
Event Organizer Management Strategy In Selecting Venues To Increase Visitor Interest: A Case Study Of The Flei Event By Panorama Media

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Abstract

This study examines the event organizer's strategic management in venue selection to increase visitor interest, using the Franchise & License Expo Indonesia (FLEI) organized by Panorama Media as a case study. Venue selection plays a crucial role in attracting visitor participation, especially in the increasingly competitive MICE industry. The research employs a descriptive qualitative approach with data collected through in-depth interviews, non-participant observation, and document analysis focusing on two main venues: Jakarta Convention Center (JCC) and Jakarta International Expo (JIExpo). The findings indicate that accessibility, strategic location, market segmentation, and supporting facilities such as parking and venue comfort are dominant factors in venue selection. Data reveals that FLEI 2023 at JCC attracted significantly more visitors than FLEI 2024 at JIExpo, highlighting the impact of venue decisions on event success. This study offers practical implications for event organizers in designing strategies based on audience demographics and preferences to enhance event effectiveness and appeal.

Keywords: event management, venue selection, FLEI, organizer strategy, visitor interest

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia's modern tourism industry has experienced significant growth, driven by the increasing role of the MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions) sector as a driving force for the creative economy and national tourism (Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, 2020; Widjaja, 2018). MICE activities not only contribute to increased regional revenue but also to strengthening destination image, creating jobs, and developing human resource capacity (Getz & Page, 2016; Dewi & Nofirza, 2021). In this context, event management serves as a strategic tool for attracting tourists while strengthening local and national business ecosystems (Anggraini, 2020; Fenich, 2015).

Franchise & License Expo Indonesia (FLEI) is one of the largest franchise business exhibitions in Indonesia, consistently organized by Panorama Media. This event serves as a strategic meeting place for business owners, brand owners, potential investors, and the general public interested in the franchise and licensing sector (Harjanti & Pribadi, 2016; Yefri, 2023). In the context of digital transformation and the post-pandemic era, events like FLEI demonstrate the resilience of the MICE sector in adapting to changing consumer behavior and global market dynamics (Silvers et al., 2012; Kusuma, 2019).

One of the key elements in the success of an event is selecting the right location or venue. A venue is not just a place for the event, but also a representation of the event brand, visitor comfort, ease of access, and visual and technical appeal (Bowdin et al., 2011; Tum et al., 2006). A study by Allen et al. (2011) showed that visitors' decisions to attend an event are heavily influenced by their perceptions of the venue, including factors such as geographic location, supporting facilities, and ease of transportation.

Panorama Media, as the organizer of FLEI, previously used two different venues: the Jakarta Convention Center (JCC) and the Jakarta International Expo (JIExpo). Based on visitor data, FLEI 2023, held at the JCC, attracted over 21,000 visitors, while FLEI 2024 at JIExpo only managed to reach around 16,000 visitors. This significant difference reflects that venue choice

directly influences visitor interest and audience participation (Lee et al., 2004; Ariffin et al., 2018; Prasetyo & Wulandari, 2022).

Venue selection involves complex strategic considerations, including room capacity, budget, technology availability, security, branding, and the continuity of the visitor experience (Wagen & White, 2010; Ferdinand & Kitchin, 2012). According to Crouch and Ritchie (1999), the competitiveness of an event destination encompasses both physical (accessibility, infrastructure) and non-physical (service, reputation) aspects. A study by Nurjanah et al. (2021) also emphasized the importance of easy access to public transportation and proximity to urban centers in attracting a younger audience.

In the context of event management, venue selection is part of strategic planning, requiring analysis of market segmentation, consumer behavior, trend prediction, and holistic location evaluation (Bladen et al., 2012; Mair, 2010). Several national studies also support that the success of an event is inseparable from the accuracy of selecting a venue that aligns with the target demographic and psychographics of visitors (Purnamasari & Santoso, 2020; Hakim & Syah, 2021). From an ROI (Return on Investment) perspective, the right venue contributes to cost efficiency and increased visitor loyalty (Jones, 2016; Fitri, 2022).

The need to understand venue selection strategies is becoming increasingly important amidst increasing competition among event organizers. In an increasingly digital and competitive MICE ecosystem, organizers need to adopt a data-driven approach to selecting event locations (Davidson & Rogers, 2016). This requires considering not only technical and logistical aspects but also social, cultural, and psychological factors that influence visitor perceptions of the venue (Hiller, 2019; Setyawan & Maulani, 2023).

Based on this background, this study aims to analyze the management strategy of event organizer Panorama Media in selecting a venue for FLEI and evaluate the impact of this decision on visitor interest. This research is expected to provide theoretical contributions to the development of event management studies and practical recommendations for the MICE industry in Indonesia in determining adaptive venue strategies based on visitor needs.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach to gain an in-depth understanding of the venue selection strategies of event organizers in the context of the Franchise & License Expo Indonesia (FLEI). This approach was chosen because it is able to reveal the dynamics and managerial processes contextually, based on the views of subjects directly involved in the event implementation (Creswell, 2016). This type of research is a case study, with the unit of analysis focused on the venue selection strategy by Panorama Media in the implementation of FLEI in two different locations: the Jakarta Convention Center (JCC) and the Jakarta International Expo (JIExpo). Case studies are used to obtain a complete and detailed picture of the actual events that occurred (Yin, 2018).

Data were collected through three main techniques: in-depth interviews with key informants, namely the FLEI Project Manager (Mr. Rulief) and staff from the Panorama Media event organizing division. Interviews were conducted semi-structured to allow further exploration of the organizers' experiences, perspectives, and strategies. Non-participatory observation, namely direct observation of the planning process, venue selection, and event implementation. This observation was conducted at the event location and organizers' workspaces to obtain contextual information and real-life behavior without the direct involvement of the researcher. Documentation study, which included the collection of secondary data such as activity reports, visitor statistics, venue location maps, promotional materials, and visual documentation of the FLEI implementation in 2023 and 2024.

Data were analyzed using the interactive analysis technique modeled by Miles and Huberman (2014), which includes three stages:

- Data reduction, which is the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, and transforming raw data into a more organized form;
- Data presentation, which is organizing data in narrative form, tables, and quotations to facilitate drawing conclusions;
- Conclusion drawing and verification, which is interpreting findings to answer research questions and ensuring validity through triangulation of sources and techniques.

To ensure data validity, this study employed source and method triangulation techniques. Triangulation was conducted by comparing interview results, observations, and documentation, as well as cross-checking between informants. Furthermore, data reliability was strengthened by implementing member checks with key informants. The research was conducted in Jakarta, specifically at two FLEI locations: the Jakarta Convention Center (JCC) and JIExpo. The study period was May to July 2024, covering the pre-event, implementation, and post-event phases to obtain comprehensive data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section outlines the research findings based on in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation analyzed using the Miles and Huberman qualitative approach. The primary focus is on the venue selection strategy implemented by Panorama Media in the implementation of FLEI (Franchise & License Expo Indonesia), as well as its implications for increasing or decreasing visitor interest. The findings are classified into five main subthemes as follows:

Venue Selection Strategy Based on Accessibility and Location

Venue selection is a strategic decision that significantly determines the success of an event, particularly for a national-scale exhibition like the Franchise & License Expo Indonesia (FLEI). An in-depth interview with FLEI Project Manager, Mr. Rulief, revealed that accessibility and location are key considerations in the venue selection process. In this context, the Jakarta Convention Center (JCC) is considered to have a highly strategic geographical position, located in the heart of Jakarta. This location provides logistical advantages and easy access for various visitor segments, both from within and outside the city.

Practically speaking, the JCC is integrated with modern public transportation modes such as the Mass Rapid Transit (MRT), TransJakarta, and the commuter line, accessible from various points in the city. Furthermore, the JCC's surroundings are supported by public facilities such as star-rated hotels, upscale shopping centers, and business districts, adding to the appeal for visitors and exhibitors. This easy accessibility creates an efficient and comfortable visiting experience and reduces travel barriers that could potentially reduce participation.

"...Location is very important because it concerns access, whether it is close to public transportation, and where the venue is located in the city, because this will make things easier for visitors and exhibitors..." (Interview, July 25, 2024)

Meanwhile, JIExpo Kemayoran, while offering advantages in terms of its larger land area and parking space, is considered to have a disadvantage in terms of location, as it is somewhat remote from the city center. Access to JIExpo relies more on private vehicles or toll-based transportation, which in certain conditions actually causes congestion and increases travel time. Consequently, this venue is less attractive to visitors who rely on public transportation or prioritize convenient access and proximity to the central business district.

This finding aligns with a study by Lee et al. (2004), which emphasized that ease of transportation access has a positive correlation with visit intention, especially in the context of public and mass events. Furthermore, Nurjanah et al. (2021) also emphasized that strategic

location not only influences logistics but also shapes visitors' psychological perceptions of the event's value and quality.

From an event marketing perspective, location also plays a role in shaping the image attached to an event. The JCC, with its reputation as a host for various international and premium events, contributes to the impression of exclusivity and professionalism at FLEI, which ultimately increases the trust and interest of potential visitors. In this regard, location selection becomes part of a brand positioning strategy that, consciously or not, contributes to the overall identity and perception of the event.

Furthermore, the strategic decision to select a venue with high transportation integration and connectivity also reflects an understanding of the importance of visitor inclusivity. Venues that are easily accessible to all groups, both geographically and socioeconomically, have greater potential to reach a broad and diverse audience. Therefore, Panorama Media's venue selection strategy in the context of FLEI demonstrates a strong understanding of the importance of location as a determining factor, not only technically but also symbolically and strategically, in attracting visitor attention and participation. Venues are chosen not only for their capacity or facilities, but also for their role in shaping a positive visitor experience even before they arrive at the event.

Market Segmentation and Venue Characteristic Differences

Market segmentation strategy is a key tool in designing a targeted marketing approach and selecting a venue for a national-scale event. Panorama Media, as the organizer of FLEI, implemented a well-thought-out segmentation approach to address the diversity of audiences and market needs. Venue selection was not carried out uniformly, but rather tailored to the demographic, geographic, and psychographic profiles of targeted visitors and exhibitors.

Interviews and internal data indicate that the Jakarta Convention Center (JCC) consistently targets the B2C (business-to-consumer) market, specifically end consumers, typically consisting of micro and small businesses, urban families, and individuals interested in franchise opportunities. The JCC's central location, along with its proximity to commercial and lifestyle amenities, makes it ideal for attracting this audience segment. The JCC's relatively modern and prestigious surroundings reinforce the event's image as a quality event enjoyed by those from middle- to upper-class socioeconomic backgrounds.

“...Why do we want to be at the JCC? Because it's the city center and we'll target the market of business people who want to spend time with their families...” (Interview, July 25, 2024)

Meanwhile, the FLEI event at JIExpo Kemayoran is more focused on the B2B (business-to-business) market, which includes professional business players, franchise license holders, investors, and parties who use the exhibition as a forum for negotiations and the formation of long-term cooperation. JIExpo's location in an area that is better connected to distribution and industrial routes (via toll roads and logistics access) makes it suitable for visitors from outside the city, especially from Jakarta's buffer areas such as Tangerang, Bekasi, and major cities in West Java and Central Java.

This segmentation pattern demonstrates the application of geographic and functional differentiation strategies in venue selection. Bowdin et al. (2011) in the event management literature emphasize that an effective venue must align with the characteristics of the target audience, both in terms of needs, information consumption behavior, and motivation to visit. Panorama Media has implemented this principle quite well, considering that the visitor experience is determined not only by the event content, but also by the atmosphere and identity of the space where the event is held.

Furthermore, data from FLEI's participant and visitor segmentation shows a consistent pattern of differences between the two venues. Visitors at the JCC primarily come from Central, South, and West Jakarta, with a focus on exploring small- and medium-scale business opportunities and family experiences. Meanwhile, visitors at JIExpo are predominantly from the Jakarta suburbs and beyond, with a tendency to focus more on purchasing business licenses, negotiating business, and institutional presence.

This phenomenon underscores the importance of a deep understanding of market behavior in the world of event organizing. Not all venues are suitable for all types of audiences, and not all audiences feel comfortable in all types of venues. A venue, in this context, is not just a physical space but also a symbol of the values, expectations, and purpose of the visitor's visit.

Furthermore, this segmentation approach also strengthens targeted marketing practices, where event promotions and communications are tailored to the target audience's background through the selection of an appropriate venue. This enables organizers to build stronger emotional and functional connections with visitors, while simultaneously increasing the effectiveness of promotional campaigns and messaging.

Thus, a venue selection strategy based on market segmentation has proven to be more than just an operational step, but a strategic decision that reflects professionalism and sensitivity to market dynamics. Panorama Media, through its selection of the JCC and JIExpo, has demonstrated an adaptive and relevant location differentiation model in responding to the demands of an increasingly segmented audience in the digital and post-pandemic era.

Supporting Facilities and Visitor Comfort

The supporting facilities provided by a venue not only serve as a technical complement to the event, but also play a crucial role in creating a comprehensive and memorable visitor experience. In the context of the FLEI event, the quality of the physical facilities and the comfort of the space directly contribute to the perceived value of the event and influence visitors' intention to return for future editions.

Based on field observations and in-depth interviews, significant differences in facilities were found between the two venues used by Panorama Media: the Jakarta Convention Center (JCC) and JIExpo Kemayoran. The JCC was deemed superior in terms of aesthetics and comfort, with a structured layout, good air circulation, adequate lighting, and supporting facilities such as restrooms, a lactation room, a dining area, and a representative exhibitor lounge. The JCC's modern architecture and clean public areas added to the visitor experience and lent a premium feel to the overall event.

Conversely, JIExpo offered advantages in terms of space capacity and flexible land use, allowing for large-scale exhibitions with a more flexible booth layout. The venue was also known for its efficient logistics system for exhibitors in distributing exhibits. However, several visitors expressed that the exhibition area at JIExpo felt too large and unfocused, causing fatigue when exploring all the booths. This situation was exacerbated by limited rest areas and a lack of clear signage in several areas.

"...At the JCC, visitors come from Central, South, and West Jakarta, while at JIExpo, many come from Tangerang. Access to JIExpo is easier via the toll road, but convenience is still important..." (Interview, July 25, 2024)

These complaints demonstrate that visitor comfort is not solely related to the facilities available, but also to how those facilities are designed to meet the needs of mobility, orientation, and rest during the event. In event management literature, visitor flow and wayfinding systems are crucial components in creating an effective and efficient exhibition space (Silvers, 2008).

A study by Harjanti & Pribadi (2016) confirmed that physical comfort and perceived spatial quality significantly influence visitors' intention to attend the same event again. This finding is further supported by the findings of Ariffin et al. (2018), who stated that venue image can shape visitors' initial expectations, which are then reinforced or corrected by direct experiences on-site. When these expectations are met or even exceeded, satisfaction levels increase and foster loyalty to the event and organizer.

Furthermore, the comfort of facilities not only impacts visitors but also exhibitors and other stakeholders such as media partners, sponsors, and invited guests. A comfortable and functional venue provides optimal interaction, enabling networking and business transactions to take place in a conducive and professional atmosphere. This is particularly relevant in the context of a franchise exhibition like FLEI, which demands intense communication and negotiation between business actors.

In venue management practices, it is crucial for organizers to consider not only capacity and layout but also comprehensive user experience design. This includes aspects of cleanliness, temperature and sound comfort, lighting, family-friendly facilities (such as a nursery room), and clarity of navigation information. All of these elements contribute to the image of the event and determine the extent to which visitors feel valued and treated professionally.

Therefore, it can be concluded that selecting an ideal venue must consider a balance between technical capacity and quality of comfort. The JCC and JIExpo each have their own advantages, but visitor perceptions indicate that comfort and aesthetics have a greater influence on audience satisfaction and loyalty. In the long term, visitor comfort can be a competitive differentiator that determines the success of an event and the organizer's reputation in the public eye.

Impact of Venue Selection on Visit Interest

Venue selection not only impacts the technical aspects of an event but also directly impacts public attendance. In the context of Panorama Media's FLEI (Indonesian Traditional Exhibition and Convention Center) organization, strategic decisions regarding the venue have proven to have a significant impact on visitor interest and attendance.

Internal statistics show that the 2023 FLEI, held at the Jakarta Convention Center (JCC), attracted 21,238 visitors over the three days. This figure dropped significantly in 2024, when the event moved to JIExpo Kemayoran, with a total of 16,000 visitors. This 24.7% decrease is not simply a normal fluctuation, but rather reflects differences in audience preferences regarding venue location and perceived value of the chosen venue.

Interviews with several visitors, exhibitors, and stakeholders indicate that the JCC has a unique psychological and symbolic appeal. This venue is widely associated with prestigious, premium, and professional events, creating a higher perception of quality for events held there. Visitors feel more comfortable, confident, and enthusiastic about attending events at the JCC due to its well-maintained surroundings, easy access to public transportation, and an atmosphere that supports both business and entertainment activities.

Conversely, despite JIExpo's capacity and ease of logistics, most visitors complained that the venue was overcrowded, hot, and lacked a sense of exclusivity. This decreased visitor satisfaction and the likelihood of returning to the next edition. These findings are consistent with a study by Purnamasari & Santoso (2020), which found that the venue plays a crucial role in shaping visitors' initial perceptions of an event. A venue perceived as representative and high-quality can enhance promotional effectiveness, broaden the event's appeal, and increase the conversion of interest into actual visits. In event marketing literature, this aspect is referred to as venue image, which refers to how the event location symbolically contributes to the overall image of the event in the minds of consumers.

Furthermore, the differing perceptions of the JCC and JIExpo also demonstrate the importance of place branding in the events industry. Venues are viewed not only for their technical feasibility, but also as entities that carry a certain reputation, values, and expectations. In the case of FLEI, the JCC symbolizes a quality, well-organized, and visitor-focused event. Meanwhile, JIExpo is more associated with mass-scale, functional events that emphasize scale.

Other factors influencing visitor interest include ease of access and visitor perceptions of past experiences. Several informants stated that they preferred not to attend FLEI 2024 because their previous experiences at JIExpo were less than pleasant, particularly regarding parking, directions to the exhibition area, and irregular visitor density. This suggests that past experiences play a significant role in shaping visitor loyalty to an event.

Furthermore, the emotional and cognitive aspects of the decision to attend an event are also influenced by the venue's location. Visitors tend to associate the venue with social status, security, and expectations regarding the performers, exhibition quality, and networking potential. Therefore, venue selection is not simply a matter of budget and space availability, but also a strategy for building a sustainable, positive experience for the audience.

Overall, the data and field findings indicate that venues have the power to leverage visitors and foster long-term loyalty. In an increasingly competitive market and with a growing variety of event options, the spatial experience is a key differentiator in the decision to visit. Panorama Media, through the experience of the last two years, has a strong basis for revising its venue selection policy in the future by considering the balance between technical factors, comfort, and the symbolic image of the venue used.

Managerial Implications

The findings of this study underscore the importance of venue selection as a strategic managerial decision in organizing a national-scale event like the Franchise & License Expo Indonesia (FLEI). Panorama Media, as the organizer, demonstrated a relatively mature approach, considering various crucial aspects such as market segmentation, accessibility, venue image, facility comfort, and previous year's visitation data. This practice reflects the implementation of the principle of evidence-based management, where decisions are based not solely on intuition or experience, but on empirical data and measurable analysis.

One key implication is that venue selection should be positioned as an integral part of the overall marketing communications and visitor experience management strategy. The venue is not only the venue for the event but also represents the brand identity of the event itself. The decision to use the Jakarta Convention Center (JCC) as the venue for FLEI 2023, for example, successfully built an exclusive image and attracted a wider audience due to its association with a prestigious, accessible, and convenient location.

Conversely, moving the event to JIExpo in 2024, despite logistically providing capacity advantages and ease of distribution, proved unable to maintain optimal attendance levels. The decline in visitor numbers by nearly a quarter demonstrates that visitor perceptions and experiences of the venue also determine levels of participation, satisfaction, and audience loyalty. In this context, managerial decision-making that fails to consider the psychological and symbolic dimensions of the venue can negatively impact overall event performance.

Another implication relates to the importance of regular market segmentation and visitor behavior research. Organizers need to understand that the rapidly evolving social, geographic, and digital dynamics of the post-pandemic era demand an adaptive and data-driven venue strategy. Satisfaction surveys, mapping visitor geographic origins, evaluating facility perceptions, and testing visitor flow scenarios are practices that need to be systematically institutionalized in event planning. This aligns with the principle of customer-centric management, which places the visitor experience at the center of the entire decision-making process.

Furthermore, a managerial approach also needs to consider the relationship between the venue and strategic partners, such as sponsors, exhibitors, media partners, and the government. Venues with a good reputation and high accessibility tend to be more attractive to sponsors seeking to expand their brand reach and provide added promotional value. Similarly, exhibitors prefer exhibition spaces with adequate supporting facilities and an environment conducive to smooth business transactions. Therefore, venue selection must also be viewed within the context of the broader event ecosystem, not solely as an internal organizational issue.

Panorama Media, in this case, has demonstrated adaptive efforts by conducting a comparative evaluation of two major venues in Jakarta. However, going forward, the company needs to design a more measurable and comprehensive assessment system for determining venues, encompassing both quantitative indicators (number of visitors, geographic origin, travel time) and qualitative indicators (perceived comfort, symbolic value, ease of navigation).

Another strategic implication is the need to invest in public communications and branding of the venue. If a venue is deemed less than superior in public perception, organizers need to develop a promotional narrative that can offset or neutralize this negative perception. For example, by highlighting the event theme, unique exhibitors, providing bonus transportation access, or collaborating with digital platforms to create a virtual preview of the event location. In other words, the venue should not be positioned as a passive variable in event planning, but rather as an active element capable of influencing, shaping, and even directing audience behavior. The success of an event is determined not only by its content, but also by how the space where it takes place accommodates the hopes, comfort, and expectations of visitors.

CONCLUSION

This research confirms that venue selection strategy is a crucial element in event planning and execution, particularly in the context of Panorama Media's Franchise & License Expo Indonesia (FLEI). The analysis shows that selecting the right venue not only impacts technical operational aspects but also directly influences visitor participation rates, audience experience, and the overall image of the event.

The Jakarta Convention Center (JCC) proved more effective in attracting visitors due to its strategic location, easy access by various modes of transportation, and reputation for promoting a premium event image. This venue is more suited to the B2C market segment, which prioritizes comfort, accessibility, and the social value of an event. Conversely, JIExpo Kemayoran, despite its superior space capacity and logistical efficiency, demonstrated limitations in providing a comfortable and representative space experience, particularly for visitors coming as families or retail businesses.

These findings also underscore the importance of market segmentation in venue selection. Panorama Media demonstrated an understanding of the differences in audience characteristics at each location, but needs to enhance its data-driven approach to more detailed mapping of visitor preferences, behaviors, and expectations. Supporting facilities, perceived comfort, and the symbolic image of a venue have proven to be crucial factors in building loyalty and increasing repeat visit intentions.

Based on these findings, it is recommended that event organizers adopt a research-based approach to venue decision-making. This includes market segmentation evaluations, visitor satisfaction surveys, visitor flow mapping, and an assessment of the venue's image from the audience's perspective. Communication and branding strategies also need to be designed to align public perception of the venue, including through digital marketing, location visualization, and promotional narratives that emphasize comfort and convenience.

In the long term, venue management integrated with an understanding of audience behavior will be a crucial asset in improving the quality of event implementation, expanding

market reach, and building a positive reputation for the organizer in the eyes of the public and creative industry stakeholders.

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