

# Word Of Mouth Marketing Communication Strategy Japan Tourism Dira Park Balung Jember

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## *Abstract*

This study aims to describe the word-of-mouth marketing communication strategy of the Japanese tourism company Dira Park Balung Jember Regency. This research is a type of qualitative descriptive research. The methods used are interviews, observation, and documentation. The results showed that the word-of-mouth marketing communication strategy implemented by Japanese tourism Dira Park Balung Jember Regency includes five indicators: talkers, topics, tools, taking parts, and tracking. Speakers (talkers) in marketing communications on this tour are divided into two, namely talkers or intermediaries of predetermined speakers (employees and tour managers) and voluntary speaker intermediaries (visitors, journalists, bloggers, and TV stations). The use of media (tools) includes online media consisting of Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, web, YouTube, TV stations, and offline media used through Word of mouth and banner installation. Participation/service (taking Part) carried out by the tour manager is by responding to questions or feedback politely & politely. Second, provide the best service. Third, internal efforts should be made by fostering cohesiveness and brotherhood between employees and maintaining visitors' trust. Fourth, make external efforts by promoting through various aspects. Supervision/control (tracking) is carried out through direct supervision and online supervision by providing criticism and suggestions through the WhatsApp number provided by the tourist.

**Keywords:** *Communication Strategy, Word Of Mouth Marketing, Travel.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Jember is one of the regencies in East Java that is currently developing its tourism sector. Based on data from the Jember Tourism and Culture Office, the number of domestic and foreign tourists visiting Jember in 2017 was 2.3 million visitors. The number of tourists is very far compared to that of Banyuwangi Regency, with around 4.01 million domestic tourists and 91,000 foreign tourists visiting Banyuwangi in 2017. This very far comparison makes Jember district even more active in promoting its tourism sector. This is evidenced by the Jember Tourism and Culture Office, which is intensively promoting the Indonesian people to become more familiar with the city of Jember. One of the activities recently carried out by the Jember Tourism and Culture Office is to hold the first fam trip for social media activists such as bloggers, YouTubers, photographers, and film communities to promote the city of Jember by doing destinations to several tourist attractions in Jember, both natural and artificial tourism (Utama, 2017)

Dira Park Balung is an artificial tourism company in Jember Regency that provides various rides that visitors can enjoy, such as swimming pools, water booms, and cafes in one location. This tour is one of the unique tours in Jember Regency because it is designed with Tokyo nuances and is complete with knick-knacks such as cherry blossoms and Japanese-style clothes rental (kimono). In addition, the ornamental design and architecture will spoil the visitors, making it seem like they are in Japan. This uniqueness makes many people interested in visiting this tour.

Jember Regency has artificial tourism, such as Dira Park Balung tourism and other tours. The more tourism in Jember Regency, the tighter competition between tourism industries will be. To be

able to overcome competition in the tourism industry, companies must be able to implement the right marketing strategy, one of which is creating tourism uniqueness and implementing the right marketing communication strategy. One strategy that can be used is a marketing communication strategy, namely word-of-mouth marketing. In the domain of service marketing, scholars have employed a variety of theoretical frameworks to elucidate customers' negative emotional responses in service failure-recovery contexts. Justice theory, which focuses on customers' perceptions of a fair recovery process, has been the predominant theory. This perspective links an employee's apology and the speed of their response to customers' retaliatory behaviors (del Río-Lanza et al., 2009; Wirtz & Mattila, 2004).

Bonifield & Cole (2008) approached the issue using the downward social comparison theory, positing that customers' vindictive behaviors can be understood through their comparison with others who have experienced worse failures. This theory suggests that customers experiencing distress improve their subjective well-being by such comparisons, particularly when they face severe service failures relative to minor ones faced by others. Companies should be sensitive to privacy and the concerns of consumers as they develop their advertising strategies and build long-term customer relationships (Mandal, 2019)

According to S. E. Lee & Lee (2024), the intention of the WOM to produce eco-friendly products refers to the communication between consumers and other people or groups (such as social channels, friends, and relatives). WOM Marketing has five elements needed to disseminate information through WOM Marketing: talkers, topics, tools, taking Part, and tracking. Talkers are a collection of targets or someone who will be an intermediary speaker about the products or services of the company. Talkers in Word of mouth are volunteers, customers, bloggers, and professional people appointed by the company. Topics can make consumers or customers talk about goods or services made by the company. This topic deals with everything the company offers, such as discounts, uniqueness, new products, special offers, and satisfying service for consumers or customers.

Tools are tools or media used to run a message, such as advertisements, websites, banners, or forums. This media is used so that people can easily talk about the goods or services offered by the company. Taking Part is the participation or service of the company in responding to questions about goods or services to potential customers through a more transparent and detailed explanation of a good or service so that they can carry out a purchase process. Tracking is a supervision or control carried out by the company by looking at the results in the suggestion box so that it will find a lot of information related to positive and negative Word of mouth.

The strategy level in word-of-mouth marketing is to get consumers to talk about, promote, and sell. The main benefits of doing Word of mouth are:

*First*, be a convincing source. Word of mouth is a method that comes from consumers by consumers and for consumers. Consumers who are satisfied with the services or products produced by their company will not only buy back but also talk about their services or products with confidence in others. *Secondly*, it has a low cost. Establish good relationships with customers who are satisfied with services or products and make it a provider of information about a business that is run. This will reduce the company's expenses because the costs are relatively low.

Dira Park Balung Tourism has a unique tour, one of which is a tourist spot that has a Japanese nuanced concept. This concept is the hallmark of Dira Park Balung, so this destination is named Dira Park Balung Japanese Tourism. Dira Park Balung tourist attraction has its uniqueness in the form of Japanese nuanced rides, kimono clothes, and Japanese-style food. Currently, many people are talking about this tour because it is considered to be a unique tourism experience. At the same time, the relatively affordable cost of rides makes this tour much discussed and in demand by tourists. This is usually referred to as word-of-mouth marketing. The use of Word of mouth marketing communication strategies in promoting a tour can affect consumer interest in visiting the tour because usually this communication spreads through information from people to people who have visited the tour, no

wonder word of mouth marketing is one of the influential media in promoting tourism services including Japanese tourism Dira Park Balung Jember regency.

## 2. METHOD

This type of research is qualitative research. The location of the study was determined using the purposive area method, namely Japanese tourism Dira Park Balung, Jember Regency. This study's types and sources of data are primary data from direct interviews with Japanese tour manager Dira Park Balung and secondary data from direct interviews with employees, visitors, and documents needed. The data collection methods used in this study were interview, observation, and documentation. Data analysis used in this study includes data reduction, data presentation, conclusion drawing, and data validity test techniques, namely source triangulation.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Marketing communication is an effort to convey messages to the public, primarily target consumers, regarding the existence of products in the market (Rahma, 2018). Conducting marketing, such as via brand spreading, on social media, enterprises usually use seed strategies based on the consideration of marketing cost and performance (ShiYong et al., 2022). Promotions like WOM communication are a common form of product sales on social media (Liu et al., 2018). Organizations must rethink strategies and business behavior and assess their impact to align with sustainability goals that promote industrial innovation, maintain well-being, protect the planet, and create business value (Hamdan, 2024). Currently, AI-Driven Marketing Research and Data Analytics is a groundbreaking book that serves as a beacon for marketers, educators, and industry leaders alike (Masengu et al., 2024)

Marketing Innovation Strategies and Consumer Behavior is a comprehensive resource that serves as a beacon of clarity amidst the chaos, offering a structured roadmap for understanding and harnessing the power of innovation in marketing (Barbosa, 2024). Event satisfaction, event identity, and behavioral intentions (re-participation intention and positive WoM behavior) on a repeated small scale. Marketing communication carried out by Japanese tourism Dira Park Balung Jember Regency is a word-of-mouth marketing communication strategy. Dira Park Balung Japanese Tourism uses this communication to promote tourism so that the wider community can know Dira Park Balung Japanese Tourism and so that the reach of this tour is not only from Jember but also outside Jember knows this tour. Word of mouth is communication between someone who has consumed goods or services and has evaluated them and then shares their opinions from one consumer to another (Haryati et al., 2022)

The marketing communication strategy carried out by Dira Park Balung Tourism in Jember Regency is to reach visitors not only from Jember but also from outside the Jember area because this communication strategy includes visitors in its promotion. What was conveyed by the Japanese tour manager Dira Park Balung Jember Regency as follows:

"Usually, tourists who visit Dira Park Balung tour capture the moment by taking pictures in Japanese tourist areas, then uploading them on social media and tagging Dira social media. Usually, they also promote Dira Balung tourism by telling about Dira Park Balung to relatives and relatives interested in coming to Dira Park Balung tourism" (MDA 26 Years).

The word-of-mouth marketing communication strategy Dira Park Balung Japanese tourism uses includes five indicators: talker, topic, tools, taking Part, and tracking.

### *Talker*

The tourism party Dira Park Balung Jember Regency needs this talker to facilitate promotions by using word-of-mouth marketing communication strategies. Visitors are among the talkers related to Dira Park Balung Japanese tourism. Usually, visitors who have visited Dira Park Balung will share their experiences associated with this tour with their relatives or relatives. In addition to the end of this tour, it also appoints employees and tour managers as speakers to promote tourism. For this Word of mouth

marketing communication strategy to run smoothly, some outsiders become talkers or speakers who participate in promoting this tour, including journalists who have covered this tour, bloggers, and tv parties who have covered Japan tourism Dira Park Balung Jember Regency, including Indosiar, JTV, Jember Tv, Kompas Tv, and others. This can increase promotion and make tourism go viral so that many people talk about Japanese tourism at Dira Park Balung Jember Regency. Based on the study's results, it can be concluded that in determining the talker or speaker so that the promotion of this tour can run smoothly, the talker is divided into two, namely the talker or speaker intermediary who has been determined and the speaker intermediary voluntarily. Word of mouth (WOM) refers to communication between non-commercial communicators regarding a product, service, or brand, and it is also considered a vital consumer behavior (Du et al., 2020)

Intermediaries who have been determined to conduct promotions are employees and managers who work in Japanese tourism Dira Park Balung Jember Regency and intermediaries voluntarily such as visitors who have visited, journalists, bloggers, and TV stations who have covered in Japan tourism Dira Park Balung Jember Regency. WOM and customer stickiness are regarded as the organisms where cognitive and emotional responses can influence user perceptions of a green brand and their willingness to support the brand (Y.-F. Lee et al., 2024)

### *Topic*

The exciting and important things in this work are the multiple solitary wave solutions, which have various kinds of physical structures such as kink soliton, periodic traveling wave, bright soliton, anti-kink soliton, dark soliton, combined bright and dark solitons, topological soliton and peakon soliton (Iqbal et al., 2024). Japan Tourism Dira Park Balung Jember Regency offers unique tourist attractions such as Japanese garden tours, kimono clothes rentals, Japanese nuance cafes, and swimming pools in one location. Not only that, this tour also provides special offers in the form of discounts or discounts for visitors for Monday-Friday, at least bringing a group of 50 people. There is a 20% discount, and two people enter the tour for free. For Saturday-Sunday, get a group of 30 people. There is a 20% discount, and two people enter the tour for free if consumers spend a minimum of Rp. 100,000 - at Dira Market, you can get one free Balung waterpark ticket. Not only that, but Dira Park Balung Japanese Tourism also provides good service to visitors. All employees must serve and treat visitors in a friendly and kind manner. In addition, this tour also maintains cleanliness so that visitors are always comfortable when traveling in Dira Park Balung, Jember Regency.

The supporting informant of Japanese tourist visitor Dira Park Balung (SAP 22 years old) also expressed the same opinion that he had participated in promoting or telling his friends and relatives regarding Japanese tourism Dira Park Balung Jember Regency either directly or using the media. Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that for the topic to occur, the things done by Dira Park Balung Jember Regency are to make tourism unique with the Japanese concept, special offers provided by tours, excellent and satisfying service, and rides in Japanese tourism Dira Park Balung. This makes visitors talk a lot about this Japanese tour because it has its plus value and uniqueness, thus making visitors interested in traveling to Dira Park Balung Jember Regency.

### *Tools*

Japan Tourism Dira Park Balung Jember Regency uses several media to optimize word-of-mouth marketing communication strategies. The media used by this tour uses two media, namely online media and offline media. Dira Park Balung uses several online media platforms, such as social media for Japanese tourism (Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp). In addition to social media, this tour is also promoted through the web and YouTube. According to the research results, many YouTubers make videos on Japanese tourism at Dira Park Balung Jember Regency because this tour is unique. In addition, there are also outsiders, namely TV stations that cover Japanese tourism in Dira Park Balung. According to the results of research, TV stations that have covered Japanese tourism at Dira Park Balung Jember Regency include Indosiar, JTV, Jember TV, Kompas TV, and others for the offline

media used by Japanese tourism Dira Park Balung, which consists of word-of-mouth promotion and the installation of banners installed on the edges of the highway. Based on the study's results, the tools (media) used in Japanese tourism at Dira Park Balung Jember Regency consist of online and offline media. Online media, such as social media, Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, web, YouTube, TV stations, and offline/offline media, are used through word of mouth and banners installed on the roadsides.

### ***Taking Part***

Participation or services carried out by Japanese tourism director Dira Park Balung in promoting tourism using word-of-mouth marketing communication strategies are carried out by responding to questions related to tourism in a friendly, kind, and polite manner. At the same time, the efforts made by tour managers to ensure that visitors always visit this tour are by providing the best service and comfort to visitors so that visitors feel satisfied and want to see the Japanese tour of Dira Park Balung again. If there are complaints from visitors, such as managers and employees of Japanese tours, Dira Park Balung will evaluate and immediately improve them. For promotion through word-of-mouth marketing communication strategies to run smoothly, Japanese tourism parties such as Dira Park Balung Jember Regency also make internal and external efforts. Internal efforts made are first always fostering cohesiveness and brotherhood between employees and always maintaining visitor trust, providing exemplary service and comfort, and consistently evaluating if there are shortcomings, while the external efforts made by this tour are by promoting through various aspects such as online media such as social media, journalists, offline, providing discounts and other special offers. Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that the Part (participation) carried out by Japanese tourism Dira Park Balung Jember Regency is carried out by First responding to questions or feedback from visitors answered politely & politely, if there are complaints from visitors as tour managers and employees will evaluate and immediately improve it. Second, they provide the best service and comfort to visitors so that they feel satisfied and want to revisit Japan Dira Park Balung. Third, internal efforts should be made by fostering cohesiveness and brotherhood between employees and maintaining visitors' trust. Fourth, make external efforts by promoting various aspects, for example, through online media such as social media, journalists, offline, special offers, discounts, and others.

### ***Tracking***

Supervision or control carried out by Japanese tourism Dira Park Balung Jember Regency is by conducting direct supervision in tourist areas such as supervision in Japanese parks and pool areas. So, every side of the pool has guards watching. If there is an accident, the tour will always be on standby by carrying P3K; besides that, every 15 minutes, the tour will conduct a voice broadcast to appeal to visitors regarding luggage and small children and always comply with health protocols. Not only direct supervision, but the Dira Park Balung Tourism Party of Jember Regency also conducts supervision through online media using criticism and suggestions; visitors can report it through WhatsApp provided by the Dira Park Balung Tourism Party Jember Regency.

The widespread use of social media has changed how marketers organize their marketing strategies, especially in promoting and distributing their products (Jalil et al., 2021). Word of mouth (WOM) become an essential part of marketing studies, considering that communication in Word of mouth (WOM) can influence the consumer (Ayuningtias et al., 2020; Jalil et al., 2021). Customer loyalty is one of the core goals pursued in modern marketing (Ririh & Pratiwi, 2018). Influencer marketing has become a potent and dynamic force in the digital age, changing the face of marketing in a variety of sectors (Garg & Bakshi, 2024)

The information found under the supervision of the Japanese tourism manager Dira Park Balung Jember Regency consists of two parts, namely positive word of mouth information and negative word of mouth. Positive Word-of-mouth information found in the supervision at Dira Park Balung tour usually includes tours unique because of the Japanese concept, suitable tours, cleanliness of tourist

attractions that are maintained, good service, and comfort. While negative Word of mouth information is found in surveillance carried out by Japanese tourism Dira Park Balung, for example, there are complaints from visitors. For example, when there are many visitors and in a complete gazebo, groups of visitors come again to the tour and suddenly complain that the place is not vast even though the situation is indeed crowded; sometimes, if it is already crowded, the cleanliness becomes reduced. However, according to the research results, the widely found information is positive Word of mouth rather than negative Word of mouth information.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The determination of talkers or speakers so that marketing communications on this tour is divided into two: talkers or intermediaries of predetermined speakers (employees and tour managers) and voluntary speaker intermediaries (visitors, journalists, bloggers, and TV stations). Talkers often discuss the uniqueness of tourism with Japanese concepts, special offers provided by tours, excellent and satisfying service, and rides in Japanese tours at Dira Park Balung. The use of media (tools) includes online media consisting of Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, web, YouTube, TV stations, and offline/offline media used through word-of-mouth promotion and installation of banners installed on the roadsides. Participation (taking Part) carried out by the tour manager is by First responding to questions or feedback from visitors politely & politely. They were second, providing the best service and comfort to visitors so that they feel satisfied and want to revisit Japan Dira Park Balung. Third, internal efforts should be made by fostering cohesiveness and brotherhood between employees and maintaining visitors' trust. Fourth, make external efforts by promoting through various aspects, for example, through online media such as social media, journalists, offline, special offers, and providing discounts. Supervision (tracking) is carried out through direct oversight and supervision directly and online by providing criticism and suggestions through the WhatsApp number provided by the tourist.

The information in the supervision carried out by the Japanese tour Dira Park Balung is more positive. Word-of-mouth information related to the uniqueness of the tour, a reasonably complete ride, good service, and others. However, negative word-of-mouth information was also found, which was not much under this scrutiny. Negative Word of mouth information relates to visitor complaints.

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