

ASIA HERITAGE PEKANBARU DIGITAL MARKETING COMMUNICATION THROUGH INSTAGRAM

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Abstract

Tourism is one of the important sectors in the economic development of a region. In the digital era like today, social media has become an effective tool to promote tourism destinations. Instagram, as one of the most popular social media platforms, has great potential to become an effective tourism information media. This study aims to explain how digital marketing communication is used by the Instagram account @asia.heritage in promoting Asia Heritage tourist destinations in Pekanbaru City. This study uses qualitative methods to identify posted content, increasing the number of followers, media partners, hashtags, and interactions with potential visitors. @asia.heritage has succeeded in implementing effective digital marketing communication in promoting Asia Heritage tourist destinations in Pekanbaru City. By utilizing social media properly, Asia Heritage can continue to increase its tourist appeal and attract more tourists to visit this area. The results of this study are elements of digital marketing communication integrated by Asia Heritage to promote tourist attractions and events, which use online marketing, social media, and word of mouth, where each element is used to carry out the stages of the Digital Marketing Communication method. Researchers hope to provide valuable insights for the Pekanbaru City government and related parties in developing digital marketing communications through social media (Instagram).

Keywords: *Digital Marketing Communication, Social Media, Instagram, Tourism, Asia Heritage.*

INTRODUCTION

For some developing countries, tourism is seen as an engine of economic development. Thirty years ago experts called tourism a passport to development and that term is still relevant today. In Indonesia, development policy clearly outlines that tourism is an integral part of national development and must be tried in an analytical, planned, structured, sustainable, and responsible manner by always providing protection to religious values, customs that live in society, sustainability and quality of living areas, and national needs.

The current business development, especially in the field of tourism, is very rapid, giving rise to competition between one tourist attraction and another to attract tourists. Rapid changes in the business environment force tourist attractions to continue to be active and creative in developing existing tourist attractions and must always update

their marketing strategies. One of these developments is the determination of locations that can be used as photo areas or commonly known as photo spots. The public will not be able to reach a good tourist location without the manager of the tourist attraction itself promoting it.

The technology that is developing faster and faster is internet technology, and cyberspace technology which is the current trend for various groups of various ages, from children to adults are currently using it. Everyone can get the convenience to communicate with other people who are in various parts of the world without being limited by time and space. The development of technology that is starting to be increasingly rapid is used not only to search for information, news, and others, but currently technology has begun to be used to advance the business world. The internet is considered to be a marketing solution as a marketing medium with a very good online media method because it can be accessed by people, in a time that has no limits and can be accessed by others from anywhere and anytime. Online media marketing as a profitable business media, makes it easy to promote to the public, and is promising for now. Business actors see that internet users are an easy target for their future business. In today's era, more and more people are using social media. Marketing communication through digital media or commonly known as digital marketing is an effort to inform and promote a brand by using digital media that can reach consumers and customers in a timely and relevant manner. By conducting digital marketing communications, companies can more easily distribute and provide new information or news (press releases), either in the form of text, photos and news. Regarding marketing communications through digital media, this is not only done by corporate institutions that function in the field of goods production, but also by companies that function as tourist destinations. Instagram is the right social media for marketing communications. Business actors can interact directly with consumers who are their followers or potential consumers who are not yet followers. In addition to being widely used by all groups, Instagram also has many features that can support marketing activities, one of which is Instagram Ads. Instagram Ads is an advertising program on Instagram where users can reach a large audience. Instagram even has a special account that can be used for marketing purposes, namely Instagram for Business. (Mubarokah et al., 2022)

Tourism promotion using social media is currently nothing new and is starting to have its own appeal for tourism industry players in promoting their tourist attractions through social media. This can be seen from the emergence of tourism areas that have social media accounts for their respective tourism. This seems to be in line with the potential of social media in Indonesia (APJII, 2020). With the potential of social media as a medium for tourism promotion, it will certainly have an impact on tourists' decisions to visit these tourist attractions. Where tourists use social media to get information related to the tourist attractions they will visit.

As we know, social media is a means that allows users to present themselves or communicate by sharing text, images, videos and forming social bonds virtually (Nasrullah, 2017).

Pekanbaru City has a very strategic geographical position, in addition, access to Pekanbaru City is very easy both by land, sea and air, making many people flock to Pekanbaru City. Pekanbaru City is also one of the cities that has quite diverse tourism, including culinary tourism, shopping tourism, historical tourism, religious tourism, halal tourism, and many others. Some of the popular tourist attractions in Pekanbaru City are the Okura Tourism Village, Asia Farm, Asia Heritage, Tenayan Raya Agrotourism Village, and Mayang Nature Recreation Park (Pekanbaru Culture and Tourism Office.Go.Id, 2021).

Considering that Asia Heritage just opened in the middle of the pandemic on April 21, 2021, they maximized their Instagram social media account which has the account domain @asia.heritage to carry out digital marketing communication activities to attract visitors through their online social media application. In developing digital marketing communication on their Instagram social media, Asia Heritage also has a team of social media specialists who collaborate with the marketing team. They are tasked with thinking about what content, breakthroughs, or promotions they will upload for the next 1 month on Instagram Asia Heritage to attract visitors. Through the Instagram account @asia.heritage, they strive to share various information, including about various cultures, cuisines, and characteristics in each Asian country, namely China, Japan, Korea and Indonesia.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher wants to know the digital marketing communication strategy of Asia Heritage, especially through Instagram social media activities. Because Asia Heritage is a new and interesting educational tourism industry that has just opened during the pandemic, Instagram social media is considered more effective for carrying out digital marketing in introducing its educational tourism places so that they are known, recognized and can be visited by the wider community. It is proven that Asia Heritage currently has approximately 49 thousand followers, which makes this Asia Heritage Instagram account meet the criteria for research. Given that the title raised by the researcher focuses more on Instagram social media in carrying out digital marketing communications. Therefore, the researcher chose to research Asia Heritage Instagram because Asia Heritage Instagram has more followers on Instagram compared to applications such as TikTok and Facebook. The focus of the research that will be studied is How Asia Heritage Pekanbaru's Digital Marketing Communication is Through the Instagram Application.

METHODOLOGY

The research method used in this study is a qualitative method. Qualitative Research Method can be interpreted as a research method based on the philosophy of positivism, used to research natural objects, where researchers are key instruments, data collection techniques are carried out in a combined manner, data analysis is inductive/deductive, qualitative research results emphasize understanding meaning and constructing phenomena rather than generalization (Sugiyono, 2019). It is said to be qualitative because this study seeks to explain objects that are relevant to the use of digital media. The selection of informants used in this study was purposive sampling, namely where researchers tend to choose information that is considered to know and can be trusted to be a solid source of data and understand the problem in depth. The criteria for selecting samples in this study are as follows:

- 1) Employees who have worked for at least 1 year at Asia Heritage.
- 2) Know or understand about Asia Heritage tourist attractions.
- 3) Understand digital marketing communications.
- 4) Understand the concept of Advertising.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This research was conducted over a period of approximately 6 months starting from December 2023 to May 2024. In this research, several stages were carried out in obtaining research data, the first stage began with initial observations of the problems and objects being studied, then continued with the second stage, namely field research at this stage interviews were conducted with research informants and documentation was taken.

After the field research was carried out, the researcher obtained research data, and based on the research data, the researcher obtained research results entitled "Digital Marketing Communication of Asia Heritage Pekanbaru Through Instagram".

The researcher collected data in the field through interviews and documentation, from the results of the interview activities the researcher began by interviewing the Head of Digital Marketing Asia Heritage, namely Suci, regarding the elements of digital marketing communication used by Asia Heritage in promoting Asia Heritage tourism, and the following results were obtained:

1. Online Marketing

In the Online Marketing element, Asia Heritage uses Advertising & Digital Marketing points. Advertising is a paid promotional activity using mass media (TV, Radio, newspapers, etc.) or online media by disseminating mass information, in the results of the interview, expectations are one of the elements of Digital Marketing Communication used by the Asia Heritage team to attract the attention of potential visitors is advertising, this element is carried out by the Asia Heritage marketing team by making posts on the Instagram account @asia.heritage to inform potential visitors that Asia Heritage is an interesting tourist attraction. According to researchers, the advertising carried out is appropriate in attracting the attention of potential visitors and promoting the tour, by making posts that are designed as uniquely and attractively as possible.

According to researchers, the use of advertising elements can be increased again by making video posts with verbal communication on social media owned by the Asia Heritage marketing team, this is because the target visitors of the tour are the community, the nature of the community is that they prefer audio-visual communication rather than visual communication alone so that according to researchers, video posts showing body gestures will seem more interesting than just in the form of online billboard posts and offline billboards that use non-verbal communication alone.

Digital marketing is a promotional activity by utilizing digital internet media as a medium for delivering information about the products offered, this definition is in accordance with the promotional activities carried out by the Asia Heritage marketing

team which utilizes social media for its promotional activities. On the Instagram application, the Asia Heritage admin utilizes the Post feature by posting online events and ongoing updates, as well as feed, instastory, and direct message features. The use of this element is due to the target visitors of Asia Heritage, namely the community, where the community itself is closely related to digital internet media, especially social media, in addition, digital marketing with social media can make promotional activities more efficient by saving time and costs and expanding the spread of information.

The digital marketing element is utilized by the Asia Heritage marketing team in promoting the Asia Heritage event to attract attention from potential consumers. This is done by posting activities or events that are currently taking place online on the Instagram account @asia.heritage, which has been designed as attractively as possible using striking background colors and unique and attractive font formats. The Asia Heritage marketing team also designed the Instagram posts used by adding funny images and icons that are currently viral, such as cultural images and characteristics of Asian countries and also special or big days, not only that, the Asia Heritage marketing team also added viral songs to several posts and instastories that they spread on Instagram, according to researchers, this is appropriate because the target visitors of Asia Heritage tourism like unique and viral things, so to attract their attention, activities like that will be needed. To find out the elements of Digital Marketing Communication used by the Asia Heritage marketing team in marketing, researchers conducted interviews with several key informants and the elements used by the Asia Heritage marketing team are advertising and digital marketing. Based on the results of several answers from informants, the design of posts with unique and attractive striking colors is the main key in attracting the attention of potential visitors, and researchers also found the use of digital marketing communications by utilizing Instagram social media. In addition, researchers took several poster design documentation from Asia Heritage, here are the results of the documentation:

Picture 1: Design and Digital Marketing Activities Special Day



2. Social Media

In the Social Media element in Digital Marketing Communication, Asia Heritage uses the Sales Promotion point where sales promotion is one of the elements of digital marketing communication with promotional activities that utilize third parties to promote products with the aim of encouraging consumers to buy products or services offered, researchers found that sales promotion is one of the elements of digital marketing communication used in promoting the tour with the aim of increasing the interest of potential visitors to the tour they organize. The Asia Heritage tourism marketing team carries out the sales promotion element by utilizing Instagram social media by collaborating with accounts that provide pay promote services called the media partner method, the accounts that are media partners of Asia Heritage tourism are @brosispku, @pkucity, @eventpekanbaru and @pkuiven the use of media partners aims to maximize promotional activities on social media. At this stage, marketers are required to be able to understand consumer attitudes towards products or services that are liked by consumers, therefore promotional activities will be needed that can increase the emotional desire of target consumers to consume or use the products or services offered. At the desire stage, promotional activities usually highlight information about the benefits that prospective consumers get when purchasing or renting products or services offered, in this case the benefits can be in the form of getting discounts or price cuts, cash back, and also valuable experiences because they can experience foreign culture (Japan), or free entry with certain transaction time limits. At this stage, the Asia Heritage marketing team peaks the desire of prospective consumers to come to the event by providing a promo where they can take classes that have been provided on that day, in addition, some information also says that the marketing team also provides a promo in the form of free photos wearing Kimono clothes from Japan and prospective visitors can also enjoy classes presented by the organizing committee free of charge. This information is promoted by the marketing team by utilizing Instagram social media on the post, feed, instastory, and direct message features. According to researchers, this activity is in accordance with the nature of their target visitors, namely the wider community, who like promos such as free entry, this can be seen from the success of the Edo event which attracted a lot of visitors on April 10-16, 2024. In addition, from the researcher's observation on one of the posts on the @asia.heritage account, the use of captions with a style of language that provides challenges and invitations and the addition of emoticons is quite appropriate for the target audience, such as in one of the posts containing the caption "win a total shopping voucher worth 10 million rupiah!!" and "free classes and competitions".

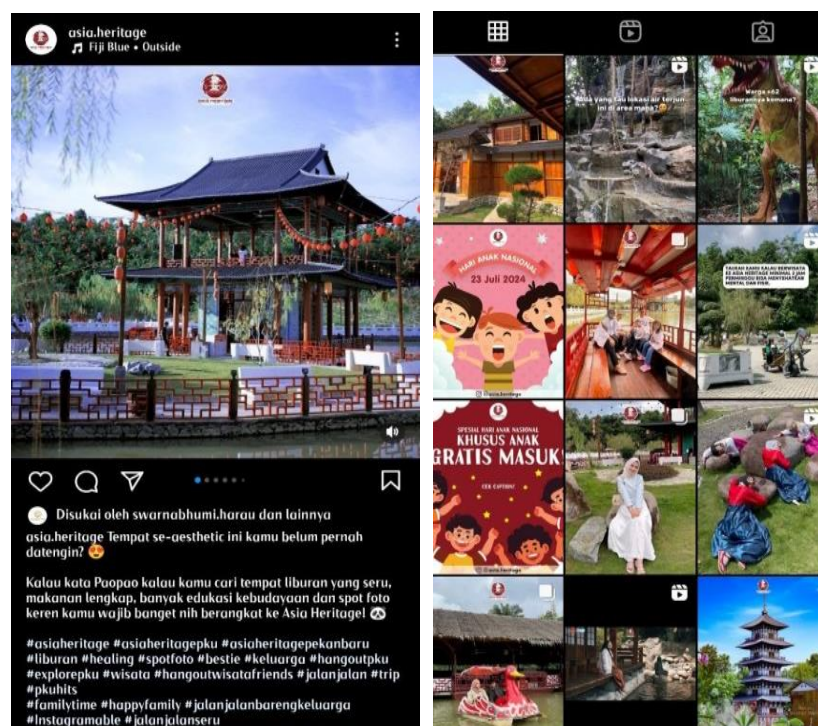
The social media used by the Asia Heritage marketing team are several platforms. The focus of this study is only on the Instagram social media application @asia.heritage. The researcher wants to know how the use of digital marketing communications is carried out by the Asia Heritage marketing team on Instagram social media.

From the results of important interviews conducted with several informants from members of the Asia Heritage marketing team who are the organizing committee for the

Asia Heritage tour, the researcher found that sales promotion is one of the elements of digital marketing communication used in promoting the tour with the aim of increasing the interest of potential visitors to the tour they organize.

The Asia Heritage tourism marketing team carries out sales promotion elements by utilizing Instagram social media by collaborating with accounts that provide pay promote services called the media partner method. The use of media partners aims to maximize promotional activities on social media. In addition to using media partners to increase the interest of potential visitors in seeking information about Asian Heritage tourism, this way the information will be disseminated more quickly to the wider community.

Picture 2: Feed and Caption



In this case, the digital marketing communication used by the Asia Heritage marketing team in promoting the event uses sales promotion, this is what the researcher concluded from the results of interviews with members of the Asia Heritage marketing team, they said that promotional activities were carried out to peak the desires of prospective visitors, namely by presenting a free entry promo whose information was distributed through post captions on the Instagram application, in addition they also use Instagram partner accounts to help promote it, the use of Instagram social media for promotional purposes is the definition of digital marketing and this is what makes researchers draw conclusions at the stage of the Digital Marketing Communication elements used by the Asia Heritage marketing team in promoting the event is digital marketing through Instagram.

3. Word of Mouth

Meanwhile, in the Word Of Mouth element, Asia Heritage uses the Direct Marketing point which is one of the points in the Digital Marketing Communication theory where promotional activities carried out by the company are by communicating directly with consumers using media and the internet with the aim of getting a direct response from consumers.

Researchers found that direct marketing is one of the points in the word of mouth element used by the marketing team in organizing the Asia Heritage tour in promoting the tour with the aim of getting potential consumers to take action by providing a response to Asia Heritage. The direct marketing element is carried out by the marketing team by utilizing Instagram media, where in the Instagram application the committee uses the instastory feature to create a question box with a Q&A filter with an invitation style of language to provide questions, impressions, and suggestions, which later potential visitors can find more information about the event that will be held.

In the last stage in Digital Marketing Communication it becomes a promotional activity where at this stage potential consumers have determined their choice to consume the products or services offered, the action referred to at this stage is not only consuming the product but can also be in the form of subscribing, following social media accounts owned by the agency or just making contact with the PR (public relations) of the agency. From the results of the interview activities with members of the Asia Heritage marketing team in organizing tourism events at Asia Heritage, it is one of the elements used to encourage target visitors to come to visit the event.

Based on the results of data collection activities in the field, researchers obtained research results that were described in the form of descriptive text based on previously determined theories, in this study the theory used is the theory of digital marketing communication, in the discussion section of this study, researchers will explain what elements are used by Asia Heritage as the Asia Heritage marketing team in promoting Asia Heritage tourism to the wider community. In this study, researchers found that Asia Heritage only uses three elements in the Digital Marketing Communication theory, namely Online Marketing, Social Media and Word Of Mouth elements. Researchers did not find Mobile Marketing elements in this study, because Asia Heritage does not have a special mobile application for marketing the tourist spot and researchers can conclude that from the results of interviews with the Asia Heritage marketing team, the elements used by Asia Heritage in Digital Marketing Communication only use Online Marketing, Social Media and Word Of Mouth elements.

CONCLUSION

Based on data taken from research subjects through triangulation analysis (interviews, observations and documentation), it is concluded that Asia Heritage Pekanbaru's Digital Marketing Communication Through Instagram is through Digital Marketing Communication techniques. Based on information from Asia Heritage's marketing team in attracting the attention of tourist visitors by focusing on digital marketing and advertising promotions. The marketing team created a visual communication design packaged in the form of a very attractive Instagram post, with the chosen post design having striking background colors equipped with icons or images of

tourist attractions and also interesting things added such as offering Japanese kimono rental services.

The Asia Heritage marketing team's strategy in spreading posts is done online with advertising, therefore the marketing team focuses more on spreading Advertising done online through Instagram social media (IG) based on the reason that currently it is the internet era, namely almost everyone has an IG social media account so that there is a faster, more efficient, time-saving and cost-effective promotion delivery.

The marketing team's strategy in maximizing aspects of Online Marketing, Social Media, Word Of Mouth through IG social media is all fulfilled. The "online marketing" aspect is carried out by prioritizing the content and advantages of Asia Heritage, namely new tourism nuance content about Asian countries packaged into interesting and unique image posts on "IG feeds and instastory". Then the "social media" aspect, the marketing team collaborates with other Instagram social media account admins who have more followers such as @pkucity @eventpekanbaru @pkuiven and @brosispku which are used as media partners who will help to spread what events are taking place at Asia Heritage, then the information will be used as captions in IG posts so that prospective visitors are more interested in the events that will be held by Asia Heritage. The "Word of Mouth" aspect routinely opens direct interaction with IG followers through Q&A, Direct Message (DM), Instastory and Instagram Reels so that visitors can get the most updated information from Asia Heritage.

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