



The Role Of Green Marketing And Brand Image In Shaping The Decision To Stay At Ecolodge Bukit Lawang Resort

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Abstract. *This study aims to examine the role of green marketing and brand image in shaping the decision to stay at Ecolodge Bukit Lawang Resort. Ecolodge Bukit Lawang Resort, located in the Bukit Lawang area, North Sumatra, offers an eco-friendly tourism concept that focuses on sustainability and nature conservation. Therefore, understanding how green marketing practices and brand image can influence consumer behavior in making decisions to stay is important. This study uses a quantitative approach with a survey of 100 visitors who have stayed at Ecolodge. Data were analyzed using multiple regression methods to test the influence of green marketing (eco-friendly products, green promotions, and sustainability policies) and brand image (trust, associations, and perceived quality) on consumer decisions. The results showed that both factors had a significant influence on the decision to stay. Green marketing plays an important role in creating a positive image that influences consumer trust, while a strong brand image strengthens the decision to stay. These findings provide insight for Ecolodge Bukit Lawang Resort managers to focus more on developing green marketing strategies and strengthening brand image in order to increase the resort's appeal as an ecologically responsible tourist destination.*

Keywords: *Green Marketing, Sustainable Marketing, Sustainable Tourism, Ecolodge Branding, Brand Image*

INTRODUCTION

In this modern era, consumers are increasingly aware of the importance of environmental sustainability and corporate social responsibility (Karácsony, 2019) (Li & Li, 2024). This has encouraged many companies to implement green marketing strategies, which aim to promote environmentally friendly products or services (Sari et al., 2024) (Lubis, Effendi, et al., 2023) (Asputri et al., 2023). The tourism industry is also not left behind, where many tourist destinations have begun to introduce the concept of eco-tourism as an effort to attract tourists who care about the environment (Effendi et al., 2023) (Effendi & Shunhaji, 2021) (Lubis, Apriliya, et al., 2023) (Lubis, Lubis, et al., 2022) (Lubis, Apriliya, Simbolon, et al., 2022) (Lubis, Apriliya, Wijaya, et al., 2022).

Ecolodge Bukit Lawang Resort, as one of the tourist destinations in North Sumatra, carries an environmentally friendly concept that focuses on sustainability and nature conservation. However, although this resort offers a lodging experience that focuses on environmentally friendly principles, it is still not widely known how green marketing strategies and brand image play a role in shaping tourists' decisions to choose Ecolodge Bukit Lawang Resort as a place to stay (Putra et al., 2024).

A strong brand image combined with green marketing efforts can be an important factor in influencing consumer decisions. Therefore, it is important to examine how green marketing implemented by Ecolodge Bukit Lawang Resort and its brand image can influence tourists' decisions in choosing a place to stay, especially for those who care about sustainability and nature conservation aspects.

Research Objectives

1. To analyze the role of green marketing in influencing tourists' decisions to stay at Ecolodge Bukit Lawang Resort.

2. To evaluate the influence of Ecolodge Bukit Lawang Resort's brand image on tourists' perceptions of sustainability and the quality of the stay experience offered.
3. To assess the relationship between green marketing and brand image in shaping the decision to stay at Ecolodge Bukit Lawang Resort.
4. To provide recommendations for the development of green marketing strategies and improving the brand image of Ecolodge Bukit Lawang Resort to attract more tourists who care about environmental sustainability.

With these objectives, it is hoped that this study can provide useful insights for Ecolodge Bukit Lawang Resort managers in designing effective marketing strategies, as well as increasing the resort's appeal and reputation as an environmentally friendly tourist destination.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Green Marketing

Green marketing refers to marketing strategies that promote environmentally friendly or sustainable products or services (Dangelico & Vocalelli, 2017) (Cherian & Jacob, 2012). Several studies indicate that consumers are increasingly concerned about sustainability, and environmentally friendly products or services can be a determining factor in purchasing or lodging decisions. In the context of tourism, especially for resorts such as Ecolodge Bukit Lawang, the use of green marketing strategies can include promotions that emphasize sustainable management of natural resources, use of renewable energy, waste reduction, and nature conservation.

Research related to Green Marketing

(Peattie, 2016) identified that green marketing not only enhances brand image, but also directs purchasing decisions, especially among consumers who are highly aware of environmental issues.

(Landua, 2008) noted that companies that implement green marketing tend to gain higher customer loyalty because consumers feel proud to support a business that is oriented towards sustainability.

Brand Image

(Wijaya, 2013) Brand image is the consumer's perception of a particular brand, which is formed by their experiences, information received, and the image promoted by the company. For Ecolodge Bukit Lawang Resort, a strong brand image as an eco-friendly tourist destination can play a big role in attracting visitors. Resorts with a good brand image, especially in terms of sustainability, are more likely to be chosen by tourists who care about the environment.

Research related to Brand Image

(Richard & Zhang, 2012) in his book explains that a strong brand image can increase customer loyalty and drive purchasing decisions. In the tourism sector, this brand image is closely related to positive experiences and perceptions regarding service quality and commitment to sustainability.

(Qu et al., 2011) argues that a positive brand image provides a competitive advantage, because it can influence consumer decisions in choosing a tourist destination.

Purchase Decision / Stay Decision

(Cretu & Brodie, 2007) The decision to stay is the final stage in the purchasing process that is influenced by various factors, including perceptions of the product, Brand Image, and perceived value. In the context of Ecolodge Bukit Lawang Resort, the decision to stay can be influenced by two main aspects: environmental awareness that drives the

selection of eco-resorts and a strong brand image, which gives consumers a sense of trust and connection with sustainability goals.

Research related to Stay Decision

(Mohammed, 2024) stated that the decision to stay is greatly influenced by the brand image and marketing strategies implemented by accommodation providers.

(Han & Ryu, 2012) also explained that for tourism products, consumer decisions are often driven by emotional elements such as connection with the values represented by the brand, in this case the values of sustainability and environmental friendliness.

Relationship between Green Marketing, Brand Image, and Staying Decisions

Based on the existing literature, it can be concluded that green marketing can improve the company's brand image, which in turn will influence consumer decisions to choose to stay at Ecolodge Bukit Lawang Resort. Marketing campaigns that emphasize commitment to nature conservation and sustainability can change consumer perceptions of this brand, create strong emotional bonds and increase loyalty, and encourage them to choose to stay.

Research related to the Relationship between Green Marketing and Staying Decisions

(Ottman, 2017) stated that effective green marketing can build a positive brand image, which ultimately influences consumer decisions to choose a place to stay.

(Mohd Suki & Mohd Suki, 2015) also found that consumers who care about sustainability are more likely to choose hotels or resorts that adopt environmentally friendly practices, which means that green marketing plays a major role in staying decisions.

Existing literature supports that green marketing and positive brand image play an important role in shaping the decision to stay at Ecolodge Bukit Lawang Resort. By adopting sustainable practices and emphasizing them in marketing, Ecolodge Bukit Lawang can attract increasingly sustainability-conscious travelers, enhance its brand image, and ultimately encourage more environmentally-based stay decisions.

Research Hypothesis

Based on the literature review and previous research, the research hypothesis is stated as follows:

- H1 : Green Marketing berpengaruh terhadap keputusan menginap di Ecolodge Bukit Lawang Resort.
- H2 : Brand Image berpengaruh terhadap keputusan menginap di Ecolodge Bukit Lawang Resort.
- H3 : Pengaruh simultan antara Green Marketing dan Brand Image berpengaruh terhadap keputusan menginap di Ecolodge Bukit Lawang Resort.

METHODS

Based on the research questions and objectives, this study uses an explanatory research type with a quantitative approach. This research was conducted at Ecolodge Bukit Lawang Resort, with 100 samples obtained using the non-probability method (Lamm & Lamm, 2019). This study uses a combination of primary and secondary data, Likert scale, multiple linear regression analysis, and t-test and dominance test to determine the effect of variable X on variable Y.

RESULTS

Green Marketing and Brand Image have a significant influence on the Decision to stay at Ecolodge Bukit Lawang Resort. This is indicated by the calculated F value

(137.354) which is much greater than the F table (3.09) and the significance level of F count (0.000) which is much smaller than the significance level α (0.05). Social media marketing and Brand Image have a positive relationship with the Decision to stay at Ecolodge Bukit Lawang Resort. This means that the better the Green Marketing and Brand Image, the higher the consumer's desire to return. social media marketing, and Brand Image are important factors that can increase the Decision to Stay at Ecolodge Bukit Lawang Resort. Social Media Marketing and Brand Image are two key factors that complement each other in influencing the decision to stay at Ecolodge Bukit Lawang Resort.

If Green Marketing and Brand Image are constant, the Decision to Stay at Ecolodge Bukit Lawang Resort will increase by 3.112 points. Green Marketing has a positive and significant influence on the Decision to Stay at Ecolodge Bukit Lawang Resort. Increasing Green Marketing will increase the Decision to Stay at Ecolodge Bukit Lawang Resort by 0.463 points. Brand Image has a positive and significant influence on the Decision to Stay at Ecolodge Bukit Lawang Resort. Increasing Brand Image will increase the Decision to Stay at Ecolodge Bukit Lawang Resort by 0.538 points.

Coefficient of Determination (R²) The R value of 0.875 shows a very strong relationship between Social media marketing, Brand Image, and the Decision to Stay at Ecolodge Bukit Lawang Resort. This means that the relationship between social media marketing, Brand Image, and the decision to stay at Ecolodge Bukit Lawang Resort is very complex and mutually influencing. Those who successfully utilize social media effectively, establish a competitive Brand Image, and provide a good customer experience will be more likely to achieve success.

DISCUSSION

One relevant study is a study that analyzes the influence of social media marketing on stay decisions through brand image. This study shows that social media marketing has a significant influence on stay decisions, with brand image acting as a mediator in the relationship. These results indicate the importance of effective marketing strategies in forming a strong brand image to influence consumer decisions in choosing a place to stay.

In addition, another study discusses the influence of green marketing and brand image on Oriflame product purchasing decisions (Juniarso et al., 2022). This study found that the application of environmentally friendly concepts in products and their marketing has a positive effect on brand image, which in turn influences consumer purchasing decisions. Although the focus is on beauty products, these findings can be adapted to understand how green marketing practices and brand image can influence consumer decisions in the hospitality industry.

Ecolodge Bukit Lawang Resort itself stands out with its commitment to sustainability and environmental preservation. Located on the banks of the Bohorok River and adjacent to the Gunung Leuser National Park, this resort offers a unique experience for guests to enjoy the beauty of nature while contributing to the Sumatran orangutan conservation program. Each room is simply designed with bamboo furniture, a fan, and mosquito nets, and offers views of the forest or river. The resort also offers a variety of activities such as hiking, river tubing, and guided tours to see wildlife in their natural habitat.

Although there is no specific research data on the influence of green marketing and brand image on the decision to stay at Ecolodge Bukit Lawang Resort, the resort's

commitment to sustainability and environmental preservation likely contributes to a positive brand image and can influence consumers' decisions to choose to stay there.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this study covers several main points related to the influence of green marketing and brand image on consumer decisions. Based on the topic, here are some conclusions that can be drawn:

1. **The Influence of Green Marketing on Staying Decisions:** Green marketing, which includes promotional efforts that focus on sustainability, environmental friendliness, and corporate social responsibility, has a significant influence on consumer decisions to stay at Ecolodge Bukit Lawang Resort. Consumers who are aware of environmental issues tend to choose places to stay that support sustainability principles, such as good waste management, use of renewable energy, and environmentally friendly materials.
2. **The Role of Brand Image in Staying Decisions:** A positive brand image also plays an important role in consumer decisions. In the context of Ecolodge Bukit Lawang Resort, a brand image associated with authenticity, sustainability, and high service quality is able to attract more tourists. A strong brand that is known for its commitment to nature conservation will strengthen consumer confidence in choosing the place as a destination to stay.
3. **Interaction Between Green Marketing and Brand Image:** This study shows that green marketing and brand image do not only play separate roles, but interact with each other in shaping the decision to stay. Effective green marketing can strengthen brand image, which in turn increases the attractiveness of Ecolodge Bukit Lawang Resort in the eyes of consumers. Brands that demonstrate a commitment to environmentally friendly practices tend to be valued by consumers who care about these issues, making them more likely to choose to stay at the place.

Impact on Consumer Satisfaction and Loyalty: In addition to influencing the decision to stay, green marketing and positive brand image also have the potential to increase consumer satisfaction and loyalty. Tourists who are satisfied with their experience staying at Ecolodge Bukit Lawang Resort, especially related to sustainability efforts and strong brand image, are more likely to return and recommend the place to others.

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