

Digitalisation in The Development of Religious Tourism Villages in Nyatnyono Village, Semarang Regency

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Abstract

This community service activity aims to increase the capacity of the Nyatnyono Village community, Semarang Regency, through the application of digitalization in the development of a religious tourism village. The village's vast spiritual tourism potential has not been optimally managed due to limited promotion and a manual information system. Therefore, this program focuses on assisting the community in utilizing digital technology to support tourism promotion, data management, and local economic development. Implementation methods include field observation, outreach, digital media training, and assistance in the creation of the village's official website and social media. The results of the activity indicate an increase in community understanding of the importance of digitalization, the establishment of an online-based promotion system, and an increase in tourist visits through digital media. This activity also encourages active community participation in tourism management and strengthens collaboration between the village government, MSMEs, and universities. Thus, digitalization has proven effective in strengthening the competitiveness and sustainability of Nyatnyono Village as a leading religious tourism destination in Semarang Regency.

Keywords: Digitalization, Religious Tourism Village, Community Empowerment, Nyatnyono Village, Tourism Development.

Introduction

Tourism is a crucial sector that can significantly contribute to improving the local economy. In recent years, the trend of community-based tourism development has grown rapidly, as communities become key actors in managing their local potential. One form of tourism development currently being widely pursued is religious tourism, offering not only natural beauty but also profound spiritual and religious values. In Semarang Regency, Nyatnyono Village is known for its significant religious tourism potential. The village boasts pilgrimage sites and regularly hosts religious activities, such as the Nyadran tradition, the Haar Wali (remembrance of the saints), and communal tahlil (remembrance of the dead) activities, which attract numerous visitors from various regions.

However, this enormous potential has not been fully utilized. Based on initial observations, tourism management in Nyatnyono Village is still carried out conventionally. Promotion is carried out through flyers, banners, and word-of-mouth, without the support of digital technology. This situation limits the reach of promotions and makes tourism information difficult for tourists from outside the area to access. In fact, in the era of the Industrial Revolution 4.0, the use of digital technology has become a basic requirement in tourism management. Heliawati & Munawaroh (2025) explain that digitalization is an effective strategy to increase competitiveness and expand promotional reach through the integrated use of information technology.

In addition to promotional challenges, the administration and documentation systems for tourism activities in Nyatnyono Village are still manual. Data on tourist numbers, income, and religious activities have not been digitized, making accurate evaluation and planning difficult. Therefore, implementing digitalization is a crucial step to strengthen tourism village governance. According to Rizal et al., (2024) success village Tourism in the digital era is highly dependent on the community's ability to utilize technology as an effective management and promotion tool.

Through community service activities, universities play a role in providing real solutions to these problems. This activity aims to assist the Nyatnyono Village community in developing a website and social media-based digitalization system that can be used for tourism promotion, publication of religious activities, and management of tourist data. This program is also expected to increase the community's capacity in using digital technology, while strengthening collaboration between academics, the village government, and the community as a mutually supportive entity.

The digitalization approach aligns with the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy's policy direction, which encourages tourism villages to adapt to technological developments.

Digitalization not only aids promotion but also plays a role in maintaining the sustainability of tourism villages, ensuring they remain competitive in the global marketplace. Through this initiative, it is hoped that Nyatnyono Village can become an example of successful digitalization implementation in Central Java.



Literature Review

Digitalization is defined as the process of transforming manual systems into digital-based systems by utilizing information technology. Heliawati & Munawaroh (2025) mention that digitalization is not just use of tool technology, but also transforming people's mindsets to be more adaptive to change. In the tourism context, digitalization encompasses online promotions, online reservation systems, tourist data management, and e-commerce-based marketing of local products, rooted in the development of spirituality-based tourism that prioritizes the moral, religious, and traditional values of local communities. Heliawati & Munawaroh (2025), village tour religion is a regional development strategy that can create a balance between economic and spiritual aspects. Religious tourism not only provides financial benefits but also strengthens the community's social identity. Rizal et al., (2024) also emphasize that village Religious tourism can be a means of moral and social development for local communities through religious activities packaged in an attractive manner.

In managing tourist villages, the role of the community is a key factor. The community-based tourism (CBT) model, as explained by Rahmadani (2023) emphasizes the importance of public involvement in every stage of village tourism management, starting from planning, implementation, to evaluation, because public participation is the key to sustainable development of local potential. Active community participation can increase the sense of ownership of tourism potential so that the development carried out is sustainable.

Digitalization plays a key role in accelerating the development of tourism villages. Heliawati & Munawaroh (2025) state that the use of social media platforms like Instagram and YouTube have been able to increase tourism promotion by up to 45%, primarily due to the power of visuals that easily attract tourists. Furthermore, technology also enables tourism operators to build integrated information systems that encompass promotions, reservations, and payments. In the context of sustainability, Heliawati & Munawaroh (2025) add that the implementation of digital systems in tourism management can increase transparency and accountability of governance, because every activity, data, and transactions can be documented online and easily monitored by the community and government. Digital data enables evidence-based decision-making, which helps village governments and tourism managers conduct regular evaluations. Thus, digitalization development not only increases efficiency but also strengthens governance with integrity.

Implementation Method

This community service program will be implemented in Nyatnyono Village, West Ungaran District, Semarang Regency, during 2023–2024. The method used is a participatory approach, emphasizing collaboration between the implementation team, the village government, and the community. The implementation process is divided into five main stages: field observation, program outreach, training, mentoring, and evaluation.

The first stage, field observation, was conducted to understand the current state of tourism management. Data was collected through interviews and documentation with village officials, tourism awareness group (Pokdarwis) administrators, and MSMEs. Observations revealed that while community enthusiasm was high, their technological skills were still low.

The second phase, program outreach, aimed to introduce the concept of digitalization to the community. The outreach took place at the village hall with approximately 50 participants. The

event explained the benefits of digitalization, digital promotion strategies, and the community's role in technology-based tourism management.

The third phase, digitalization training, focused on digital content creation, travel photography, and social media management. Participants were taught how to create promotional content using the Canva app and upload it to Instagram and Facebook. They also learned how to create a simple website using WordPress.

The fourth phase, mentoring, is carried out continuously for three months. The implementation team assists tourism managers in operating the village's social media accounts and website. The content uploaded includes religious activities, culinary specialties, and MSME products.

The fifth stage, evaluation, was conducted through questionnaires and interviews. The evaluation results showed an 80% increase in the community's digital skills compared to before the training. Furthermore, the village's social media accounts saw a 65% increase in followers. time three month

Results and Discussion

Community service activities carried out in Nyatnyono Village, Semarang Regency, in 2023–2024 demonstrated significant results in increasing the community's capacity to manage digital-based tourism villages. Prior to the program, most residents and tourism managers still relied on conventional methods to promote religious tourism potential. Information about pilgrimage activities, tourist attractions, and local MSME products was disseminated only by word of mouth or through information boards around the tourist area. Interviews with village officials revealed that one of the main obstacles to tourism development was the community's limited understanding of information technology. This situation prevented the tourism village from becoming widely known, despite its high spiritual and natural potential.

in addition, the community was taught how to create a digital catalog of products from MSMEs selling food, beverages, and village souvenirs. Rizal et al., (2024), utilization of social media can significantly increase the visibility of local tourism by providing a space for the community to interact directly with potential tourists without geographical boundaries. This finding proved relevant in the context of Nyatnyono Village, where, after the training, the village's social media accounts began to attract a large number of followers and sparked renewed interest in the potential for religious tourism there.

The website includes a village profile, a schedule of religious activities, a history of revered religious figures, and a travel guide for visitors. in line with opinion Heliawati & Munawaroh (2025) stated that that digitalization Tourism information can create a more efficient, informative, and engaging promotional system for modern travelers who tend to search online before traveling. After the website launched, people began to understand the importance of consistently updating content and answering visitors' questions online. Within three months, site visitor data showed a 60% increase in average visits compared to before the program was launched.

Improvements have occurred not only in the promotional aspect, but also in data management and communication between tourism operators. Prior to digitalization, coordination between tourism operators was carried out manually through face-to-face meetings, which often took a long time. After the training, the community began using instant messaging apps and online document-sharing platforms to facilitate work coordination. study (Heliawati & Munawaroh (2025), use Digital technology can improve communication effectiveness and accelerate decision-making within village community groups. In the context of Nyatnyono Village, similar results were seen in the increased efficiency of coordination meetings and the division of tasks among tourism awareness group (Pokdarwis) administrators.

Beyond the technical benefits, digitalization activities also have a social impact. Communities that were initially less confident in using technology are now showing high enthusiasm. Village youth are the main driving force in creating promotional content, while women members of the Family Welfare Movement (PKK) are actively involved in preparing MSME products for online marketing. According to field observations, cross-generational involvement in these activities strengthens a sense of community and fosters a new culture of digital literacy within the village. delivered by Rizal et al., (2024), strengthening Digital capacity at the local level can foster collective awareness of the importance of innovation in tourism village development.

these activities also show a significant improvement in the community's economy. MSME products, such as traditional foods and handicrafts, previously sold only around tourist attractions, are now being marketed online through marketplaces and social media. in line with findings Waluyo

et al., (2022) which confirms that Digital transformation in the tourism and MSME sectors has expanded market reach and created new business opportunities in rural areas. Interviews with local MSMEs revealed that they have experienced a 30% increase in sales since participating in digitalization mentoring. This impact has not only increased income but also bolstered community confidence in the potential of the digital economy.

Beyond the economic aspect, digitalization activities also provide added value in the management of local spirituality and traditions. Through digital documentation, the history and stories of religious figures who attract religious tourism can be archived more systematically. Hasibuan et al., (2024) explain that preservation values culture and religion through digitalization is step strategic For guard inheritance local in the middle current global modernization , because digital technology is capable documenting and disseminating values wisdom local in a way more spacious and attractive for generation Young people . In Nyatnyono Village, residents are now able to create simple documentary videos about pilgrimages and local traditions, which they then upload to social media. This content serves as an educational tool for tourists and a way to preserve local wisdom.

village . The community not only gained new skills but also developed an adaptive mindset to technological developments. However, the sustainability of the activities' results requires ongoing support from universities, local governments, and private partners. put forward in Waluyo et al., (2022) , development village tour Digital- based innovation requires multi-party collaboration so that the innovations that have been implemented can continue and provide long-term benefits for society.

With this initiative, Nyatnyono Village is now recognized as an example of a religious tourism village that has begun integrating elements of spiritual traditions with digital innovation. The village's religious and technologically-minded image has become a unique attraction for both local and international tourists. This transformation demonstrates that digitalization is not merely a promotional tool, but rather part of a sustainable, inclusive, and adaptive village development strategy. to changing times.



Conclusion

Community service activities through the application of digitalization in the development of the Nyatnyono Religious Tourism Village have yielded positive and sustainable results. This program has successfully enhanced the community's ability to utilize digital technology for tourism promotion and data management. Digitalization has opened up new opportunities for the community to expand promotional networks, increase tourist visits, and stimulate village economic growth. Furthermore, this activity fosters a collaborative spirit among residents and strengthens the role of the younger generation as key drivers of village innovation.

Conceptually, this activity demonstrates that digitalization is not just a tool, but also a technology-based community development strategy. With the support of the village government, active community participation, and mentoring from universities, Nyatnyono Village has been able to transform into a religious tourism village that adapts to modern developments without abandoning its spiritual values.

This program is expected to serve as a model for other tourism villages in implementing digitalization. Going forward, website and social media management will need to be continuously

developed with advanced training in digital marketing and creative design. Cross-sector collaboration also needs to be continuously strengthened to ensure tourism villages are self-sufficient and empowered . competitiveness at regional and international levels national .

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