

SUN TZU'S STRATEGY FOR WINNING THE SUSTAINABLE TOURISM MARKET

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Abstract

This research examines the effectiveness of adopting Sun Tzu's strategies to achieve domination in the tourism business, resulting in the establishment of sustainable tourism. "The Art of War" is a classic Chinese work of strategy authored by philosopher Sun Tzu. It offers combat methods and highlights the importance of power in navigating a complex commercial environment. Entrepreneurs in any industry clearly recognise the need of maintaining higher levels of customer satisfaction for the sustainability of their business. The significant decrease in sales of business products can be attributed to the unsatisfactory levels of client satisfaction. Simultaneously, the persistent loss in sales numbers implies a significant risk of the business facing bankruptcy. Business managers must anticipate and strategize for competition from competitors, taking into consideration several factors. This research uses a qualitative research methodology. The findings demonstrate that the fundamental principles of Sun Tzu's Art of War can be effectively employed to attract customers in the tourism industry. This can be achieved by demonstrating respect towards customers, efficiently organising information, maintaining a clear focus on objectives, securing advantageous positions, launching strategic attacks, implementing unexpected tactics, skilfully manoeuvring, concentrating resources, leveraging economic power, establishing a resilient command structure, exhibiting strong leadership, and employing straightforward problem-solving techniques.

Keywords: Sun Tzu Strategy; Tourism Market; Tourism Village; Sustainable Tourism

1. INTRODUCTION

This research analyses the effectiveness of adopting Sun Tzu's strategy to achieve dominance in the tourism industry, resulting in the long-term growth and stability of the tourism sector. The Art of War is a renowned Chinese work on strategy authored by the philosopher Sun Tzu. It offers battle methods that emphasize the importance of power in navigating a dynamic business-related environment (Fawzia & Wardhani, 2020). Tourism activities encompass endeavors aimed at satisfying human desires for leisure, which are experienced through the provision of services by certain establishments. Tourism is an industry that involves diligent work, the manufacturing of goods, and the generating of wealth via human efforts, as defined by A.S. Hornby (Hakim, 2010). Industrial activities demand diligent effort to achieve success, generating products that offer satisfaction and enhance the welfare of humans. According to Kotler (Mahanani & Alam, 2022), the term "industry" always refers to a productive activity that creates products or services with economic, social, and psychological dimensions.

Kotler emphasizes the deep correlation between quality, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty. The presence of high-quality products or services motivates consumers to develop strong connections or affiliations with a company, resulting in customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Lerep Tourism Village's success can be attributed to its commitment to preserving local cultural traditions and maintaining environmental sustainability, resulting in its recognition as the third-best sustainable tourism village in Central Java. In 2021, the Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy directly acknowledged the village. In 2021, Lerep Tourism Village in Central Java was recognised as one of the top 300 tourism villages in Indonesia, earning it a spot among

the 24 tourism villages in Central Java that received the Indonesian Tourism Village Award (ADWI). The village's exceptional performance in delivering superior services and ground-breaking innovations in Central Java and beyond has significantly contributed to its success in serving to tourists.

Lerep Village capitalizes on the local wisdom and innovative abilities of its residents to meet the demands of the tourism industry. Parts of the residents are involved in agricultural activities, given the mountainous terrain of the region. Dairy cows are the primary focus of animal husbandry. In order to attract travelers to visit Lerep Tourism Village, agricultural products are transformed into traditional cuisine and packaged in bamboo-woven boxes. Subsequently, there are traditional cultural attractions at the culinary market on certain occasions, during which the entire community wears traditional clothing. The existence of the "ndeso snack market" (a snack market in rural areas) generates employment prospects inside the village, raises the worth of agricultural goods, and eventually enhances the well-being of the inhabitants.

The research addresses the issue of successfully winning the tourism market in Central Java and formulates the problem of how to sustain this strategy against competitors from other villages/tourism villages. Therefore, the use of Sun Tzu's strategy, "The Art of War," is deemed necessary. This classical work provides a strong approach to competing in dynamic business environments.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This research is conducted through qualitative research methods with data collection techniques involving interviews, observations, document analysis, and Focus Group Discussions (FGD). The data sources include government authorities, tourism attraction managers, community organizations, local residents, and tourists.

As for the previous research related to this proposal:

Table 1
Previous Research

Research Title	Marketing Strategy of Batik Putri Sangga Buana Karawang with SWOT Analysis Based on Five Elements of Sun Tzu
Researcher	(Triana & Sayuti, 2022)
Year	2022
Related Variables	Batik, MSMEs, Sun Tzu Concept, SWOT
Findings	The Sun Tzu 5-element strategy is suitable for the environmental situation by developing the marketing mix of price and promotion through finding alternative materials and surprising discounts to customers. It involves maintaining market niches and product prices and quality by educating the public about product quality, and developing collaborations with others to meet customer demands.
Similarities	This research employs the same variables, utilizing Sun Tzu's strategy as a reference for the study. The 5 elements identified as successful strategies for business product development in this study suggest that the 12 Sun Tzu strategies could serve as a model for conquering the tourism market in the tourism industry.

Research Title	Designing Balanced Scorecard with SWOT Analysis and Sun Tzu's Art of War for Performance Improvement at PT Dominica Surabaya
Researcher	(Anggun et al., 2015)
Year	2015
Related Variables	Balanced Scorecard, SWOT Analysis, Quality Function Deployment, Strategy, Internal Business Process Perspective
Findings	The priority planning needed, according to Sun Tzu's war strategy, resulted in prioritized plans that were translated into executable strategies for the company. The research outcome includes performance improvement strategies for company management that can be executed to enhance innovation and expand performance improvements.
Similarities	This research contributes to planners by suggesting that winning in the market involves Sun Tzu's war strategy to improve company management, enhancing innovation, and initiating improvements to ensure sustainability, especially when applied in the field of tourism.

Research Title	Global Perspectives on Smart-Power Strategy in International Arena: Critical Discovery into Philosophy of Clausewitz and Sun Tzu from Strategic Implications
Researcher	(Bao, 2021)
Year	2021
Related Variables	International Studies, Smart-Power Strategy, Sun Tzu, Clausewitz, International Development, Cross-Cultural Studies.
Findings	Sun Tzu's strategic approach emphasizes achieving optimal victory without engaging in any battles. Meanwhile, it plays a more epistemologically productive role, focusing on leveraging intelligent strength strategies in the complex and evolving international arena. In this context, relying solely on brute force proves insufficient to maintain dominance and secure advantageous positions.
Similarities	This research employs a strategy for achieving business victory that doesn't involve direct confrontation but instead plays a strategic role with intelligence to attain business advantages. Therefore, this strategy is crucial in the study by reinforcing Sun Tzu's strategy and subsequently analysing the accomplishments that should align with the tourism market. It involves implementing strength strategies for which variables are ready to engage in a war that impacts sustainability.

Based on the description above, this research illustrates that the Sun Tzu Strategy Method is the most crucial cornerstone in determining the strategy of business warfare to achieve profits and sustainability. The 12 essential Sun Tzu strategies are analyzed and examined in Lerep

Tourism Village to achieve optimal results as a model for conquering the sustainable tourism market.

Leaders implementing the strategies present in Sun Tzu into their business strategies are highly likely to emerge as winners in market competition. Conversely, failure to adopt or apply these strategies significantly increases the likelihood of losing in the market competition. Additionally, environmental conditions influence businesses, requiring entrepreneurs to modify existing plans. Therefore, previously formulated business plans need to be modified or adapted to the influencing environmental conditions. If there are weaknesses, create the perception that competitors have high expectations for our business. Similarly, if there are strengths, do not reveal them to competitors (Hekasarini, 2016).

The solutions offered by this research are as follows:



Figure 1
Research Flowchart

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Findings

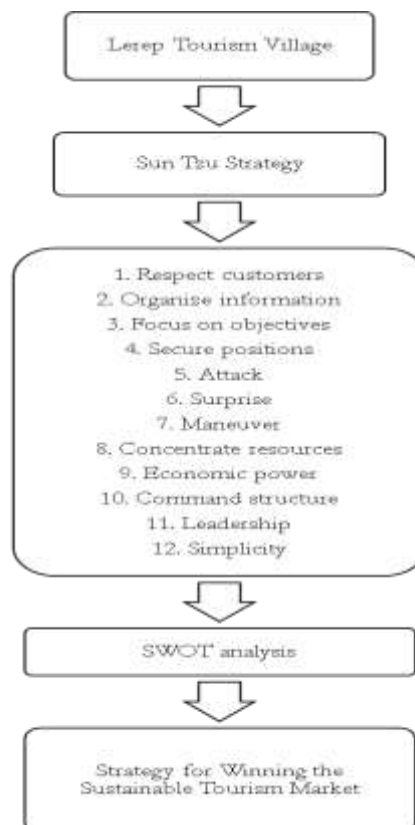


Figure 2
Research Framework

The success of Lerep Tourism Village can serve as a model for the development of sustainable tourism through Sun Tzu's Art of War strategy. The achievements include:

1. Respect Customers

Lerep Tourism Village's success in achieving the right strategy, guided by Sun Tzu's Art of War, focuses on winning customers in the tourism market, especially in attracting tourists. The importance of respecting customers and maintaining partnerships is emphasized. The achieved strategy involves understanding and identifying the customers who will be served, particularly the tourists coming to Lerep Village, their segments, and cultural aspects. If this model is achieved, it means respecting tourists. The success in serving tourists is evident through several achievements:

1. 1st place in the Healthy Livestock Village Competition at the Provincial Level in Central Java in 2013
2. 2nd place in the Dairy Cattle Group Competition at the Provincial Level in Central Java in 2017
3. 1st place in the Clean Environment Competition at the District Level in Semarang in 2017
4. 1st place in the Pokdarwis Conversion Competition at the District Level in Semarang in 2017
5. 1st place in the Tourism Village Festival at the Provincial Level in Central Java in 2017
6. 1st place in the Pokdarwis Convention at the District Level in Semarang in 2018
7. 2nd place in the BUMDes Festival at the Provincial Level in Central Java in 2018
8. 2nd place in Appreciation and Pokdarwis Conversion at the Provincial Level in Central Java in 2018
9. 1st place in the Aware Village Competition for Social Security at the National Level on December 5, 2018
10. 1st place in the Culinary Festival Ndeso District in Semarang on March 23, 2019
11. Overall champion of the Tourism Village Festival in Semarang District on June 21, 2019
12. Overall champion of the Appreciation of Pokdarwis in Central Java on July 28, 2019
13. Main climate village of the Ministry of Environment in 2019
14. Sustainable Tourism Village Award at the National Level in 2020
15. 1st place in the Women Farmers Group (KWT) at the District Level in Semarang in 2021

The development strategy for tourism villages must also understand the segments of tourists visiting new tourist villages, especially for the long term. It involves looking at trends, both from the nearest tourism villages and those that are more popular. Additionally, it considers the number of tourist visits, such as from educational institutions, urban areas, and others.

Services must be maintained and improved to provide satisfaction to tourists, becoming a focal point for the desires and needs of tourism village development. This is essential for establishing long-term relationships in the tourism program.

2. Organize Information

The organization of information in the development of a company reaches a point of success where it must be capable of determining success in the competitive field, in line with the market, customers, and competition that pays attention to the right organizational information.

Organizing this information to reach the competitive stage in the market involves understanding the limitations in finding the right market based on the available data. Typically, managers will maximize targeting by tailoring existing offerings to their segments.

Thus, the information offered will align with the achievements from the tourists' experiences. For example, the educational institution segment, including preschools, elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools. This segment has been well-executed.

Organizing around the trends in urban areas is also considered as the basis for changing offerings to tourists. It is analyzed based on existing data or previous purchases of Lerep tourism package products. This is done to ensure that managers understand the desires of tourists amidst changing trends.

The number of tourist visits also becomes the standard target for Lerep Tourism Village to advance in the long term and compete with other competitors at any given time. Information from customers/tourists who have traveled and made reservations will be sought regarding their origin and the destination of their travel. After the activity, there will be an evaluation of the comparison according to customers after participating in activities in Lerep Tourism Village and plans for future activities. This is crucial and even mandatory as a basis for measuring the price of package types according to their products and in line with tourists' interests compared to our competitors. Accurate information is the key to this principle.

3. Focus on Objectives

The company must focus on its objectives, namely finding new market foundations or competing to capture existing markets. The strategy for exploring new markets first involves strengthening existing products in four and involving four other hamlets that have not been involved, driven to discover their potential. Then, for the existing four, finding innovations in each attraction of those hamlets and also the marketing methods for their products. Starting from the end of this year, to take the initiative in promotions, direct promotions will be sent directly to potential guests.

4. Secure Position

To secure the company's position, the strategic approach must be able to determine the company's current position and efforts to maintain that position, either through cost leadership or differentiation. Therefore, the strategy adopted by Lerep Tourism Village includes improvements in facility services, providing special pricing options or discounts for customers/tourists, with calculations applied to travel agents.

5. Attack

The best defense, according to Sun Tzu, is to attack first. The company should initiate the attack, not in the sense of attacking competitors, but by entering the field quickly and responsively to opportunities to dominate the market.

The innovation strategy involves expanding the variety of tour packages and developing tourism potential, thus launching an attack to be ready to dominate the market. The strategy targets the expansion of offerings to include more package varieties across the eight hamlets. Subsequently, innovation is implemented through the productive women farmer groups, making them eligible to be offered to tourists as agro-tourism. Three houses run by women farmers are ready to serve tourists. This approach is maximized through collaboration with professional academic agents, conducting segmented training programs on processing products from women farmers. This strategy has been successfully implemented, with four innovations accomplished within a year.

6. Surprise

Providing surprises is an innovative strategy, both for customers and competitors, by offering something beyond conventional expectations. The strategy implemented so far to achieve surprise involves continuous correction and evaluation of the existing products. Further steps include refining and optimizing services, and daring to execute to assess the competitors'

capabilities regarding the tourism efforts in Lerep village. If relying solely on regular sources for information about Lerep Village, tourists will only receive basic information about the village's tourism packages or attractions. However, this information might not cover in-depth research findings. Therefore, it is essential to enhance consistency and innovation in services. This way, tourists will experience surprises that surpass their expectations based on the information they received earlier. The reality will be better than what they anticipated, encouraging them to return to Lerep Village.

7. Manoeuvre

The company must act swiftly in responding to competitors and identifying market opportunities by executing manoeuvres that competitors find challenging to predict. Therefore, the strategy involves promptly addressing innovations at the hamlet level when competitors exhibit trends or experience increased visitor numbers. This includes discussing and implementing new product innovations that will attract visitors to Lerep Village. Additionally, surveys are conducted among visitors to gather feedback and insights into the continuous improvement of Lerep Village. Furthermore, collaboration models with various parties are expanded to reach the promotional target faster and effectively reach the tourists.

8. Concentrate Resources

The company must effectively manage the right resources, ensuring the allocation of appropriate resources to create a well-prepared and efficient team for battle. This is implemented by Lerep Village through enhancing human resources towards tourism. Human resources are continuously prepared for regeneration and competence improvement through internal education programs in Lerep Village. External activities involve training in collaboration with Pokdarwis, Bumdes, academics, and government programs. This synergy aims to optimize the community, turning them into tourism human resources ready to provide excellent and sustainable services to tourists.

9. Economic Power

Economic power involves competing through the concept of efficiency, such as the precise use of budgets to make the company competitive in terms of pricing. Economic and efficient resource management is achieved through collaborative strategies with government funding. The village government administers the Musedes budget, managed by the village tourism manager. Regarding self-funding through independent capital management, revenue is generated through the sale of tourism package products. The capital management, conducted through two waves for self-investment, provides members with a 15% to 40% interest rate. This distribution ensures self-financing for optimal utilization.

10. Command Structure

The command structure determines the direction of the company, and a good structure is one that is clear and swift, avoiding excessive bureaucracy to allow for flexible two-way information flow. The command structure begins with the village head initiating the initiative. The main driver then educates the community and proceeds with the village government. Currently, it is managed by the tourism manager. The next step is to establish a recognizable brand, namely Lerep Village. Subsequently, a vision and mission are created. Long-term goals involve partnering with businesses to manage tourism packages in various destinations owned by several stakeholders. For its advancement, synergy is achieved through promotional opportunities at festivals.

11. Leadership

Leadership is related to command and how a leader can be a driving force, participate in the process, be an example, and exhibit relevant competence. The village head serves as a role

model, having built a good reputation and demonstrated dedication, making him an exemplary leader. When guiding the tourism village, there is substantial support, although not unanimous, as many people endorse and support various aspects. The family also provides significant support, contributing to the progress in the development of the tourism village. Community human resource planning is facilitated by the village head. The high level of trust in the community allows for easy guidance by the Village Head. The community has confidence in the leadership, as demonstrated in the creation of tourism packages where minimal intervention is required. The initial monitoring played a crucial role, and over time, the community took charge, leading to the continuous success and achievement of awards for Lerep Tourism Village. This success has established an effective system within the community.

12. Simplicity

Simplicity in problem-solving is crucial, as complexity can lead to unorganized and complicated issues. Therefore, problem simplification is necessary through the simplification of problems in the form of business models or simulations. The above principles can be executed effectively with commitment and support from all elements within the company. Community institutions follow a business model principle that supports several elements facilitating commitment to tourism development. This is achieved through the management of the culinary market, as it serves as the focal point for various types of tourists and the community. Therefore, when issues arise in the community, they can be easily and promptly addressed. For instance, if a village encounters a problem at the village level, mutual reminders, corrections, and discussions about solutions take place. One case in point is the culinary market, which typically experiences low visitation every Sunday. This issue is discussed at the village level, and the follow-up involves collaboration with the village-owned enterprise (Bumdes) and the art team to create engaging activities, not limited to culinary experiences alone.

4. CONCLUSION

The fundamental principles of *The Art of War* by Sun Tzu are highly essential when applied to tourism businesses as strategies to win customers, specifically in the tourism market and targeting tourist segments. Manoeuvring, in this context, implies understanding how to attack specific market segments or customers where you can emerge victorious. The success of marketing is not determined by the product but by the customers. When conquering a region, maintain strategic points. Consider the situation before taking action. Those who understand the intricacies of deviation will achieve victory. Thank you, this research was funded through the PDP program of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology (KEMENDIBUDRISTEK) in 2023.

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