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# Tourism Villages Branding Strategy for Mojotrisno Village as the Embodiment of Sustainable Branding Concept

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**Abstract.** The establishment of tourist villages in Indonesia moreover with the highly awareness of sustainability concept, contributes to the cultivation of the creative economy. One of the example is Mojotrisno Village in East Java. Which is actively engaged in developing its community through the implementation of a sustainable branding strategy aimed at unlocking the full potential and improving the well-being of its residents. This study analyzed and develop a place branding strategy with a sustainable branding concept that can be applied to similar community contexts. Utilizes multimethod research, including qualitative approaches, applied research, and visual semiotics, the outcome is brand communication directives for Wisata Desa Mojotrisno using sustainable place branding concept for “Wisata Desa Mojotrisno.” Through the examination of the Mojotrisno Village case study, it becomes evident that purposeful branding initiatives have the potential to shape sustainable ecosystems, fostering continual development and resilience into the foreseeable future.

**Keywords:** Sustainable branding, place branding, branding, Mojotrisno village

## 1 Introduction

The recent development of village potential management as a tourist destination has been increasingly promoted by the government, both at the central and local levels. This aligns with the initiatives highlighted by the East Java Cultural and Tourism Office (Disbudpar Jatim), which encourages culturally-based villages to utilize local culture as a regular event to enhance the village's branding [1]. The tourism aspect has the potential to boost economic activity and contribute to the sustainable development of the area. This trend has motivated the Mojotrisno village to recognize the importance of developing its village potential while simultaneously building its branding. Mojotrisno has a vision and mission to advance the village through the potential held by its community. The concept they aim to pursue is the village tourism concept. However, considering the natural beauty of the village, there is nothing particularly special

about it, perhaps even similar to others. Nevertheless, the development that can strengthen Mojotrisno lies in providing a unique identity for the village.

In the process of development, the villagers are becoming increasingly aware of the importance of environmental issues that can impact human survival. This raises questions regarding the creation of placemaking that addresses the specific challenges faced by Mojotrisno village. Additionally, the strategy for this branding aims not only to bring benefits to the residents but also to shape a sustainable ecosystem, the results of which can continue to grow and be sustained in the future. The concept of the Barongan market in Mojotrisno, initially implemented to boost the local economy, has evolved into a real-life case study and learning opportunity for Mojotrisno village to understand the benefits of environmental preservation. From this concept, the idea of village tourism for Mojotrisno emerged. In the formation of this branding, there is also a process of placemaking, where the participation of the community and villagers plays a crucial role. This process is also referred to as placemaking because it involves the transformation of public spaces shaped by the relationships among Mojotrisno residents and the place itself [2]. Starting with the sustainable concept as the core value in the formation of the Barongan market, Mojotrisno residents began to recognize the importance of imbuing meaning into a place to express their identity. This concept was then extrapolated to shape the overall branding concept for Mojotrisno village tourism, accompanied by the development of the potential of the village's region. Mojotrisno village itself possesses cultural diversity that serves as both potential and allure for it to become a tourist village. Through this study, we will examine the concept of sustainable place branding in the context of a tourist village. The strategy for sustainable branding involves efforts to ensure continuity through the rejuvenation or care of both the environment and human life. The objective of this research is to generate guidelines for sustainable place branding. This is expected to enhance the quality of life for marginalized communities by exploring community potential and increasing awareness of sustainable branding concepts, ultimately contributing to a better life.

## **2 Research Methods**

This study utilizes multimethod research which are qualitative approaches, applied research, and visual semiotics. The study leverages field observations, interviews, and existing literature as data sources. First by collecting datas for the branding concept using the observation and deep interview with Mojotrisno's villagers, using qualitative research to explore the social phenomena, capture people's thoughts and feelings and focused on the real situation of the village itself [3]. From this process we produced insight and variants of concept for Tourism Villages Mojotrisno using the qualitative approach . We have done this reaseach in a collaboration class of brand communication with group of students and mentors. First using applied research we develop the concept for Mojotrisno tourism village, using practice-led that the research leads to the new insight about the design practice and also followed with practice-based research, with the creative design being investigate to create the better concept for Mojotrisno tourism village strategy [4]. Second, based on the concept we create the visual branding identity for Mojotrisno tourism village using Peirce visual semiotic approach. These research also conduct the literature review about sustainable branding, visual communication and place branding.

### **3 Literature Review**

#### **3.1 Brand and Sustainable Concept**

A sustainable brand signifies that its vision, mission, and concept remain relevant to consumer needs. A brand must be able to respond to market demands and adeptly observe the changes within it. A good brand can establish a sustainable, reciprocal relationship with its consumers. Sustainability itself arises from societal concern for environmental conditions and the surrounding community, aiming for human longevity and prosperity. Ultimately, this concept must be adaptable by brands seeking to coexist with current societal perspectives. A robust branding concept has the potential to influence and modify existing societal systems, particularly in their social aspects, and create a new lifestyle. For Mojotrisno tourism village branding, a sustainable strategy is important to create holistic transformation with engagement with multiple stakeholder of the village, that have the same goals. Strong sustainable brand have power to initiate a ultimate change in people lives [5]. As Murphy mention in Tourism and Sustainable Development, there are seven sustainable component of development; resource management, economic activity, social obligation, aesthetic appeal, ecological parameters, biological diversity and basic life support system [6]. Cultural and history of a place can contribute conceptual context for a brand managerial and information processing in branding interaction between consumer and society. This condition is suitable with Mojotrisno. Most of the Mojotrisno's villager have not fully adapt with the new concept of their village which to be a proper tourism village. Therefore a guideline such as place brand strategy and brand communication is needed to enhance the villager knowledge, and advocating the brand value to the people outside.

#### **3.2 Visual Perception Through Visual Semiotic as Communication Media**

A brand must be able to convey its values to the target audience through a communication process with the right strategy. This form of communication is not only verbal but also visual. To communicate visually, a visual language is required, with the application of visual semiotics that can be accurately interpreted by the target audience in line with the goals of the brand communication. Therefore, it is necessary to study how to translate the existing branding concept into a visual perception that can be understood by the target audience. In the process, we also need to study the characteristics, culture, and perspectives of the target audience so that what is conveyed can be precise and understood. Through Peirce visual semiotic; icon, index and symbol to communicate the brand concept and value. The combination of icon, index and symbol, graphic and color that related with the Mojotrisno culture is the objective for this study to interpret [7]. Visual message that in form of storytelling is easier to understand and perceived by the audience [8].

### **4 Result and Discussion**

#### **3.1 Tourism Village Mojotrisno as placemaking**

Mojotrisno tourism village was an initiative idea that taken from Pasar Barongan, an idea from Dr. Ir. Lintu Tulistyantoro, M.Ds. Head of the Center for Community Service at Petra Christian University and the head of Mojotrisno village Mr. Nanang, with their development staff and

local artisan such as Mr. Amin, and the others. Pasar Barongan is an open market that combines all cultural aspect from Mojotrisno. Such as, traditional food and beverages, hand crafting products, garment and cultural experience of Mojotrisno such as dance and traditional music performing. They saw this as an opportunity to develop their village, therefore a sustainable branding strategy for utilizing the full potential and improving the well-being of its residents is needed. As mention by Schroeder, cultural and history can provide contextual concept of a brand that allows brand to interact with their audience in a society [9]. As mention before there is a problem during this process, not all of the villager wants to take part for this transformation for their village. Many of them still confused about the direction of this project. Therefore, a masterplan for developing the village followed by sustainable branding strategy which could be well communicated is needed as a guideline for every aspects of placemaking. This strategy leads to placemaking strategy that consist the process of creating an identity, creation and maintenance of a place by their residents, in order to fullfil the needs of the community. The outcome, is not only the physical construction, but also the value, culture and vision from the village itself. The ideal design of placemaking are consist of these aspects, safety, easy to access, comfortable, clean, could interact spontaneously with other people, friendly, connected with the other, authentic experience, acquire the character and charm that attractive from the place [2]. To communicate the placemaking strategy, there are a set of marketing activities that support the visual branding to differentiate and identify between others, brand communication that constantly communicate the brand value that associate with the place, create emotional connection between the place and the visitor, and efficiency of finding this destination to create a positive image [10]. Here is the analysis data of Mojotrisno's placemaking that adapted to the Mojotrisno's Tourism Village place branding strategy.

**Table 1.** Mojotrisno Place branding concept and scedule. Adaptation of placemaking concept.

Placemaking aspect	Mojotrisno's Tourism Village Concept	Schedule
Visual Branding	Visual Brand identity: brand naming, logo, color, supergraphic, Enviromental Graphic Design.	Developed
Brand Communication	Advertising ads, social media, brand activation	Developed
Emotional connection	Brand story through brand activation and advertising ads.	Developed
Efficiency	Online media such as social media, website, and brand activation	Developed, and in progress

Based on these data, Mojotrisno tourism village branding strategy to be a sustainable brand, is still in the developing progress. The first step that we create is making the guideline for these concept. Some of the supporting infrastructures are being build to enhance the brand value.



Fig. 1. Mojotrisno Tourism Village branding development progress.

### 3.2 Sustainable Branding for Mojotrisno Village

The creation of the branding and communication strategy for Mojotrisno Village was carried out as part of a service-learning project that involved collaboration from various courses with different but complementary competencies. The results of this collaboration produced a branding strategy concept for Mojotrisno Village and a derivative branding concept for other development areas as part of the village. This branding concept was expressed visually using visual semiotic theory to provide the right verbal and visual meaning for the Mojotrisno Village Tourism concept. The branding keyword is harmony, which translate in reminder of the noble identity and cultural heritage of humanity, building harmony with nature and the environment with an eco-friendly spirit, familiarity, openness, tolerance and peace. From this keyword, we create the brand essence “(Re)Creation Across Time for a Harmonious Life” with brand positioning, “A sustainable village that serves as a vessel for each individual to rediscover its humane side through a profound experience of local culture and community.” Thus, we create the tagline for Mojotrisno tourism village, “*Maringi Trisno*” Mojotrisno village becomes a place of embodiment of love, to share the feeling of love that creates harmony. The visual concept from this translates to some keyword that suits the tone and brand character, humble, natural, warm, passionate, authentic. An icon that resembles this visual concept was made to



communicate with the audience. To bring the value of this concept, an index approach was made, which can make a sign that has phenomenal attachment between the representamen and its object. Every object that is found in this visual branding, connected with the meaning of Mojotrisno village's social values symbols [7]. Therefore, this logo was made based on below explanation:



Fig. 2. Mojotrisno Tourism Village logogram

This logo is a representation of the growing love in Mojotrisno Village. Starting from the affection for noble culture, a strong foundation is formed, rooted deeply, spreading and making it a part of the love for fellow beings and the universe. The engraved love then shapes an M symbolizing Mojotrisno Village through contrasting thick and thin curves, inspired by the carvings often found in Mojotrisno. Accompanied by an illustration of the Trowulan Temple located in Mojokerto. The chosen colors are derived from natural hues with a greenish-yellow tint. These colors are selected for their natural and sustainable impressions, aligning with the village's spirit by opting for colors close to nature.

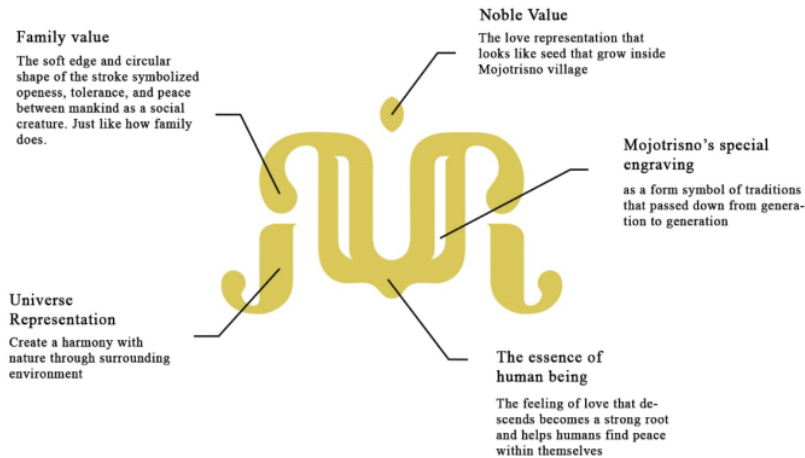


Fig. 3. Mojotrisno Tourism Village logogram visual concept

Here is the final logo that represents Mojotrisno Village Tourism identity.



Fig. 4. Mojotrisno Tourism Village logo

This concept is also translated into visual branding and brand communication that can convey the concept and value of Mojotrisno Village to its target audience.

## 5 Conclusion

Based on this study, we argue that sustainable branding must promote survival through the rejuvenation or care of the environment and support human well-being (social aspect), while forming a culture based on customs and beliefs as a balance between nature, humanity, and their beliefs. This is also resonated with Mojotrisno Village Tourism place branding concept, which encompasses three observed elements: a harmonious relationship between humans, nature, and their noble value. The other important aspect is the holistic support of all Mojotrisno's stakeholders and most important their villagers. This concept has been successfully applied because it aligns with the Mojotrisno people's character and their goals in life, which makes it easy to obtain assistance and support from the community. Branding concept for goods need to provide the needs of the community and other aspects that related [9].

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