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Integrated Tourism Marketing Communication at Makassar International Festival & Forum (F8)

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ABSTRACT

Makassar International Eight Festival and Forum (F8) is one of the biggest events in Makassar City which was first held on September 8 2016 at the Losari Beach Pavilion. This festival covers eight creative sectors, namely: Film, Fashion, Fiction Writer & Font, Fine Arts, Food & Fruit, Fusion Music, Flora & Fauna. After being absent in 2020 and 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, F8 was held again and was successfully included in the Top 10 Kharisma Events Nusantara (KEN) in 2022 and 2023. This research aims to apply promotional aspects carried out by the Makassar City Tourism Office heading to the F8 Festival. The method used is descriptive qualitative, with data collection through interviews and observation. The research results show that F8 not only functions as an annual festival, but also as an effective strategic promotional mix tool with a focus on collaborating aspects of advertising and personal sales. Advertising is carried out through social media and conversion media, as well as personal sales which are packaged in a business to business form. Collaboration with various parties and friendly countries also supports improving the image of Makassar City as an international destination. In this way, F8 not only succeeded in increasing tourist visits, but also strengthened bilateral relations and promoted the local culture of Makassar City on the international stage

INTRODUCTION

In developing a tourist destination, promotion is fundamental in increasing transactions and developing a tourist destination. One strategy that is considered effective in promoting city destinations is holding a festival. Kotler & Keller (2006) explain that tourism marketing involves communication, creation and delivery of messages or values to the target audience. By holding festivals, a city can display cultural uniqueness, flashbacks of the city's history, as well as aspects of local creativity aimed at the audience, in this case tourists. Research conducted by Lambe & Dianita (2023), regarding the management of the city branding "Explore Makassar" after the pandemic, found that the F8 festival was the main tourism activity carried out by the Makassar City Tourism Office which supported the increase in post-pandemic tourism.

Makassar International Eight Festival and Forum (F8) is one of the Event large held in Makassar. Makassar Mayor Danny Pomanto claimed that F8 is a new history of the implementation of the largest festival in the world (Pranata, 2016). This festival was first held on September 8, 2016 at Losari Beach Pavilion. F8 gathers eight sectors, namely; Film, Fashion, Fiction Writer & Font, Fine Arts, Food & Fruit, Fusion Music, Flora & Fauna, in 2020 and 2021, the Festival was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic (Regards, 2022). The Makassar City Government then tried to rebuild Makassar City tourism by conducting this festival. From September 7, 2022 to September 11, 2022, it made it into the Top 10 Kharisma Event Nusantara (KEN) 2022 (DisPar, 2022). Then the F8 Festival, which will be held on August 23-27, 2023, has again managed to enter one of the Top 10 Kharisma Event Nusantara (KEN) 2023 and 2024 (Makassar City Government, 2024).

Makassar International Eight Festival and Forum (F8) is again included as one of the TOP 10 Kharisma Event Nusantara (KEN) 2023. After making it into the Top 10 list of Kharisma Event Nusantara (KEN) in 2022. Eight Festival competes with 319 events from 34 provinces. Kharisma Event Nusantara (KEN) provides five aspects of

assessment, namely; ideas and innovation potential, creative economic growth, event management, performing arts and culture, & communication and media strategies. The re-entry of Makassar International Eight Festival and Forum (F8) is considered to be able to collaborate all elements of the creative economy subsector and can always prioritize consistency every year.

In the implementation of Makassar International Eight Festival and Forum (F8) there are eight fields of art all beginning with the letter "F", which is the nickname Eight Festival (F8). These fields are; Film, Fashion, Fiction Writer & Font, Fine Arts, Food & Fruit, Fusion Music, Flora & Fauna. (Compass, 2023). In addition to the art fields above, this annual event is also enlivened by artists and artists from various regions as well as the capital city. One of the attractions that brought this festival to the international scene is that this festival was attended by delegates of friendly countries. Some of them also display the cultural potential of their country.

Several literature reviews that are references in this study. Burgon and Huffner in Maulana & Gumelar (2013) define communication as a communication process that aims to influence the thoughts and opinions of others to be in accordance with the opinions or desires of the communicator. Then, Burgon and Huffner added that persuasive communication is a communication process that invites and persuades others with the aim of changing attitudes, beliefs or opinions according to the wishes of the communicator without any element of coercion. Tom Duncan and Sandra Moriarty in Belch & Belch (2018) stated that Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) is a new generation marketing approach used by companies to focus more on efforts to obtain, maintain, and develop company relationships with customers and other related parties. Duncan and Moriarty also developed a marketing model based on communication, messages can come from three levels, namely; corporate, marketing and marketing communications. IMC communication media continue to develop into several parts such as

Advertising, Sales Promotion, Personal Selling, Direct Marketing, Corporate Communication, Event & Experience, Word of Mouth, Sponsorship, Marketing Public Relations (MPR) and Packaging (Pamungkas, 2018).

In forming brand awareness or brand knowledge towards the target audience, promotional & marketing elements are needed which are known as the marketing communication mix (Marketing Communication Mix) or promotional mix (Promotion Mix). According to Kotler Armstrong Kotler & Armstrong (2014) regarding the promotional mix, there are several promotional tools that can be collaborated with the aim of conveying messages persuasively to the target audience. The promotional mix according to Kotler & Keller (2016) is; Advertising, Sales Promotion, Personal Selling, Public Relations, Direct Marketing, Event & Experience, Intractive Marketing & Word of Mouth.

The implementation of the Festival manifests things that can give birth and support the formation of the image of a destination of an area. In this case, researchers want to see the harmony of the Festival as a Promotional Media in the formation of the image of international destinations from Makassar City. Makassar City was chosen to be the object of research because the development of Makassar City is quite substantial in compiling and implementing various Event and Festivals. Makassar International Eight Festival and Forum (F8) is a festival that made it into the Top 10 Kharisma Event Nusantara (KEN) 2022 (DisPar, 2022). Based on the background explanation that the author has described, the author decided to carry out research with the title "Festival as an International Promotion Media (Case study of F8 Festival as a promotional media in building the image of international destinations in the city of Makassar)".

METHODS

This research applies qualitative descriptive research method. According to Cresswell (2015) Descriptive research is research that aims to dive into circumstances, conditions or other things (circumstances, conditions, situations, events,

activities), the results of which can be written into the form of research reports. In this study, researchers will describe the results of interviews and observations to five informants. The informant consisted of two key informants, one expert informant and two supporting informants.

This study used a data collection method by taking the interview method with five selected informants. Interviews are also identified as a process of interaction or conversation between interviewers and informants, face-to-face to discuss something that is the object of research (Cresswell, 2015). Researchers conducted online interviews at the Makassar City Tourism Office for key informants and supporting informants. Next, the researcher conducted interviews with expert informants in his office. After the researcher underwent an interview with the informant, the researcher compiled a transcript of the interview. The transcript of the interview will facilitate and clarify the findings of this study.

The Observation Method is a companion in conducting this research. According to Sugiyono (2018), conservation is a data accumulation technique that has specific characteristics when compared to other techniques. Observations are not limited to people, but observations can be made of other natural objects. By conducting observation activities, researchers can learn about behavior and the meaning of the behavior. Observations were carried out by researchers directly at the Makassar City Tourism Office. Through this observation method, researchers can find activities and data that support the results of interviews with informants.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Makassar International Festival & Forum (F8) as a Promotional Destination

Makassar City officially received the city branding "Explore Makassar" from the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy in 2017. Makassar is also dubbed as the Gateway of Eastern Indonesia, due to the rapid economic growth in this city. In striving for the city branding "Explore Makassar", the Tourism Office manages city branding, one of

which is by carrying out events that promote Makassar City. Makassar International Festival & Forum (F8) is a mega event held in Makassar City every year. The F8 Festival has again made it into the Top 10 of Kharisma Event Nusantara (KEN) in 2023. The event, which is claimed to be The Biggest Waterfront Festival in the World, raises local traditions and culture experiencing a significant increase in visitors every year. The amount of economic turnover during the implementation of this festival certainly has a positive chain effect not only to the city government and tourism business actors but also the entire community. With this achievement, public expectations for events that are now set in the national tourism event calendar are getting bigger.

F8 Festival itself is a mega event held with the aim of promoting 8 aspects of the city of Makassar. F8 gathers eight sectors, namely; Film, Fashion, Fiction Writer & Font, Fine Arts, Food & Fruit, Fusion Music, Flora & Fauna. The procurement of the F8 Festival also contributes to bilateral relations between several countries in collaboration with the city of Makassar. The Head of the Makassar City Tourism Office also added that during a visit to Australia with the Mayor of Makassar, the F8 Festival became one of the topics of discussion that was interesting for the Australian side. The F8 Festival also provides a space for international parties to participate in promoting and displaying fine arts from other countries.

In the process of formulating the theme of the F8 Festival every year, the Tourism Office collaborates with various parties. The Tourism Office involves local communities, cultural actors, activists, experts and representatives from the special generation of Generation Z. By involving parties related to the theme to be raised, the implementation of the F8 festival will be wider and deeper about it. In addition, the F8 festival collaborates with several countries in terms of presenting representatives from the country to participate in the F8 festival.

Makassar International Eight Festival and Forum at the beginning of its implementation was based on the Decree of the Mayor of Makassar

Number: 1221/556.05/KEP/VII/2016 concerning the Establishment of Makassar International Eight Festival and Forum 2016 Activity Implementers. Currently, the F8 Festival is the main event held annually by the Makassar City Tourism Office in collaboration with the government and private sector. This F8 festival was born from "Tudang Sipulu" or is a crush between art and culture actors. This workshop was held together with the Mayor of Makassar with the agenda to discuss how to form a festival/event that can accommodate the creative industry of Makassar City. The negotiation "Tudang Sipulu" gave birth to a festival that contains 8 aspects of creativity in the city of Makassar. Makassar Mayor and F8 Initiator Mohammad Ramdhan Pomanto revealed that F8 is not just an annual agenda of Makassar City. However, F8 is the face of the progress of Indonesian civilization. The Makassar City Tourism Office said that Makassar is a city that has a widely known civilization, has strong art and culture, which makes Makassar City full of creativity.

Makassar International Festival & Forum Promotion Strategies

Based on the results of research that researchers have carried out regarding "Makassar International Festival & Forum (F8) as a Destination Promotion". Researchers concluded that the Makassar International Festival & Forum (F8) had implemented a promotion mix strategy in making F8 a promotional destination for the city of Makassar. In carrying out the promotion mix. The Makassar City Tourism Office focuses on collaborating on several aspects of the promotion mix in making the F8 festival a destination promotion for Makassar City.

The Makassar City Tourism Office conducts Public Relations & Publicity through collaboration with Metro TV to advertise and provide exclusive coverage of F8 every year. The international F8 Festival is also covered by international media. Australian media reported on the implementation of the F8 festival which involved other countries in the implementation of the festival. Through the Australian Consulate-General, Australia reported that F8 offered the Australian Consulate to open a

fine arts component and become part of the implementation of F8. In addition, there was coverage in several news media regarding the implementation of the F8 festival, such as: Metro TV, CNN Indonesia, detik.com, tribun.timur.mks, IDN Times, Kompas TV, Fajar.co.id, ANTARA News. In addition, the Makassar City Tourism Office uploaded promotional content through its own media, such as Instagram with the accounts @F8Makassar and @tourism_makassar, as well as TikTok and Youtube with the account name @tourism_makassar.

In addition, the Head of the Makassar City Tourism Office added that there was an implementation of branding advertising based on destination, origin and time (DOT). DOT is an elaboration of product and distribution strategies. By implementing the DOT system, the Head of the Makassar City Tourism Office said that the implementation of DOT could help determine the placement of advertisements for the F8 festival, so that they are effective and on target. F8 festival advertising was also carried out massively and intensively, which was carried out three months before the F8 festival was officially opened. The Creative Content Division and the Head of the Office stated that the selection of social media as a platform for advertising was because it was cheap, reached wider, and was effective and massive. The target audience for implementing F8 advertising on social media is the entire Makassar City community as well as potential local and international tourists. The message conveyed through F8 festival advertising is persuasive, namely inviting the entire community to participate in the implementation of the biggest international event in Makassar City. In addition, the Makassar City Tourism Office also compiled hashtags on social media such as; #F8Makassar2023, #ExploreMakassar, and #KesiniMiSaja. The hashtag was created by the Tourism Office to support marketing on social media.

In addition, the Makassar City Tourism Office promotes through cooperation with sponsors in participating in the F8 festival. The following are sponsors that support the promotion of the

implementation of the F8 festival: Telkomsel, Citra Land City, Tanjung Bunga, Siloam Hospitals, Tallasa City, FKS Land, Summarecon Mutiara, Kalla Friends, PLN Makassar Utara, Coca-Cola, LT Pro, Rewa, Flan Media Indonesia, Bank Sulsebar, Surya Nation Gelora.

Personal Selling is an activity that involves direct interaction between sales people and consumers or tourists. In its implementation, the Makassar City Tourism Office packages Personal Selling in the form of an Event, which results in collaboration between IMC Tools, namely personal selling and event & experience. The steps taken by the Tourism Office by conducting Table Top. Table Top is a Business to Business activity that is packaged into a tourism market, where this activity directly brings together sellers and buyers. The Makassar City Tourism Office carries out business to business in the form of Direct Sale, MICE EXPO and Travel Fair. The implementation of Direct Sale is carried out in various cities in Indonesia, with the aim of conducting business to business. Direct Sale also collaborates with and includes sellers from the city of Makassar to sell tour packages that are combined with access to the F8 festival. In addition, the implementation of Direct Sale also involves tourism actors from the city where the direct sale is held. MICE Expo is one of the promotional programs of the Makassar City Tourism Office in collaboration with the Indonesian Hotel and Restaurant Association (PHRI) of South Sulawesi. The implementation of the MICE EXPO involves hotels in the city of Makassar, in marketing accommodation packages that include access to the F8 Makassar City festival. The Makassar City Tourism Office is holding the MICE Expo 2023 on April 8 and 9, 2023 at the London Atrium Mall Pipo. This event is being held for the second time in Makassar City. MICE or Meeting, Incentive, Conference, and Exhibition is collaborating with the Indonesian Hotel and Restaurant Association (PHRI). A total of 40 hotels in Makassar that are members of PHRI will be involved. The Head of the Makassar City Tourism Office, Muhammad Roem explained that the MICE Expo 2023 is a momentum for all parties, especially

the hotel business to recover after the pandemic. MICE Expo has a business to customer target, which brings together hotel entrepreneurs with customers who need MICE services and products as an increase in trade activities in the tourism industry (SindoMakassar, 2023). Gebyar Wisata Nusantara EXPO (GWN Expo) was held at the Smesco Exhibition Hall, Jakarta on June 8-11, 2023. GWN Expo is a national exhibition, which displays information on all tourism destinations and creative economies from Sabang to Merauke. This event is a Table Top Tourism Business Forum, which is a tourism business event that brings together tourism business owners (Sellers) and travel agents (Buyers) (MedCom.Id, 2023). The Makassar City Tourism Office participated in the 2023 GWN Expo, by opening a booth offering tourism in Makassar City, especially the implementation of the F8 Festival event in August 2023.

CONCLUSION

This research concludes that the Makassar City Tourism Office has succeeded in promoting the Makassar International Eight Festival and Forum (F8) as an international event that represents Makassar City. The success of this festival being included in the Top 10 Kharisma Events of the Archipelago (KEN) in 2022 and 2023 shows its effectiveness in attracting public attention, both at national and international levels. F8, which covers eight creative sectors (Film, Fashion, Fiction Writer & Font, Fine Arts, Food & Fruit, Fusion Music, Flora & Fauna), not only increases the number of tourist visits but also strengthens bilateral relations with friendly countries through participation international delegation.

The Makassar City Tourism Office has implemented an effective promotion mix strategy, including advertising, public relation & publicity, personal selling, event & experience and sponsorship. Collaboration with national and international media, promotion in various cities through personal selling, all contributed to the successful promotion of this festival. Additionally, F8 provides a space for local communities, cultural

actors and young people to participate, which enriches the content and relevance of the festival.

In this way, F8 has succeeded in promoting Makassar City as a tourist destination rich in art and culture, as well as improving the city's image in the eyes of the world. It is hoped that the sustainability and consistency of the implementation of this festival every year will continue to support the development of tourism and the creative economy in Makassar City. This can be applied by other regional Tourism Services to carry out promotion strategies for regional destinations. Strategies that can be adapted include holding a festival or event that is consistently held, which represents the characteristics of the area. This destination promotion strategy through festivals and events can be applied to other regions, to increase engagement with those regions.

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