

ICT As a Promotional Medium in Increasing The Competitiveness of Local Businesses in Tourism Industry

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Abstract

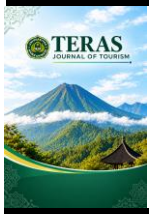
This study aims to find out how to utilize Information and Communication Technology through social media platforms and the types of social media used for promotion to increase the competitiveness of the weaving business at Sentosa Sasak Tenun Pringgasela Gallery. This research was conducted on Jalan Gang Rinjani, Sentosa Hamlet, Pringgasela Village, Pringgasela District, East Lombok Regency. This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach using data collection techniques of interview and observation types to solve problems investigated in the research site. The sample of this study is the manager of Sentosa Sasak Tenun Gallery, who is promoting through social media by utilizing features from social media platforms as their promotional strategy and posting photos and videos of products to attract consumers to buy. The results achieved are the use of ICT to reach a broader audience in a more efficient way using *internet marketing* in expanding networks, and the types of social media used are *Facebook*, *WhatsApp*, and *Instagram* in promoting their products to increase the competitiveness of their business. The conclusion is that using information and communication technology as a promotional medium through social media can help expand the audience in business development, increase business competitiveness, and expand the selling power of the weaving business to various parts of the world. ICT through social media plays an active role in promotional activities at the Setosa Sasak Tenun Pringgasela Gallery.

Keywords: Competitiveness, ICT, local business, promotion

Introduction

Tourism is one sector that has an essential role in a country's economy. Tourism is a significant industry that generates the most foreign exchange in various countries, including Indonesia. In recent years, the tourism sector in Indonesia has experienced rapid development and has contributed significantly to national economic growth (Lyeonov et al., 2024). One of the factors driving the growth of the tourism sector is the increasing number of domestic and foreign tourists visiting Indonesia (Yang et al., 2024). However, with the growing competition in the tourism industry, the right strategy is needed to increase the competitiveness of local businesses in the tourism sector. Data on national foreign exchange receipts in 2011 from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) shows that foreign tourists have contributed Rp—eighty trillion, totaling 7.6 million tourists. Meanwhile, domestic tourists have also contributed Rp. 123 trillion, so foreign exchange earned from the tourism sector has increased since 2006-2010. In 2009, tourism was also the third largest foreign exchange contributor after oil & gas and palm oil, with a total value of Rp 62 trillion (Ekman, 2024).

According to Reginald Ryan U. Gosela & Riah E. Encarnacion (2024), the tourism industry has opened a lot of information about tourist destinations, booking travel packages, and business information, becoming more accessible to humans, including tourists. By seeing this new phenomenon, business people have also been able to change their business patterns in



tourism more easily (Marchesani et al., 2024). Seeing that the business world was previously still controlled by *offline business people*, now it has turned around to be controlled by humans with the internet easily accessed anywhere (Ana Leiras & Journal:, 2023).

Information and communication technology (ICT) as a promotional medium is one of the strategies that business people can use in the tourism industry to increase their competitiveness (Yuwono et al., 2024). ICT has become an inseparable part of people's daily lives, including meeting the need for tourism information. Promotional media using ICT can facilitate access to information about tourism, provide convenience and speed in the booking process, and improve the quality of services offered (Bassi & Martín, 2024). However, according to Simarmata et al (2024), using ICT as a promotional medium cannot be the only strategy for increasing business competitiveness in the tourism industry.

Information and communication technology is also closely related to local businesses in the tourism industry because business people can use it as a promotional medium for their local products. Social media is a new media developed by ICT to make it easier for users to interact, share, and cooperate with fellow users to increase the competitiveness of their business products (Abbas et al., 2024). Thus, this technology has a vital role for business people in the tourism industry to access and build cooperation networks to promote and increase the competitiveness of local product businesses.

With this technology, social media can be accessed through the internet network and has been applied in many countries that can be used to the tourism sector because the magnitude of human dependence on this interconnected world is very high, which makes internet users able to communicate efficiently (Marchesani et al., 2024). So we can see this through the increased activity of world internet users, especially in Indonesia, and the impact of this technology can also change some human behavior in social and cultural (Hussain et al., 2024).

Although technological developments are now extensive, many business people in the tourism industry still do not use these facilities. One of them is a local business in the tourism industry, namely the *sesek* weaving business, which is done manually using a poll located in the village of Pringgasela. In this village, most of the residents work as weaving businesspeople, but they still rely on art shops as storage places for sold woven goods. So this large art shop is their way to leave goods and sell them to customers who have subscribed to the art shop. With this situation, of course, weaving business people must improve their *mindset* to make sales and promotions by utilizing information and communication technology as another channel to increase the competitiveness of their business.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze the use of ICT as a promotional medium in increasing the competitiveness of local businesses in the tourism industry. This study also seeks to explore the factors that affect the effectiveness of ICT utilization as a promotional medium and to provide recommendations for local businesses in the tourism industry in utilizing ICT as a promotional medium. This research is expected to provide input and contribute to the government, entrepreneurs, and tourism industry stakeholders in increasing local businesses' competitiveness. In addition, this study is also expected to be a reference for other researchers interested in researching ICT utilization in the tourism industry.

Methods

In this study, the approach used is a descriptive qualitative approach. This research is conducted to solve a problem investigated by examining the condition of the subjects and objects of research based on the facts in the research place (Hall & Liebenberg, 2024). The

point is that researchers want to see the emphasis or depth of data obtained through data received through sources and data seen in the field. So, research in using information and communication technology as a promotional medium in increasing the competitiveness of local businesses in the tourism industry can be described through this descriptive qualitative method.

Based on the method used, researchers only use primary data as a source of data obtained from field studies using data collection techniques such as observation and interviews. Researchers use this data collection technique to get valid and appropriate data in this study. To declare this study is good or not, researchers elaborate again using triangulation to prove whether the data from this study is research done scientifically or not to test the data obtained.

Findings and Discussion

1. Types of Social Media Promotions Used by Sentosa Sasak Weaving Gallery

The study results found that Sentosa Sasak Tenun Gallery has used social media as their means of promotion. According to Berhanu & Raj (2024), promotion is also commonly referred to as a strategy within companies to develop their products by creating unique information about product prices and quality as an implementation of efforts to increase product competitiveness. The things that can be done in the promotion are to make a message or information persuasive and compelling to attract the interest and attention of consumers.

The results showed that the owner and manager of Sentosa Sasak Tenun Gallery have used this method to promote their products. Based on facts from the experience of resource persons, social media is a very efficient medium for promoting business development at Sentosa Sasak Tenun Gallery. The resource persons used several platforms in the implementation of the promotion as follows:

a. Facebook

According to Fauzi et al (2024), the use of Facebook in Indonesia is growing so fast and ranks second in the world, and the United States has the most Facebook users in the world. Sentosa Sasak Tenun Gallery has used this *Facebook platform* as its promotional media because it can reach audiences or consumers to attract buying interest to promote more effectively.

In utilizing Facebook, there are several strategies carried out by Sentosa Sasak Tenun Gallery through the available features to increase the marketability and competitiveness of their products as follows:

1) Upload photos and videos

This strategy will attract potential consumers to see product information before buying. One goal is to upload photos and videos to provide important information related to the advantages and characteristics of their weaving products.

2) Short, concise, and clear posts

This strategy aims to provide important information with a concise but understandable narrative. In this way, it is expected to overcome users' boredom to read by posting more informative and precise information.

3) Creating a Two-Way Dialogue

It is known that Sentosa Sasak Tenun Gallery uses this strategy always to try to respond to all interactions on this *Facebook platform*, both from comments, likes, and private messages sent by other users.

b. WhatsApp

WhatsApp is a simple social media application with many features, for example, sending messages, sending images, sounds, videos, creating groups, and others, and is accessible in terms of operation. These features can be a unique medium for communicating and exchanging files, photos, and videos between owners and consumers.

Sentosa Sasak Tenun Gallery owners usually use this platform to respond to consumers who proceed to the purchase stage. There are several activities carried out via *Whatsapp* by Sentosa Sasak Tenun Gallery as follows:

1) Provide information about the products offered

Sentosa Sasak Tenun Gallery utilizes private *chat* features and *Whatsapp groups* to inform consumers about products and the advantages of their weaving product characteristics. Using this feature is expected to improve the business image to consumers and increase business competitiveness.

2) Share Product Photos or Videos

Sentosa Sasak Tenun Gallery utilizes this strategy through chat, group chat, and status features to share product photos and videos by displaying detailed characteristics. In addition, it can provide various important information needed by consumers.

c. Instagram

Instagram is a social media application that presents content in the form of photos and videos, and the features owned by Instagram also allow users to interact easily with captions, comments, messages, and so on. From interviews with the owners of Sentosa Sasak Tenun Gallery using social media, it is expected to influence the wider community, especially young people, to see and buy the products they want according to their tastes. The activities carried out on this platform are:

1) Interact directly with users.

Sentosa Sasak Tenun Gallery utilizes this strategy as a means of interaction with other users. Responding to all comments and messages on this platform can convince consumers to buy their woven products.

2) Shows the distinctive features of Pringgasela weaving

Uploading photos and videos showing weaving characteristics aims to provide an overview of the advantages of Sentosa Sasak Tenun Gallery products. This strategy is expected to interest other users and change their minds about buying and recommending our products to others. Promoting products like this it can increase purchases of weaving products and can compete well with other competitors.

2. Utilization of Information and Communication Technology at Sentosa Sasak Weaving Pringgasela Gallery

Information and communication technology as a promotional medium has proven to be an essential factor in increasing the competitiveness of local businesses, including the weaving business in Sentosa Sasak Tenun Pringgasela Gallery. The results of this study revealed several important findings about the types of media that are often used, and how the use of Information and Communication Technology acts as a promotional medium in increasing the competitiveness of weaving business in the tourism industry through social media.

ICT as a promotional medium has enabled weaving businesses in the tourism industry, such as the weaving business at Sentosa Sasak Tenun Gallery in Pringgasela Village, to reach a broader audience more efficiently. With various online platforms and applications, these

weaving businesses can promote their products and services to potential customers worldwide. This helps increase exposure and awareness about local products with unique characteristics and opens up new opportunities to attract potential customers.

In addition, information and communication technology also provides convenience in the transaction process and interaction with customers. Various online reservation platforms, electronic payments, and real-time information services make it easy for customers to access and use the services of their products. This increases convenience for potential customers and their satisfaction and helps build a positive image for this weaving business.

The results of this study also show that ICT through social media is very active in playing a role in promoting the Setosa Sasak Tenun Pringgasela Gallery. This weaving business uses *internet marketing*, such as social media, as its promotional press to increase its competitiveness. According to Deb et al (2024), *internet marketing* is one of the promotional structures that includes, one of which is social media. The social media platforms Sentosa Sasak Tenun Gallery uses are Facebook, WhatsApp, and Instagram, which can increase reach and appeal to the target audience.

Using social media as a promotional medium at Sentosa Sasak Tenun Gallery has excellent potential to increase its *visibility* and popularity. With the right strategy and effective management, social media can be an efficient tool in promoting a weaving business and supporting the growth of its business competitiveness. With the social media promotion of the weaving business at Sentosa Sasak Tenun Pringgasela Gallery, it runs smoothly and quickly. It is more efficient in terms of cost, energy, and time. Promotion through social media can also reach a broader and faster audience or target compared to offline media.

Overall, the use of ICT as a promotional medium in increasing the competitiveness of the weaving business in the tourism industry has a significant impact. In the face of growing market competition, these weaving businesses must proactively adopt these technologies and put them to good use to strengthen their sustainability, growth, and competitive advantage. In this digital age, ICTs are valuable assets that can transform how local businesses operate and compete in the tourism industry.

Conclusion

1. Types of social media promotion

Sentosa Sasak Tenun Gallery uses three social media platforms to increase the competitiveness of its weaving business. Of the three platforms, Sentosa Sasak Tenun Gallery utilizes interesting features from each media to be used as a promotional strategy in increasing the competitiveness of their weaving business. The three platforms are:

a. Facebook

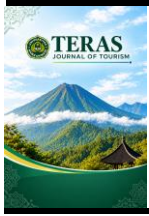
This platform is used as a promotional medium by utilizing existing features to introduce products and interact with consumers directly. The strategy is to upload photos and videos, create posts with a concise and clear narrative, and create a two-way dialogue.

b. WhatsApp

This platform is also used by utilizing existing features to connect buying interests from consumers and provide accurate information about the advantages of the products offered. The strategy is to provide information about the products offered and share photos and videos of products privately through private chat features.

c. Instagram

This platform is used to market products through high-quality photos and videos to attract buying interest from other users. It can interact directly by exchanging opinions or



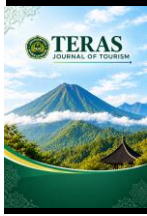
opening buying and selling offers. The strategy used is to interact directly with users and show the characteristics of Pringgasela weaving through shared photos and videos.

2. Utilization of Information and Communication Technology as a Promotional Media In the use of Information and Communication Technology

Sentosa Sasak Tenun Gallery has used social media as a form of ICT utilization in conducting promotions. This social media has enabled these weaving businesses to reach a broader audience more efficiently. With this media, the weaving business at Sentosa Sasak Tenun Pringgasela Gallery has greatly helped develop the business, increase its competitiveness, and create a vast network of cooperation. ICT uses several platforms or social media applications to promote its products and services to potential customers from various parts of the world. In this case, it dramatically helps businesses increase consumer exposure and awareness about local products with unique characteristics, opening up new opportunities to attract potential customers.

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