

## Gallery Tour Strategy to Increase the Number of Visitors at Tirtodipuran Gallery Link Yogyakarta

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### ABSTRACT

**Keywords:** promotional strategies, gallery tours, exhibition visitors, word of mouth.

The strategy to increase the number of visitors to galleries and museums is now still a burden for managers. The promotion strategy used by the manager should not stand alone or continue to use the most effective promotion mix (promotion mix) carried out by the analysis of the strengths and advantages of each gallery or museum. One form in the promotional mix that can still be used is word-of-mouth information which has been proven to be effective because it focuses on visitor satisfaction and loyalty as the target market for art galleries. However, WOM also cannot stand alone without the help of other forms of promotion such as advertising and public relations. This study aims to provide information about the effectiveness of gallery tours as a promotional strategy to increase the number of visitors to the gallery. The method used is qualitative with a descriptive approach. The data collection technique is by observation, interviews, and documentation carried out directly by researchers at the research location, namely the Tirtodipuran Link Yogyakarta gallery from October to December 2023. The results of the study show that visitors are impressed by the existence of gallery tours, so gallery tours can be a form of promotion, namely WOM and the increase in the number of visitors can also be evidenced through visitor data that shows an increase in certain months when the gallery holds the opening of exhibitions and artist workshops in which there are gallery tour activities in it. So the conclusion obtained from this study is that gallery tour services can not only create visitor satisfaction and loyalty but also can be a form of promotion in the form of WOM to increase the number of visitors to the gallery and it is hoped that this promotion strategy can also be applied in national museums in Indonesia.



### Introduction

Gallery tours are a form of promotional strategy carried out by Tirtodipuran Gallery Link Yogyakarta. In the gallery tour, there are several series of activities and services

provided by the gallery to visitors as a step to provide comfort and satisfaction for visitors while in the gallery (Rahmadhani HRP, 2024). The customer will talk to other customers about their experience using the product or service they purchased, so this advertisement is a reference from someone else and this reference is done by word of mouth (Chien, 2017). Gallery tours, in addition to being a service that focuses on satisfaction as an effort to build visitor loyalty, are also an effective form of promotion in increasing the number of gallery visitors, namely information from word of mouth (Word of Mouth).

Visitors who can take part in the gallery tour are divided into several groups ranging from school-age children (kindergarten, elementary, junior high, high school, and college), elderly age groups, children with special needs, government employees as well as the private sector and community in general (Murti, 2017). The series of activities in the gallery tour is also considered to be an effective learning tool in daily leadership practices, especially among schools, both for teachers and students (Kaimal et al., 2016). The series of activities in the gallery tour will be adjusted to the needs of the tour group on that day so that the experience and benefits of the gallery tour will also differ depending on the category of each visitor (Mashuri, 2020).

Gallery tours are also a good promotional strategy for creating customer loyalty. Customer loyalty is a customer who not only re-buys a good or service but also has a commitment and a positive attitude towards the service company, for example by recommending others to buy or use the company's services (Saputri, 2019). With this gallery tour service, it is hoped that visitors will feel comfortable in the gallery environment and can enjoy the atmosphere in the gallery during the visit which will finally give a good impression of the gallery tour activities that are followed by visitors (Thohari et al., 2024).

From these statements, it is hoped that the gallery tour, in addition to visitors getting satisfaction from their visit to the gallery, can also be a promotional tool for the gallery by using the good impression and loyalty of visitors to attract new visitors to the Tirtodipuran Link Gallery. Visitors are expected to get a good impression and give their loyalty from the series of programs or activities in the gallery tour offered by the gallery which will be discussed in the next section of this article.

## **Research Methods**

The formal object of this study is the gallery tour strategy which is a form of visitor service as a way to provide visitor satisfaction in the hope of creating visitor loyalty and the formation of a good impression which can then be an effective form of promotional strategy about the material object of the research, namely increasing the number of visitors at the Tirtodipuran Link Yogyakarta gallery as the context in which this research is conducted. The author determined this topic as the object of research because he wanted to ensure the connection between the gallery tour service at Tirtodipuran Link Yogyakarta and the increasing number of visitors who came to the gallery and prove that the loyalty of visitors who have a good impression can also be an effective promotional strategy to bring in other new visitors.

The method used by the author in this article uses a qualitative approach. The author describes the results of his research by linking several previous sources and using several techniques in collecting data, namely field observation, interviews with visitors and guides, documentation of activities, and direct participation in a series of gallery tour activities. The author uses these data collection methods and techniques because the research is carried out by the author himself and gets data in the field directly by observing activities, listening to the responses from visitors who take the tour, interviews with guides and representatives of the gallery who are authorized to explain about the activities and reading literature related to the research topic.

The observation carried out by the researcher was by making direct observations at the research location, namely the Tirtodipuran Link Yogyakarta gallery. The researcher attended a gallery tour guided directly by artist Angky Purbandono (Angky Pu) which was followed by students of SD Grow Yogyakarta as participants. The researcher observed the activities of the tour participants from the arrival of the participants in the gallery to the end of the activity by sharing the works of the participants during the workshop to take home as their memories. The purpose of this observation was to find out the extent of interaction between the artist and the participants in the gallery tour series and the enthusiasm of each participant in participating in the entire series of activities. Another observation was made by the researcher on another day while attending the opening of an exhibition titled "In the East of the Sun" by artist Riono Tanggul. At the opening of the exhibition, the researcher observed the course of activities from the beginning of the event opened by representatives of gallery managers, exhibition curators, and main artists. The researcher observed the enthusiasm of guest visitors in attending the event from the beginning until visitors were welcome to start a tour of the gallery that could be accompanied and interact directly with the artists present.

Interviews conducted by researchers were conducted with several parties. In addition to visiting the gallery, the researcher also conducted interviews with artists who were present at the opening of the exhibition and officers who were tasked with guarding the gallery and serving visitors who came. From this interview, the researcher obtained the answers of the resource persons as evidence to strengthen the analysis and initial arguments in his research. The results of the interview also open up several different perspectives that can be the next reference for the gallery management in improving the gallery tour service to be better according to the wishes of visitors.

The documentation carried out by the researcher includes taking photos during observation, both location photos, works on display, activities at the opening of the exhibition, and gallery tours. The purpose of documentation is to capture the moments that exist during the research and provide evidence of visitor satisfaction when interacting with artists during gallery tours. The researcher also collected data on the number of visitors for the last 4 months since the study took place, namely in August, September, October, and November from the archive of gallery visitor data provided by the public relations section.

From the three data collection techniques, the researcher can connect the results of the three techniques into research results that can also be discussed for future research.

## **Results and Discussion**

### **Visitors are impressed when they take a gallery tour.**


When taking a gallery tour, visitors can enjoy several services provided by the gallery. The services provided for the gallery tour visitors start from the presence of a welcome drink in the entrance area which indicates the welcome of gallery guests before starting a series of activities in the gallery tour (Rachim & Gunawan, 2022). The gallery manager provides several kinds of drinks and snacks for visitors to enjoy before starting their activities to take a tour of the gallery on that day. An example observed by the researcher was when there was a gallery tour and workshop by artist Angky Pu which was attended by students from SD Grow Yogyakarta. The same thing was also found when researchers attended the opening of the Riono Tanggul artist exhibition in November this year at the Tirtodipuran Link Gallery in Yogyakarta. The gallery manager through its employees provides several kinds of snacks and drinks and even adds to the satisfaction of visitors, guests are welcome to order drinks at the gallery's Ooze Bar for free (Table 1, Figures 1 and 2).

The series of activities after visitors are given a welcome drink service is to follow the gallery guide to go around enjoying the artworks exhibited in the gallery. The guiding officer is the public relations section of the gallery because the public relations department is the one who knows the most about the products of the works being exhibited and can explain the intentions and objectives of the artist in his works (Junaidi, 2017). In the researcher's observation while participating in the gallery tour and Angky Pu's workshop, the role of public relations in the gallery tour is very important to give a good impression to the gallery visitors at that time were the students of SD Grow Yogyakarta (Table 1, Figure 3). Public relations is responsible for explaining to visitors about the existing works, and must also be able to attract visitors to actively interact so that the gallery tour feels warmer and more memorable for visitors who take part in the tour activities that day. The same thing was also observed when researchers participated in the opening of the Riono Embankment exhibition. In the opening ceremony, visitors who came had the opportunity to take a tour of the gallery guided directly by the artists from the works on display. Visitors can not only enjoy the works on display but also interact directly with the existing artists so that it becomes a satisfaction for visitors who come at the opening of the exhibition (Table 1, Figure 4). Public relations also plays a role in publicizing the exhibition which makes visitors come to the exhibition from the opening to the exhibition. Publication activities carried out by public relations, for example, by collaborating with various parties in the context of installing exhibition posters and distributing catalogues provided at the opening of the exhibition to visitors who come (Hedynata & Radianto, 2016). The posters and catalogues themselves are part of the advertising efforts made by the gallery management (Table 1, Figure 5, and Figure 6).




In addition to the welcome drink and gallery tour guided by public relations at Angky Pu's gallery tour and workshop, visitors who are elementary school students are invited to witness the process of printing stickers from the design results on the computer into the form of printed stickers which are then used by the students to make their work in the form of a piggy bank that is attached to stickers according to their preferences and later can be taken home as souvenirs (Table 1, Figure 7 and Figure 8).

From the three series of activities in the gallery tour, both regular gallery tours and during the opening of the exhibition, it can be observed that there is a deep interaction between tour participants and public relations and artists who guide gallery tour activities. This interaction can make a good impression on the participants of the gallery tour which is then conveyed to their closest people at home after the tour is completed. In addition to the interaction between public relations and artists and tour participants, the presence of a welcome drink when participants first arrive is also expected to give the impression of a good welcome from the gallery management to visitors.

**Tabel 1**  
**Dokumentasi Penelitian**

No	Picture	Information
1		<i>Welcome drink</i> provided for visitors during the Angky Pu workshop
2		<i>Welcome drinks</i> were provided for visitors who came to the opening of the exhibition "Di Timur Matahari" by artist Riono Tanggul

3		<p><i>Public relations</i> guided the gallery tour of workshop participants from SD Grow Yogyakarta.</p>
4		<p>Artist Rofik accompanies and interacts with gallery visitors during the opening of the exhibition.</p>
5		<p>Students of SD Grow Yogyakarta see the process of printing stickers by artist Angky Pu at the workshop.</p>

6		<p>Artist Angky Pu interacted directly with the students in his workshop to make each participant's work take home as souvenirs.</p>
7		<p>An example of a publication activity carried out by <i>public relations</i> by attaching posters in public locations that have collaborated with the gallery</p>
8		<p>The catalogue provided by the gallery manager for exhibition visitors is a form of publication and advertising.</p>

Source: Writer, 2023

### Satisfaction and Good Impression of Gallery Visitors as a Word of Mouth (WOM) Strategy

Holding the principle of WOM that one customer will talk to another customer about his or her experience when using the product or service purchased or used, then even though it looks simple, this method is the most effective in marketing and even selling a product or service. The management of the Tirtodipuran Link gallery understands this very well, so it tries its best to meet the needs of gallery visitors.

In this study, in addition to direct observations, researchers also conducted interviews to complete the results of the research that had been carried out. The researcher conducted interviews with visitors who came at the opening of the exhibition, an artist who was participating in the exhibition, and a gallery guard.

**Gallery visitors increase in the month of the opening of exhibitions and workshops.**

The researcher asked for data on the number of visitors in the gallery administration to see whether or not there was an increase in the number of visitors in a certain month, especially if there was an opening of an exhibition or workshop in that month. The data received by the researcher is visitor data from August to November because the time of the research conducted by the researcher is from October to December, so the visitor data needed is at least three months of data from the previous month, including those that include the opening of exhibitions and artist workshops.

**Table 2**  
**Gallery Visitor Recap August 2023**

<b>No</b>	<b>Day, date</b>	<b>Number of visitors</b>
1	Tuesday, 1 August 2023	21
2	Wednesday, 2 August 2023	24
3	Thursday, 3 August 2023	24
4	Friday, 4 August 2023	31
5	Saturday, 5 August 2023	45
6	Sunday, 6 August 2023	37
7	Tuesday, 8 August 2023	33
8	Wednesday, 9 August 2023	32
9	Thursday, 10 August 2023	22
10	Friday, 11 August 2023	32
11	Saturday, 12 August 2023	59
12	Sunday, 13 August 2023	67
13	Tuesday, 15 August 2023	50
14	Wednesday, 16 August 2023	39
15	Thursday, 17 August 2023	63
16	Friday, 18 August 2023	35
17	Saturday, 19 August 2023	54
18	Sunday, 20 August 2023	59
19	Tuesday, 22 August 2023	36
20	Wednesday, 23 August 2023	37
21	Thursday, 24 August 2023	23



22	Friday, 25 August 2023	40
23	Saturday, 26 August 2023	45
24	Sunday, 27 August 2023	41
25	Tuesday, 29 August 2023	30
	Wednesday, 30 August 2023	44
26	Thursday, 31 August 2023	32
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,055</b>
<b>Average</b>		<b>39</b>

From the August table, it was recorded that the total number of visits in one month was 1,055 people with an average daily visit of 39 people. It is known from public relations that in August there will be the opening of exhibitions and workshops for artists.

**Table 3**  
**September 2023 Visitor Recap**

<b>No</b>	<b>Day, date</b>	<b>Number of visitors</b>
1	Friday, 1 September 2023	40
2	Saturday, 2 September 2023	75
3	Sunday, 3 September 2023	70
4	Tuesday, 5 September 2023	45
5	Wednesday, 6 September 2023	42
6	Thursday, 7 September 2023	24
7	Friday, 8 September 2023	21
8	Saturday, 9 September 2023	43
9	Sunday, 10 September 2023	48
10	Tuesday, 12 September 2023	29
11	Wednesday, 13 September 2023	18
12	Thursday, 14 September 2023	16
13	Friday, 15 September 2023	17
14	Saturday, 16 September 2023	33
15	Sunday, 17 September 2023	59
16	Tuesday, 19 September 2023	17
17	Wednesday, 20 September 2023	22
18	Thursday, 21 September 2023	15
19	Friday, 22 September 2023	30
20	Saturday, 23 September 2023	30

21	Sunday, 24 September 2023	24
22	Tuesday, 26 September 2023	21
23	Wednesday, 27 September 2023	16
24	Thursday, 28 September 2023	48
25	Friday, 29 September 2023	22
26	Saturday, 30 September 2023	32
<b>Total</b>		<b>755</b>
<b>Average</b>		<b>33</b>

From the September table, it can be seen that the total number of visits in one month is 755 people with an average of 33 visits per day. In that month the exhibition is still ongoing but there is only a gallery tour if needed by visitors (by request).

**Table 4**  
**Gallery Visitor Recap October 2023**

No	Day, date	Number of visitors
1	Sunday, 1 October 2023	26
2	Tuesday, 3 October 2023	22
3	Wednesday, 4 October 2023	21
4	Thursday, 5 October 2023	21
5	Friday, 6 October 2023	23
6	Saturday, 7 October 2023	36
7	Sunday, 8 October 2023	33
8	Tuesday, 10 October 2023	26
9	Wednesday, 11 October 2023	15
10	Thursday, 12 October 2023	19
11	Friday, 13 October 2023	16
12	Saturday, 14 October 2023	17
13	Sunday, 15 October 2023	15
<b>Total</b>		<b>290</b>
<b>Average</b>		<b>22</b>

From the table in October, it can be seen that the number of visitors is only 290 people with an average of 22 visits per day. That month is the end of the ongoing exhibition and half of the month the gallery is closed for work decline and renovation.

**Table 4**  
**Gallery Visitor Recap November 2023**

No	Day, date	Number of visitors
1	Friday, 10 November 2023	290
2	Saturday, 11 November 2023	39
3	Sunday, 12 November 2023	42
4	Monday, 13 November 2023	24
5	Tuesday, 14 November 2023	17
6	Wednesday, 15 November 2023	22
7	Thursday, 16 November 2023	26
8	Friday, 17 November 2023	24
9	Saturday, 18 November 2023	57
10	Sunday, 19 November 2023	48
11	Tuesday, 21 November 2023	32
12	Wednesday, 22 November 2023	20
13	Thursday, 23 November 2023	28
14	Friday, 24 November 2023	23
15	Saturday, 25 November 2023	34
16	Sunday, 26 November 2023	37
17	Tuesday, 28 November 2023	22
18	Wednesday, 29 November 2023	19
19	Thursday, 30 November 2023	17
<b>Total</b>		<b>821</b>
<b>Average</b>		<b>43</b>

Finally, in the November table, it can be seen that the total number of visits is 821 people with an average daily visit of 43 people. In that month, there was the opening of the exhibition "Di Timur Matahari" by artist Riono Tanggul.

From the four tables, it can be seen that the highest number of visitors is in August, which is 1,055 people with an average of 30 visitors per day, followed by 821 people in November with an average of 43 visitors per day. This is because in August there is an artist workshop in which there is also a gallery tour and the opening of the exhibition. Similarly, in November there was the opening of the exhibition "In the East of the Sun" by artist Riono Tanggul. In other words, the existence of gallery tours given to visitors, both in artist workshops and exhibition openings, has a clear impact based on gallery visitor data.

The results obtained by the researcher through direct observation, interviews, and administrative data regarding the number of gallery visitors answered some of the

researcher's initial analysis of the effectiveness of gallery tours as a promotional strategy to increase the number of visitors, especially gallery tours contained in artist workshops and exhibition openings. First, the researcher obtained evidence that visitors were very impressed by taking part in the gallery tour both during the Angky Pu artist workshop which was attended by SD Grow students, as well as the impression of visitors who could interact and be accompanied by artists to see the works at the opening of the Riono Tanggul exhibition which was known from the researcher's interview with one of the visitors encountered. However, the role of public relations is also very much needed in this case, both to guide gallery tours if needed, maintain good communication with loyal visitors, and make publications related to ongoing exhibitions in the gallery.

Second, based on the results of interviews with Rofik artists and Vivi visitors, the researcher found that visitor satisfaction if they get gallery tour services both accompanied by direct artists and gallery guards will be a good impression that has the potential to become a Word of Mouth (WoM) promotional strategy. This is due to the theory that truly loyal customers have the potential to become word-of-mouth advertisers, loyal to the company's product portfolio for a long period (Hasan, 2009:81). This means that visitors with a good impression have the potential to revisit the gallery and tell their good impressions to friends or family so that they can become potential visitors to the next gallery. These results are by customer satisfaction indicators according to Hawkins and Lonney (Ngabito, 2020:11) including (1) the suitability of expectations felt by customers, (2) interest in revisiting, and (3) willingness to recommend to friends or family.

Third, based on visitor data obtained by the researcher, in certain months (August and November) that include artist workshops or exhibition openings, including gallery tours in a series of activities, gallery visitors become more crowded than usual days. This is proof of conformity with the definition of word-of-mouth communication according to Ali Hasan customers who have loyalty to the product will be willing to tell good things about the company and its products to others, friends, and family which is much more persuasive than advertising (Hasan, 2009:81). So in this case, visitors as loyal customers will tell the good impression of the gallery tour service and other supporting facilities that they receive to the people around them to come and visit the gallery. This is also by the opinion of Gremler and Brown (Hasan, 2009:83) that customer loyalty is a customer who not only re-buys a good or service but also has a commitment and a positive attitude towards the service company, for example by recommending others to buy.

## **Conclusion**

So some of the researchers' findings have proven that a gallery tour can be a form of promotional strategy that prioritizes visitor satisfaction and loyalty by hoping that the good impression obtained through the gallery tour can be a source of positive information in word-of-mouth communication. The results of the study prove that there is a direct comparison between visitor satisfaction through gallery tour services that create a good impression can increase the number of exhibition visitors in the gallery because the

formation of WOM promotion which contains this good impression and synergizes with other forms of promotion, namely advertising and public relations can increase the number of exhibition visitors who come to the gallery. The role of public relations is also needed to create this WOM in addition to carrying out publication activities and helping promotions in the form of advertising from the manager so that visitors come to the exhibitions held, public relations is also tasked with maintaining the loyalty of gallery visitors in the form of good communication when guiding gallery tours.

This study is useful in finding out the importance of gallery tour services that can also be applied to national museums, but with the limitations of researchers in the search for literacy, additional literacy is needed to do so. The researcher proposes to conduct further research by comparing the effectiveness of this direct gallery tour service as a form of promotion with the existence of a virtual tour gallery as a technological development for digital promotion so that it can be known the difference in the impression obtained by gallery and museum visitors between physical and digital gallery tour services. Finally, the researcher can conclude that the success of the promotion strategy carried out is inseparable from several interrelated promotional mixes, both forms of advertising, public relations, word-of-mouth information, and other forms of promotion that go hand in hand and do not stand alone to achieve goals, especially marketing in the field of art which requires an emotional bond with the public and art connoisseurs.

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