

Analysis of Visual Elements and Brand Identity in Tourism Logo: Bali the Island of Gods

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Abstract

Branding is part of Bali tourism marketing strategy. Throughout the time, logo played a big role in the Bali tourism branding. To say the least, logo is an effort to give strong identity in global tourism market. The identity, as matter of fact, has been known that it was made by foreigners who came to Bali island long before, through trade and adventure trip. The names created by scholars, artists, and celebrities have been in circular. Some of those names are useful in ways of marketing purpose. When the new logo “Bali the Island of Gods” was launched in 2017, it brought some responses from public. There was criticism about the color not being native to Balinese culture. Another question arises about the reasons for choosing the symbols, such as *meru* and hibiscus flower in the logo. This identity showed inconsistencies. The study used qualitative method by doing deep interviews and literature review. This study concerns on elements of graphic and text in logo. The result of the study showed that “Bali the Island of Gods” logo shown simplicity in terms of style. The color technic is complex with silhouette approach, the balance with the bold contrast on the typeface. In term of branding, the logo was aimed to give strong personality in Bali image so that it brings impact to the arrival of foreign visitors.

Keywords: logo, visual elements, brand, identity, bali the island of gods

I. Introduction

In the beginning of 1930 Bali had been the main topic of conversation among tourists from western hemisphere. Ever since, tourism has been the major economic source for Balinese. Passing through the colonial ruler era and the Indonesia Republic, the tourism has been managed toward the modernization including the creating branding through logo. The purpose of this branding is to expand the market, especially foreign visitors. This far, three logos have been used to increase the coming numbers of foreign visitors.

Referring to previous branding, it was named “Visit Indonesia Year” in 2008 to help raise the image of tourism. This was deemed successful because the number of foreign tourist visits to Indonesia has shown an increase since then (Nuzululita, 2019). But that only lasted a moment, after that there was a decline again with another situation. Therefore, the local government in Bali deemed it was necessary to have a new branding including a new tourism logo. So the latest logo “Bali Shanti” was chosen with expectation that this logo fulfills the objective and utilitarian goals of the logo.

In 2011, the government of Indonesia decided to change the national branding (rebranding) to “Wonderful Indonesia”. Bali as one of the provinces which partakes to the national tourism program must undergo this policy. That was reasoning behind the logo of Bali tourism must follow the national tourism strategy. Here the “Bali the Island of Gods” logo becomes the official branding of Bali tourism. This branding was launched in 2017 and is still used today. The committee involved in the process is a collaboration among many parties, such as the central–regional government, and various elements of society consisting of cultural figures, artists, academic scholars, professionals in the field of branding and so on. Even though there were various opinions among the discussion, the stakeholders generally accepted this logo.

Each logos reflects a purpose. A logo refers to any symbol created for the identification (Sayegh, 2018). What is seen from a logo is the design, identity and meaning (Henderson & Cote, 1988). Logos can also form a brand reputation (Olins, 1989; Baker & Balmer, 1997). Generally an aesthetic brand visual design arouses attention, creates curiosity and provides initial information (Tinarbuko, 2015). The problem surfaced among the scholars who questioned whether the aesthetic and identity reflected in “Bali the Island of Gods” are representation of Bali culture. The colors and representation figures seemed puzzling in spite of its simplicity. This logo is seen as having a weakness and delivering misinterpretation.

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From the perspective of branding there are inconsistencies. When Bali simultaneously uses two different brandings at a same time, and later on following national branding blindly, it seems as if Bali has several different identities. Logically, selling a product with two different identities will certainly make buyers confused.

II. Methods

This study employs qualitative methods. Data collection is from interview and the graphic design of Bali tourism logo. Narrative analysis involves capturing the information and insight of the policy maker, academics and practitioner of marketing brand. The logo graphic was examined through its visual elements.

III. Results and Discussion

3.1 History of Bali Branding

Bali tourism was initiated by travelers. According to Fussell (1980) tourism always started by adventure and exploration He said “before tourism, there was travel, and before travel there was exploration”. The merchants who sought a route to Moluccas islands which well known for spices instead found Bali. The foreign fleet came ashore to get fresh water, food and cattle. They explored the island and found such a beauty which latter described it in many names. Tourism merely acknowledged since the government of Dutch claimed Bali as one of its colonies. The “*Baliseering*” is a milestone of tourism officially established by the colonial ruler. *Baliseering* is Dutch policy to regain best image after the bloodshed through *Puputan* War across Bali. Besides security, this policy aimed Bali becoming tourism industry.

Names for Bali had been created since the first tourist came to the island. There were names relates to the nature and culture, such as “Morning of the World”, “The Last Paradise”, “Enchanted Isle”, “The Island of Gods” etc. Mead (2000) pointed out Bali as a metropolis due to the arrival of artists, scholars, and celebrities. The names continues around on to this day and are used as Balinese tourism themes.

The names created by foreigners stick to Bali image. The colonial government initiated using those names the first time to promote Bali tourism. The KPM (*Koninklijke Paketvaart-Maatschappij*) launched postcards, brochures, pamphlet to attract European market. In those days the nude women pictures came to light excite the European tourist. In modern era those marketing tools are obsolete and no longer exist. There are many ways to promote Bali tourism, in this case logo plays a big role.

Since Bali joined the republic there was nothing hindering the development of tourism. The center government in Jakarta took much interest in Bali due to tourism can boost the local economy (Couteau, 2002). Now Bali Tourism has become a big industry which is managed with modern marketing. Logo as part of modern marketing were created to provide image identity, identification and simultaneously strengthen position in the global tourism market.

The first logo was “Bali is My Life” made in 2007. This logo was made to respond to Bali bombings in 2002 and 2005. Then, later in mid-2007 apart from “Bali is My Life” it turned out that Bali had one more branding namely “Bali Shanti Shanti Shanti”. The first branding was inaugurated in January 2007 by the Indonesian Ministry of Tourism and Culture, while “Bali Shanti Shanti Shanti” was inaugurated six months later. The Indonesian Hotel and Restaurant Association (PHRI) Bali regulated the “Bali is My Life” branding, while the Bali Government Tourism Office supported the “Bali Shanti Shanti Shanti” branding. The Balinese theme that was sold through the branding “Bali is My Life” was for Bali to be seen and used as a lifestyle. There were two different brandings running in the same period, which were not made by the same source of stakeholders and did not contain continuity. This matter raised questions related to Balinese identity. With the existence of two different Bali tourism brandings, it was possible for identity confusion to arise. In 2017 a new logo carried a new theme which was considered more relevant and in line with the “Wonderful Indonesia” branding which is the national tourism theme, established. “Bali the Island of Gods” branding replaced “Bali Shanti Shanti Shanti” which was considered less known by the international community. The process of determining branding was carried out by the Ministry of Tourism by involving Balinese cultural stakeholders.

Table 1.Bali Tourism Logo Based on Historical Context

Name of Logo	Visual	Years	Historical Context
Bali is My Life		2007-2017	Bali Bomb I, Decreasing Foreign Tourist Arrival
Bali Shanti		2007-2017	Bali Bomb II Decreasing Foreign Tourist Arrival
Bali the Island of Gods		2017-now	Decreasing Foreign Tourist Arrival Global Covid Pandemic

3.2 Visual Elements

Visual element, according to Supriyono (2010), is illustrations that in general can serve to clarify an information or message as well as an attraction. Visual element analysis is a method to value the aesthetic of graphic art piece. De Wulf et al (2001) argued that through the aesthetic of logo, public might acknowledge an identity. The audience would appreciate the logo if it is able to offer aesthetic experience which is pleasure them (Goldman, 2005). Visual element analysis of logo can be done by breaking down it into visual indicators, namely: lay out, shape, composition and typeface. Tourism logo of “Bali the Island of Gods” is an identity sign of a brand. Furthermore, the analysis of the logo must refers to visual elements, such as typographic, shape and so on (Henderson and Cote, 1998; Wheeler, 2003).

3.3 Layouts

The layout of “Bali the Island of Gods” logo is a landscape square graphic with gradient patterned background. The font position paralleled with the image of island forms a balance composition in map picture. In the logo, the type of layout used is a combination of silhouette and axial layout. Silhouette layout refers to an illustrative method of highlighting the shadowy shape of a subject. The visual appearance can be in the form of text, color illustrations, or subtle color refraction. The position of the illustration is in the center (axial) with a strong appearance as the main element and supporting elements such as text supporting the illustration. The shape of the rectangular or landscape layout makes it easy to adjust the position of the map of the island of Bali, whose shape stretches to the left and right. The use of silhouette layouts is easier to adapt to the flow of image shapes. The dimensions of the length and width of the landscape in the silhouette layout are more appropriate for illustrations in the form of geographic maps. The use of silhouette and axial layouts is a classic and simple technique. The goal is to make it easier for the public or audience to capture the message of the logo. In general, designs with layouts that use classic nuances provide additional opportunities for text and color elements so that the design looks artistic and unique.

3.4 Shape

Starting from the outer layer, there is supergraphic “spreading wings” encased the logo which inspired from parts of wings which is the main illustration in “Wonderful Indonesia” logo. The tail of supergraphic points toward the logo as if to represent the logo. The supergraphic also symbolize the branches of the “Wonderful Indonesia” as the part of national tourism policy.



Fig. 1 Tourism Logo Bali The Island of Gods.

Source: <https://bali.tribunnews.com>

Inside the rectangular box there are three forms of illustration, the first is an illustration of the island of Bali, its shape looked unbalanced on the left side, while at the bottom the shape is like a tail. The second is the silhouette of a *meru* (Bali Hindus Temple) with nine pillars, a building that is considered sacred by Balinese Hindus. The third is a picture of hibiscus flowers. The flower crown consists of five petals with pistil and stamens in the middle in different colors. This flower is close to the daily life of Balinese people, especially for decoration.

The illustrations of the islands of Bali and Nusa Penida with the silhouettes of *meru* and a hibiscus flower using composition, proposition, balance and unity of image objects to form a sense of space or dimension. The map of the island of Bali is depicted with Choropleth technique using color and shading but not fully for artistic purposes. theworldtravelguy.com website describes Bali as “a fairly small island..., with an odd shape”. Ian Charles Stewart in the book “Indonesian Portraits from an Archipelago” describes Bali as a “gem”. Anatomically, the island of Bali is indeed diamond-shaped. The shading in the picture depicts the beauty of the island of Bali with varied landscape topography such as hills, mountains, rocky coastlines, sandy beaches and rice terraces.

In addition to the illustration of the island of Bali, the “Bali the Island of Gods” logo contains the *meru* building. *Meru* as a sacred building for Balinese Hindus (*pura*) built with layers of stone and has a series of roof shapes resembling overlapping pyramids covered by black palm fronds. There are nine overlaps with a unique meaning. The *meru* is drawn using the silhouette technique, namely how to draw or paint by covering one area using one color. Image details are not very visible, usually only made to resemble certain shapes. This gives a simple and minimalist impression. In the center of the illustration of Bali island, there is a hibiscus flower (Latin: *Hibiscus rosa-sinensis* L). It was chosen since hibiscus flower holds a special meaning for Balinese people. Research (Cesar et al, 2015) shows that organic logo designs such as flowers always have a better effect on the audience then followed by cultural designs such as buildings.

4.5 Color

Colors in logo according to Vellest (2012) has some significant role in creating different meanings within different society. This logo has a color scheme that comes from five categories, namely: Natural Wonders, Sensory Wonders, Cultural Wonders, Modern Wonders and Adventurous Wonders, each category has a color gradient.



Piq.2 Colors According to the Philosophy of Wonders

Source: Visual Elements in “Wonderful Indonesia” Logo

The right color will be creating strong identity (Budelmann, 2019). The colors used in “Bali the Island of Gods” logo referred to the Nusantara color philosophy (Philosophy of Wonders). The color categories included Natural Wonders, Sensory Wonders, Cultural Wonders, Modern Wonders and Adventure Colors.

The background uses a broken white color which is warm and neutral to other colors. The color of the text “Bali” is darker than “the Island of Gods” to promote and strengthen Bali among world tourism competition. The colors used in the illustrations are familiar in the archipelago, for example, green refers to harmony with nature, orange means creativity, enthusiasm and something warm, purple means strong imagination and inner and outer unity, magenta means balance and common sense, and blue stands for universality and peace.

4.6 Composition

Composition is a space in which individual elements must become one; where images, text, color and graphics become a single design in which everything is combined. The composition of the logo includes proximity, white space, alignment, contrast, and repetition. The proximity is all about using visual space to show relationships in your content. In practice, it's pretty simple—all you have to do is make sure related items are grouped together. White space is the spaces between the content, between lines, and the outer margins. The logo shows the balance of white space between the text and the illustration. There is no crowded and cluttered space. The range space gives room to breathe. There is an equal alignment between illustration and text. The main script (Bali) and superscript (the Island of Gods) are evenly spaced. Contrast is a visual technique that can help the viewer navigate the work. It shows them where to begin and where to go next using different levels of emphasis. In this logo, it is clearly shown by the bolder and bigger typeface that make the ‘Bali’ word looks stand out.

4.7 Typeface

Typography is extremely important and choosing the right typeface can make all the difference (Sayegh, 2018). The logo uses the same type of font with the same writing style, for example the use of lowercase and bold letters in the region name. In graphic art design, typography is the process of compiling publication materials using printed letters (Kusrianto, 2007). Typography functions in forming beauty or aesthetics. Text must be precise and clear, therefore the typeface or design of a set of letters, numbers, and punctuation marks, must have a standard and consistent visual characteristic (Hill, 2005).



Fig.3 Font Signika.
Source: Valiansyah

The text “Bali the Island of Gods” is written in lowercase using a signika typeface that is more appropriate for cultural terms. The size of the letters for writing the word “Bali” is almost five times the size of “the Island of Gods”. The word “Bali” also uses the bold element which serves as the dominant information. The typeface (font) used in the logo is primer signika. This type of font is included in the category of philosopher fonts with characteristics that are suitable for carrying traditional culture, namely using tendrils, thick characteristics in the middle and thin on the ends. In addition, the font has legibility that is clear enough so that the brand name can be easily recognized by the target audience.

The letters used in the text are lower case which tend to give the impression of being casual, friendly, relaxed and light. Letters are written obliquely even in English words which are usually written in italics. In the text “Bali”, the letters are bold with a larger size as an element of prominence. The thick black color and different sizes from the other words give a contrast effect so that it looks more dynamic.

4.8 Brand Identity: The impact of Bali’s Branding

Promotion of Bali, especially after the Bali bombing incident, is a necessity to give a sense of security to the public, especially tourists. Utilitarian value is positively related to public trust in branding. The importance of Bali branding is made precisely so that it helps tourists get to know the real Bali before going on a tour. Bali branding builds visibility thereby increasing the likelihood of repeated trips to Bali.

The creation of a branding logo in tourism is a marketing tactic, which symbolizes the tourism business. The tourism branding logo was given voice, appearance, personality, and values that is in accordance to the wishes of guests or tourists in the tourism industry. Well-defined branding helps attract the right audience, as well as leave a lasting impression. Technically, the “Bali the island of gods” logo fills public spaces in top-line media, such as websites, social media, bulletins, pamphlets, etc. As well as bottom line media, such as: billboards, billboards, banners, oudtec, videotron and so on. The wider the reach of public space for logo placement, the wider the audience that can access information (Puntoadi, 2011).

Promotion of Bali, especially after the Bali bombing incident, is a necessity to give a sense of security to the public, especially tourists. Utilitarian value is positively related to public trust in branding. The importance of Bali's branding is made precisely so that it helps tourists get to know the real Bali before going on a tour. Bali's branding builds visibility thereby increasing the likelihood of repeated trips to Bali. Bali Tourism Branding through the "Bali the Island of Gods" logo aims to convey to the public about Bali tourism which carries cultural tourism. Explicitly through the logo already tells that Bali is a place of peace and calm. Silence and spirituality are like two sides of a coin that are interrelated. According to Pamayun (Interview 5 December 2022) tourists come to Bali to "find universal happiness because of 'harmony'".

In 1999 the number of arrivals of foreign tourists was 1,355,799 grew by 14.20% from the previous year. In 2000 the increase in foreign tourist arrivals to Bali only rose 4.3%. In 2001 the growth in foreign tourist arrivals fell to -3.4%. In 2002, two force majeure incidents occurred in Bali tourism, namely the Bali bombing I, which saw a drastic decline, especially in 2002/2003, the growth in foreign tourist arrivals plunged to -22%. To restore Bali tourism, the first Bali tourism logo was created with the theme "Bali is My Life". In 2004 there was an increase in the arrival of foreign tourists by 48%.

In 2005, the Bali bombing occurred again, causing homesteads to drop to -5.3% and in 2006 it got worse, down to -9.5%. Seeing the fact that foreign tourist arrivals for two years (2005-2006) experienced minus growth, the local government initiated a new Bali tourism branding logo titled "Bali Shanti Shanti Shanti". This logo represented the hope of Bali tourism with the slogan of peace providing security guarantees for foreign tourist travelers.

In 2007 there was positive growth with arrivals increasing by around 32%. However, after that there was a slow decline in foreign tourist arrivals until 2012 reaching its lowest point with a growth of 4%. Until 2016 the growth rate fluctuated with the highest growth rate only reaching 23%. In 2017 the government nationally carried out a national tourism branding entitled "Wonderful Indonesia". One of the sub-systems of national branding is Bali tourism branding with the theme "Bali the Islands of Gods". After this logo was released to the public, the increase in tourism arrivals never happened, until when the pandemic broke out, Bali tourism experienced a fall to the lowest point of -100% in 2021.

Judging from the effectiveness of the tourism branding logo "Bali the Islands of Gods" to bring in more foreign tourists, it has not been proven. There are two causal factors; the first is the external factor, namely the global pandemic which has caused tourism activities to stop simultaneously around the world, including Bali. Second, the internal factor of the branding logo which cannot represent a tourist destination, namely; reputation, identity and perception

In an interview with the vice Governor of Bali Tjokorda Oka Artha Ardhana Sukawati stated that the branding that had been prepared in a comprehensive way and had touched all aspects of branding. However, according to branding practitioner Gde Esha Satria Wibawa (in an interview on 11 November 2022) the branding logo visually looks simple, small, poor in ornamentation because it aims to make Bali a cheap destination. Gde Esha also estimates that branding has not been taken seriously by local governments because not many people understand the function of branding.

IV. Conclusion

Aesthetically, the "Bali the Island of Gods" logo emphasizes simplicity with a silhouette drawing technique, namely an illustrative method that highlights the shadowy form of a subject. This silhouette technique is simple and does not require complex coloring techniques. The silhouette technique in the *Meru* building makes it easy for the public to digest the message conveyed. The use of the primer signika type typology is in harmony with giving a relaxed, casual, friendly and light feel to the logo. The themes used in the Bali tourism logo, namely the first, second, and third logos, are felt to have no common thread or clear synchronization between the essence of their identity and their visual marketing output. In particular, the logo "Bali the island of gods" is less sharp, symbolizing the characteristics of Bali as an island of the gods. There are many questions that arise, for example why hibiscus flowers are not endemic to Bali or *Meru's* choice of overlapping nine and so on. To adopt in a vulgar and haphazard way all the realities constructed by foreigners is a failure of epistemology. What's more, letting other people identify Bali constantly creates a dependency effect. Balinese people become not independent in thought

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Respondents

Tjokorda Oka Artha Ardhana Sukawati, vice Governor of Bali
 Tjok BagusPamayun, Bali Tourism Board Chairman
 Gde Esha Satria Wibawa, Corporate Branding Practioner