

Analysis of the Development of a Marketing Strategy for the Batu So'on Tourist Destination in Bondowoso

Rhendy Adiputra Setya Pratama
Departement of Languange, Communication, and Tourism
Tourism Destination Study Program

ABSTRACT

Batu So'on Bondowoso Tourist Destination is a geotourism site that forms part of the Ijen UNESCO Global Geopark (UGGp), and its unique natural rock formations serve as its main attraction. Despite its significant tourism potential, in recent years this destination has experienced stagnation and even a decline in tourist visits, which is believed to be due to suboptimal marketing strategies. This study aims to analyze the marketing strategies that have been implemented at the Batu So'on Bondowoso Tourism Destination and to formulate recommendations for developing marketing strategies to increase the number of tourist visits. The study employs a qualitative method with a descriptive approach. Data were collected through observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation from 17 informants, including representatives from the Bondowoso Regency Tourism, Youth, and Sports Office; Ijen Geopark; local managers; and tourists. Data analysis was conducted using the 7P marketing mix (Product, Price, Place, Promotion, People, Process, and Physical Evidence) combined with SOAR analysis (Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, Results). The results of the study indicate that the marketing strategy for the Batu So'on Tourist Destination has not been implemented optimally. The destination's strengths include its unique geology, affordable ticket prices, and its status as part of the UNESCO Ijen Global Geopark; however, various challenges remain, such as the lack of dedicated promotional media, inadequate road access to the destination, and supporting facilities that require improvement. Based on a SOAR analysis, this study produced strategic recommendations that include strengthening digital promotion through official social media channels, organizing cultural and geotourism events, developing educational tour packages, enhancing the competencies of local managers, strengthening partnerships with various stakeholders, revitalizing tourism facilities, and improving access infrastructure to the destination. These strategic recommendations are expected to enhance the destination's competitiveness, expand its marketing reach, increase tourist visitation, and support the development of sustainable tourism in Bondowoso Regency.

Keywords: Marketing Strategy, 7P Marketing Mix, SOAR Analysis, Geotourism, Batu So'on Bondowoso.