



SOCIAL MEDIA AS A MARKETING MEANS OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN THE MODERN ERA

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Abstract:

This study aims to analyze and understand about Social Media as a Means of Marketing Educational Institutions. Along with the development of technology, social media has become one of the means of communication and information of the community. Social media is also used as a promotional tool for an organization by utilizing existing features. Educational institutions that use social media as a means of promotion can show the advantages and programs that exist in educational institutions so that they can attract prospective students or guardians of students to study at the institution. The role of social media in promoting educational institutions. The research method used is literature research. This research method is to collect information and data through scientific writing or the collection of information of a literary nature that is relevant to the research subject, or to study and solve problems in depth based on relevant library materials. The result of this research is that social media can be used to promote educational institutions effectively and efficiently. Because in social media applications there are features that can be set according to the desired target, so that the messages contained in the promotional content are conveyed to people in need. In addition, promotion through social media can lead to education both directly and indirectly.

Keywords: *Marketing of Educational Institutions, Social Media.*

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of educational marketing by educational institutions is to provide information to the broader community about the service offerings offered by schools, to increase public interest in schools, to differentiate what schools offer from other schools, and to emphasize what schools offer. The community will offer added value obtained from the products provided by the school, and the school will remain stable in the eyes of the community. The marketing function of education is how educational institutions make people interested in becoming part of these educational institutions. Educational marketing exists as a container or media to market an educational institution. Thus, the public can discover what is happening in these educational institutions (Putri: 2021).

Promotional or marketing strategies that educational institutions often carry out include placing banners, distributing brochures, and so on. However, it is considered less effective. Then what methods can educational institutions do to increase their competitiveness? One way is to promote through social media.

Along with the development of technology, social media has become a means of communication and promotion in modern society. This can be seen through the many networking applications, such as WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook, etc. Social media facilitates all community communication activities because social media provides a variety of features that can be used as needed.

In this millennium era, the competitiveness of educational institutions needs to be improved immediately, not only for educational institutions but also for enhancing the educational marketing strategy. The role of the community as customers of

educational services is that they are looking for something different from what educational institutions usually sell. So academic institutions must renew their concept to provide attractive, high-quality products or services. With the development of the times, educational institutions need to pay attention to the problems that exist in today's society so that schools can create products or services that can overcome these problems. Educational institutions also need to provide products that are currently in demand by the public (Putri: 2021).

With the more intense competition between educational institutions, the managers of educational institutions must be able to demonstrate their institutions' superiority to be competitive. One of the things that can be done is to promote on social media. In promoting educational institutions, managers must show excellent programs that can attract prospective students. This is done so that future students who are the promotion target can learn about the programs in educational institutions.

This background makes researchers want to know how educational institutions' marketing strategies are through social media in an effort to carry out school branding and student recruitment.

RESEARCH METHODS

The research method used is library research. This research method is to collect information and data through scientific writing, literary information relevant to the research subject, or studying and solving problems in depth based on relevant literature (Sugi Yono, 2015). Sources of data used in this research are books, scientific journals, articles, and others.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Definition of Social Media Marketing

Kaplan and Haenlein describe social media as a collection of media in Internet-based applications that build on the intellectual and technical foundations of Web 2.0. Web 2.0 technology is a technology that enables two-way interactive dialogue (Kaplan: 2010).

According to Gunelius, social media is an online publishing and communication tool, website, and Web 2.0 goal that is rooted in dialogue, contribution, and participation (Susan: 2011). In a broader discussion, social media is often associated with the term democratization of information, a shift from content readers to content creators (Evans: 2013).

Hubspot, an American developer and distributor of marketing, sales, and customer service software products; Social media marketing is the act of creating content. This content will then attract public attention. According to Neil Patel, one of the world's digital marketing experts, social media marketing is the process of attracting people's attention so that they interact with the content presented. If linked, the possibility of sharing content will certainly be greater (Patel: 2017).

From the various definitions above, social media marketing is a marketing process created by third parties, namely social media-based websites. Some social media are used to market or promote products or services

Including Youtube, Whatsapp, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, and so on.

Social Media Marketing Basics

According to Gurnelius (Susan: 2011), four critical pillars form the foundation of social media. Marketing means:

1. Read (read). Marketing through social media requires a lot of reading. Read online conversations about products, services, customers, and competitors. This activity is to digest information relevant to businesses and consumers to establish communication.

2. Create (Create). An essential aspect of social media is creating and publishing rich, meaningful and valuable content. The success of social media marketing lies in the strength of the message content.
3. Distributing (share). Today, consumers rely more on the number of relationships, reviews, recommendations and conversations than on the information shared. Not just stopping at one social media tool, content spread on websites or blogs is transmitted through other social networks to reach a wider audience.
4. Discuss (discuss). The basis of the social media marketing that is no less important is interacting, consulting, responding, and providing feedback on customer responses. Marketers must respond responsively and respect consumer opinions.

Different Types of Social Media Marketing Apps

Here are some of the famous and most used social media apps in Indonesia that marketers can use in their social media marketing campaigns:

1. Youtube. The number of YouTube users is enormous, more than 10 billion. On this platform, people can upload lengthy videos. In addition, with this feature, YouTube is suitable as a product advertising medium. Ad durations can be very long. Several ads on YouTube are packaged in a skit. By building a YouTube channel, the number of viewers can be seen from the number of subscribers, shares, likes and comments. Make it easy for marketers to design messaging strategies.
2. Whatsapp. This messaging platform is a free mobile application that uses an internet connection to chat with other WhatsApp users without paying. The application also supports services for sharing files and images and supports free voice and video calls. With over 5 billion monthly active users worldwide and another feature, WhatsApp Business is a suitable online medium for marketers to conduct their marketing campaigns.
3. Facebook. The estimated number of current Facebook users is 5 billion. When Mark Zuckerberg created it in 2005, Facebook was only available to US students. Facebook is a social media that is used by many people today. For marketing purposes, Facebook can be used to increase product brand awareness through content creation. Facebook is also suitable for advertising; Facebook's advertising service makes it easy for marketers to define marketing objectives, advertising budgets and ad timing.
4. Instagram. Instagram users reach more than one billion. This social media, especially in Indonesia, is widely used by millennials and celebrities. Lots of excellent features on Instagram. As part of social media marketing, Instagram can be used as a product catalogue. Show product photos that are suitable for installation in Instagram stories and albums. In addition, advertising on Instagram is also available as a paid feature. The Instagram comment or poll and question column features can also be used as a discussion forum between companies and customers.
5. Twitter. This application has been used by nearly a billion people worldwide. Among social media for marketing, Twitter is mainly used for customer service. Indeed, the main difference between Twitter and other social media is interaction. Twitter offers businesses an excellent opportunity to interact directly with the public. This is different from Instagram or Facebook marketing strategies that prioritize content publishing over direct interaction.

Social Media Marketing Strategy

A marketing strategy is an integrated set of activities for a sustainable competitive advantage. The target of the marketing strategy itself is complete customer satisfaction (total customer statistics). An educational marketing strategy is a plan to provide educational services to satisfy customers by considering different concepts, models, products, training costs and information dissemination strategies related to educational institutions. One of the marketing strategies that companies and academic institutions widely use is the marketing mix (Putri: 2021).

Kotler and Fox state the educational marketing mix is the 7Ps, i.e. program (program), price (price). Location (location containing location and activity system), promotion (advertisement), process (process), physical facilities (evidence of facilities) and also the person (people). James & Philip evaluated marketing practices for educational services in 11 schools (including elementary, junior high, public and private) where many school principals and school staff did not know the marketing mix of education services, schools sacrificed an excellent and coordinated education marketing strategy when promoting schools (Wijaya, 2016).

All schools have elements of the educational services marketing mix that need to be more consistent and different. Implementing a marketing strategy for educational services requires a different mindset to see the activities of educational institutions in terms of the needs of education service customers. The following is an explanation of the marketing mix (marketing mix):

1. Product, which includes facilities and services offered by educational institutions. With this service product, customers do not buy goods but receive value and benefits from an offer, such as an attractive school program or activity.
2. Price (price) or Funding (Cost), namely comparing expenses to the income of customers of education services and determining the price to be charged to customers of education services. This is evident in private schools, as education service clients can choose between expensive private schools and sound, free public schools. However, this is an essential point for public schools because:
 - a. Acceptance of students leads to additional funding from the state.
 - b. There are donors.
 - c. Parents will be billed for fees and donations for extracurricular activities.
3. Place (location), i.e. good school accessibility, the strategic location of schools, good school performance and good school conditions, need attention.
4. Promotion, namely the ability to communicate regarding providing school services to clients of educational services. Advertising is an essential issue in marketing educational services in marketing academic service products.
5. People (people) are people who participate in the delivery of educational services. This affects how customers evaluate education services. Stakeholders with good attitudes and behaviour serving consumers provide added value to educational institutions.
6. Physical Evidence is evidence that customers of educational services benefit from the educational services offered. The elements show that the school building where lessons are held is in good condition, and the facilities and infrastructure are suitable to support learning activities in schools.
7. Process, namely the school management system for managing the marketing of education services, which influences the placement of school staff about the coordination of education service marketing strategies and resource search. Relevant processes include procedures, tasks, schedules and routines provided to Education Services clients.

Overall, here are some social media marketing strategies (Aprilia: 2020):

1. Mapping the tastes of the audience. Public or customer tastes can be a reference for the suitability of our products to the market. In addition, the map of consumer tastes will determine the content we create on social media. Adjust the tastes of consumers or audiences by presenting content that will increase engagement.
2. Identify the application platform used. The application platform influences the choice of products to sell. Each forum has its features. This will affect the presentation of the contents of the product being sold. For example, a product will be marketed on Instagram. Therefore, products must be marketed in a millennial, chic, contemporary (updated) style, etc.

3. Create engaging content. Content is king. The content of the message is king. No matter how good our social media strategy is, it will only be addressed with full, exciting and valuable content for consumers. Engaging content will increase engagement and sharing. With compelling content, people can also be tempted to buy or use the marketed products. Marketers can package content in different versions. For example, short videos, posters, memes, etc.
4. Send messages consistently. The publication is done regularly and continuously. Pay attention to peak times or times when the audience or consumers are active and spend a lot of time on social media. It's best to post when it's time to leave, take a break, or come home from work. Back then, people were usually active on social media. Avoid posting during the night's rest.
5. Evaluation. Social media will provide accurate data about the success of the marketing process. This data can be used as learning materials for better social media marketing in the future. Many factors can measure the success of social media marketing. Among them are the number of followers, the number of viewers, and the number of shares.

Implementation of Social Media Marketing in Educational Institutions

Social media management requires a team with adequate job descriptions and skills or qualifications (Rudi: 2021).

1. Form a team
 - a. Manager, responsible for planning strategies and regularly directing the process flow of social media optimization.
 - b. Content Creator, responsible for creating Content that will be published on social media.
 - c. Copywriter, responsible for creating captions, texts, stories, and issues related to offers or Content in collaboration with content creators.
 - d. Administrator, responsible for monitoring development statistics, monitoring and interaction (comments, likes, redistribution).
2. Create a marketing strategy
 - a. Creating educational institution branding that will become a reference in every social media marketing campaign. School branding creates a unique and exciting perception in the public's minds, especially the students' parents. It is a value (differentiation) that differentiates itself from other schools and a plan to maintain the loyalty of school stakeholders. In this case, Educational Institutions can create cargo or show the vision of Educational Institutions that are unique and can be a differentiator from other Educational Institutions.
 - b. Deciding which app or social media channel to use for a school content marketing campaign. In determining the application that will be used, it is chosen according to the needs and type of marketing content. Applications that can be used for marketing include WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, etc.
 - c. Target or Goal to be achieved. In marketing a product, of course, some targets need to be completed, for example getting 100 thousand likes or subscribers, or postings being shared by as many as one million people and so on.
 - d. Update Content regularly. Even though the Content is reduced, this is not a reason to reduce the frequency of posting on social media. Content updates twice a day or at least once a day.
 - e. Use as many photo and video posts as possible. Social media managers maintain and improve the quality of Content by adding photos and videos of activities or collections that remind us of school values.
 - f. Interact with social media followers. Keep in touch by responding to comments, reposting followers' uploads, and liking and sharing posts

- that are useful and related to the school. Responding to comments will build positive interactions with followers.
- g. Create a hashtag or hashtag (#) according to the school brand. The hashtag will become the icon of the school band. The more massive hashtags we publish, the more accessible for people to find our school's information on social media.
 - h. Determining the target audience or target audience of the school's social media channels are the school's internal stakeholders, namely staff teachers, parents of students, and students. As well as external school stakeholders, namely parents, guardians of students and the general public.
3. Create and upload Content
At this stage of content production, the social media team starts planning according to the strategy. You can schedule weekly or monthly Content in a content calendar. Each day has a set theme, the amount of Content, and what elements are needed to create the Content. Whether in the form of images, videos or captions or descriptions.
 4. Evaluate the Content
After the consistency of content creation and content publication is carried out, the next step is Content Evaluation. Evaluation can be carried out every week by evaluating two things: the Evaluation of content creation and the Evaluation of goal attainment. Here are the details:
 - a. Evaluation of content production. This Evaluation aims to see the execution of the content creation plan. The social media manager or person in charge reports the results of content production to the principal of the school or educational institution to measure the performance of the planned content production.
 - b. Evaluate goal achievement. The number of followers and subscribers can measure the achievement of goals, the reach achieved, interaction with the public, the number of likes and comments, the involvement of school information seekers, and the number of registered users added via registration links listed on social media.

The evaluation results become the basis for development and innovation for subsequent strategies and planning and the effectiveness of social media in school branding and achieving school enrollment rates.

CONCLUSION

Social Media Marketing Basics

Four pillars form the basis of social media marketing: read, create, share, and discuss. These four pillars can determine how effectively to market Educational Institutions on social media.

Different Types of Social Media Marketing Apps

Educational institutions can use applications such as WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and so on.

Social Media Marketing Strategy

The marketing strategies on social media that educational institutions can apply are mapping audience tastes, identifying the application platforms used, creating exciting content, sending messages consistently, and evaluating them.

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