

Digital marketing Strategies for Melon Agri-Tourism Development in Supporting Sustainable Tourism Villages

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Abstract: Community service activities were conducted at Desa Wisata Kebon Ayu with a focus on implementing *digital marketing* strategies in the development of melon Agri-tourism to support a sustainable tourism village. The urgency of this program was based on the limited ability of tourism managers to utilize digital media as a promotional and marketing communication tool, resulting in the melon Agri-tourism potential not being widely recognized by the public and tourists. In addition, the rapid development of information technology and the growing trend of experience-based tourism require tourism village managers to adapt to more modern, creative, and sustainable marketing strategies. The objective of this activity was to improve the capacity of melon Agri-tourism managers in implementing *digital marketing* strategies to enhance tourism attractiveness and support the sustainability of the tourism village. The program was implemented using a participatory approach consisting of field observation, needs identification, socialization, training, and mentoring. The training materials included tourism business management, destination branding, social media utilization, digital promotional content creation, and online platform-based marketing strategies. The community service activity in Kebon Ayu Tourism Village generated several positive impacts on melon Agri-tourism managers and tourism village development. The managers became more capable of building a more attractive and informative tourism destination brand. This activity also encouraged the establishment of tourism management practices that are more adaptive to technological developments and tourism market demands. As a result, it is expected to increase tourist visits and provide economic benefits to the local community.

Keywords: Digital Marketing, Melon Agri-tourism, Sustainable Tourism Village, Digital Marketing, Community Empowerment.

Introduction

Kebon Ayu is one of the tourism villages with significant potential for the development of agriculture-based tourism through melon Agri-tourism. This potential is supported by favorable geographical conditions for horticultural cultivation, a well-preserved rural environment, and active community involvement in managing tourism activities based on local resources. Melon Agri-tourism not only offers economic value but also provides educational and recreational experiences for visitors through cultivation, harvesting, and direct consumption of agricultural products. These conditions position Agri-tourism as an alternative approach to tourism village development that can support

community empowerment and sustainable tourism development.

In the context of modern tourism development, digital transformation has become an essential requirement for tourism destination management. The advancement of information technology has significantly transformed tourist behavior in searching for information, selecting destinations, and sharing travel experiences through digital platforms. Digital marketing and social media have become strategic instruments for establishing effective marketing communication due to their ability to reach consumers more broadly, rapidly, and interactively (Tiago & Veríssimo, 2014) Furthermore, Stephen, (2016) emphasized that social media strongly influences

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consumer behavior by shaping tourists' perceptions, preferences, and decision-making processes in choosing tourism destinations.

The role of digital marketing in the tourism sector has also become increasingly important in supporting ecotourism and sustainable tourism development. Armutcu et al., (2023) demonstrated that digital marketing and social media significantly influence tourist behavior in seeking authentic and sustainable tourism experiences. In addition, digital marketing contributes to shaping destination image, which can enhance tourists' interest in ecotourism (Khan et al., 2022). Meanwhile, Go et al., (2020) argued that social media and digital data serve as effective promotional tools in supporting sustainable tourism development through the extensive dissemination of tourism destination information.

Despite its considerable potential, Kebon Ayu Tourism Village still faces several challenges in managing melon Agri-tourism, particularly in terms of marketing and digital management. Tourism promotion has been integrated with digital marketing strategies; however, the outcomes have not yet reached an optimal level. Tourism managers still experience limitations in optimizing social media utilization, developing digital promotional content, strengthening destination branding, and using online platforms to reach a broader market segment. As a result, the potential of melon Agri-tourism has not been widely recognized by the public and tourists, leading to suboptimal tourist visitation levels.

Moreover, tourism managers and local communities continue to require assistance in strengthening tourism business management to adapt to technological advancements and increasingly competitive tourism market demands. Khampusaen et al., (2024) explained that digital media interconnectivity can become a strategic tool for developing rural Agri-tourism potential through improved access to information and destination promotion. This finding is reinforced by Mulasiwi et al., (2025) who stated that digital marketing represents an important innovation in developing smart farming-based communities and creative entrepreneurship in rural areas.

The development of digitally based tourism villages also requires active community participation to create innovative, independent, and sustainable tourism management practices. Strengthening community capacity through mentoring and empowerment activities can encourage the development of more adaptive and competitive tourism villages (Herawati & Suhendra, 2025). In addition, social media plays an important role in building tourist loyalty and increasing community engagement in sustainable ecotourism development (Cheng et al., 2017; Hoang et al., 2024).

Based on these conditions, this community service program was implemented in the form of digital marketing strategy assistance for melon Agri-tourism managers in Kebon Ayu Tourism Village. The program aimed to enhance the capacity of local communities and tourism managers in utilizing digital media as a promotional and marketing communication tool. The assistance activities included social media management training, destination branding, digital promotional content creation, and strengthening tourism business management based on digital technology.

The primary focus of this community service activity was to strengthen the capability of melon Agri-tourism managers in implementing digital marketing strategies to support sustainable tourism village development. Through this program, it is expected that the competitiveness of the tourism destination will improve, tourist visitation will increase, and the local community's economy based on village potential will be strengthened sustainably.

Method

This community service program was conducted at Kebon Ayu Tourism village and focused on strengthening digital marketing strategies for melon agri-tourism development to support sustainable tourism villages. The program applied a participatory and community-based approach involving tourism managers, local community members, and agri-tourism stakeholders throughout the implementation process.

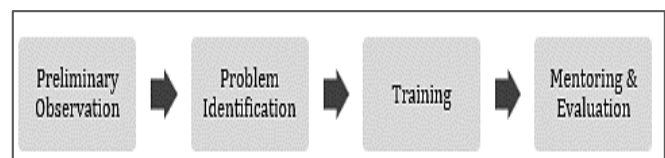


Figure 1. Stages of Community Service Activities

The service activities were designed through several systematic stages consisting of preliminary observation, problem identification, training, mentoring, and evaluation. The preliminary observation stage was conducted to examine the existing conditions of melon Agri-tourism management, identify local potentials, and analyze the main challenges faced by tourism managers, particularly in digital marketing practices and tourism business management. Data collection at this stage was carried out through direct observation, informal interviews, and discussions with tourism village managers and community representatives.

Based on the findings from the preliminary assessment, the program focused on improving the capacity of tourism managers in utilizing digital media

for tourism promotion and marketing communication. The training activities were conducted through workshops and interactive discussions covering several topics, including tourism business management, destination branding, social media optimization, digital content creation, and online marketing strategies. Participants were introduced to practical techniques for creating attractive promotional content, managing tourism-related social media accounts, and improving digital engagement with potential visitors.

In addition to training sessions, mentoring activities were implemented to provide direct assistance in applying digital marketing strategies. The mentoring process emphasized hands-on practice in content development, social media management, and destination promotion using digital platforms. The participants were guided in designing tourism branding strategies that reflected the uniqueness of melon agri-tourism and the local identity of the tourism village.

The evaluation stage was conducted to assess participants' understanding, participation, and ability to implement the knowledge and skills gained during the program. Evaluation was carried out through observation of participant engagement, discussions, and assessment of digital promotional outputs produced by the tourism managers. The overall method was expected to strengthen the managerial and digital marketing capacities of the community in supporting the sustainable development of melon Agri-tourism and increasing tourism competitiveness in Kebon Ayu Tourism Village.

Result and Discussion

The implementation of the community service program in Kebon Ayu tourism village demonstrated improvements in the managerial capacity and digital marketing capabilities of melon agri-tourism managers. The activities were conducted through several stages, including preliminary observation, problem identification, training, mentoring, and evaluation, focusing on strengthening tourism business management and optimizing digital marketing through social media platforms.

During the initial stage, the observation results indicated that tourism managers had already utilized social media as a promotional tool; however, its use was still limited to simple content uploads and had not been supported by structured branding and digital marketing strategies. In addition, tourism service management and business planning were still conducted conventionally, limiting the ability to reach broader tourism markets.

Through training and mentoring activities, tourism managers gained knowledge and practical understanding regarding digital marketing strategies, social media management, destination branding, and digital promotional content creation. The program also encouraged the application of digital technology in tourism promotion management through the optimization of social media platforms as marketing communication tools. Tourism managers became more capable of creating attractive, informative, and consistent promotional content, thereby increasing the visibility of melon agri-tourism among the public and potential tourists.

Changes in the managerial capacity of local business partners after the implementation of the program are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Changes in the Managerial Capacity of Local Business Partners

Aspect	Before the Training Program	After the Training Program	Achievement Indicators
Business planning	Tourism business planning was still simple and unstructured	Tourism managers began to develop promotional and business development plans	Availability of digital promotion and business development plans
Service management	Tourism services were managed conventionally	Managers began to understand the importance of responsive and informative tourism services	Improved communication services for visitors
Institutional management	Coordination among tourism managers was still limited	Coordination and task distribution among managers became clearer	Increased involvement of managers in tourism activities
Marketing strategy	Promotion activities were conducted in a simple and limited manner	Managers began utilizing social media and digital platforms for promotion	Increased digital promotional activities
Understanding of digital marketing strategies	Knowledge of digital marketing was still limited	Managers gained understanding of branding, social media, and digital promotional content	Improved capability in managing social media and promotional content

The implementation of digital innovation within the community service program was reflected in the utilization of social media as a tool for destination branding and visual-content-based tourism promotion. This innovation assisted tourism managers in expanding promotional reach, increasing interaction with potential visitors, and strengthening the identity of melon agri-tourism as one of the village's tourism attractions. Furthermore, the mentoring activities enhanced the managers' ability to formulate promotional strategies that are more adaptive to technological developments and tourism market demands.



Figure 2. Training Session on Social Media and Digital Marketing Strategy

The evaluation results showed that participants experienced improvements in understanding and practical skills related to the implementation of digital marketing for melon agri-tourism development. Tourism managers became more capable of implementing digital promotional strategies in a more systematic and sustainable manner. The outputs achieved from this program included enhanced digital marketing capacity among tourism managers, the development of digital promotional content, increased tourism social media activities, and strengthened branding of Kebon Ayu Tourism Village as a community-based and sustainable agri-tourism destination.

Conclusion

The community service program conducted in Kebon Ayu successfully strengthened the managerial and digital marketing capacities of melon Agri-tourism managers in supporting sustainable tourism village development. The implementation of digital marketing strategies contributed to increasing the visibility and promotional effectiveness of melon Agri-tourism through digital platforms. Tourism managers became more adaptive in utilizing social media as a marketing communication tool and were able to develop more structured and attractive promotional strategies. In addition, the mentoring activities encouraged stronger community participation and improved coordination among tourism managers in managing tourism activities.

Overall, the program demonstrated that strengthening digital marketing capabilities can become an effective approach to enhancing the competitiveness of local tourism destinations, increasing tourist visitation potential, and supporting sustainable community-based tourism development.

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