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**DIGITALIZATION MARKETING STRATEGY: CASE STUDY OF TERONG  
CREATIVE TOURISM VILLAGE, BELITUNG REGENCY**

Oleh

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**Abstract**

This research examines the role of digitalization in sustainable tourism marketing in the Creative Tourism Village of Terong. The primary focus of this study is on how the use of digital technology enhances operational efficiency, expands market reach, and strengthens sustainable practices within the tourism context. The findings indicate that the adoption of digital technology, such as websites, mobile applications, and social media, plays a crucial role in promoting the Creative Tourism Village of Terong to a broader audience. Digitalization has enabled more effective communication with tourists, more efficient reservation management, and rapid and accurate information dissemination. Additionally, digital technology supports innovation in delivering engaging and interactive tourism content, thereby enhancing the tourist experience. In conclusion, the implementation of digital-based marketing strategies in the Creative Tourism Village of Terong has significantly contributed to achieving sustainable tourism development goals by leveraging technology to support economic, social, and environmental sustainability. Ongoing collaboration among all stakeholders and adaptation to technological changes are key to successfully marketing tourist destinations in the digital era.

**Keywords: Digital Marketing Sustainable Tourism Digitalization Community Engagement Operational Efficiency**

**INTRODUCTION**

The decline in the number of domestic tourist trips in 2019, before the COVID-19 pandemic, highlights the vulnerability of the tourism sector to unexpected external and internal factors. Although domestic tourism plays a crucial role in the local economy, this fluctuating trend necessitates more resilient and adaptive development strategies that can respond to changing socio-economic and global health dynamics. The dominance of tourists from Java Island in domestic tourism statistics underscores the geographical concentration that may hinder the full potential of tourism in other regions. Diversifying domestic source markets and promoting tourist destinations outside Java can help reduce this dependency and ensure a more equitable distribution of tourism economic benefits.

Digitalization has become a key element in expanding the marketing reach of tourist villages. The digital transformation has shifted the paradigm in how tourist destinations are promoted and managed. Mumtaz and Karmilah (2022) highlight how digitalization has facilitated visitors in accessing information about destinations, making reservations, and sharing their experiences through social media and other digital platforms. In the context of the Creative Tourism Village of Terong, the adoption of technology such as websites, mobile applications, and an active presence on social media has provided a competitive advantage in an increasingly digital market. This success is closely related to the ability to adapt new communication tools and digital



technologies to meet visitors' needs and preferences.

However, digital technology alone is not enough to guarantee sustainability. As Suwarso and Nurjanah (2017) reveal, integrating social innovation and creativity into digital strategies is essential to ensure the sustainability and authenticity of the tourism experience. Social innovation in the Creative Tourism Village of Terong includes sustainable waste management initiatives, the development of educational tourism programs involving local schools, and the creation of tourism products based on local wisdom. These initiatives not only support environmental and cultural preservation but also provide direct benefits to the local community, enhancing the village's appeal as a sustainable tourism destination.

Therefore, the success of sustainable tourism development in the Creative Tourism Village of Terong lies in the balance between utilizing digital technology and the authenticity of the local experiences offered to tourists. Effective communication strategies, digitalization, social innovation, and creative programs work synergistically to create a destination that not only offers beauty and uniqueness but also ensures that tourism can be a driving force for sustainable development.

This research aims to deeply explore how the Creative Tourism Village of Terong implements digital-based marketing strategies to achieve sustainable tourism development goals. The findings indicate that local community involvement in every stage of tourism project planning and implementation is key to success, ensuring the relevance, acceptance, and sustainability of these initiatives. The use of digital technology has played a significant role in enhancing operational efficiency, expanding market reach, and strengthening sustainable practices. Social innovation has also proven to add value to the tourism experience and enhance community engagement in sustainable tourism

development. Community empowerment becomes the main foundation in achieving the success of sustainable tourism development, emphasizing capacity building, training, and fair distribution of benefits.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This research employs a descriptive qualitative approach to gather in-depth information about the digital marketing strategies implemented by the management of the Creative Tourism Village of Terong within the context of sustainable tourism development. This methodology was chosen because it allows the researcher to understand phenomena from the participants' perspectives and in a natural context without manipulation (Creswell, 2014). Primary data were collected through a series of in-depth interviews with key informants, including village managers, local community members, and representatives from the Belitung Regency Tourism Office. Informants were selected through purposive sampling to ensure they possess direct knowledge and experience related to the implementation of digital marketing strategies in the village (Patton, 2015).

Additionally, participatory observation was conducted to gain a better understanding of the use of digital technology in tourism marketing, as well as the social interactions, practices, and dynamics involved (DeWalt & DeWalt, 2011). Secondary data were obtained from related documents, such as digital marketing activity reports by the village managers, marketing campaign documentation, and publications from the Belitung Regency Tourism Office. Data analysis was carried out using content analysis techniques to identify key themes that emerged from the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

This helps in understanding how digital-based marketing strategies are implemented and their impact on the development and sustainability of the Creative Tourism Village of Terong. The research findings are expected to provide insights into best practices for



implementing digital marketing to support sustainable tourism development.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This study demonstrates that sustainable tourism development in the Creative Tourism Village of Terong is greatly influenced by digital marketing. The use of digital technology has become a cornerstone in marketing strategies, enabling more effective and efficient communication to promote the destination to a wider audience. Mumtaz and Karmilah (2022) emphasize the importance of digitalization in the tourism sector, where the application of digital marketing and social media has proven to be highly effective in reaching a broader and more diverse audience.

In the context of the Creative Tourism Village of Terong, digitalization encompasses the use of an official website, social media platforms such as Instagram and Facebook, and online booking applications. This strategy not only enhances visibility and accessibility of information for potential visitors but also creates a more interactive and enriching experience for tourists. The official website and mobile applications provide comprehensive information about tourism activities, event calendars, and booking options, making it easier for visitors to plan their trips.

Social media usage, in particular, has played a critical role in the marketing strategy of the Creative Tourism Village of Terong. Platforms like Instagram allow the village to leverage visual content and the ease of sharing to attract the attention of a younger and broader audience. The content shared not only highlights the natural beauty and local culture but also sustainability initiatives and local community engagement. This creates a strong narrative about the Creative Tourism Village of Terong as a destination that offers authentic and socially responsible experiences.

The success of digital marketing is also evident from the ease of access and operational efficiency provided by online booking platforms. The use of digital booking systems,

event calendars, and online payment options meets visitors' needs for quick and easy access to information and booking processes. This strategy not only enhances operational efficiency but also strengthens the position of the Creative Tourism Village of Terong as an adaptive and innovative destination.

This research employs a descriptive qualitative approach to gather in-depth information about the digital marketing strategies implemented by the management of the Creative Tourism Village of Terong. Primary data were collected through in-depth interviews with key informants, including village managers, local community members, and representatives from the Belitung Regency Tourism Office. Informants were selected through purposive sampling to ensure they possess direct knowledge and experience related to the implementation of digital marketing strategies in the village (Patton, 2015). Additionally, participatory observation was conducted to understand the use of digital technology in tourism marketing, as well as the social interactions and dynamics involved (DeWalt & DeWalt, 2011). Secondary data were obtained from related documents, such as digital marketing activity reports and publications from the Belitung Regency Tourism Office.

Data analysis was carried out using content analysis techniques to identify key themes that emerged from the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The findings indicate that the use of digital technology in marketing is highly effective in increasing visibility, expanding market reach, and enriching the tourist experience. In conclusion, the implementation of digital-based marketing strategies in the Creative Tourism Village of Terong has significantly contributed to achieving sustainable tourism development goals by leveraging technology to support economic, social, and environmental sustainability. Continuous collaboration among all stakeholders and adaptation to technological



changes are key to successfully marketing tourist destinations in the digital era.

In the context of the Creative Tourism Village of Terong, digitalization has been identified as a catalyst that enables the transformation of the tourism sector into a more dynamic and accessible one. The study reveals that digitalization is not only related to marketing aspects but also includes operational efficiency and enhanced customer experience. Through the use of websites, social media, and booking applications, the Creative Tourism Village of Terong has successfully reached a wider audience and provided ease for prospective visitors to plan and execute their trips smoothly. Digitalization has enabled this tourism village to proactively respond to changing consumer behavior that increasingly relies on digital technology in various aspects of life, including travel planning.

The research findings show that the presence of responsive and intuitive online platforms helps increase destination visibility, facilitate the reservation process, and provide information that can be accessed anytime and anywhere. These findings align with Mumtaz and Karmilah (2022), who demonstrate how digitalization can enrich the ways tourist destinations interact with their visitors.

The use of digital technology in tourism operations also helps the Creative Tourism Village of Terong manage visitor data, preferences, and visitation patterns. This data is invaluable for informing strategic decisions and developing more personalized tourist experiences. With precise data analysis, the tourism village can tailor its offerings to be more attractive and relevant to target markets while strengthening its sustainability strategies.

Moreover, digitalization has contributed to the development of social innovations in the context of sustainable tourism. By collaborating with local initiatives such as the Dalang Collection Waste Bank mentioned by Suwarso and Nurjanah (2017), the Creative Tourism Village of Terong

integrates environmentally friendly solutions into its tourism infrastructure. This demonstrates that the use of technology can support not only tourism promotion but also sustainable practices that directly benefit the community and the environment.

Overall, digitalization in the Creative Tourism Village of Terong has become a driving force in strengthening the village's economic, social, and environmental sustainability. Based on the research findings, digitalization is a strategic step that ensures tourism can grow without compromising the sustainability principles at the core of the village's vision. These findings underscore the importance of a holistic approach in adopting digital technology to support sustainable and inclusive tourism development.

## CONCLUSION

Various strategic elements such as effective communication strategies, digitalization, social innovation, and community empowerment interact and support each other in achieving sustainable tourism development goals. This research highlights the importance of involving the local community in every stage of planning and implementing tourism projects to ensure the relevance, acceptance, and sustainability of these initiatives.

Specifically, the use of digital technology has been a catalyst for transforming the tourism sector in the Creative Tourism Village of Terong. Digital marketing has increased operational efficiency, expanded market reach, and enriched the tourist experience. Through digital platforms such as websites, social media, and booking applications, the village has successfully reached a wider audience and facilitated easier travel planning for visitors. Social innovation, in the form of collaboration with local initiatives, has also added value to the tourism experience and strengthened community engagement in sustainable tourism development.



The success of sustainable tourism development in the Creative Tourism Village of Terong is measured not only by economic growth but also by improvements in the quality of life of the community, environmental preservation, and economic stability achieved through effective digital marketing strategies. Digital marketing has proven to be a strategic step that ensures tourism can grow without compromising sustainability principles, supporting the local economy, and maintaining environmental and social balance.

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