



Marketing management in implementing digital branding and online marketing when facing the covid-19 pandemic

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ABSTRAK

There is a downturn in the business and financial world due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. This causes the need for an alternative form as a solution so that the products owned can still be marketed to consumers. Business people can do this by utilizing online marketing and digital branding to the fullest as a way of communication that can be done with consumers. This study aims to analyze how marketing and digital branding can be implemented during the Covid-19 pandemic. This research is qualitative, with data obtained from various research results and previous studies that are still related. This study found that online marketing strategies and digital branding were effective enough to be carried out during the Covid-19 pandemic. In addition, the implementation of online marketing and digital branding needs to be done optimally.



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INTRODUCTION

One of the COVID-19 pandemic impacts is that it is difficult for business people to market their products. Moreover, brands that have been built previously have become unknown again because the government has imposed large-scale social restrictions (PSBB) and social distancing to suppress the growth rate of positive cases (Atienza & Tabuena, 2021). According to Wirapraja, current developments require marketers to update their sales system to remain competitive in the current era. One of the business tips made to realize this system is online marketing which is expected to update the conventional marketing system that has been understood by the public (Yuliastuti et al., 2021).

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the government has also began to investigate online marketing as a potential solution to the tax deficit caused by the economic slowdown and falling state revenues. For example, one of the Bukalapak platforms prioritizes online marketing in the form of basic food products during this pandemic to meet the needs of consumers at home (Veza et al., 2021). According to Dinisari, Bukalapak's Co-founder and President Director, Fajrin Rasyid, stated that at this time, the Bukalapak company had begun to record the development of e-commerce because business at this time had moved from conventional to digital, and there was public consumption behavior. From this statement, we can conclude that the online marketing movement is fast, especially during this pandemic (Wismiarsi et al., 2020).

The Indonesian Central Statistics Agency has reported 3,504 e-commerce users across 101 regions and all provinces in Indonesia, according to 2019 statistics. From these data, only about 15.08% of the total use of e-commerce businesses can be concluded. This is in contrast to those who do not use e-commerce businesses, 84.92%. This data shows that e-commerce businesses in Indonesia are still relatively low (Effendy et al., 2021). Many Indonesian people are still comfortable with their conventional businesses, even though in the current era, there is a need for a business revolution that is all conventional into an online business or e-commerce. Several types of fashion, such as clothes, t-shirts, and shirts, are still in great demand as an e-commerce business, with the second most being sold at 22.11% (Siregar & Sinaga, 2021). Compared to other businesses such as several types of services and equipment rental and others, it is only around 20.83%. This shows that the Indonesian people are very fanatical about fashion development (Wahrlich & Simioni, 2019).

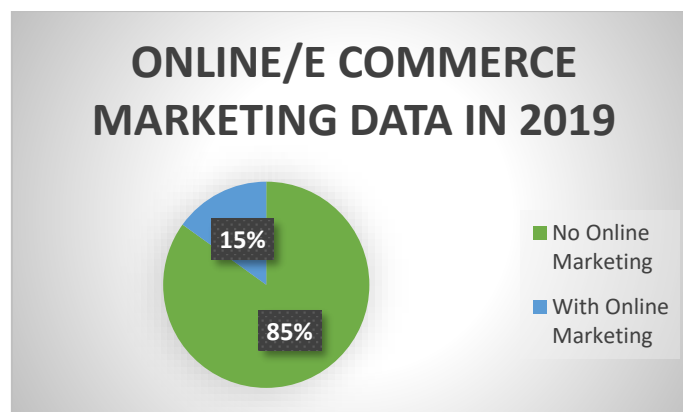


Figure 1 Percentage of online marketing/e-commerce in Indonesia

Meanwhile, according to data from the Association of Indonesian Internet Service Providers. Internet users in Indonesia in 2018 were 64.8% or around 171.17 million people of the total population in Indonesia, namely 264.16 million people with 21.6% usage in Sumatra, 55.7% in Java, 6.6% in Kalimantan, 5.2% in Bali and Nusa Tenggara, and 10.9% in Sulawesi, Maluku, and Papua. This is an increase of about 10.12% of the total number of internet users in 2017 (Yusuf et al., 2020).

We can conclude that almost half of Indonesians already use the internet. Still, if we look at statistical data on the use of internet media as a business, it is only around 15.08 percent. Of course, this is a challenge for us to improve the marketing system and digital branding to realize an advanced society's economy with marketing technology. Using online marketing strategies and building our digital branding can increase our economic welfare, considering that everything is digital now (Wozniak, 2020).

At the end of December 2019, Chinese citizens began to be stirred up by discovering a new virus thought to have originated in Wuhan. This virus is known as SARS-CoV-2, and the disease is called Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). According to WHO data, as of June 16, 2020, there were 216 infected countries, 7,941,791 confirmed cases, and 434,796 deaths. As for Indonesia, according to the task force for the acceleration of handling COVID-19, as of June 16, there were 40,400 confirmed cases, 15,703 recovered, and 2,231 cases died (Ashour et al., 2020).

According to Kotler, online marketing is a firm performance system that focuses on the sale of goods, services, and promotions using the internet to support the system. Here, online marketing is more commonly referred to as e-commerce, which is a transactional activity that leverages internet media to make shopping convenient and effective (Lopez Garcia et al., 2019). One of the benefits of online marketing in this context is that the payment system becomes more accessible and effective. Usually, people make payments using an ATM (Automatic Teller Machine). Products that are marketed are already available through internet media so that people who want to see or buy can see product displays without having to come directly to the store or the place of sale (Febriani et al., 2021). The delivery system also uses delivery services, so this online marketing system greatly helps buyers. This is considered very effective considering that many Indonesian people have used smartphones, and in addition, during this pandemic, many people have been doing their work at home (Agung et al., 2019).

Meanwhile, according to Keller, branding is a name, term, sign, symbol, design, or combination intended to identify the goods or services or groups of sellers and differentiate them from competitors. Not separated from online marketing, the role of digital branding here is also critical to support the effectiveness of online marketing. Without appropriate branding, the products sold to the public will be difficult to identify (Barijan et al., 2021). According to Rangkuti, the definition of a brand is divided into four types: 1) Brand name; 2) Brand marks; 3) Trademarks; 4) Copyrights. The brand here is also not only a mere symbol but also has a meaning to introduce the product so that the product introduced becomes popular in the eyes of the public. By building a digital brand or digital branding, the combination of online marketing and digital branding will result in an effective and efficient system of selling goods and services (Mas'ud et al., 2022).

Through the explanation above, the researcher then intends to examine how online marketing and digital branding can be done during the Covid-19 pandemic in Indonesia.

METHOD

This research was conducted using a qualitative approach. The data used in this research is secondary data, where the researcher collects mixed results of previous studies and studies that still have relevance to this research as research data. The research data that has been collected will be processed and analyzed by the researcher so that later the results of this research can be found.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Online Marketing Analysis and Digital Branding

According to 2019 statistical data, Indonesian people who have used online marketing are only around 15.08% of the total. Online marketing is one of the most powerful strategies that can be implemented today, particularly in the age of the industrial revolution. 4.0. According to the results of quantitative research conducted by Setiawati about the effect of online marketing on increasing MSME profits in Central Java, it has a positive influence. In this study, the data obtained were primary data by sending chairs to respondents online and offline. This online marketing system can improve people's welfare considering the number of internet users in Indonesia is also very large. By maximizing online marketing in the MSME sector, sales profits will increase.

Jati & Yuliansyah's research results about the influence of online marketing strategies on consumer buying interest based on a case study on the Azzam Store online shop. Their research stated that the online marketing strategy and consumer buying interest with this system were considered good, with a total average score of 336.67 for online marketing strategy and 343.33 for consumer buying interest. This research also shows that the coefficient between online marketing strategy and consumer buying interest has a very strong relationship. If the seller and buyer here have a good relationship, this can be a major factor in increasing buyer interest.

Kosasi, in his research entitled designing an online marketing information system to expand the property market segmentation, stated that this online marketing information system is beneficial in finding and offering house prices for the general public. With this online marketing system, people who want to get information about installments and repayments are easier without involving mediators.

There are various types of online marketing management systems. Putri's research results, entitled online marketing strategy design at Fullus fashion, concluded that using Instagram and Facebook online marketing strategies is very effective through benchmarking evaluation. They use websites and marketplaces to directly direct buyers to visit their social media. With this, their Instagram and Facebook visitor traffic automatically increases drastically. The promotion system they use is a news delivery system and online coupons. In addition, they also made a promotion in the form of giveaways and endorsements. Another strategy implemented by Fullus Fashion is to increase the types and collections of products. This can be seen from the rapid development of their store since adding their types and collections. In addition to making a promotion in the form of giveaways and endorsements, they also provide a guarantee if there is a product error during delivery or there is a product defect.

In addition to maximizing the online marketing system, we also have to build a brand or branding. Brands here must also be based online or digitally. By creating a brand following our marketing system, the products or services we market will be more easily accessible to buyers. According to Yusuf's research entitled optimization of branding programs and brand activation in the digital era, it is stated that building digital branding is very important to implement so that it will get the maximum impact and expand the network. Building branding here is also crucial for marketing continuity in the future or the long term. Suppose we are going to build a brand or our company logo, then, of course, we will maximize our logo so that it is known and can last 40-50 years to come. If branding has been formed, it will affect consumer buying interest in the marketed products. Consumers are also getting to know and understand the goods being sold.

Arista & Astuti, in their research entitled the analysis of the influence of advertising, brand trust, and brand image on consumer buying interest in Telkom Speedy in the city of Semarang, that among the three variables studied were advertising variables, brand trust variables, and brand image variables. From the results of these three variables, it can be concluded that the brand trust variable has the most significant influence among the other two variables, with a significance level of 0.001. From the study results, it can be said that building a brand is very important. Moreover, the public has trusted the brand as a trusted brand.

This is consistent with the findings of Farisi's study, titled The influence of brand image and product quality on purchasing decisions for Adidas shoes among students at the Muhammadiyah University of North Sumatra, which concluded that product design, brand image, and product quality exert a significant influence on consumers' purchasing decisions. If these three aspects can be maximized, the marketing and branding system can generate high profits and increase consumer interest in buying existing products.

In online marketing, digital branding is crucial because we can build a bond with customers, make our brand easy for people to remember, and expand our reach, network, and others. Digital branding can be in logos, websites, social media, and others.

The survey results from the Association of Indonesian Internet Service Providers showed that 62.8% of Indonesians believed in the security of online transactions, 19% answered they did not know, 17.1% said it was not safe, and the rest did not respond. From this data, we can conclude that the Indonesian people can trust the online marketing system in conducting online transactions.

According to the results of several studies and the data above, it can be concluded that the selection of online marketing to market goods or services has a very positive effect on both economic development and the growth of consumer buying interest. Plus, the Indonesian people are very confident in transactions using the online system at this time.

Describing Online Marketing and Digital Branding Amid the Covid-19 Pandemic

As we all know, the COVID-19 pandemic has had many impacts on economic growth in Indonesia. One of them is the number of workers who have been laid off (termination). This, of course, will affect the wheels of our economy. One of the effective tips to apply during this pandemic is maximizing online marketing and building our branding. Given the increasing number of people who start WFH (work from home). Thus the opportunity to optimize our branding and marketing is easier because internet usage during the COVID-19 pandemic is increasing rapidly. Reporting to the official CNN Indonesia website, there has been a significant increase in internet users during this pandemic, up to 40%. This happens to several internet service providers such as Indihome and Biznet and service providers such as Telkomsel, Indosat, Smartfren, and others.

One of the impacts of the turmoil of the globalization era is the decline in the traditional market and modern market enthusiasts toward the online market. This is because the benefits obtained from the online market are more significant than from the traditional market. One of the factors that cause the conventional market to lack interest is convenience, not too high cost and power, friendly prices with attractive discounts, and time efficiency. This is very suitable for this pandemic, considering that many people have considered security issues and the ease of transacting online. The online marketing system here has no limits, and customers can market their products in all corners of the world using only the internet. Apart from that, to maximize the role of online marketing, it must be accompanied by strengthening digital branding.

According to Wany, in his research entitled MSME survival strategies during the COVID-19 pandemic, MSMEs emphasized that there are several strategies that MSMEs can implement. This strategy is to change the sales model that has initially been conventional to online or e-commerce, do digital marketing and build branding to introduce its products, improve the quality of products and services for convenience and create relationships with the community and customers so that the level of consumer trust increases. If this strategy can be implemented optimally, MSMEs can run and not experience losses. This is consistent with the findings of Awali and Rohmah's study, according to which the introduction of online marketing for MSME enterprises to advertise some of their products had a beneficial impact even during the COVID-19 epidemic in which social distance was practiced. Optimizing internet marketing during a pandemic can provide solutions for all economic sectors since it adheres to the principle of the fourth industrial revolution, which employs technology to make work simpler. With this internet marketing strategy, production demand will persist, notwithstanding COVID-19's effects.

According to the research conducted by Fitriyani entitled "Post-Covid-19 Pandemic Business Management Strategy," the implementation of strategies that can be applied to build online marketing in the middle or post-pandemic is to use the 5Ps strategy, namely position, plan, perspective, project and prepare the strategy. By implementing these five strategies, online marketing can run optimally during the pandemic and post-pandemic and increase customer satisfaction. This is following research

conducted by Rapitasari, which shows that the digital marketing strategy is a strategy that aims to build communication between producers and consumers and also to build customer trust in the products to be sold. If consumers already know the product, the seller will find it easier to develop and market their products (Rapitasari & Dwiarta, 2022).

KESIMPULAN

Online marketing tactics and digital branding are highly effective marketing strategies, given that technical advancements are accelerating and the 4.0 industrial revolution has begun. This internet marketing system's benefits include easy access and communication between sellers and buyers regarding product sales, payment systems that are becoming simpler due to technological advancements, and time and location efficiency. If online marketing is maximized by building branding, the products sold will be increasingly recognized by the wider community and can maximize the role of online marketing. During this COVID-19 pandemic, internet marketing and digital branding must be efficiently handled. This is because, at the present time, a large number of people have been laid off and the chance to implement this online marketing plan is expanding, especially as internet usage during the COVID-19 pandemic has expanded greatly.

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