

Digital Marketing as a Strategy to Improve Higher Education Promotion During the COVID-19 Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

In the realm of business, one of the most crucial components in establishing a company's success is promotion. As a result, producers will engage in various sorts of promotions, which will be costly. It's not only promotion from one individual to the next. Social media is now frequently employed as a digital marketing approach. Universities recruit students in the same way that businesses do. Promotions are run to boost the number of prospective students who apply to the college. The education sector in Indonesia will be virtually completely crippled by the year 2020. The government is urging the entire community to exercise physical distance in the middle of the COVID-19 outbreak, which is causing great concern among Indonesia's entire population. Universities all around Indonesia are having difficulty operating as a result of this. Almost all colleges have implemented work-from-home policies, which impede academic and non-academic activities and prevent new students from enrolling. The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in a significant reduction in the number of potential students enrolling at universities. Universities have a hard time promoting and introducing themselves to the general population. Universities can use digital marketing media to promote higher education as one solution. The purpose of this study is to conceptually examine digital marketing strategies to Improve Higher Education Promotion. The research method used is descriptive research. The findings of this study indicate that social media materials play a major role.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted all aspects of life, including schooling. The government's policy of physical separation has resulted in the closure of all educational institutions. Online media must be used to carry out teaching and learning activities. Every employee in the college administration department works from home. This is a separate

barrier to administrative work for employees. Promotion and college registration are two administrative tasks that are limited. Physical separation has the effect of making prospective students and their parents/guardians hesitant to seek new student registration information.

Because people are encouraged to stay at home, higher education marketing, which is normally carried out through billboards and banners, is currently unproductive. As a result, universities must consider alternative methods of promotion [2]. Social networking is one of the most prominent digital marketing platforms nowadays. Making posters or films for social media promotion is an option [3]. Posters, on the other hand, are less appealing for usage on social media because the amount of information that can be presented on them is limited. In this scenario, the college feels compelled to create a college promotional video that can be shared on social media platforms like TikTok [4].

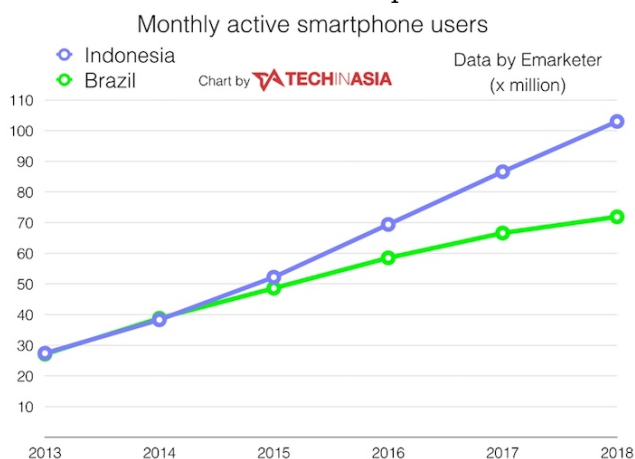


Figure 1. The Totally of Smartphone Users in Indonesia
Source: id.techinasia.com

The use of new media such as smartphones is fast increasing; in 2018, there were about 100 million active smartphone users in Indonesia, making it the country with the fourth-biggest smartphone population [5]. After China, India, and the United States, humans now have access to all of the information they need, even university searches, thanks to cell phones. In general, modern culture uses cell phones as a means of carrying out daily tasks such as purchasing daily essentials via smartphone applications. The smartphone applications accessible differ based on the demands of the community. The number of TikTok users in Indonesia will reach 92.07 million in 2022, according to data from ByteDance advertising. Tiktok is the most popular application that is useful for sharing videos [6].

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Marketing Management

According to Suparyanto & Rosad [7], is the process of analyzing, planning, organizing, and managing programs that include the conceptualization, pricing, promotion, and distribution of products, services, and ideas to create and maintain profitable exchanges with target markets in order to achieve company goals .

2.2 Digital Marketing

Digital marketing is a technique aimed at increasing communication between producers and consumers, as well as increasing customer trust in the products being offered. It will be easier for the seller to develop and market their products if the product is already well-known by consumers (Rapitasari) [8]

2.3 Strategy

According to Sondang Siagian [8], the best method to employ available cash and labor in response to the demands of environmental change is to apply the strategy. A

strategy is a plan, method, or set of maneuvers or tactics designed to attain specific objectives or consequences.

2.4 Social Media

Social media is an online medium that allows users to effortlessly interact, share, and produce content. It includes blogs, social networks, forums, and the virtual world, which is the most widely used kind of social media. According to another viewpoint, social media is an online medium that facilitates social contact, as well as a web-based technology that transforms communication into an interactive discussion (Anang Sugeng) [9].

2.5 Promotion

"Promotion is a set of incentive techniques, most of which are short-term, aimed to drive the faster and higher purchase of specific items or services by customers or traders," according to Philip Kotler, as translated by Benjamin Molan [10].

The use of the Internet as a medium to connect two-way communication between organizations and consumers is known as digital marketing [[11]]. The usage of social media [12], which is commonly employed by marketers, is an example of how digital marketing promotes sales promotion [13]. Similarly, colleges are increasingly turning to digital marketing to expand their reach and lower their expenditures [14]. The existence of social media is a mechanism for consumers to disseminate information in the form of text, photographs, audio, and video to a wide range of parties, including both companies and consumers [15].

3. METHOD

The research approach employed was descriptive research, which is a type of research targeted at characterizing currently occurring phenomena [16]. Descriptive research strives to create a methodical, factual, and accurate picture of a study object's facts and features [16]. It can be decided to implement a digital marketing strategy based on the analysis of the two characteristics above, with the stages of determining the best strategy and the initial step of laying the digital foundation in the form of identifying businesses, competitors, customers, business targets, and progress [17].

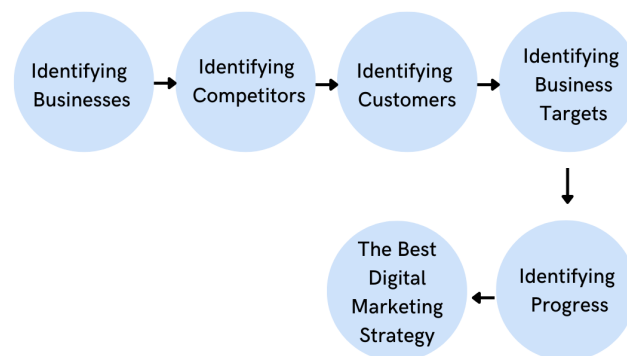
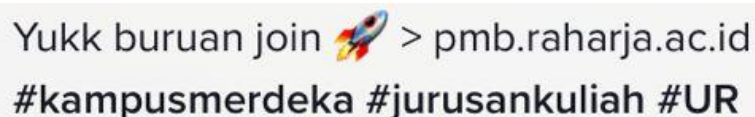


Figure 1. Stages of Determining the Best Strategy

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The first step in implementing a promotional strategy is interactive marketing, which constantly involves customers in their business operations [18]. Next comes publicity or public relations, where universities can forge strong connections with customers, one of which is producing video content that draws customers to TikTok [19]. Finally, there are sales promotions [20], which include giving out discounts, price cuts, coupons, or other incentives [20]. In order to promote higher education, increase interest, and grow their

TikTok account followers, a variety of methods are employed on TikTok, such as hashtags (tags), intriguing content creation, and trend following, utilizing clear descriptions, and consistently posting video content on TikTok [21].



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Figure 3. Clear hashtag and caption examples

Internal strategy analysis is crucial for the successful use of digital marketing tactics. Another aspect, though, should not be disregarded. When it comes to customers from the digital market, which is the company's primary target market, external conditions must also be taken into consideration. Customers have high expectations for a variety of things, particularly for digital marketing media that is simple for them to utilize whether they engage in physical or online purchasing and selling. When customers are at ease utilizing social media, they can use it more effectively and efficiently. Along with how comfortable they are using social media [22], consumers take into account how content producers deliver information. Customers will find it easier to obtain information and are therefore more likely to locate what they are looking for fast [23].

Digital marketing mediums also have the quality of being user-centric [23]. Given that digital technology enables consumer involvement in product creation, media that can meet consumer preferences in terms of this involvement will increase the sense of control the consumer feels over the product through the feedback they provide, thereby creating positive value for consumers [24].

Customers will be satisfied with a digital marketing plan if it can accomplish the aforementioned goals, as it is the definition of customer satisfaction, which is a state in which a product or service's usability may match or even exceed customer expectations. Customer satisfaction in this circumstance is communication satisfaction because the digital marketing strategy is simply a plan implemented in terms of communicating with customers through digital communication channels [25]

5. CONCLUSION

A marketing plan known as a "digital marketing strategy" makes use of information technology that is always evolving. For these methods to be effective and to choose the best Digital Marketing plan, a business must implement them while taking into account a variety of internal and external elements. The main goal of establishing a digital marketing strategy is to increase college promotion by fostering connections between brands and consumers, specifically through communicating the brand to foster trust and loyalty. Conceptually, it can be deduced that there is a relationship between the application of digital marketing methods to raise customer pleasure and subsequently boost interest in enrolling in college. Loyalty is the outcome of the accumulation of recurrent satisfaction.

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