COMMUNICATION STRATEGY IN AGROTOURISM IN CURUP VILLAGE REJANG LEBONG REGENCY BENGKULU

STRATEGI KOMUNIKASI AGROTURISME DI DESA CURUP, REJANG LEBONG BENGKULU

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine the marketing strategy of agrotourism marketing, in the Curup village of Rejang Lebong Regency, Bengkulu, by using the concept of integrated marketing communication. Rejang Lebong Regency, Bengkulu, in the last two years, many new tourist spots have emerged with the concept of agrotourism whose management is still individual. The study was conducted using a qualitative descriptive approach. The informant selection uses purposive sampling technique. The data conclusion technique used is observation, interviews, and literature study. Data validity test used is source triangulation. The results of this study are that from the general condition of tourism in Rejang Lebong Regency has experienced development every year. Agrotourism potential in this area is very potential to be developed. The marketing communication strategy that has been carried out by agrotourism in the Rejang Lebong Regency of Bengkulu is by utilizing social media Facebook as a form of promotional activities. Facebook is a owned media, which is social media that is managed by agrotourism managers in the form of status posts, photos, videos, visitor testimonials and live broadcasts. But in Facebook management it is still not maximal, sometimes in a few months no information is posted on its Facebook status. This is because the management of agrotourism is still an individual, a family business and that manages only the owner, there are no employee.

Keywords: marketing communication, agrotourism, promotion mix.
BACKGROUND

Tourism or tourism has become a lifestyle for developing countries, including Indonesia. Tourism has become a fundamental need for society. Tourism itself is an activity or recreational activity outside the domicile to escape from the work routine or find a new atmosphere. This opportunity is being used by the community to develop the tourism business itself.

Indonesia as an agricultural country, has the potential of natural resources that can be developed as a tourist area. This can be seen, many new tourism objects have sprung up in various regions in Indonesia, from the concept of natural tourism, historical tourism, to agrotourism. Curup Village, Rejang Lebong Regency, Bengkulu, one of them. Located in the highlands of the mountains, with a cool natural environment, people in Curup village use the land as agricultural land. Looking at the dominant agricultural sector and the tourism sector that is starting to develop, these two sectors can be combined into agrotourism. In this area new tourism spots are emerging, namely flower garden and fruit garden tourism with the concept of agrotourism.

The purpose of this study was to determine the marketing strategy of agrotourism marketing in Curup Village, Rejang Lebong Regency, Bengkulu. The number of visitors who come to the agrotourism location tends to increase, although there are decreases in certain months. The average visitor is a domestic tourist who comes from outside the area.

The benefit of this research is to encourage agro-tourism managers in determining the right marketing communication strategy so as to maintain and increase the number of visitors.

The large number of visitors who come to the agrotourism location in Curup village, Rejang Lebong Regency, Bengkulu, cannot be separated from the marketing element. The basis of marketing is the existence of effective marketing communication. Marketing communication is defined as the process of disseminating information about a company and what it wants to offer to the market. Marketing communication is a suggestion where companies try to inform, persuade, and remind consumers directly or indirectly about the products and brands sold (Sulaksana, 2007: 23).
Marketing communication strategy is a way to achieve the goals of a company. Marketing communication strategy is a plan carried out by marketers to achieve marketing communication objectives, namely to inform consumers about the existence of a product or service offered by using certain methods (Hermawan, 2012: 33).

Marketing mix is an element that must be considered in marketing communications. Marketing mix is a set of marketing tools that the company uses to continuously achieve its marketing goals in the target market (Kotler, 2009: 101). McCarthy in Kotler (2009: 63), states that the marketing mix consists of four elements, known as 4P, namely Product, Price, Place, and Promotion.

Promotion is an element of marketing mix, where in promotion there is an effort to make a company widely known by the public. From here there will be a promotion mix. Promotion mix is a combination of promotional tools including advertising, public relations, and sales promotions that are used to reach the target market and fulfill organizational goals as a whole (Lamb, et. Al., 2001: 147)

Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) is an effort or marketing activity by combining various communication media. IMC is a promotion mix effort. IMC is a form of marketing communication strategy that is closely related to communication.

The reason underlying the adoption of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) as a marketing communication strategy is the flood of information that tends to spoil consumers, the existence of trade liberalization that opens business barriers that have been domestic businesses, the faster product commodities as a result of innovation, and intensified competition, various media that have succeeded in seizing public trust as a source of facts and truth so that it has a major influence on the death of a business, and high advertising spending so that marketing communication becomes overloaded and increasingly ineffective because consumers tend to decrease their ability to remember the messages that have been seen and heard (Sulaksana, 2007: 29)

METHODOLOGY

This research is a descriptive research with qualitative type. This research method is done with the intention to be able to find all the answers to each question as expected.
Sources of data in this study are primary and secondary data, primary data obtained through interviews with informants, and observation. Secondary data is obtained by conducting literature studies on related literature. The informants in this study were selected using purposive sampling technique, namely the informants were determined based on certain considerations in accordance with the research needs.

Data analysis techniques used are using Miles and Huberman analysis techniques, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The validity of the data using triangulation techniques.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Agro tourism in Curup Village, Rejang Lebong Regency, Bengkulu

Curup Village, Rejang Lebong Regency, Bengkulu, is a village in Bengkulu located in the highlands of the mountains. The majority of the people in this village are farming, because of the cool air climate, people grow vegetables.

Inspired by agrotourism in other regions, especially in Java, the flower garden and fruit garden tourism objects emerged, some farmers in this village began to look at the same business. Their vegetable garden land, they plant flowers so be a flower garden. Initially there was only one flower garden, as time went on other flower gardens appeared. Not only flower gardens, some farmers also began to develop strawberry fruit orchards and oranges. It is undeniable, competition between similar attractions began to emerge. This will result in perssaingan in attracting visitors to come to the tourist attraction.

Marketing Mix of agrotourism in Curup Village, Rejang Lebong Regency, Bengkulu

Marketing mix is an element that must be considered in marketing communications. The marketing mix applied by agrotourism in Curup Village, Rejang Lebong Regency, Bengkulu is covering product, price, place, and promotion.

1. Product

Agrotourism products in Curup Village, Rejang Lebong Regency, Bengkulu are among others Flower Garden and Fruit Garden. Visiting the flower garden, we are offered a beautiful view of colorful flowers that are in bloom, arranged in such a way as to spoil the eyes. In this flower garden there are special spots that are deliberately
designed so that visitors can take selfies. In addition small cottages are also provided so that visitors can sit back and enjoy the expanse of flower gardens.

It's different from the fruit garden. Here the fruit garden is a garden of strawberry fruit and oranges fruit garden. In this fruit garden, besides having special spots for selfie photos, you can also pick your own orange or strawberry fruit. Here we are taught how to choose fruit that is ready for harvest and how to pick the right fruit so that the plant is not damaged.

2. **Price**

The price determined to be able to enter this tourism object is relatively cheap and affordable by the people of all walks of life. The price of admission to this attraction is between Rp. 15,000 to Rp. 20,000 per person. This price is considered relatively cheap and affordable.

3. **Place**

The agrotourism market place in Curup Village, Rejang Lebong Regency, Bengkulu covers the area of Bengkulu and its surroundings. It does not rule out the possibility of other areas outside Bengkulu or even outside Sumatra. The location of agrotourism which is on the edge of the main road, is one of the main attractions, making it easier for visitors to reach these attractions.

4. **Promotion**

The promotion conducted by agrotourism in Curup village, Rejang Lebong Regency, Bengkulu is by utilizing Facebook social media. Facebook is a owned media, which is social media that is managed by agro-tourism managers in the form of status posts, photos, videos, visitor testimonials and live broadcasts.

**Integrated Marketing Communications Agro Tourism in Curup Village, Rejang Lebong Regency, Bengkulu**

Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) is an effort or marketing activity by combining various communication media. IMC is a promotion mix effort. IMC is a form of marketing communication strategy that is closely related to communication. The success of a region in marketing its regional potential depends on how to deliver messages to the community. Without communication, the community will not be able to know and recognize the products offered in their area.

The marketing communication strategy that has been carried out by agrotourism in Curup Village, Rejang Lebong Regency, Bengkulu is by utilizing Facebook social media as a
form of promotional activities. Facebook is a owned media, which is social media that is managed by agrotourism managers in the form of status posts, photos, videos, visitor testimonials and live broadcasts.

Facebook is used by agrotourism as a means of advertising. Facebook is used as a communication medium in providing information related to the products offered in the agrotourism. Managers assume that advertising on Facebook will spread faster and the costs incurred are also not large.

Facebook is also used as a means to provide information about the sales promotion that is carried out. Sales promotion carried out is usually in the form of a discounted price for the entrance ticket. In some existing agrotourism, sales promotion is done by holding a photo challenge. Where visitors can participate by uploading their selfie photos on the tourist attraction on the facebook manager page.

The next promotion mix conducted by agrotourism in Curup Village, Rejang Lebong Regency, Bengkulu is with public relations. Agrotourism managers have carried out activities included in the public relations activities in the promotion mix. Again Facebook took part in this. In public relations activities, the management utilizes Facebook as a medium for delivering information or publicity from the manager to the public. This is intended to build the image of agrotourism in the minds of the public.

But in Facebook management it is still not maximal, sometimes in a few months no information is posted on its Facebook status. This is because the management of agrowisatanya management is still an individual or family business, where all work is done by the owner and family members, without involving other people as employees. Thus there is no clear division of tasks and sometimes each family member has their own activities.

Agrotourism visitors in Curup Village, Rejang Lebong Regency, Bengkulu Agrotourism visitors come from various regions in Bengkulu even in Sumatra. Visitors who come to the agrotourism object itself get information about the existence of the tourism object from different sources. The results showed that visitors who came to the agrotourism object in Curup Village, Rejang Lebong Regency, Bengkulu, got information about the tourist attraction precisely from the mouth to mouth information of visitors who had come to the tourist attraction. In addition, visitors get information from Facebook visitors who have come to the tourism object through posting their selfie photos, not from Facebook agrotourism
managers. This can mean that visitors are not aware of Facebook from the agro-tourism manager.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study are that from the general condition of tourism in Rejang Lebong Regency has experienced development every year. Agro tourism potential in this area is very potential to be developed. The marketing communication strategy that has been carried out by agrotourism in the Rejang Lebong Regency of Bengkulu is by utilizing social media Facebook as a form of promotional activities. Facebook is a owned media, which is social media that is managed by agro-tourism managers in the form of status posts, photos, videos, visitor testimonials and live broadcasts. But in Facebook management it is still not maximal, sometimes in a few months no information is posted on its Facebook status. This is because the management of agrowisatanya management is still an individual, a family business and that manages only the owner, there are no employees or staff alone.

REFERENCES


