

Research Article

Liquor *Sophia* as a New Branding To Improve Marketing Tourism in East Nusa Tenggara Indonesia

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Abstract

East Nusa Tenggara Province is one of the provinces in Indonesia which has excellent tourism potential. At present, the Government of Indonesia is trying to exploit the various possibilities in the region to support the world's tourism destinations. *Sophia* is alcoholic liquor with 40% content. *Sophia* is a local folk liquor in East Nusa Tenggara, officially branding by the Indonesian government through the East Nusa Tenggara Provincial Government. This study refers to Branding's potential, which is the primary goal of comparing these products—in this study, using a qualitative descriptive approach. This research reviews the marketing strategy of the branding *sopi*, which is the result of local wisdom of the local community that has passed down for generations.

Keywords

Sophia, Tourism, Branding

1. Introduction

Tourism is a leading sector in Indonesia's East Nusa Tenggara province. They coincided with the inauguration of East Nusa Tenggara as Indonesia's Premium Tourism Destination, which means the best tourism. Therefore there are many changes and leading trends that occur in the province of East Nusa Tenggara. Driving tourism includes the Komodo National Park, which became the New 7 Wonders (Seven Wonders of the World), and the beauty of the Flores sea park, the Kelimutu three-color volcanic lake and a very diverse cultural tour. In this situation, it dramatically affects people's lives and society. There are various elements of culture and customs that take a position in this situation. There are multiple aspects of learning in the spotlight at this moment, such as weaving, dancing, singing, and culinary. One of the highlights in writing is about *Sopi*. *Sopi* is a traditional liquor of the

people of East Nusa Tenggara (*NTT*), with 40% alcohol content produced by various people. There have been many articles about the properties, benefits, and aspects of *sopi*, but we raised funding *Sopi* as a Branded New for local wisdom. In the southeastern province of Nusa Tenggara, *sopi* liquor are a tradition inherited from the ancestors of East Nusa Tenggara. East Nusa Tenggara Province is an archipelago province with various islands that have different tribes, and each tribe has its way of processing and producing *sopi* drinks. The *sopi* is an alcoholic liquor sourced from palm trees. The palm juice is then extracted by distillation with fire heat and then processed into *sopi* liquor. Since ancient times people have traditionally cultivated and produced it. Then packaging and distribution and running are done historically, too; there is no proper standardized management that can manage the *sopi* like in other alcoholic liquor. But in 2019, a breakthrough made by the East Nusa Tenggara provincial government under the leadership of Governor Victor Laiskodat launched *Sophia*. A brand of *sopi* liquor in a modern and international standard in cooperation with the government and Nusa Cendana University [1]. The policy was released to boost the tourism sector, and the community's economy can move well. The breakthrough carried out so that the *sopi*, which previously managed traditionally, can now be of an international standard and has a standard price set by the state. In this study refers to a communication concept that is the concept of Branding. Brands are more than names, brands, and symbols. The brand is a critical element of a company's relationship with consumers. The brand represents

consumers' perceptions and feelings about a product and its performance. Brands are also said by experts to be in the heads of consumers. As one respected marketer once said, "Products created in factories, but brands created in mind." Strong brands have high brand equity. Brand equity is the differential effect known by brand names to customer responses to their products and marketing. A brand has positive brand equity when consumers react better to it than generic or unbranded versions of the same product; brands have negative brand equity if consumers react poorly than non-branded versions [2].

2. Method

This research is descriptive, aimed at describing in detail about certain social phenomena in people's lives. Bogdan and Taylor [3]. Qualitative methods are research procedures that produce descriptive data in the form of written or oral words from people and observable behaviours. This approach is directed at the individual background holistically. Qualitative research is research that uses natural environments to interpret phenomena that occur and are carried out by involving various methods. In qualitative research, the methods commonly used are interviews, observations, and utilization of documents. According to Bungin, in qualitative research, the researcher did not quantify the data obtained. The data acquired will be analyzed and described based on findings of the facts of the research in the field [4].

In the process of data management, this research is analyzed using triangulation techniques combining facts in the field with confirmed documentary evidence and verified primary sources. It can synthesize that qualitative research intends to understand the phenomenon of what is experienced by the subject of study such as behavior, perception, motivation, actions, etc. holistically and utilizing descriptions in the form of words and language, in a particular natural context.

3. Result and Discussion

3.1 Sophia as a Branding

Following branding theory, in the process of constructing a particular branding, according to Kotler [2], some conditions are needed to meet the branding criteria, including:

Must suggest something about the benefits and quality of the product Sopi has the benefits and quality of products. Sophia is an alcoholic drink with quite a lot of benefits, namely, as a social kindship, as an economic driving tool, as a cultural-based health communication tool and many more [5].

It should be easy to pronounce, recognize, and remember like: Sophia is a name given to be comfortable and tends to have philosophical meaning.

The brand name must be distinctive: Sophia is a unique brand. Besides having a distinctive taste, Sophia is a

superior brand that is on par with Sake from Japan and Cap Tikus from Manado Indonesia [6].

Able to develop in, as explained earlier at the beginning that Sophia is an ancestral tradition in the culture of the people of East Nusa Tenggara that are traditionally processed and produced. But over time, the traditional sopi was created by having standardization and having a registered brand [7].

Brand names must easily translate into foreign languages. Sophia is a development of the word Sopi. Sophia philosophically means wisdom. So with Sophia, this traditional drink has a wise, good impact and aims for the prosperity of the people.

Must be able to be registered for legal protection. Sophia is The local brand legalized by the government of East Nusa Tenggara, which refers to the East Nusa Tenggara governor's regulation No. 44 concerning the purification and management of East Nusa Tenggara's typical alcoholic liquor [8]. The government also determines the age standards of Sophia users and the price threshold for the price of these drinks and already has an excise permit and excise label.

3.2 Sophia Brand and Tourism

There is a brand concept that brand equity is the strength of the brand representing the product so that a product is in the minds of people when the brand is there. The brands strategy defines what the brand supposed to achieve in term to consumers attitudes and behaviour [9]. The brand epitomizes all of the products that cause people to look brand as he sees all products with all the advantages and uniqueness. In the case of destination brand equity, a brand must present a destination where the brand exists (Figure 1). Destination brands must evoke an understanding of the target, its philosophy, and various benefits, uniqueness, and ease of the destination. A brand destination always draws tourists closer to the destination where the brand exists and represents that destination [10].

Following Schutz [11], the objectives of a good branding strategy are:

1. Can convey messages.
2. Can confirm the credibility of the brand owner.
3. Can connect with more personalized marketing targets.
4. Motivate buyers.
5. Creating customer loyalty.

So to be successful in a branding strategy, we must understand the needs and wants of customers and prospects or candidates customer (Figure 2).

The presence of the Sophia brand is an added value in the tourism sector in East Nusa Tenggara. As a destination



Figure 1: Sophia Brand.



Figure 2: Modified Sophia Brand.

brand Equity, Sophia takes the role of not only the influence of the labels and logos that display the Komodo Varanus. But it is also a noble value that has passed down through generations of the people of East Nusa Tenggara in general. The appearance of Sophia in the time of the East Nusa Tenggara tourist destination trend is rising gives its attention to increasing the popularity of the destination. The Province of East Nusa Tenggara with Sophia learned from Japanese *Sake*, where *Sake* is an alcoholic drink derived from Japanese culture and traditions. When visiting Japan, we will always be served with *Sake* liquor until it appears in the minds of tourists that if you visit Japan, then you should taste *Sake*, or if you have not gulped *Sake* in Japan, then you are not yet in Japan. That is also the case in East Nusa Tenggara, Sophia's presence will instruct visitors independently that when they are in the land of East Nusa Tenggara, then you should taste Sophia as a form of your union with the East Nusa Tenggara homeland. The Government of the Province of East Nusa Tenggara has a vision that is far ahead, putting local wisdom into an economic potential and a superior commodity to support the progress of tourism

in the area. With already having strict standards, Sophia is undoubtedly no doubt to be marketed to tourists, both domestic and international. Because not all tourists will easily taste something that is not standardized, but with Sophia, it has become clear that the drink is suitable for consumption with specific standards. That position can make Sophia able to compete in the future, such as *Sake*, Japan, European beer, Vodka, US, and various liquor that is legal in the world market and is widely known. In the future, Sophia will be a souvenir from tourists when returning home after visiting East Nusa Tenggara, commonly done in Japanese *Sake* or other legal world alcoholic liquors.

4. Conclusion

Sophia is a new trend that promotes and supports tourism in the province of East Nusa Tenggara Timur. Sophia comes with appropriate standardization to respond to the demand of the tourism market and expected to stimulate the economy of small communities of traditional Sophia craftsmen. With Sophia making that specialty drinks become the leading sector of the tourism area. Typical

40% alcohol liquor becomes a new lever to put all aspects of tourism to good use. Sophia also gave a breakthrough innovation for the people of Indonesia that culinary from the local wisdom of the community can compete in the global world.

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