

Destination Branding Process of Bengkalis Regency as a Cultural Tourism Destination by the Board of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports

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Abstract

Adanya kebijakan pembangunan pariwisata yang kurang didukung dengan aktivitas komunikasi yang terintegrasi menjadikan permasalahan pariwisata di Kabupaten Bengkalis semakin kompleks. Disparbudpora menjadikan Kabupaten Bengkalis sebagai destinasi tujuan wisata budaya melalui *destination branding*. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui proses *destination branding* Kabupaten Bengkalis oleh Disparbudpora sebagai tujuan wisata budaya. Metode penelitian yang digunakan yaitu kualitatif dengan pendekatan studi kasus deskriptif. Hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa Disparbudpora Kabupaten Bengkalis memperkenalkan destinasi wisata budaya dengan melakukan 5 tahapan *destination branding*. Pertama tahap *market investigation, analysis and strategic recommendation* yaitu dengan pengumpulan data sekunder, survey lapangan dan analisis data. Kedua tahap *Brand identity development*, menggunakan seperti logo selembayung dan tagline Bengkalis *diversity of culture*. Ketiga tahap *brand launch and introduction* yang dilaksanakan melalui komunikasi digital dan special event yang digelar setiap tahunnya. Keempat *brand implementation* yang dilaksanakan sesuai dengan program yang telah ditetapkan pada RIPPARDA 2021-2035. Kelima *Brand monitoring, evaluation and review* yang dilakukan secara langsung, melalui UPT Pariwisata dan pengelola destinasi dan Evaluasi, review yang membahas data-data yang telah dikumpulkan terkait kekurangan maupun kelebihan destinasi.

Kata Kunci: komunikasi pariwisata, *destination branding*, pariwisata budaya, Bengkalis

Abstract

The existence of tourism development policies that are not supported by integrated communication activities makes tourism problems in Bengkalis Regency increasingly complex. Disparbudpora has made Bengkalis Regency a cultural tourism destination through destination branding. This study aims to determine the destination branding process for Bengkalis Regency by the Board of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports (Disparbudpora) as a cultural tourism destination. The research method used is qualitative with a descriptive case study approach. The results of this study indicate that Disparbudpora of Bengkalis Regency introduces cultural tourism destinations by carrying out 5 stages of destination branding. The first stage is market investigation, analysis and strategic recommendation, namely by collecting secondary data, field surveys and data analysis. The two stages of Brand identity development, using the Sembayung logo and the tagline Bengkalis diversity of culture. The three stages of brand launch and introduction are carried out through digital communication and special events which are held annually. The four brand implementations are carried out in accordance with the program set in RIPPARDA 2021-2035. Fifth, Brand monitoring, evaluation and review is carried out directly, through the UPT Tourism and destination managers and Evaluation, a review that discusses the data that has been collected regarding the deficiencies and advantages of destinations.

Keywords: tourism communication, *destination branding*, cultural tourism, Bengkalis

INTRODUCTION

Riau Province lacks a strong tourism brand since the enactment of Law no. 25 of 2002, which stipulates the Riau Archipelago Province. This is due to the more dominant concentration of tourist areas on Batam Island and its surroundings which are geographically and strategically close to Singapore (Haris et al., 2017) Culture-based and natural wealth tourism can contribute to regional income (Yasir et al., 2019). Each region in Riau Province, such as Bengkalis Regency, has a different potential and developed tourist destination.

To a multicultural society, Bengkalis Regency has the potential for cultural, marine tourism, cultural heritage, and tourist villages. This is demonstrated by the ethnic diversity of the Bengkalis, who include dominant tribes such as the Akit, Liong, Javanese, Chinese, and Minang migrant tribes. Each tribe has its cultural patterns, but cultural motifs essentially describe the life cycle that every human being goes through. In general, various types of community traditions represent life, birth, marriage, and death. This demonstrates that Bengkalis Regency is a leader in cultural tourism. Cultural tourism is one of the new tourist trends in line with the increased emphasis on preserving traditional culture and relationships to attract tourists (Budianto & Edi, 2013). According to research conducted (Pratama & Amin, 2018) cultural tourism was included as an icon of Bengkalis Regency in 2018.

Disparbudpora will be in 2020. According to Article 5 of RIPPARDA 2021-2035, regional tourism development includes tourism destinations, tourism marketing, industry, and institutions. As a result, the Bengkalis Regency Government (Disparbudpora) established the brand "Bengkalis diversity of culture" to support the region's tourism potential. According to (Media Center Riau, 2022), Bengkalis Regency was named the most popular tourism brand with the tagline "diversity of culture of Bengkalis regency" and the jingle "Ayo ke Bengkalis" at the Riau Tourism Award (APR) 2022 event held at the Novotel Grand Ballroom in Pekanbaru. It can encourage the development of competitive and sustainable tourist destinations through the Riau Tourism award.

Building a tourism destination brand is crucial to creating strong destination branding (Bungin, 2015). Aside from that, the social image of destinations that do not require special efforts in branding tourism destinations indicates that there are tourism destinations whose brands are self-constructed by the community and tourism destinations that require branding, such as Bengkalis Regency. The Bengkalis Regency Disparbudpora Destination Branding Program is expected to be able to improve the image of the destination and create awareness in a space or public such as stakeholder concern to increase the value and awareness of the tourism potential of Bengkalis Regency, which is on the Outer Island so that it can change perceptions and become the leading face of tourism in Indonesia.

At the end of 2021, a new brand, "Bengkalis Bermasa," which stands for Bengkalis Bermarwah Maju and Prosperous, was formed directly by the head of the Bengkalis Regency regional government. The brand has become the official brand for carrying out various programs and activities of Bengkalis Regency, including in the tourism sector. In addition, the Head of the Regency Government has prepared audio branding so that the public can quickly understand Bengkalis Regency's vision and mission. There is a meaning in the audio branding that has been launched alongside the brand that Bengkalis Regency upholds Malay culture in

accordance with the programs and activities carried out. So, this is not in line with the brand set by Disparbudpora, namely "Bengkalis Diversity of Culture".

The emergence of the Bengkalis BERMASA brand, which is inconsistent with the cultural diversity of the Bengkalis brand, poses a new challenge to the destination branding program implemented by the Bengkalis Regency Disparbudpora. All Bengkalis BERMASA programs reflect Malay culture as the identity of the Bengkalis Regency and consistently contribute to the implementation of the Bengkalis diversity of culture destination branding program. As a result, tourists are more familiar with the brand of the Regional Head of Government than with the brand of the Bengkalis Regency Disparbudpora. Furthermore, tourists' perceptions of Bengkalis Regency tourism, which should be an identity, are cultural diversity; however, tourists understand that Bengkalis Regency tourism identity is Malay culture and nature tourism.

Nonetheless, Disparbudpora of Bengkalis Regency is still attempting to fulfill its obligations. At the same time, destination branding is a promise made to the government and marketing communicators in order to create an image, provide an overview, promote, and provide information about what tourists can expect from their tourist destinations by developing a strong brand personality that can compete with other brands (Amanah & Damastuti, 2022). Furthermore, the government and tourism marketing communication actors must deliver on their promises to provide potential tourists with an exciting and high-quality experience. According to (Chrysoula & Evangelos, 2016), research on Destination Branding and Visitor Brand Loyalty: Evidence from a Mature Tourism Destination in Greece that destination branding characteristics appear to have a more significant influence on visitor trust in a brand. It was also discovered that trust in destination branding had a positive effect on brand loyalty and tourists' intent to return to the destination. The planning for Disparbudpora's development program in Bengkalis Regency is poor due to a lack of support from tourism stakeholders (Yohana et al., 2018). The presence of symbols and broad functions demonstrates the presence of destination branding as an element in the formation of Bengkalis Regency, as well as how tourism stakeholders can respond to destination branding in order to facilitate the development of the Regency.

Tourism development policies in Bengkalis Regency cannot be separated from central government policies; however, this policy is not supported by communication activities or better-integrated communication policies (Yasir et al., 2019). A communication policy is a principle, rule, or guideline that is built into a communication system to serve as a framework for coordinating activities and making decisions that affect communication activities (Cangara, 2013). Tourism communication issues include policies that are not long-term oriented, communication management that is still lacking in market analysis, low effectiveness, quality, and quantity in marketing communications, and errors in marketing communications positioning (Yasir et al., 2019). It is a process to communicate a specificity or uniqueness that is owned by a tourism destination in accordance with a predetermined brand through the destination branding program implemented by Disparbudpora, Bengkalis Regency. Communication plays a role in tourism development, not only in marketing but also in communicating destinations, accessibility, and stakeholders (Bungin, 2015).

Destination branding is viewed as a tool for communicating a good brand from an area and aims to increase the perception that branding will not change an area by removing the identity that is characteristic of the area; branding also helps to increase an area's competitiveness (Jose, 2013). In this case, development of tourist destinations also has important role in preserving heritage culture, local wisdom, and natural preservation (Yasir, 2021). This is also emphasized by (Efni, 2020), who states that forming destination branding makes all tourism stakeholders aware of the brand's presence and is used as an action to build a positive image of a destination and communicate the actions taken to all stakeholders and the public through events, visuals, and narratives that are local to international in order to obtain good profits and compete with other destinations.

According to this definition, destination branding is a Disparbudpora program that aims to build tourism in Bengkalis Regency in a sustainable manner. As a result, the goal of this research is to learn about the destination branding process for Bengkalis Regency as a cultural tourism destination. This research is expected to contribute to the ideas of a researcher studying communication science in the field of public relations, mainly destination branding, which serves as a concept to make Bengkalis Regency a cultural tourism destination.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research applied a qualitative approach with a descriptive case study approach. The advantage of using case studies, according to Yin (Nurahma & Hendriani, 2021), is that researchers could use them to study the subject more thoroughly and in-depth. The researcher described the Disparbudpora process of destination branding for Bengkalis Regency in "relatively natural" conditions with the researcher presented on an object under study. The study's case is the result of human, organizational, and natural actions. A problem does not always have to be a negative construct. Furthermore, a descriptive case study is part of a qualitative research method in exploring a case and involves collecting data from various sources of information that the researcher requires in order to authentically understand the subject.

The key informants were chosen using a purposive sampling technique because the selection criteria were based on the research objectives and topics. Purposive sampling is a technique for selecting informants who are thought to know the most based on what is expected, making it easier for the researcher to explore objects and social situations (Sugiyono, 2015). Based on this explanation, the researcher established the following criteria for informants: (1) employees of the Bengkalis Regency tourism, culture, and sports office who are still actively working; (2) directly related to all Bengkalis Regency destination branding activities from the beginning to the end; and (3) capable of providing information clearly related to Bengkalis Regency destination branding. Based on these criteria, the researcher identified two informants in this study: (1) Mr. Alwizar, the head of the tourism sector who participated in controlling the destination branding program and was able to provide information about the program; (2) Mrs. Dimas, Head of the Tourism Destination Development Section, who has extensive knowledge and is directly involved in all Bengkalis Regency destination branding activities from start to finish and can provide program information.

In this study, data were gathered through observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. This study applied the data analysis method of the Miles and Huberman models, which is data collection that is repeated until completed and yields data deemed credible by Sugiyono (Andriyanto, 2022) in the data analysis procedure is as follows: (1) Data reduction by selecting, focusing, summarizing, searching for themes, and removing unnecessary data so that data processed in the data reduction method produces clearer data. (2) Data presentation is a technique for simplifying complex information so that it is simple and easy to understand. This is done to make it easier to draw conclusions and propose actions. (3) drawing conclusions by seeking and employing the developed mindset, and the researcher also ensures that drawing conclusions can answer the formulation of the problem in this study.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Essentially, every tourism destination, such as tourist destinations in Bengkalis Regency, already has its own identity that distinguishes it from others in the public's mind. Developing a destination's identity necessitates social formation, such as branding. Destination branding aims to build strong relationships both internally and externally in order to boost the economy and tourism market while also serving as a platform for social development. According to (Hikmawan & Maulida, 2019), tourism stakeholders such as the community, industry players, government, investors, and so on are required to play a role in the branding program's success. The presence of tourism stakeholders' support for tourism development programs demonstrates the existence of two-way communication between Disparbudpora Bengkalis Regency and tourism stakeholders. The goal of the two-way communication is to encourage tourism stakeholders to continue working with Disparbudpora, Bengkalis Regency.

The Disparbudpora of Bengkalis Regency establishes destination branding as a means of two-way communication. This is one of the boundary-spanning activities that provides public information about the organization. The goal of boundary spanning is to create a two-way communication system between the organization and the general public. This theory is related to public relations because public relations serves as a bridge between the organization and its surroundings. However, Disparbudpora Bengkalis Regency does not have a dedicated public relations department. However, for the tourism section, they have a separate tourism marketing section whose function is similar to that of public relations in general.

The nature of the organization implemented in an open system is characterized by boundary-spanning activities carried out through destination branding. According to Heath (Kriyanto, 2014), any organization with an open nature will feel dependent on other groups or organizations in its environment; additionally, organizations cannot rely solely on processes or internal interactions, such as closed systems. Groups and organizations must interact with one another. Similarly, Disparbudpora Bengkalis Regency needs tourism stakeholders to participate in the Bengkalis Regency destination branding program as a cultural tourism destination.

Disparbudpora of Bengkalis Regency's process of disseminating information about cultural tourism to the public at various stages. There are five stages of destination branding undertaken by Bengkalis Regency of Disparbudpora.

Market investigation and analysis

The market investigation, analysis, and recommendations are the preliminary stages of research activities carried out to map market potential (regions), develop strategies, and recommend strategic destinations. Based on the research findings, Disparbudpora of Bengkalis Regency carried out this stage to identify superior tourist destinations owned by Bengkalis Regency so that they could be introduced to the public or potential tourists at this time. Disparbudpora Bengkalis Regency conducted research through secondary data collection, field surveys, and data analysis. According to (Amaliah, 2013), this stage is for conducting market (regional) mapping research and recommending strategic locations in developing strategies.

The survey results are a feasibility study (feasibility study document) owned by Bengkalis Regency, which includes information such as accessibility, accommodation, and facilities for each destination. This feasibility document will be used as a foundation and source of information to assist in making competitive decisions. Potential tourist destinations, for example, will be recorded and entered into SISPARNAS.

“We go on business trips by forming a team to see if there are tourist destinations, what tribes and cultures are around there, what form of society is it, what is developing, what are the attractions, accessibility, and amenities. the obtained data becomes our database, and this data will be analyzed for feasibility to become a priority destination in SISPARNAS.”- (Mrs. Dimas)

Disparbudpora Bengkalis Regency makes use of the Ministry of Tourism's National Tourism Indicator Information System (SISPARNAS) for all regencies in Indonesia. SISPARNAS is a platform that provides information about tourist objects, attractions, and the availability of infrastructure in the Bengkalis Regency. Using big data technological innovations and an adaptive approach, the goal is to map both the potential and the tourism sector in order to produce data on tourism indicators for policy-making as well as service facilities provided to tourism actors and local governments in accordance with the Law No. 10 of 2009 concerning tourism.

“Alhamdulillah, there is help from the ministry in the form of SISPARNAS, the national tourism data system where they help regencies and cities collect data from the application form so we have to fill in the fields listed so they can help in the analysis. If they require data, we will provide it, such as the discovery of new destinations, which we will enter, or the number of visits, which we will enter, or reports of attractions and events”- (Mrs. Dimas)

As a platform for considering and deciding whether a destination, such as Rupert Island, Sakai tribe houses and customary forests, Datuk Laksamana Raja Dilaut Site complex, Indah Selat Baru beach, Raja Kecil beach, and Edge Mandau trunk, should be included in the National Tourism Strategic Area (KSPN), this flagship tourism receives development attention in terms of potential, marketing, and promotion. This website is accessible to the general public who want to visit Bengkalis Regency or simply learn about the tourist destinations in Bengkalis Regency. Furthermore, Disparbudpora is open to receiving information from people who want to promote their village as a tourist destination. Thus, Disparbudpora Bengkalis Regency employs boundary-spanning by receiving and conveying

information obtained from stakeholders. Disparbudpora Bengkalis Regency has criteria in place to best provide satisfaction values to stakeholders at Disparbudpora Bengkalis Regency. The Bengkalis Regency Disparbudpora criteria begin with the location of the destination, the type of tourism, and the attractions proposed. Disparbudpora of Bengkalis Regency can classify which one should come first using these criteria.



Figure 1 Website of National Tourism Information System (SISPARNAS)
Source: <https://sisparnas.kemenparekraf.go.id>

Disparbudpora Bengkalis Regency plans and organizes programs and activities for the future. This is about public relations management aspects and processes. According to (Butterick, 2013), during the research stage, the planning section and the information program gathered will be used to make decisions about the public, strategies, goals, tactics, and communication actions in program development. Disparbudpora RIPPARDA 2021-2035 includes a strategy for Bengkalis Regency. The Bengkalis Regency tourism development strategy, as seen in the RIPPARDA, is divided into four parts based on Law No. 10 of 2009, namely the development of the tourism industry, the development of tourism marketing, and the development of tourism institutions.

Brand identity development

Brand identity development is a stage carried out by the Bengkalis Regency Disparbudpora to create a destination identity that you want to introduce to potential domestic and foreign tourists, with the goal of creating a good brand image. The tagline logo, as well as the vision and mission, aim to create characters so that consumers can associate a product well, which means that when consumers don't remember the name of a product, their memories can be returned via taglines, logos, or jingles. On that basis, Disparbudpora of Bengkalis Regency has created a destination brand based on the vision and mission stated in the RIPPARDA 2021-2035. According to Morgan and Pritchard (Amaliah, 2013), brand identity is formed based on the vision, mission, and image that will be formed at that destination.

The tagline “Bengkalis Diversity of Culture” represents the identity formed by Disparbudpora of Bengkalis Regency. This tagline serves as a tourism promise from Disparbudpora to tourists and potential tourists that the charm of various cultures can be found in Bengkalis Regency by collaborating with natural/maritime tourism. The public can easily remember the information delivery with the tagline (Aziz & bawanto, 2020). Disparbudpora also has a selembayung logo, which depicts a Malay carving motif. This is one of the cultural

elements that can be found in every corner of a traditional Malay house. The selembayung carving motif on this logo, which comes in a variety of colors, represents Bengkalis' diverse tourism sectors. There are also different colors in selembayung, each with its own meaning.



“Nature,” the green color, represents the wealth of beautiful natural tourism in Bengkalis Regency.



“Diversity,” the red color, represents Bengkalis Regency’s diverse ethnic groups, customs, languages, culinary arts, and so on.



“Sea,” the blue color, represents Bengkalis as a coastal area made up of several islands rich in marine life.



“Prosperity”, the purple color, represents tourism in Bengkalis Regency as a hope for the community's creative economy to improve and prosper.



“Strength” is defined as enthusiasm, happiness, burning energy, and hope that Bengkalis Regency will be increasingly recognized in the tourism and cultural sectors in the future.

According to Kotler and Pfoertsch in the journal (Ajibulloh & Prayoga, 2022), it is easier to accept symbols and images than anything else, and a strong logo can build awareness of brand identity and be easily recognized and recalled.



Figure 2 Logo of Bengkalis Regency Tourism

Source: Disparbudpora Kabupaten Bengkalis

The presence of a brand identity can help people learn more about a destination. However, there are some things that are still very common and make it difficult for the general public to remember. As a result, destinations must highlight their potential so that external parties can easily recall the characteristics that these destinations possess (Ilhami, 2019). The Bengkalis Regency Disparbudpora logo and tagline are used in Bengkalis Regency tourism programs, marketing, and promotional processes such as social media to special events that are held. This is one of the breakthroughs made by the Bengkalis Regency Disparbudpora to widely introduce the identity of Bengkalis Regency to tourists and potential tourists so that branding carried out at tourist destinations can increase the number of visits, affecting regional income and increasing the income of the community around the destination, and is also expected to improve the economic sector and so on in Bengkalis Regency. According to

Morgan and Pritchard (Bungin, 2015), destination branding aims to generate revenue from a destination.

Brand launch and introduction: communicating the vision

Disparbudpora uses social media to communicate the tourism identity of Bengkalis Regency to prospective tourists, taking advantage of digital communication opportunities. According to Gertner and Berger (Isdarmanto et al., 2020), destination branding through online media (internet) is one of the quickest tools for accessing tourism information sources, and its users can easily participate, share, and create content through social networks, blocks, forums, wikis, and virtual worlds. Danis also stated (Mahmudah & Rahayu, 2020) that social media is an appropriate marketing platform. By making it simple to access in various locations using only gadgets. This brings marketers closer to their customers.

Disparbudpora Bengkalis Regency uses social media, such as Instagram with the username disparbudporabengkalis, which has 2,115 followers, 2,772 followers, and 740 photo and video posts, and the verified tourismbengkalis official account, which has 729 followers, 142 followers, and 134 photo and video posts. Disparbudpora also communicates through Facebook. This platform is similar to Instagram, which is used to disseminate tourism information in Bengkalis Regency. It's just that Instagram's target demographic is 18-35 years old, whereas Facebook's is 35-50 years old. This is an efficient and timely method of publishing information because it reaches the target market. According to research (Subekti et al., 2020), social media plays an important role in destination branding (Bungin, 2015).

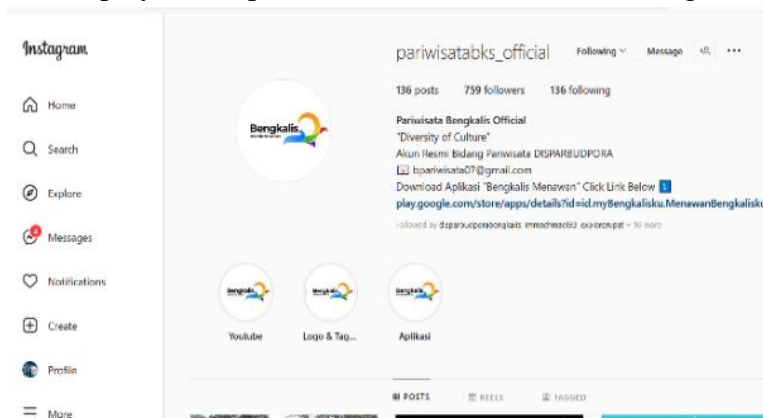


Figure 3 Instagram account of Bengkalis Tourism
Source: www.instagram.com/pariwisatabks_official/

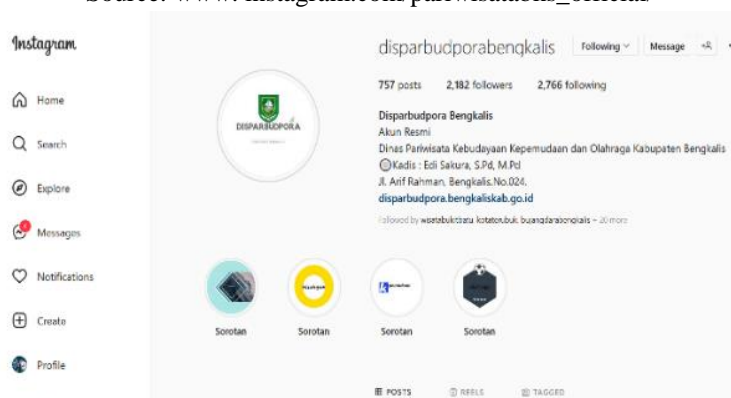


Figure 4 Instagram account of Disparbudpora of Bengkalis Regency
Source: www.instagram.com/disparbudporabengkalis/?hl=id

Disparbudpora of Bengkalis Regency also uses social media such as TikTok and YouTube as a supporting tool for spreading information about natural and cultural tourism, which is the Regency's identity, but the content provided is only 16 videos. When intangible cultural assets are communicated through social media, they become tangible elements. This explains how destination branding re-presentation and process can simplify destination essentialization (Caprioli et al., 2021). This is consistent with the definition of social media in the boundary-spanning public relations, which states that social media is used as an interactive channel of communication that allows for mutual interaction (Kent & Li, 2020).

The tourism website is now an important communication tool for introducing a destination (Nurrahman et al., 2021). This is similar to what Disparbudpora, Bengkalis Regency, has done, which has two websites, disparbudpora.bengkaliskab.go.id and bengkalisnawan.info. Visitors to the website can learn about tourist attractions, tourist villages, events, accessibility, and lodging. It's just that disparbudpora.bengkaliskab.go.id includes information about youth and sports. It is possible to promote the Bengkalis Regency tourism brand through digital communication. The marketing concept in public relations serves as an interactive communication guide. The more interactions there are, the closer the virtual relationship between Disparbudpora Bengkalis Regency and the public will be. As stated by (Wiwitan et al., 2017), social media marketing must prioritize honesty and truth because it can represent an institution as well as the general public through boundary-crossing activities. According to (Kriyanto, 2014), the implementation of boundary-spanning activities can be accomplished by establishing a two-way communication system for stakeholders, allowing the organization to adapt to its surroundings.

In addition, to using Disparbudpora website, Bengkalis Regency also uses special events as a communication tool to supplement online media. The presence of promotional events is also thought to be effective in introducing the brand. According to (Kotler & Keller, 2016), the benefits of holding special events can be seen in terms of directly involving tourists and involving active tourists. It is an emotional event with the primary goal of capturing the attention and participation of tourists in the event. From a public relations standpoint, this is consistent with special events, which function to provide information and build positive reciprocal relationships with the public through events that are purposefully designed into an organization's activities and work programs (Broom & Sha, 2013). Based on this explanation, it is consistent with the goal of the Bengkalis Regency Disparbudpora in holding a special event, namely to introduce various cultural attractions held on the coast in order to increase tourist interest in returning to Bengkalis Regency for the next event or simply coming for a tour.



Figure 5 Website Homepage of Disparbudpora of Bengkalis Regency
Source: <https://disparbudpora.bengkaliskab.go.id/>

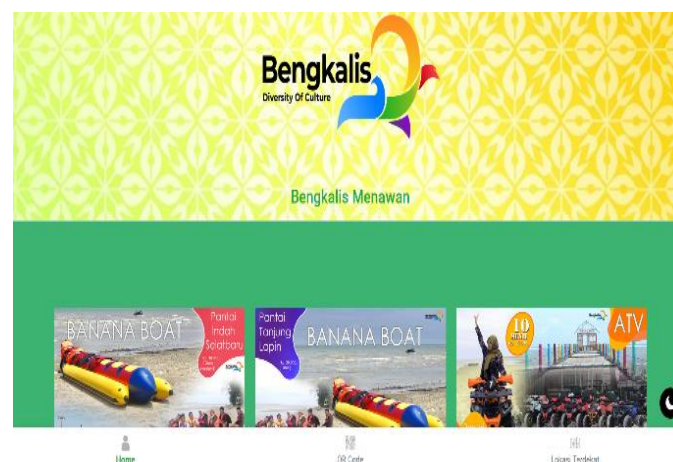


Figure 6 Website Homepage of Bengkalis Menawan
Source: <https://bengkalismenawan.info/>

Disparbudpora Kabupaten Bengkalis mempunyai tujuh event wajib yang harus dilaksanakan setiap tahunnya seperti Timang-Timang Mandau, Ritual Cue Lak, Festival Budaya Bahari Selat baru, Festival Sungai Bukit Batu, Festival Lampu Colok, Rupert & Running 10K Festival. According to the established brand, the main focus of the event is on cultural events. There are five events and 1 Bengkalis bachelor and virgin election event among the seven mandatory Bengkalis Regency tourism events that have been included in the 2022 Riau Province event calendar; this is the first step for Bengkalis Regency Disparbudpora to continue developing tourism after having the Bengkalis brand of cultural diversity. Furthermore, Disparbudpora focuses on the development of coastal culture, with the destination located in the new and Rupert Straits, according to the Bengkalis KSPN, and displays various attractions that represent all of the Bengkalis people's culture in accordance with predetermined branding. According to (Budianto & Edi, 2013), the development of cultural tourism is a distinct trend for tourists, which is consistent with the growing emphasis on protecting traditional culture while also attracting tourists.



Figure 7 Budaya Bahari and Mandi Safar Event

Source: Hasil Observasi Peneliti

One of the efforts to establish and confirm the position of cultural tourism destinations in Bengkalis Regency in the tourism industry is the process of communicating the brand. This is one of the manifestations in the stages of destination branding implementation. The efforts of Bengkalis Regency Disparbudpora in communicating this is the goal expected by Disparbudpora in making Bengkalis Regency a destination for cultural tourism and attempting to become top-of-mind in the minds of tourists.

Brand Implementation

Disparbudpora Through marketing promotions, Bengkalis Regency, provides an interesting experience for tourists and potential tourists. The offer is a promise made by the Bengkalis Regency Disparbudpora to tourists and potential tourists that must be met by all parties involved in Bengkalis Regency tourism. According to (Kriyanto, 2014), there are several principles of public relations communication, such as the principle of honesty in telling the truth based on facts, being objective, accurate, and not manipulative in order to deceive the public.

According to Law No. 19 of 2009 Chapter VIII, the government has authority in tourism development to (1) compile and establish a master plan for national tourism development. (2) Coordination of tourism development across industries and provinces. (3) Carry out national tourism cooperation in accordance with the provisions of the law. (4) Choose a national tourist attraction. (5) Choose national tourist destinations. (6) Develop standards, procedures, guidelines, norms, criteria, and control systems for tourism operations. (7) Create policies for the development of human resources in the tourism industry. (8) Create, maintain, and protect national assets such as tourist attractions and potentially valuable assets that have yet to be discovered. (9) Offering national tourism promotion services. (10) Make it easier to support tourist visits. (11) Provide information about tourist security and safety. (12) Oversee and evaluate tourism organizations. (13) Allocating tourism funds.

Bengkalis Regency has RIPPARDA 2021-2035 as a reference in tourism development based on this law, which is an implementation of the Bengkalis Regency destination branding program. According to the 2021-2035 RIPPARDA, Pentahelix is established and well integrated with the implementation stage, with the goal of raising tourists' and potential tourists' expectations of Bengkalis Regency as a cultural tourism destination. According to Morgan and Pritchard (Auliasifa, 2020), destination branding for tourists can involve a variety

of tourism stakeholders, including suppliers (tourism attractions, hotels, transportation, and so on), government agencies (local, regional, and national), travel agencies, tour operators, destination marketing organizations, and infomediaries. The RIPPARDA Pentahelix image for the 2021-2036 Bengkalis Regency is as follows:

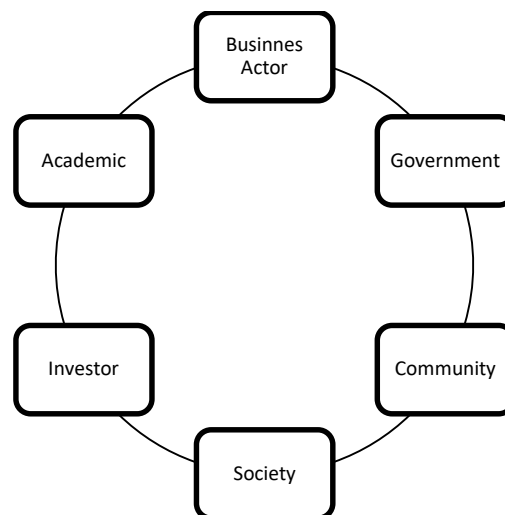


Figure 8 stakeholder relationship in brand implementation *implementation*

Source: Research result, 2022

It is clear from the image that all parties involved in the tourism industry are interconnected. Disparbudpora Bengkalis Regency, as a destination branding actor, collaborates with tourism stakeholders to determine what the public currently requires. Disparbudpora of Bengkalis Regency's open system is an implementation of boundary-spanning activities in which the organization requires stakeholders to provide feedback so that they know what the public needs by establishing two-way communication with tourism stakeholders (Kriyanto, 2014). For example, providers of tourist-required facilities and infrastructure. This is also explained by the findings of the research (Hartono et al., 2022), which show that when organizations and individuals carry out destination branding programs, they are directly or indirectly involved in creating activities and managing tourist destinations.

The collaboration system currently in use has not been fully utilized. As a result, Disparbudpora divided it into four sections in accordance with the strategy outlined in the Regional Tourism Development Master Plan (RIPPARDA) for 2021-2035. Specifically, the development of tourism destinations, development of the tourism industry, development of tourism marketing, development of tourism institutions, and development of human resources. This can directly or indirectly create jobs in industries such as hotels/inns, restaurants, consulting, and transportation, thereby increasing local tax revenues and assisting in the export of local products. However, there are inconsistencies in the RIPPARDA section on tourism destination development point b, which states that "Build and develop the potential of Bengkalis Malay cultural tourism resources (history, traditions, arts) and the natural potential of the mainland, coasts and small islands, in an effort to sustainably protect Bengkalis Regency's tourism resources while also providing for the community's welfare."

This reference contradicts the meaning of the Bengkalis Regency Disparbudpora brand tagline, which states that "Cultural Diversity is a unique and interesting thing that Bengkalis

Regency owns, such as tribe, ethnicity, culture, language, and customs that are ready to be introduced to the world." As a result, when these references are implemented, it becomes disoriented and easy to be taken over by the BENGKALIS Bermasa brand, where the 2021-2036 RIPPARDA Tourism Destination Development section point b is in accordance with Bengkalis Bermasa's vision and mission, which upholds Malay culture.

Aside from the disparity between the Bengkalis brand's diversity of culture and one of the RIPPARDA sections for 2021-2036, the internal situation of the Bengkalis Regency Disparbudpora still has many shortages of competent human resources in their fields. Despite the fact that (Yasir et al., 2019) believe that increasing Human Resources (HR) is the most important thing to serve as a support for tourism development. According to Mrs. Dimas and Mr. Alwizar, a lack of competent human resources has hampered program implementation, so the results have not been maximized.

Aside from that, Disparbudpora believes that the entire collaboration process is still hampered by funds, causing programs and activities to be held soberly and some to be abandoned. If there aren't many natural tourist destinations, the manager must make marketing investments aimed at promoting events that can attract tourists, in addition to allocating adequate budget funds to build adequate infrastructure, services, and security. Managers must comprehend what tourists require when visiting a destination. Tourists will go to places where they can get what they need at reasonable prices and in a convenient location. According to the journal (Civelek, 2015), funding is a major issue for organizations that carry out destination branding.

Disparbudpora Bengkalis Regency anticipates that central funds will aid the destination branding program. However, due to the status of the land acquisition, the local government is not ready. Land that should be managed directly by the local government, but the status of the land is still held by the village government, such as the Selat Baru, Tanjung Lapin, and Prapat Tunggal areas. In this case, destination branding requires special attention in order to obtain a much larger budget. For example, the national tourism brand "Wonderful Indonesia" has succeeded in distinguishing itself in the midst of highly competitive Southeast Asian tourism marketing, such as the Malaysia brand, the Truly Asia, or the Amazing Thailand brand. According to (Judisseno, 2019), available branding budget allocations can be tailored to the needs of the destination branding program and the Human Resources involved.

Monitoring, evaluation, and review

In the final stage, the Bengkalis Regency Disparbudpora monitors and assesses the success or failure of various activities. As stated by Morgan and Pritchard (Putra & Asnan, 2022), destination branding is an attempt to identify deficiencies, deviations, and other issues from the activities that have been carried out. The monitoring phase is handled directly by UPT Tourism and destination managers. Disparbudpora Bengkalis Regency considers the number of visitors to each event, the event schedule, and whether the event's contents are consistent with the theme and message to be conveyed to visitors.

"Yes, we usually do direct monitoring, especially during this annual event. Usually, when the event is held, it appears that there are flaws that must be addressed in the

future, ranging from the number of visitors to how the event is carried out, whether it is as expected or not” - (Mr. Alwizar)

At this point, the Bengkalis Regency Disparbudpora is carrying out boundary-spanning activities by monitoring the environment. As a result, the organization can identify and interpret issues or problems that may have an impact on the activities that have been completed. When the event is completed, the monitoring results are used as evaluation material. This is done in the form of a momentary analysis by forming a focus group discussion and discussing the data that has been collected regarding the advantages and disadvantages of each destination. Not only is the number of visits used to assess the success of the Disparbudpora program, but the advantages and disadvantages of destinations and Sapta Pesona are also used to assess the success of destination branding. According to (Yi, 2017) in his book, evaluation is a method of determining the success or failure of a marketing strategy implemented by an organization and determining whether the implemented strategy can be reapplied or should be replaced with a new strategy.

This is consistent with the presentation (Maspaiteella et al., 2016), which states that the purpose of an evaluation is divided into two parts: improving program quality and determining whether a program can be continued. Development programs such as accessibility and accommodation are also evaluated. This is done to determine whether the program has any flaws or deviations and whether the addition of the program will make it easier for tourists to travel. Disparbudpora also conducts a review stage, which is an important step in developing better and more sustainable tourism. Every year, a different theme is chosen for the event. With this theme, the event becomes more varied, which may entice potential tourists to return.

Monitoring, evaluation, and review are carried out to see how far a branding program has progressed; the consistency of the brand's vision and mission is one of the indicators of success (Meitaliza & Rusmadi, 2018). In this regard, Disparbudpora of Bengkalis Regency will continue to work to improve programs and activities that have been implemented if they are not performing as expected. With a more advanced tourism industry, Bengkalis Regency may be able to increase PAD.

CONCLUSION

The destination branding process conducted by Disparbudpora of Bengkalis Regency used several stages. First, market investigation, analysis, and strategic recommendation conducted by Disparbudpora of Bengkalis Regency through secondary data collection, field surveys, and data analysis. Disparbudpora employs SISPARNAS to aid in data analysis in order to develop a National Tourism Strategic Area (KSPN). Second, the Bengkalis Regency's development of brand identity In accordance with the vision and mission of the Bengkalis Regency RIPPARDA, Disparbudpora uses the selembayung logo in various colors and the Bengkalis diversity of culture tagline. Third, Disparbudpora of Bengkalis Regency carried out the brand launch and introduction via digital communication via social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, YouTube, and websites. Aside from that, Disparbudpora of Bengkalis Regency organizes seven special events each year. Fourth, brand implementation in accordance with the RIPPARDA Bengkalis Regency for the years 2021-2023. There are irregularities in RIPPARDA for 2021-2036 that need to be consistent with the Bengkalis

brand's cultural diversity definition. Because of a lack of human resources, program implementation has been hampered, and the entire collaboration process is still hampered by funds, so activities are only held soberly, and some are not even implemented. The status of the land should be managed directly by the government, but the village government still holds the status of the land. Fifth, monitoring, evaluation, and review of the brand. Disparbudpora of Bengkalis Regency conducts direct monitoring through the UPT Tourism and destination managers. The evaluation and review conducted discuss the data gathered regarding the benefits and drawbacks of each implemented program.

The researcher advised Disparbudpora of Bengkalis Regency to evaluate RIPPARDA for 2021-2036 and the Bengkalis Diversity of Culture brand to form a budget in accordance with short, medium, and long-term work programs and re-plan land acquisition in order to collect funds from the central government. Conduct skilled and broad-minded tourism human resource training so that they understand sustainable destination branding programs. Furthermore, the tourism promotion system must be strengthened both online and offline.

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