

The Role of Gus and Yuk Tourism Ambassadors in The Promotion of Cultural Tourism in Mojokerto District

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Abstract

Mojokerto Regency in East Java is a developing area thanks in large part to investment in new transportation, other facilities and cultural tourism. As Tourism Ambassadors for the Mojokerto Regency Tourism and Creative Economy Office, Gus and Yuk play an important role in introducing and promoting the tourism potential of Mojokerto Regency to a wide audience. This research aims to study how tourism ambassadors can help improve tourism promotion in Mojokerto Regency. The research was conducted at the Mojokerto Regency Cultural Tourism Office. This article's research method was achieved through the use of descriptive qualitative analysis techniques. In which the author conducted an organized interview about the functions played by tourism ambassadors in the cultural tourism industry. The information used in this research comes from a variety of sources, including books and articles, as well as interviews with experts in the field who have direct knowledge of the problem under study.

Keywords: Culture, Tourism, Role, Promotion

Introduction Section

Mojokerto Regency, as one of the tourism destinations in Indonesia, is rich in natural beauty and cultural heritage that is worth exploring. Tourism is not only a potential economic sector, but also an important tool in preserving and promoting local cultural riches. In an effort to increase tourism attractiveness, the role of tourism ambassadors becomes very vital. In this context, Gus and Yuk, as tourism ambassadors for Mojokerto Regency, have a significant responsibility in promoting cultural tourism.

Gus and Yuk are not just faces representing Mojokerto Regency, but they are also real representatives of the cultural richness and natural beauty of the area. As tourism ambassadors, their role is not limited to breaking event ribbons or appearing at official events. They have a strategic role in conveying positive messages about the rich culture of Mojokerto Regency to local, national and international communities.

Regarding Gus and Yuk's role as tourism ambassadors in promoting cultural tourism in Mojokerto Regency, as tourism ambassadors, Gus and Yuk have the responsibility to promote various tourism destinations in Mojokerto Regency. They can do this through participation in various promotional events, marketing campaigns, and social media activities to attract the attention of potential tourists.

Research can aim to evaluate the extent to which Gus and Yuk help build a positive image of a place or destination, and can involve how Gus and Yuk promote and preserve the cultural and social aspects of a destination. Gus and Yuk function as symbols or representations of the rich culture of Mojokerto Regency. They carry a positive image and depict cultural heritage, traditions, art and natural beauty which are the main attractions of tourism destinations. Gus and Yuk are often invited to participate in official events, such as cultural festivals, tourism exhibitions and other events aimed at promoting Mojokerto Regency. Their presence can improve the image of the region and attract media attention.

The existence of tourism ambassadors like Gus and Yuk can have a positive impact on the local economy. An increase in the number of tourists attracted by their promotions can create new business opportunities, advancing the hospitality, restaurant and other small business sectors. Apart from promoting tourism destinations, Gus and Yuk also have an educational role in introducing and preserving local culture. They can be involved in educational activities and programs that increase public awareness of the importance of preserving cultural heritage. Through this role, it is hoped that Mojokerto Regency can continue to develop as an attractive and sustainable tourism destination.

Previous researchers discuss regarding the role of Tourism Ambassadors have previously been researched and reviewed by Bahru Zaman through his journal entitled "The Role of the Tourism Service in Increasing Regional Original Income

Through Tourism in Berau Regency" 2014, Volume 2(1): 1 - 10. In The journal contains a point where the Berau Regency Tourism Office carries out tourism promotion efforts, one of which is by employing Berau Regency Tourism Ambassadors who have the nicknames Agai and Ulai to promote the arts and culture and tourism of Berau Luar City. What this research has in common with previous research is that it wants to see how Tourism Ambassadors fulfill their role, namely as one of the regional promoters who will promote the potential of their region in the field of culture and tourism to the general public. What differentiates the researcher's research from this is the explanation of the Strategy of the Berau Regency Culture and Tourism Office for Tourism Promotion from a Marketing Communication Perspective.

As one of the leading figures in marketing, Philip Kotler stated that destination marketing involves identifying and understanding the needs and desires of the tourist market. Tourism ambassadors, in this context, are an important element in conveying positive messages that can influence tourists' perceptions of the destination. Bambang Supriadi & Roedjinandari (2017) define tourists as temporary residents of a country who do not plan to settle there permanently and spend money earned in another country while on holiday. In Mariotti's view, the tourism potential of a destination consists of all the features that make it attractive to tourists and encourage them to go there (Marasabessy et al., 2021). All tourist attraction assets that can be used to develop the sector are considered part of its "tourist potential". If something has the potential to become a tourist destination, then we say it has tourism potential. This research classifies tourism potential into three categories: natural, cultural, and man-made.

A. Natural Potential

In this context, what is meant by "natural potential" is the condition and diversity of flora and fauna in a region, as well as the characteristics of its natural landscape such as beaches, forests, and so on (the physical condition of an area). Tourists will flock to these tourist attractions because of the benefits and uniqueness they contain in nature, as long as the development takes into account the surrounding environmental conditions.

B. Cultural Potential

Cultural potential lies in traditions, arts, crafts, architectural landmarks, and other manifestations of human ingenuity and taste.

C. Human Potential

Humans can also attract tourists by showcasing regional culture through things like dances and performances.

Marketing communication theory can be interpreted within the framework of the communication model proposed by Claude Shannon and Warren Weaver. This model involves a sender (marketer), message (advertising or promotion), channel (media or marketing channel), recipient (consumer), as well as feedback elements. This theory can be applied to understand how marketing messages are delivered and received in a marketing campaign. Lasswell's communication model, which includes the elements of "who says what in which channel to whom with what effect", can be applied in marketing communications analysis. It involves the sender (marketer), message (advertising or marketing materials), channel (media or distribution channels), receiver (consumers), and impact (influence on behavior or perception). McGuire contributed interaction theory that can be applied in a marketing context. The theory highlights the steps of persuasive communication, including attention, understanding, reception, retention, and action. This theory can help in understanding how marketing messages can influence consumer behavior.

Harold D. Lasswell, a political and communication scientist, contributed his theory related to the famous communication model with the main question "who says what in which channel to whom with what effect" (who says what in which channel to whom with what effect). This model covers several important aspects of communication. The following is an explanation of these aspects:

1. Who

Refers to the sender or source of the message. Who conveys the message or information? In the context of marketing communications, this can include companies, brands or individuals acting as senders of marketing messages. In the context of marketing communications, especially related to the role of the Mojokerto Regency tourism ambassador, referring to the "message sender or source" will refer to the entity or individual responsible for conveying marketing messages to promote tourism in Mojokerto Regency. Message senders in this case may include:

- The regional government of Mojokerto Regency has a role as a message sender in an effort to promote their tourism destination. They may design campaigns, organize events, or provide resources to support tourism promotion.
- Mojokerto Regency tourism bureau, can act as the main message sender. They are responsible for developing marketing strategies, compiling promotional materials, and collaborating with other related parties.

- Individuals or groups of people appointed as Mojokerto Regency tourism ambassadors can also be message senders. They have the responsibility to convey positive messages and promote the tourism attractions of Mojokerto Regency through various platforms, including social media, public events and media interviews.

2. *Says what*

Concerning the content or contents of the message. What does the sender want to convey or communicate to the recipient? In marketing communications, this includes advertising messages, product information, brand values, and other elements of a marketing campaign. In this case, the content of the message conveyed by the tourism ambassador can cover various aspects, such as:

- Mojokerto Regency tourism ambassadors can deliver messages highlighting tourist attractions in the area. This could involve highlighting natural, historical, cultural or other unique tourist attractions that may attract tourists.
- Highlight cultural diversity and local traditions as part of marketing messages. This can include culinary specialties, cultural activities, or unique traditions that are attractive to tourists.

3. *In Which Channel*

Refers to the communication channels or media used to convey messages. Where is the message delivered? Is it through television advertising, social media, websites, or other communication channels? In the context of marketing communications, channel selection is very important to reach the target audience effectively. Several communication channels or media that can be used by Mojokerto Regency tourism ambassadors involve:

- Mojokerto Regency tourism ambassadors can utilize social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, Twitter or TikTok to convey tourism messages. They can share photos, videos, stories and up-to-date information to build awareness and engagement.
- Promoting tourism information in Mojokerto Regency through the official website. This may include travel guides, event information, and resources to help travelers plan their visits.
- Attend tourism events, exhibitions or festivals and distribute promotional materials directly to potential tourists. This may include brochures, flyers or promotional merchandise.

4. *To Whom*

Concerning the recipient of the message or audience. Who is the target of the message? In marketing communications, this includes determining the target market or demographic group aimed at by a marketing campaign. Some aspects that can be considered regarding the recipient of the message or audience are:

- Identify interest-based groups that may be interested in certain activities or tourist attractions in Mojokerto Regency. For example, nature, art or history lovers.

5. *With What Effect*

Refers to the expected impact or effect of the message. What does the sender want to achieve by conveying the message? In the context of marketing communications, the desired effect could be increased brand awareness, increased sales, or a positive change in consumer perception of the product or service. Some impacts or effects that might be expected from the message conveyed by the Mojokerto Regency tourism ambassador are:

- Increase public awareness, both at local, national and international levels, about the existence and attractiveness of tourism in Mojokerto Regency.
- Building a positive image of Mojokerto Regency as an attractive, safe and tourist-friendly tourism destination.
- Receive awards and recognition from related parties or the tourism industry for achievements and success in increasing tourism in Mojokerto Regency.

Lasswell's model helps in analyzing and understanding the main elements in every communication process, including marketing communications. Through these questions, the model provides a framework for detailing and understanding the dynamics and factors involved in the communication process.

Research Methods

The research strategy used here is descriptive. Descriptive research can be seen as an approach to problem solving that requires characterizing or describing the current state of a topic or target of inquiry (individual, organization, community, etc.). This strategy summarizes the events in question and attempts to discover or explain relationships. Qualitative descriptive methods were used to analyze this research data. Analysis often includes explanations, detailed descriptions, and the logical development of ideas about the thing being analyzed. The collected data will be processed and analyzed descriptively qualitatively to assess the contribution of tourism ambassadors to tourism promotion in Mojokerto Regency by paying attention to the criteria for tourism ambassadors, the role of tourism ambassadors, and promotion requirements. activities carried out by tourism ambassadors. Information is collected afterwards.

Gus and Yuk can analyze data from social media platforms where they interact with the public and tourists. For example, measuring the number of likes, comments and shares on posts related to cultural tourism promotion. And Gus and Yuk's role is to promote Mojokerto tourists, such as by distributing brochures, press releases and tourist content videos. Gus and Yuk can carry out content analysis to evaluate the messages conveyed and have a good impact on the image of Mojokerto's cultural tourism.

Descriptive research aims to provide methodical, factual and accurate descriptions, illustrations, facts, qualities and correlations of the phenomena being studied (Rukin, 2019). Specifically, questionnaires are used to collect data, namely a series or list of questions arranged methodically for respondents to fill out. Secondary sources include information collected by the Mojokerto Regency Tourism and Creative Economy Office, which was formed and guided by tourism ambassadors Gus and Yuk. Among other things, these studies require the collection of program-specific data and internal information. The cultural tourist attractions that were the targets of the research were the Jolotundo Baths, Warung Khas Mojokerto and Batik Village. Gus and Yuk can collect feedback on an ongoing basis from the community, tourism actors and other related parties. This evaluation can be used to improve their role as Gus and Yuk and optimize Mojokerto tourism promotion strategies.

Results and Discussion

It can be seen from the marketing communications system of the Mojokerto Regency Gus Yuk Association which can be seen from the following things, that the findings of the analysis carried out using integrated marketing communications theory show:

1. Advertising and promotion. From the poster, it can be seen that the event held by Gus and Yuk, which is located in Mojokerto Regency, is related to tourism marketing in Trowulan District. Both domestic and foreign countries that have these facilities need to have representatives from DISPORABUDPAR and Gus Yuk. Apart from that, DISPORABUDPAR and Gus Yuk had to visit several temples and talk to temple administrators who had shortcomings.
2. Personal Events and Experiences. A series of incidents caused by Gus and Yuk. Due to the lack of financial support from the Mojokerto Regency Government and human resources for Gus Yuk members who were active outside the city, the Mojokerto Regency Government only participated in events organized by DISPORABUDPAR. From PAGUK (Association of Gus and Yuk) a small work program for the selection of Gus and Yuk and a Ramadhan themed work program were implemented. These programs have been implemented. And once again with messages coming from Gus and Yuk. In his role as a DISPORABUDPAR tourism agent, he expressed his wish that Gus and Yuk could learn about tourism product developments and get feedback from tourism managers.
3. Marketing with Interactive Components. Mojokerto Regency Tourism Ambassadors Gus and Yuk make maximum use of online media by implementing an online media management system. This is because according to several online tourism media managers, online media has a big influence on the promotion carried out by Gus and Yuk tourism ambassadors to increase the promotion of historical heritage tourism. One illustration is the influx of visitors from other countries who are interested in studying the heritage of the Majapahit kingdom.
4. Word of Mouth Marketing. This marketing communication strategy was very effectively implemented in Gus and Yuk, Mojokerto Regency; However, in this research, it is stated that Gus and Yuk, Mojokerto Regency cannot be said to be optimal because there is no event promotion for any events held by these temples. As a result, the study concluded that Gus and Yuk, Mojokerto Regency could not be said to be optimal. The tourist manager's opinion, which is one of the many factors that exist, is not enough to make this situation ideal for marketing. This can be seen from several different temples, namely from the absence of tourism support facilities, thus raising questions about the possibility of holding events there and involving tenants at the event location.

Tabel.1 List of Gus dan Yuk Mojokerto District in 2021

No.	Gus and Yuk category	Gus's name	Yuk's name
1.	Winner Gus and Yuk	M. Rizqi Ardiansyah	Fachma Airisa R.
2.	Winner Gus and Come on, Representative 1	Muhammad Aminudin Zulfi	Rita Nuril Aini Ni'Matusholikha
3.	Winner Gus and Come on Representative 2	Panji Trisno	Candra Prasetya Kinanti
4.	Gus and Let's Friendship	Ilham Firmansyah Putra	Dwi Adinda
5.	Gus and Let's Get Talented	Magentama Sineksenjati W.	Prasta Tyasih Triasoka W.
6.	Gus and Let's Be Inspirational	Yovie Perdana Rudiansyah	Fransisca Cristy O.D.P
7.	Gus and Come on Intelligence	Jihan Tridho P.	Maevelina Dewi Haliman
8.	Gus and Yuk Favorite	Nur Rachmad Abi P.	Eka Ferra Maylinda

Based on the results of interviews conducted with Sandi Wahyu Maulana from Trawas, Mojokerto find that the reason for becoming Gus Mojokerto Regency was to develop and educate tourism areas in Mojokerto Regency. Gus and Yuk succeeded in increasing public awareness regarding cultural tourism in Mojokerto. This finding is in line with marketing communication theory which states that tourism ambassadors have an important role in conveying messages to the public. Apart from that, he also has good public communication skills which is an added value. There are many cultural attractions in Mojokerto Regency, such as Jolotundo Baths, Mojokerto's typical Warung Waderb and Batik Village. For Sandi Wahyu Maulana, the role of a tourism ambassador is to introduce tourism such as the Jolotundo baths to the community, not only Mojokerto Regency but also the outside community. This can be done by branding with social media, in addition to promoting and highlighting the advantages and characteristics of the Jolotundo baths.

Apart from that, the role of Warung Wader typical of Mojokerto is also the same as inviting tourists to visit the stall and enjoy the dishes there, of course by showing the characteristics of the stall that differentiate it from other places. Apart from that, the role in the batik village is also carried out by wearing batik at every event. An ambassador pioneers the use of batik by wearing it at events.

In analyzing social media data, it was found that Gus and Yuk's participation on the platform had a positive impact on interactions with tourists. These findings support tourism promotion theory which emphasizes the role of social media in reaching a wide audience. There was a significant increase in the number of tourist visits to cultural destinations in Mojokerto after the Gus and Yuk promotional campaign.

This finding is consistent with previous research which shows that the presence of tourism ambassadors can stimulate tourist interest. Previous researchers, discussions regarding the role of Tourism Ambassadors have previously been researched and reviewed by Bahru Zaman through his journal entitled "The Role of the Tourism Service in Increasing Regional Original Income Through Tourism in Berau Regency" 2014, Volume 2(1): 1 - 10. In The journal contains a point where the Berau Regency Tourism Office carries out tourism promotion efforts, one of which is by employing Berau Regency Tourism Ambassadors who have the nicknames Agai and Ulai to promote the arts and culture and tourism of Berau Luar City. What this research has in common with previous research is that it wants to see how Tourism Ambassadors fulfill their role, namely as one of the regional promoters who will promote the potential of their region in the field of culture and tourism to the general public. What differentiates the researcher's research from this is the explanation of the Strategy of the Berau Regency Culture and Tourism Office for Tourism Promotion from a Marketing Communication Perspective. The research results support this marketing theory by showing that the promotional messages conveyed by Gus and Yuk are effective in achieving the goals of public awareness and participation. With Gus and Yuk's social media theory focusing on active participation in social media, these findings support the theory that these platforms can be an effective tool for building the image of a tourism destination.

Conclusion

A tourism ambassador has a very large role in the daily operations of the Mojokerto Regency Culture and Tourism Office, where he is responsible for carrying out his obligations as a Brand Ambassador. Based on the responsibilities that tourism ambassadors are expected to carry out in every task assigned to them according to the required field, the role they play as communicators to market tourist destinations also contributes to conveying the company's message, which in this case is Culture. and the Mojokerto Regency Tourism Office, to preserve and promote culture and tourism. This can be seen from the tourism ambassadors who are tasked with promoting various places for tourists to visit. This shows a change in consumer attitudes and behavior which is the main aim of the Culture and Tourism Department's initiative to invite tourism ambassadors to be involved as partners in marketing and promotional activities. This shows Mojokerto Regency's efforts to cultivate its cultural offerings and expand its tourism industry profitably. In this process, do not forget professional ethics, especially communication professional ethics. By applying professional communication ethics, the cultural tourism branding process in Mojokerto Regency becomes easier.

Through the social and functional responsibilities they play, as well as the power of word of mouth they possess, tourism ambassadors are even able to reach target groups that are often unreachable through traditional methods. Long-term studies conducted on various marketing strategies show, without a doubt, that it works. Because consumers generally place a higher level of trust in the information they hear from friends and acquaintances compared to what they hear from advertisements or spokespersons, the personal networks that tourism ambassadors build are not only considered an efficient communication channel, but also a resource. implied that can be maximized to increase the competitiveness of a region as a whole. This is one of the many reasons why tourism ambassadors are so important to a destination's success. The imaginative and creative power of tourism ambassadors is one aspect of character that is developed as a result of their role as tourism ambassadors. This is demonstrated by the many various events and activities they participate in with various parties outside the scope of their functional responsibilities.

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