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The Role of New Media in Facilitating
Entrepreneurship in Tourism - Case Study:
Promoting Komodo Island in East Nusa Tenggara

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ABSTRACT

Tourism is an important component of the Indonesian economy as well as a significant source of the country's foreign exchange revenues. According to the Center of Data and Information - Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the growth of foreign visitor arrivals to Indonesia has increased rapidly by 9.61 percent since 2010 to the present.

One of the most potential tourism destinations is Komodo Island located in East Nusa Tenggara. With the island's unique qualities, which include the habitat of the Komodo dragons and beautiful and exotic marine life, it is likely to be one of the promising tourism destinations in Indonesia and in the world. In 1986, the island has been declared as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO.

The Ministry of Culture and Tourism continuously promotes many of the country's natural potential in tourism through various media: printed media, television and especially new media. However, there are challenges for the Indonesian tourism industry in facilitating entrepreneurship skills among the local people in East Nusa Tenggara. According to the Central Bureau of Statistics (2011), East Nusa Tenggara is considered as one of the poorest provinces in Indonesia where the economy is lower than the average, with a high inflation of 15%, and unemployment of 30%. This research is needed to explore further the phenomenon behind the above facts, aiming at examining the role of new media in facilitating entrepreneurship in the tourism industry in Komodo Island. The results of this study are expected to provide insights that can help local tourism in East Nusa Tenggara.

Keywords: Tourism, Entrepreneurship, New Media

I. BACKGROUND

It is inevitable that tourism in Indonesia has become an important indicator in stimulating the economy of the country. In 2009, tourism was considered as one third of the foreign exchange revenue after oil, natural gas and palm oil. According to the Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS), tourists who visited Indonesia in August 2011 reached 621,084 people, where the number is rising by 7.32% compared to the number of tourists in the same period in 2010 as many as 4.63 million people (http://www.mediaindonesia.com/read/2011/10/03/264996/4/2/621.084-Turis-Berkunjung-ke-Indonesia-selama-Agustus-, accessed on October 18 2011). An Indonesian Economist, Faisal Basri, indicated in his speech, "Indonesian Economic Development Roadmap 2009-2014", that the tourism sector is projected to become the driving force of the economy

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in the coming period of 2009-2014, and that the sector will be able to contribute about 10 percent to 15 percent of the Gross Domestic Growth (GDP) in the coming year (http://nasional.kompas.com/read/2009/10/15/1756231/, accessed on October 18, 2011).

The number of foreign tourists visiting Indonesia has increased periodically. This is due to the wealth and natural beauty, historical heritage and the diversity of Indonesia's culture. These are considered as important elements in supporting the country's tourism. In addition, Indonesia is known as the largest archipelagic country in the world that has the fourth longest coastline in the world with approximately 17,480 islands.

With its geographical layout, "Indonesia located below the equator has resulted for having tropical and wet climate throughout the year. Moreover, its position which mediates the continents of Asia and Australia and the Indian Ocean and Pacific, Indonesia has a very strategic location" (http://www.wisatalk.com/ accessed on October 18, 2011).

In addition to natural conditions that support the potential of tourism in Indonesia, the government also issued laws and regulations that support its citizens for having and experiencing tourism activities. According to the country's law:

> "Freedom to travel and spend your spare time travelling is a part of human rights."
> (Undang-Undang Kepariwisataan, UU NO.10, 2009)

With support from its natural and physical beauty and the government in promoting tourism in Indonesia, the next stage is the selection of tourism destinations. When it comes to tourism destinations, one might consider choosing between going abroad or exploring the country. Unfortunately, many Indonesian people are more interested in going abroad for travel. As urged by the Chairman of the National Mandate Party, Soetrisno Bachir, adapted by Imam Prihandoko in Kompas (http://nasional.kompas.com/read/2008/12/02/09454362/berwisatalah.di.dalam.negeri accessed on October 3 2011):

> "Travel in your own country, we will definitely obtain beauty that is no less more interesting than places abroad. Help this nation by not having spending sprees buying international products, including not buying the beauty of other nations"

From various selections for tourist destinations in Indonesia, East Nusa Tenggara is considered as a very popular tourist destination and well-loved foreign destination. Although the province of East Nusa Tenggara is one of the poorest provinces in Indonesia, its natural scenery and diversity for tourist attractions encompasses it as an amazing tourist destination. As illustrated in the following quote (http://www.tourismntt.com/ (accessed on October 3, 2011):

> "…traditional ceremonies like the Pasola of Sumba, the whip fighting of Flores and the war dances of Sabu. See the prehistoric Dragons of Komodo, the three colored crater lakes of Keli Mutu in Flores; dive in the world renowned diving destinations of Alor and Komodo; surf the waves of Rote and Sumba…"

Picture 1: East Nusa Tenggara Tourism Map
Source: www.indonesia-tourism.com

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From all tourist destinations located in Flores, the uniqueness of the Komodo National Park (with area of 1,817 km ²) is one of the sought after destinations which lead to become as one of the finalists in "The New Seven Wonders of Nature". This is due to the existence of the Komodo Dragon's habitat (Varadus komodoensis), which is one of endangered species that occupies the island of Komodo, Rinca and Gili Motang. In 2008, the number of foreign tourists who visited the Komodo Island amounted to 21.000 people. In 2009, the number of tourists increased to 36.000 people. In 2010, it increased to 45.000 people. Most of the visitors are "foreign tourists who come mainly from Australia, Southeast Asia, and the United States (http://www.indonesia.travel/id/news/detail/471/promosi-mandiri-indonesia-untuk-taman-nasional-komodo-the-real-wonder-of-the-world accessed on October 3, 2011).

In facilitating to promote the Komodo National Park, the Indonesia government through Ministry of Culture and Tourism is also assisted by a non-profit organization named Swisscontact. The organization developed a program known as the Regional Tourism Development Project (WISATA) which began in 2009-2013 and includes the island of Flores in province of East Nusa Tenggara (NTT). The main activities will focus on developing local destination management organizations with two entry points to Flores: Labuan Bajo and Maumere. (http://www.swisscontact.or.id/projects/eastern-indonesia/wisata-–-regional-tourism-development-on-flores-island/accessed on October 3 2011).

Since 2010, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism has set a new program in Indonesia in order to increase tourist visits: "Destination Management" (DMO). There are 15 tourism destinations which will be developed by applying the concept of DMO in the period of 2010 to 2015. Tourist des-

tinations include: Kota Tua (Jakarta), Pangandaran (West Java), Borobudur (Java), Bromo-Tengger-Semeru (East Java), Toba (North Sumatra), Sabang (Aceh), Lake Batur (Bali), Rinjani (NTB), Komodo, Flores-Flores (NTT), Tanjung Putting (Borneo), Derawan (East Kalimantan), Toraja (South Sulawesi), Bunaken (North Sulawesi), Wakatobi (North Sulawesi), and Raja Ampat (Papua) (http://nttonlinenews.com/ntt/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id =10697:pakar-pariwisata-dunia-akan-bahas-wisata-ri&catid=40:pariwisata&Itemid=57 accessed on October 3 2011)

Due to its very far whereabouts, many tourists seek information regarding accommodations, attractions, services of tour operators, as well as the restaurants surrounding The Komodo National Park that can be accessed through the internet. Fares for Aviation and maritime transport services connecting from the main port of Labuan Bajo to Komodo National Park are all available in the Internet. The use of the Internet for obtaining information is on high demand and can be illustrated from the picture below:

Picture 2: Visitor's Flag Counter
Source: www.TourismNTT.com

From the background described above, there is a need for further research in order to examine how the role of new media, government and other agencies facilitate tourism and entrepreneurship in Komodo Island in Nusa Tenggara. In addition, this research will also study efforts from the Indonesian government and other agencies in promoting Komodo Island.

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II. LITERATURE REVIEW
II.1. New Media and Entrepreneurship

The way we communicate and promote products and/or services is highly influenced by the medium we use. Many entrepreneurs use various mediums such as television, radio, and newspapers to promote its products. Equally important, the current medium of choice is "New Media". New media is a form of interactive communication that uses the Internet, including podcasts, RSS feeds, social networking, text messaging, blogs, wikis, and other virtual worlds.

There are many uses of New Media. New media allows for anyone to create, modify, and share content and share it with others, using a relatively simple tool that is often free or inexpensive. New media requires a computer or mobile device with internet access (http://aids.gov/using-new-media/basics/what-is-new-media/ accessed on October 3 2011).

The role of new media in facilitating entrepreneurship can be seen from the articles Jaya Akunuri adapted by Nwankwo and Gbadamosi in his book "Entrepreneurship Marketing: Principles and Practice of SME Marketing" (2010: 177):

"It has been well documented in academic literature that entrepreneurs rely hugely on both personal and social networking contact. Online media further enables entrepreneurs to do what they are best at – interact with people, build relationship and talk with their customers."

The use of the Internet for small and medium entrepreneurs has increase along with the uprising of business and market development. As said by Kuratko and Hodgetts (2007: 14), small businesses use the Internet for various operations, including customer-based identification, advertising, consumer sales, business to business transactions, email and private internal network for employees.

II.3. Tourism and Destination Management

There are several approaches to defining tourism. Reid, in his book "Tourism, Globalization and Development: Responsible Tourism Planning" (2003: 111), states:

"Tourism is also defined economically among entrepreneurs, according to consumption patterns, and by profit and loss. In many developing countries, the prices charged for many exhibits maintained by government agencies changes based on whether the visitor is a non-national tourist or a citizen of the country. In a sense, then, there are two distinct types of visitors to such exhibits, even though the attraction may be the same. For these purposes, domestic tourism is seen as much as a recreation as it is a form of tourism."

One definition of tourism that emphasizes the importance of experience gained from tourists proposed by Urry (1990) adapted by Lobo in his article "Cultural Tourism and the Leisure Paradigm: The Australian Experience" in the book "The Tourism and Leisure Industry: Shaping the Future" (2005:136):

"Tourism is a departure from everyday experience. He describes tourism as experience and as a free-time activity that contracts with the daily routine and which can chiefly be identified by means of "signs" bringing significance to the attention of the tourist (for example, beauty, romance, nature)."

Macleod and Carrier, in their book "Tourism, Power and Culture: Anthropological Insights" (2010), says that:

"Tourism as an experience and an industry is infused by culture in its various dimensions, and influenced throughout by relationships of power; this is particularly apparent at the destination site."

One of the concepts that need to be examined in connection with the concept of tourism that has been described above is the con-

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cept of "destination". According to Steven Pike in his book Destination Marketing - An Integrated Marketing Communication Approach (2008: 24):

> *"A destination is a geographical space in which a cluster of tourism resources exist, rather than a political boundary."*

Pike, adapted from rubies (2001:39), also describes the Cluster as:

> *"an accumulation of tourist resources and attractions, infrastructures, equipments, service providers, other support sectors and administrative organisms whose integrated and coordinated activities provide customers with the experiences they expected from the destination they chose to visit"*

There are various categories of tourism activities. Here are the categories based on Reid, Fuller, Haywood and Bryden, (1993) adapted by Reid (2003:108):
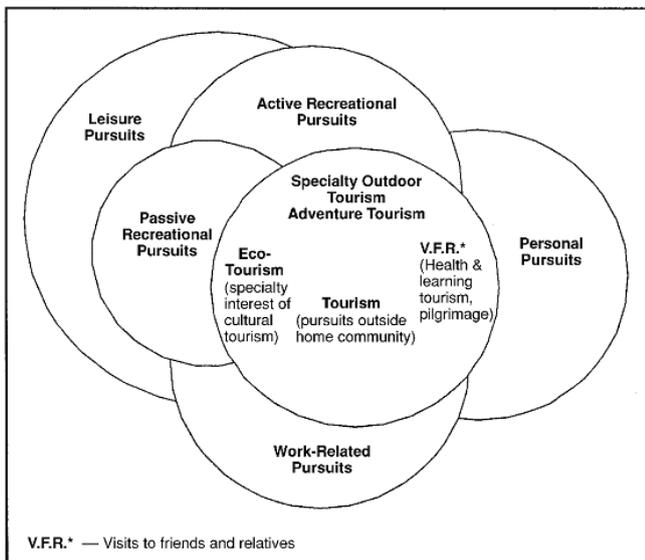
Picture 3: Categories of Tourism Activities
Source: Reid, Fuller, Haywood and Bryden, 1993

Eco-tourism is one of the categories of tourism activities that are currently favored by many local and foreign tourists. According to Hammitt and Symmonds in his article "Wilder-

ness" Weaver in his book "The Encyclopedia of Ecotourism" (2001: 327):

> *"Ecotourism is travel to fragile, pristine, and unusually protected areas that strive to be low impact and (usually) small scale. It helps educate the traveler; provides funds for conservation; directly benefits the economic development and political empowerment of local communities; and foster respect for different cultures for human rights".*

III. METHODS

In this research, a qualitative approach is applied. The research period took place from August 28 until October 22, 2011. The methods used in collecting data for this study consisted of semi-structured personal interviews, examination of documents and personal observations. Application of multiple methods or triangulation in social research has been supported by many researchers because they help to overcome the shortcomings inherent in the use of one method. Case studies are used as a research strategy because the focus of this study is the island of Komodo as a tourist destination.

Retrieval of data using techniques such as in-depth interviews to a key informant and also informants for this study was needed. The key informant in this study was Ir. Firmansyah Rahim, MM, as the Director General of Tourism Destination Development (PDP) Ministry of Culture and Tourism. Informants from Swisscontact were Mr. Christian Maramis as a Field Office Manager of Eastern Flores Swisscontact (Indonesian Swiss Development Cooperation) for the program TOURISM - Tourism Destination Development Flores located in Maumere.

Other informants included Mr. Frans Teguh M.A as the Head of Planning and Legal Directorate General of Tourism Destination Development (DG PDP), who was an important informant, especially for detailed data with respect to the program Destination Management in Flores. Researchers also included Mr. Anang Subiantoro, as the first entrepreneur of an internet café available for tourists,

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was chosen for this research. Internet Apik; owned by Mr. Anang is an internet café located in Labuan Bajo.

IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION
IV.1.The Role of New Media (Internet) in promoting Flores and Komodo Island

When researchers examined the role of new media, especially the Internet, the first step was to inspect and search the Internet network facilities that are available in the area; for this study, the target area was Labuan Bajo, Flores. Interestingly, there are only two Internet providers in Labuan Bajo, which are Telkomsel and Indosat. According to Mr. Anang, an internet café entrepreneur, Internet Apik, said that internet connection was established in 1998 by Telkomnet using a long distance rate. He stated that:

> "In 2004 Telkomnet instant with local rate was installed. However, it only existed for three years. During that period, I used GPRS system from Indosat IM3 which is better than Telkomsel Flash. After that, most internet café owner uses IM2 Satellite. For the past two years, we have faster Internet access from Telkom Speedy."

To access the Internet, most tourists come to Internet cafes along the main road in Labuan Bajo. These services are provided by many cafes and restaurants in Labuan Bajo and the connection is generally the same at 1 Mb / s, which is good for Skype and Youtube connections. This result leads to a challenge for the tourism industry in the area when it comes to providing Internet service as well as price competitiveness for the available Internet services.

This situation is very contrast compare to tourism destinations such as Bali, where tourists have various internet provider options. With the wide range of Internet providers in an area, small businesses and tourism will be able to flourish alongside with the fast development of global opportunity.   This is due to the abil-ity of each provider offering a range of facilities and ease for surfing in cyberspace, including options in price and/or in quality.   Other areas, such as Pontianak in East Kalimantan (as one of the poorest provinces in Indonesia according to BPS, 2011) that has just received aid from the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (Menkominfo) RI, a five-unit Car Internet Service Center District (M-PLIK) sees the importance of the Internet for its community. According to the Head of Department of Transportation, Tourism and Culture (P2K) Pontianak regency, Suharjo Lie (http://www.equator-news.com/lintas-barat/kab-pontianak/20111029/dunia-maya-rambah-masyarakat-terpencil accessed on 31 October 2011):

> "There are so many positive impacts with the internet service. Community can easily obtain all information needed for the general public, students and others. As a source for communication between communities and between regions of the other regions,"

In terms of obtaining information using the internet, when a researcher entered the keyword "Flores, Indonesia" into the Google search engine, there were about 6,100,000 search results in categories from all sources. While using the keyword "Komodo Island" there was about 737.000 results in the same category. All sources mean that it includes Images, Maps, Videos, News, Shopping, More.

When a researcher compared the above results by entering the keyword "Bali", there were about 67,900,000 results, and the keyword "Lombok" resulted in about 38,100,000 sources which confirmed the gap in the information the internet provided using the Google search engine. In contrast to other tourist destinations that have a unique Eco-Tourism attraction such as Raja Ampat and Wakatobi, Komodo Island is still lagging far behind. (With the keyword "Raja Ampat", there were about 1,040,000 results and about 845.000 results for "Wakatobi Island"). These findings reveal that

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the Komodo Island obviously needs more support in order to make it one of the prime tourist destinations in Indonesia.

Internet facilities in Flores, especially Labuan Bajo as the main port to Komodo Island, have only been running for about 2-3 years. Here is an excerpt regarding the available internet facilities by Mr. Rahim Firmansyah as the Directorate General PDP Ministry of Tourism and Culture:

"I requested Telkomsel to build their station in Komodo because the Vice President was coming... When the Vice President was there, he couldn't do this and that, so he told us to do it (activate the internet)... The Vice President told us to activate the internet connection quickly when he was there." (Interview in October 7, 2011)

Mr. Christian of the Swisscontact, who sees the importance of internet facilities to the community as a learning device, added:

"Oh yes, it's very important. A broader range will facilitate them in capacity building, so they can learn, right? It wil make it easier for them to obtain information that is smart enough. The problem is, provinces usually have it better, almost all government offices have access to the internet so everything goes smoothly. This is because Kupang is actually the capital city of a province, but if you see regions, it's so unfortunate. The Tourism Office in Maumere has no internet connection, even though it's a tourism office. So it's a tourism office, but it has no internet connection, it's quite depressing." (Interview on October 13, 2011)

The above statements reveal how both the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and Swisscontact feel that there is a lack of internet facilities in tourist areas and the island of Labuan Bajo Komodo. It is not in line with the concept put forward by Jaya Akunuri where more online media allows employers to do what they are best at, ie: interact with people, build relationships and talk with their customers.

IV.2. Tourism and Destination Management

Each destination has its own uniqueness and distinctiveness of the present-owned tourist attraction. The uniqueness is what makes a tourist area more prominent than other regions. Therefore, the concept of destination management proposed by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism can provide a competitive advantage for every 15 existing destinations in Indonesia. One of the backgrounds of why this concept will benefit tourism destinations in Indonesia is due to geographical differences in comparison with other countries. As noted by Mr. Firmansyah:

"What country would you like to compare it to? Singapore? Indonesia is too vast. But for me, that's not an obstacle, it's an asset. The difference is Singapore or Thailand has a short distance... We have different characteristics, and that's what makes it interesting for me. That's where our uniqueness lies. Plus, we're divided by the ocean. That could be an obstacle, but for me, that's actually what makes it interesting." (Interview on October 7, 2011).

The same was said by Mr. Frans Teguh to explain the differences between Indonesia's tourism with other countries, which can be seen from the location map of where Indonesia consists of many islands, while other Asian countries do not have as many islands as Indonesia (interview on October 11, 2011).

A tourism concept proposed by Reid (2003) and Urry (1990) which focuses on 'experience' in line with what was raised by Mr. Frans is as follows:

"...A link chain must be built in a certain destination, which means it should begin from the tourist arriving at the airport, or the docks, or whatever transportation he or she used. As for information, he or she will need a guide. He eats at a restaurant, sleeps in a hotel, buys culinary souvenirs, he or she may use or buy transportation, meet the community. This is a design of a tourism product where the experience is created by experience. Experience that is arranged, experience that must be created". (Interview on October 11, 2011).

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By supporting the concept of destination management up until fully executing the idea, tourists will be able to focus more on submerging themselves in the adventure and feel of the area. Thus, creating a more lively and remarkable experience.

One finding from the interview with Mr. Christian of Swisscontact is a different category of tourist activities made for the island of Komodo, which is Eco-tourism. It was expressed as follows:

"For us, those who designed the project, also from the inputs by the stakeholders, we try to avoid making it like Bali, so we avoid that type of max tourism. We avoid it. We prefer it to be more on the lines of ecotourism. That's why in the master plan, there will be more inputs, designs and other things that avoid max tourism. We avoid it because it can become 'uncontrollable'. So we will also avoid manufactures. One of our famous visions is Flores, which challenges manufacturers, because it's still natural. That's what we will try hard to maintain in the future, so there won't be too many things or attractions or manufactured buildings." (Interview on October 13, 2011)

As seen from the suggestion put forward by Mr. Christian, one of the uniqueness of the management of destinations (Destination Management) is the different categories of tourism such as Eco-tourism for the island of Komodo.

Eco-tourism destinations have become one of the most sought after areas for those who crave a different experience for their holiday. It is unique because it provides a different experience compared to other tourist destinations. Adventure, knowledge and an ambience that is different than what we experience in our daily lives are only a few things that eco-tourism can offer. The Komodo Island is a perfect destination to experience all that, and many more.

The Komodo Island is obviously widely acknowledged as the habitat of the endangered Komodo dragon, the largest lizard on earth. Yet aside from that, the island has much more to offer. Several other animals have nestled on the island such as the Javan Deer, buffalos, cockatoos, and others. The island is also bordered by a beautiful beach with rare pink sand that can only be found in a handful of areas around the world. It is also a popular spot for diving and exploring the creatures that lie beneath the ocean.

By executing destination management well and promoting Flores as one of the primary targets for alternate vacations spots, such as eco-tourism destinations, the pristine Komodo Island can be an experience that local and international tourists will never forget.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Tourism is an important element for the growth of the Indonesian economy. Although Komodo Island is one of the most promising destinations in Indonesia, it still faces many challenges in facilitating entrepreneurship skills among the local people in East Nusa Tenggara. Based on the observation, there are a few things that need to be accomplished in order to maximize the area's potential.

With Flores as one of the prime tourist destinations, there are some crucial points that need to be observed. First, internet or new media is a very important tool in the field of tourism. This study has shown that through this, we can appeal to a wider range of tourists, locally and internationally, by upgrading the promotional tools, expanding networking and others. Second, entrepreneurism is still lacking in Flores. By helping the people develop this area of expertise, it can facilitate the tourists in enjoying their experience when they arrive at their destination. Third, destination management can support the promotion of tourism in Indonesia by providing experience that can be engineered through a synergy among the stakeholders in their respective destinations. With destination management, it will be known that eco-tourism is one of the unique qualities that can be found in Flores.

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There are also some research suggestions that could be conducted in order to further enhance Indonesian tourism. It is known that some destinations still have very minimal internet facilities that can support the facilitation of communication and promotion of tourism, both for local and international tourists. Further studies to determine the interest in entrepreneurship at each destination is needed so that a program can be proposed to a non-profit organization, such as Swisscontact, and also create a synergy with destination management programs from the Ministry of Culture and Tourism.

Based on this analysis, there are still many things that need to be done in order to further enhance the growth of tourism in East Nusa Tenggara, specifically the Komodo Island. Hopefully, aiding this area will be able to boost Indonesia's tourism industry in the years to come.

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