



## Feel the Rhythm of Korea: South Korea Digitalized Nation Branding in Promoting Tourism Towards Indonesia

### *Feel the Rhythm of Korea: Nation Branding Digital Korea Selatan dalam Promosi Pariwisata di Indonesia*

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#### ABSTRACT

The tourism sector in South Korea is playing an important role in supporting the country's economy. The South Korean government pays special attention to the development and promotion of its country's tourism by forming a special organization, namely the Korea Tourism Organization (KTO). This study aims to determine the process of image building and promotion of South Korean tourism through descriptive qualitative analysis using the concept of nation branding. The data collection process was carried out through interviews with the KTO and the Indonesian public, who were the audiences of the "Feel the Rhythm of Korea" campaign. This research shows that KTO has succeeded in identifying its market so that the implementation of national branding is carried out efficiently through digital media and brings up elements of music and dance as unique selling points in its promotion. In addition, KTO has also succeeded in attracting public interest by using a nation-brand ambassador. The conclusion of this study is that KTO's innovation in using digital media to carry out nation branding, and tourism promotion is the right decision, so that it succeeds in creating a positive image and encouraging the desire of the Indonesian public to travel to South Korea.

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#### ABSTRAK

Sektor pariwisata bagi Korea Selatan merupakan salah satu sektor utama yang menyokong perekonomian negaranya, sehingga pemerintah Korea Selatan menaruh perhatian khusus dalam pengembangan dan promosi pariwisata dengan membentuk organisasi khusus, yaitu Korea Tourism Organization (KTO). Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui proses upaya pembentukan citra dan promosi pariwisata Korea Selatan melalui analisis kualitatif deskriptif dengan menggunakan konsep nation branding. Proses pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui wawancara dengan pihak KTO dan publik Indonesia yang menjadi penonton dari kampanye "Feel the Rhythm of Korea" yang dilakukan oleh KTO. Riset ini menunjukkan KTO berhasil mengidentifikasi pasar, sehingga implementasi nation branding dilakukan secara efisien melalui media digital serta memunculkan elemen musik dan tarian sebagai unique selling points dalam kegiatan promosi. Selain itu, KTO berhasil menarik minat masyarakat dengan penggunaan nation-brand ambassador. Simpulan penelitian ini adalah inovasi

*KTO dalam menggunakan media digital untuk melakukan upaya nation branding dan promosi pariwisata merupakan langkah yang tepat, sehingga berhasil memunculkan citra positif serta mendorong keinginan publik Indonesia untuk berwisata ke Korea Selatan.*

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## Introduction

In 2020, the international world was occupied with the COVID-19 pandemic. To reduce the virus's spread, several countries imposed restrictions on the movement of people, both within their borders and when visiting from abroad. South Korea also enacted the policy as of February 2020. This limitation certainly has an impact on the tourism sector in South Korea. At the beginning of the pandemic, South Korea experienced a decline in the tourism sector of almost 80% (Intan, 2020), and the decline was still ongoing during the pandemic. This condition poses challenges for KTO as the main actor in promoting South Korean tourism. In addition, with everything that has been going on during this pandemic phase, KTO has been challenged to do their "unique" image building and promotion while adjusting to certain restrictions and limited space for their creativity by utilizing existing digital channels, especially due to their peak COVID-19 outbreak in February 2020 with "Patient-31," a case related to Shincheonji Church of Jesus, which spiked 180 times more cases than before just within 2 weeks with 10.613 new COVID-19 cases daily. With their peak cases, it led to the Republic of Korea being classified as a high-risk COVID-19 country by several countries, including Indonesia, that have temporarily restricted entry for people with a history of traveling from there.

As one of the countries that actively promoted tourism to increase the number of foreign tourists, the Republic of Korea has been in a golden era to improve their national economy as tourism is one of their main sources of income. Referring to data from the Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism of the Republic of Korea, in 2019, foreign tourist visits to the Republic of Korea reached 17.250 million, an increase of 260,000 from the annual report in 2016. This amount accounted for 21 billion USD from foreign tourist visits, and it has successfully created 460,000 jobs in South Korea. Still, in 2019, South Korea was ranked 16th in the Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Index (TTCI) released by the World Economic Forum (WEF), where the ranking increased from its original rank of 19th in 2017 (CHOI, 2020).

Currently, South Korea focuses its tourism promotion on targeting Japan and the Southeast Asian region. Indonesia is one of the big tourism markets for South Korea. From 2017–2019, the number of Indonesian tourist visits to South Korea has increased year over year (Aristyani & Yuniasih, 2021). The Korean government sees this as an opportunity to increase economic growth. The South Korean government then formed a tourism organization called the Korea Tourism Organization (KTO) to promote Korean culture and tourism within the Korean community and internationally. KTO has several branch offices spread across various countries, including Indonesia. KTO in Indonesia, which is in Jakarta, was built to introduce Korea to the public and travel agents through various activities, such as exhibitions, tourism cooperation projects, and cultural events. Through these activities, Korea expects to establish bonds between Korean travel agents, airline companies, hospitals, and other companies related to the tourism sector to improve business relations between Indonesia and Korea (KTO Jakarta, 2014).

In the final quarter of 2020, KTO released a digital campaign titled "Feel the Rhythm of Korea," a series of videos on the KTO YouTube channel. In each of its videos, KTO shows interesting tourist locations. The video is attractively packaged, featuring a blend of traditional pansori songs re-arranged with modern music and choreography from Ambiguous Dance Company against the backdrop of the beauty of cities in South Korea into a complete whole campaign. Feel the Rhythm of Korea videos went viral throughout the year on social media. It has been recorded with an average of 4.5 million views on

KTO's official YouTube channel (Playboard, 2022). This promotional campaign was awarded "the best digital campaign" at the Tourism Innovation Summit 2020 in Seville, Spain. Apart from its uniqueness, this campaign received great attention from the wider community because of its timing. At that time, the international community was experiencing a pandemic, which limited travel and travel permits. With the existence of this video series, it had a psychological impact on the international community to be able to feel "closer" to Korean culture and to feel the sensation of traveling in South Korea during the pandemics.

There are several literature studies related to this topic, focusing on the Republic of Korea's nation branding and soft power, which would be the main citation in this research. Literature studies contain information on The Republic of Korea's nation branding from "Strategi National Branding Korea Selatan melalui Imagine Your Korea 2016-2018," which discussed the implementation of KTO's tourism strategy through their program "Imagine Your Korea," which involved many sectors from non-government, including but not limited to private sectors, resulting in The Republic of Korea's nation branding rank in 2018 skyrocketing to the Top 20 on the Unhold-Korea Index. Other nation branding's literature study "South Korean Nation Branding and The Building of Competitiveness Society which pressures, which responses?" written by Juliette Schwak stated that Korean Wave (Hallyu) is a useful tool for increasing The Republic of Korea's nation branding by utilizing non-government actors to look more appealing in the international public's eyes which, in a way, could be concluded that cultural and economic sector are the main center in current international relations that should be utilized to stay in this competitiveness society (Schwak, 2015).

In the soft power literature studies, the Korean Wave is classified as one of the most impactful soft power diplomacy's instruments for increasing positive nation branding, resulting, in this research, in the agreement of an MOU between Bekraf (the Creative Economy Agency of Indonesia) and KOCCA under the MCST to strengthen cooperation for both countries, especially in the creative industry (Bimantoro, 2021; Rastati, 2018). It is also stated in "Diplomasi Publik Korea Tourism Organization (KTO) terhadap Indonesia pada Sektor Pariwisata tahun 2018–2019" that public diplomacy study can be implemented in every Korean Wave's program, which can be seen through three public diplomacy dimensions: (1) daily communication; (2) strategic communication; and (3) building sustainable relationships (Aristyani & Yuniasih, 2021). Tourism promotion strategy which includes (1) B2B marketing held by Indonesia and Korea (Gyeonggi Province); and (2) Online marketing strategy through website and social media from both countries. This resulted in the development of tourism cooperation between Gyeonggi Province and cities in Indonesia (Hyeonseock, 2017).

In this research, the authors would like to specifically focus on the research problem that contains KTO's public diplomacy strategy in Indonesia and the impact of it on The Republic of Korea's nation branding in the Indonesian public's eyes through the "Feel the Rhythm of Korea" campaign, which would be analyzed through three research questions: (1) brand advertising strategy; (2) the role of a nation-brand ambassador to support the campaign; and (3) Indonesian public responses to this campaign as this research's result.

### **Soft Power and Tourism**

A country's soft power can come from various things, including tourism. Tourism is a means of people-to-people interaction. This interaction between nations is a means to bridge and foster interest in the values, culture, and policies of the state of soft power actors (in this case, South Korea) among society and other countries. Therefore, tourism can be considered a soft power instrument because it can foster interaction between nations and generate interest in the host country. This interest can create a positive image of the country, increasing tourist visits.

Tourism plays an important role in shaping the country's power through four interrelated things (Ooi, 2015). First, tourists can help to deepen awareness of tourism areas and even foster empathy for them. Second, through destination branding, a country's tourism organizations must convey a favorable

and attractive image of their country to the world. Third, implementing big events is also important for increasing a country's influence in the geopolitical region. Finally, the behavior of foreign tourists gives an impression of their native nation. Based on these factors, it is possible to conclude that tourism can improve a country's image through "soft power."

Joseph Nye Jr. (2008) considers public diplomacy a tool used by the state to achieve "soft power," or the dimension of power used to achieve desired effects through the attractiveness of a country resulting from three factors: the country's values, culture, and policies. Jan Melissen highlighted three main ideas associated with public diplomacy to accommodate attempts to achieve public diplomacy objectives: propaganda, country branding, and cultural relations (Melissen, 2005). The practice of nation branding is complex, involving many parties promoting and building their country's image board. The nation's image is fundamental because of its function, which is the main identity of the state that is used in every activity of its international relations and is a differentiator with other countries. The image of a country is the result of a collective assessment of the state and others that refers to the image formed through its culture, foreign policy, or tourism.

### **Nation Branding**

Simon Anholt defines nation branding as an effort to influence the perspective of the perpetrator's state that represents the nation's image, and it will affect improving the reputation of the offender's state (Anholt, 2011). According to Anholt, the term "brand" can be interpreted as three different things: first, a brand is a product design (product appearance, logo, shape, and so on); second, the brand describes the culture or values owned by the owner or those behind the brand; and third, a brand refers to the reputation of the product or the party behind it among its target audience. A brand formed by a country will affect the perception possessed by that country, and it has the potential to become the country's image, which then impacts its national reputation. Reputation is a collective assessment given by others based on impressions of the image formed through foreign policy, culture, tourism, economy, products, and exports of the offending country. Dinnie explained that a brand for a country serves to position its country in terms of investment potential, export opportunities, credit worthiness, tourism potential, and international relations in general.

In implementing national branding, a country needs to consider three main elements: brand identity, brand image, and brand positioning. The brand positioning element aims to design an image that wants to be accepted and follows the intended target market. To form a strategic plan, Dinnie formulated that the state could begin by answering and describing three main questions: "What are we doing now? Where do we want to go? How do we get there?" (Dinnie, 2015). With these three main questions, it can be formulated that there are seven main strategies that the state can implement in carrying out its nation branding: nation-brand advertising, customer and citizen relationship management, nation-brand ambassadors, diaspora mobilization, nation days, the naming of nation-brands, and nation branding tracking studies.

### **Method**

This research used qualitative research methods. Qualitative studies exist to provide views on emerging or pre-existing concepts to be able to explain social behavior. This qualitative methodology was used to explain the phenomena in international relations discussed in this study.

The authors used a type of research technique called descriptive analysis, with the main purpose of dissecting a phenomenon that was used as the main topic in the research. This technique was used to analyze South Korea's nation branding strategy carried out by the Korea Tourism Organization through the digital campaign 'Feel the Rhythm of Korea' in Indonesia to establish South Korea's positive image in Indonesia.

## Result and Discussion

### KTO’s Nation Branding Strategy to Improve the Brand-Image of South Korea in Indonesia

Since the South Korean government makes the tourism industry one of the country’s main income sources, the government should ensure the provision of high-quality services. The promotion and marketing efforts for the South Korean tourism sector are carried out by utilizing the Korea Tourism Organization (KTO). KTO is also responsible for building South Korea’s image through cultural promotion (Korea Tourism Organization, 2014). Therefore, KTO formed the brand slogan “Imagine Your Korea” to build closeness with the international public. Furthermore, before the COVID-19 pandemic, KTO and the South Korean government routinely organized events related to tourism and culture in Indonesia. In organizing the event, KTO also collaborated with other stakeholders in Indonesia so that the promotion occurred optimally.

**Table I Indonesian tourists visit to South Korea 2019-2021**

Nationality	2019.12 Pleasures		2020.12 Pleasures		2021.12 Pleasures	
	Original Data	Change (%) from the accumulation of the previous year	Original Data	Change (%) from the accumulation of the previous year	Original Data	Change (%) from the accumulation of the previous year
<b>Indonesia</b>	23,216	20,637 (+12.0%)	1,690	156,045 (-81.0%)	1,794	20,757 (+56.8%)

Source (KOSIS, 2022b)

Based on the data above, tourist visits to South Korea from Indonesia dropped drastically within one year (see 2019–2020). The decline occurred by 81%, with 1.690 tourists visiting from Indonesia to South Korea, while in the same period in 2019, the number of Indonesian tourist visits reached 23.216. With this fact, it can be safely said that the government of South Korea and the KTO need to design a special strategy to maintain their existence in the international community. Therefore, the authors classify the declining number of Indonesian visitors to South Korea due to the COVID-19 spike as the main reason why KTO finally started their journey on an online tourism strategy.

The year 2020 was the first time that KTO held a virtual event, titled Korea Tourism Virtual Fair 2020, which was held online considering the conditions of the COVID-19 pandemic. The event was held over five days and attended by 293 Korean companies and tourism facilities owned by the South Korean government and 57 foreign companies engaged in the tourism industry (Korea JoongAng Daily, 2020). At this event, visitors can get a promotional trip to South Korea and enjoy the performances and other entertainment. Through this event, KTO and the Korean government are trying to continue to build closeness with the international public. It was also stated by one of the speakers in this study, Kyungsub Sim, Associate Staff at the Digital Marketing Planning Team, KTO Korea, that “during the pandemic, people could not visit Korea.” But we realized that there was a demand to travel to our country. So, since they can’t visit us, we decided to bring Korea to them through video, music, and dance (Sim, 2022). From this statement, the authors analyzed that one of the KTO’s innovations during the pandemic was to utilize digital platforms to “bring” Korea closer to the international public through the Korean Travel Virtual Fair and the “Feel the Rhythm of Korea” campaign to implement its goal. In particular, the “Feel the Rhythm of Korea” campaign was released through YouTube and other digital platforms. Due to the situation that makes it impossible to bring tourists directly to the location, the authors analyze that KTO innovated by bringing the “pleasure” of traveling through music, videos, and dances implemented in the “Feel the Rhythm of Korea” program.

According to the authors, the “Feel the Rhythm of Korea” campaign is also one of KTO’s efforts to build South Korea’s national brand. KTO strives to establish a brand image as a safe country with a diverse culture that welcomes anyone who wishes to visit. So, from the planning process to its implementation, the KTO considers things that will affect the South Korean nation’s brand among the international public.

**KTO Brand Advertising Promotion Strategy in Promoting ‘Feel the Rhythm of Korea’ in Indonesia**

A brand’s advertising strategy will provide many benefits, such as opening new markets, revitalizing a declining brand, changing consumer behavior, and increasing sales. To accomplish all of this, a brand must pay attention to several things that are fundamental to the brand’s advertising strategy, namely: the country must have consumer knowledge, avoid overpowering creative ads, misidentify the media used, and make too frequent changes to the campaign and the quality of its advertising (Dinnie, 2015). Marketing and promotion carried out by KTO were done through things directly promoted to the community by holding festivals or travel fairs, and they also used digital technology in brand formation by creating campaigns that appealed to the public and their target market.

The “Feel the Rhythm of Korea” campaign is a form of innovation in promotion carried out by KTO. During the pandemic, tourists could not visit Korea, but interest remains high. Thus, KTO innovates to bring Korea to the international community through video, music, and dance (Sim, 2022). The use of digital platforms such as YouTube, Meta, and TikTok has become the primary tool for conveying messages and shaping South Korea’s image to the international public, particularly in Indonesia. Referring to the interview results, the authors analyze that although this campaign did not have any specific techniques in its implementation, the success achieved by KTO was the result of how KTO could understand its market needs with the right audience target, which they knew was millennials and generation Z, which are the generations that spend the most time on social media. This statement is also supported by referring to the table below: the average millennial generation spends as much as 2 hours and 29 minutes daily on social media, while generation Z spends 2 hours and 39 minutes daily (GlobalWebIndex, 2020).

**Table II The Use of social media in Asia Pacific in 2020**

Generation	Average Time Used per Day	Change from the Previous Year
Gen Z	2 hours 39 mins	53%
Gen M	2 hours 29 mins	30%
Gen X	1 hour 59 mins	45%
Gen B	1 hour 29 mins	63%

Source: (GlobalWebIndex, 2020).

This shows the massive use of social media and the importance of social media as an instrument in promoting and forming a brand image for KTO. There are special patterns that KTO finds in Millennials and Generation Z, especially in South Korea which they are more interested in a simple and fun form of promotion than a complicated one to enjoy the easy access platform mixed combining local and international elements simultaneously. Then, KTO tried to raise these two elements in the campaign program ‘Feel the Rhythm of Korea.’

Kyungsub Sim added that “Before this campaign, KTO used public figures to make videos, but things like this did not last long in the public’s memory....” (Sim, 2022). Thus, the authors conclude that through ‘Feel the Rhythm of Korea,’ KTO tried to create a more creative campaign by incorporating unique choreography by combining traditional and modern elements. This kind of combination has never been done before by KTO, so at first, the public was interested in watching because this is something that looks strange or funny, which initially felt unfamiliar to the foreign audience. However, in the end, it caused curiosity about the campaign. KTO is trying to bring out traditional elements in this campaign

because, so far, the public or the international public only knows South Korean culture from K-POP and K-Drama, even though South Korea is rich in traditional culture and has many things to show for tourists. In addition, KTO managed to make everything interesting by being supported by beautiful visuals so that the audience could feel interested in and even addicted to the song and dance (@TheGonjinIndonesia, 2022). Based on the author's opinion, the "Feel the Rhythm of Korea" program is not only used by KTO to promote tourist destinations but also, in a way, introduces South Korean culture with a combination of modern and traditional elements.

KTO is trying to touch on a unique side to its promotional campaign this time, which is the sense of hearing, so that this can be a reminder for the audience. Kyungsub Sim stated that "when people are traveling, they always try to satisfy their five senses." But among five senses, hearing is the most difficult to satisfy. But through the "Feel the Rhythm of Korea" campaign, we want to send the message that "five senses can be satisfied" (Sim, 2022). Therefore, the authors conclude that when listening to the audio, they will be reminded of the "Feel the Rhythm of Korea", and, more broadly, remember the moments that appear simultaneously in the video.

The brand advertising strategy used by KTO utilizes more digital media, such as social media. This strategy is considered suitable for the community's needs and society's current conditions. Some of the interviewees conducted by the authors said that they followed KTO's social media pages because they felt they could get information about South Korean tourism or even South Korean culture in general (Arifahsasti, 2022; Dessi, 2022; Iman, 2022; Natalia, 2022). Through the campaigns and programs launched by KTO during the pandemic, the public felt they could still get information and entertainment related to South Korea. Some followed KTO's social media pages to find out the travel regulations to South Korea during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the Feel the Rhythm of Korea program, the authors found that KTO focused more on promotion through the YouTube channel since it can reach a wider audience. Referring to KTO data, Feel the Rhythm of Korea videos are most watched by people in Japan, the Philippines, Vietnam, and Indonesia. KTO also added that it has successfully achieved its goals (Sim, 2022). This campaign aims to become a "viral" online campaign. KTO does not specify a certain amount to indicate success. However, according to Google Analysts' performance data on KTO Korea, the Feel the Rhythm of Korea campaign outperformed other KTO advertising brands. Based on data from Playboard, as of June 2022, videos from the first series of the Feel the Rhythm of Korea campaign have reached an average of 4.5 million viewers on the official KTO YouTube channel (Playboard, 2022).

The authors can therefore conclude that KTO has succeeded in achieving its goal of doing brand advertising through "Feel the Rhythm of Korea" as a "viral" online campaign that is known to the international public. This success was achieved because KTO managed to identify the right target market and medium to use in the spread of its campaign, namely millennials and generation Z, whose daily social media use is massive. Then, KTO also managed to maintain consistency in the quality and form of its campaign so that it managed to form a favorable impression on the public when hearing and seeing music and dance that appeared in the "Feel the Rhythm of Korea" campaign.

### **KTO's Collaboration with Nation-Brand Ambassadors in Promoting 'Feel The Rhythm of Korea' in Indonesia**

In the traditional context of the state, ambassadors or diplomats are usually appointed directly and officially by the state to be representatives in other countries. In the context of a company, brand ambassadors are usually appointed to provide a "human face" to the company's activities. A company usually appoints someone with in-depth knowledge of the company or its products who can communicate brand values to the target audience (Dinnie, 2015). Thus, in the context of nation branding, the authors classify nation-brand ambassadors as the representatives of a country while functioning to communicate brand values to the international public. The behavior of individuals designated as nation-brand ambassadors

is also important, so the state must identify qualified individuals who also play a “role” as nation-brand ambassadors.

KTO often collaborates with idols, influencers, or public figures on its programs and campaigns to promote South Korean tourism and culture. It is done without reason. To which Kyungsub (2022) said, “Everyone admires idols’ works and wants to be like them.” This type of exhibition creates a positive image for the person, and the audience admires their work. As a result, they emulate their idols and strive to be like them. Therefore, idols may appeal more than diplomats” (Sim, 2022). Thus, the authors could conclude that the international public will be more familiar with idols and influencers because they can be easily found on digital media, and with the positive image they possess, it will stimulate his fans to learn more about them and enjoy his work more. In addition, the authors also emphasize that it is the reason why, in the promotion of nation-brands, public figures are considered more attractive than diplomats, especially in these current international relations.

In the first series of the Feel the Rhythm of Korea program, KTO collaborated with the members of the variety show Two Days, One Night (2D1N) Season 4 to promote tourist locations in South Korea. KTO collaborates with 2D1N because both have a common vision and mission: to introduce South Korean culture and promote tourist destinations in South Korea. The authors found that some of the sources of this research knew about the campaign because they were fans of 2D1N. The source said that even at first, they only wanted to watch the Feel the Rhythm of Korea episode featuring 2D1N members, namely the video Feel the Rhythm of Korea: Incheon, and even watched it many times (Dessi, 2022).

Using national brand ambassadors in brand promotion is important from the public’s perspective. Almost all interviewees claimed they were aware of and interested in seeing the “Feel the Rhythm of Korea” promotional campaign since the promotional video included revered public celebrities. Naturally, KTO has criteria for choosing its ambassadors. At least three elements must be evaluated based on interview results: background, traditions, and public opinion on potential nation-brand ambassadors (Sim, 2022).

The authors realized that the 2D1N players each already had a good reputation with the international public, and almost all of them have a quite large number of fans around the world. With the power they possessed, they certainly affected the popularity of the “Feel the Rhythm of Korea” campaign in the international community. Especially in Indonesia, where several sources that the authors interviewed, who also happened to be fans of the players in 2D1N, and it can be confirmed that public figures have a large influence in promoting something. As a result, it is possible to conclude that using nation-brand ambassadors in Feel the Rhythm of Korea influences the number of people interested in watching the campaign video. In determining the nation-brand ambassador, the authors found that KTO also pays attention to the brand image of the chosen public figure because it will affect the nation-brand of South Korea itself.

### **Indonesian Public Response to the ‘Feel the Rhythm of Korea’ Promotional Campaign Implemented by the Korean Tourism Organization**

One of the long-term goals of a strategic plan with unique selling points (USP) is to increase the tourism sector by encouraging foreign tourist visits to the country. Therefore, the public’s response to the nation’s branding efforts is an important thing. Public response can indicate the public’s perception of South Korea. Positive public perceptions and responses can lead to trust from the international public in the image that a country is trying to build. It is important for the state to be able to identify internal and external conditions before planning its national branding. In this research, the international public response will be divided into two parts: (1) the positive image of South Korea and (2) the increasing number of Indonesian tourists to South Korea after the implementation of the “Feel the Rhythm of Korea” campaign.



### South Korea Has a Favorable Image in Indonesia

In the previous chapter, it was mentioned that through the “Feel the Rhythm of Korea” campaign, KTO tried to form the image of South Korea as a country that has diverse cultures, is safe, and is inclusive. We attempted to confirm with some of our interviewees that they understood the message and image that South Korea sought to project during this campaign.”...dengan perkembangan zaman dan video kampanye ‘Feel the Rhythm of Korea,’ menggambarkan bahwa negara Korea Selatan, yang kaya akan budaya dan modern, kini juga terbuka dengan segala jenis kulit...” (Arifahsasti, 2022). Therefore, the authors could conclude that there was a sense of security after watching the video, which could lead to encouraging the audiences to have a desire to visit South Korea. Furthermore, our other sources claim that they are learning about new tourist destinations as a result of this campaign.

To conclude, the USP of a nation’s branding strategy is very important, and KTO builds that part with two main points: dance and music. When watching the Feel the Rhythm of Korea video, viewers will immediately hear pansori music, which is, of course, foreign to people who are not from Korea. In addition, the movements performed and the clothes used by the dancers are also very interesting. It is confirmed by the interviewees that the music performed by the Leenalchi Band and the choreographed movements of the Ambiguous Dance Company are the most remembered things from the campaign. These two elements are elements that become USPs and are remembered by the audience. So, at this stage, KTO succeeds in building its image as a country with diverse cultures.

### Indonesian Tourist Visit to South Korea

Referring to the KTO, which said that this campaign is not targeting a specific amount for the tourist visit but indirectly affects the curiosity and desire of the audiences to be able to visit South Korea, the increase has been gradual, owing to several major factors, including the COVID-19 pandemic and government regulations regarding travel restrictions to and from abroad imposed by both sides of the government. However, the increase in the number of visits can be seen in the data below:

**Table III Data on Indonesian Tourist Visits to South Korea September – December 2021**

Nationality	2021.09		2021.10		2021.11		2021.12	
	Original Data	Change (%) from the previous month	Original Data	Change (%) from the previous month	Original Data	Change (%) from the previous month	Original Data	Change (%) from the previous month
<b>Indonesia</b>	872	-598 (-40.7)	1,167	295 (33.8)	1,369	202 (17.3)	1,794	425 (31.0)

Source (KOSIS, 2022)

According to the data above, the authors conclude that the number of tourists visiting Indonesia for vacation in September 2021 was only 872. However, from October to December 2021, the number of tourists increased every month. In October 2021, the number of tourists was 1,167. In November, it increased by 17.3% to 1,369 tourists from Indonesia, and then it increased again by 31% to 1,794 tourists in December 2021. Therefore, the authors conclude that the data shows that there are indications that Indonesians still have a high interest in vacationing in South Korea.

### Conclusion

Feel the Rhythm of Korea was created not only as a tool used to promote tourist destinations in South Korea, but through this campaign, the authors found that KTO realized that it would also form a brand

image for South Korea. Three brand images want to be formed through this campaign: South Korea, which is rich in culture, safe, inclusive, and open to anyone who wants to travel to South Korea.

In terms of brand advertising, nation-branding actors must understand the consumer knowledge of the target market they wish to target when developing a strategic plan. In this campaign, KTO identifies the needs and target market well. The decision by KTO to use the digital platform was right; through the digital platform, it's easier for KTO to reach wider audiences, so the campaign massively reached a big number of audiences. KTO also learned that nowadays, people tend to be interested in simple and fun forms of promotion and form unique selling points by combining local and international elements at the same time.

The author concludes that this achievement is also influenced by KTO's consistency in organizing and posting various other content on KTO's social media pages. The KTO's consistency in providing information and conducting campaigns makes it easier for the public to recognize and understand the purpose of the KTO, which will have an impact on the perception of the Indonesian people towards the country of South Korea. This success is also supported by other factors, one of which is using national brand ambassadors. In the first series of *Feel the Rhythm of Korea*, KTO collaborated with KBS, especially with the variety show *Two Days, One Night (2D1N)*. The show of *2D1N* players greatly influenced the popularity of the "Feel the Rhythm of Korea" campaign. Many people were interested in this campaign video since they had heard that the public figures involved in videos in Incheon were also interested in watching other videos.

The image that the KTO is trying to build is that of South Korea as a country that is culturally diverse, inclusive, and safe. This image was successfully formed by KTO through the video "Feel the Rhythm of Korea," which combines modern and traditional culture, raising the public's perception of South Korea's diverse culture. In addition, the public also concluded that South Korea is currently very open to anyone who wants to visit; this creates a sense of security for the public, which then encourages the public's desire to be able to travel to South Korea.

The number of Indonesian tourist visits to South Korea has not increased significantly because there are still regulations in place regarding travel restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, during the last quarter of 2021, the number of tourists from Indonesia to South Korea continued to increase, which could indicate that the interest of Indonesians to visit South Korea is still high.

From the explanation above, this research concludes that KTO has succeeded in carrying out nation branding by providing unique selling points that have succeeded in building a top-of-mind campaign under unique circumstances, which in this research is a pandemic situation. By calculating the right target audience, KTO's tourism promotion with the "Feel the Rhythm of Korea" campaign has succeeded in penetrating the Indonesian public through the nation brand's advertising strategy and nation brand ambassador. This unique tourism campaign, under unique circumstances, can pique the Indonesian public's desire to watch and even visit South Korea by building psychological closeness during and after the pandemic. Another point is that, through the "Feel the Rhythm of Korea" campaign, KTO has succeeded in shaping the image of the country as a country that is culturally diverse, safe, and inclusive, especially since this campaign was executed during the peak of COVID-19 in South Korea.

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