

Social Media Marketing Integration as an Interactive Marketing Strategy To Increase Competitive Advantage

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ABSTRACT

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This study aims to analyze the role of social media integration as a marketing strategy in optimizing a company's competitive advantage in the digital economy era. The current transformation in marketing strategies has encouraged the integration of digital platforms to foster communication, consumer engagement, and ultimately achieve competitive advantage. The study employed qualitative methods, incorporating literature review of various international and national journals covering digital marketing, social media integration, and competitive advantage. The analysis results indicate increased brand awareness and engagement, optimization of customer relationship management based on real-time data, and increased product and service innovation through consumer feedback. Social media integration enables companies to create a consistent customer experience. Social media integration is not only a marketing communications strategy but also a strategic capability that can support value creation and improve company performance.



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Introduction

Social media today is not only used for socializing but can also be utilized as a digital promotional tool. Integration between platforms encourages social media marketing activities that can facilitate the delivery of promotional messages or advertisements to audiences/potential consumers. The interactive use of social media can create two-way communication, thus hopefully supporting consumer needs. Competitive advantage is a strength possessed by business actors and businesses that demonstrates their superiority compared to other business competitors. The growing development of information technology encourages collaboration and information sharing without being limited by space and time. According to (Mangold & Faulds, 2009), the increased use of social media creates integration related to communication and interaction strategies, marketing activities, customer service, and relationship management with other stakeholders. This integration arises due to changes in consumer behavior towards the digital ecosystem of information search, interaction and

communication, and decision-making. Social media integration is also related to the customer journey, so it can be understood what consumer interest in a product is, from how consumers search for needed or desired products, to consumers making purchases, and also to the creation of loyalty. With the advancement of the digital era, information searches have increasingly shifted to using social media. Two-way communication also facilitates audiences in helping them meet their information needs. Furthermore, direct reviews and comments posted on social media serve as a reference for potential consumers in making purchasing decisions, determining whether the product they are purchasing is relevant and whether it aligns with their needs and desires. Social media integration also relates to the interconnectedness of platforms such as websites, email, digital service features, and e-commerce. According to Schultz and Kitchen (2000), marketing communication activities must be well-coordinated to ensure consistent messages delivered to the audience across various communication platforms. This creates a coherent communication structure that aligns with the business processes being implemented. Social media integration creates a strategic digital ecosystem, particularly for marketing communications (Hanna, Rohm, and Crittenden (2011)). To support an effective marketing strategy, engaging and attractive content is essential to attract the interest and awareness of potential consumers. Furthermore, several indicators in content creation, such as titles, copywriting, and footage, also play a role in producing adaptive content. Social media integration is also related to routine evaluations that are carried out periodically, as well as responding to feedback from consumers well and quickly. Research conducted by Lemon and Verhoef (2016) shows that omnichannel experience. Without integration, there is a possibility of repeated communication, irrelevant customer experiences, and poorly conveyed marketing messages. This digital integration enables synchronization between marketing activities carried out both online and offline, with the hope and goal of creating customer satisfaction and building loyalty. Furthermore, social media integration is also expected to encourage improved business performance both internally and externally. Improved company performance is also expected to encourage the optimization of customer relationship management (CRM), thereby encouraging good relations with consumers and references for making the right strategic decisions. Likewise, increased innovation to enhance co-creation (Kaplan and Haenlein (2010)). Social media integration becomes a competitive advantage in increasing value related to many things, including aspects of marketing, financial, and operational performance that have an impact on marketing effectiveness and achieving sustainable competitive advantage. Then, optimization in terms of brand value and product and business positioning. Continuous digital transformation encourages the integration of social media and other digital platforms. This transformation relates to business processes and innovation to increase creativity and value for a brand or business. Regarding marketing performance measurement through social media, social media integration is also directly related to analytics and analysis of customer needs and desires through the social media used, then determining marketing personalization, to benchmarks and references in decision-making based on valid and relevant data (Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick, (2019)). Based on research conducted by (Felix, Rauschnabel, and Hinsch, (2017)), the implementation of social media integration can have an impact on increasing brand engagement, marketing and business performance, and relationships with consumers. The relationship between social media integration and digital consumer behavior is not only a combination of the use and analysis of various digital platforms, but also a form of strategy to optimize technology, information, and user experience related to marketing in the digital era.

The current information era changes have an impact on changing values and engagement towards a brand and company, it is also important to focus on media with user-generated content to optimize communication and interaction with consumers (Harizi, A., & Trebicka, B. (2023)). The integration of social media and social media marketing has a powerful synergy and potential to improve good communication between companies and consumers, as well as related stakeholders (Thackeray, R., Neiger, B. L., & Keller, H. (2012)). Social media and marketing communication integration are also related to the services to be offered (Valos, M. J., Haji Habibi, F., Casidy, R., Driesener, C. B., & Maplestone, V. L. (2016)). Social media analytics development strategies are related to technological developments and the organization/company's ability to implement and integrate in business-to-business marketing (Wang, Y., Rod, M., Deng, Q., & Ji, S. (2021)). One of the core of communication integration in marketing is the purpose of the marketing communication, and also the purpose of utilizing social media both for the short term and long term (Barger, V. A., & Labrecque, L. (2013)). Social media integration is identified as one of the important factors in the business environment, as a strategy to increase global competitiveness and increase competitive advantage (Abuhashesh, M. Y. (2014)). Marketing in the current digital era is increasingly interactive, and there are also improvements in business processes and target markets, as well as improvements in good relationships and communication with consumers (Csikósová, A., Antošová, M., & Čulková, K. (2014)). Various digital media currently help marketers in increasing promotional customization to consumers based on marketing segmentation (Malthouse, E., & Shankar, V. (2009)). The use of interactive technology has an impact on retail and marketing operations and strategies. In addition, the use of technology can encourage the development of innovation and sustainable competitive advantage (Varadarajan, R., Srinivasan, R., Vadakkepatt, G. G., Yadav, M. S., Pavlou, P. A., Krishnamurthy, S., & Krause, T. (2010)). The ease of access to technology today helps marketers in promoting products faster and with a wide reach because it is not limited by space and time (Ratchford, B. T. (2015)). The existence of competition in business can spur marketers to improve marketing strategies that are different from competitors, as well as encourage increased continuous innovation to support strategic marketing planning (Ramaseshan, B., Ishak, A., & Kingshott, R. P. (2013)). Marketing communications also play a role in the role and perception of brands in determining positioning and marketing effectiveness (Stoian, O., Polozova, T., Didenko, E., Storozhenko, O., & Moskvichova, O. (2018)). Optimizing interactive services also has a link between target markets and consumers, with consumer participation and the use of technology in delivering messages and products (Bolton, R., & Saxena-Iyer, S. (2009)). Sustainable competitive advantage can increase business potential and integrate perspectives for decision making (Tzokas, N., & Saren, M. (2004)). Company performance also influences the achievement of sustainable competitive advantage and the determination of subsequent business strategies (Kaleka, A., & Morgan, N. A. (2017)). Good relationships between consumers and business partners also contribute to competitive advantage (Morgan, R. M., & Hunt, S. (1999)). Implementation of digital marketing strategies and transformations also play a role in competitive advantage and also the development of digital skills (Hussain, H. N., Alabdullah, T. T. Y., Ries, E., & Jamal, K. M. (2023)).

Method

The method used is a descriptive qualitative method. The discussion is related to how social media marketing integration is one of the strategies used to improve interactive communication with the aim of achieving competitive advantage. This method is used to determine the relationship between social media integration and its impact on competitive advantage. Data collection techniques used are observation and data interpretation. It is hoped that the research conducted will obtain comprehensive results related to social media integration as an interactive marketing strategy that can increase the

competitive advantage of companies/businesses. Several indicators of social media integration are related to content, other digital platforms used, as well as social media insights and analytics with interactions based on likes, comments, and reposts/reshares of content. Therefore, this will also be related to customer engagement such as interaction, satisfaction, and consumer loyalty.

Results and Discussion

The integration of social media utilization encourages interactive communication and product branding. Similarly, integration with e-commerce websites or marketplaces facilitates consumer purchasing through ease of access and features. Customer engagement also makes integration more relevant to customer needs and desires. This relevance can be derived from previously conducted market research, such as interviews, focus group discussions, observation, and documentation. Consumer participation related to social media integration includes sharing content containing product information, consumer product reviews, and recommendations to relatives or friends. This can indirectly raise consumer awareness and encourage improved word-of-mouth strategies. These activities also encourage the creation of positive relationships, interactions, and communication between marketers and consumers. Improved company performance is one indicator of competitive advantage, as is the quality of products and services offered to consumers. Significant innovation development also drives competitive advantage, for example, innovation in the use of technology and digital platforms to optimize digital content and promotions. Communication conducted through real-time information technology facilitates marketers and consumers in obtaining information related to promotional and marketing activities. Likewise, innovation in digital services, fast response, and easy access to product information can encourage positive feedback from consumers. Good management skills can also support the creation of sustainable competitive advantage. Increasing competitive advantage will enhance the company's image and value, business sustainability, and ultimately business growth and development, which have positive impacts both internally and externally. Therefore, the various indicators that have been implemented can create competitive advantages that can also improve operational efficiency, develop product innovation, enhance relationships and interactions with consumers, and create added value. Based on observations, social media integration serves not only as a promotional tool but also as a strategic tool for improving a company's performance and business systems, which can also inform strategic decision-making. Informants also stated that social media integration can accelerate customer interaction, accelerate service response, enhance brand visibility, and even digital-based sales growth.

Observational data shows an increase in content consistency, frequency of two-way communication, and the use of social media insight data as a basis for evaluating business strategies.



Picture 1 Relationship between variabel

Based on observations and interviews with research respondents, communication between marketers and audiences facilitates the delivery of product information. This is in line with research by Kaplan & Haenlein (2010) regarding social media, which can enable organizations to build interactive

communication to improve marketing effectiveness and customer relationships. According to research by Trainor et al. (2014), social media integration can also optimize a company's ability to manage customer relationships. Observations also show that good communication with consumers can improve ongoing communication and consumer education. The use of social media analytics features to optimize insights that will lead to consumer behavior analysis. Likewise, the existence of competitive advantages to improve company performance and can create company value differentiation. Regarding response speed, in line with research by Teece (2018) related to dynamic capabilities, explaining that responding to consumer feedback can increase a company's competitive advantage.

Conclusion

Social media integration can drive value creation and the delivery of promotional messages to audiences. Integration emerges from various indicators such as communication, customer service, and good relationships with consumers and other business partners, such as the use of titles, copywriting, and also the use of content calendars to support flexible and scheduled content scheduling. Digital integration creates synchronization to achieve company goals and targets, thus driving improved business performance both internally and externally. Good communication and interaction with customers, such as interviews, focus group discussions, and observation of feedback provided, can drive awareness and engagement, thus encouraging the creation of competitive advantage and the achievement of company value. Innovation also plays a role in implementing appropriate marketing strategies and increasing competitive advantage, which in turn can also improve business resilience and sustainable performance.

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