

Transformation of National Tourism in Blitar City: SOAR Approach in Realizing Smart Tourism City

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Abstract

Purpose: This research aims to identify and formulate strategies for developing Blitar City's national tourism destinations through SOAR analysis and geomarketing approaches to support the realization of a smart tourism city that harmoniously integrates modern technology with strong local wisdom and national heritage values.

Method: This study employs a qualitative design with a multidisciplinary approach, utilizing SOAR (Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, Results) analysis as the primary analytical framework. Data collection was conducted through field observations, in-depth interviews with key stakeholders including the Tourism Office, tourism business actors, and local communities, complemented by secondary data from government policies and previous studies. The research specifically focuses on national tourism destinations in Blitar City and applies geomarketing principles for strategic tourism route development.

Result: The SOAR analysis revealed strategic priorities with the Opportunity-Result (OR) strategy scoring highest (9.36), followed by Opportunity-Aspiration (OA) strategy (9.05). Key findings include the identification of Blitar's strong national tourism identity centered on Bung Karno's heritage, strategic opportunities through smart tourism city trends and government support, and the formulation of a three-pillar Smart Tourism City framework encompassing smart infrastructure, smart tourist experience, and smart destination governance. The study proposes geomarketing-based integrated heritage tourism trails and dynamic visitor flow management systems.

Contribution: This research advances smart tourism theory by demonstrating the successful integration of SOAR analysis with geomarketing approaches specifically for heritage tourism destinations. It contributes new knowledge by providing a contextually-adapted smart tourism city framework that preserves national identity while embracing technological innovation. The study offers practical value to policymakers, tourism managers, and stakeholders by delivering evidence-based strategies for transforming traditional heritage destinations into competitive smart tourism cities, serving as a replicable model for similar national heritage tourism destinations in Indonesia and globally.

Keywords: Smart Tourism City, SOAR Analysis, National Tourism, Heritage Tourism, Blitar City

Introduction

Blitar City holds a strategic position as one of Indonesia's national tourism destinations with a rich historical and cultural heritage (Diella, 2022). The presence of historical sites such as Bung Karno's Tomb and Gebang Palace, along with well-preserved colonial legacies, makes



this city a center for education and spirituality for both local and national communities (Arifin, 2022). These destinations not only play a vital role in preserving historical values but also have great potential as economic drivers through the tourism sector (Setiawan, 2018). However, amid this significant potential, Blitar City faces challenges in tourism development in the modern era.

The advancement of information and communication technology has brought significant changes to the global tourism industry (Atmaja, 2023). Tourist destinations in many major cities worldwide have begun adopting the smart tourism city concept, which emphasizes the integration of technology, data analytics, and efficient and sustainable destination management (Lee et al., 2020). The implementation of technologies such as Geographic Information Systems (GIS), big data, Internet of Things (IoT), and digital platforms has become a key factor in building destinations that are responsive to the needs of today's tourists (Villalobos et al., 2022). This transformation aims to enhance the tourist experience as well as support environmental and social sustainability at tourism destinations (Streimikiene et al., 2021).

Nonetheless, the development of smart tourism cities in Indonesia, particularly in Blitar City, still faces significant challenges. Limitations in digital infrastructure, service fragmentation, and suboptimal utilization of spatial data and technology for marketing and destination management are major obstacles that need to be addressed (Damayanti et al., 2024). Furthermore, local government and tourism stakeholders still struggle to integrate technology and data comprehensively into destination development strategies (Satria & Wibowo, 2021). This indicates a gap in knowledge and practice regarding the implementation of smart tourism cities, especially concerning the use of strategic analysis and geomarketing technology (Ordóñez Martínez, 2024).

Geomarketing, which combines spatial analysis and geographic data, offers a potential solution that has not been fully utilized in Blitar City. Geomarketing enables precise market segmentation, optimization of information distribution, and enhancement of destination attractiveness through location-based management (Peñarubia-Zaragoza et al., 2019). While current literature extensively discusses the use of digital technology in tourism, there is still limited research integrating strategic analysis based on internal potential and external opportunities, such as the SOAR method, with geomarketing, especially for national heritage tourism destinations (Gündüz, 2024). Hence, this study fills that gap by examining the transformation of national tourism in Blitar City using SOAR approaches.

The SOAR analysis, as a strategic tool, offers advantages by focusing on strengths, opportunities, aspirations, and desired results in a positive and visionary manner (Santoso & Widyatmini, 2021). Combining SOAR with geomarketing is expected to provide strategic guidance based on spatial data and local potential that is precise and targeted to support the creation of an adaptive and sustainable smart tourism city (Imran et al., 2025). The novelty of this research lies in integrating these two approaches as the foundation for developing national tourism in Blitar City, contributing uniquely to both theory and practice of smart tourism in the local Indonesian context.

This research aims to identify and formulate strategies for developing Blitar City's national tourism destinations through SOAR analysis and geomarketing approaches to support the realization of a smart tourism city. The study benefits theoretically by advancing the smart tourism paradigm through the integration of strategic analysis and spatial technology. Practically, the research provides concrete recommendations for local government, industry players, and stakeholders in optimizing national tourism potential based on technology and data.

The expected outcomes of this study include improving the effectiveness of managing national tourism destinations in Blitar City through strategies that leverage local strengths and technological opportunities. Practical implications involve guidelines for implementing integrated tourism routes based on geomarketing, developing digital applications, and strengthening the city's brand as a modern and interactive national education center. Thus,

Blitar City can compete competitively and sustainably as a smart tourism city while reinforcing nationalism and local wisdom values.

Research Method

This study is designed to achieve the optimization of national tourism destinations in Blitar City by employing the SOAR analysis approach as a strategic tool to support the development of a smart tourism city. The research uses a qualitative design with a multidisciplinary and structured approach to deeply explore internal and external factors influencing the development of national tourism.

Research Subjects and Objects

The research subjects consist of key stakeholders involved in managing and developing national tourism in Blitar City, including the Tourism Office, tourism business actors, and local communities. The object of this study is the national tourism destinations in Blitar City alongside relevant strategic factors supporting the advancement of a smart tourism city.

Operational Definitions and Research Variables

Optimization of National Tourism Destinations is defined as the process of enhancing the attraction, accessibility, and management of tourism sites by leveraging historical and cultural potentials as the basis for development (Dunets et.al., 2019 & Katyukha et.al., 2025). SOAR Analysis is used as the analytical framework to identify Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, and Results that are essential in developing the national tourism sector toward a smart tourism city (Khavarian-Garmsir & Zare, 2015). The primary variables analyzed are the SOAR components representing internal and external conditions, strategic visions, and desired outcomes.

Data Collection Techniques and Instruments

Primary data were collected through field observations to gain direct understanding of the condition and management of the destinations. In-depth interviews were conducted with relevant stakeholders to gather qualitative data on their perceptions, aspirations, and challenges in tourism development (Song et.al., 2021). Secondary data were obtained through document reviews such as local government policies, destination management reports, and previous studies as complementary sources. The data collection instruments include semi-structured interview guides and observation checklists developed based on the SOAR dimensions.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using a qualitative descriptive method with a focus on SOAR analysis. The analysis process involves identifying and categorizing strengths and opportunities which form the basis of aspirations and expected results in developing national tourism in Blitar City. The outcomes of the analysis are formulated into strategic recommendations that are positive, collaborative, and future-oriented.

Data Validity and Reliability

To enhance the validity and reliability of the findings, triangulation of sources and data collection techniques was employed. Data obtained from observations, interviews, and documents were cross-verified through discussions with stakeholders to ensure the relevance and accuracy of the analysis.

Hypothesis Testing

As this qualitative exploratory study aims to provide conceptual understanding and strategic formulation, it does not incorporate quantitative hypothesis testing. The main focus is on generating insights and strategic recommendations based on SOAR analysis.

Result and Discussion

Overview of National Tourism in Blitar City

Blitar is a city rich in historical and cultural value, making it an attractive tourist destination for visitors from all walks of life. The city is famous as the birthplace and resting place of Indonesia's first president, Soekarno, so the main historical attractions in Blitar include Bung Karno's Tomb and the Bung Karno Library Museum, which showcase historical value and distinctive Javanese architecture. Additionally, there is the PETA Museum, which recounts the struggles of the PETA troops during the independence era, and the Gebang Palace, which was once the residence of Bung Karno, further enriching the city's historical heritage.

Besides these main historical attractions, Blitar City also has several other historical sites such as Blitar Square, which serves as the city's central hub and a bustling landmark, and the Aryo Blitar Mausoleum, which holds significant cultural value. On the other hand, BonRojo emerges as a modern and creative recreational destination, complementing the city's tourism offerings and providing visitors with a unique alternative experience. This diversity of historical and cultural tourism is the main strength that attracts tourists to Blitar.

In the field of educational and cultural tourism, Blitar City offers Belimbing Karangsari Agrotourism, where visitors can experience picking fruit firsthand and learn about agriculture. The city also stands out as a centre for creative tourism through the presence of the Kendang Craft Education Tourism Village in Sentul and the Kembang Turi Batik Tourism Village, which introduce and preserve local craft traditions. This educational tourism helps enrich the selection of educational destinations while highlighting local wisdom and culture.

For family tourism, Blitar provides various child-friendly recreational facilities, such as Blitar Park, which features a variety of playgrounds, and the educational Fish Garden, which introduces the world of fisheries. The Blitar City Government is actively developing tourism through creative economy-based programmes and the development of supporting infrastructure, making the tourism experience more comfortable and appealing. The combination of historical, educational, cultural, and family recreational tourism makes Blitar City a strong contender to continue developing as a premier tourist destination at both the regional and national levels.

Identifying Potentials and Problems in Blitar City National Tourism Destinations

Based on the results of observation and secondary data processing that has been carried out by researchers on the potential conditions and problems that exist in Blitar City as a National Tourism City, the following is a presentation of the potential and problems

Tabel 1. Identification of Potential and Problems of Blitar City

Aspects	Potential	Problem
Tourist Attractions	Bung Karno as the most prominent national icon and branding in Blitar City. Karno's Tomb, Library and Museum with a collection of the history of the nation's struggle.	There is a great dependence on the branding of one main icon (Karno's Tomb) so that others have less branding.
Infrastructure & Accessibility	A strategic city in the southern part of East Java. There are train stations and intercity terminals.	Parking, toilets, pedestrian, and public transportation facilities to tourist attractions are still limited.
Promotion & Branding	He has a strong national icon: Karno as the Proclamator of the Republic of Indonesia. Potential branding as a "National City."	Not all tourist areas are disability-friendly. Promotion is still minimal on digital platforms. There is no consistent city branding that can attract visitors across all generations.
Institutional & Governance	Support from the local government through the Tourism Office and national events. The development of Blitar City as a tourist city is supported by several policy documents, both spatial planning and development.	Coordination between parties (government, business actors, community) has not been optimal. Some tourist attractions are managed not yet professionally. Lack of integration between national tourism in Blitar City

Aspects	Potential	Problem
Creative Economy & Local Communities	The potential of culinary, handicraft, and tourist village MSMEs around tourist attractions. Public enthusiasm for national events.	Community involvement is still limited. MSME products are less innovative and do not highlight national identity.
Events & Attractions	There are various events held by Blitar City in a full year that can support Blitar City tourism. Scheduled events in the annual routine calendar.	Complete information regarding the event to be held is still lacking
Regional Competition	Location close to Malang, Batu, Kediri (a big city in East Java). It can be used as a historical tour route of East Java.	National tourism is inferior to natural/modern tourism in the surrounding area. The city of Blitar is often considered a retirement city.

Source: Identification by Researchers, 2025

Factors of SOAR Conditions in Blitar City National Tourism

The SOAR analysis of national tourism in Blitar City identified a number of important factors divided into four main dimensions, namely Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, and Results. This approach helps to understand the existing conditions and map the strategic potential that can be utilised to support the development of a smart tourism city based on national tourism.

Strengths

Blitar City possesses several key strengths that serve as fundamental assets in developing its national tourism sector. The national tourism icon, Bung Karno’s Tomb, is supported by other historical and cultural destinations such as Gebang Palace, PETA Museum, Bung Karno Library, and Aloon-Aloon Blitar, collectively enriching the city’s educational and historical value. The strong identity of Blitar as the “Proclamation City” enhances its uniqueness and attracts tourists interested in national heritage. Geographically, Blitar’s strategic location on the southern route of East Java with adequate transport access facilitates convenient visitor mobility. Moreover, robust local community support in preserving history and culture creates an inclusive and sustainable tourism ecosystem. In addition, the potential for thematic tourism packages based on history, culture, and education adds distinctiveness and competitiveness to the tourism products offered.

Opportunities

Global trends toward smart tourism cities provide significant opportunities for Blitar to leverage digital technologies such as GIS, big data, and social media in destination promotion and management. Strong support from central and provincial governments, reflected in several policy documents, offers a solid formal foundation for the development of national tourism. Collaborations with digital platforms, influencers, and creative industry actors present further opportunities to extend marketing reach and reinforce the destination’s image. The potential for location-based tourism development optimizes the uniqueness of Blitar’s geography and history to attract new tourist segments. Year-round recurring events in Blitar act as continuous momentum to draw tourist attention and strengthen the city’s branding as a national tourism hub.

Aspirations

The strategic vision is to establish Blitar City as a smart tourism city rooted in nationalism that harmoniously integrates modern technology with strong local wisdom. A primary aspiration is to create an integrated tourism route based on geomarketing, connecting all national heritage destinations into a well-managed unified network. The city also aims to become a national center of patriotic education through the development of innovative digital content and interactive experiences that elevate educational quality and visitor engagement. Additionally, aspirations include realizing data-driven tourism promotion that is targeted and sustainable, as well as positioning Blitar as a model of a nationalist tourism city adaptable to technological advancements and evolving tourism dynamics.

Results

The expected outcomes of implementing the SOAR strategies include an increase in tourist arrivals with evenly distributed visits across all national tourism destinations in Blitar, supporting inclusive economic and social benefits. Longer tourist stays and increased tourist spending are critical success indicators. The formation of Blitar's brand image as a modern, interactive, and digitally educational tourism destination is a strategic achievement to enhance competitiveness. Increased regional revenue from tourism directly contributes to local development. Strengthening the role of local communities in destination management and marketing demonstrates sustainable and participatory tourism development. Lastly, the availability of a spatial-based tourism database provides a strong foundation for evidence-based and adaptive tourism policy-making.

Calculation of SOAR Analysis in Blitar City National Tourism

The SOAR (Strength, Opportunity, Aspiration, Result) analysis for the development of national tourism in Blitar City involves systematic calculations and comprehensive evaluations of four key dimensions. The SOAR framework is an evolution of the traditional SWOT analysis that integrates the principles of Appreciative Inquiry (AI) to focus on positive transformation rather than problem solving. The calculation process uses a weighted scoring system where each factor in the four SOAR dimensions receives:

- Weight: The relative importance of each factor (0.0-1.0)
- Rating: Performance assessment on a 5-point scale
- Score: Calculated as Weight × Rating

The methodology ensures that the total weight is equal to 1.0 for each dimension, providing a standardised measurement for all factors. Here are the calculations for each aspect of SOAR:

Strength (S) Dimension Calculation

The internal strength factors of national tourism in Blitar City show significant competitive advantages:

Tabel 2. Strength Assessment Score

Strength	Weight	Rating	Score
The national tourist icon of Bung Karno's Tomb is supported by other historical and cultural destinations: Gebang Palace, PETA Museum, Bung Karno Library, Aloon-Aloon Blitar.	0.23	5	1.14
A strong city identity as the 'City of Proclamation' and a centre for national tourism	0.23	5	1.14
Strategic location on the southern route of East Java with adequate access	0.14	2	0.27
Local community support for historical and cultural preservation	0.23	4	0.91
Potential for thematic tourism packages based on history, culture, and education.	0.18	3	0.55
Total Score	1		4.00

Source: Results of SOAR Analysis by Researchers, 2025

The strength dimension calculation shows that Blitar's most significant advantages lie in its national historical significance and strong city identity, each contributing 1.14 points to the total score of 4.00.

Opportunity (O) Dimension Calculation

External opportunities indicate favourable conditions for tourism development:

Tabel 3. Opportunity Assessment Score

Opportunity	Weight	Rating	Score
The Smart Tourism City trend encourages the use of GIS technology, big data, and social media in promotion	0.23	5	1.14
Central and provincial government support for national tourism through several policy documents	0.23	5	1.14
Collaboration with digital platforms, influencers, and creative industry players	0.18	4	0.73
Potential for location-based tourism development	0.18	5	0.91
Regular events in Blitar City held throughout the year	0.18	5	0.91
Total Score	1		4.82

Source: Results of SOAR Analysis by Researchers, 2025

The opportunity dimension achieved the highest individual score of 4.82, indicating exceptionally favourable external conditions for tourism development. Technological trends and government support represent the strongest opportunities.

Aspiration (A) Dimension Calculation

Strategic aspirations define future goals and desired outcomes:

Tabel 4. Aspiration Assessment Score

Aspiration	Weight	Rating	Score
Becoming a Smart Tourism City based on national identity that combines technology and local wisdom	0.18	4	0.73
The creation of an integrated tourism route based on geomarketing that connects all national destinations	0.23	5	1.14
Becoming a national-scale national education centre through digital content and interactive experiences	0.18	4	0.73
The realisation of data-driven, targeted, and sustainable tourism promotion	0.23	4	0.91
Becoming a model national tourism city that is adaptive to technological developments	0.18	4	0.73
Total Score	1		4.23

Source: Results of SOAR Analysis by Researchers, 2025

Aspiration calculations show a balanced ambition in technology integration and sustainable tourism development, with integrated tourist routes receiving the highest priority weighting.

Result (R) Dimension Calculation

Expected and measurable results of strategic implementation:

Tabel 5. Result Assessment Score

Aspiration	Weight	Rating	Score
Increase in the number of tourist visits with an even distribution across all destinations	0.19	5	0.96
Increase in length of stay and tourist spending	0.15	4	0.62
Establishment of Blitar City's brand image as a modern and interactive national tourist destination	0.19	5	0.96
Increase in regional income from the tourism sector	0.15	4	0.62
Strengthening the role of local communities in destination management and marketing	0.15	4	0.62
Availability of a spatial-based tourism database as a basis for policy-making	0.15	5	0.77
Total Score	1		4.54

Source: Results of SOAR Analysis by Researchers, 2025

The calculation of the results emphasises visitor distribution and brand image formation as priority outcomes, contributing to a total score of 4.54.

The strategic matrix combines dimensions to produce four strategic approaches:

Tabel 6. Strategic Matrix Calculation

Aspect of SOAR	Strength (S)	Opportunity (O)
Aspiration (A)	Strength-Aspiration (SA) $4.00 + 4.23 = 8.23$	Opportunity-Aspiration (OA) $4.82 + 4.23 = 9.05$
Result (R)	Strength-Result (SR) $4.00 + 4.54 = 8.54$	Opportunity-Result (OR) $4.82 + 4.54 = 9.36$

Source: Results of SOAR Analysis by Researchers, 2025

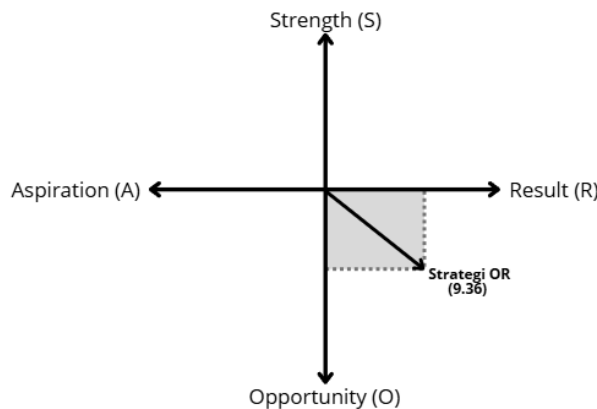


Figure 1. SOAR Calculation Graph Results

Source: Illustration by Researchers, 2025

Based on the calculated scores, the strategic priorities are ranked as follows:

1. Opportunity-Result (OR) Strategy: 9.36 - The highest priority strategy that focuses on utilising external opportunities to achieve measurable results, with an emphasis on technology utilisation and government collaboration for visitor growth.
2. Opportunity-Aspiration (OA) Strategy: 9.05 - The second priority strategy that combines external opportunities with long-term aspirations, centred on developing a Smart Tourism City through digital integration.
3. Strength-Result (SR) Strategy: 8.54 - The third priority strategy that leverages internal strengths to achieve concrete outcomes, utilising historical significance for visitor attraction and retention.
4. Strength-Aspiration (SA) Strategy: 8.23 - A foundational strategy that builds on existing strengths to pursue aspirational goals, focusing on the development of heritage-based Smart Tourism.

Concept and Components of Blitar Smart Tourism City

The concept of Smart Tourism City (STC) is an evolution of the development of urban destinations that utilize advances in information and communication technology (ICT), data analysis, and sensors to create a sustainable, competitive, and improved quality of life for locals and tourists alike. An STC does not only focus on the implementation of technology separately, but on holistic integration that includes all stakeholders in the tourism ecosystem to provide a more personalized and efficient experience. The convergence between the components of smart tourism and smart cities aims to overcome various urban challenges, including the issue of over-tourism, by creating urban spaces that can be enjoyed together by residents and visitors, as well as ensuring sustainability in environmental, economic, and socio-cultural dimensions.

In the context of Blitar City, which has a strong identity as a national heritage tourism destination, the conceptual architecture of STC must be specifically designed to reinforce, not replace, the national narrative that is its main asset. The aspiration to become a "Smart Tourism City based on national identity that combines technology and local wisdom" (aspiration score 0.73) is the main foundation. Thus, the implementation of generic technology will not be adequate. Every technological intervention must be able to answer the fundamental question: "How does this technology enrich tourists' understanding and appreciation of Blitar's historical role in Indonesia's national narrative?" The answer to this question leads to a unique socio-technical model, in which technology serves as a medium to convey a profound message of nationalism.

Based on the analysis and synthesis of the literature, the conceptual architecture of Blitar Smart Tourism City is proposed to be built on three interintegrated pillars, which are specifically adapted to the context of the city's national heritage:

Pillar 1: Smart Infrastructure

This pillar is the technological foundation that allows other intelligent functions to operate. Its main components include:

- a. **Integrated Digital Connectivity:** Providing high-speed public Wi-Fi access in all national tourist destination areas, from the Karno Tomb complex to the PETA Museum and Gebang Palace. This is a basic prerequisite for allowing tourists to access digital services.
- b. **Integrated Data Platform:** The development of a centralized platform that consolidates data from various sources, such as ticket sales data, hotel occupancy rates, visitor traffic data, and sentiment from social media. The platform became the brains of STC, enabling big data analytics for decision-making.
- c. **Implementation of the Internet of Things (IoT):** Installation of IoT sensors at strategic points for real-time management of visitor flows, monitoring of environmental conditions (e.g., air quality around parking areas), and efficient waste management. This technology is a core component in the concept of smart tourism.

Pillar 2: Smart Tourist Experience

This pillar focuses on the use of technology to enrich tourist travel, making it more informative, interactive, and personalized, in line with the four dimensions of smart tourism technology: informative, accessibility, interactivity, and personalization. Its main components are:

- a. **Integrated Mobile Application:** A "Blitar Heritage" application that functions as a digital tour guide. The application not only provides information, but also offers personalized thematic tour route recommendations based on users' interests (for example, the route "Footprint of the Proclamator" or "Blitar Colonial Architecture"). The app also integrates digital payment and ticketing systems for all destinations.
- b. **Implementation of Augmented Reality (AR):** The use of AR technology at sites such as the Gebang Palace or the MAPA Museum. Tourists can point their gadgets at certain objects to see three-dimensional visualizations, historical photo archives, or even simulations of Karno's speech, making history more vivid and interactive. AR allows destinations to create unique experiences, especially for cultural tourism.
- c. **National Narrative-Based Digital Content:** In-depth digital content development, such as historical podcasts, virtual tours, and articles that connect sites in Blitar with important events in Indonesian history. This directly supports the aspiration to become a national-scale national education center.

Pillar 3: Smart Destination Governance

This pillar ensures that STC development is managed effectively, inclusively, and sustainably. It involves the use of technology to improve management efficiency and collaboration between stakeholders. Its main components include:

- a. **Analytics Dashboard for Decision Making:** A data-driven dashboard for the Tourism Office that presents data visualizations from an integrated platform. This dashboard helps in creating evidence-based policies related to marketing strategies, resource allocation, and infrastructure development.
- b. **Stakeholder Collaboration Platform:** A digital portal that facilitates communication and coordination between city governments, tourism industry players (hotels, travel agencies), academics, and local communities. This supports the creation of a holistic and participatory tourism ecosystem.
- c. **Technology-Based Sustainability Management:** The use of data to monitor the environmental and social impacts of tourism, as well as to develop mitigation strategies. This is crucial to prevent over-tourism at key sites and ensure that the benefits of tourism are felt equally by local communities, in line with the principles of smart citizens.

By adopting this three-pillar framework, the City of Blitar can transform its national heritage assets into an authentic and highly competitive smart tourism experience, where technology is not the end goal, but rather a strategic tool to strengthen its national identity and values.

Smart Tourism City Implementation Strategy in Blitar City National Tourism Destinations

The implementation of the Smart Tourism City concept in Blitar City requires a strategic roadmap that translates the SOAR analysis into a series of measurable and executable actions. The results of the strategic matrix calculation in Table 5 and visualized in Figure 1 provide a clear hierarchy of priorities, which guide the allocation of resources and focus of implementation. The strategy that was most urgent and had the greatest impact was the Opportunity-Result (OR) strategy with the highest score (9.36), followed by the Opportunity-Aspiration (OA) strategy (9.05). Strategies based on internal strengths, namely Strength-Result (SR) (8.54) and Strength-Aspiration (SA) (8.23), play the role of foundations and supporters that strengthen the execution of key strategies.

Top Priority Strategy - OR (Opportunity-Result): Leveraging Digital Opportunities for Measurable Results Through Geomarketing

The strategy focuses on leveraging the most significant external opportunities—namely Smart Tourism City trends, government support, and potential collaborations with digital platforms—to directly achieve desired outcomes, such as increasing the number and equity of visits, building a strong brand image, and increasing regional revenue. In this context, geomarketing is a crucial implementation machine. Geomarketing is a discipline that integrates geographic data into marketing strategies to reach the right audience, in the right location, and at the right time. This approach allows Blitar to bridge the gap between spatial assets (destination locations) and effective digital marketing actions. The application of geomarketing in OR strategies can be described into the following specific tactics:

- a. **Development of GIS-Based Integrated Heritage Tourism Trails:** Using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to map all national tourism assets and their supporting infrastructure. From this mapping, several optimal thematic tourism routes can be designed, such as "Jelajah Jejak Proklamator" or "Blitar Cultural Heritage Route". These routes are then promoted through mobile applications and digital platforms, which directly answer the aspiration for "the creation of integrated tourist routes based on geomarketing".
- b. **Dynamic Visitor Flow Management with Geofencing:** Implementing geofencing technology (virtual fences) around major destinations such as the Karno Tomb

complex. When the sensor detects a visitor density that is close to maximum capacity, the system can automatically send push notifications to travelers' devices that are in or near the area. These notifications may contain suggestions to visit nearby alternative destinations that are less crowded (e.g., the PETA Museum or Karno Library), along with incentives such as ticket discounts or culinary vouchers. This tactic directly targets the result of "an increase in the number of tourist visits with an even distribution across all destinations" and is a sophisticated application of proximity marketing.

- c. Location- and Behavior-Based Hyper-Targeted Promotion: Utilizing location data from mobile devices and analyzing social media data to conduct highly specific audience segmentation (geotargeting). For example, digital ad campaigns can be targeted to users in major cities who show an interest in history, museums, or educational tourism. During the school holiday period, ads may specifically target a segment of families or study groups from educational institutions. This approach ensures marketing budget efficiency and higher message relevance.

Supporting Strategies - OA, SR, and SA: Building the Foundation for Long-Term Transformation

Although the OR strategy is spearheaded, its success depends on a supporting strategy that builds the necessary capacity and foundation:

- a. OA (Opportunity-Aspiration) Strategy: This strategy connects external opportunities with a long-term vision. Its implementation involves utilizing policy support from the central and provincial governments to secure funding and regulatory frameworks for STC infrastructure development. Collaborations with universities and technology companies (opportunities) are used for research and development of innovative applications, which gradually realize Blitar's aspiration to become a pilot national tourism city.
- b. SR (Strength-Result) Strategy: This strategy focuses on harnessing internal strengths to achieve tangible results. Blitar's main asset is its historical narrative. The implementation of this strategy is through the digitization of content assets, such as archives at the Karno Library, historical photo collections, and oral stories from the local community. This digital content is then disseminated through various platforms to build and strengthen Blitar's brand image as a modern and interactive educational tourism destination, which will ultimately increase the number of visits and the length of stay of tourists.
- c. SA (Strength-Aspiration) Strategy: This strategy is fundamental, using existing strengths to build the future. The main strength of Blitar is the strong support of the local community in historical preservation. This strategy is realized by actively involving communities in the digital transformation process, for example through digital literacy training programs, content creation workshops, and participation in tourism governance boards. This engagement ensures that STC's transformation runs inclusively, authentically, and truly reflects local wisdom, in line with the aspiration to blend technology with national identity.

Strategic Implications and Policy Recommendations

The SOAR analysis and formulation of the Smart Tourism City (STC) implementation strategy for national tourism in Blitar City has resulted in a series of profound strategic implications for stakeholders. This transformation is not merely a technological project but a paradigm shift in how destinations are managed, marketed, and experienced. To translate this strategic vision into reality, a clear policy framework, targeted investment allocation, and effective collaboration models are required. The following recommendations have been formulated to guide the Blitar City Government and its partners in navigating this transformation process.

Policy Recommendations

- a. Preparation of the Digital Tourism Master Plan: The Blitar City Government, through the Tourism Office, is recommended to immediately prepare a Digital Tourism Master Plan 2025-2030. This document should explicitly integrate the three-pillar STC framework and the geomarketing-based implementation strategy that has been outlined. This master plan should set clear Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) (e.g., target of increasing tourist distribution by 30% in three years), a realistic timeline for each phase of implementation, and a detailed budget allocation.
- b. Establishment of a Tourism Data Governance Framework: The success of STCs is highly dependent on the availability and interoperability of data. Therefore, it is necessary to form a regulation or mayor regulation regarding tourism data governance. This policy should set data collection standards, data sharing mechanisms between stakeholders (government, hotels, tourist attractions), and strict data privacy and security protocols to protect travelers' information. This framework is the foundation for evidence-based policymaking.
- c. Providing Incentives for Digital Adoption by MSMEs: To address the problem of service fragmentation, the government needs to encourage the adoption of technology by Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in the tourism sector. Incentive policies can be in the form of technical assistance, subsidies for online booking system software and digital payments, or tax breaks for businesses that are fully integrated with the city's digital ecosystem. This will ensure that the benefits of digital transformation are felt equally.

Investment Recommendations

- a. Investment Priorities in Fundamental Digital Infrastructure: Initial investments should be focused on building the infrastructure that is the backbone of STC. The top priority is the provision of reliable and free public Wi-Fi networks throughout major tourism zones. Without adequate connectivity, most smart tourism services will not be accessible to tourists.
- b. Development of a Centralized Tourism Analytics Platform: Recommends investment in the development or procurement of a software platform that serves as a centralized analytics dashboard. The platform must be able to integrate and visualize data from multiple sources (ticket sales, social media, IoT sensors) to provide actionable insights to destination managers. This investment will transform tourism management from reactive to proactive and predictive.
- c. Investment in Human Resource Development: Technology will be useless without competent human resources. Significant budget allocations must be directed towards digital capacity building programs for government officials, tourism business actors, and local communities. The program should include basic digital literacy training, digital marketing skills, customer service management in the digital age, and tour guide training to take advantage of new tools such as AR applications.

Collaboration Recommendations

- a. Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Model for Infrastructure: Given the budget constraints of local governments, the development of digital infrastructure such as Wi-Fi networks and IoT sensor installations is ideal to be implemented through Public-Private Partnership schemes. Governments can partner with telecommunications or technology companies to fund, build, and maintain infrastructure, with a revenue-sharing or concession model in return.
- b. Penta-Helix Collaboration for Innovation: STC transformation requires continuous innovation. The Blitar City Government must proactively foster Penta-Helix collaboration involving: the Government (as a regulator and facilitator), Academics (for research and concept development), Business Actors (for commercial investment and implementation), Community (to ensure inclusivity and authenticity), and Media (for

promotion and dissemination of information). Partnerships with universities and tech startups, for example, can accelerate the development of unified mobile apps and AR content.

- c. Establishment of a Community Tourism Advisory Council: To ensure that the development of STC is aligned with the values and aspirations of the local community, it is recommended that an advisory board be formed consisting of community leaders, cultural experts, representatives of tourism awareness groups (Pokdarwis), and local youth. The council serves as the government's strategic partner in designing authentic tourism experiences and ensuring that tourism development delivers tangible social and economic benefits to communities, strengthening the Smart Citizen component in the STC ecosystem.

By implementing these policy, investment, and collaboration recommendations in a structured manner, Blitar City can ensure that the transformation towards a Smart Tourism City is not only technically successful, but also economically sustainable, socially inclusive, and culturally authentic.

Conclusion

This study advances knowledge in the smart tourism field by demonstrating how traditional heritage tourism destinations can successfully transform into smart tourism cities while preserving their cultural authenticity and national identity. The integration of SOAR analysis with geomarketing approaches provides a novel analytical framework that moves beyond conventional SWOT-based tourism planning by emphasizing positive transformation and spatial intelligence. The research contributes to smart tourism literature by proposing a three-pillar conceptual architecture specifically designed for heritage destinations, addressing the gap in existing frameworks that often overlook cultural preservation in technological integration.

The practical implications of this research are substantial. Local governments can utilize the proposed strategic hierarchy, prioritizing Opportunity-Result strategies that leverage external technological opportunities to achieve measurable tourism outcomes. The geomarketing-based implementation strategies, including GIS-integrated heritage tourism trails and geofencing technology for visitor flow management, provide actionable tools for destination managers. The policy recommendations encompassing digital tourism master plans, data governance frameworks, and public-private partnerships offer concrete guidance for systematic smart tourism implementation.

However, this research acknowledges several limitations that warrant consideration. The study focuses exclusively on Blitar City's national tourism context, potentially limiting generalizability to destinations with different heritage characteristics or development stages. The qualitative SOAR analysis, while comprehensive, lacks quantitative validation through visitor behavior data or economic impact measurements. Additionally, the research does not address potential negative impacts of digital transformation on local communities or examine long-term sustainability challenges of technology-dependent tourism models. The rapid evolution of digital technologies may also affect the relevance of specific technological recommendations over time.

Future research should expand this framework's applicability by conducting comparative studies across diverse heritage tourism destinations in Indonesia and internationally. Longitudinal studies tracking the actual implementation of smart tourism strategies and their measurable impacts on visitor experience, local economic development, and cultural preservation would provide valuable empirical validation. Research investigating community adaptation to digital tourism transformation and developing inclusive participation models would strengthen the social sustainability dimension. Additionally, exploring the integration of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence and blockchain in heritage tourism contexts could further advance the smart tourism paradigm. Quantitative modeling of visitor behavior using big data analytics and development of smart

tourism city performance indicators specific to heritage destinations represent promising avenues for future investigation.

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