

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

Tourism is one of the sectors that has long been recognized as having strategic strength in encouraging and accelerating economic growth at the national and regional levels. Deputy for Distribution and Services Statistics of the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), Puji Ismartini, revealed that the number of trips by tourists in the archipelago (Wisnus) reached 105.12 million trips in June 2025 (Simamora, 2025). The significant increase in the number of domestic tourists shows the high public interest in tourism activities in various regions, which is also a positive indicator for the development of tourism as a whole.

In terms of domestic tourism, East Java is one of the destinations for Indonesian tourists to the island of Java. Domestic tourist travel data in Indonesia released by the Central Statistics Agency shows that domestic tourist travel to Java reached 75.49%. And East Java became the main province in 2022 with the number of trips reaching 27.29%, which is the highest in Indonesia from the total number of foreign tourists (Indonesian Central Statistics Agency, 2023). The Governor of East Java, Khofifah Indar Parawansa, said that when viewed based on regencies/cities, Surabaya City, Malang Regency, and Sidoarjo Regency are the areas most visited by foreign tourists in East Java Province (East Java Province, 2023). This is the race for other regions in East Java Province to continue to dig deeper about the regional tourism potential to bring in many tourists, both domestic and foreign.

Tuban Regency is one of the areas whose area is on the north coast of Java Island. Tourism in this area has quite promising potential and continues to develop as a regional tourism attraction. Based on BPS data from Tuban Regency, the number of tourists in Tuban during 2024 is recorded at around 6 million people who have visited various tourist attractions in Tuban Regency, both domestic tourists and foreign tourists (Central Statistics Agency of Tuban Regency, 2025). This shows that although Tuban's natural tourism is better known in the local scope, Tuban's natural potential offers enough attraction to bring in domestic tourists and little foreign interaction.

Wisatawan	Jumlah Wisatawan (Jiwa)	
	2024	
M mancanegara		84
Domestik		6.041.169
Jumlah		6.041.169

Figure 1. 1 Domestic and Foreign Tourist Data in Tuban Regency
(Source: BPS Tuban Regency)

Tuban Regency has various tourist destinations in the form of natural, religious, historical, and family tourism objects. Tourist destinations in Tuban Regency are classified as having a large number so that they offer many choices to tourists. From BPS data Tuban Regency states that the most popular tourist destinations in Tuban Regency in 2024 are favorites and better known by tourists because they are supported by several things, namely infrastructure, facilities, and attractions that the destination has.



Figure 1. 2 The most popular tourist attractions in Tuban Regency
(Source: Instagram BPS Tuban Regency)

From the popularity of these tourist destinations, it shows that several other tourist attractions that are not listed certainly need to develop improvements, strengthen local tourism branding, improve supporting facilities and infrastructure, and intensify promotions to compete strongly with these favorite destinations. One of the destinations that has considerable potential is Suruan Eco Park. This tour, although relatively new, is quite attractive to tourists to visit the destination.



Figure 1. 3 Attractions of Suruan Eco Park
(Source: personal documentation)

Suruan Eco Park is a tourist destination that presents a natural atmosphere as well as other exciting activities, with a natural tourism image that presents water activities and is friendly to visitors' pockets. The establishment of this area began with the awareness of the owner of the tourist attraction, Mr. Anta Wahyudi, who took the initiative to utilize his own sago plantation by developing natural potential while preserving the environment. The movement, which began in 2018 and was inaugurated in 2024, is carried out with the surrounding community to prepare destinations that create space and become a symbol of collaboration between the community and nature, as well as creating sustainable tourism.

Although currently Suruan Eco Park has been visited by local tourists in the region or outside the region, its management continues to be improved. Several aspects that continue to be sought are improved and added such as facilities and tourist activities while still paying attention to the comfort and safety of visitors. The various facilities provided include several facilities or rides that are rarely found in destinations in Tuban Regency, one of which is snorkeling. This snorkeling ride is provided by the manager for tourists to be able to find out how the destination is under or in the water of Suruan Eco Park, even though there are unique facilities, however, some visitors do not know about it due to the lack of information provided. Likewise with the artificial waterfall spot facilities in the Suruan Eco Park area, some visitors do not know if there is a spot because of its location which tends to be hidden and the absence of clear directions. Not only that, the wide range of promotions also needs to be increased so that Suruan Eco Park is not only known at the local and regional levels but can attract tourists on a national and foreign scale. One of the communication strategies that has been carried out today is by collaborating with influencers to visit and create content on social media, which is then published as a means of promotion to expand the exposure of the destination

and build visual appeal among the audience. However, the strategy also raises a new problem, namely the image raised by each content creator can be different because the basic image is still unclear. This causes this destination to not have a character that significantly distinguishes it from other similar tours. As a development of a tourist destination, the priority problems that arise are infrastructure, supporting facilities, products or features, and the promotion of tourist attractions have not been utilized optimally (Wibawa & Veronica, 2025).

Based on the results of the survey that has been collected, as many as 143 respondents have expressed their opinions so that crucial findings underlying this design were obtained. Data shows that most of the respondents are people of Tuban Regency who have known about the existence of Suruan Eco Park through social media to recommendations from friends/family. However, although the level of awareness is quite high, the level of direct visits is still minimal, as shown by the percentage of 59.4% of respondents who have never visited. Most of their reasons are not knowing the location, haven't seen the promotion, and haven't had the time or opportunity. In terms of attractiveness, the majority of respondents stated that Suruan Eco Park is interesting to visit because of its natural beauty, water/boat activities, photo spots, and affordable ticket prices. This shows that the potential of nature and tourism activities actually has strong value to be promoted. These findings show that Suruan Eco Park has great potential for tourist attractions, but has not been supported by effective branding and visual communication strategies to convert *awareness* into visits. The public needs clearer information, more attractive visuals, and a more professional branding identity as determining factors for interest in visiting.



Figure 1. 4 Suruan Eco Park Logo
(Source : Instagram Suruan Eco Park)

Currently, Suruan Eco Park Tourism has a visual identity that is still limited in the form of a logo only, which according to Mr. Anta Wahyudi as the owner and manager of the tour that, the logo was initially only made simply, of course in the future it will need to undergo renewal and brand strengthening. This is also strengthened by the results of the questionnaire which stated that 60.9% of respondents stated that the current logo was less attractive. In addition to logos, other visual identities also need to be created to get the characteristics of the brand owned. He also revealed that, with the implementation of maximum identity, it will certainly further strengthen the image of tourist destinations and increase attraction to prospective visitors. This is also supported by the data from the questionnaire results which shows that 65.7% of respondents think that it is very necessary to have a strong branding and 61.5% of respondents strongly agree that Suruan Eco Park has a more consistent and professional identity. This statement is one of the reasons for *designing branding*. *Branding* is one of the important marketing communication activities carried out by product owners, be it in the form of goods or services with the aim of communicating or introducing the brand, with an effort to make the public aware of the existence of the product, make the public interested, make the public feel like trying or feeling, and make the public make a decision to buy the products offered, until finally the brand gains consumer loyalty or customers (Nurjayanti & Arifin, 2025).

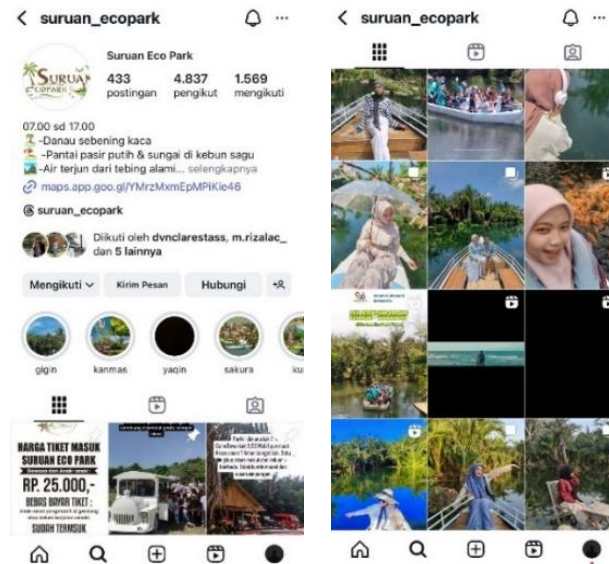


Figure 1. 5 Instagram Suruan Eco Park
(Source : Personal Documentation)

The most basic thing is to rebuild the brand to increase tourist attraction and visits. Because a strong brand identity creates a more professional and trustworthy impression, which ultimately increases sales and business growth (Yani et al., 2025). The changes are in the form of logo design,

supergraphics, colors, typography, social media, tourist area media, and other supporting media. The proper use of social media is one part of the experience, as well as presenting positive emotions and personal connections between visitors and destinations. The role of digital marketing in a product can be used to build *Brand Awareness* in consumers (Aditia, 2022). Therefore, designing a *professional, consistent, and structured* visual identity and branding system can bridge *awareness* into high visitor interest. This concept is in line with the theory of experience branding, which is the emotional and sensory experience felt by consumers when interacting with the brand.

The process of rebuilding the Suruan Eco Park brand is of course through stages in its implementation, each step cannot be separated from the application of *the Design Thinking* method. The *Design Thinking* method is an approach that focuses on understanding user needs, exploring ideas, and creating creative and innovative solutions. There are several stages in *the Design Thinking* method, namely *emphasize, define, ideate, prototype, and testing*. With the application of these stages, it is hoped that it can strengthen the image of Suruan Eco Park because it is a tourist destination.

1.2. Problem Identification

1.2.1 Lack of clear and consistent branding

Based on the results of the survey that has been conducted, Suruan Eco Park is mostly known to the public, but the level of direct visits is still low due to the lack of clear information about tourist attractions, facilities and facilities provided. Most respondents also assessed that the promotion of Suruan Eco Park was not optimal and that social media was not informative or consistent. The absence of strong branding makes it difficult for people to get to know this tourist character easily, so that the tourism image of Suruan Eco Park is less prominent than other destinations. Some people consider Suruan Eco Park to be a water destination in the form of natural landscapes as usual, namely in the form of boat rides on water only. This condition shows that the lack of clear and consistent branding is the root of the main problem, which affects the low level of *deep awareness*, quality perception, and public interest in visiting. Therefore, a stronger, informative, and representative rebranding of Suruan Eco Park as a natural tourist destination is needed to increase public attraction and trust.

1.2.2 Limited visual identity

Currently, the visual identity of Suruan Eco Park has not been developed through a mature branding process and has a simple appearance. Existing logos do not yet reflect strong character and are consistent with other visual identity elements. This has an impact on the weak visual image in the eyes of tourists, making the destination less visible and does not have its own characteristics compared to other tourist destinations. With consistent visual elements, it becomes easier for tourists to recognize this destination and be interested in visiting (Zai, 2025).

1.2.3 High competition with similar tourist destinations

The Suruan Eco Park destination has a competitor that almost has similarities to the recreation offered, namely Silowo Ecotourism. This competition is based on the inauguration of tourist destinations carried out by Silowo Ecotourism earlier than Suruan Eco Park. However, if calculated from the beginning of development and planning, Suruan Eco Park is earlier than Silowo Ecotourism. From this causes tourists to see or hear the word canoe water tourism, most of them think it belongs to the same destination, namely Silowo Ecotourism.

1.3. Problem Formulation

Based on the background and identification of the problem that has been presented, the formulation of the problem can be formulated as follows:

"How to design a rebranding strategy for Suruan Eco Park as a natural tourism that represents its characteristics and uniqueness and enhances the attraction and image of the destination?"

1.4. Problem Limitations

In order for the research and design of *the rebranding* of Suruan Eco Park to be more focused and not to expand to a domain that is too broad, the limitations of the problem in this case are determined as follows:

1. The focus of *the rebranding* was carried out on the Suruan Eco Park Tourist Attraction located in Merakurak District, Tuban Regency.
2. *The rebranding* is focused on the development of the brand strategy and the design of a visual identity
3. The target audience in this design is limited to young people and couples who are interested in nature tourism, quiet recreational experiences, and exploration-based activities and visual aesthetics.

1.5. Purpose of Design

The objectives of the branding design of Suruan Eco Park Tuban Regency are as follows:

1. Designing the *branding of* Suruan Eco Park that is appropriate and effective so that it can represent natural tourism with a natural, comfortable, and relaxing atmosphere for visitors.
2. To create the brand positioning of Suruan Eco Park as a natural tourist destination that has a clear visual character, is easy to recognize, and is able to attract tourists
3. Produce visual identity elements that include logos, typography, colors, and other supporting graphic elements that can represent the tourist character of Suruan Eco Park.

1.6. Benefits of Design Results

1.6.1 Benefits for Writers

1. Providing real experience in developing knowledge in the field of branding and visual identity, especially in the local tourism sector.
2. To be a case study and reference for similar research or design in the future.
3. Providing space for design innovation in combining aspects of beauty, education, and promotional functions for tourist destinations.

1.6.2 Benefits for Suruan Eco Park

1. Enhancing the image of Suruan Eco Park as an ecotourism destination with its own unique characteristics and advantages.
2. It is a means to strengthen brand awareness so that it becomes better known not only at the local, regional and national levels.
3. Provides consistent brand guidelines for use across a wide range of promotional areas, both digital and print.

1.6.3 Benefits for Tourists

1. Making it easier for tourists to recognize Suruan Eco Park through a strong, simple, and memorable visual identity.
2. Providing a more meaningful travel experience due to the harmonious and consistent visual narrative and branding.
3. Enhancing the attractiveness and positioning of Suruan Eco Park as a natural destination with character and the ability to compete with similar destinations.

1.7. Design Framework

*Rebranding*The Suruan Eco Park, which aims to enhance local tourism appeal, was created as a requirement for completing a final assignment in the Visual Communication Design study program at UPN "Veteran" East Java. This rebranding was carried out to increase tourist appeal to local tourism destinations, particularly Suruan Eco Park, at the regional, national, and international levels.

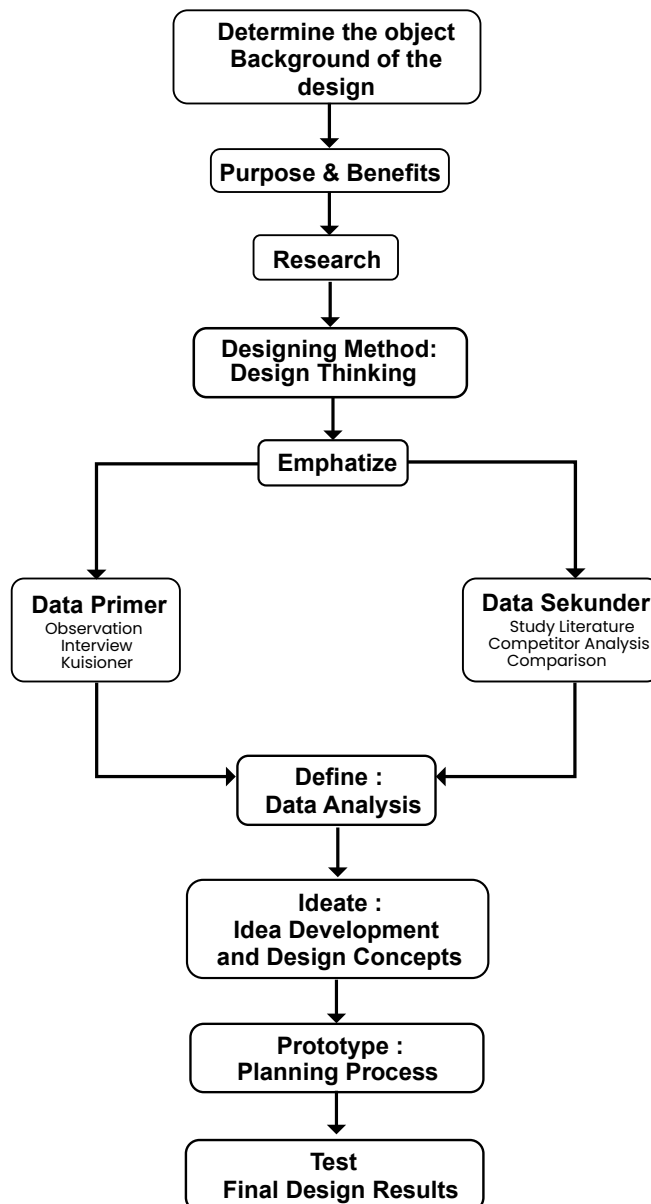


Figure 1. 6 Planning Framework
(Source : Personal Documents)