specific industry group or in comparison to competitors. For instance, a company may set a goal to rank within the top quartile of its sector. Progress toward that goal can then be measured, monitored, and managed.

Fourth, the Accountability Formula is based on reputation changes measured against a customized template. If an organization experiences a decline in one of its reputation attributes, such as communication, a specific department—such as public relations—can be assigned responsibility to improve that perception through proactive communication initiatives.

Fifth, the Reputation Management Plan is the result of a comprehensive reputation management process that includes strategic plans for performance, behavior, and communication. The

comprehensive reputation management diagram from Dorley and Garcia (2015) outlines the reputation management process, which involves several key steps.

The process includes self-assessment, where the organization evaluates its current reputation, followed by a reputation audit involving both internal and external assessments of the organization's reputation. A gap analysis is conducted to determine the difference between the current and desired reputation. The outcome of this process is the reputation criteria and aspirations, which are used to create a Reputation Management Plan. This plan includes addressing issues, vulnerabilities, and opportunities, an accountability formula, and a communication strategy that encompasses both long-term planning and contingency planning for known threats.

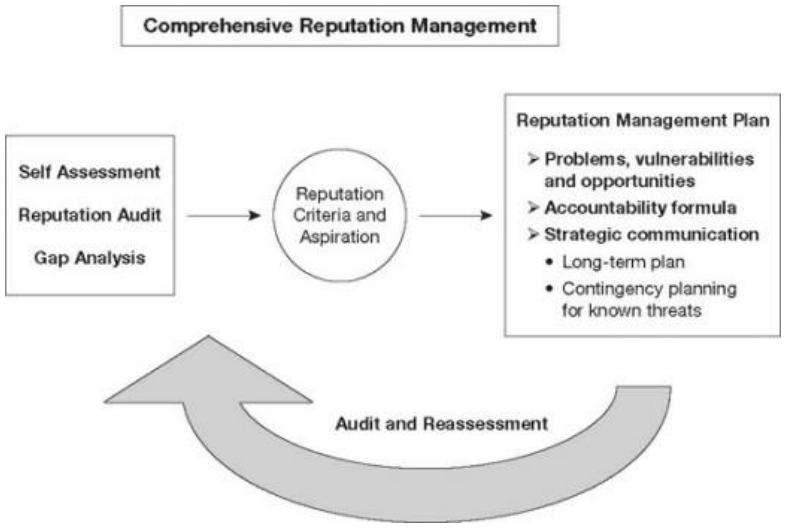


Figure 1. Comprehensive Reputation Management Dorley & Garcia (2015)

Sixth, the Annual Follow-Up Audit and Assessment is a crucial step in the reputation management plan. This process involves reviewing and evaluating the actions and strategies implemented over the past year to manage and enhance the organization's reputation. The primary purpose of this audit is to ensure that all actions align with the standards outlined in the reputation management plan.

Seventh, Stakeholder Mapping, or stakeholder review, is the process of identifying, understanding, and managing relationships with individuals or groups that have an interest or influence on the organization. Stakeholders can include employees, customers, investors, suppliers, governments, local communities, and others. The steps in a stakeholder review include identifying all parties who are interested in or affected by the organization's activities, analyzing their interests, needs, and expectations, building effective communication and involving stakeholders in the decision-making process, and regularly monitoring and assessing relationships with stakeholders to ensure their needs are met and relationships remain positive. By conducting regular stakeholder reviews, organizations can build and maintain strong relationships with influential parties, ultimately helping to achieve organizational goals and enhance reputation.

Destination Branding

The concept of branding in the tourism industry is known as destination branding. According to Abdullah & Indrowarjo (2021), destination branding is a trend that involves the process of branding a place, where a city is promoted as a destination or tourist destination for local, national, and international communities. This approach allows a city to manage its tourism potential as a unique identity and characteristic that distinguishes it.

Through destination branding, there is a separation between one destination and another, allowing tourists to recognize the differences and provide added value to the destination compared to similar destinations. A successful destination brand will certainly create positive expectations for tourists, both those who have visited the destination and those who have the potential to visit (Arifianti et al, 2020). In an effort to build a strong brand, a targeted strategy is needed to achieve the

goal optimally. Destination branding can be considered a strategy that starts from a specific destination, such as a city, country, or region, with the aim of building a strong position in the minds of the target market, as well as positioning a product and making the destination known throughout the world.

Natural Bengkulu Logo

The term logo is a general term. If viewed more specifically, a logo can be a series of letters, a picture form, or a combination of letters and pictures. A logo in the form of processed letters is called a Logotype and a logo in the form of a picture is called a Logogram. A logo that contains a series of letters and pictures does not have a special name. In general, these three types of symbols are called logos (Listya & Rukiah, 2018).

In designing a logo, visual communication elements play a crucial role in conveying a deep message. Form, as one of the main elements, is able to present the character and nature of an object or company, becoming a symbol that symbolizes direction, purpose, or hope. Color, as another element, has the ability to present, symbolize, and describe objects, events, and human behavior. The use of typography, namely the type of font in a logo, can provide an additional dimension by symbolizing belief, optimism, reliability, strength, and other aspects (Listya & Rukiah, 2018).

Although the physical appearance of a logo is very important, a logo cannot be considered complete if it only meets the requirements for visual appearance alone. A logo must carry the meaning and purpose contained within it, create an emotional connection, and encapsulate the essence of the identity or values that the object or company it represents wants to convey.



Figure 2. Natural Bengkulu Logo (2024)

In this study, the logo that is the object of study is the Natural Bengkulu logo. The concept of the Natural Bengkulu logo is Bengkulu's tourism promise to Indonesia and the world. Natural is a combination of two words, namely "nature and cultural", this keyword that is carried is considered as the head wonders that will represent other wonders such as sensory wonders and adventurous wonders, so "nature and cultural" contains the meaning of the promise that Bengkulu's hospitality is rich in the wonder of nature that disturbs the heart and cultural diversity that will lead tourists to an adventurous experience and enjoy traditional food and culture that is fun for tourists.

Material and Methodology

The research method used in this study is a qualitative descriptive method with a case study type of research. The qualitative descriptive method is a method based on the philosophy of post-positivism to examine objects with real conditions or not set. A case study is a type of research that uses empirical evidence (not the results of laboratory experiments) to examine whether a theory can be implemented in a condition or not. A case study is also a research strategy that focuses on one or several cases as research objects to explore various aspects and dimensions of the phenomenon being studied, as well as understand the perspectives and experiences of the actors involved.

This study is a single instrumental case study conducted to describe an issue, namely the reputation management of Bengkulu tourism brands through the Natural Bengkulu logo. The Natural Bengkulu logo is a visual identity used to promote Bengkulu tourism as an attractive and diverse natural tourism destination.

The data collected in this study came from primary and secondary sources. The primary source is the result of in-depth interviews with informants from the Bengkulu Provincial Tourism Office.

Secondary sources are documents related to the Natural Bengkulu logo, such as activity reports, social media, websites, and other publications. The data collection techniques used are observation, interviews and document review. Data analysis will use Miles and Huberman which consists of three stages, namely data collection, fund reduction, and conclusion drawing.

To ensure data validity, researchers use the source triangulation and method triangulation approaches. Source triangulation is the process of comparing and confirming data from different sources, while method triangulation is the process of comparing and confirming data from different methods.

Result and Discussion

The key informant in this study was Meki Indo Manna, who is the Sub Coordinator of Promotion/Young Expert Adyatama Tourism and Creative Economy at the Bengkulu Provincial Tourism Office. He is 40 years old and has significant experience in managing and promoting regional tourism. Data collection was conducted through in-depth interviews, which allowed for a number of comprehensive and in-depth information regarding the strategies implemented in promoting and maintaining the reputation of the Natural Bengkulu logo.

The Natural Bengkulu logo is Bengkulu's tourism promise to Indonesia and the world. Natural is a combination of two words, namely "nature and culture", these keywords that are carried are considered as head wonders that will represent other wonders such as sensory wonders and adventure wonders, so "nature and culture" contains the meaning of the promise that Bengkulu's hospitality is rich in the wonder of nature that disturbs the heart and cultural diversity that will lead tourists to an adventurous experience and enjoy traditional food and culture that is enjoyable for tourists.

The use of the Natural Bengkulu logo was first initiated by Meki Indo Manna, who was an informant in this study. After the initial idea, a team of seven people was formed to design the Natural Bengkulu logo. Initially, the option considered was The Land of Rafflesia, but after further discussion, this option was not considered representative of the entire Bengkulu Province. This is due to the fact that the Rafflesia flower only grows in certain districts, so it does not reflect the diversity and richness of the culture and nature of the province as a whole. In addition, the phrase The Land of Rafflesia was considered too long and complex to be used as an effective logo. Therefore, the Natural Bengkulu brand logo was chosen as a more inclusive and memorable representation.

The reputation management of the Natural Bengkulu brand logo is divided into seven components of brand reputation management.

Reputation Template Customization

The customized reputation template is a framework specifically designed for each organization, in this study, the Bengkulu Provincial Tourism Office. This framework is used to assess and manage the reputation of the Natural Bengkulu brand logo systematically and measurably.

Based on the interview, there are several main indicators used to evaluate the effectiveness of the Natural Bengkulu brand logo in managing regional tourism reputation. First, innovation in tourism promotion through the Natural Bengkulu brand is considered a strategic step in line with the direction of the Ministry of Tourism to align local branding with the Wonderful Indonesia national campaign. The Natural Bengkulu brand logo was chosen to reflect the uniqueness and richness of Bengkulu's nature and culture, which were previously less exposed and received less attention from tourists. Before the implementation of this logo, tourism destination management in Bengkulu had not been fully able to represent the potential of regional tourism, so they had not been able to attract tourists optimally.

The quality of tourism products in Bengkulu, although quite good before the Natural Bengkulu brand logo, was still not optimal due to the lack of effective branding efforts. The use of the Natural Bengkulu logo brand has helped increase the global competitiveness of Bengkulu tourism, one of which is by adopting the CHSE (Cleanliness, Health, Safety, and Environment Sustainability) standard which is a global trend in the tourism industry. In addition, communication and transparency in tourism marketing through the Natural Bengkulu brand are carried out well, ensuring that information conveyed to tourists and stakeholders is accurate and reliable. The integrity and credibility of the Natural Bengkulu brand are also considered positive, reflecting the commitment of the local government and stakeholders in maintaining the quality and authenticity of the brand.

Reputation Audit from Internal and External Perspectives

The Internal and External Constituent Reputation Audit involved two stages. First, the internal audit measured what employees believed to be the intrinsic identity of the organization and compared it to the views of senior leadership. The interview results revealed that the intrinsic identity of the Natural Bengkulu brand was designed by considering the elements of Sapta Pesona and local wisdom, which is reflected in the choice of the word Natural (a combination of the words nature and culture). This shows that the Natural Bengkulu logo is not only a visual symbol, but also represents the values and unique characteristics desired by stakeholders in promoting Bengkulu tourism. The alignment between the intrinsic identity and the views of tourism management is an indication that there is a strong understanding and acceptance of the vision and mission to be achieved through this branding.

From the perspective of internal management, especially in the Promotion Division, there is a clear consensus on the meaning and purpose of the Natural Bengkulu logo. All employees and senior management already have the same understanding of the Natural Bengkulu logo identity, this shows that there is effective internal communication and adequate training on branding elements.

In reputation management theory, this indicates an alignment between the desired identity and the understood identity at the organizational level. External perception of the Natural Bengkulu brand also shows alignment with the desired identity. Support from external constituents, including local communities, tourists, and other stakeholders, indicates that the Natural Bengkulu logo is well received and seen as an accurate representation of Bengkulu's tourism identity. This indicates the success of brand reputation management in achieving effective communication goals with external audiences where the message conveyed by the Natural Bengkulu logo has been well received and understood by the public, without significant cognitive dissonance.

Determining Reputation Capital Objectives

The determination of reputation goals in this study refers to intangible assets in the form of reputation goals built through brand and marketing strategies. The main objective of launching the Natural Bengkulu logo is to increase the profile of Bengkulu tourism at the national and international levels. This effort includes introducing the uniqueness of Bengkulu's nature and culture that may not be widely known by tourists.

The Natural Bengkulu logo is expected to highlight strong differentiation, with elements such as the Rafflesia flower that only grows in Bengkulu Province, as well as other local natural and cultural riches that are the main attractions. This strategy aims to attract a segment of tourists who are looking for a different and authentic experience, which may not be found in other more common tourist destinations.

The reputation management strategy implemented through the Natural Bengkulu logo can be said to be successful, seen from the increase in the number of tourists each year.

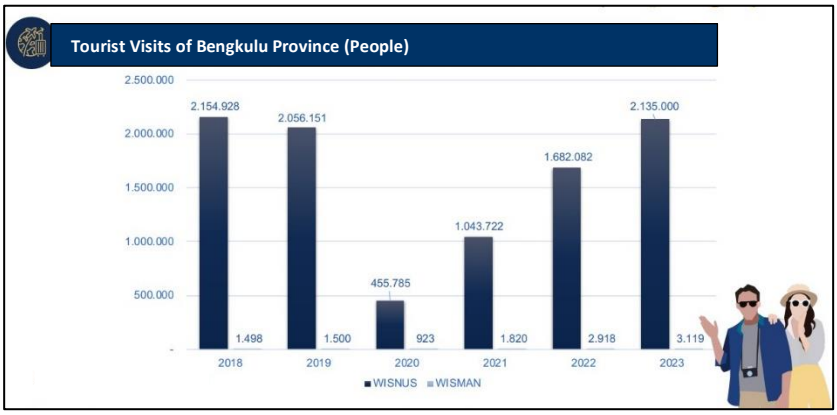


Figure 3. Tourist Visits to Bengkulu Province 2018-2023

The figure above shows the increase in the number of tourist visits to Bengkulu Province from 2018 to 2023. In 2018, the number of tourists reached 2,154,928 people, consisting of domestic tourists (wisnus) and foreign tourists (wisman). This figure experienced a slight decrease in 2019 to

2,056,151 people. However, in 2020, there was a drastic decrease to 455,785 people due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic which restricted international and domestic travel.

In 2021, along with the launch of the Natural Bengkulu logo, the number of visits began to increase again to 1,043,722 people, indicating the beginning of the recovery of the tourism sector. This positive trend continued in 2022 with a significant increase to 1,682,082 people. In 2023, the number of tourist visits will reach 2,135,000 people, almost approaching the number of visits before the pandemic. This progressive increase in the number of tourists reflects the success of the reputation management strategy through the use of the Natural Bengkulu logo.

This logo is able to attract the interest of domestic and international tourists by highlighting the uniqueness and local values of Bengkulu Province, even though it has to compete with other destinations that already have a global reputation. In this Reputational Capital Goals indicator, brand reputation management through the Natural Bengkulu logo has succeeded in prioritizing sustainability and the quality of the tourist experience as the main priority.

Accountability Formula

The accountability formula is based on reputation changes measured against a customized template. If an organization experiences a decline in one of the reputation attributes, then a specific department can be given responsibility to improve the impression through proactive communication initiatives. In the accountability formula component, the Bengkulu Provincial Tourism Office implements a systematic mechanism to measure and manage the reputation of the Natural Bengkulu brand logo. Measurement of reputation changes is carried out by monitoring the adoption of the logo by Regional Government Organizations (OPD) and other community elements. The increase in the use of this logo by various OPDs indicates wider acceptance and an increase in brand reputation, which is a positive indicator of the effectiveness of the branding strategy implemented.

When faced with the challenge of declining reputation, informants explained the readiness of the Bengkulu Provincial Tourism Office to make the necessary improvements. This is in the form of adjusting the logo design elements without changing the main essence of the Natural Bengkulu logo. This adjustment is made to ensure that the logo remains relevant and in line with developments in market trends and expectations, while maintaining a unique identity that distinguishes Bengkulu from other tourist destinations.

One of the interesting things about the Natural Bengkulu logo is that there is no blue element, which is often associated with modernity and technology. This is due to the fact that Bengkulu is still in the development stage towards full modernity. Focus on elements that reflect the richness of nature and local culture is prioritized, considering Bengkulu's position which is still developing as a tourist destination. This blue element is what might be considered for use if there is a change to the current Natural Bengkulu logo.

In terms of responsibility for managing and improving the reputation of the Natural Bengkulu logo, it is divided across the Tourism Office, with a special focus on the Marketing and Promotion Sub. The division of responsibilities is carried out to address negative perceptions and ensure that all parties involved understand their role in maintaining and improving the brand's reputation. This strategy strengthens the integrity and credibility of the brand, and ensures that communication about the brand to the public remains consistent and positive.

Reputation Management Plan

The Reputation Management Plan is the result of a Comprehensive Reputation Management process that includes strategic plans for performance, behavior, and communication. Based on an interview with the Sub-Coordinator of Promotion of the Bengkulu Provincial Tourism Office, it is known that the Bengkulu Provincial Tourism Office has formulated a comprehensive strategic plan for the Natural Bengkulu brand logo. The main elements in this plan focus on four essences: preservation of culture and heritage, event organization, development of the creative economy, and promotion of tourist villages.

These elements not only serve to strengthen the Natural Bengkulu brand logo but also to highlight the richness of the region's culture and nature, thus creating a unique and attractive identity for tourists. Identification of problems, vulnerabilities, and opportunities in the Natural Bengkulu logo is carried out through a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis. With this

method, the Bengkulu Provincial Tourism Office can proactively recognize and assess potential challenges and opportunities that can be optimized. Consultation with experts in the field of tourism also plays an important role in identifying factors that can affect brand reputation. In addition, the accountability formula used involves performance assessment based on established Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

The long-term communication strategy for the Natural Bengkulu brand logo is carried out through ongoing promotional campaigns designed to maintain public awareness and interest. Promotion is carried out by utilizing various media and channels to reach a wider audience. For example, promotion is carried out at Soekarno-Hatta Airport through visual displays at the international and domestic arrival terminals, targeting both local and foreign tourists. This strategy aims to provide a strong first impression of Bengkulu's tourism potential.

Promotion is also carried out on Transjakarta buses, utilizing the wide reach of public transportation to reach people in the capital city and its surroundings. By displaying visual advertisements on buses and bus stops, the Natural Bengkulu brand logo is introduced to thousands of passengers every day. Not only that, promotions are also placed in airline magazines such as Batik and Garuda, which are read by airline passengers while in flight.

To address known threats, the Bengkulu Provincial Tourism Office has prepared a flexible contingency plan. One of them is by adjusting messages and communication strategies if there are changes in tourism trends or emergency situations. For example, if there is a sudden change in traveler preferences or environmental challenges, these contingency plans allow brands to remain relevant and responsive to evolving conditions.

Annual Audit and Assessment

Annual follow-up audits and assessments are important processes in a brand's reputation management strategy. In the audit and assessment of the Natural Bengkulu logo, it was conveyed by the research informant that the annual follow-up audit and assessment for the Natural Bengkulu brand logo plays a crucial role in ensuring that the brand continues to be relevant and effective in achieving Bengkulu's tourism promotion goals. This audit process involved the Governor and the Head of the Bengkulu Provincial Tourism Office, who directly assessed the logo's performance in attracting tourists and complying with established standards, including compliance with the Wonderful Indonesia guidelines. In fact, the results of the last annual audit and assessment showed that the Natural Bengkulu brand logo had succeeded in increasing the visibility and attractiveness of regional tourism, with positive responses from tourists and the local community. This confirms that the communication and promotion strategies carried out were appropriate and effective.

In the logo approval process, the informant and design team initially submitted three logo options for consideration by the Governor. However, the Governor immediately chose the first logo, showing confidence and clarity of vision in choosing the most appropriate visual representation for the Natural Bengkulu brand logo. This logo was then stated in the Decree of the Governor of Bengkulu Number M. 213 Dispar of 2021 concerning the Natural Bengkulu Logo. This quick decision reflects the Governor's commitment to support Bengkulu tourism development with strong and consistent branding.

Stakeholder Mapping

Identification of stakeholders in the management of the Natural Bengkulu brand logo is a critical step to ensure the involvement of various relevant parties in the development of regional tourism. Based on an interview with the Sub-Coordinator of Promotion of the Bengkulu Provincial Tourism Office, it is known that the stakeholder identification process carried out by the Bengkulu Provincial Tourism Office involves mapping stakeholders including local governments, tourism industry, local communities, academics, and non-governmental organizations. Each group has a different role and interest in promoting and managing the Natural Bengkulu brand logo. The local government has the responsibility for regulation and supervision, while tourism industry players such as travel agents and destination managers play a role in the direct implementation of tourism promotion.

Communication with stakeholders is carried out by the Bengkulu Provincial Tourism Office through various channels and platforms to ensure that the information conveyed is effective and

reaches the right audience. This effort is fully supported by the Bengkulu Provincial Government, as seen from the issuance of Circular Letter Number 556/505/Dispar/2021 concerning the Use of the Natural Bengkulu Tourism Brand Logo. This circular is a follow-up to the Decree of the Governor of Bengkulu Number M. 213 Dispar of 2021 concerning the Natural Bengkulu Logo. In the circular, there is an appeal to Regional Apparatus Organizations (OPD), BUMN, BUMD, vertical agencies, banking, and tourism business actors in Bengkulu to use the Natural Bengkulu logo in every activity, event, outdoor/indoor media, social media publications, and print media, as an effort to support the promotion of tourism in Bengkulu Province. This circular also encourages the socialization and publication of the use of the Natural Bengkulu logo, as well as the understanding and implementation of brand and design application guidelines issued by the Bengkulu Provincial Tourism Office.

Communication with stakeholders is also carried out through coordination meetings and discussion forums. With this approach, the Bengkulu Provincial Tourism Office seeks to create strong synergy between various related parties, in order to support the sustainability and strengthening of the positive image of regional tourism, especially in the management of the Natural Bengkulu logo brand reputation.

Conclusions

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that the reputation management strategy applied to the "Natural Bengkulu" brand logo by the Bengkulu Provincial Tourism Office has significantly contributed to enhancing the visibility and attractiveness of the region's tourism. The strategy revolves around the implementation of seven key components of reputation management. *Firstly*, the adjustment of the reputation template was tailored to reflect the unique characteristics and values of the "Natural Bengkulu" brand. This has helped shape a consistent and positive image in the public eye.

Secondly, both internal and external audits of the brand's reputation were conducted. This allowed for a thorough evaluation from various perspectives, with the "Natural Bengkulu" logo incorporating elements that resonate with the principles of "Sapta Pesona" (Seven Charms), ensuring a consistent and positive message that aligns with the public's perception. The third component involved establishing clear goals for capitalizing on the brand's reputation. The "Natural Bengkulu" logo was specifically designed to elevate the profile of Bengkulu's tourism, both nationally and internationally, with a focus on highlighting the region's unique natural beauty, including the Rafflesia flower. The data gathered shows an increase in tourist visits since the logo's launch, demonstrating the effectiveness of this strategic effort.

A formula of accountability was also established to track changes in the brand's reputation over time. This included monitoring the adoption of the logo by various regional offices and the public. In cases where a decline in reputation was observed, adjustments to the logo design were made, while still preserving its core essence. In addition, the reputation management plan was developed to include various initiatives such as cultural preservation, tourism events, the promotion of the creative economy, and the development of tourist villages.

A SWOT analysis was employed to identify both challenges and opportunities, ensuring that the long-term communication strategy, which is grounded in sustained promotional campaigns, remains effective. Furthermore, an annual audit and evaluation process was conducted to ensure that the "Natural Bengkulu" logo remains relevant and continues to perform its intended role in promoting the region. This process involved key stakeholders such as the Governor and the Head of the Tourism Office, who reviewed the logo's impact on increasing tourism visibility.

Lastly, stakeholder mapping was a crucial aspect of this strategy, involving local government, tourism industry players, the local community, and media. Regular communication with stakeholders has fostered stronger relationships, enhanced promotional efforts, and expanded the reach of the brand. The implementation of these seven components has collectively produced a significant positive impact on the reputation of the "Natural Bengkulu" brand logo. As a result, Bengkulu has become an increasingly recognized and attractive tourist destination, with a growing number of visitors drawn to its unique natural and cultural offerings.

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