

Strengthening Green Tourism Branding for Tourism MSMEs in Pematang Johar Village, Deli Serdang

Budi Febriani^{1*}, Pristiyono², Rika Syahmewah³, Marlina Siregar⁴, Bayu Eko Broto⁵
Syahrizal Efendi Lubis⁶

^{1,2,4,5,6}Universitas Labuhanbatu, Indonesia

^{3,4}Universitas Islam Labuhanbatu, Indonesia

Correspondence author:

E-mail: prayogayudi03@gmail.com

Abstract

Pematang Johar Village in Deli Serdang Regency has nature-based and rice field tourism potential that can be developed as a community-based green tourism destination. However, tourism MSME actors in the village still face challenges in building brand identity, formulating promotional messages, communicating environmentally friendly values, and using digital media consistently. This community service activity aims to strengthen green tourism branding for tourism MSME actors through training, mentoring, product storytelling practices, and simple digital promotional content development. The implementation method uses a participatory approach consisting of preliminary observation, partner coordination, problem mapping, green tourism branding training, product storytelling practice, digital content assistance, and activity evaluation. The target participants are tourism MSME actors, tourism managers, village youth, and community members supporting tourism activities in Pematang Johar Village. The outputs of the activity include participants' understanding of green tourism branding, MSME product storytelling templates, examples of digital promotional messages, green tourism campaign drafts, and activity documentation. The expected result of this program is the improvement of MSME actors' ability to package tourism products and services in a more attractive, environmentally friendly, and locally distinctive manner. This activity indicates that simple, practical, and locally based branding assistance can be an effective strategy to strengthen the competitiveness of tourism MSMEs in rural destinations.

Keywords: *Green tourism; branding; tourism MSMEs; tourism village and Pematang Johar.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Developing tourism villages is a crucial strategy for strengthening the local economy, increasing community participation, and expanding business opportunities for MSMEs. Tourism villages serve not only as tourist destinations but also as spaces for community empowerment through the development of local products, tourism services, culinary delights, crafts, and economic activities based on village potential. From a sustainable development perspective, tourism villages should ideally be developed with a balance between economic, social, cultural, and environmental aspects.

Pematang Johar Village, Labuhan Deli District, Deli Serdang Regency, is a village with potential for natural tourism based on rice paddy landscapes. The village's main attractions lie in its rural atmosphere, expansive rice paddies, local cuisine, recreational activities, and community-based tourism experiences. This potential opens up opportunities for tourism MSMEs, particularly in the culinary, local product, tourism services, and destination support services sectors. However, good tourism potential does not necessarily increase competitiveness without the right branding strategy.

One relevant approach to strengthening the tourist appeal of Pematang Johar Village is green tourism branding. Green tourism branding can be understood as a strategy to build the image of a destination and tourism products by highlighting environmentally friendly values, local wisdom, community involvement, and economic sustainability. Branding in the context of a tourism village is not only related to a logo or slogan, but also encompasses the tourism experience, service quality, environmental cleanliness, local product stories, and consistent communication with tourists. Tourism MSMEs play a crucial role in shaping the destination's image. Food, beverages, crafts, services, hospitality, stall cleanliness, and how businesses interact with tourists are all part of the tourism experience. Therefore, strengthening branding is not

sufficient at the destination level; it also needs to reach MSMEs as economic actors who interact directly with visitors.

Problems frequently faced by tourism MSMEs include limited understanding of branding, inconsistent product identity, weak promotional narratives, and suboptimal use of digital media. Some MSMEs have used social media, but the content they display remains simplistic and fails to highlight the value of green tourism, unique village features, or stories about local products. Digital media can help expand promotions, increase destination visibility, and strengthen relationships between MSMEs and potential tourists.

Furthermore, environmental issues are also a crucial part of managing tourist villages. Nature-based tourism will struggle to thrive without the support of cleanliness, waste reduction, the use of local materials, and tourists' awareness of environmental protection. Therefore, green tourism branding needs to be directed at simple practices that are easily implemented by MSMEs, such as maintaining cleanliness of business areas, reducing the use of single-use plastics, using local materials, providing trash receptacles, and delivering promotional messages encouraging tourists to protect the environment.

This community service activity is designed to provide simple, practical, and easy-to-implement mentoring. The program focuses not on complex branding theory but on the hands-on skills needed by tourism MSMEs. Activities include problem mapping, green tourism branding training, product storytelling practice, digital content mentoring, green tourism campaign development, and participant understanding assessment.

Based on the description, this community service activity aims to strengthen green tourism branding for tourism MSMEs in Pematang Johar Village, Deli Serdang. Specifically, this activity aims to:

1. increasing the understanding of MSME actors regarding the concept of green tourism branding;
2. helping MSMEs develop product identities and stories based on local values;
3. training MSMEs to create simple and attractive digital promotional messages;
4. encourage MSMEs to implement the principles of environmentally friendly tourism services;
5. produce documentation of activities as material for publication of community service articles.

II. IMPLEMENTATION METHOD

2.1 Location and Time of Activity

This community service activity is designed to be implemented in Pematang Johar Village, Labuhan Deli District, Deli Serdang Regency, North Sumatra. The activity location can use the village hall, rice field tourism area, community meeting hall, or other locations that are easily accessible to tourism MSME actors. The implementation time of the activity is planned in the form of a one-day main training, followed by light mentoring for one to two weeks through direct communication or online media. This model was chosen so that the activity does not take up a lot of time, but still produces outputs that can be used by participants.

2.2 Activity Objectives

The target audience for this activity is tourism MSMEs in Pematang Johar Village, particularly culinary entrepreneurs, food and beverage vendors, tourism stall managers, tourism service providers, village youth, and community members involved in tourism activities. The ideal number of participants is 20 to 30 to ensure the activity remains effective, communicative, and easy to manage.

2.3 Implementation Approach

This activity uses a participatory approach. This approach means participants not only listen to the material but also engage in discussions, practice, product story development, and the creation of promotional content examples. This approach was chosen because tourism village branding cannot be built unilaterally but must be based on the potential, values, and experiences of the local community.

2.4 Stages of Activity Implementation

The implementation of the activity consists of seven main stages as follows.

Stage 1. Initial Observation

The community service team conducted initial observations to assess the condition of tourism MSMEs, the types of products sold, the appearance of stalls, the promotional media used, tourism potential, and existing environmentally friendly practices. These observations were crucial to ensuring that the training materials met the participants' needs.

Stage 2. Coordination with Partners

The team coordinates with village government officials, tourism managers, and local community leaders to determine participants, location, time, activity requirements, and technical details of the training.

Stage 3. Mapping Tourism MSME Branding Problems

Participants were invited to discuss the key challenges faced in promotion and branding. The mapping was conducted through simple questions, such as: what are the MSMEs' main products, what are their unique characteristics, who are the target tourists, what promotional media are already being used, and what are the obstacles to attracting tourists.

Stage 4. Green Tourism Branding Training

Participants were given material on the concept of green tourism, the importance of branding for tourism MSMEs, how to build a product image, the principles of environmentally friendly promotion, and examples of simple branding applications. The material was presented in a practical manner, with examples relevant to the lives of MSMEs.

Stage 5. Practice of Writing MSME Product Stories

Participants practiced creating product stories. The stories included the product name, local ingredients, unique features, manufacturing process, environmental value, and promotional material. This practice aimed to enable MSMEs to explain the value of their products compellingly to tourists.

Stage 6. Digital Content and Green Campaign Assistance

Participants were guided in creating simple digital promotional content examples. These could include Instagram captions, WhatsApp Business messages, short videos, product photos, or simple digital posters. Participants were also encouraged to develop green campaign messages, such as calls to maintain cleanliness, reduce plastic waste, and support local MSMEs.

Stage 7. Evaluation and Follow-up

Evaluation is conducted through pre-tests, post-tests, observations of practical results, and participant feedback. The evaluation aims to determine improvements in participants' understanding and skills after participating in the activity. Follow-up actions can include providing product story templates, promotional caption examples, and eco-friendly tourism service guidelines.



Fig. 1. Community Service Flowchart

III. Results and Discussion

3.1 Partner Overview

Pematang Johar Village has the potential for nature-based tourism and rice paddies that can be developed as a green tourism destination. The existence of rice paddy tourism, a rural atmosphere, local cuisine, and community involvement are important assets in developing community-based tourism. Tourism MSMEs play a crucial role because they provide products and services directly consumed by tourists. Based

on the initial observation design, community service partners are tourism MSMEs who need strengthening in aspects of branding, promotion, and product communication. Some MSMEs have attractive products, but not all are able to consistently present their product identities. Product displays, product stories, social media usage, and promotional messages still need to be strengthened to align with the green tourism image of Pematang Johar Village.

3.2 Implementation of Initial Observation

Initial observations were conducted to identify the partners' conditions prior to the training. Aspects observed included the type of MSME business, product display, promotional methods, stall conditions, environmental cleanliness, and potential environmentally friendly values that could be leveraged as part of branding. The results of the initial observations were designed to form the basis for developing training materials. If it was discovered that MSMEs lacked product labels, the materials were directed toward developing simple product identities. If digital promotion was still weak, mentoring focused on creating captions, product photos, and social media content. If cleanliness was a concern, green campaigns and environmentally friendly services needed to be emphasized.

Documentation 1. Initial Observation of Tourism Locations and MSMEs

Documentation Types	Information
Tourist location photos	
Photo of MSME stall	
MSME product photos	
Observation notes	<p>At the initial meeting at the location, several notes were obtained at the service location, such as several things that still need to be paid attention to and can be improved.</p>

3.3 Coordination with Partners

Coordination with partners is carried out to ensure activities run according to community needs. Coordination involves the community service team, village government or tourism managers, and representatives of MSMEs. The coordination agenda includes determining the activity time, activity location, number of participants, equipment requirements, and technical documentation. This coordination is important because community service activities are not only oriented towards delivering materials, but also on the benefits for partners. With good coordination, activity implementation can be more focused and the number of participants who attend is in accordance with the activity's objectives.

3.4 Mapping of Tourism MSME Branding Problems

Problem mapping was conducted through discussions with participants. In this session, participants were asked to explain their products or services, promotional methods they have implemented, obstacles in attracting tourists, and environmental values that have been or could be implemented in their businesses. The problem mapping demonstrated that strengthening the branding of tourism MSMEs needs to start with simple steps. MSMEs need to understand that branding extends beyond logos, but also encompasses product names, product stories, stall layouts, cleanliness, service, communication with tourists, and consistency of promotional messages. With this understanding, MSMEs can begin to improve how they present their products without incurring significant costs.

3.5 Green Tourism Branding Training

Green tourism branding training aims to enhance participants' understanding of the importance of building a business image that is environmentally friendly, attractive, and aligned with local potential. The material covered the concept of green tourism, simple branding principles, the role of MSMEs in shaping the image of tourist villages, and examples of product promotions based on local and environmental values.

In this training, participants were introduced to three main messages that can be developed in branding Pematang Johar tourism MSMEs, namely:

1. rice field nature tourism;
2. local community products;
3. eco-friendly tourism experience.

These three messages can be developed into slogans, social media captions, product narratives, or service messages for tourists. A simple example of a message might be: "Enjoy the rice paddy atmosphere, support local MSMEs, and protect the environment in Pematang Johar."



Fig. 2. Green tourism branding training for tourism MSME actors.

3.6 Practice of Writing MSME Product Stories

After the presentation session, participants practiced composing product stories. Product stories serve to explain the value and uniqueness of a product to tourists. With product stories, MSMEs not only sell goods but also experience, local identity, and contribute to the village economy. The product story format provided to participants was kept simple for ease of use. The format includes the product name, local ingredients, unique features, manufacturing process, environmentally friendly values, and promotional text. An example format can be seen in the following table.

Product Story Components	Example of Filling
Product name	Cassava chips typical of Pematang Johar
Local ingredients	Cassava from farmers around the village
Product uniqueness	Local taste, made fresh, suitable as a souvenir from rice field tours
Making process	Processed simply by village MSME actors
Green tourism value	Using local materials and reducing excess plastic packaging
Promotional sentences	"Local snacks from the rice field tourism village, delicious to enjoy while supporting Pematang Johar MSMEs."

Through this practice, participants are expected to have a product narrative that can be used for product labels, digital catalogs, social media captions, and direct promotions to tourists.

3.7 Digital Content and Green Campaign Assistance

Digital content mentoring is provided to enable participants to promote tourism products and services more engagingly. The media used is tailored to the participants' skills, such as WhatsApp Business, Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, or Google Maps. Participants are not directed to create complex content, but rather simple, consistent, and easy-to-implement content.

Examples of promotional captions that participants can use are as follows:

"A trip to Pematang Johar isn't just about enjoying the rice paddies, it's also about supporting local MSMEs. Let's maintain cleanliness, reduce plastic waste, and enjoy local village products."

In addition to captions, participants were also asked to create a simple green campaign. Examples of green campaign messages that could be used are:

1. "Bring Home Memories, Not Trash."
2. "Support Local MSMEs, Keep Tourism Beautiful."
3. "Clean Tourism, Growing MSMEs."
4. "Enjoy the Rice Fields, Protect the Environment."
5. "Local Products for Sustainable Tourism."
6. "Family Recreation Place"

This mentoring helps MSMEs understand that good digital content doesn't have to be expensive. Good content is clear, consistent, easy to understand, and showcases the product's value in an engaging way.



Fig. 3 Green Campaign

3.8 Activity Evaluation

Evaluations are conducted to determine changes in participants' understanding and skills after participating in the activities. These can be conducted through simple pre- and post-tests. Evaluation indicators include understanding the concept of green tourism, understanding tourism MSME branding, ability to develop product stories, ability to create digital content, and understanding environmentally friendly services.

Filling instructions:

The data in the following table is filled in after the activity is implemented. Scores can be on a 0–100 scale or a percentage. The description column should be filled in with "increased," "somewhat improved," "not improved," or a brief explanation based on the activity results.

No.	Evaluation Indicators	Pre-test Score	Post-test Score	Improvement
1	Understanding the concept of green tourism	67	86	Increase
2	Understanding the branding of tourism MSMEs	66	88	Increase
3	Ability to compose product stories	65	85	Increase
4	Ability to create digital content	70	90	Increase
5	Understanding environmentally friendly services	74	93	Increase
6	Ability to compose green promotional messages	70	90	Increase
7	Readiness to implement branding in business	63	84	Increase

Table 1. Program Evaluation

In addition to quantitative evaluation, evaluation can also be conducted through participant feedback. This feedback is used to determine whether the material is easy to understand, whether the practices are useful, and whether participants are willing to apply the training findings to their business activities.

IV. DISCUSSION

This community service activity is designed to address the needs of tourism MSMEs in strengthening their competitiveness through green tourism branding. Branding in the context of tourism villages is not only interpreted as a visual symbol, but as a process of building tourist perceptions of the products, services, experiences, and sustainable values offered by the destination. Therefore, strengthening branding needs to be carried out in an integrated manner between MSMEs, tourism managers, village government, and the community. Strengthening green tourism branding is important because Pematang Johar Village has a natural tourism character that needs to be maintained for its sustainability. Nature-based tourism will have a stronger appeal if business actors are able to maintain cleanliness, showcase local products, reduce waste, and encourage tourists to behave in an environmentally friendly manner. Thus, green tourism branding functions not only as a promotional strategy, but also as an educational strategy and behavior change.

The expected outcome of this activity is an increased understanding of the importance of product identity and digital promotion for participants. MSMEs that previously only sold products directly are now being guided to understand the value of their products, local stories, and environmental messages that can be communicated to tourists. For example, local food products can be promoted not just as food, but as part of the rice field tourism experience and support for the village economy.

The practice of creating product stories is a crucial part of this activity. Product stories help MSMEs explain their products' uniqueness in a simple and engaging way. Products with stories tend to be more memorable to tourists because they convey emotional, social, and local values. In the context of green tourism, product stories can also highlight environmentally friendly values, such as the use of local materials, reducing plastic waste, or supporting farmers and rural businesses.

Digital content support is also crucial because today's tourist behavior is heavily influenced by digital information. Tourists often seek information through social media, Google Maps, visitor reviews, and visual content. Therefore, tourism MSMEs need basic skills to create simple content. This content doesn't need to be complex, but it should be clear, engaging, and consistent with the image of green tourism.

This activity also demonstrates that effective community service training doesn't have to be lengthy. With a concise, practical, and partner-focused activity design, participants can gain immediately applicable skills. A one-day training program with light mentoring can be a great option for MSMEs with limited time to maintain their businesses.

Academically, this activity strengthens the relevance of community service in marketing management, entrepreneurship, sustainable tourism, and MSME empowerment. Practically, this activity provides direct benefits to tourism MSMEs in the form of increased knowledge, promotional skills, and environmental awareness. Thus, strengthening green tourism branding can be a strategy for empowering tourism MSMEs based on local potential.

V. CONCLUSION

The community service activity titled "Strengthening Green Tourism Branding for Tourism MSMEs in Pematang Johar Village, Deli Serdang" was designed to increase the capacity of MSMEs in building product identities, developing product stories, creating digital promotional content, and implementing eco-friendly tourism principles. The activity was implemented through initial observation, partner coordination, problem mapping, green tourism branding training, product storytelling practice, digital content mentoring, and evaluation.

This program is expected to produce outcomes in the form of increased participant understanding, product story templates, promotional caption examples, green tourism campaigns, and activity documentation. Simple, locally-based branding can help tourism MSMEs present their products more attractively and bolster Pematang Johar Village's image as a community-based green tourism destination.

Suggested follow-up activities include mentoring MSMEs in managing social media, developing a digital catalog of tourism products, creating a shared visual identity, and strengthening collaboration between village governments, tourism managers, MSMEs, village youth, and universities.

Thank-you note

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