

# Marketing Communication Strategy of Sibolga Community on Pandan Beach Tourism Object Development

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## Abstract

The purpose of this study is to determine the Sibolga community's strategy for developing pandanus beach tourism objects. Advertising, direct marketing, public relations, personal selling, and sales promotion are all used in the marketing communication strategy. This study will concentrate on the marketing communication mix used in introducing pandanus beach tourist destinations. Pandan Beach is a popular natural tourist destination in Central Tapanuli Regency. This study employs a qualitative descriptive research method in order to display and explain the phenomena observed in the field. This study's data collection technique is an observation technique, which involves making direct observations on the object of research. Interview and documentation techniques are also used in data collection. Interviews were conducted with a variety of informants, including tour guides, people selling souvenirs, and Pandan Beach managers. According to the findings of this study, Pandan Beach employs a marketing communication mix to increase brand awareness, which includes advertising, personal selling, direct marketing, public relations and publicity, and sales promotion. Pandan Beach advertises on social media to reach domestic tourists, and advertisements are also published in local print media. Meanwhile, direct marketing is carried out by collaborating with Medan travel tours. Personal selling is implemented by all pandan beach managers, and all pandan beach managers and guides are trained in personal selling. All managers also serve as Public Relations officers, whose responsibility it is to maintain relationships between internal and external communities. Meanwhile, Pandan Beach is promoting its products by offering attractive price packages to tourists.

*Keywords:* public policy, COVID-19, Dzoelham Hospital, binjai city.

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## 1. Introduction

In Indonesia, tourism is a significant economic sector. Tourism in Indonesia has the potential to be a future economic driver for the country (Sembiring, 2016a). We frequently visit various types of tourist attractions in Indonesia. Parks, seas, forests, mountains, shopping centers or malls, historical sites, museums, culinary arts, lakes, reservoirs, lakes, hot springs, zoos, waterfalls, beaches, and so on are examples of tourist attractions.

Because almost all provinces in Indonesia have beautiful beaches, coastal tourism can be used as the largest source of revenue. North Sumatra is one of Indonesia's provinces with many historical and natural attractions. Central Tapanuli is a district in North Sumatra. Binasi Beach, Kalangan Beach, Putri Beach, Bilalang Beach, Sosor Godang Beach, Kalimantan Beach, and Pandan Beach are among the many beach attractions in Central Tapanuli Regency.

Pandan Beach is one of the beaches that used to be the main tourist attraction in the Central Tapanuli district. However, Pandan Beach must now compete with new tourist attractions in the Central Tapanuli district. Pandan Beach has its own beauty, in that the beach water is quite clear, the white sand beach stretches from east to west, and the waves are not too big, making it safe for children and families to play.

The annual increase in the number of tourists is the driving force behind all tourism objects in Central Tapanuli Regency, including Pandan Beach. Pandan Beach must be competitive with other tourist destinations. Many tourist objects in Central Tapanuli are being used as new tourist attractions at this time, so Pandan Beach, which was once the main tourist attraction, must be able to compete with new tourist attractions.

The role of the community in the development of a tour so that it can compete with other tours is very influential. Various strategies, such as the promotion of tourist attractions through various media, the provision of facilities at tourist attractions or their surroundings, the ease of transportation, cleanliness, to souvenirs or typical souvenirs from

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tourism, are required for the development of a tourist attraction in order to attract tourists to visit the tour. (Azzahrani, 2018a)

According to the explanation, the formulation of the problem in this study is a) how is the Sibolga community's tourism communication strategy carried out in developing pandan beach tourism objects? b) What are the barriers to developing pandanus beach tourism objects for the Sibolga community?

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Marketing Communication Definition

Marketing communication is essentially the process of conveying information, orders, and ideas from one person to another in order for them to interact. According to Kotler and Keller, marketing communication is a means for businesses to inform, persuade, and remind consumers about the products and brands they sell, either directly or indirectly. Meanwhile, marketing communications, according to Prisgunanto, are all promotional elements of the marketing mix that involve communication between organizations and the target audience in all of its forms and are intended for marketing performance. (Nugraha et al., 2017a)

Marketing is a mental attitude, a way of thinking that guides someone to do something that sells ideas, careers, places (tourism, homes, industrial locations), laws, services (transportation, aviation, hair cutting, health), entertainment (shows, competitions), and non-profit activities such as social and religious. (Widyaningrum, 2016a)

In this case, the marketing discussed in this study is more related to tourism. Where what is being marketed is a tourist destination, namely Pandan Beach.

In summary, marketing consists of six components. That is to say: First, marketing with the goal of satisfying customer needs and desires. As a result, understanding consumer behavior, as well as their specific needs, wants, and preferences, is critical to marketing success. Second, marketing entails trade. Where marketers and customers exchange something of value in order for each party to benefit. Marketers create products or services, then communicate with and facilitate their delivery to customers (Azzahrani, 2018a). Third, marketing requires decisions about the 4Ps (Product, Price, Place, and Promotion) for physical products and the 7Ps (People, Process, and Physical Evidence) for services. The marketing mix, which consists of the 4Ps and 7Ps, is a series of controlled activities used by businesses to respond to market demands. Fourth, either individuals or organizations can market. There are three possible forms for the form: a. B2B (Business-to-Business), which is the process of selling goods or services from one business (company, institution, or organization) to another business; b. B2C (Business-to-Consumer), which is the process of selling goods or services to final consumers; c. C2C (Consumer-to-Consumer), which is the process of consumers selling products or services to other consumers. Fifth, marketing occurs in a variety of settings or contexts. They include for-profit and non-profit organizations; online and offline; physical goods, services, and non-traditional marketing (person, place, course, event, and organizing marketing). Sixth, marketing aids in the creation of value for customers. The concept of value refers to the relationship between benefits and costs, or what a person receives in comparison to what he or she gives (get versus give). (Kusuma & Sugandhi, 2019a)

### 2.2. Marketing Communication Strategy

(Devito, 2007), a communication expert, defined communication strategy as “the best combination of all communication elements ranging from communicators, messages, channels (media), receivers, to influences (effects) designed to achieve optimal communication goals.”

The selection of a strategy is a critical step in communication planning that must be handled carefully because the results obtained can be fatal, particularly in terms of time, material, and energy losses. As a result, strategy is another secret that planners must keep hidden. (Kusuma & Sugandhi, 2019a)

### 2.3. Communication Strategy for Tourism Marketing

Marketing aims to incorporate customer satisfaction and organizational values into decision-making processes, including product development strategies. The tourism industry strives to be dynamic in responding to changes in consumer needs and values, as well as product developments that will have an impact on the tourism marketing environment (Sembiring, 2016a).

Marketing communication is a powerful tool for the organization and its environment that aims to carry out marketing planning and organizational tactical actions in order to attract the attention of customers and stakeholders. Marketing

communications are developed in response to external challenges such as political, legal, or regulatory issues, as well as socioeconomic, media, and industrial developments. Marketing communication is also concerned with shaping consumer behavior and investigating the interaction between consumer actions and reactions to marketing messages. (Nugraha et al., 2017a)

Marketing, according to Kotler and Armstrong, is a social and managerial process through which individuals and groups obtain what they require and desire by creating and exchanging products and value with others. Meanwhile, Oka A. Yoeti, in his book *Marketing Pariwisata*, defines tourism marketing as “all activities that bring together demand (demand) and supply (supply), so that buyers are satisfied and sellers make the most profit with the least risk.” (Widyaningrum, 2016a)

Observing the previously described factors, it is clear how important marketing activities are in the development of a country and tourism destination. There are several reasons why marketing activities in tourism are required, including the following: tourism is a product produced by tourism businesses that must be marketed for sale, tourists are located far apart from tourism businesses, the very rapid development of the increase in the number of tourist visits, tourism activities have become a human need, and there is very tight competition in countries that develop tourism. (Sembiring, 2016a)

#### 2.4. Marketing Communication Combination

The marketing communication mix is a synthesis of five marketing communication models: advertising, sales promotion, public relations, personal selling, and direct marketing.

##### 1) Publicity

Advertising is any form of paid non-personal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods, or services by a known sponsor. Advertising has evolved into a vital communication system of society, particularly the business world, in the life of an already advanced and complex society. (Masmuh, 2010). One of the most well-known and widely discussed forms of promotion is advertising. Another advantage of mass media advertising is its ability to capture the attention of consumers, particularly for products whose advertisements are well known or popular among the general public (McClelland, 1961).

##### 2) Promotion of Sales

Sales promotion is a type of direct persuasion that uses various incentives to stimulate immediate product purchases and/or increase the number of items purchased by customers (Nugraha et al., 2017b). Sales promotions and exhibitions have a short-term effect in marketing communication tools as an attempt to stimulate purchasing attitudes. This assumption departs from the habit of people buying an item without planning ahead of time; this is what will happen to sales through this facility. (Widyaningrum, 2016b).

##### 3) Public Relations and Advertising

A company's public relations effort is a comprehensive communication effort to influence the perceptions, opinions, beliefs, and attitudes of various groups toward the company (Pace & Faules, 2010). Cutlip defines public relations as a deliberate effort to influence public opinion through good character and responsible behavior, based on mutually beneficial two-way communication (Mulyana, 2004).

##### 4) Individual Sales

Personal selling, according to William G. Nickels, is a face-to-face interaction between individuals aimed at creating, improving, controlling, and maintaining mutually beneficial exchange relationships with other parties (Widyaningrum, 2016b).

##### 5) Marketing Direct

Direct marketing is a marketing approach that allows companies to use their own distribution channels and/or marketing communications while dealing with customers (Kusuma & Sugandhi, 2019b). Because of technological advancements in communication, it is no longer difficult to conduct interactive communication through mass media, particularly the internet. The world wide web's (www) facilities allow for a reciprocal flow of information, allowing users to participate while also modifying the form and content of the information. The internet's presence has influenced not only how businesses design and implement business and marketing strategies, but also the marketing communication programs they use. This enables businesses to communicate with their customers and interact with them via existing website features.

### **3. Methodology**

Because it attempts to present and explain the phenomena observed in the field, this research is a qualitative descriptive study. According to Bogdan and Taylor, qualitative research is a research method that generates descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from observable behavior that is directed at the context and the individual holistically (whole) (Soemantri, 2005). The Pandan Beach tourist attraction, which is located in Pandan District, Central Tapanuli Regency, is the subject of this study.

The following data collection methods were used in this study: observation, interviews, and documentation. Observation is the direct observation of the object of research, documentation is the collection of data through the use of related documents, and interviewing is the collection of data through the use of questions and answers with several related informants. 1. Muflihun Simatupang, the director of PT.Putra Tapanuli, which is located in the middle of the Medan-Pandan route. 2. Fadil Pasaribu, the owner of the ship that will take you to Pandan Beach. 3. Abdul Haris Batubara, a salted fish souvenir vendor 4. Fakhruddin Simatupang, the community figure 5. Ucok Batubara is an anchovy and salted fish owner and seller. The analysis technique used is an interactive model that involves data collections (collection of data), data reductions (reduction of data), displaying and making decisions, and verification.

This study used data triangulation techniques and theoretical triangulation to test the validity of the data obtained. Data triangulation is a data checking technique that involves comparing different data sources in order to investigate similar data. Theoretical triangulation is the process of verifying data by describing patterns, relationships, and including explanations derived from the analysis (Soemantri, 2005)

### **4. Result and Discussion**

Based on the data collection techniques used, it is known that the manager of the Pandan Beach tourism object used a marketing communication mix to attract tourists to visit. The following types of marketing communication mix have been used:

#### **1) Promotion**

Advertising is one component of an effective marketing communication mix for reaching a large number of consumers. Pandan Beach managers were aware of this and advertised in both local and national media. The advertising content presented is also diverse, tailored to the media and target audience. Pandan Beach managers use social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp, and others to reach local audiences in North Sumatra. The management advertises in national media as well as local communities in North Sumatra (Kusuma & Sugandhi, 2019b).

#### **2) Sales Promotion**

Sales promotion is a component of the marketing communication mix that has the effect of providing stimuli for consumers to purchase products. The Pandan Beach tourist attraction initially charged a different price for the island entrance ticket and the fee for the guide who was provided. Since 2018, the manager has offered sales promotions in the form of tour packages that include entrance tickets, guides, lunches, as well as first aid kits and mineral water. The tour package includes the following items:

##### **a. Package I (Start Sibolga IDR 500,000/person)**

Speedboat trip (ship crossing to the island), Life Jacket (Buoy), Snorkeling Equipment, Local Guide, Lunch 1 time, All island entrance fees, Mineral Water, First Aid, Landscape and underwater photo documentation using DSLR/Canon/Nikon cameras and GoPro. Package I includes visits to Kalimatung Island, Mursala Island, Badalu Island, and Bluespot.

##### **b. Package II (Beginning Sibolga IDR 400,000/person)**

Speedboat ride (ship crossing to the island), life jacket (buoy), and one lunch. Package I includes visits to Kalimatung Island, Mursala Island, Badalu Island, and Bluespot.

##### **c. Package III (Beginning Sibolga IDR 300,000/person)**

Speedboat trip (ship crossing to the island), Life Jacket (Buoy). Package I includes the following tourist attractions: Kalimatung Island.

### 3) Public Relations

Pandan Island Management recognizes that a tourism object's uniqueness must be actively promoted. As a result, the manager works with various travel agencies and guides to include Pandan Beach as one of the must-see destinations on the tourist tour agenda. Direct marketing through travel agencies is a powerful tool for attracting foreign tourists. Pandan Beach makes good use of the internet's presence, which allows marketers to easily reach their target audience. Managers use social media to spread the word about the existence and natural beauty that is available (Sembiring, 2016b). The manager actively promotes the beauty of Pandan Beach, as well as the tourist activities and promotions, through their official Instagram and Facebook accounts with the name "Pandan Beach." The presence of directly managed social media makes Pandan Beach easier to reach and get closer to its external public.

### 4) Individual Selling

Touch and closeness are important factors for marketers to consider when providing stimuli to the public. Recognizing this, the guides and all employees are trained in the use of foreign languages such as English to facilitate communication with tourists. They are also well-versed in Pandan Beach tourism objects, allowing them to explain and persuade tourists to purchase one of the packages on offer (Nugraha et al., 2017b).

Marketing communication strategies are not always implemented smoothly. According to (Azzahrani, 2018b), there are several classic mistakes that frequently occur in the field application of marketing communications, namely:

- 1) Because few companies have a marketing communication strategy that is coordinated with their organizational communication activities, many business people use marketing communications only to expand fragmentation, or even to create a cohesive picture in the minds of customers, shareholders, or staff employees.
- 2) Businesspeople who are already aware of marketing communication plans are more loaded with tactical plans and marketing development budgets; for example, companies only plan advertising communication facilities. Many other tactical marketing communication plans are not carried out. As a result, there is no strong coordination and integration in the company's business communication plan.

Marketing communications will be disorganized and ineffective if they lack a strategy. Marketing communication strategies and tactics must meet at least six requirements for company efficiency, namely whether they are in accordance with (a) space, (b) time, and (c) company prestige, which is adjusted to (d) ownership of production goods capable of equating with production workers, (e) adequate human resources, and (f) a supportive work culture. In short, there must be a consistent allocation of production funds to the company's marketing communications. Companies can promote their products, but they must do so in accordance with the reality of existing product and service quality (Widyaningrum, 2016b).

Pandan Beach managers face obstacles such as (1) the implementation of marketing communication strategies that have been integrated but have not been carried out on an ongoing basis, and (2) the Public Relations division has not yet been established to serve as a bridge between Pandan Beach and its external public and to carry out publication activities. Pandan Beach managers have not advertised on an ongoing basis in marketing communication strategies, particularly advertising (Kusuma & Sugandhi, 2019b). Ads are only installed or served at specific times. The public relations function is carried out by Pandan Beach management's entire organizational structure, so there are no individuals who focus and specifically carry out the function as a bridge and carry out structured publication activities.

## 5. Conclusion

Pandan Beach, a tourist attraction in Central Tapanuli, has implemented a marketing communication strategy to increase tourist visits. Pandan Beach's strategies include advertising, personal selling, direct marketing, public relations and publicity, and sales promotion. Pandan Beach managers use social media and national media to reach their target market of domestic tourists. Pandan Beach also advertises in the local print media. The manager of Pandan Beach uses direct marketing by collaborating with travel tours in Medan as a bridge between the manager and the target market. To ensure that tourists who visit Pandan Beach make purchases, the manager is equipped with personal sales skills to conduct direct face-to-face communication with the goal of influencing tourists to make purchases. To ensure Pandan Beach's survival, all managers serve as public relations representatives, acting as a link between Pandan Beach and its external public by collaborating with travel tours and freelance guides. To encourage tourists to make purchases and keep Pandan Beach's income under control, the manager creates tour packages that are tailored to the number of visitors. This is done to provide tourists with a sense of comfort and security. Pandan Beach is able to increase tourist awareness (brand

awareness) and encourage purchases through an integrated marketing communication strategy. Pandan Beach may see an increase in visitors as a result of the implementation of this strategy.

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