



Coffee Shop the Manala Depok in the study of Marketing Communication Strategy

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ABSTRACT

Optimizing marketing communication strategies is crucial for the sustainability of coffee shop businesses, especially in the digital era. This study aims to analyze the implementation and effectiveness of marketing communication strategies implemented by The Manala Coffee Shop Depok. Emphasis is placed on how communication through digital media, especially Instagram and WhatsApp, influences consumer interest. Qualitative research methods were used, with data collection through in-depth interviews conducted in January 2024. The research sample involved The Manala management and observations of consumer interactions. The results of the study indicate that digital media-based communication has varying effectiveness; consumer-initiated communication tends to be more effective. The implications of this study highlight the importance of adaptive communication strategies that focus on responsive interactions to build and maintain consumer trust, as well as increase loyalty in the competitive coffee market

INTRODUCTION

The coffee shop industry in Indonesia has shown very rapid growth in the last ten years. Its development is no longer limited to a place to drink coffee, but has evolved into a lifestyle center, a place for social interaction, a work area, and a means of recreation. This expansion phenomenon is not only dominant in big cities, but has also spread to various regions, including Depok. Data shows that consumer interest in coffee and the cafe experience continues to increase, triggering the emergence of various coffee shops with their own concepts and uniqueness. In the midst of this coffee shop "explosion", competition has become very tight, requiring every business actor to develop an effective marketing strategy in order to attract and maintain market share. (Amelia, 2023) The Manala Coffee Shop Depok is one of the business entities operating in this competitive environment. As is common in modern businesses, digital media has become an inseparable part of their communication strategy. Based on initial observations and information from the thesis that is used as a reference, The Manala actively utilizes platforms such as Instagram and WhatsApp as the main channels to interact with consumers. Instagram is used to build brand image, display menus, and announce promotions, while WhatsApp functions as a direct communication channel for orders, questions, and personal interactions. However, the fundamental question that arises is how effective is the use of digital media in attracting consumer interest and ultimately building loyalty. The phenomenological justification for this study lies in the paradox of digital marketing communication. (Darmanto, 2023)

On the one hand, digital media offers unprecedented reach and direct interaction. On the other hand, the massive ocean of information and content can drown out or ignore marketing messages. In addition, there are significant differences in how consumers respond to brand-initiated communication versus self-initiated communication. Based on interviews in the reference thesis, there are indications that communication initiated by consumers (for example, consumers asking via WhatsApp) tends to be more effective than communication initiated by the shop. (Siti, 2024)

This phenomenon is a logical starting point for this study, which will explore these dynamics more deeply. This study focuses on analyzing and evaluating the digital marketing communication strategies that have been implemented by The Manala Coffee Shop Depok. This study specifically seeks to identify how the cafe utilizes various digital channels in its promotional efforts and interactions with its consumers, with a particular emphasis on comparing the effectiveness of coffee shop-initiated versus consumer-initiated communications. This study is expected to enrich our understanding of consumer behavior in responding to digital marketing communications in the coffee industry. Theoretically, the findings of this study are expected to enrich the existing corpus of literature in the field of marketing communications, especially regarding the role of communication initiatives in building consumer interest and trust in the context of MSME businesses that are highly dependent on digital interactions. (Iwan, 2024)

Practically, these findings will provide valuable recommendations for The Manala Coffee Shop Depok, and other similar coffee shops, in designing more adaptive, responsive, and consumer-centric communication strategies, so as to increase competitiveness, strengthen customer loyalty, and ensure business sustainability in this dynamic market. (Zulfiah, 2023)

LITERATURE REVIEW

Marketing communication strategy is an approach adopted by a business entity to channel information to potential consumers, with the main aim of influencing their behavior and decisions in purchasing products or services. Referring to the views of Kotler and Armstrong, marketing communication integrates various components such as advertising, sales promotion, public relations, and personal selling. All of these elements are designed synergistically to build and strengthen bonds with customers. In the context of a coffee shop, marketing communication strategies can include the use of social media, direct promotions, and activities that involve direct interaction with customers are essential to boost their awareness and interest in the products offered. (Roby, 2023)

Research Gap

Although research on marketing communication strategies and the use of social media has been widely conducted, there is still a gap in understanding how coffee shops, especially The Manala Depok, apply these strategies in a local context. This study aims to fill this gap by analyzing the marketing communication strategies implemented by The Manala Depok and how these strategies influence consumer interest and behavior. Through this theoretical review, it is hoped that this study can provide more comprehensive insights into the marketing communication strategies implemented by The Manala Depok and their effects on consumer interest. (Devara, 2023)

METHODOLOGY

This study will use a descriptive qualitative methodology. This approach was chosen because it allows for a deep and comprehensive understanding of the marketing communication strategies implemented by The Manala Depok Coffee Shop, with a focus on exploring the “why” and “how” these strategies are implemented and exploring perceptions from various related parties. In this context, the research will not focus on collecting numerical or statistical data, but rather on narrative descriptions and This approach involves a comprehensive data analysis process, where information is collected through a series of triangulation methods: direct observation, in-depth interviews, and review and interpretation of relevant documents. (Boyka, 2024)

The population of this study includes all individuals or elements involved in the marketing communication strategy of Coffee Shop The Manala Depok, with sampling carried out using purposive sampling to select key informants such as owners/management and relevant staff, as well as several customers to gain an in-depth perspective. The data that has been successfully collected will

then be analyzed through a qualitative approach, using the interactive model from Miles, Huberman, and Saldana. This analysis process includes three main stages: data reduction, which functions to simplify and select relevant data; data presentation, where data is presented in a systematic format to facilitate understanding; and drawing conclusions or verification, in order to identify patterns and themes that emerge related to the marketing communication strategy that has been implemented.

RESULT

This study has investigated the marketing communication strategy implemented by Coffee Shop The Manala Depok, with a focus on an in-depth understanding of how they attract and retain customers amidst industry competition. This investigation was conducted through in-depth interviews with Fajar Galuh, a representative from The Manala, who provided direct insight into the communication approach they use. Qualitative data collected from the interviews were then analyzed to identify patterns, themes, and the effectiveness of The Manala's communication strategies, as well as their impact on consumer interest. The Manala Depok proactively implements various marketing communication strategies that aim to educate, persuade, and continuously remind its target market about the product offerings and services they provide. Based on the interviews, The Manala's marketing communications can be divided into two main channels. First, is digital media communication, which includes the use of Instagram as the main visual platform to interact with consumers. Instagram is used to post attractive product photos, display a comfortable Coffee shop atmosphere, and disseminate promotional information or special events through regular posts and stories. In addition to Instagram, WhatsApp is also used as a more direct and personal communication intermediary, either through Instagram direct messages which are then redirected to WhatsApp for further conversation, or consumers who directly contact The Manala via WhatsApp for questions, orders, or complaints. Second, in addition to digital communication, face-to-face communication directly at the coffee shop location is also considered crucial. Interaction between baristas or staff and visiting customers is an important means of creating a personal experience, understanding customer preferences, and building stronger emotional relationships.

The Manala's marketing communication strategy can be identified from several important aspects based on Fajar Galuh's view. They explicitly rely on digital media, but with the understanding that its effectiveness is highly dependent on communication initiatives. Fajar Galuh revealed that the communication they initiated proactively (for example, mass promotions or broadcast messages) was often less effective because it was not always responded to. Instead, they prioritized a quick response to communication initiated by consumers. This shows a strong pull marketing strategy in the digital realm, where they are ready to provide information and services when consumers actively search or ask.

The second strategy is building trust through professional communication. In maintaining consumer trust, The Manala applies a communication approach that maintains boundaries. The communication carried out is "basic only", limited to matters related to the menu or the coffee shop itself. They deliberately avoid communication that is too personal or that tries to dig up consumers' personal information. This strategy aims to build transparent and professional relationships, emphasizing the products and services offered, thus creating a sense of security and comfort for consumers.

Consumer interest in The Manala Depok is directly influenced by the dynamics of the marketing communication carried out. Interview results indicate that consumer interest is significantly higher when they take the initiative to communicate with The Manala. When consumers actively search for information or interact with The Manala via WhatsApp or Instagram DM, The Manala's quick and relevant responses trigger strong interest and potentially convert that interest into action (visits or purchases). In contrast, one-way communication from The Manala (e.g. general promotions) is less effective in generating interest if there is no reciprocal interaction from consumers. This underscores that for The Manala, two-way engagement and the ability to respond to consumers' specific needs are key in growing and maintaining consumer interest. The findings of this study can be linked to several marketing communication theories. The synergistic implementation of Instagram and WhatsApp by The Manala reflects the principles of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) Theory, where multiple communication channels are used consistently. The use of social media demonstrates the relevance of New Media Theory, which emphasizes consumer interactivity and participation in the digital age. The higher effectiveness of consumer-initiated communication is direct evidence of the importance of these characteristics in the modern media landscape. Furthermore, the findings on the effectiveness of consumer-initiated communication are very much in line with the principles of Symbolic Interaction Theory or Cognitive Response Theory, where meaning is created through interaction and active reception of messages by individuals.

The Manala's quick response to consumer inquiries builds a positive experience that is important in Public Relations Theory, which focuses on building and maintaining good relationships with the public. In addition, The Manala's approach to maintaining personal communication boundaries to build trust is in line with the concept of marketing communication ethics and the importance of building brand credibility.

Overall, The Manala Depok has successfully leveraged digital media as the backbone of their communications, specifically Instagram and WhatsApp, to reach their target audience. However, the effectiveness of their strategy is highly dependent on the nature of the interaction; consumer-initiated communications have proven to be far more effective in generating interest and building connections. This underscores the importance of a two-way and responsive communication model in today's digital environment. The Manala focuses not only on delivering their message, but also on building relationships through

quick responses and maintaining professional communication boundaries to foster trust. While the data available is qualitative and does not provide quantitative metrics, in-depth interviews with key informants provide a clear picture of The Manala's communication philosophy and practices.

They understand that in the social media landscape, active consumer engagement is key to success. Their strategy of focusing on basic coffee shop-related communications also demonstrates an understanding of the importance of keeping the focus on the core business and value proposition, without getting caught up in overly personal or intrusive communications. As such, The Manala Depok employs an adaptive, responsive, and relationship-oriented marketing communications strategy, leveraging the power of digital media while still valuing personal interactions. This strategy allows them to build brand awareness and maintain consumer loyalty in a competitive coffee shop market.

DISCUSSION

This discussion section elaborates on the research findings on the marketing communication strategy of Coffee Shop The Manala Depok, placing it in the context of academic theory and practical implications. The results show that The Manala implements an adaptive marketing communication strategy, with a significant emphasis on digital interaction and responsiveness to consumer initiatives, as well as a professional approach in maintaining trust.

The use of Instagram and WhatsApp as the main communication channels by The Manala Depok is a clear reflection of the evolution of the marketing communication landscape in the digital era. In the context of New Media Theory, these platforms do not only function as one-way information delivery tools, but also as interactive spaces that enable dialogue between brands and consumers. The finding that communication initiated by consumers tends to be more effective than communication initiated by The Manala itself, strongly supports the principle of interactivity in this theory.

When consumers actively send messages or inquiries, they demonstrate a higher level of engagement, and The Manala's quick response not only satisfies their information needs, but also reinforces positive perceptions and builds relationships. This is in line with the idea that in the digital age, consumers seek active participation and personalization, rather than just passive message reception. The effectiveness aspect of communication based on this initiative can also be explained through the lens of Symbolic Interaction Theory. Every message exchanged between The Manala and consumers is a form of symbolic interaction that creates meaning. When consumers take the initiative, they send a signal of interest that is then interpreted by The Manala, and The Manala's response in turn creates meaning for consumers about how the brand values the interaction. A satisfying response strengthens the emotional and cognitive bond, which ultimately contributes to customer loyalty.

Unanswered messages or one-way communication from The Manala can be interpreted as lacking value or relevance to consumers, thus its effectiveness is low. In addition, The Manala's strategy of maintaining communication boundaries that are "just basic" and not leading to personal matters is a smart

implementation of marketing communication ethics. In a digital landscape where consumer privacy is increasingly a concern, this approach builds trust and credibility. This is consistent with the principles of Public Relations Theory, which emphasizes the importance of building and maintaining good relationships with the public through transparent, honest, and respectful communication. By not invading consumers' privacy, The Manala positions itself as a professional and trustworthy brand, which in turn can increase long-term loyalty. This is in contrast to an aggressive approach that may be too interventionist, which can actually erode consumer trust. Although this study did not use statistical tests to measure effectiveness quantitatively, qualitative evidence from interviews with Fajar Galuh provides rich insights into The Manala's communication perceptions and practices. Fajar Galuh's explanation of the effectiveness of two-way versus one-way communication, as well as his approach to maintaining trust, is strong qualitative empirical evidence from the field. These findings confirm that The Manala Depok's marketing communication strategy is not simply following the trend of social media use, but also integrates a deep understanding of consumer behavior and the importance of responsive and ethical interactions.

The Manala Depok demonstrates good adaptation to the dynamics of contemporary marketing communications, where success is not only measured by how many messages are delivered, but also by how effectively the messages trigger interactions and build meaningful relationships with consumers.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study has succeeded in comprehensively investigating the marketing communications strategy implemented by The Manala Depok Coffee Shop, with a focus on an in-depth understanding of how the approach influences consumer interest and loyalty. Based on the analysis of qualitative data obtained through in-depth interviews with key informants from The Manala, several important conclusions can be drawn as well as practical implications that are relevant to the coffee shop industry and similar businesses.

The first conclusion is that The Manala Depok strategically integrates the use of digital media, especially Instagram and WhatsApp, as the main foundation of their marketing communications. Observations show that these platforms do not only function as channels for disseminating information, but also as crucial interactive media. The effectiveness of this communication is highly dependent on consumer initiative; communications originating from consumer questions or engagement have proven to be much more successful in attracting interest and creating bonds than messages initiated by The Manala itself. This phenomenon underlines the paradigm shift of marketing communication towards a more responsive and consumer-centric model, where brands must be ready to actively engage when consumers show interest.

The second conclusion highlights The Manala's strategy in building and maintaining consumer trust. They adopt a professional and careful communication approach, limiting conversations to essential matters related to

the Coffee shop's products and services, without trying to intervene in the consumer's private sphere. This approach is crucial in fostering credibility and building long-term relationships, as it demonstrates respect for privacy and focuses on the intrinsic value offered by the brand. Adherence to this kind of communication ethics forms a solid foundation of trust, which is crucial in building customer loyalty in a competitive market.

The practical implications of this research are significant. For The Manala Depok, it is important to continue strengthening and optimizing the speed and quality of responses to every interaction initiated by consumers, as this has been proven to directly affect interest and potential conversion. In addition, they can explore creative methods to trigger consumer initiatives, such as through interactive content on social media or campaigns that encourage dialogue. Maintaining professional communication boundaries and focusing on the core business should also be a priority, as this is key to maintaining a trusted brand image.

More broadly, these findings suggest that service sector businesses should invest in responsive, relationship-oriented communication strategies that leverage the power of digital media while upholding personal interaction and communication etiquette. The Manala Depok demonstrates an effective model for adapting to the dynamics of modern marketing communications, where success is measured not only by the reach of the message, but also by the depth of interaction and trust built.

FUTURE STUDY

Any research, including this study on The Manala Depok's marketing communications strategy, has intrinsic limitations that need to be acknowledged in order to provide an accurate picture of the scope and generalizability of the findings. The primary limitation of this study lies in the qualitative nature of its methodology, which focuses on a single key informant. While Fajar Galuh's views, as a representative of The Manala, are valuable and relevant, the data collected is perceptual in nature and may not fully reflect the full perspective of the management or operational teams. Furthermore, this study did not include direct interviews with The Manala consumers, meaning that understanding consumer interests and perceptions is based on the coffee shop's interpretations, rather than the direct voice of customers. This limits the ability to generalize the findings to a wider consumer population or gain a deeper understanding of the customer experience.

This study also does not include quantitative analysis of marketing communication metrics such as social media engagement rates, WhatsApp message reach, or sales conversion data that can be directly linked to the communication strategy. This lack of numerical data limits the capacity to objectively measure the effectiveness of the strategy and compare it to industry benchmarks. Given these limitations, suggestions for further research are as follows: first, adopting mixed methods that combine qualitative and quantitative data. This could include large-scale consumer surveys to measure interests and

behaviors, and digital metrics analysis to evaluate campaign effectiveness. Second, conducting comparative studies with other coffee shops could provide insights into best practices and compare different strategies. Third, in-depth content analysis of all of The Manala's digital communication materials could identify more detailed message patterns. Fourth, studying consumer perspectives through focus group discussions or in-depth interviews could enrich the understanding of how The Manala's strategy is directly received by their target audience. By addressing these limitations, future research could provide a more comprehensive, measurable, and generalizable understanding of marketing communication strategies, and make a more substantial contribution to the field of marketing communications.

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