

Experiential and Digital Marketing Strategy for Sustainable Halal Tourism : with Wahdatul Ulum

Laily Nur Asyifa^{1*}

¹ Department of Islamic Economics, Faculty of Islamic Business and Economics, UIN Walisongo Semarang, Indonesia

Prof. Street Dr. Hamka Campus III UIN Walisongo Semarang 50185

*Corresponding email: lailynurasyifa0310@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

In Indonesia, with a majority Muslim population, it is easy for halal tourism to grow and develop, especially in the Central Java region. However, according to IMTI data, Central Java has not optimally provided a significant impact regarding access to Muslim-friendly tourism. But it is different from the iconic tourist attraction in the capital of Semarang, namely Lawang Sewu. Therefore, this research aims to find out how optimal the development of Lawang Sewu tourism is by applying the concepts of Experiential Marketing and Digital Marketing to the values of Wahdatul Ulum for Muslim tourists. This research uses qualitative research methods with descriptive analysis through the results of structured interviews and literature studies on related objects. In this research, the results found that halal tourism in Lawang Sewu applies experiential marketing which can enrich the tourist experience while ensuring tourism is Muslim-friendly. Not only that, marketing Lawang Sewu halal tourism through digital marketing can also be accessed online; through websites, social media with quality content and applications. Therefore, based on researchers' observations, the Lawang Sewu tourist attraction is able to apply all assessment indicators from ACES (Access, Communication, Environment, and Service). Researchers recommend that further research analyze new concepts related to the Pentahelix Model in Halal Tourism in Indonesia.

Keywords: *Digital Marketing, Experiential Marketing, , Halal Tourism, Sustainable, Wadatul Ulum*

Introduction

The development of the halal industry is currently showing very rapid progress. The Global Islamic Economy (GIE) indicator in 2020 measures the strength of the Islamic economy in 73 countries, so that Indonesia is ranked fourth. This ranking has improved compared to the previous year, namely 2018 (rank 10) and 2019 (rank 5). Six main industry sectors were used in their measurements: Islamic finance, halal food, Muslim-friendly

tourism, fashion, media and recreation, and pharmaceuticals and cosmetics. One of the six main industrial sectors is Muslim-friendly tourism, the most influential halal industry among other halal industrial sectors (Fauzi et al., 2019; Mastercard-CrescentRating, 2023a).

Muslim-friendly tourism is also the core of the halal industry, because its existence is recognized when services include elements of halal food, fashion, media and recreation, as well as pharmaceuticals and cosmetics (Fitriyyah, 2022). Indonesia is a country with

enormous ethnic, cultural and religious diversity, making Indonesia have a very diverse historical and cultural heritage. This diverse historical and cultural heritage is one of the potential opportunities for tourism development in Indonesia. The tourism industry is a vital sector that has an important impact on national income and can even open up new jobs for people, especially in developing countries (Tourism, nd).

In 2021, based on the State of Global Islamic Economy Report 2021, Indonesia will be able to maintain its 4th position in the world in terms of sharia economic development (Arif Budiman, 2019). However, the positions for various sharia economic sub-sectors vary. For the halal tourism sector, based on the Global Muslim Travel Index report, Indonesia experienced an increase in ranking from 2nd to 1st in 2023. This can be seen based on the following table:

Table 1 Ranking of Halal Destinations

GMTI 2023 Rank	Destinations	GMTI 2023 Scores
1	Indonesia	73
1	Malaysia	73
3	Saudi Arabia	72
4	United Arab Emirates	71
5	Türkiye	70

Source: data processing in the State of Global Islamic Economy Report

Based on this table, Indonesia and Malaysia together hold the prestigious top position in GMTI 2023. Indonesia again took the top position after previously both occupying the same ranking in 2019, and in 2022 it will reach 2nd place while Malaysia consistently maintains its status in the rankings. GMTI has been at the forefront since it was founded in 2015. Based on data obtained by the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy in 2019, data shows that the tourism sector contributed 5.5% to total GDP income, namely around IDR 5.5 lakh. 280,000 billion, with total tourist visits of 16.3. This is inseparable from the extraordinary cultural diversity and natural charm that is able to make Indonesian tourism a target for local and foreign

tourists. Population growth will have a significant impact on tourism because tourism is one of the needs that must be met (Mastercard-CrescentRating, 2023a; Surwandono et al., 2020).

In Indonesia, which is predominantly Muslim, halal tourism can easily grow and develop. Technological advances and ease of internet access are also one of the causes of the rapid increase in the number of tourists, both domestic and foreign. Indonesia is starting to develop a halal tourism trend. Halal tourism is a form of strategy that uses cultural management combined with Islamic Sharia standards as its foundation. Halal tourism can be done by providing facilities and basic needs for Muslims. The facilities referred to here are the need for places of worship, halal food and drinks, transportation and shelter (Takhim et al., 2023). Accordingly the Indonesia Muslim Travel Index (IMTI) utilizes a structured approach “the CrescentRating ACES model,” a robust framework set out in the Mastercard-CrescentRating Global Muslim Travel Index (GMTI) report. This model is a comprehensive guide for destinations that aims to increase their attractiveness for Muslim tourists by focusing on four important domains: namely access, communication, environment, service (IMTI, 2023).

The halal tourism sector offers interesting and promising opportunities to improve the economy and increase regional income. Considering this, Semarang, the capital of Central Java Province, can be used as a halal tourist destination. The results of the Indonesia Muslim Travel Index (IMTI) 2023 highlight provinces that have succeeded in positioning themselves as leading destinations for Muslim tourists. The top ranking is occupied by West Nusa Tenggara with a score of 67, followed by Aceh, West Sumatra, DKI Jakarta and Central Java. These regions stand out not only for providing Halal options but also for creating a holistic travel environment that meets various aspects of Muslim travelers' needs (Adinugraha & Sartika, 2022; IMTI, 2023; Mastercard-CrescentRating, 2023a).

The following is a table based on the Indonesia Muslim Travel Index regarding the ranking of halal tourism in Indonesia:

Table 2 List of Top 5 Halal Tourism in Indonesia

Province	IMTI 2023 Score	IMTI 2023 Rank
Nusa Tenggara Barat	67	1
Aceh	63	2
Sumatera Barat	62	3
DKI Jakarta	60	4
Jawa Tengah	59	5
Jawa Barat	56	6

Source: Indonesia Muslim Travel Index data

Based on the table above, Central Java province is ranked 5th. Therefore, especially the condition of Semarang City's high tourism potential with many tourist attractions should be able to make Semarang City a Halal Tourism Destination City and not just a Transit City. Halal tourist destinations in Semarang are very diverse and spread widely throughout the region. Of the many halal tourist destinations, those that can be mapped are as follows: First, there are culture-based halal tourism such as Rawangsewu, Gedong Songo Temple, Tugu Temple, and the Nyonya Meneer Herbal Medicine Museum. Second, halal tourism based on religion, such as the Great Mosque of Central Java and the Baitturahman Mosque. Third, nature-based halal tourism, namely Curug Benowo, Kali Pancur Waterfall, Umbul Sidomukti and Rowo Pening and Marina Beach. The development of halal tourism is not only limited to improving facilities, but is also combined with local wisdom typical of each region (Mastercard-CrescentRating, 2023b; Pujiono et al., 2018).

However, the halal tourism sector is one of the sectors whose existence is not yet supported by regulations that have binding legal force in the form of laws or ministerial regulations, because currently the regulations are based on DSNMUI fatwas regarding guidelines for organizing tourism based on sharia. Apart from that, from an ecosystem perspective, Indonesia currently only has 3 halal industrial areas out of a total of 126 industrial areas in Indonesia. Indonesia currently still does not have a comprehensive

work map for every sector in the halal industry (Hariani, 2023).

With this, good management is needed for halal tourism in the Semarang City area. Currently, marketing strategies to attract tourists are in demand because everything is digital, so taking advantage of this moment will increase tourist interest. In the current global era, there is a need for added value that tourists need. Tourists are not only about rationality, but also emotional aspects that focus on a pleasant travel experience, this is usually called experiential marketing (Öztürk, 2015).

Experiential marketing is a marketing strategy that evolved from traditional marketing (Subawa, 2020). A shift from marketing traditional features and benefits to creating tourist experiences. Apart from experiential marketing, there is another important thing that needs to be considered, namely digital marketing. Digital marketing is one of the factors why someone makes purchasing decisions based on the information they get (Ponde, 2019; Saha & Bhattacharjee, 2023). Thus, the better the value of a product or service, the greater the enthusiasm of tourists to understand, pay attention to, and describe information about purchasing that product or service (Nanda et al., 2023).

The essence of experiential marketing and digital marketing has to do with the loyalty of Muslim tourists. If you rely on promotions as a way to attract tourists, then they will require high costs. Return visits or tourist loyalty do not require a lot of money to retain tourists compared to attracting new tourists. The main component of keeping Indonesian tourism alive in the long term is the loyalty of Muslim tourists. When tourists enjoy a product or service and have a memorable experience while consuming it, they will become loyal tourists, and they will even be willing to spread information about the product to anyone around them, this is known as word of mouth (Kristiana et al., 2020).

Previous research on halal tourism marketing, according to Ajeng Paradipta (2018), states that the combination of halal tourism and local wisdom has the same criteria. Other research by Battour (2021) and Azizuddin (2022) also states the same thing that the intersection between

experiential marketing and halal tourism presents a unique opportunity for entrepreneurs to meet the needs of Muslim tourists. Likewise, research conducted by Sobari (2019) states that experiential marketing plays an important role in halal tourism, influencing the satisfaction and loyalty of Muslim tourists. However, it is different from research conducted by Muhamad (2019) that there are challenges in implementing halal tourism, especially in Muslim minority countries, namely in ensuring compliance with Islamic teachings. As research by Yakin, 2020 regarding Muslim minority areas in Indonesia, shows that the marketing strategy for authentic Lombok culture in halal tourism is not yet fully optimal (Fauzi et al., 2019; Mawarni et al., 2022; Rasyifa et al., 2021; Ummah et al., 2021; al., 2023).

Therefore, this research will answer the shortcomings of previous research by implementing (1) an experimental marketing strategy with a focus on tourists, namely by maximizing facilities in the form of places and tour guides who are ready to accompany tourist trips. (2) Optimization of digital marketing in promoting halal tourism, this can be achieved through the promotion of halal food and culinary tourism on government sites, as shown by Japan, South Korea and Thailand, and (3) Maintaining tourists with sustainable satisfaction with experience gained. So with this, good management is needed by tourism managers with the role of government supported by a massive marketing system to increase Muslim-friendly destinations in Semarang.

Based on the description of the problem to be researched, the aim of this research is to analyze experiential and digital marketing strategies for Muslim tourists in Semarang City. Based on this phenomenon, it is necessary to develop the halal industry by collaborating, one of which is marketing management by developing digital marketing in various mass media, applying the marketing mix concept, tourism branding and developing experiential marketing for tourists as well as collaborating with government institutions to progress. together to mutually develop and strengthen the attraction of Muslim-friendly tourism in the local area. So the problem is formulated as follows: (1) How is

the development of experiential marketing in the iconic halal tourism Lawangsewu, Semarang City? (2) How is digital marketing optimized in promoting Muslim-Friendly Tourism in Lawang Sewu? (3) How is *Wadatul Ulum* implemented in Halal Tourism in Lawang Sewu?

Literature Review

Halal Tourism

Halal tourism is any tourist object or action that is permitted in accordance with Islamic teachings, as expected by Muslim tourists in the tourism industry. Islamic law is considered the basis for the distribution of tourism products and services aimed primarily at Muslim consumers, such as halal hotels, halal resorts, halal restaurants, and tours based on Islamic values. Tourist locations are not only found in Muslim majority countries, but can also be applied in Muslim minority countries (Fuadi et al., 2022; Sulasih, 2020; Tourism, nd).

Therefore, halal tourism includes tourism services and products designed for Muslim tourists in Muslim or non-Muslim countries. Furthermore, this definition assumes that tourist destinations do not only focus on religious tourism, but also motivational tourism destinations and other general tourist destinations. Razzaq et al, (2016) stated that Muslim tourists tend to choose sharia accommodation which has characteristics such as the availability of halal food, suitability of hotel staff uniforms, absence of pornographic images and alcoholic drinks, information regarding the following things, meeting rooms with places of worship (Destiana, 2020; Kristiana et al., 2020). The increasing demand for commercial tourism and hotel services that comply with Islamic law is described as halal tourism, halal hospitality, tourism. Halal tourism is a new concept in the tourism industry that offers tourist packages and destinations designed to meet tourists' needs (Mawarni et al., 2022).

Marketing Concept

Effective tourism marketing strategies are then used to analyze the basic concepts of sharia tourism marketing, which consist of (Sundari & Lestari, 2022; Zenny Oktamia Rachman et al., 2022):

- 1) Developing products related to Islamic tourism creativity, products and services with new or different characteristics that provide new or different benefits to tourists;
- 2) Branding is the process of creating unique names and images of Islamic tourism products, places and services in the minds of tourists, especially through theme-based advertising campaigns;
- 3) Pricing, activities aimed at determining the best price for tourism products and services;
- 4) Positioning, namely a tourism marketing strategy that is in line with sharia which aims to create an image of a country, city or region in the minds of tourists that occupies a different position compared to the competitive image;
- 5) Promote Islamic products, services or tourist attractions through publications or advertisements.

a. Experiential Marketing

The current halal tourism concept must consider aspects of tourist satisfaction to build loyalty. One factor is experiential marketing (Subawa, 2020). Experiential marketing comes from a series of interactions between a customer and a product, company, or part of an organization, that provoke a reaction. This experience is personal and implies customer involvement at different levels (rational, emotional, sensory, physical, and spiritual. In addition, customer responses both subjectively and internally as a result of interacting directly and indirectly with stakeholders or the company (Dimyati, 2014). The main point of experiential marketing is connecting with customers using several levels of approach. Experiential marketing is a marketing strategy that allows consumers to experience our products directly. This strategy is considered effective because it allows consumers to know directly the quality of the products offered. There are five types of experiential marketing that we can do. Starting from introducing products, holding events and seminars, sharing immersive experiences via VR (Virtual Reality), to promoting the content you create.

The concept of Wahdat Al-Ulum

The concept of " *Wadatul Ulum* " is an idea that originates from Islamic thought, especially from the Islamic classical intellectual tradition, which emphasizes the unity of knowledge. Wadatul Ulum can be translated as "unity of sciences" or "unity of knowledge" almost like *the Unity of Sciences* . This concept is based on the belief that all branches of knowledge, whether considered secular or religious, ultimately come from the same source, namely Allah SWT (Mawarni et al., 2022; Subhani, 2023)

Method

This research uses a qualitative approach with field research methods (Agriyanto et al., 2023; Onwuegbuzie et al., 2012). The research object took the Central Java Province area, especially Semarang City. Firstly, regarding cultural tourism destinations, namely Lawing Sewu. Data collection was carried out through three stages, namely observation, interviews and literature. Observations were carried out to get an initial picture of the substance of the problems in this research. Then interviews were conducted with several tourist informants as primary data sources, namely tourists and tourism managers. Meanwhile, secondary data was obtained from literature studies in the form of journals, books, websites and other documents relevant to this research. This research focuses on halal tourism marketing management in Semarang City. Data collection was carried out via Instagram, the Lunkia application, agency websites and tourism as research subjects. The analytical method used is interactive analysis with three analytical components, namely data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions (Nuryasmin & Furqan, 2023)

Results and Discussion

Development of Experimental Marketing in Halal Tourism Lawangsewu Semarang City

Experiential marketing, which focuses on creating unique and memorable experiences, can be a key differentiator in this context (Darmawan & Yasa, 2022). By utilizing this strategy, entrepreneurs can tap into the growing Muslim tourist market and contribute to the development of halal tourism.

"We found out the information from a friend's Instagram post, then became interested after finding out that there was a Semarang City Anniversary promotion. Seeing the newest immersive tourism icon made us interested in visiting Lawang Sewu. "It turns out that nowadays it is very modern, we can enjoy this tour," said a tourist with the initials B.

Based on the results of the interview, it can be seen that tourists were amazed by the experience they had when visiting Lawang Sewu. So, experiential marketing or experience-based marketing is a strategy that involves consumers in memorable and meaningful experiences. In the context of halal tourism in Lawang Sewu, the application of experiential marketing can enrich the experience of Muslim tourists while ensuring compliance with sharia principles. The following are several ways to apply experiential marketing to halal tourism in Lawang Sewu:

1. Experience Islamic History and Culture

- Muslim Friendly Tours** : Provides tours that focus on history in Indonesia and its connection to Lawang Sewu. For example, a tour guide can explain the history of life in Semarang and how these buildings relate to that history.
- Islamic Culture Exhibition** : Holding an exhibition of Islamic arts and culture in the Lawang Sewu area. This could include Islamic calligraphy, traditional Muslim clothing, and Islamic craft souvenirs.

2. Spiritual and Educational Activities

- Islamic Education Workshop** : Hold workshops on Islamic history, the art of calligraphy, or short courses on Islamic values and ethics.

3. Muslim Friendly Facilities

- Prayer and Ablution Places** : Providing comfortable and clean prayer and ablution places, and ensuring information about these facilities is easily accessible to visitors.
- Halal Food** : Providing a canteen or restaurant that serves halal food, with a menu that reflects the richness of Islamic culinary delights.

4. Social Interaction and Community Engagement

- Cultural Events** : Holding Islamic cultural events, such as halal food festivals,

traditional Islamic music performances, or Islamic bazaars involving local communities.

- Volunteering Program** : Involving visitors in social activities, such as social work around the Lawang Sewu area, which is organized with the local Muslim community.

5. Technology and Social Media

- Mobile Application** : Developing a mobile application that provides information about prayer times, location of ablution places, halal restaurants, and Islamic historical information related to Lawang Sewu.
- Interactive Displays** : Using interactive technology such as augmented reality (AR) to provide educational experiences about Islamic history and Islamic culture in Semarang.

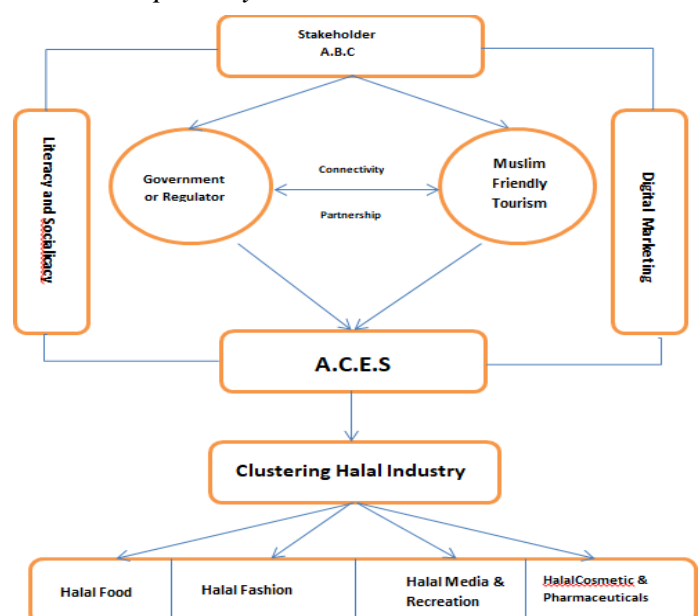
6. Personalized Experience and Customization

- Custom Tour Packages** : Provide tour packages that can be tailored to the needs and preferences of Muslim visitors, including private tours, exclusive educational sessions, and specific halal culinary experiences.
- Islamic Souvenirs** : Selling souvenirs that reflect Islamic culture and art, such as handicrafts, Islamic history books, and products relevant to Muslim life.

As in the following scheme:

Figure 1 Muslim Friendly Tourism scheme

Source: primary data



The figure shows that Muslim-friendly tourism is also an important component in the halal industry. This is in line with the results of interviews that have been conducted. This impact can be seen from the first, Muslim-friendly tourism involves and mobilizes the movement of people from one place to another, so it requires excellent service in synergy with other government and private institutions/organizations. Second, foster motivation which has a positive impact on the emergence of other halal industries such as this scheme.

If a country develops Muslim-friendly tourism, five other halal industries will automatically develop. Logically, if Muslim tourists visit a place to eat, they need halal food. When they want to carry out financial transactions, they will look for sharia banks. When they intend to shop for fashion for themselves and souvenirs. When they are tired, not feeling well, or even want to dress up and dress up, they look for halal medicine and cosmetics. They need halal media and recreation for news, films, amusement parks, etc. (Nuryasmin & Furqan, 2023; Ummah et al., 2023).

This scheme is an ideal form of synergy, minimalist with maximum results, and will provide multiple positive impacts, which will ultimately expand and accelerate the potential of various other halal industries. It can even open up new job opportunities for communities around Muslim-friendly tourist destinations in the form of food, fashion, pharmacy or media, as well as recreation and other halal industries, which will ultimately improve and make Indonesia the world's halal epicenter (MJ Ahmed & AKBABA, 2018; Firdausi et al., 2017).

Table 3 ACES model for tourist destinations in Semarang City

Kerangka Model	Submodel	Lawang Sewu	Pantai Marina	Firdaus Fatimah Zahra
Access	Air Access	√	√	√
	Road Infrastructure	√	√	√
	Rail & Sea	√	√	√
Communication	Tour Guides	√	-	√
	Stakeholder Education	√	√	√
	Market Outreach	√	√	√
Environment	Muslim Visitor Guide	√	√	√
	Domestic Tourist Arrivals	√	√	√
	International Tourist Arrivals	√	√	-
Services	Commitment to Halal Tourism	√	√	√
	Regional Tourism Organization	√	√	√
	Sustainable Tourism Initiatives	√	√	√
	Halal Restaurants	√	√	√
	Airport Facilities	√	√	√
	Hotels	√	√	√
	Tourist Attractions	√	√	-
	Cultural Heritage Sites	√	-	-
	Tourist Information Center	√	√	√

Source: data processed by researchers

Based on IMTI's Indonesia Muslim Travel Index which functions as a tool to evaluate each province's ability to accommodate Muslim tourists, with a focus not only on the availability of Halal options but also on overall environmental acceptance and inclusiveness, thus aiming to increase the Destination and Industry Competitiveness Index . By doing this, they seek to exploit the huge potential of halal tourism as a significant catalyst for improving and diversifying the Indonesian economy (M. Ahmed et al., 2021; IMTI, 2023; Ummah et al., 2023).

Optimizing branding through digital marketing in promoting Muslim-Friendly Tourism in Lawang Sewu

Lawang Sewu formed its positioning strategy, namely as a historical tourist attraction as an icon of the city of Semarang which has a unique building with the term 100 doors, which actually has more than 100 doors. With this positioning, it was developed with differentiation from Lawang Sewu. Lawang Sewu tourism is offered

as a historical tourism product which is a colonial heritage building which was once the railway head office in Semarang City. This tour offers a unique view, namely the many doors in each building, so it is called Lawang Sewu. The Tourism Department and the Central Government are collaborating to offer one of the heritage tours in Semarang City which can be accessed on various media such as the official website, the official Lawangsewu Instagram account and broadcasts on television.

Digital Marketing

The halal tourism digital marketing concept combines concepts such as prioritizing website channels, social media, interesting and mobile-friendly content, with halal tourism marketing attributes in the form of ease of searching for halal products and services; halal assessment and certificate; Halal food features; Recommendations for halal food restaurants; enhancing the halal tourism experience; Halal as a symbol of culinary difference; halal aspects at airports; such as halal services and facilities (Saha & Bhattacharjee, 2023).

By carrying out this concept, Lawang Sewu halal tourism marketing can be accessed online; through websites, social media, mobile-friendly with quality content and applications. The concept of halal tourism will attract Muslim tourists to visit. The Ministry of Tourism is socializing the development of halal tourism in Central Java Province. The city of Semarang has great potential as a religious and cultural tourism destination which is supported by Muslim residents, making this a great opportunity for this historic island to develop the halal tourism segment.

In the current digital era, the use of technology for tourism marketing has become a challenge (Adinugraha et al., 2020; Indah & Mahyuni, 2021). The efforts made by the local government in developing Lawang Sewu tourism are still limited to promotions in the form of providing a tourism information center, annual festivals, bazaar activities, and collaboration with related service ministries. One of the statements from the tourism manager regarding Lawang Sewu tourism promotion media.

"That's right for promotion of Lawang Sewu via local social media, in the form of uploading official city government accounts on Instagram and from related agencies," said staff from the tourism management.

This means that several activities such as the annual festival are still a mainstay in promoting Lawang Sewu tourism. Regarding technology, promotions are carried out using websites, Instagram, YouTube and the official Semarang City application.

Figure 2 Tourism Promos in Lawangsewu



Source: researcher's observation

Based on the researcher's observations above, the Semarang City Culture and Tourism Office not only promotes Lawang Sewu tourism on the website, it also provides information regarding the annual Lawang Sewu Festival event which is still a mainstay in promoting Lawang Sewu tourism. Likewise, tour packages are launched to be superior in attracting tourists. Discount promotions on tourism due to big holidays have several positive impacts for tourism managers, namely increasing tourist visits.

Discounts encourage more people to visit tourist destinations, increasing the number of domestic and international tourists. With increased visitor income, income for tourist managers, restaurants and Muslim-friendly souvenir shops also increases. Equalization of Visitors, Promos can help even out the number of visits throughout the year, reducing pressure during the peak

season and increasing visits in the low season. Promotions and destinations providing discounts on holidays are often accompanied by promotional campaigns, increasing awareness and attractiveness of a tourist destination (Fauzi et al., 2019; Ramadhanty et al., 2024).

Overall, discount promotions on holidays have great potential to boost the tourism sector, but require good management to minimize the negative impact. This can also be seen from related websites, applications and social media accounts.

Instagram is a very effective tool to help promote local tourism. With Instagram, tourism managers can attract tourists with a positive impact, namely increasing visibility, such as high-quality photos and videos that can show the beauty of tourist destinations, attracting the attention of potential tourists. Then the influence of Influencers, such as collaborating with influencers, can increase destination exposure to a wider audience (Ponde, 2019; Zenny Oktamia Rachman et al., 2022). Interaction and Engagement such as by posting features such as stories, live streaming, and interactive posts allow direct interaction with potential visitors. Event Promotion: Information about special events or promotions can be disseminated quickly and widely. So, overall, Instagram helps increase awareness, interest and tourist visits to local destinations.

The Lunpia Semarang application has several important benefits for tourism in this city. Namely as a tourist guide by making it easier for tourists to find tourist attractions, culinary delights, hotels, entertainment and events in Semarang. Technological advances have contributed to the provision of smartphone applications in the halal tourism industry which of course makes holidays more comfortable and Muslim-friendly (Sundari & Lestari, 2022; Tourism, nd). This strategy has become one of the tourist attractions visited by Muslim tourists; It will also provide added value in marketing destinations and developing halal tourism. Technological innovation will be an additional point in strengthening the halal tourism industry in Lawang Sewu if it is supported by human resources and collaboration with relevant stakeholders.

Easy access to tourism information as described above is very necessary for Muslim tourists when planning to travel to a tourism destination. Lunpia is an example of a smartphone application that helps Muslim tourists, especially in the city of Semarang, to find food restaurants and provides several reviews from consumers (Samori et al., 2016).

The application helps tourists find shopping centers and hotels with worship facilities and halal food restaurants. This application is available in English and Indonesian. This application is available on Android and iOS. Stephenson (2014) as quoted in Battour & Ismail (2016) stated that applications like the ones above will make it easier for Muslim tourists to find hotels.

Implementation of Wadatul Ulum in Halal Tourism in Lawang Sewu

The concept of "Wadatul Ulum" or "unity of knowledge" is an idea that emphasizes the integration of religious knowledge and general science in the understanding and application of knowledge (Asyikin, 2023). In the context of halal tourism, this concept can be applied to create tourism experiences that not only meet sharia standards but also enrich tourists' knowledge and spirituality. The following are several implementations of the Wadatul Ulum concept in Lawang Sewu halal tourism:

1. Sharia Compliance:
 - a) Halal Activities: Arranging tourism activities that comply with sharia, such as no entertainment that violates Islamic principles and providing time for prayer.
 - b) Halal Accommodation: Providing accommodation that complies with sharia principles, such as providing halal food, prayer rooms and facilities for ablution. (*attached*)
2. Religious Education and Knowledge:
 - a) Muslim-friendly Tour Guide: Providing tour guides who have moral values and ethics of religious tolerance.
 - b) Educational Program: Develop educational programs that teach tourists about art and culture related to the development of Islam in

Lawang Sewu, as well as Islamic teachings that are relevant to the places visited.

3. Welfare and Social Justice:

- a) Community-Based Tourism: Develop tourism programs that involve local communities, provide direct benefits to them, and promote Islamic social values such as mutual assistance and mutual cooperation. Such as the existence of historical and arts and culture communities in the Semarang City area.
- b) Sustainable Economy: Encouraging tourism that supports the local economy and does not damage the environment, in accordance with the principles of justice and balance in Islam.

4. Balance of Knowledge of the World and the Hereafter:

Reflection and Contemplation: Creating space and time for spiritual reflection, such as holding dhikr sessions, recitations, or religious lectures during tourist trips.

5. Technology and Innovation:

Applications and Technology: Using applications and technology to provide information regarding prayer times, Qibla direction, halal restaurants and nearby mosques (Mawarni et al., 2022; Subhani, 2023)w.

Discussion

By implementing an experiential marketing strategy that focuses on the values and needs of Muslim tourists, Lawang Sewu can become an attractive and meaningful halal tourist destination, while respecting and promoting Islamic culture and history. New forms and patterns of halal industry development can start from the development of Muslim-friendly tourism. Together with the government, we collaborate with the tourism ministry and synergize in managing Muslim-friendly tourism. The scheme related to halal tourism is implemented in various Muslim-friendly tourism in Semarang City, some examples of which are tourism that has local wisdom value, namely natural tourism, one of which is Marina Beach and heritage tourism which has become an icon of Semarang City with historical cultural value from colonial heritage, namely Lawang

Sewu. Then this was also reflected in the Firdaus Fatimah Zahra religious tourism. Muslim tourist loyalty is obtained through tourist satisfaction and Muslim tourist marketing experiences. Therefore, managers or related parties need to make comprehensive improvements in terms of information about halal tourism, management of tourist attractions, availability of sharia hotels, halal certified restaurants, and ease of finding public facilities such as places of worship as well as implementing halal tourism. Apart from that, in terms of experiential marketing, a strategy is needed to create a positive experience for Muslims

Lawang Sewu Tourism also always innovates, such as holding cultural events in the Lawang Sewu courtyard, renting vintage clothes and culinary exhibitions which are intended to attract visits from all groups, both domestic and foreign tourists. In some of these innovations, Lawang Sewu is again offering unique things by holding a 3-Dimensional exhibition, namely Lawangsewu Immersive, in which there is a display of the history of the existence of how train construction used to be now in the world of Indonesian railways. Then the modern infrastructure is currently being adapted by Lawangsewu tourism, such as implementing ticket payments using QRIS and the existence of 3-dimensional display technology depicting Lawangsewu, then adapting the historical display of Lawang Sewu using English for foreign tourists, then there are many tour guides who are ready to accompany tourists.

Furthermore, offering a Muslim-friendly concept in tourism is a special attraction for Muslim tourists, because it offers the availability of halal food, sharia-based accommodation (some have a family-friendly accommodation concept), and several facilities to support the needs of Muslims. The development of tourist destinations is not only in the form of regional advantages but also potential such as arts, culture, culinary and local advantages (Anggara et al., 2019). Sumarabawa (2015) as quoted in Anggara et al, (2019) stated that tourism development potentially requires information on physical and environmental factors which include accessibility, supporting facilities and infrastructure ("Adoption of Halal

Tourism Concept in Star Rated Hotels in Mombasa County, Kenya: The Role of Perceived Benefits,” 2022; Ainin et al., 2020; The application of the Wadatul Ulum concept in halal tourism in Lawang Sewu can create a rich and holistic experience for Muslim visitors. By integrating education, spirituality, a balance between knowledge of the world and the afterlife, and community involvement, Lawang Sewu can become a tourist destination that not only meets sharia standards but also provides added value in the form of in-depth knowledge and experience. Qualitative research with primary and secondary data will be very useful in understanding visitor needs and expectations, as well as identifying areas that need improvement to achieve these goals.

The development of Muslim-friendly tourism in Central Java Province refers to Central Java Governor Regulation Number 6 of 2015. This regulation does not explicitly regulate Muslim-friendly tourism. However, existing tourist destinations have generally carried out development and governance, referring to IMTI and GMTI criteria in terms of access, communication, environment and service or in tourism known as ACES (IMTI, 2023).

The ACES criteria are described in sub-criteria and indicators which can be explained as follows: (1) Access is ease of access to tourist destinations by air, sea and land transportation modes. Air access is the availability of airlines, both domestic and international. Sea access is the availability of sea travel services. Meanwhile, land access is the availability of train services and other transportation within cities and between cities/provinces, as well as adequate infrastructure, including quality roads, CCTV, street lighting, directions and other supports; (2) Communication Access assesses and considers Muslim-friendly tourism facilities with five sub-criteria, including Muslim visitor guides, stakeholder education, marketing media, tour guides, and digital marketing; (3) Environmental criteria focus on evaluating the number of domestic and foreign tourist arrivals, availability of Wi-Fi/internet networks, and regulations.

In this case, the large quantity of Muslim visits will be a signal and attraction for other Muslims about the comfort of a tourist destination. The

availability of Wi-Fi/a strong internal network is available in several places, pages and tourist stories in various forms of website platforms, applications, etc. (4) Tourist services that include culinary delights, travel accommodation, and several Muslim-friendly tourism support services or facilities.

Through experiential and digital marketing, tourism can be managed with tourist-based marketing management. By developing this concept, Muslim-friendly tourism will increase because tourists feel *safe* when traveling, in terms of carrying out worship, shopping for halal culinary delights, as well as other Muslim-friendly components. It is highly hoped that Halal Tourism will not only exist in city tourist areas, but can be implemented even in tourist areas with Muslim minorities.

(1)

Conclusion

In Indonesia, with a majority Muslim population, it is easy for halal tourism to grow and develop. The existence of sophisticated technology and easy internet access is also one of the causes of the rapid increase in the number of tourists, both domestic and foreign tourists. With this, good management is needed for halal tourism in the Semarang City area. Currently marketing strategies to attract tourists are in demand because everything is digital, namely through experiential marketing and digital marketing. In the context of halal tourism in Lawang Sewu, the application of experiential marketing can enrich the tourist experience while ensuring Muslim-friendly tourism. Not only that, Lawang Sewu halal tourism marketing can also be accessed online; through websites, social media, mobile-friendly with quality content and applications.

In the context of halal tourism, this concept can be applied to create tourism experiences that not only meet sharia standards but also enrich tourists' knowledge and spirituality. Therefore, based on researchers' observations, it was found that the Lawang Sewu tourist attraction was able to apply all assessment indicators from ACES (*Access, Communication, Environment, and Service*). So that tourists feel comfortable with access, facilities, management services, a Muslim-friendly environment and ethical service. This can become an attraction and thus

increase iconic tourists in the city of Semarang so that it has a big chance of being ranked as Halal Tourism in the world based on the Global Muslim Travel Index.

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