

Designing The Room 19 Mascot as a Promotional Strategy Medium

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ABSTRACT

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Design Thinking; Mascot;
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The rapid development of technology has led to innovations such as library cafes, which aim to promote literacy among young people. However, the concept of library cafes is still not widely known. This research explores the effectiveness of using a mascot as a promotional strategy to enhance public awareness of The Room 19 library cafe and encourage reading interest. The study employed interviews, observations, questionnaires, and literature reviews for data collection. The findings show that the mascot, designed with an approachable and creative visual identity, effectively increases the visibility of The Room 19 among students and young professionals. The mascot represents the library cafe's brand values and creates an emotional connection with the target audience. In conclusion, using a mascot as a promotional medium has significant potential to foster literacy promotion and establish a stronger relationship with the community through engaging branding efforts.



Introduction

The more and more technology develops into specific innovations in various fields, making humans dependent on existing technology (Blichfeldt & Faullant, 2021). Technology is proliferating and continues to evolve. This rapid development occurs thoroughly throughout the international world (Setiadi, 2016; Wiryajati et al., 2022). In this increasingly modern marketing era, more and more companies are competing in marketing their products. Humans are increasingly creative in creating many ideas, hoping that all affairs can become more accessible and practical. One of the innovative ideas that has been developed today is a library using the concept of a cafe. The phenomenon of a library cafe as a place to channel activities and creativity is still an idea developed in this era because it combines reading with a place to eat and drink (Lauwrentius, 2015; Liu, 2022; Puspitasari, 2017).

However, public awareness about library cafes remains limited. People traditionally view libraries as spaces for reading without the allowance for eating and drinking. This limited awareness necessitates promotional strategies to broadly introduce

the library cafe concept to diverse audiences, including the younger and older generations.

This study focuses on The Room 19, a library cafe that integrates food and beverage services with a collection of books available for reading and borrowing. The founder, passionate about promoting literacy, recognized that the young generation in Indonesia often lacks a reading habit due to the increasing presence of advanced technologies, which can make them neglect the value of reading.

To address these challenges, this research proposes using mascots as a promotional strategy to enhance public awareness of library cafes like The Room 19. The novelty of this research lies in examining how mascots, successfully used for branding in other industries, can uniquely serve as a promotional tool for library cafes to attract readers and foster interest in reading. This approach differs from other promotional strategies by emphasizing the mascot's emotional appeal and relatability, which can create a stronger connection with potential visitors.

Several previous studies have explored the use of mascots in promotion, often highlighting their ability to represent brand values and foster customer loyalty. Unlike traditional promotional methods, this study provides insight into how mascots can be effectively leveraged to promote library cafes, thus contributing uniquely to promotional strategy literature and practical efforts to increase literacy.

The Room 19 is one of the topics that need to be researched because of the founder's passion for inviting people who visit it to love reading, considering that reading awareness in Indonesia is minimal. This research was conducted to find out that using mascots as a promotional strategy can increase the introduction of the library cafe concept to the public and become an invitation to the public to increase their interest in reading books.

Research Methods

The methods used in data collection are interviews, observations, documentation, and literature studies. The questionnaire is a list of questions about a matter or field, which must be filled in in writing by the respondent, the person who responds to the question (Soewardikoen, 2021). The questionnaire is done by distributing questionnaires to employees and visitors of The Room 19 to obtain data related to user identity and existing problems regarding literacy and The Room 19.

Meanwhile, secondary data was collected through direct observations at the location, documentation, literature reviews, and internet resources relevant to the research object. The analysis process of the collected data was crucial in guiding design decisions for the mascot of The Room 19.

The analysis began by compiling data from interviews, observations, and questionnaires. The insights gathered from these sources informed the design features of the mascot. For example, the questionnaire results indicated that most visitors were students and young professionals who preferred engaging and relatable visual elements. This led to creating a mascot that embodies a friendly, approachable character.

The observations revealed that visitors were more likely to be drawn to creative spaces and interactive elements. Therefore, it was decided that the mascot should not only serve as a symbol of the library but also actively engage visitors by being present in various promotional materials, including merchandise and digital content.

Throughout the design process, data analysis continuously informed iterative changes. For instance, feedback gathered through interviews with staff emphasized the importance of the mascot conveying a sense of community and literacy promotion (Widodo & Wahyuni, 2021). This input was incorporated into the mascot's design by giving it attributes that symbolize reading culture, such as holding a book and inviting demeanor. Thus, the analysis process was not merely about data collection but actively guided each stage of the design, ensuring the mascot aligned with the objectives of increasing literacy and promoting the unique library cafe concept of The Room 19.

Results and Discussion

Emphatize

The Room 19 is located at Jl. Dipati Ukur No.66C, Lebakgede, Coblong District, Bandung City, West Java. The observation was conducted on February 28, 2024. The Observations were made to discover the latest conditions of the room 19, founded by three people who had a passion for improving literacy among the younger generation.

The facilities provided are toilets, food and drinks, power outlets, WiFi, and an outlet for creativity for visitors who do not just come to read.

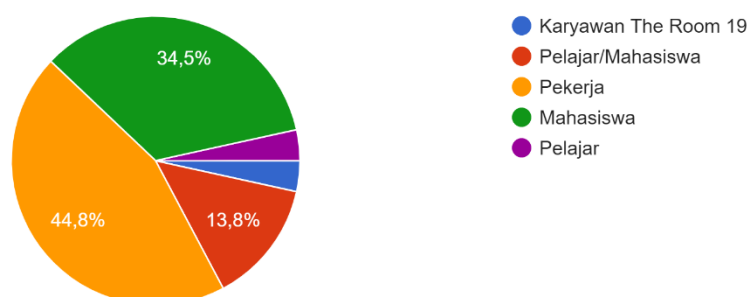


Figure 1. Questionnaire Results

Source: Personal Document

Based on the questionnaire results, it can be concluded that the visitors of Room 19, mainly students, college students, and workers, recognize the important role of reading in improving literacy skills. In addition, they also agree that further efforts need to be made to improve literacy among students. Therefore, initiatives to strengthen literacy remain relevant and should continue to be encouraged.

Define

Based on an interview conducted with Reiza, it can be obtained about the history of the establishment of The Room 19, the beginning of the formation of The Room 19 as

a means for students and surrounding students to increase their interest in reading and become a place to discuss and as a place to share hobbies more comfortably. In addition to conducting interviews with the owners, researchers also interviewed an employee. It can be known from his own hope, namely that The Room 19 can be better known and can always be a place to read, add knowledge, share hobbies, and do creative activities such as drawing and so on (Whillans et al., 2021; Zulfirman, 2022).

		SWOT ANALYSIS LIBRARY CAFE THE ROOM 19	
		Help	Inhibit
From the Inside	Strength	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperation with book publishers, food & beverage suppliers, and merchandise. • Owners who pay attention to business developments, • Strategic Location . 	Weaknesses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate access • A room that is still narrow • Toilets that are still merged • Limited books • Dapur dan kasir masih menyatu.
	From the outside	Opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilities that can still be developed, • Services that need to be innovated. • There is still not too much competition 	Theats <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited funding • Very congested location • Human resources that need special training • Noisy environment

Figure 2. SWOT Analysis

Source: Personal Documents

As for the SWOT analysis, it can be seen that The Room 19 has the strength of having direct cooperation with the publisher and has a strategic location near Padjajaran University, has shortcomings such as inadequate access and a narrow room because The Room 19 is located in the 2nd floor of a shophouse.

The results of observation, questionnaire distribution, interviews, and analysis have been carried out to screen the problems and then group them based on the type of problems in Room 19. The problems found are by the direction of scientific studies from researchers, namely the problems of visual identity and promotional media. These problems can be solved with a design approach.

The results of the PEST analysis show several factors affecting Room 19. One of them is political. The Ministry of Education and Culture appeals to the public to strengthen literacy culture. This is stated in Law Number 3 of 2017 concerning the Bookkeeping System.

Ideate

The following comparison matrix uses multivariate analysis, a variable processing technique involving many factors simultaneously (Tintori et al., 2023).

Kategori	Kineruku	The Room 19	Nimna Books Cafe
Bidang Usaha	Cafe, Library & Bookstore	Cafe & Library	Cafe & Library
Variasi Buku	Fiksi & Non fiksi	Fiksi & Non fiksi	Fiksi & Non fiksi
Jumlah Buku	Sekitar 5.000 buku	Sekitar 1.200 buku	Sekitar 600 buku
Fasilitas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • toilet • makanan & minuman 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • toilet • makanan & minuman • stopkontak • WiFi • penyaluran kreativitas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • toilet • makanan & minuman • stopkontak • WiFi
Alamat	Jl. Hegarmanah No.52, Hegarmanah, Cidadak, Kota Bandung, Jawa Barat 40141	Jl. Dipati Ukur No.66C, Lebakgede, Kecamatan Coblong, Kota Bandung, Jawa Barat 40132	Jl. Sukahaji No.126, Sukarasa, Kec. Sukasari, Kota Bandung, Jawa Barat 40152

Figure 3. Comparison Matrix

Source: Personal Documents

The goal is to identify the influence of these variables on an object simultaneously (Miller, 2017). This method requires more than two variables and allows researchers to test the relationship between these variables.

Prototype

Designing a mascot begins with making a mood board. A mood board is a tool or board media commonly used by a designer to establish an initial reference point for a design concept (Gatto et al., 2011). Here is the mood board for The Room 19 mascot.



Figure 4. Moodboard

Source: Personal Documents

The idea of this mascot was taken from a chimpanzee. Chimpanzees with the scientific name *Pan troglodytes* are famous for primate animals that are considered to have unique intelligence and social life.



Figure 5. The Room 19 Mascot Design

Source: Personal Documents

The Room 19 mascot wears casual clothes, wears a jacket, baggy jeans, and wears white shoes, while holding a reading book and a cup filled with warm drinks (Ariesta, 2020; Ermawati et al., 2016), because based on the drink menu served by The Room 19 is a warm tea drink without sugar.

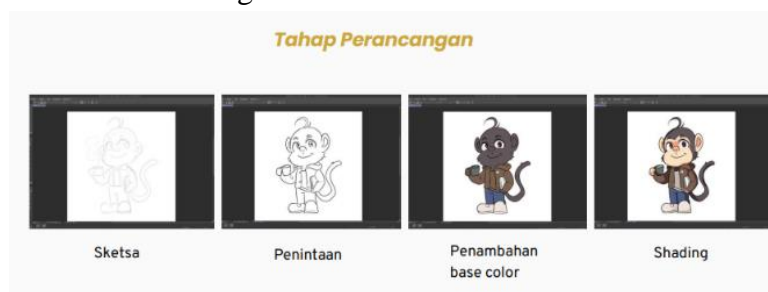


Figure 6. Mascot Design Stages

Source: Personal Documents

Test

Experiment with adding mascots to specific merchandise such as t-shirts, mugs, posters, and others.



Figure 7. Merchandise

Source: Personal Documents

Conclusion

The conclusions drawn from the research and design of The Room 19 mascot indicate that literacy among young people is crucial and requires special attention from various stakeholders to increase awareness and interest in reading. Providing a creative space, such as The Room 19 library café, is one approach to encouraging young people to engage more in reading activities. The design concept of the mascot was built around the idea that the library café should be a welcoming place for everyone, though it primarily targets young visitors. The mascot, depicted as a chimpanzee, symbolizes an endangered species, reflecting the critical state of reading habits among the younger generation.

Furthermore, the research provides several suggestions to enhance the effectiveness of The Room 19 mascot and the overall promotional strategy. First, establishing strong relationships between The Room 19 and other similar library cafés could help The Room 19 create its own niche and foster beneficial collaborations. Additionally, expanding promotional efforts to include other social media platforms, rather than solely relying on Instagram, would increase the visibility of The Room 19. Finally, creating an official mascot unique to the café's library, complemented by selling official merchandise, could strengthen brand identity and foster a sense of connection with visitors.

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