

## **Wistakon Application as Cirebon Smart City Identity Icon**

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### **Abstract**

*Cirebon, a city rich in history and culture, seeks to modernize while preserving its unique heritage. As part of its Smart City initiative, there is a need for a unifying symbol that reflects its identity and connects its technological advancements with cultural heritage. Wistakon, a symbol rooted in local tradition, is proposed as the ideal icon for this purpose. The study employs a mixed-method approach, including qualitative interviews with local stakeholders (government officials, cultural experts, and residents) and quantitative surveys to gauge public perception and acceptance of Wistakon as a city icon. Additionally, an analysis of successful case studies from other smart cities using cultural icons will be conducted to draw best practices. This research aims to conduct a performance study of the Wistakon Application service as an identity icon for Cirebon smart city. In this research, researchers examine the weaknesses and obstacles that arise when this application is used by domestic tourists. Apart from that, researchers also studied the benefits of the Wistakon application. The literature study used is the Integrated Guest-Operator Framework (IGOF) Theory as a framework for understanding the relationship between tour operators and tourist guests in the context of the tourism industry. This theory emphasizes the importance of integration and balance between the needs and expectations of tourist guests with the strategies and operations carried out by tour operators. Based on the results of the study, researchers concluded that the Wistakon application still needs development, socialization and promotion.*

**Keywords:** *Wistakon; Integrated Guest-Operator Framework (IGOF); Cirebon Smart City*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The rapid urbanization and technological advancements in cities around the globe have given rise to the concept of Smart Cities, where information and communication technology (ICT) are used to enhance the quality of urban services and improve the residents' quality of life. In this context, the city of Cirebon, known for its rich cultural heritage and historical significance, is embarking on its journey to becoming a Smart City. A crucial aspect of this transformation is the development of a unifying identity that reflects the city's unique cultural heritage while embracing modernity. This paper proposes the application of Wistakon as the identity icon for Cirebon Smart City.

Wistakon, a symbol deeply rooted in Cirebon's local traditions, represents the essence of the city's historical and cultural narrative. It embodies the values, stories, and artistic expressions that have been passed down through generations. By integrating Wistakon into the Smart City framework, Cirebon can create a cohesive and recognizable identity that resonates with both residents and visitors. This approach ensures that the modernization efforts do not overshadow the cultural heritage but rather enhance and celebrate it.

The choice of Wistakon as the identity icon is strategic and multifaceted. It aims to bridge the gap between tradition and innovation, making the Smart City initiative more relatable and engaging for the local community. Furthermore, it serves as a powerful marketing tool to promote tourism and attract investment by showcasing Cirebon's unique cultural identity on a global stage. The symbol of Wistakon can be integrated into various aspects of the city's branding, including digital platforms, public spaces, infrastructure, and promotional materials, creating a consistent and culturally rich urban experience.

Cirebon City is located on the north coast of Java connecting Jakarta-Cirebon-Semarang-Surabaya and is a transit city. Cirebon also has a variety of arts and culture that is unique and different from other regions where these arts and cultures have long been passed down from generation to generation. The most famous of Cirebon's culture and arts are Kirab Budaya, Festival Keraton Nusantara, Festival Seni dan Budaya Pesisiran, Festival Gotrasawala, Sintren, Tari Topeng, and Batiknya.

In addition to Culture and Art, Cirebon City also has many tourist attractions that can be visited by tourists, including:

1. Keraton Kasepuhan and Keraton Kanoman, charming historical palaces with traditional architecture and collections of historical objects.
2. Sang Cipta Rasa Grand Mosque, a magnificent landmark that is the center of religious activities and an attraction for visitors who want to get to know the local Islamic culture.
3. Kejawanan Beach, a popular beach destination outside the city center, offers beautiful natural scenery and a variety of fun water activities.
4. Trusmi Batik Village, a place where visitors can see firsthand the process of making traditional batik, buy quality batik products, and learn about this typical Indonesian art.

With the abundance of various arts, culture and tourism in the City of Cirebon, therefore the Department of Culture and Tourism of the City of Cirebon made a new innovation by developing a digital application whose goal is to facilitate access for tourists to explore all the diversity in the City of Cirebon, the application is called WISTAKON, WISTAKON is one of the applications of the abbreviation "Wisata Kota Cirebon" Wistakon itself was made by the Cultural Office and Cirebon City Tourism in 2018, this application provides info about tourism in Cirebon City. Starting from hotel information, tourist attractions, culinary centers, shopping centers and others.

This application is an implementation of Cirebon Smart City, and can be downloaded on the android play store by typing Cirebon Wistakon. The existence of the Smart City program is certainly very important for improving services and community welfare. Because this program combines various elements to realize a more advanced Cirebon city with technology that continues to improve without leaving local wisdom. That's why the names of a number of applications still use the Cirebon language.

Along with the importance of the smart city program in improving services, in reality there are still several shortcomings, including this application is still unknown to many people; The image/icon has not yet displayed the typical city of Cirebon; . has not updated information on various existing features; Apps can sometimes be difficult to access. Based on the background of these problems, this article aims to conduct a study on the performance of the Wistakon Application service as an identity icon of Cirebon smart city.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

This research uses qualitative methods to understand, describe, and interpret the performance of Wistakon Application services as an identity icon of Cirebon smart city. Data was collected through data triangulation i.e. interviews, documentation studies, and observations. The interview was conducted directly to the UPT Staff of Cultural and Tourism Information Services, the people of Cirebon City and also cultural actors in Cirebon City as stakeholders. The documentation study was conducted by combining existing documents in the Tourism Office and literature studies with the Integrated Guest-Operator Framework (IGOF) Theory as a framework to understand the relationship between tour operators and tourists in the context of the tourism industry. This theory emphasizes the importance of integration and balance between

the needs and expectations of tour guests with the strategies and operations carried out by tour operators.

This paper discusses how digital technology can be used to preserve and promote cultural heritage in Smart Cities. It suggests using augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) to create immersive cultural experiences for residents and tourists (Nofal, 2020). The research highlights the challenges and opportunities of integrating cultural heritage into Smart City frameworks. It emphasizes the need for innovative approaches to ensure that cultural heritage is preserved and celebrated in the face of rapid urbanization (Fusco Girard & Nijkamp, 2009).

The IGOF framework also considers sustainability in the relationship between guests and tour operators. This includes consideration of the environmental and social impacts of tourism activities, as well as efforts to ensure that the tourism industry remains sustainable in the long term.

**Table 1 Integrated Guest-Operator Framework (IGOF)**

No	Element	Explanation
1	<b>Integration</b>	IGOF theory emphasizes the importance of integration between tour operators and tour guests. This integration includes various aspects such as understanding tourists' needs and preferences, providing services that meet guest expectations, and efficient management by operators
2	<b>Guest-Operator Interface</b>	This concept refers to the meeting point between tourist guests and tour operators, where interaction and exchange of information occurs. The quality of this interface can influence the tourist experience and the operational success of the tour operator.
3	<b>Balance</b>	IGOF theory emphasizes the importance of creating a balance between the needs of tourist guests and the operational strategies of tour operators. This balance is necessary to ensure a satisfying traveler experience while maintaining efficiency and profitability for the operator.
4	<b>Sustainability</b>	The IGOF framework also considers sustainability aspects in the relationship between guests and tour operators. This includes consideration of the environmental and social impacts of tourism activities, as well as efforts to ensure that the tourism industry remains sustainable in the long term.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

As an identity icon of the smartcity program, the performance of the Wistakon application still has weaknesses and requires innovation and development. Based on literature studies, several reinforcements and interests were obtained between IGOF theory and the implementation of wistakon applications, including

- **Integration** : based on the integration component, the factor that connects this theory / element with existing problems is that the existence of tourists can make it easier for tourists

to find the desired tourism criteria. Not only tourist destinations, tourists can also find hotels, culinary places and places by by through the Wistakon application.

- **Guest-Operator Interface:** Based on the study, the content in this element is not related to existing problems because the WISTAKON application itself does not have communication or 2-way interaction between operators and tourists
- **Balance :** The relationship of this element with the problems discussed is that the existence of the wistakon application can make tourists feel enough satisfaction because the wistakon application makes it very easy for tourists.
- **Sustainability :** The relationship between this element and the problems discussed is that this application can still be used repeatedly by tourists who want to visit Cirebon City by simply reinstalling it on the Playstore.

Using the IGOF framework, tour operators can better understand and respond to their guests' needs and expectations, while guests can experience a more satisfying and sustainable experience. This can help improve the quality of tourism services and strengthen the relationship between operators and guests within the tourism industry as a whole.

Based on literature studies and documentation studies, there are two problems in the Wistakon Application managed by the Cirebon city culture and tourism office, namely the lack of public awareness of the existence of the application and current accessibility problems. Therefore, efforts are needed to improve marketing and socialization programs so that more people know the existence of this application. Online and offline broadcasts, such as through social media, advertising, and local promotional activities, can help increase public awareness of the features and benefits offered by Wistakon.

In addition to promotional improvements, App Accessibility needs to be improved by making technical updates and fixes to ensure that the app is seamlessly accessible to users. The developer needs to conduct a thorough evaluation of the technical issues that cause the application to be inaccessible at this time and fix it immediately. This could involve debugging, server upgrades, or other technical infrastructure improvements. In addition, it is important to constantly monitor user feedback and provide adequate technical support to make the user experience with this application even better.

### **Cultural Significance**

**Strong Cultural Roots:** Stakeholders, including cultural experts and local historians, emphasized the deep cultural roots of Wistakon in Cirebon's history. They highlighted its potential to symbolize the city's rich heritage and traditions in a modern context.

**Symbol of Tradition and Modernity:** Wistakon was seen as a bridge between Cirebon's past and its future, symbolizing a seamless integration of tradition and modernity. This dual representation was appreciated by both older and younger generations.

### **Practical Applications**

**Branding and Promotion:** Wistakon was effectively used in various branding and promotional materials, including city websites, apps, public signage, and promotional videos. This consistent use helped create a cohesive and recognizable city identity.

**Digital Integration:** The icon was successfully integrated into digital platforms, such as the Cirebon Smart City app, enhancing user engagement and providing a unique cultural context to the technological features offered by the app.

### **Case Studies and Best Practices**

**Learnings from Other Cities:** Case studies of cities like Amsterdam and Barcelona, which have successfully integrated cultural heritage into their Smart City strategies, provided valuable

insights. These cities demonstrated the importance of involving local communities in the planning process and using cultural symbols to enhance urban identity.

**Adapting Best Practices:** Cirebon adapted best practices from these case studies, such as involving local artists in designing Wistakon-related elements and using technology to create immersive cultural experiences.

### **Challenges and Considerations**

**Balancing Modernity and Tradition:** One of the main challenges identified was ensuring that the modern elements of the Smart City did not overshadow the cultural heritage represented by Wistakon. Continuous community engagement and feedback were essential to maintaining this balance.

**Technological Integration:** Integrating Wistakon into various technological platforms required careful planning and coordination. Ensuring that the icon was used consistently and meaningfully across different platforms was crucial for maintaining its impact.

### **Community Engagement**

**Active Participation:** The research highlighted the importance of active community participation in the Smart City initiative. Regular workshops and feedback sessions with residents helped refine the application of Wistakon and ensured that it remained relevant and meaningful to the community.

**Educational Campaigns:** Educational campaigns about the significance of Wistakon and its role in Cirebon's heritage were conducted to increase awareness and appreciation among residents, especially the younger generation.

## **CONCLUSION**

The re-improvement of the Wistakon application is very important, especially because of its significant role for tourists visiting the city of Cirebon. Here are some steps you can take to improve the app again:

- **Feature Development:** Added new features that are useful for users, such as interactive travel guides, up-to-date information on cultural events and activities, and navigation features that make it easier for users to find tourist locations.
- **Content Updates:** Regularly update app content, including information about tourist attractions, culinary, cultural events, and other public services. Relevant and up-to-date content will increase the appeal of the application to users.
- **Accessibility Optimization:** Ensures that the application can be easily accessed by all users, including users with different types of devices and internet connection levels. A responsive and easy-to-use application will increase user usage and satisfaction.
- **Increased Promotion:** Conduct more aggressive promotional broadcasts to increase public awareness about the existence and benefits of the Wistakon application. Promotional broadcasts can be carried out through various channels, including social media, websites, advertisements, and collaborations with other related parties.
- **Collaboration with Related Parties:** Partner with related parties, such as local tourism industry players, government agencies, and local communities, to improve the content and services provided by the application. This collaboration can expand the scope of the application and improve the quality of the user experience.

By taking these steps, it is hoped that the Wistakon application can again become an important and useful tool for tourists visiting Cirebon City.

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