

STRATEGIES IN PROMOTING TOURISM PRODUCTS IN PANTAI BIRU, MAKASSAR, INDONESIA

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to analyze promotional strategies that should be applied to tourism products at Pantai Biru, identify the factors that support the increase in tourist visits, and develop recommendations for integrated and sustainable promotional strategies. This research uses a qualitative method with data collected through observation and interviews involving tourism managers, local business actors, and tourists as informants. The findings show that the promotional strategies implemented so far are still limited to the use of simple social media, word-of-mouth promotion, and occasional entertainment events organized at the beach area. The main supporting factors for the increase in tourist visits include the natural beauty of Pantai Biru with its clear seawater, relatively easy accessibility from downtown Makassar, and the involvement of the local community in providing facilities and tourism services. However, the study also found several obstacles in the implementation of promotional activities, including limited funding, lack of innovation in digital content creation, and the absence of an integrated marketing strategy. Based on these findings, this study recommends strengthening the branding of Pantai Biru as a more competitive tourism destination, optimizing the use of digital media with creative and interactive content, and developing multi-stakeholder collaboration that involves local communities, managers, and tourism business actors. In addition, the principle of sustainability needs to be integrated into every promotional activity so that the development of tourism is not only oriented toward increasing the number of visitors but also maintaining the preservation of the coastal environment and improving the welfare of local communities. This research is expected to provide practical contributions for managers and tourism business actors in designing more effective promotional strategies, while also serving as a reference for the development of sustainable tourism in Makassar. In the future, the findings of this study may also serve as a consideration for further research on promotional strategies in other destinations with similar characteristics, so that the results are not only beneficial locally but also relevant in the context of national tourism development. Such strategies will strengthen the long-term competitiveness of Pantai Biru.

Keyword: promotional strategy, pantai biru, tourist visits, sustainability

1. INTRODUCTION

The promotion of tourism products plays a significant role in the development of tourist destinations aimed at attracting a larger number of visitors. Pantai Biru, recognized as one of the prominent tourist spots, possesses considerable potential to be further developed through the implementation of effective and appropriate promotional strategies. A variety of promotional approaches can be utilized, ranging from leveraging social media platforms to organizing entertainment events that actively involve local community participation. The optimization of digital technology has become a central factor in reaching a broad and precisely targeted audience. Moreover, a deep understanding of the target tourists' characteristics is essential to tailor marketing strategies to their needs. Well-planned management will also enhance Pantai Biru's appeal as a preferred travel destination. Hence, adopting a strategic approach to promoting tourism products in Pantai Biru is crucial to support the advancement of the local tourism industry.

When designing promotional strategies for Pantai Biru tourism, it is important to grasp the diverse approaches that have been explored in previous research. Several studies have examined promotion strategies and destination development, with a particular focus on Pantai Biru. Nisya and Zakik (2022: 1-10) highlight the importance of developing halal tourism at Pantai Biru, which

positively impacts the welfare of the surrounding community. Ramdhani and Andriana (2023: 6674-6687) assert that social media use is an effective promotional tool in attracting tourists. Dwika et al. (2022: 1-14) analyze the feasibility of Pantai Biru as a tourist destination through a sustainable development lens. Additionally, Febrianti et al. (2021: 5-10) emphasize the role of facilities and accessibility as factors that boost visitation interest. Muhaer et al. (2024: 1-14) reveal that demographic characteristics of tourists, such as age and marital status, influence their attraction; younger tourists tend to be drawn to visual appeals disseminated through social media, while older tourists prefer relaxing experiences.

Promotional strategies implemented must keep pace with technological advancements and current tourist behaviors. Social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube have become primary channels for promoting tourist destinations due to their ability to efficiently and rapidly reach a wide market. Engaging and high-quality promotional content will increase public interest and awareness regarding Pantai Biru. Moreover, managers need to carefully manage posting schedules, accurately identify target audiences, and conduct regular evaluations to optimize promotional outcomes. Entertainment events can also serve as additional attractions for tourists. Collaborative approaches involving various stakeholders are expected to strengthen marketing strategies and destination management. Through these efforts, Pantai Biru is anticipated to experience a significant increase in tourist visits.

The success of promoting tourism products at Pantai Biru not only enhances visitor numbers but also contributes positively to the local economy. Sustainable development and promotion can create employment opportunities and improve the welfare of the local community. Therefore, the strategies applied must consider environmental and social aspects to prevent harm to local ecosystems and cultures. The use of digital technology also assists in managing visitor data and monitoring tourist satisfaction. Consequently, professional and integrated management will yield an attractive and highly competitive tourist destination. Additionally, routine evaluations are crucial to adapt strategies in response to evolving trends and market demands. Collectively, these strategies will effectively support the optimal development of tourism at Pantai Biru.

2. RESEARCH & METHODOLOGY

This study employs a descriptive qualitative method aimed at gaining a deeper understanding of how tourism promotion strategies are implemented at Pantai Biru. This approach was chosen because it can provide a comprehensive picture of the phenomenon through data in the form of statements, perspectives, and related documents. Primary data were obtained through direct observation at the research site and interviews with managers, tourists, and the local community. Observations were carried out to identify the types of promotional activities applied and to see their impact on the number of tourist visits. Interviews served as a way to gather information about the views and expectations of the stakeholders involved. In addition, this study also made use of secondary data sourced from books, journals, and previous reports relevant to beach tourism promotion strategies. Through this method, field findings could be combined with theoretical studies that support the research.

In collecting data, this study applied three main techniques, namely observation, interviews, and documentation. Observations at Pantai Biru were conducted to record the forms of promotion such as the use of social media, the organization of events, and the involvement of local communities. Interviews were conducted using a purposive sampling technique, selecting informants who were considered to have relevant experience or knowledge, such as destination managers, tourism business actors, and visitors. Documentation was obtained from various sources, including promotional brochures, social media posts, event reports, and news coverage related to Pantai Biru promotion. The collected data were then selected based on their relevance and accuracy to support the analysis. To ensure data validity, triangulation techniques were applied by comparing information from

different sources and methods. This step was taken to guarantee that the research results truly reflect the actual conditions in the field.

The data analysis process was carried out using an interactive model consisting of three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. At the reduction stage, the researcher sorted and simplified the results of interviews, observations, and documentation to identify key patterns. The reduced data were then presented in descriptive narratives, tables, and quotations from informants. The final stage was conclusion drawing, which was carried out repeatedly until consistent findings were obtained. To strengthen validity, this analysis also applied triangulation of sources and methods. This process is expected to answer the research objective, namely to identify effective promotional strategies for enhancing Pantai Biru's attractiveness. Furthermore, the findings of this study are expected to provide practical recommendations for managers in designing sustainable tourism promotion strategies. Thus, this research contributes not only academically but also practically to regional tourism development.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 An Overview of Pantai Biru

Pantai Biru in Makassar is a well-known tourist destination located in the Tamalate District, Makassar City, South Sulawesi. The beach is distinguished by its clear blue waters and soft white sandy shore, creating a breathtaking view for visitors. Its strategic location, approximately 5.8 kilometers from Pantai Losari, offers easy access by both private vehicles and public transportation. Besides its scenic natural beauty, Pantai Biru is equipped with adequate facilities to ensure visitors' comfort during their stay. Various interesting activities such as swimming, snorkeling, and gazebo rentals are available, suitable for families and general tourists alike. The affordable entrance ticket price makes this beach a favored choice not only for local residents but also for visitors from outside the city. The combination of natural beauty and comprehensive facilities positions Pantai Biru as a significant tourism icon in Makassar.

Pantai Biru provides a unique experience with its dominant bright blue color, which is characteristic and imparts an exotic yet calming impression to visitors. Blue gazebos are lined along the beach for rent, offering comfortable resting and gathering spots for families or groups of tourists. Additional amenities such as tents, a spacious parking area, and a well-maintained cleanliness management system contribute to the ease of visits. The environmental cleanliness is well-maintained with strategically placed trash bins. Pantai Biru is also known to be picnic-friendly, welcoming families seeking a relaxed atmosphere. Friendly services and maintained security further enhance the attractiveness of the destination. These overall aspects make Pantai Biru an ideal and comfortable recreational spot.

In terms of accessibility, Pantai Biru is situated on Jalan Metro Tanjung Bunga, a coastal area with good road networks and easy-to-reach conditions. From downtown Makassar, visitors can reach the beach in approximately 40 to 50 minutes by private car. Besides the main route, there is an alternative route via the Reformasi Toll Road, shortening travel time to the beach. Pantai Biru is located near other famous beaches such as Pantai Akkarena and Pantai Tanjung Bayang, making it convenient for tourists to visit multiple destinations in a single short trip. Public transportation is also available for tourists without private vehicles. This easy accessibility makes Pantai Biru a strategic choice for tourists who want to explore Makassar's coastlines. Adequate transportation infrastructure supports the growing number of visitors.

The main attraction of Pantai Biru is not only its natural beauty but also its facilities that support various tourism activities. A unique facility at the beach is the outdoor wedding party area, the only one of its kind in Makassar. Attractive decorations and professional catering services are available to support wedding ceremonies and other events. Besides weddings, Pantai Biru is also a favorite camping site even though permanent lodgings are not yet available. The beach's sunset views are known to be stunning and often compared to those found on Bali's famous beaches. Other supporting

facilities such as cafeterias, snorkeling equipment rentals, and security make visits more complete. All of these facilities make Pantai Biru suitable as a family recreational and social event destination.

Beyond its natural beauty and complete facilities, Pantai Biru also provides a positive economic impact on the surrounding community. The destination opens business opportunities for local residents, such as food vendors, boat service providers, and rental of beach activity equipment. Income from the tourism sector contributes to the welfare improvement of the local community. The local government has been striving to improve facilities and maintain cleanliness to support tourism growth in the area. Good management efforts aim to preserve the beach ecosystem while maximizing economic benefits. This potential establishes Pantai Biru as a key pillar in the tourism development of Makassar City. Active involvement of local communities in management further strengthens sustainable destination stewardship.

The area surrounding Pantai Biru is complemented by various supporting attractions, including Makassar's traditional culinary delights available to visitors. Numerous restaurants and food stalls offer a wide variety of menus ranging from fresh seafood to traditional local dishes. In addition to culinary offerings, there are several hangout spots with beautiful sea views that enrich the visitor experience at Pantai Biru. The presence of entertainment and culinary facilities adds important value to keep visitors longer. Managers also pay attention to adequate sanitation and security facilities for visitor comfort. Environmentally friendly policies are beginning to be implemented to maintain the marine and beach ecosystem free from waste and pollution. All these factors support Pantai Biru as a comfortable and attractive destination for diverse visitor groups.

Pantai Biru often hosts various events that support tourism promotion activities. Various events such as cultural festivals, water sports competitions, and music concerts have been held at the beach. These events not only boost tourist visits but also introduce and preserve local culture and arts. Support from government and private sectors plays a significant role in enhancing the quality of the events organized. Moreover, these events provide opportunities for community participation and local business actors. Infrastructure and service improvements during the events offer positive experiences for visitors. Through regular activities, Pantai Biru continues to grow as a central tourism hub and an outstanding destination in Makassar.

As one of the premier beach tourism destinations in Makassar, Pantai Biru faces challenges and opportunities that require careful management. Destination management must ensure environmental sustainability by maintaining cleanliness and controlling negative impacts on the beach ecosystem. Challenges such as climate change and plastic pollution are issues that need serious attention through sustainable environmental programs. On the other hand, significant opportunities arise through digital promotion and partnerships with various stakeholders. Strategic planning that involves the local community is essential to ensure tourism development provides long-term benefits. With effective management, Pantai Biru can continue to maintain its status as a favored destination and enhance its contribution to Makassar's economy. Sustainability and innovation are the main keys to Pantai Biru's successful future.



Figure 1: Pantai Biru

Source: Authors, 2025

3.2 Tourism Products and Supporting Factors for Tourist Visits at Pantai Biru

Pantai Biru is famous for its stunning and calming natural beauty. The crystal-clear blue seawater sparkles under the sunlight, creating a mesmerizing view. Many visitors come just to enjoy the refreshing and relaxing atmosphere. Some sit and chat with friends, take beautiful photos, or play joyfully in the shallow water. This seascape gives a different impression compared to other destinations around Makassar. Such breathtaking scenery is the first attraction that catches tourists' attention. Therefore, the panoramic sea becomes the most essential tourism product at Pantai Biru.

Easy accessibility is another strong factor that makes Pantai Biru appealing. Its strategic location near the city center allows visitors to reach it conveniently. The road conditions are fairly good and suitable for both private and public transportation. The existence of a toll road makes the trip even faster and more practical. Tourists feel happy because they do not need to take a long and tiring journey. This smooth access becomes a big advantage compared to other hard-to-reach destinations. Thus, accessibility strengthens the overall charm of Pantai Biru.

The facilities provided at Pantai Biru also attract tourists' attention. Comfortable gazebos for resting, spacious and organized parking areas, and simple yet delicious food stalls are available. Visitors feel more at ease with the presence of these supporting amenities. Some equipment such as snorkeling gear is also available for rent, adding fun experiences. Although not yet modern, these facilities already fulfill tourists' basic needs. Friendly facilities make visitors want to stay longer at the site. Hence, such amenities are an important part of Pantai Biru's tourism product.

The role of the local community adds an authentic touch to Pantai Biru. Residents run small businesses like food stalls, equipment rentals, and simple guiding services with warm hospitality. Their friendliness creates a welcoming atmosphere for visitors. Tourists experience a different vibe that cannot be found at other destinations. The presence of locals enriches the cultural nuance and strengthens the destination's identity. It not only supports the economy but also adds emotional value to the visit. Therefore, community participation becomes a captivating supporting factor at Pantai Biru.

Cleanliness and safety are crucial factors that shape a positive impression. The management has already provided sufficient trash bins at several strategic points. Cleaning staff work diligently to keep the beach neat and pleasant. The presence of supervision makes tourists feel secure and protected. A clean environment gives the impression of a well-maintained and classy beach. On the other hand, poor hygiene could ruin the image and reduce attractiveness. Therefore, cleanliness and safety must be consistently maintained.

Overall, the tourism products of Pantai Biru consist of natural beauty, accessibility, facilities, pricing, activities, and community involvement. All these elements complement one another to create a memorable experience. Visitors not only enjoy the beautiful sea but also the warm service and friendly atmosphere. Affordable prices and easy access further strengthen its appeal. Local participation adds authenticity that enriches tourists' experiences. If all aspects are well-managed, Pantai Biru can stand out as a leading destination. Strong tourism products will also support more effective promotional strategies.

3.3 Promotion Strategies and Recommendations for Sustainable Tourism Development at Pantai Biru

The current promotion strategies at Pantai Biru remain simple and limited. Most promotion relies on natural word-of-mouth from previous visitors. Social media posts exist but are still infrequent and less appealing. Occasionally, entertainment events are organized, adding a cheerful vibe to the beach. These methods do increase visits, but they are not strong enough for long-term growth. Many people outside Makassar still do not recognize Pantai Biru's beauty. Therefore, more creative and effective promotion strategies are urgently needed.

Social media can become the most powerful tool in the digital era. For now, Instagram and Facebook posts are irregular and lack engaging content. Simple photos alone are not enough to spark curiosity among potential visitors. Audiences today prefer short videos, creative storytelling, and

interactive content. If managed attractively, social media can reach a very wide audience. Consistent content brings a stronger impact on the destination's image. Thus, optimizing social media should be a top priority for Pantai Biru's promotion.

Events and festivals can serve as highly effective promotion strategies. Music concerts, water sports competitions, or cultural activities provide a festive attraction for visitors. Unfortunately, such events are not regularly held, limiting their long-term impact. Tourists usually look for annual or seasonal events they can plan around. If Pantai Biru had a fixed calendar of events, tourism visits would be more stable. Events also create free promotional opportunities through media coverage and tourists' posts. Therefore, events should be organized in a more consistent and planned way.

The involvement of local communities can also be maximized as a promotional strength. Friendly residents can naturally promote the beach through their businesses and interactions. With digital training, they could also help promote via social media platforms. Such efforts make the promotion feel more authentic and trustworthy for visitors. Tourists will also feel more connected to the local people. Moreover, community-based promotion contributes directly to improving local livelihoods. Hence, empowering residents is essential for strengthening sustainable promotion.

Limited funding remains a serious obstacle in Pantai Biru's promotion efforts. Small budgets make it difficult to create high-quality and creative content. Producing professional videos or running digital campaigns requires significant costs. Likewise, holding consistent events is not possible without financial support. If promotion is done in a minimal way, the destination will lose its competitive edge. The best solution is to collaborate with government institutions and private sectors. With adequate funding, promotional strategies can be more attractive and professional.

Branding is also crucial for strengthening Pantai Biru's identity. Currently, the beach lacks a clear slogan, logo, or unique story that differentiates it from others. In fact, branding gives uniqueness that tourists can easily remember. This identity can build pride and make Pantai Biru more recognizable. Without branding, the destination will be overshadowed by more popular beaches. Consistent branding creates a positive long-term image for tourism growth. Therefore, creative branding should be developed as soon as possible.

Sustainable promotion must align with environmental preservation principles. If the focus is only on increasing visitors, the beach could suffer damage. Modern tourists are becoming more concerned about environmental and sustainability issues. For this reason, eco-friendly campaigns should be included in every promotion. For example, encouraging cleanliness and promoting the use of eco-friendly products. Such messages create a positive image of a destination that truly cares. In this way, promotion supports both conservation and responsible tourism growth.

In summary, Pantai Biru's promotional strategies must be creative, consistent, and sustainable. Social media should be managed with fresher and more engaging content. Annual or seasonal events could be scheduled to create regular attractions. Local communities must be empowered to take part in promotional activities. Funding support and strong branding should also be prioritized to enhance identity. All these steps should be carried out while preserving the natural environment. With the right strategies, Pantai Biru can grow into a competitive and captivating tourism destination.

4. CONCLUSION

Pantai Biru has great potential as a leading tourism destination supported by its natural beauty, easy accessibility, and the active involvement of the local community. The tourism products offered are quite diverse, ranging from simple facilities, recreational activities, to a welcoming atmosphere that provides authentic experiences for visitors. However, the current promotion strategies remain limited and underdeveloped, relying mostly on word-of-mouth, basic social media posts, and occasional entertainment events. Funding constraints, lack of digital content innovation, and the absence of strong branding make Pantai Biru less competitive compared to other destinations. This situation highlights the need for more modern, creative, and targeted promotional innovations. With better management, Pantai Biru can increase its attractiveness and strengthen its position in the

tourism market. Therefore, strengthening promotional development strategies is essential for sustainable growth.

The main recommendation from this study is to build strong branding for Pantai Biru as a competitive tourism destination through appealing visual identity and storytelling. Optimizing social media with creative, interactive, and consistent content must also become a priority to reach a wider audience. In addition, organizing regular events, cultural festivals, and sports activities can add value and enhance tourist visits. Financial support from the government and private sectors is necessary to ensure promotion runs effectively and professionally. Sustainability principles must also be integrated into every strategy so that increased visitation does not harm the environment while still benefiting local communities. With these steps, Pantai Biru can grow into a tourism destination that is not only popular but also sustainable. This research is expected to serve as a reference for managers and tourism actors in designing more effective and competitive promotional strategies.

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