Digital Marketing: Marketing Strategy for Madrasah Education Services During The Covid-19 Pandemic

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Abstract:
This study aims to analyze marketing strategies to promote madrasas for new students. The research approach is descriptive qualitative to analyze the digital marketing process that madrasas have carried out in recruiting new students during the Covid-19 pandemic. Data analysis was carried out interactively using the Miles and Huberman method, which included data collection, data presentation, data reduction, and concluding. The study results show that, first, the "superior madrasah" brand is part of digital marketing carried out by MTs N 1 Yogyakarta to attract new students. Second, the digital marketing process is carried out through several stages: setting goals, mapping target markets, initiating and planning content, creating content, distributing content, strengthening content, evaluating content marketing, improving content marketing, and online and offline marketing. Third, digital marketing is quite effective in increasing the enrollment of new students at madrasah.

Keywords: Digital Marketing, Education Services Marketing, Excellent Madrasah

Abstract:
Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis tentang strategi marketing untuk mempromosikan madrasah bagi peserta didik baru. Pendekatan penelitian adalah kualitatif deskriptif untuk menganalisis proses digital marketing yang telah dilakukan oleh madrasah dalam merekrut peserta didik baru di masa pandemi Covid-19. Analisis data dilakukan secara interaktif dengan menggunakan metode Miles dan Huberman yang meliputi pengumpulan data, penyajian data, reduksi data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa, pertama, brand "madrasah unggul" menjadi bagian digital marketing yang dilakukan oleh MTs N 1 Yogyakarta untuk menarik minat peserta didik baru. Kedua, proses digital marketing yang dilakukan melalui beberapa tahap, yaitu: penetapan tujuan, pemetaan target pasar, pengagasann dan perencanaan konten, penciptaan konten, distribusi konten, penguatan konten, evaluasi pemasaran konten, perbaikan pemasaran konten, dan pemasaran online dan offline. Ketiga, digital marketing cukup efektif dalam meningkatkan jumlah pendaftaran peserta didik baru di madrasah.

Kata Kunci: Digital Marketing, Pemasaran Jasa Pendidikan, Madrasah Unggul

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INTRODUCTION

The Covid-19 pandemic, which was first discovered in Wuhan in December 2019 (Wang et al., 2020), forced a change in the education system that was usually carried out face-to-face (offline) directly with students to become virtual (online) (Tufan et al., 2020; Churiyah et al., 2020) using various media, such as Zoom Cloud Meeting, Google Meet, Webex.com, Google Classroom, and so on. Changes have also occurred in the marketing of educational services. The Covid-19 pandemic has encouraged educational institutions to market educational services through online media to avoid the risk of contracting Covid-19. This is what is called a digital-based marketing approach (digital marketing). According to Diana Prihadini et al. that digital marketing is an essential factor in promoting private tertiary institutions and attracting new students during the Covid-19 pandemic (Prihadini et al., 2020).

This research focuses on the implementation of digital marketing as a marketing strategy for educational services at MTs N 1 Yogyakarta during the Covid-19 pandemic. The first positive case of Covid-19 entering Indonesia was found on March 2, 2020 (Sukur et al., 2020). To avoid spreading, the Government of Indonesia issued PP No. 21 of 2020 concerning Large-Scale Social Restrictions (PSBB) to the "New Normal" policy (Irwanto & Arifin, 2020). This policy encourages MTs N 1 Yogyakarta to optimize digital marketing to attract new students. Based on the results of observations made on June 10, 2020, there was a threefold increase in the interest of students enrolling at MTs N 1 Yogyakarta during the 2020/2021 school year.

Digital marketing for the education industry is beneficial in facilitating external consumers (students/students) in finding products because, with the internet, information spreads faster and reaches consumers (Ikatrinasari et al., 2020). It is essential to research education marketing to examine the strategies used by institutions in marketing educational services. This is also due to high competition between educational institutions (Tyagita, 2016) and public interest, as consumers are more selective in choosing only quality educational institutions for their children (Asrori, 2016). Thus, institutions that cannot provide complete educational services (quality) and need help to build good communication with the community will be unable to compete (Anam, 2013). On this basis, education marketing is critical to position educational institutions as commodities that provide educational services to the community (Faizin, 2017).

The development of the industrial revolution era 4.0 demands changes in all service areas, one of which is information technology-based educational services. To market these services, marketing of educational services virtually (online) or known as digital marketing, is needed. Techniques that facilitate access and publication of information using social interaction through social media (K. & A.H, 2012). Social media has become popular because it provides convenience (Pradiwanto, 2018). There is an opportunity for people to connect online, whether in business, political or personal relationships (Agung & Darma, 2019).

The development of marketing theory (marketing) has led to marketing 4.0. Philip Kotler et al., in their two books, marketing 3.0 (Kotler et al., 2010) and
marketing 4.0, explained that the development of this theory changed the orientation of marketing. Marketing 1.0 is product oriented to marketing 2.0 is customer oriented. Marketing 3.0 is human-oriented towards marketing 4.0, which is a marketing approach that combines online and offline interactions (Kotler et al., 2020).

Digital marketing demands seriousness in educational marketing services in detail on social media (website). Research by Kadek Ardi Permana & Agus Putu Abiyasa found that some people prefer to go directly to the educational institution they will choose instead of looking at their profiles on social media because the information conveyed is not clear (detail) (Permana & Abiyasa, 2019). Digital Marketing only has an effect of 15.1% in shaping the company's image in society.

Research conducted by Abdu (2018) states that digital marketing only influences 15.1% of the formation of corporate image in society. Meanwhile, Untari & Fajariana's (2018) research states that marketing using social media (Instagram) has been effective but has yet to be used optimally. Hence, there is a need to approach consumers via telephone or inform consumers directly.

Another study explained that student involvement in choosing and making decisions about choosing the campus of their choice must be supported by digital marketing carried out by the campus that will be their choice. Therefore, the campus must provide a strong understanding of the digital marketing program so prospective students can easily access it (Rochmah & Kusumawati, 2019). Based on the above literature review, this article examines the implementation of digital marketing as a madrasah strategy in marketing educational services during the Covid-19 pandemic.

RESEARCH METHODS

This qualitative research examines the process of implementing digital marketing in promoting madrasas to the public and prospective new students, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic. Data collection techniques through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation studies (Sugiyono, 2011). For data validation techniques, researchers used to source and method triangulation techniques. Source triangulation, namely the use of different sources to gather similar data; for example, in this study, researchers conducted interviews with madrasa principals cross-checked with interviews with teachers. Meanwhile, method triangulation uses different data collection methods to obtain data. For example, in this study, the results of interview data regarding the use of digital marketing increased the interest of new students being cross-checked with data originating from PPDB registration documents for the 2020/2021 Academic Year.

The data analysis method used in this study uses a qualitative analysis description technique, in which the researcher describes the situation or phenomenon obtained and then analyzes it in sentences to obtain conclusions. This study uses qualitative data analysis from Miles and Huberman (1992), namely data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing or data verification.
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Branding "Superior Madrasah"

The "Superior Madrasah" brand launched by the Ministry of Religion was used as a marketing strategy by MTs N 1 Yogyakarta. To maintain the "Excellent Madrasah" brand, it is necessary to improve the quality of madrasas, maintain the achievements that have been achieved, and encourage and facilitate teachers and students to excel and innovate. To encourage achievement, every semester, the head of the madrasa awards community members who get achievements in the form of certificates or scholarships for students.

The "Madrasah Ungul" branding was utilized by MTs N 1 Yogyakarta to open the "superior class" program as a pioneering form of superior madrasah. This program has been running for two years, namely the 2019 and 2020 Academic Years. Efforts have been made by MTs N 1 Yogyakarta to become a superior madrasah by opening special classes, namely special academic excellence classes and special research classes. The research class is currently making a technology product, including electronic masks and agricultural pest catchers.

To make this particular class program successful, the madrasah collaborates with research institutions to develop the program. So students who enter the superior class continue to obtain regular material and receive unique additional material as a feature of the particular superior class program.

MTs N 1 Yogyakarta in carrying out brand marketing as a "superior madrasah" using a digital marketing approach. The programs that have been developed are used as content to be conveyed to the public using the madrasa website and social media such as Instagram and Facebook. Marketing through digital marketing can reach a wider audience and, of course, provide easy access to the information needed. Besides that, digital marketing is also an alternative to building the image of the madrasa through social media.

The image of the madrasa is an assessment of the institution. An image can be generated by objectively assessing society's behaviour and institutional ethics amid society. Image can also be said to be a feeling, a public self-image of an institution, or an impression intentionally created from an object, person, or organization.

Madrasahs with superior predicates can compete and carry out updates from various things so that other madrasa institutions will include that madrasah institution. Madrasahs must continue to improve their good image in society so that the value of trust given by the community will remain high in these madrasas, and the goal of becoming a superior madrasah will be achieved through the goals, vision, and mission (Givari, 2020).

Content Marketing as a Digital Marketing Strategy

Content marketing includes the production of content and its distribution. Social media marketing develops business performance, consumer relations and consumer behaviour (Taneja & Bala, 2019). According to Kotler et al. There are eight steps in content marketing, namely (1) setting goals, (2) mapping target markets, (3) content planning and planning, (4) content creation, (5) content
distribution, (6) content reinforcement, (7) evaluation of content marketing, and (8) improvement of content marketing (Kotler et al., 2020).

Digital marketing strategy at MTs N 1 Yogyakarta through content marketing about madrasas which is published via; website: http://www.mtsn1yogyakarta.sch.id; 2) Instagram; https://instagram.com/mtsnegeri1yk_official ?utm_medium=copy_link; and 3) Facebook; http://www.facebook.com/groups/2992540994312286/?ref=share. The content marketing steps that have been carried out are as follows:

1. Setting goals for creating content to make it easier for the public to access madrasah information. To expand the online marketing network and make it easier for the public to access information, MTs N 1 Yogyakarta has created a website and Instagram that contain content about madrasas. According to Mr Lukman Hamid (Deputy Public Relations Officer of MTs N 1 Yogyakarta), the website and Instagram owned by the madrasa contain contents of madrasa achievements so that they are easily accessible to the public and prospective students. Madrasah's website content contains writing, photos, and videos. This article reports madrasa activities accompanied by photographs as authentic evidence of these activities. Meanwhile, short videos record testimonials from madrasa services (Hamid, 2020).

2. Mapping the target market and madrasah promotion targets. Marketing of educational services is needed in the modern era to achieve the target interest of students. Each institution can promote educational services through social media according to its market segmentation. MTs N 1 Yogyakarta has a segmentation of students who come from Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) and Elementary Schools (SD) with predetermined requirements. Madrasas provide all prospective students equal opportunity to participate in the selection at MTs N 1 Yogyakarta.

3. Initiation and content planning as promotional material. The Madrasah, Public Relations section, prepares content concept planning; content and content follow-ups are joint duties and obligations for all elements of the madrasa. Content drafting is currently still collaborating or using services from external parties due to limited internal madrasah human resources. Like creating a madrasah profile, the concept is made by the madrasah, while the execution of the creative uses the services of content creators from external madrasahs.

4. Digital content creation. Content created by madrasas, based on certain momentum, can be a gap for madrasas to promote to the public. Like the momentum of the enrollment period for new students, of course, the content created is content related to how to choose an ideal and good school. Like the momentum of the month of Ramadan, madrasas are trying to make digital posts about greetings for the month of Ramadan, which is essentially a form of introduction for madrasas to the public.

5. Distribution of content through madrasah social media. Content distribution currently uses the madrasa website platform, madrasa Facebook, and madrasa Instagram. As for the madrasa website, the content will appear on the initial homepage so that digital posts will immediately appear when
someone visits the website, which will be sold to the public. As for Facebook and Instagram, posts will appear on feeds, Insta Stories, and Facebook Stories. Thus, the existing content can be seen by many people quickly. As for content in the form of videos, MTsN 1 Yogyakarta distributes it through the madrasa YouTube. When there are activities of a significant nature, there will be live on the YouTube channel.

6. Strengthening digital content. Strengthening the content carried out by MTs N 1 Yogyakarta is by updating the existing content according to the needs and momentum. This was done so that there would be refreshments on the social media accounts managed by the madrasah and that followers who had followed the social media accounts could follow them. Then another strengthening is that, in terms of content, madrasas try to keep the content short and dense of information so that readers of the content do not need to translate the content’s intent too long, such as a short 1-minute video about MTs N 1 Yogyakarta.

7. Evaluation of digital content marketing. According to information from Madrasah Public Relations, the evaluation of content marketing needs to be more specific. Because madrasas do not use a paid platform, it is just that the evaluation is rolled out when there is inappropriate content to be published or an evaluation of the effectiveness of the content against the expectations that the madrasa wants to achieve for this content.

8. Digital content marketing improvements. Digital marketing must analyse targeted consumers to adjust content and think about how to promote it (Suganya et al., 2020). Education Marketing at MTs N 1 Yogyakarta is carried out through the twibon platform, namely photo media with a madrasa background. This Twibon is also shared with alums to help market madrasas to the public and their testimonials for educational services at madrasas. In addition, to speed up the dissemination of information, madrasas use WhatsApp broadcasts which are shared with WhatsApp groups (WAG) which contain New Student Registration (PPDB) and so on.

9. Online and offline marketing. Apart from using a digital marketing approach, MTsN 1 Yogyakarta also conducts marketing through conventional channels (offline) by printing brochures containing information about madrasas and socialization of madrasas to Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) or Elementary Schools (SD) to attract prospective new students.

Digital Marketing as a Marketing Strategy for Madrasah Education Services

Digital marketing aims to bring consumers and products together using electronic and social media, such as Facebook, Instagram, or website and email platforms. Digital marketing is closely related to internet use; according to research, Indonesia is included in the world's top ten countries with the most internet users. In March 2019, 143.26 million Indonesians were using the internet, putting Indonesia in fifth place in the world in internet usage (Junusi, 2020).

Social media platforms provide a new perspective in connecting consumers and products. The ability to reach promotions not only to one customer at a time but to be reached by the public at large, to follow, collect some
information, store, analyze and communicate continuously with customers is made a new thing for marketing managers who deal with digital marketing. On the other hand, social media empowers products and all online customers. Public opinion on social media is more concerned with service or product sellers to improve quality (Grubor & Jaksa, 2018).

Social media is essential for HEI recruiting and marketing, which can directly correlate to institutional success and influence educational policy (Paladan, 2018). Digital marketing is carried out by MTs N 1 Yogyakarta to implement New Student Admissions (PPDB) for the 2020/2021 school year by delivering various excellent programs held on social media and websites. As for social media, MTsN 1 Yogyakarta focuses on Instagram and Facebook accounts and shares information via the existing Whatsapp group. This effort has had a good impact even during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Digital marketing that has been carried out by MTs N 1 Yogyakarta has had an impact on increasing the amount of student interest. Even the condition of the Covid-19 pandemic did not reduce students' enthusiasm to register at MTs N 1 Yogyakarta, namely around 1,500 registrants during PPDB for the 2020/2021 Academic Year. Of the 1,500 applicants, it is known that most of them are outstanding prospective students. Because seen from the point of view of theoretical value, many register with scores above the minimum score set by MTs N 1 Yogyakarta. So that this is expected to be able to boost the madrasah's performance to be better; the madrasah flagship class program also encourages a culture of achievement among teachers and students. Madrasas always encourage students to take part in competitions both at the local and national level; during the Covid-19 pandemic in the 2020/2021 Academic Year, there were four championships won by students, namely first place in a national poster competition, first place in a provincial level web application competition, first place winner in provincial level karate, and first place winner in the DIY-Central Java scientific work competition. This achievement is included in the category of non-academic fields and scientific work.

Having a brand as a superior madrasa can influence the learning atmosphere and achievements at MTsN 1 Yogyakarta. An atmosphere of achievement culture is built, which continues to be inflamed to spur the academic community to compete in achieving these achievements. To the expectations of the head of the madrasa, the more achievements the madrasa academic community achieves, the more the brand as a superior madrasa can be realistically accounted for in the community. Therefore, to encourage and foster this culture of achievement, madrasa heads and teachers are continuously encouraged to take part in various competitions; students are directed to take part in various competitions, both academic and non-academic such as the National Science Olympiad (OSN) and teachers are encouraged to become innovative teachers whom the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia holds.

Even though this flagship program is in the process of being developed and has yet to produce alums, many regular class alums from MTs N 1 Yogyakarta continue their education at public schools and madrasas. It was
noted that 40% continued at the State Aliyah Madrasah, 20% at State Senior High Schools, 25% at State Vocational Schools, and 15% at other private schools. The alum distribution shows that the quality of graduates from MTs N 1 Yogyakarta can compete with other educational institutions.

CONCLUSION
The period of the Covid-19 pandemic required changes in various things in the field of education, without exception the marketing strategy. Thus, every madrasah needs to combine conventional marketing strategies with massive digital marketing to maximize promotion through several digital platforms such as social media and websites. Through these media, madrasas can promote special programs to attract new students, as MTs N 1 Yogyakarta did, which promoted them as pioneers of superior madrasas.

The digital marketing strategy carried out by MTs N 1 Yogyakarta has succeeded in increasing the interest in registering New Student Admissions (PPDB) for the 2020/2021 academic year. Prospective students have tripled from the previous PPDB, namely around 1,500 registrants. This increase in interest is allegedly due to two things: the only programs offered through digital marketing and massive promotions from social media so that many parties can access them. The stages in creating uploaded content as promotional material are: setting goals, mapping target markets, initiating and defining content, creating content, distributing content, strengthening content, evaluating content marketing, improving content marketing, and online and offline marketing.

The focus of this research only explains digital marketing as a marketing strategy for educational services in madrasas during the Covid-19 pandemic. Thus, suggestions for further research can compare the effectiveness of digital marketing with conventional marketing in the post-covid-19 pandemic. This further study can be analyzed using the Marketing 4.0 theory approach.

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