

Analysis of Bondowoso Regency Government's Advertising Strategy in Building Sport Tourism Branding

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Abstract

This article aims to analyze the Bondowoso Regency Government's advertising strategy in building a sports tourism image and evaluate its success in increasing tourist visits and community participation. Using a qualitative approach with a case study, data were collected through in-depth interviews, direct observation, and documentation studies. The results showed that digital media, such as social media and online platforms, effectively delivered promotional messages and strengthened the destination's image. Regular events such as the Bondowoso Night Run 2025 and other sports activities act as promotional icons and tourist attractions. This strategy has successfully increased community participation and attracted domestic and international tourists, strengthening Bondowoso's position as an innovative and competitive sports destination. However, challenges remain related to the lack of innovation in digital promotion and the optimal utilization of technology. Therefore, this study recommends developing innovative digital content and a study of the impact of tourism experience to improve the effectiveness of future promotional strategies. These suggestions are expected to support the development of sustainable and adaptive sports tourism.

Keywords: Advertising Strategy, Bondowoso Regency Government, City Branding, Sport Tourism

Introduction

In the current era of globalization, the development of the tourism sector is one of the main pillars of economic growth and identity of a region. Various countries and regions compete to utilize their tourism potential to attract domestic and foreign tourists. One of the main strategies in this effort is through effective destination branding, including the use of promotional and advertising media that can make the destination widely known and have a positive image in the eyes of the public. (Morgan, 2007). Indonesia prioritizes sport tourism for its benefits in attracting foreign tourists, promoting tourism, and offering attractive destinations due to its tropical climate and diverse natural resources (Pakaya et al., 2023).

Advertising, one of the subsectors of the creative industry, significantly contributes to Indonesia's creative economy by encouraging innovation and creativity, not only as a promotional tool (Junaedi, 2025). Sports tourism development in Indonesia is increasing, as it can combine sports activities with natural beauty, local culture, and other unique experiences that can attract a broad spectrum of tourists. In this context, the role of local governments is key in developing the right promotional strategies to increase the competitiveness of their tourist destinations. Therefore, a study entitled "Analysis of

Bondowoso Regency Government's Advertising Strategy in Building Sport Tourism Branding" is important to conduct. This choice is based on the fact that Bondowoso Regency, as one of the regencies in East Java, has excellent potential in the field of sports and nature tourism, but still requires the development of an integrated and effective promotional strategy in order to improve its image and attractiveness in the eyes of tourists. Social media significantly influences tourists' perceptions of Bondowoso Regency, with influencer-curated content attracting visitors and building an emotional connection between the destination and visitors (Junaedi et al., 2025a). By studying and analyzing the advertising strategy carried out by the local government in building a sport tourism image, it is hoped that it will be able to make a real contribution to enriching the literature on the management of sport tourism-based tourism destinations while offering practical solutions that can be implemented.

By definition, the advertising strategy in this context refers to a series of promotional activities carried out by the Bondowoso government through various communication media to introduce and strengthen the image of sports tourism in the area. The scope of this research includes an analysis of the types of advertising used, the media chosen, the messages conveyed, and how all these elements can shape the perception and appeal of sport tourism in Bondowoso. The primary focus of this research is to review the promotional strategies undertaken by the government, both through digital and conventional media, and measure their effectiveness in building a sports destination branding identity. Promotional media play an important role in implementing an integrated marketing communication strategy, helping institutions inform audiences about their products and services, enabling them to recognize and use them (Junaedi et al., 2025b). Within this framework, it is important to examine how the messages conveyed can attract local and international tourists and how the image of Bondowoso Regency as a sports tourism destination can compete geographically and emotionally with other destinations in Indonesia and the surrounding region.

The need for this research arose because developing sport tourism destinations in Bondowoso Regency still requires a more integrated and innovative communication strategy. Currently, tourism promotion in this area has not fully penetrated the broader market, mainly due to various challenges such as limited promotional media, a lack of optimal utilization of digital technology, and a lack of innovation in delivering promotional messages. Strong brands provide a significant competitive advantage for companies in the knowledge-based sector, increasing their competitiveness in the globalized service sector in the knowledge economy (Tóké, 2020). Therefore, the researcher sees that an analysis of the advertising strategy implemented by the government can reveal the strengths and weaknesses of the existing approach, so that strategic recommendations can be made to improve future promotional planning. In addition, this research is also expected to enrich the literature on branding sport tourism-based tourist destinations, which is still limited, especially in the context of regions in Indonesia.

Various innovations and challenges in tourism promotion have created a significant research gap. Most previous studies highlighted aspects of tourism destination development in general, without paying attention to the specific communication strategies used by local governments to promote sport tourism. Studies on the effectiveness of government advertising strategies in building the image of sports destinations in

Indonesia are still minimal. Therefore, this research aims to answer several important questions, such as: "What is the advertising strategy of the Bondowoso Regency government in building the image of sport tourism?" "What are the media and messages used in the promotion?" and "What are tourists' perceptions of the image of sport destinations in Bondowoso Regency?" By answering these questions, it is hoped that a comprehensive picture of the effectiveness and relevance of the promotional strategy can be generated, as well as identifying elements that need improvement and enhancement.

The theoretical contribution of this research is to enrich the literature on the management of sport tourism-based tourist destination branding, especially in the context of rapidly developing Indonesia. By understanding government advertising strategies, this research can expand the conceptual framework on the role of promotion in building the image of sports and tourism destinations. Practically, the results of this research are expected to be a reference for destination managers, especially local governments, in designing and implementing more effective promotional strategies. The proposed strategy will help improve the economic and cultural competitiveness of the region through increasing tourist visits, strengthening regional identity, and creating new sustainable economic opportunities. In addition, it is also expected to raise awareness of the importance of synergy between the government, local communities, and the private sector in developing and promoting sport tourism innovatively and adaptively to various challenges of the times.

Method

In this research, the method applied is a qualitative approach with a case study design to gain an in-depth understanding of the Bondowoso Regency Government's advertising strategy in building sports tourism branding. A case study is a research project that examines a specific scenario, event, or phenomenon to identify and analyze its relevant themes (Kriyantono, 2021). The case study design enables researchers to delve into the intricate nature of sleep tourism, examining the interactions between various factors influencing traveler experiences (Yin, 2018). This approach allowed the researcher to explore the strategic aspects used and the experiences and perceptions of various stakeholders. The researcher combined several techniques to collect relevant data, including in-depth interviews, field observations, and documentation studies. The interview technique was conducted with purposively selected informants, such as government officials in tourism and sports, managers of sport tourism destinations, industry players, and local communities directly involved in promotional activities. Purposive sampling enabled the researcher to select individuals with specific characteristics, ensuring the inclusion of informants with valuable insights into the study's phenomenon (Sugiyono, 2019). These interviews helped to obtain rich, first-hand data on the strategies implemented, challenges faced, and community perceptions of the promotion.

In addition, field observations were conducted at various promotional activities and sport tourism events held in Bondowoso Regency. This technique allowed researchers to

directly observe the stages of promotion implementation and the interaction between the strategies implemented and the community and activity participants. Through these observations, researchers obtained empirical data related to the implementation process and the success of the implemented strategies. Furthermore, documentation studies were also carried out to analyze promotional materials such as brochures, social media, digital advertisements, and reports on government activities. This technique enriches the data obtained and provides a complete picture of the official information and promotional materials used in the branding strategy.

The data collected was then analyzed using content analysis and thematic analysis techniques. This step involved systematically coding the results of interviews, observations and documentation to identify key themes supporting the advertising and branding strategies applied. Furthermore, the data from the various sources were processed and organized in a structured manner to find patterns and relationships between variables relevant to the research focus. To ensure validity and reliability, researchers applied data triangulation, which compares and confirms results from various sources, and used data collection techniques to get an accurate and objective picture.

In the process of concluding, researchers used an interpretive approach. Findings from the results of data analysis were developed into conclusions that describe the effectiveness, challenges, and supporting factors of the advertising strategy implemented. The conclusions were also validated through discussions with tourism and marketing communication experts to get a broader and objective perspective.

Result and Discussion

This research comprehensively describes the advertising strategy implemented by the Bondowoso Regency Government in building sports tourism branding, as well as the successes and challenges faced in realizing this vision. The strategy generally includes various aspects of marketing communication through conventional and digital media, with the primary objective of increasing tourist visits and strengthening Bondowoso's image as a leading sport tourism destination in Indonesia. This strategic approach is supported by the development of various sport tourism agendas that are routine and annual, such as the Bondowoso Night Run 2025 and several other sporting events, which become promotional icons, community boosters, and tourist attractions.

Advertising Strategy and Strengthening Bondowoso's Brand as a Sport Tourism Destination

The government's advertising strategy focuses on creating a positive image through various media, including social media, billboards, banners, and other digital media. The use of social media is a mainstay, given its wide penetration and efficiency in reaching various age groups and socioeconomic backgrounds. The Bondowoso Regency Government actively promoted the event through digital platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube, featuring various activities, participant testimonials, and the beauty of the tourist destinations. In addition, they also utilized local influencers and athletes with large follower bases to expand their promotional reach and instill the message that Bondowoso is a fun and family-friendly sports tourism center.

Furthermore, the existence of a tourist information center, both physically and online, makes it easier for tourists to access information related to the sports tourism agenda that will take place. One of the most effective approaches was implementing a consistent branding program through the hashtag #BondowosoNightRun and other hashtags, which was also used to monitor and analyze public responses on social media. Through this digital campaign, Bondowoso's image as an innovative and active sports tourism destination is continuously built, indirectly increasing the interest of domestic and foreign tourists in visiting and participating.

The implementation of this advertising strategy also had a direct impact on increasing the number of participants and visitors, especially from outside the region. Data from the event organizers shows a significant spike in participation each year, demonstrating the success of social media promotion and attractive event packaging. In addition, the positive image created by the various activities has a ripple effect, with tourists verbally and through social media recommending their experience to the broader community.

On the other hand, the success of this strategy can also be seen in the increasing participation of local communities in sport tourism activities. The government conducts literacy and training activities so the community can participate as participants, business actors, and event organizers. This is a strategic step before and after the event, as it creates jobs, improves the local economy, and builds a sense of ownership of the Bondowoso brand as a sport tourism destination. Thus, advertising not only acts as a promotional tool but also as a means of strengthening the sustainable sports tourism ecosystem in Bondowoso.

Elaboration of Bondowoso's Sport Tourism Agenda: Bondowoso Night Run 2025 and Other Events



Figure 1. Bondowoso Night Run 2025

One of the main agendas in this branding strategy is the Bondowoso Night Run 2025, a sport tourism event designed to attract running enthusiasts from across Indonesia and even internationally. The event was conceived as part of a series of activities that highlighted Bondowoso's natural beauty and established the city's identity as an exciting and challenging night sports destination. With various long and short distance running categories open to the public, the event is a competition and a means of promoting Bondowoso's distinctive culture and natural beauty, such as the charm of the Ijen Crater and stunning tea plantations.

In addition to the Bondowoso Night Run, several other agendas are also used as promotional tools and sport tourism brand development. Among them are the Alas Purwo Marathon, Mount Argopuro Trekking, and the Mountain Bike Festival, held annually and receiving wide attention from local and national media. These events are integrated into the advertising strategy by highlighting the uniqueness of the region and its natural beauty, as well as showcasing the diversity of local cultures that are alive and interesting to be part of the sport tourism experience. The government works closely with local communities, sports organizations, and the private sector in organizing the events, creating an effective and professional collaborative atmosphere.

The success of these agendas cannot be separated from the placement of a targeted and consistent advertising strategy, which can create a positive image and strengthen Bondowoso's position as an innovative sports tourism city with high integrity. Continuous promotion, strengthening the community through various educational programs and training, and involving the local community in every activity, are important factors in the success of this strategy. Indonesia's rich natural resources, diverse cultures, and human resources make it a potential destination for sport tourism, offering economic value for the state, government, and society (Agustin et al., 2024).

Challenges in Advertising Strategy and Strengthening Bondowoso's Brand as a Sport Tourism Destination



Figure 2. Trial Run Bumi Raung

Despite the successful implementation of the strategy, various challenges need to be overcome to optimize the development of the sports tourism brand in Bondowoso. One

of the main challenges is the lack of human resource capacity in marketing communications and professional and innovative digital media management. In addition, promotional infrastructure is still limited, such as the lack of optimal internet facilities in some areas and the lack of conventional promotional media that can reach specific layers of society.

Success is also strongly influenced by public and visitor perceptions of Bondowoso's image as a sport tourism destination. For this reason, it is necessary to use data analytics and direct feedback from event participants to ensure that the image formed aligns with expectations and can provide a positive experience to tourists. In other words, strengthening the advertising strategy must be supported by internal improvements in management and sustainable destination development.

The Bondowoso Regency Government's advertising strategy in building sport tourism branding has shown positive results. Digital media and experiential promotions, primarily through significant events such as the Bondowoso Night Run 2025 and other sport tourism events, have increased the community's and tourists' positive image and participation. The implementation of this strategy shows that targeted and innovative advertising can support the development of sustainable and highly competitive destinations, especially in the field of sport tourism.

The success of brand development does not depend only on promotional activities, but also involves aspects of destination management, community participation, and the development of innovations that follow global trends. By considering the existing strengths and challenges, the government can design a more effective and adaptive communication strategy in the future, so that the vision of Bondowoso as a national and international sports tourism center is increasingly realized. Support for infrastructure development, human resource capacity, and accountability in event management are the main foundations for the sustainability of this branding.

Advertising strategies should also be oriented towards building an inclusive and environmentally friendly tourism ecosystem. The use of social media as a promotional tool must be balanced with quality and sustainable destination development. For example, improving public facilities and accessibility to event locations, building awareness of environmental conservation, and providing unique and authentic experiences. This strategy will enrich the value proposition and make Bondowoso Regency a superior and forward-looking sport tourism destination, in line with the development of the global tourism industry.

Conclusion

Based on the results and discussion, it can be concluded that the advertising strategy implemented by the Bondowoso Regency Government in building a sports tourism image has positively impacted community participation and tourist visits to the area. Digital media such as social media and other online platforms have proven effective in reaching various groups and strengthening the promotional messages conveyed, to increase positive perceptions of Bondowoso as a sports tourism destination. In addition,

promotional activities carried out through regular events such as the Bondowoso Night Run 2025 and various other sporting events play an important role as a promotional icon while increasing public trust and attracting domestic and international tourists.

However, the results of this study also show that some challenges need attention, such as limited innovation in delivering promotional messages and less than optimal utilization of digital technology as a whole. Therefore, the suggestion for further research is to conduct an in-depth study on digital content development and promotional innovations that can sustainably strengthen the destination image. In addition, it is also important to examine the effect of these promotional strategies on the tourist experience and the sustainability of destination development, to produce more comprehensive practical recommendations in improving the effectiveness of sports tourism marketing strategies in the future.

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