ANALYZING THE EFFECT OF CULTURAL EVENTS TOWARDS THE INCREASING NUMBER OF TOURIST VISITS: A CASE STUDY IN EVENT INDUSTRY AT BATAM REGENCY, RIAU ISLAND PROVINCE

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Abstract

This study aimed to discover the development of tourism industry in several cultural events in Batam Regency, Riau Island Province. This was considered crucial as it dealt with how the cultural event in tourism industry might affect the intensity of tourists' revisit and tourism development. The data were obtained from interview and library research about the number of tourists' visits on the cultural events and the increasing number of local revenue. The data were analyzed using a qualitative data analysis. The results from the study showed the effectiveness of the cultural events in attracting tourists' revisit, developing the tourism industry, and generating local revenues. These were seen from the aspects such as quality of accessibility, marketing, accommodation, and venue.

Keywords: development, tourism industry, cultural event, tourists' revisit, effectiveness.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui perkembangan industri pariwisata di beberapa acara budaya di Kabupaten Batam, Provinsi Kepulauan Riau. Ini dianggap penting karena berkaitan dengan bagaimana acara budaya di industri pariwisata dapat mempengaruhi intensitas kunjungan wisatawan dan pengembangan pariwisata. Data diperoleh dari wawancara dan penelitian perpustakaan tentang jumlah kunjungan wisatawan pada acara-acara budaya dan peningkatan jumlah pendapatan lokal. Data dianalisis menggunakan analisis data kualitatif. Hasil dari penelitian menunjukkan efektivitas acara budaya dalam menarik kunjungan wisatawan, mengembangkan industri pariwisata, dan menghasilkan pendapatan lokal. Ini dilihat dari aspek-aspek seperti kualitas aksesibilitas, pemasaran, akomodasi, dan tempat

Kata Kunci: perkembangan, industri pariwisata, acara budaya, kunjungan wisatawan, efektivitas.

1. Research Background

The development of Batam as a regional processing industry has been perfectly released after Presidential Decree (*Kepres)* No 41 year of 1973. Since then, industry has become the main sector of the economic development in this city. Beside the decree, the geographical position of Batam as one of the outer islands in Indonesia makes Batam the city of Exclusive Economic Zone (ZEE) or Special Economic Zone (KEK). This condition causes Batam to have several special economic policies or even some special policies in customs, taxes and licenses. It can be in the form of suppression like customs duties, Value Added Tax, Sales Tax Luxury

Goods, which aims to increase investment and economic growth in Batam.

However, the potential sectors to be promoted in Batam are not only processing industry, but also the tourism sector. This is proven by the data that Batam was chosen as five best cities in Indonesia in 2012 with the number of tourist arrival reaching 1.219.608 for international tourists with the growth rate of 5.51% after Bali and Jakarta (Badan Pusat Statistik Nasional, 2012 in Putri 2013:2). In 2016, it was also supported by the proposal of Batam Chambers of Commerce and Industry on December 30th, 2016 on the website www.kabarbatam.com which set that 2017 was the year of tourism for Batam Regency. The head of Batam Chambers of Commerce and Industry also acknowledged that tourism sector was one of the leading sectors in Batam besides manufacturing industries, shipyards, offshore, trading and IT services.

Referring to the previous data, it can be assumed that tourism becomes a new promising industry to be promoted in Batam. In other words, it can be perceived that tourism can be one of the motors for Batam to trigger development in this city. It is observed that there are seven excellent potential sectors in Batam focusing on tourism industry such as MICE tourism, shopping tourism, culinary tourism, cultural tourism, history tourism, sport tourism, and religious tourism. From these potential sectors, cultural tourism is an example of currently growing tourism. This is in line with the fact that Batam is identical with Melayu ethnic and some influences of Chinese culture. As a result of this phenomenon, the stakeholder in Batam has created some yearly events that include the attraction of these cultural ethnics to increase the number of tourist visits.

In 2015, there were at least 6 cultural events like Lantern Festival Parade, Local Dance Parade (*Gurindam 12*), Batam Cultural and Arts Festival, Wonder Food Festival, Dance Parade, and Archipelago Cuisine Festival. Meanwhile, there were at least 9 cultural events performed in 2016 like Chinese New Year celebration, Imlek Festival and Barongsay Show, Tamadun Melayu Dance and Art (*Gurindam 12*), Batam Tourism Ambassador, Batam Dance Parade, Local Dance Parade in Riau Islands, Moon Cake Festival, Malay Art Feast (*Kenduri Seni Melayu*) and Wonder Food Batam. The increasing number in varieties of local arts performed seems to show that there is an indication of improvement in tourist revisits to participate, attend and watch the cultural events. Thus, it can be perceived that the increasing number of cultural events in Batam is varied along with the increasing number of tourists revisits in Batam to see the attraction performed throughout the cultural events.

However, an interesting fact was discovered from the latest data of the tourist revisit number in Batam from 2015 to 2016 in which there was a decrease in the total number of national and international tourist (especially Singaporean) to Batam. Based on the latest data of tourist revisit, it can be seen that almost every month in 2016, the number of international tourist visits was decreasing compared to 2015. The lowest tourist visit was in August where the discrepancy was 25.88% lower than 2015 from 134.540 people to 99.724 people (Koran Sindo Batam, 2017:1). Additionally, an informal interview was also proposed to one Hotel General Manager in Batam, at February 2nd, 2017, which also explained that there was a reduction of occupancy rate in his Hotel which may be affected by the cutback of tourist revisit in Batam especially tourists from the nearest country like Singapore and Malaysia.

Therefore, it can be identified that there was a gap in planning of holding some cultural events to attract tourists with the number of tourists' visit to Batam. Thus, it seems important to analyze how the cultural event in tourism industry may affect the intensity of tourists' revisit in increasing the local revenue. To answer this formulation of problem, there were three research questions followed this study. The research questions were:

1. How do the cultural events contribute in increasing tourists revisit and Batam revenue?
2. Do the event organizers in Batam Tourism and Cultural Department face obstacles in conducting the cultural events?

3. Why do the event organizers in Batam Tourism and Cultural Department face obstacles when empowering cultural events to increase tourist revisit and Batam revenue?

The significance of this research was to inform the stakeholders of Batam to develop the face of cultural events, so it might give a high contribution in expanding the quality of tourism industry in Batam.

1.1. Literature Review

Event is generally defined as an affair; effect; happening; or notable occurrence. Event can be categorized into an activity or an event which is designed for a particular purpose including any activity which is unexpected but happening. Specifically, Getz (2007:18) defined event as an occurrence at a given place and time; a special set of circumstances; a noteworthy occurrence. Thus, it means that event is a temporal phenomenon that can be planned or unplanned.

Furthermore, studying the theory of event management is also important to be discussed when planning to organize a particular event. Even management includes administration, design, marketing, operations and risk. These elements need to be considered before conducting a particular event. Each of the domains of previous event management can be seen below:
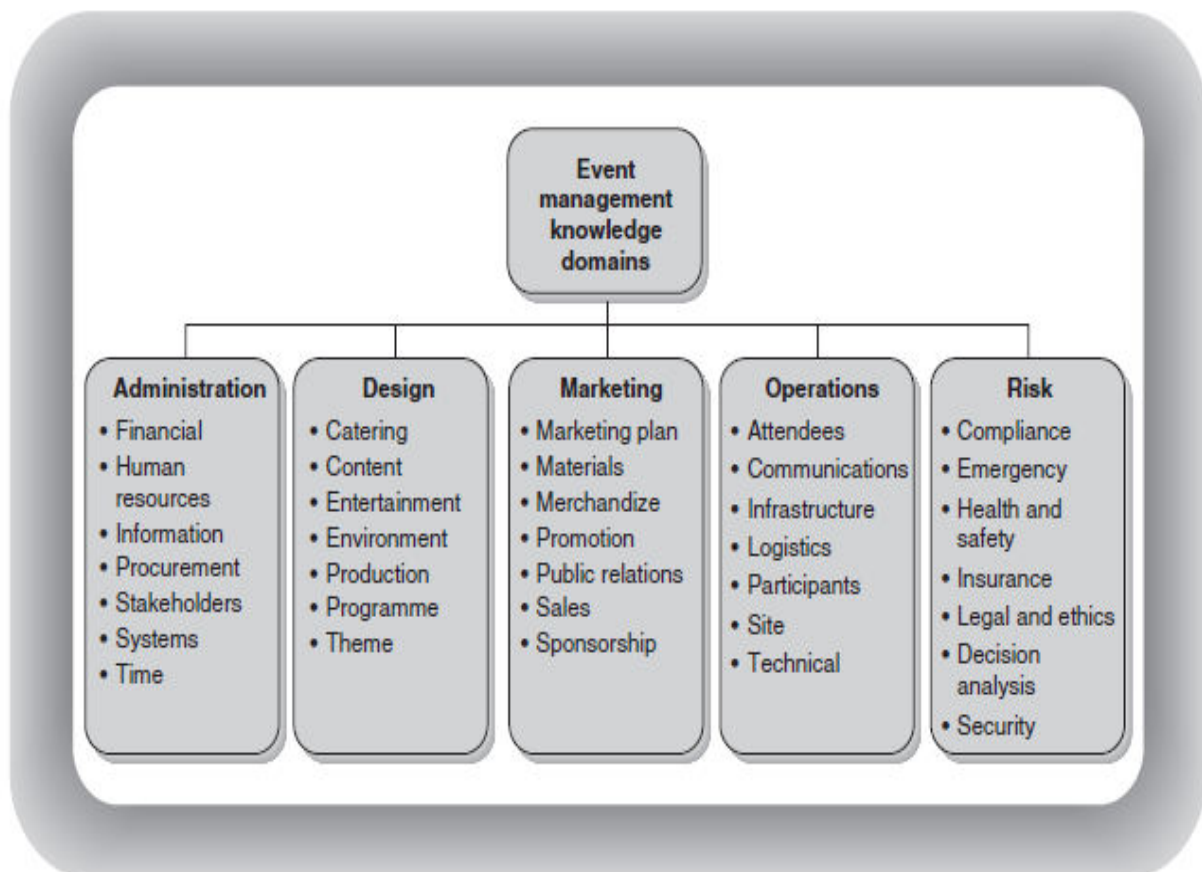

Figure 1. The Domains of Event Management (Getz 2007:2)

By knowing this event management, the event organizers may prevent any obstacles and problems which may arise during the events. In other words, event management helps to design, guide, and control the preparation and the course of the event.

Furthermore, Getz (2007: 28) acknowledged that event can be distinguished into two

parts; planned events and unplanned events. Specifically, planned events can be defined as a particular event which is designed by professional event designers and managers. In contrast, the unplanned event is an event that happens spontaneously and unpredictably. The differences of each event can be seen from the table below (Getz 2007:28).

Table 1. The differences of Planned Events and Unplanned Events

Aspect of differences	Planned events	Unplanned events
Purpose	Goals or outcomes are specified by producers of the event and influenced by key stakeholders.	Purpose is self-defined; intentions of participants might be unclear, diverse, even contradictory.
Program	Usually planned and scheduled in detail; the designers of the event are generally willing to create "experiences" to guests, participants, and spectators.	Spontaneous activities; or one set in motion by agents; actions become rather unpredictable.
Control	Controls are imposed by managers and other formal stakeholders, including governments.	No management system is in place, only a degree of normal civic control; sometimes a police response is required.
Accountability	Producers and managers are formally held accountable.	No organization or legal entity can be held accountable; individuals can be held accountable for their actions.

Based on the previous differences, it can be identified that the tourism event can be considered as planned event. As planned event deals with planning, planned events are also divided into several types. Getz (2007:23) describes the functions of planned events like iconic events, premier or prestige events, mega event, media event, cause-related event, corporate event, publicity stunt, special event, spectator & interactive events, and participant events. The breakdown of various functions above is described in the following table;

Table 2. Definitions of Various Functions in Planned Events

	Function of Planned Events	Definition
1	Hallmark and Iconic Events	An event that is possessed such significance, in terms of tradition, attractiveness, quality or publicity and provides the host venue, community, or destination with a competitive advantage like Mardi Gras, Calgary, and Tattoo.
2	Premier or Prestige Events	Any events that include a prestige which some may be located in permanent and impermanent places and may also combine elements of iconic and hallmark status like World Cup, and Boston Marathon
3	Mega Events	Events are that yield extraordinarily high levels of tourism, media coverage, prestige, or economic impact for the host community, venue or organization like Olympics, World Cup, Music Festival that

		contributes high impact for society
4	Media Event	Media events are created primarily for broadcast audiences, linked to the power of television and the Internet in reaching global audiences
5	Cause-related Event	Events that are established to raise money making them a part of social marketing. Common types are gala dinners, concerts, entertainment shows, endurance events, celebrity sports and auctions.
6	Corporate Event	Any event produced by or for a corporation that fits this category, with common types being product launches, meetings, grand openings, and publicity stunts.
7	Publicity Stunt	Any event designed to garner publicity and usually associated with politicians and movie stars.
8	Special event (mostly used terms)	A special event is a one-time or infrequently occurring event outside the normal program or activists of the sponsoring or organizing body.
		To the customer or guest, a special event is an opportunity for an experience outside the normal range of choices or beyond everyday experience.
9	Spectator and Interactive Events	"Interactive" events embody person-setting or person-person interactivity, unlike 'spectator" events which are inherently passive.
10	Participant Events	Events that are held for people to be involved, not just to spectate which provide targeted benefits or used to customized experiences where participants are necessary for the event to exist.

Moreover, Getz (2007:30) describes the typology of planned events such as cultural celebrations, festivals, carnival, heritage commemoration, parades & processions, religious events, political & state events, arts & entertainment, performing arts, literature, visual arts, business & trade events, meetings & conventions, exhibitions, fairs, sport events, recreational events, and many others. These show that the typology or scope of planned events is huge, and it may cover not only small scale but also large scale in its realization.

Next, planned events especially cultural events may also affect the social and economic condition of the local citizen (Pitana in Kemenpar 2011:10). The impact of tourism on socio-economic conditions of local communities can be categorized into 8 groups, such as:

      a. foreign exchange earnings from money changers
      b. community income
      c. employment opportunity
      d. prices
      e. distribution of the benefits of business tourism
      f. ownership and control
      g. development in many fields
      h. government revenue

Referring to cultural events in Batam, it is implied that these cultural events are also an example of planned events that vary from cultural celebrations, festivals, carnival, exhibitions and sport events. Seeing from the purpose of these events, it can be identified that the series of cultural events in Batam can be classified as iconic events and special events. This is in line

with the definition that cultural events in Batam are set as the iconic event to show the tradition, culture, and attractiveness of the society, while the aspect of special event can be seen from some one-time event which is not frequently displayed and designed to attract customer or guest and contribute to increase the local revenue of the regency..

2. Research Method

This study used a case study research method which aimed to analyze and look precisely for the phenomenon at the beginning, and the explanation was obtained to explain what might become problems of decreasing tourist visits while there are some numbers of cultural events are planned. The data of this research were gathered from in-depth interviews and documentation studies. The deep-interview was conducted to two staffs in Batam Tourism and Cultural Department on Wednesday 1st, 2017. The first staff was the Malay culture observer who currently works in art, culture and history division of Batam Tourism and Culture Department. The second staff was also the staff of Batam Tourism and Culture Department who also works in art, culture and history division. Beside conducting the interview, the data were also supported by analyzing some documentation studies from Central Bureau of Statistics Riau Islands about the intensity of tourist revisits and the purpose of visiting Batam from 2014-2016.

In the technique of data collection or gathering, a few technique or data collection procedures were used. The description of the process can be seen below. First, the primary data were obtained from the field through interviews. Then, the information obtained from the interview was interpreted and correlated with the data from Central Bureau of Statistics Riau Islands. After analyzing both data, the discussion was undertaken to observe the efficiency of cultural event in tourism industry at Batam in improving the intensity of tourists' revisit and tourism development..

3. Result and Discussion

There were 10 questions given to the interviewees about the types, condition and prospective of cultural events in developing the popularity of tourism industry in Batam to increase the local revenue of the city. Based on the interview given to both of the staffs, they acknowledged that since 2014 until 2016, there was an increase in the numbers of cultural events performed in every month on the following year. The first staff added that several cultural events have been programmed to be a yearly event like Melayu Art Feast. These events were set to be the iconic events for Batam in order to attract the intensity of local and international tourism to visit Batam. A special event was also held in Batam like Traditional Dance Competition which was designed to explore the creation of young generation and art performers in Batam in expressing their creativity to popularize local dance which was endemic and unique like Jogi Dance, one of original dance from Batam popularized in Panjang Island.

Instead of asking about the varieties of cultural events performed in Batam, a question about how effective the cultural events to increase the tourists revisits to Batam was also proposed. For this question, both of the staffs agreed that the contribution of cultural events to increase the number of tourists was still low. Both of them believed that this was probably caused by the lack of analysis in the implementation time especially when it was set to attract international tourist. In the aspect of attracting local tourists, the problem was probably caused by the lack of people interest on the art being displayed. As a result, the intensity of local and international tourists visiting the cultural events was not really high. The second staff added that the enhancement of tourist revisits was not really significant even for the yearly events that had been held in every year.

Due to this explanation, the second staff also added that the aspect of accessibility, venue, and accommodation were not the problem during the preparation or implementation of the events. He said that the major cause of the problem was the promotion and marketing of the

events. The first staff also expressed the same idea. He acknowledged that major cause of this problem was the lack of budget allocation to do the promotion and marketing of these cultural events. Although the government had allocated some fund for holding these events, this was not enough to afford all the facilities needed to organize the events. The first staff also added that Batam Tourism and Culture Department had tried to seek, promote, and preserve the cultural aspects in Batam, but due to limited fund, it minimized the promotion and marketing of the events. Thus, it was suggested that there should be a special fund allocation to establish the events.

Besides asking about the intensity of tourist revisits, a question about how the cultural events might contribute in improving the local revenue of Batam was also asked. Both of the staffs could not explain clearly how these cultural events might make an improvement for the local revenue. It was difficult for them to justify that a particular cultural event had an impact toward the local revenue. It should be supported by data, and they did not have the data. However, they did not refuse that the effectiveness of cultural events to increase the number of local revenue was still not significant or could be considered as low. Therefore, they added that this could be one of the concerns of not only the government but also the societies to promote and market these cultural events.

From the previous findings, it can be interpreted that the contribution of cultural events to improve the tourist revisits and local revenue was still low, especially to attract international tourists. It was supported by the data of Central Bureau of Statistics Riau Islands, which was obtained from General Lecture from Head of Riau Island Tourism and Culture Department in Batam Tourism Polytechnic on February 3rd, 2017 that presented the data below:

Based on the data above, it can be identified that from 2013 until 2016, there was a decline of international tourists revisits to Batam on 2015 to 2016. The decline was really significant with discrepancy -16.2%. It was probably caused by several negative issues that happened at that time like terrorism, bombardment issue, and mass demonstrations. It made several countries like Singapore release a travel warning to visit Batam and other cities or districts in Riau Islands. This absolutely affected the visits of tourist to several cultural events held in Batam.

Besides identifying the number of tourist revisits to Batam, the purpose of international tourist visiting Batam was also identified. The figure can be seen on the picture 2 below:
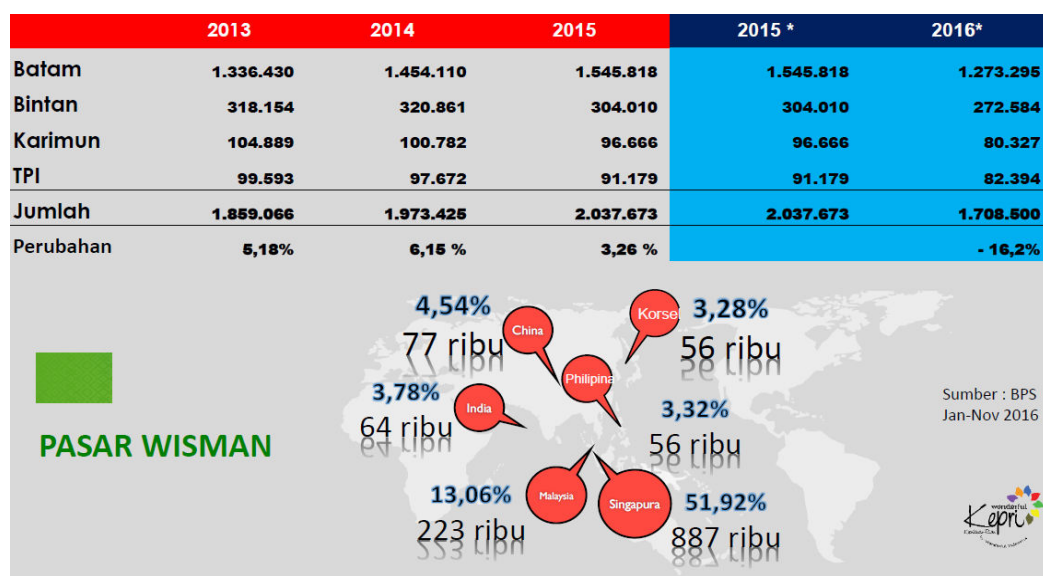
	2013	2014	2015	2015 *	2016*
Batam	1.336.430	1.454.110	1.545.818	1.545.818	1.273.295
Bintan	318.154	320.861	304.010	304.010	272.584
Karimun	104.889	100.782	96.666	96.666	80.327
TPI	99.593	97.672	91.179	91.179	82.394
Jumlah	1.859.066	1.973.425	2.037.673	2.037.673	1.708.500
Perubahan	5,18%	6,15 %	3,26 %		- 16,2%

Figure 2. The international tourist visits in Batam and other Islands in Riau Island Povince
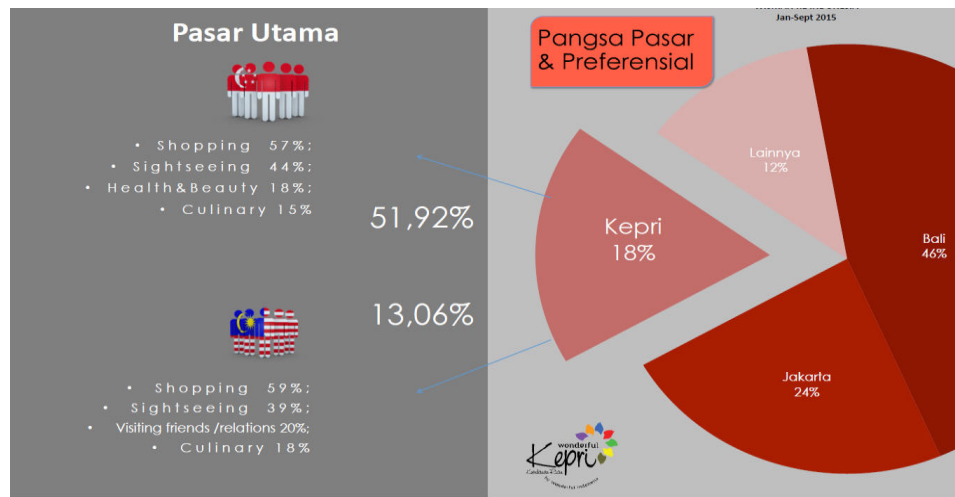
Figure 3. The reasons why international tourist visits in Batam and other Islands in Riau Island Province

It can be seen in figure 2 that the potential markets of Batam were tourists from Singapore and Malaysia where Singaporeans had the highest rate of visiting Batam with percentage by 51.92% compared to Malaysia which was only 13.06%. One interesting point which can be obtained from the data on Figure 3 is that none of the tourists visiting Batam or Riau Islands had the purpose of "attending event" particularly the cultural events. Most of them came to Batam for shopping, sightseeing, health & beauty, and culinary. This probably became one major cause why the rate of tourists attending the cultural events were still low and not significant to gain the income of local revenue.

Based on the findings, it can be discovered that the effectiveness of cultural events to increase the number of tourists' revisits and local revenue was still not significant or low. The causes of the problem were probably derived from how to increase the brand awareness of cultural events, especially to support the marketing system or promotion of the cultural events to tourists. Thus, tourists, especially international ones, visited Batam even Kepri not only for sightseeing, shopping, visiting friends, health, or culinary only, but also attending the cultural events which officially might increase the intensity of improvement in local revenue.

As the problem derived from the finding dealt with the marketing system of promoting cultural events and how to gain the fund allocation for the events, there might be several points noted in this case. First, the popularity of the cultural events was considered low because the promotion or marketing of the cultural events were limited only in small area. Hence, there were only a small number of participants and tourists joining the event. Second, the lack of fund to conduct the event might affect the facilities supporting the events. Before discussing the strategies to overcome the previous problems, the discussion began with why these problems occurred. The reason was the lack of awareness and control in the event management, especially on the aspect of administration and marketing. This was possibly caused by the reason that after conducting the event, the event organizers did not establish a deep evaluation toward any issues arisen after conducting an event. As a result, similar problem dealing with financial, promotion or marketing always existed.

Regarding to these problems, there are several efforts that can be done to solve the problem. For the marketing problem, there are some strategies that the event organizers may carry out to deal with the problem. The strategies are divided into three (INCONSISTENT) parts. The First strategy deals with the event page or website, the second strategy is on the pre-event email, the third strategy may focus on the pre-event social activity, the fourth is submitting to media partners, and the fifth is during the event and post-event activities (adapted from "How to Market an Event: 50 Event Marketing Tips" at www.orbitmedia.com;

Christopher, 2004:100; Roberta, 2015:47).

The first strategy deals with the event page or website. This is beneficial for promoting the cultural event as many departments in Batam nowadays have completed their personal website. The description of the strategies can be seen below:

a. Clear description about the event

The website should indicate the topic, time, place and participants of the event clearly. Don't forget to share the benefits that the attendee will obtain. Thus, using third-party endorsement like a testimony of the previous event is a good choice.

b. Pre-event object of content on the event

Providing tangible object of event content during the event is also a good choice to attract the attention of tourists or attendees to get involve in the event. The objects should be something that they can bring home after attending the event like videos, photos, t-shirts or other things. The most important thing to remember from this strategy is capturing a good memory of attendees while attending the event.

c. Stating the artist, actress or speaker biography and pictures

Showing the picture of artist, actress, or speaker involve on the event page may attract the attention of tourists or attendees to come.

d. Event portrait

This image or portrait will be displayed when the page is shared in the social network. It can be in the form of logo, picture of people attending, or a satisfied face of attendees or tourist who have visited the previous event.

e. Video advertisement

It is also a good idea to create a simple video like an interview with actress, or speakers who perform in the cultural event in order to captivate the tourist attention especially if the speakers or actresses have had several shows in or outside the country.

f. Adding the "register now" button.

The website needs to clearly show the "register now" button and a call button in order to help the tourists or participants registering themselves.

The second list of strategies is related with the pre-event email. Pre-event email is also beneficial to invite the participants to join the event, and it generally works when the event organizer has several marketing emails. The strategies to distribute the pre-event email are as follows:

a. Interesting subject line

The email should set a subject line that might show emotional content like anxiety and awe, so it may lead to a high rate of access like "you have missed a great chance for not attending this event."

b. Good timing

By sending the promotion email on the weekend time, it may increase the clickthrough rates. The reason is because the attendees, tourist or expected participants do not feel stress and are probably willing to commit for few minutes to view the event and may be in a good mood to invite friends to join. Then, when the attendees or tourists have finished registering themselves, an auto mail response needs to be created.

c. Video url/thumbnail attachment

Video always plays an important role to display a vivid description of the event. Thus, it is important to attach video thumbnail on the email.

d. Testimony or proof from previous events

Not only videos, testimony or proof also supports how the attendees will view the proposed event.

The third strategy is related to the pre-event social activity, and it is considered to be

beneficial to promote the cultural event in Batam. Nowadays, social media grows very rapidly. Thus, empowering the role of social media to do a pre-event marketing is a great choice this year. The summary of the strategies is as follow:

a. The hashtag (#....). It is necessary to pick and share an event hashtag that is shorts, memorable, and unique.
b. Links on Social Media like Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram and many others.
c. Relevant people on Twitter who are interested in the topic. It is a good idea to mention them and give them a friendly invitation.
d. Early and frequent Tweets expressing statements like "Registration opens", "Early-bird registration is ending soon", "Countdowns: "Just X days until the event", and so on.
e. Facebook, twitter and Instagram following.

Overall, in the pre-event marketing, it is recommended that a great deal of social media activities such as connecting, mentioning, tweeting and linking need to be done.

The fourth strategy deals with working with media and industry partners. At the moment, Batam already has some media outlets like Batam Post, Sindo Batam, Riau TV or even National Media Partner like national television or newspaper. The strategies are:

a. Submitting information to local media outlets
b. Submitting information to industry associations
c. Informing the local, national or international media partner.

The promotion throughout the media is surely possible to increase the number of tourists visiting the cultural events in Batam.

The fifth strategy is on marketing efforts during the event. Live tweeting, Life streaming from online media for instance can be some of the ways of marketing during the event. The strategies which can be done during the event are:

a. Tweeting quotes. It is a good idea to tweet quotes of interesting performance or statement from participants or tourists.
b. Sharing pictures. It is necessary to share pictures of what's happening during the event.
c. Holding a lucky draw to open an opportunity to gather e-mail addresses or contacts.

Beside the previous strategy, post-event activities are also important to share appreciation for attendees, participants, or tourists who have attended the cultural events. Some strategies that we can possibly do are gallery of event photos on page, video of participants' presentations (compilation), top tweets from the event, survey for testimonials, thank you tweets or e-mail, and moments sharing through mention, hashtag, and photos. These five strategies are expected to cause a high impact in increasing the effectiveness of cultural events to increase the tourists' revisits and local revenue in Batam's cultural events.

The second problem is the financial problem. One strategy that the event organizer may apply is by involving third-parties sponsorship to support the funding of the event instead of proposing the special funding allocation from local budgets. The strategies can probably be done by working with partners and giving free admission (a table in the event space) for photo, video or news partner. The second strategy is creating a unique promotion with the affiliate partners by having them do a promotion of their product by renting a stand on our event. Next, concerning food and beverages, it is suggested to invite sponsors or influencers that can join us for lunch or dinner session for the event. It will directly increase the amount of funding in the organization of events. Finally, joining with hotel and other souvenirs shop in serving the tourist and participants during the event is also a good way to raise the fund.

4. Conclusion

The effectiveness of cultural event to develop the tourism industry in Batam regency does not seem significantly improving the quantity of tourist revisits and local revenue. Besides, the purposes of tourists visiting Batam in general are not for participating in the cultural events but for culinary, sightseeing, visiting relatives, health, and beauty. This may be caused by some problems like ineffectiveness of promotion and marketing, and the lack of financial supports to conduct the cultural events.

Dealing with these problems, several strategies have been proposed on the discussion such as empowering page, social media and video before, during, and after the event. Meanwhile, involving third-party is suggested to solve the financial problem. Hopefully, the ideas proposed in this study will contribute as a new insight for managing cultural events to improve the role of cultural events in increasing the number of tourists' revisits and local revenue as cultural events is one potential element to raise the economic sector of particular area.

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