

PROMOTION STRATEGY TO INCREASE ENGAGEMENT THROUGH INSTAGRAM AT BEEJE COFFEE LHOKSEUMAWE

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Abstract

This research aims to analyze Instagram-based promotional strategies used by Beeje Coffee Lhokseumawe in increasing customer engagement. In the digital era, social media marketing has become essential for small businesses, especially those in the culinary industry. This qualitative descriptive study utilized interviews, observation, and documentation to examine how Beeje Coffee crafts its promotional content, utilizes Instagram features, and addresses limitations in digital engagement. The findings reveal that visual consistency, creative content, and audience interactivity significantly impact engagement metrics. However, the absence of structured planning and limited digital skills remain major obstacles. The study is supported by theories of promotional strategy, digital marketing, social media utilization, Instagram branding, and digital engagement.

Keywords: Promotional strategy, instagram, engagement, visual, branding, digital marketing.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis strategi promosi berbasis Instagram yang diterapkan oleh Beeje Coffee Lhokseumawe dalam meningkatkan keterlibatan (*engagement*) pelanggan. Di era digital, pemasaran melalui media sosial menjadi kebutuhan utama, khususnya bagi usaha mikro dan menengah di sektor kuliner. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif melalui wawancara, observasi, dan dokumentasi, untuk mengkaji bagaimana Beeje Coffee menyusun konten promosi, memanfaatkan fitur Instagram, serta mengatasi keterbatasan dalam *engagement* digital. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa konsistensi visual, konten yang kreatif, serta interaksi dengan audiens sangat memengaruhi performa keterlibatan. Namun, kurangnya perencanaan dan keterampilan digital masih menjadi kendala utama. Penelitian ini didukung oleh teori strategi promosi, pemasaran digital, pemanfaatan media sosial, branding Instagram, dan *engagement* digital.

Kata Kunci: Strategi promosi, instagram, engagement, branding visual, pemasaran digital.

INTRODUCTION

Amid the rapid advancement of information and communication technologies, social media has fundamentally transformed the ways in which businesses interact with consumers. Instagram, as a visually oriented platform, facilitates promotional practices that are not only informational but also aesthetic and emotionally resonant, thereby enhancing persuasive communication (Junawan & Laugu, 2020). For small and medium-sized enterprises

such as Beeje Coffee in Lhokseumawe, Instagram represents a strategic digital channel for reaching younger consumer segments, particularly Generation Z, strengthening brand presence, and fostering customer engagement.

Currently in its twelfth year of operation, Beeje Coffee offers several flagship products, including sanger coffee, espresso, and Gayo coffee. The predominance of delivery-based orders among its customers further underscores the effectiveness of Instagram as a promotional

medium in driving sales performance. The brand's official Instagram account (@beejecoffee.id) has attracted more than 6,448 followers. Interactive features such as likes, comments, and content sharing function as measurable indicators of audience response and two-way communication between the brand and its followers. In an increasingly competitive coffee industry, the strategic utilization of digital marketing has become essential for expanding market reach and attracting potential customers.

To date, Instagram has emerged as one of the most influential social media platforms for entrepreneurs, serving as a critical tool for online business communication that should not be underestimated. The adoption of Instagram-based promotional strategies enables firms to reduce marketing costs, time, and labor while potentially enhancing sales performance. This aligns with the central role of customer satisfaction in contemporary marketing theory and practice (Riza et al., 2021). Nevertheless, digital promotion does not inherently guarantee high levels of engagement. Many businesses continue to face challenges related to content consistency, limited human resources, and insufficient understanding of platform algorithms and data-driven insights.

Furthermore, rapid environmental and market dynamics have intensified competition across industries. Marketing success is frequently assessed through the attainment of customer loyalty, which is closely linked to effective marketing strategies and sustained customer satisfaction (Zikir et al., 2019). Accordingly, this study is significant in providing empirical insights into how digital promotional strategies particularly those implemented via Instagram can be systematically designed and sustainably executed to enhance customer engagement.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Promotion Strategy Theory

Promotion is one of the essential elements of the marketing mix, serving to inform, persuade, and remind consumers about a product. According to Kotler and Keller (2020, p. 189), promotion refers to activities undertaken by a company to communicate product advantages to consumers through various media. Lubis and Pratama (2021) define a promotion strategy as a systematically designed long-term plan intended to ensure that marketing communication activities are carried out effectively and achieve predetermined objectives. Prihadi and Susilawati (2018) argue that promotion encompasses activities such as advertising, sales promotion, publicity, and personal selling, each of which performs a specific function in delivering messages to consumers. In this context, the selection of promotional media and methods should be aligned with market segmentation as well as the firm's strategic objectives.

According to Tjiptono (2014:221), promotion strategies can be designed based on the communication objectives to be achieved, such as creating brand awareness, shaping product perceptions, or increasing sales. These strategies must also be aligned with technological developments, particularly within the context of digital promotion. Accordingly, promotion strategy serves as a foundational element in establishing effective marketing communication. The selection of social media as a promotional channel should be accompanied by a comprehensive understanding of target audience characteristics. Herdiyani et al. (2022) emphasize that social media represents an interactional medium that aligns with contemporary digital culture, making it a relevant and effective platform for marketing communication.

Solikah et al. (2021) state that promotion aims to familiarize consumers with a company's products, thereby stimulating interest and ultimately leading to purchase decisions. Accordingly, promotion can be understood as a strategic activity that not only introduces products to consumers but also plays a crucial role in shaping desire and preference, encouraging purchasing decisions, and fostering long-term relationships between firms and consumers.

Digital Marketing Theory

Digital marketing refers to the marketing process that utilizes digital technologies and the internet to reach consumers in a broader and more personalized manner. According to Chaffey (2021:11), digital marketing involves the use of digital technologies combined with traditional marketing methods to enhance the effectiveness of communication with consumers. Afifah (2016) emphasizes that digital marketing not only enables real-time, two-way interactions but also provides accurate data analytics capabilities to evaluate the performance of promotional campaigns. Setiawan et al. (2023) argue that elements such as websites, social media, search engine optimization (SEO), and email marketing constitute integral components of a digital marketing strategy.

Furthermore, Akbar et al. (2023:58) highlight that within the context of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), digital marketing can bridge capital limitations by expanding market reach through creative content and the optimal utilization of social media platforms. Therefore, a comprehensive understanding of digital marketing is crucial for business practitioners in designing promotional strategies that are relevant and competitive in the modern business environment.

Instagram Marketing and Visual Branding Theory

Instagram is a visual-based social media platform that is widely used for promotional and branding activities. According to Putri (2022, p. 49), Instagram provides extensive opportunities to present brand images through visually appealing, aesthetic, and easily shareable content. Cristin et al. (2021:36) note that Instagram features such as Feeds, Stories, Reels, and Highlights can be strategically utilized to expand promotional reach and develop brand identity.

The use of color tones, design consistency, and distinctive visual styles constitutes an essential component of visual branding strategies. Zein (2019, p. 28) further asserts that strong visual representation contributes to the creation of brand recall and reinforces consumer perceptions of the products or services offered. Therefore, business practitioners must be able to align promotional content with Instagram's dynamic and highly competitive visual characteristics. Accordingly, Instagram should not be regarded merely as a photo-sharing platform, but rather as a strategic branding tool that plays a significant role in shaping consumer perceptions and strengthening brand engagement.

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach, aiming to describe and analyze Beeje Coffee's promotional strategies through Instagram in enhancing customer engagement. According to Sugiyono (2019), qualitative research relies on primary data sources and utilizes data collection techniques such as interviews, with data analysis conducted through field-based descriptive interpretation to produce comprehensive conclusions.

DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

The implementation of promotional strategies through Instagram by Beeje Coffee has had a positive impact on consumer interaction, particularly in fostering closeness and enhancing brand identity. Promotions are carried out through visual content such as product photos, interactive Stories, and Reels showcasing the café atmosphere. This strategy facilitates the direct and engaging delivery of promotional information. Similar approaches have been observed in previous studies (Mahardhika et al., 2019; Roni & Rahim, 2021).

Beeje Coffee utilizes Instagram Feed to upload various types of visual content, including photos and videos of coffee menus, promotional information, customer testimonials, and documentation of specific activities. Feed posts are not scheduled regularly but are instead uploaded based on the availability of content deemed interesting or relevant for publication. This strategy aims to ensure that each post maintains high visual quality and can attract maximum audience attention.

One of the main features employed is Instagram Stories, which allows Beeje Coffee to deliver brief information such as daily promotions and customer polls. This not only enhances audience engagement but also strengthens two-way communication with consumers (Mukhlis et al., 2023). Consistent use of visual elements further contributes to reinforcing brand identity (Chandra, 2021).

However, there are several limitations in the implementation of this strategy. Beeje Coffee does not yet have a fixed posting schedule and has not fully utilized Instagram Insights for content performance analysis. Additionally, the lack of expertise in content design and social

media strategy presents challenges that need to be addressed.

Overall, the promotional strategy implemented has demonstrated effectiveness in capturing audience attention and fostering engagement. Jefkins (2018) emphasizes that well-planned content in the digital realm constitutes an optimal component of corporate strategic management. With improved content planning and digital training, this strategy can be further enhanced to achieve more optimal results.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of promotional strategies through Instagram by Beeje Coffee has had a positive impact on enhancing customer engagement and strengthening brand image. Promotions are conducted using various features such as Feed, Stories, and Reels, which are utilized to convey promotional information, foster two-way communication, and expand audience reach in the digital environment.

Consistent, interactive, and visually appealing content has been shown to increase follower responses, including likes, comments, and shares. Moreover, the use of interactive Stories, such as polls and quizzes, has successfully facilitated direct and real-time customer engagement, thereby enhancing consumer loyalty to the brand.

Nevertheless, several challenges remain in the execution of this strategy, including the absence of a regular content calendar, limited analysis of insight data, and constraints in human resources (HR) in areas such as design and copywriting. Consequently, training and the enhancement of digital literacy are necessary to optimize the effectiveness of the implemented strategy.

Overall, digital promotional strategies via Instagram have proven effective in increasing customer engagement at Beeje Coffee and are expected to be further developed in a more structured manner in the future.

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