

E-book on Uncovering the Pearl of Borneo – Labuan through our Lens (From the Innovation Perspective)

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Highlights

This innovation which encompasses the concept of *e-tourism* focuses on the important role of the internet and web technology particularly in marketing a destination, in this case, a promotional e-book entitled *Uncovering the Pearl of Borneo- Labuan through our Lens*. This is an innovative approach in e-learning development whereby the personalized sharing of experiences and stories, and the historical significance of the places were depicted through photographs, each compiled with informative description complemented with meaningful quotes. It is hoped that this e-book will help elevate Labuan's tourism status, and concomitantly provide an innovative educational experience to students, researchers, tourists or anyone who have an interest in Labuan. The embedment of videos, hyperlink applications and links to various websites transforms this e-book (innovation) into a "large textbook" specifically for educational and promotional purposes.

Key words: *e-book, Labuan, Tourism, Education, Learning*

Introduction

In the last decade or so, the adoption of information and communication technology (ICT) by tourists and businesses has transformed the processes and the value chains in the tourism industry (Vukadinović et al, 2016). People have become more technology-inclined and ICT-savvy in that majority are now comfortable to scout for travel details independently without the hassle of going through a third party for information. Discerning tourist nowadays uses search engines and mobile apps to make their travel plans. This has prompted *businesses, groups or individuals* to create something original and more effective that "breaks into" the market or society. Additionally, with the availability of interactive online platforms that provide reviews and other travel-related content (such as TripAdvisor.com), this has resulted in tourist being more informed (Pan, 2015) and able to make travel decision easily. Besides online platforms, another way of sharing experience or testimonials is via an e-book – an e-book is known to speak volume of such innovation as not only it provides information *within the fingertips*, but also elevates the significant role of the internet and web technology particularly in marketing a destination that is not popularly known (Morrison, 2013). Henceforth this e-book is a testimonial of a sort, shared online – that presents a beautiful illustration of what a destination has to offer through the lens of the writers. Such descriptive accounts and historical narrations of the places were vividly shared based on the writers' experience of discovering the *pearls* in Labuan.

Description of the innovation

Tourism is information-intensive in nature hence requires the important role of the internet and web technology particularly in marketing a destination. The world is moving towards a paperless environment whereby information is at our fingertips. Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) recognizes that publications in the form of open educational resources (OER), in this case an e-book, is an innovative approach in e-learning development. This is in line with the objectives of Ministry of Education in diversifying the teaching and learning media of public universities.

This innovation sees the writers immersing themselves into expressing the life, cultures, and places through photographs, and subsequently conveying them via an e-book. The embedment of videos, hyperlink applications, and links to various websites have brought this e-book an interesting and informative read, that can reach out to a great mass of people in the name of sharing without borders and fewer restrictions. With the scannable Quick Response (QR) code

(Figure 1), end users are spared by the hassle of having to get hold of or purchase a physical travel destination book. Sharing of information through an e-book is one of the important promotional tools in this technological and dynamic era. In the context of Labuan, it helps contribute to the development of Labuan tourism industry and its historical significance using electronic media. The process of the innovation is described in Figure 2.

The e-book is informational and educational as it showcases historical places, culture, and lifestyle of the people that includes amongst others:

- Historical places – War Memorial, Peace Park, Surrender Point, The Chimney and The Clock Tower;
- Culture – Water Village, Damai Sunset Musical Concert, Food, Community project, Various ethnic of people, lifestyle, religion and places of worship and local festivals;
- Parks and recreation – Botanical Garden, Bird Park, Beach, Sunset, Sunrise and the United Nation Beach;
- Surrounding Island – Pulau Papan and
- Green Adventures – a portrayal of plants and trees found around the island.

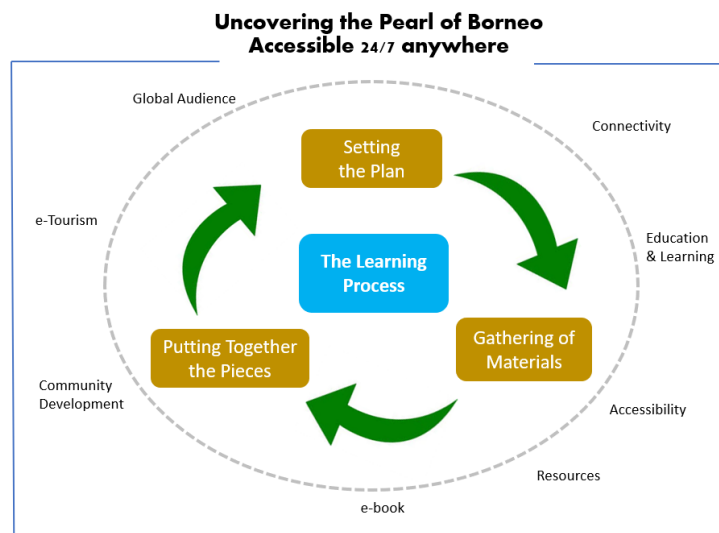


Figure 2: Process of innovation
Uncovering the Pearl of Borneo- Labuan through our Lens (2018)

Some comments from our reviewers and readers:

"...The writers are able to meet the suggestion of title with the table of contents, that is, uncovering of various cultural experiences of the "pearl of Borneo through picturesque photos and sound writings. This is supported by extensive coverage of historical facts, where to have fun, and depictions of rainbow of cultures Labuan has to offer. Additionally, the writers have also captured the spirituality and potentials of the locals in a well-written manner" - Simranpreet Kaur Hansaram

"The title UNCOVERING THE PEARL OF BORNEO seems very exciting, as it should be revealing things that not normally promoted. It is good for the reader to see the updates and discover the 'less popular' items in the island" – AP Dr. Awangku Hassanah Bahar Bin Pengiran Bagul

"The e-book presented a lovely narration of the places of interest in Labuan. The pictures and videos tell a thousand words, with some form of mysteries surrounding certain historical places, this has enticed me to visit Labuan". – Beatrice A.

"Informative and comprehensive. Great thought and amazing job. Exactly to promote Labuan". – Lolis Leo

A great e-book, I enjoyed reading the stories and experience of the writers, it has given me some knowledge about Labuan that probably even the local people may not know. Most of all I love the breathtaking view of the sunset and sunrise of Labuan!"- Flora Peter

"This book has clearly portrayed something about Labuan that an ordinary tourist may not be able to see. From the first to the last page, I enjoyed reading their stories, and the narrations about the pictures, including the videos and links that make it so enthralling. It was so educational and fascinating, enjoyed every moment of my time spent reading the e-book". – Gen Simara

"The e-book provides a great overview of the Island's history and its exuberant and diverse culture. The historical places and a breathtaking view of the beaches and islands really make a person feel serene, enjoying what nature has to offer. Well done!" - Nick Teong



Figure 1: QR code for the e-book

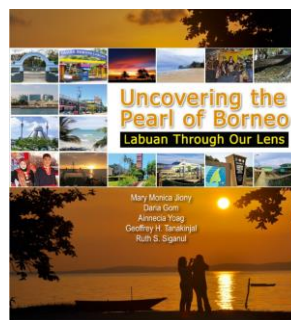


Figure 3: The e-book is assessable at:
http://www.ums.edu.my/oer/E-Books/Uncovering_The_Pearl_of_Borneo

Advantages of innovation towards education and community

This e-book serves an important purpose in the online world from the following perspectives:

Toward Education

- This e-book is beneficial to researchers and students as references in the field of marketing, tourism and hospitality.
- This e-book provides information on the historical places besides the attractive sceneries of Labuan through our lens; loads of pictures were presented in order to provide readers a glimpse of the beautiful places, along with our personal stories of the moments captured on camera. Historical background of the places was also narrated, which are educational in nature.
- Readers of this e-book may find the reading process both interactive and engaging as **they would simultaneously be educated about a place and its tourism attractions**. *Interactive* as in the embedment of videos, hyperlink applications, and links to various websites, and engaging, in the sharing of the writers' first-hand experiences about Labuan.

Toward Community

- This e-book is published in digital form in support of the UMS's OER initiatives and in line with the government National e-Learning Action Plan Policy (DePAN);
- Information about Labuan is made available for the global community for education and promotion purposes;
- This e-book narrates the life and culture of the people of Labuan, which documents the happenings around Labuan during the time the book was in the publication process.

Commercial Values

The commercialization potential will be as follows:

- This e-book is an open educational resources (OER) and anyone can easily access and download for their use subject to CC BY Creative Commons License (Figure 3);
- Promotes Labuan as a popular destination, even more so with the upcoming **Visit Malaysia Year 2020** promotion campaign, this e-book aptly fits the campaign's purpose;
- Helps the local authorities and tourism bodies in promoting Labuan to the global community;
- Attracts and entices the global community to visit Labuan to uncover the pearls themselves;
- The writers plan to publish this e-book in printed form, that will be made available to interested buyers – tourists, students, local community, tourism agencies, and corporate firms.
- With the cooperation and expected sponsorships of the local authority and tourism bodies, this book (hard copy version) will be presented as souvenirs to VIPs and guests.

Acknowledgement

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