

Analyzing the Use of Augmented Reality in Public Relations Efforts to Improve Tourists' Experience In Ragunan Zoo

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Abstract

Augmented Reality (AR) has become an increasingly popular technology across various fields, including tourism. Ragunan Wildlife Park, a zoo in South Jakarta, Indonesia, has introduced an AR application to enhance the visitor experience. This research aims to analyze the use of Augmented Reality in public relations efforts to improve the tourist experience at Ragunan Wildlife Park. Using a descriptive qualitative approach, the study was conducted through on-site observation, in-depth interviews with visitors, and a review of related literature and documentation. Additionally, a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) was employed to evaluate the impact of AR usage. The study findings indicate that AR in the Ragunan Zoo application adds value by providing additional information about the zoo's fauna and facilities, facilitating online ticket purchases, and reducing wait times. However, AR also faces challenges such as the requirement for a stable internet connection and visitors' lack of familiarity with AR technology. Opportunities arise from the potential to strengthen digital relationships with visitors, while threats include data security risks and visitors' disinterest in using the app. The study concludes that AR has significant potential to enhance the visitor experience at Ragunan Wildlife Park. However, clear guidelines and educational efforts are needed to ensure visitors can easily access and use the application. With straightforward instructions and appropriate promotion, AR can be an effective tool to improve the visitor experience and strengthen the image of Ragunan Wildlife Park.

Keywords: *Tourism, Augmented Reality, Experience, SWOT Analysis*

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INTRODUCTION

In 1968, engineer Ivan Sutherland was recognized as one of the pioneers in the history of Augmented Reality. Even in the 1960s, he designed the visual simulation and 3D modeling software Sketchpad. In 1968, a device with a head-mounted 3D display was made at Salt Lake City University, in the United States. A pair of glasses is made to view images in 3D. These glasses are arguably the ancestors of Google Glass. Due to their weight and difficult installation, these glasses were nicknamed the "sword of Damocles". To wear them, these glasses need to be hung from above to support their weight and the user needs to be strapped to the device for a more immersive sensation. In 1980, Steve Mann developed the EyeTap, a helmet that displayed virtual information before the user's eyes. It is the first model of a functional augmented reality headset. Until

now, the concept of EyeTap still exists, although it has been honed until it becomes smaller and more practical.

Tourism as a global phenomenon has become a basic need of hundreds of millions of people. As a basic necessity, travel should be part of human rights that must be respected and protected. This has led to several international organizations such as the United Nations, the World Bank, and the World Tourism Organization (WTO) recognizing that tourism is an integral part of people's lives, especially in terms of social and economic activities. The notion or definition of "tourism" develops with various similarities and differences. The similarity lies in people's desire to travel from one place of residence to another, driven by curiosity to experience or experience for themselves the beauty of a tourist destination. The difference, however, is the priority of certain parts of the definition based on their perspective or importance (Pradini et.al., 2023). According to the Law No. 10 of 2009, tourism can be defined as a variety of tourism activities supported by various facilities, as well as services provided by the community, companies, government, and local governments (Pradini et. al., 2022). The study of tourism participation has been widely applied in the tourism sector. This tourism participation connects all sectors (Pradini et. al. 2023). Tourism at this time is a necessity for humans, both those who travel and the community around the tourist destination area. Tourists need to be satisfied through their expectations, while the community around the location hopes that it will have positive implications in the form of increased income and welfare. At this time, the position of the tourism sector is one of the mainstay sectors that can increase the country's foreign exchange as a support for oil and gas and non-oil and gas export commodities. The development of the tourism sector is carried out because it is able to make a considerable contribution to the country's foreign exchange receipts and in addition, tourism activities are closely related to the unique resources of a tourist destination, namely in the form of natural attractions and cultural attractions (Nugroho, and Pradini, 2022).

In the 2010s Augmented Reality became a shine in the advertising industry. Large companies such as Disney, Coca Cola or Pepsi are leveraging AR to create large-scale commercial operations. Use screens placed in various places such as bus stops. Snapchat became the first social media to introduce AR to its users. The app first introduced "geofilters" in 2014. The filter is in the form of a frame that will change shape according to the background of the city of the place.

In digital marketing, AR can be used to create engaging and differentiated experiences, allowing companies to present products, services or brand messages creatively and interactively and the use of AR in digital marketing has opened up new opportunities for companies to strengthen relationships with customers. Augmented reality provides the ability to present digital content in the context of the user's real world, through devices such as smartphones, tablets, or AR glasses. This technology allows users to see and interact with digital items that are "tied" and "attached" to physical objects around them.

Today's augmented reality (AR) technology has developed rapidly. We can find such technology in various fields from marketing to tourism. This is because more and more companies are using AR technology. One of them is the Ragunan Zoo application, this Augmented Reality application as an information medium

can make it easier for visitors or tourists to get to know Ragunan Zoo.

Ragunan Wildlife Park which has been established for 150 years and is included as the third oldest zoo in the world and the zoo with the second most diverse population of fauna and flora in the world. Ragunan Wildlife Park covering an area of 140 hectares located in Pasar Minggu, South Jakarta, Indonesia. The zoo has an aviary and includes a primate center, and employs more than 450 people. There are many rare and endangered fauna from several regions in Indonesia and around the world. The total fauna owned as many as 3,122 species including birds. With tropical forest design, rare fauna such as crocodiles, gorillas, orangutans, tapirs, anoa, Sumatran tigers and peacocks are given plenty of space.

METHOD

This research is a descriptive research with the research used is a descriptive qualitative approach. In this study is qualitative data. Descriptive research is research intended to collect information about the status of an existing symptom, namely the state of symptoms according to what they are at the time the study is conducted. In descriptive research is aimed at making descriptions, pictures or paintings systematically, factually and accurately about the facts, properties and relationships between the phenomena studied.

A descriptive qualitative approach is used to understand the phenomenon at the research site thoroughly and deeply, so that the moments in qualitative research are unique and flaming and the resulting conclusions are not intended to be generalized to populations that are more suited to different situations. But the results of qualitative research can be transferred to certain situations whose characteristics are the same or relatively the same.

There is a fundamental difference between the role of theoretical foundations in quantitative research and qualitative research. In quantitative research, research departs from theory to data and ends in acceptance or rejection of the theory used. While in qualitative research researchers depart from data, use existing theories as explanatory material, and end up with a theory.

a. Time and Place of Research

The location of this research was conducted in Ragunan Wildlife Park, Pasar Minggu, South Jakarta. The time of this study takes place on January 28, 2024.

b. Data Collection Techniques

Data collection techniques are ways that researchers can collect data. In order for this study to obtain relevant data, researchers used primary data collection techniques and secondary data collection techniques.

1) Primary Data Collection Techniques

Primary Data Collection Techniques are data collection techniques obtained directly from parties who are sources of research in the field. This technique can be done by:

• Observation Method

The observation method is a method carried out as a systematic observation and recording of the symptoms that appear in the object of research. This observation was made at Ragunan Wildlife Park, Pasar Minggu, South Jakarta.

- **Interview Method**

An interview is a means of gathering information by asking a number of questions orally to be answered orally as well. The main characteristic of interviews is the presence of direct face-to-face contact between interviewers and interviewees. As for the interview that the author uses is a free interview with tourists who visit the Wildlife Park, the author has prepared a list of questions to be asked. The interview method used is an in-depth interview to obtain information in terms of the use of Augmented Reality can be used in public relations efforts to improve the tourist experience with the application Ragunan Zoo or Ragunan Zoo.

- 2) **Secondary Data Collection Techniques**

Secondary data collection techniques are data collection techniques obtained from secondary sources after primary data. In terms of data sources, additional material derived from written sources can be divided into sources of books, and scientific magazines, sources from archives, personal documents and official documents.

- Literature study is the collection of data obtained from books, literature, the internet and other sources related to this research.
- Documentation studies are data collection techniques using records or documents at the research location or other sources related to the object of research.

- 3) **SWOT Analysis**

SWOT analysis (strength, weakness, opportunity, trends) is one method in formulating a company strategy by looking at the company's environmental conditions, both internal and external environments. SWOT analysis emphasizes more on how the company's strengths and weaknesses in dealing with existing opportunities and threats. SWOT itself is an acronym for Strength, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats. SWOT analysis is used in conducting strategic analysis of the company. This is because SWOT analysis provides in-depth information about the company's internal conditions and the external environment faced by the company, so that the company will have an idea of what strategic decisions will be taken. According to Johnson, Scholes & Sexty (1989), SWOT is a general device designed and used as a first step in the decision-making process and as strategic planning in various applications.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This SWOT analysis will be conducted to analyze the use of Augmented Reality in public relations efforts to improve the tourist experience in Ragunan Wildlife Park.

Strength

Improving the image of the Wildlife Park as a destination that is in line with technological developments in the digital era. Augmented reality from the Ragunan zoo application can be used to provide additional information about animals, and other areas in Ragunan Zoo. The Ragunan Zoo application can provide ease of purchasing tickets online, minimizing queue times and providing a more comfortable experience for users.

Weaknesses

Augmented Reality from the Ragunan Zoo app requires a stable internet connection to process content. Limited network infrastructure in Ragunan Wildlife Park can be an obstacle, especially in certain areas that may have weak signals. There are some visitors may not be familiar with AR technology or may not be interested in downloading and using the app while visiting. This could reduce the effectiveness of using AR as a PR tool. And when displaying a location map in the Ragunan Zoo application, it is sometimes difficult to access and makes visitors reluctant to open the application while in Ragunan Zoo, preferring to see the map or location map directly.

Opportunities

The development of Augmented Reality from the Ragunan Zoo application opens up opportunities to expand visitors' digital knowledge. This can create a long-term relationship with visitors who are digitally connected and can continue to receive up-to-date information about Ragunan Wildlife Park. May provide a platform for marketing and promotion of special events, sponsorships, or collaborative activities with external parties can open additional income opportunities and increase the presence of users of the Ragunan Zoo application.

Threats

The collection of data from users in the Augmented Reality application of Ragunan Zoo poses a data security risk. If not managed properly, this can lead to privacy concerns and loss of visitors' trust in the park. Especially if visitors are not familiar with AR technology from the Ragunan Zoo application and do not have the skills to use the application, this can reduce the effectiveness of the application and make visitors reluctant to download or use the application.

CONCLUSION

The use of Augmented Reality from the Ragunan Zoo application has great potential to improve the tourist experience in Ragunan Zoo. By presenting interactive and educational elements, this application can give an additional dimension to tourist visits. Based on the analysis of the use of augmented reality in public relations efforts to improve the tourist experience in Ragunan Zoo, the following suggestions are provided with clear facilities and guidelines to assist visitors in downloading and installing the Ragunan Zoo application. Simple and easy-to-understand instructions will increase user participation.

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