

*Local Tourism Destination Content in Online Travel Agency Promotion in Indonesia*

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**Abstract**

Online Travel Agency (OTA) had an impact on making people ease to travel, through their mobile devices without any extra charges. This paper is aim to describe how local tourism destination content in those application and their social media, what kind of language to promote travel destination, as storytelling and experiences also guest comment play an important role to affect others for travel or consume tourism product. Are there any differences between promoting tourism using application and advertising using mass media? This paper focuses on how online travel agencies use language in e-commerce, the contextual analysis and the identity in local destination tourism. The Communications approach to the tourism industry has meaning to inform and to persuade people. Why should focus on local tourism destination? This argument had relevance with The Indonesian Government policy that tourism destinations in Indonesia must be well-known for the local and international travelers. The Narratives approach on the story of destination should speak differently based on socio-cultural, local wisdom and natural scenery. The Interpretive approach will be used to data analysis on promotions content of local tourism destinations publish by 5 online travel agencies in Indonesia. Research found that 5 online travel agencies which are Traveloka, Tiket, Pegipegi, Airy and KAI have content mostly posted on element tourism were scenery, accommodation, transportation and food culinary. Local tourism destinations in Indonesia were frame in natural scenery, as part of socio cultural aspect that will boost tourism industry.

Keywords: Local Tourism Destination, Language And Promotion Content, Online Travel Agency

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## Introduction

This paper is discussed about how the growth of online travel agency should effect on customer decision to travel to local tourism destination in Indonesia. Internet, hand phone application and media social were used by online travel agency to be their place to share and sell product, place to do the business. To survive in future business, the implementation of website and e-commerce practices is the most useful strategy for travel agents when facing disintermediation (Hashim et al, 2014). The growth of this business in Indonesia, which quote from Google research, shown that travel related search increased 39%, also consumer in Indonesia have several habits before decided their travel destination, booking accommodation and transportation (thejakartapost.com, October 1, 2019). Netizens (internet audiences) mostly searched for promotion from OTA increased 38% which is also tend to search for their features and services. Google research also shown that most searched tourist destination in Indonesia are Dieng (Central Java), Mount Bromo (East Java), Borobudur Temple (Central Java), Prambanan Temple (Yogyakarta) and Kota Tua (West Jakarta). Adjacent to tourist destination, Alvara Research Foundation (2018) that quoted in cnnindonesia.com (10/07/19), had found that 5 online travel agencies which is on the top of mind millennial's consumer were Traveloka, Ticket.com, Blibli, KAI Access dan Airy Indonesia.

Background issue that shown in Strategic Plan 2015-2019 from Ministry of Tourism Republic of Indonesia (kemenparekaf.go.id) that development of tourism destination and investment, to boost tourism as the key of export income, field of work and infrastructure. This key target has urge tourism industry to promote local tourism destination. Pillar of National Tourism Development admit that tourism marketing include expansion the market, developing tourism image, increasing cooperation and co-working, developing promotional aspect. Cooperation strategy between government and industry should be seen as an advantage seeing as the rapid growth of digital technology.

Advertising and promotional content play an important role in marketing tool, aimed to influence attitude and behavior audiences, since it is able to confirm and reinforce. The use of images to portray their product, as do destinations, attempting to construct an image of a destination that will force it into the potential tourist's evoked set, or destination short list, leading to a purchase decision (Morgan & Pritchard, 2000). As consumer changing media habit to search information online, promotional content on leisure activities could adapt to consumer need. Example from Morgan & Pritchard (p. 122, 2000), consumer changing holiday needs into word was: *I want to escape*, now: *I want to discover people, places and experiences*. Excitement moments and dreams have been offer in tourism advertisement through visual image and language, audio visual and narrative/story telling.

Research on user perception of travel website found that had differences response on quality of the website, e-loyalty, gratified and trust to the website (Moura et al (2014)), this research shown the strength of using website as corporate image and how audiences have trust and intention to consume or share the information from travel website. Angkiriwang's et al (2018) research on Tripadvisor (online travel agency) found that electronic word of mouth (e-wom) impact caused by factors of content (quality, price, convenience) has highest rank reasons of using Tripadvisor's

application. These factors shown that traveler decisions had influenced by references from other reviews. E-wom had capability to persuade by sharing experiences.

Leiper (1979) in Pike (2008) said the study of tourism as a focal subject has sometimes been treated with derision in academic circles, perhaps because of its novelty, perhaps because of its superficial fragmentation, perhaps because it cuts across established disciplines. The tourism research had multi perspective issue. This paper aimed to explore communication perspectives in promotional content, both visual and languages. Sukendro (2018) in his paper said that local content in tourism promotion have to consider the exposure of local culture and copyright. Cultural content were not commercial aspect but to convey the culture in higher and artistic aspect.

Campelo, Aitken, and Gnoth (2011) used model that identifies four construct to experience of place: Right, Role, Relationship and Responsibilities, researched found that place branding communication has play role in marketing destination as symbol of representation between people and place. Hou et al (2011) presented a content analysis of promotional videos from 10 major tourist destinations in China. The purpose of this study is to document the common content elements, orientations, presentation methods, persuasion methods, time patterns, and the use of sound, music and volume in Beijing, Nanjing, Chengdu, Chongqing, Xi'an, Qingdao, Shanghai, Shenzhen, Xiamen

Pinto et al (2019) found that factors that influencing tourist' purchase decision were online reviews, promotions and photos are also important. The importance online tourists give to price varies by age group, income and country of residence. Online reviews are significant regardless of tourists' characteristics, except for age. Cluster analyses additionally revealed three different tourist segments based on the importance given to price, online reviews, promotions and photos. Images influence the purchase decision of the tourist, both at the destination level and the final decision level and photographic content, in general, can be more effective to transmit emotional attributes. For promotional content of local destination, this photos also produced by professional photographer or amateur with skill.

### **Research Objective**

This paper focuses on how online travel agencies use language in e-commerce, the contextual analysis and the identity in local destination tourism.

### **Research Methods**

This paper used qualitative research to describe and interpretive data analysis. Collected data from five online travel agencies (traveloka, tiket, pegi-peg, airy, kai) instagram account, website/application, youtube. Data analysis: content of promotional material from online travel agencies in Indonesia, from August 2019 to December 2019.

### **Result and discussion**

Promotional content counted and interpreted from 5 online travel agencies that has been posted in their website/application, instagram and youtube.

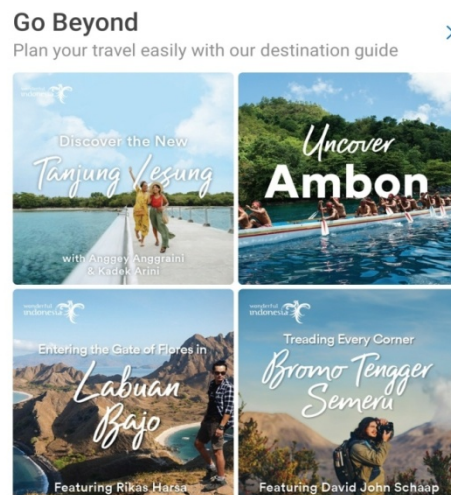
1. Traveloka is a unicorn start-up company from Indonesia (PT. Trinusa Travelindo), engaged in travel reservation for airlines, hotels, and expand to other travel attraction voucher. It has customer services in Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam and Filipina. 80% their employees are based in Indonesia. Established on February 2012. Their application have been downloaded by 30 millions+ people, and become top 1 as online travel agent.

a. Website: posted 11 articles from 11 destinations (Danau Toba, Tanjung Bira, Bromo, Wakatobi, Bangka Belitung, Surabaya-Madura, Labuan Bajo, Derawan, Kepulauan Seribu, Bintan and Mandalika), contain of food/culinary, accommodation, scenery and entertainment. Attached of Wonderful Indonesia Logo. Traveloka editorial is special division to produce articles, also from contributors (writer, photographer and video). Headline consist of adventurer word, describing places that will connected to people, slogan of Complete your Journey. All articles introduced activities and info. In the end of stories, list of hotels offer and activities. Length of articles: 2-5 minutes reading. This type of promotional articles supported by photo visualization of places and poetic word. Examples: *Sepotong surga di Tanjung Bira* (a slice of heaven in Tanjung Bira) completed with photo of open air beach.

b. Instagram: 138 posts (Local 44, International 16). 6 elements of tourism: food, accommodations, transportation, scenery, shopping area, entertainments. Video content of attraction from destination, include cultural heritage from craft to traditional art. Target to millennial/youth, using language and model of this generation.

c. Youtube: 47 post (Local 2, International 13). Length of video 2-3 minutes. Using concept story tell from voice over. Highlight on easy to travel with traveloka.

Picture 1: Screen capture from Traveloka application



2. Tiket.com is well known company name PT Global Tiket Network, focus on booking and ticketing online using their website. Established Agustus 2011.

a. Website: 12 post about local tourism destination such as Semarang, Danau Toba, Makasar, Medan, Lombok Pink Beach, Lamongan, Cirebon, and Riau. Most of articles show scenery or local attraction, also food culinary. 2 articles talked about hotel offer/accommodations, cheap hotel in Medan and Danau Toba. Their slogan : *Mau Kemana? Semua ada tiketnya* (Going somewhere? Everywhere has a ticket).

b. Instagram: 30 post content of local tourism destination. E-poster promotion have common template with logo wonderful Indonesia attach, showing that a joint

promotion applied with national campaign. Also have stories in their post, for example about traditional fabric (*kain tenun*) is used to become fashion property of visual image. Every post caption used low context to promote their sells, also with hash tags.

c. Youtube: 14 video of local destination with touch of local art and cultural, showing traditional dance and *Membatik* (traditional culture painted fabric).



Picture 2 : Screen capture from instagram Tiketcom

3. Pegi-peggi was established Agustus 2013 to serve online reservations, their company name is PT Go Online Destination.

a. Website/app had 6 posts that cover about scenery, transportation and accommodation. From Labuan Bajo, Raja Ampat, Gili Terawang, Belitung, Ubud, Nusa Penida, this destinations nearly beaches or ocean view. Focus on visual aspect of the story, caption identify location.

b. Instagram: 10 posts on local tourism destination using hashtag #butuhpegipegi, which show low context to audiences because this hash tags need audiences to take action to reserve their trip using their services. Their brand needed to have positioning on followers mind. 23 creative posts (pic 3) were their campaign using persuasive words only which was pointed to their followers as example : *Buat kamu yang tak pernah merasa se-istimewa Yogyakarta#butuh pegipegi* (For you, who never being as special as Yogyakarta).

c. Youtube: 3 posts about cultural heritage of Indonesia from Legend of Sangkuriang (West Java) to ancient mummy in Papua.



Picture 3: screen shoot from instagram pegipegi

4. Airy Indonesia was operated by PT Airy Nest Indonesia, this travel company cooperate with low budget retail hotel in Indonesia. Their strategies to re-build image of low budget hotel by their standard of maintenance rooms. Develop property management services for their partner, 3 star hotel and below. Established in 2015.



Picture 4: screen shoot instagram airyindonesia

a. Website/app: place to book accommodations and airlines. There is no promotional content on tourism destination, focus on cooperation offer (properties management) and sell rooms.

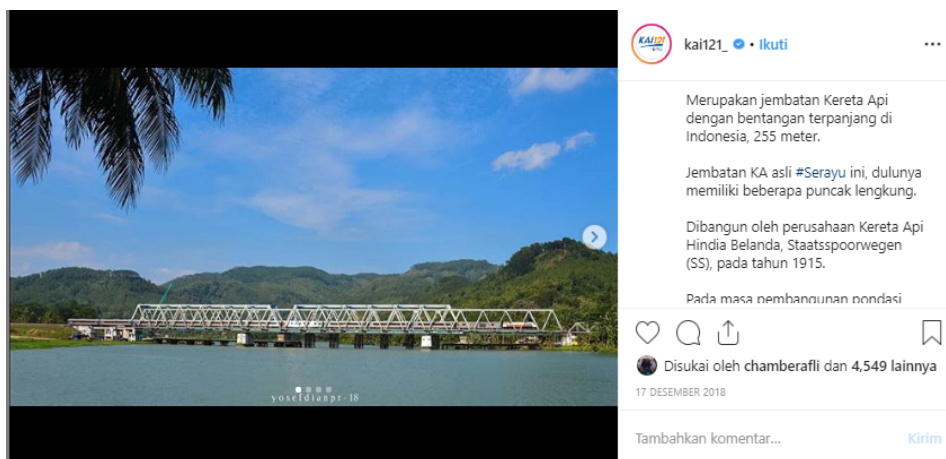
b. Instagram : 82 post on local tourism destination, some caption used hard sell promotion, some just tell stories about location and ask about followers favorite's spot. Their visual image identified their product and target market which is accommodation for low budget traveler or backpacker. Also using their corporate color blue as their main visual tone photo.

c. Youtube: 7 post on local tourism, topic on food culinary and Bandung city. Video was film by airy person (represent young adult) as a fun traveler. Promote on how to become their partner in room service management.

5. Kereta Api Indonesia is known as a state owned enterprise named PT Kereta Api Indonesia.

a. Website/app : 0 post, place to buy train ticket in Java. General information on route and schedule.

b. Instagram : 1 post story of long bridge with panoramic visual of scenery in Serayu, Central Java.



Picture 5: screen shoot from intagram KAI

Common content and tourism element that have been used in promotional and informational aspect in Online Travel Agencies shown that there is no differences between advertising in mass media versus social media. Variety post and length of the stories that had been different presented. Online travel agency used television commercial to increase awareness and purchase decision. Celebrity endorser played strategic communications to their audiences. Speak in popular culture that most of their audience would understand. Their specific tagline used their brand so that product association follow in consumer mind.

## Conclusion

The contents of local destinations in website, *youtube* and *instagram* from five online travel agencies shown that most posted on element tourism were scenery, accommodation, transportation and food culinary. Local tourism destinations in Indonesia were highlight in natural scenery, as part of socio cultural aspect that will boost tourism industry.

Most of online travel agency used hard sell promotions, language of media social to gain more interactions are through hash tags (#) and challenging question to their audiences to join and take action to travel.

Visual aspect of photography is played the best part to promote local destination content, where as showing beautiful scenery and specific angle, also natural aspect of the society. This visualization speaks thousand words, some might say. Video on youtube and instagram were able to invite interactions and good image of locations. Video material as an audio visual strength to accommodate millennial generation seeks for information through live review.

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Traveloka apps, YouTube and Instagram.

Tiket.com apps, YouTube and Instagram.

Pegipegi apps, YouTube and Instagram.

Airy Indonesia apps, YouTube and Instagram.

KAI apps, YouTube and Instagram.