

IN THE MIDDLE OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, USING THE MARKETPLACE AS A PROMOTIONAL MEDIUM TO INCREASE SALES

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ABSTRACT

This study analyzes the company's approach for surviving the product by using promotional media to boost sales during a pandemic by utilizing the marketplace as a promotional medium. The advancement of internet technology has altered the way business is conducted and promoted. Transactions and promotion are carried out via the use of online media, one of which is e-commerce. E-commerce is a method of purchasing and selling goods and services via the internet that has the ability to save time in a variety of ways, one of which is by streamlining the marketing process. E-commerce has a beneficial function, one of which is to accelerate the promotion process. Lazada, Shopee, and Tokopedia are just a few of the e-commerce sites that are supported. The descriptive qualitative technique is used in this research, and the subject of the study is UMKM Jaka. On the other hand, a significant amount of money has been spent on digital marketing in order to boost sales in the marketplace. Marketplaces as an example of e-commerce are used to demonstrate innovation or a shift in sales techniques. According to this study, customers virtually forgot about the brand during the pandemic, making the marketplace the most effective medium for promoting the brand and increasing sales. Digital behavior is fueling the growth of internet customers in order to boost revenues during the epidemic.

Keywords: Market, Media Promotion, Increased Sales, and Covid Pandemic.

INTRODUCTION

The internet exemplifies the rapid development of technological advances. In the guise of the internet, technological advancements are presenting new opportunities for businesses to innovate and improve their operations (Aboelenien, Arsel & Cho, 2021). The internet is very helpful for the process of selling and buying goods and services online, which is referred to as E-commerce in the industry (Ahsyar, Syaifullah & Ardiansyah, 2020). For example, Tokopedia, Lazada, Blibli, Bukalapak, and Shopee are all examples of E-commerce apps that are used to conduct transactions over the internet (Aisyah, 2020). In recent years, numerous new applications from third-party providers that offer marketplaces have emerged as a consequence of their convenience and the inclusion of interesting filters. The marketplace has transformed into something like to a store or a shopping mall. A wide range of products are offered at a variety of price ranges. The existence of this marketplace may offer an opportunity for MSME actors to promote their products or services or to do business with one another. This is related to the change in how people trade, from conventional shopping to transactions aided by online media, which has occurred in recent years (Effendy & Sunarsi, 2020). E-commerce is a business strategy that aims to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of commercial operations via the use of information technology.

When e-commerce is present, consumers profit from its existence (Faridah & Wulandari, 2020). Online buying and selling transactions may be more convenient than traditional methods since they may be done at any time and from any place, including your home (Kumala & Junaidi, 2020).



FIGURE 1
E-COMMERCE BUSINESS INCOME DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

According to the findings of a study conducted by the Indonesian Statistics Agency in 2020, the outbreak of the COVID-19 virus and the government's policy of restricting movement resulted in a reduction in direct interaction between business actors involved in the operation of the economy and the trade market (Kusumawati et al., 2021). According to the Bureau of Public Statistics (BPS) in 2020, this has an effect on consumption patterns and the way individuals spend their money. Electronic commerce has a positive impact on Indonesia's small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) (SMEs). SMEs are increasingly reliant on E-commerce as their main marketing channel as the businesses of local entrepreneurs become more diverse (Lestari, Amroni & Harris, 2020). Indonesia's situation has recently deteriorated significantly as a result of the widespread spread of the virus. This issue impacts virtually all industries, not only the health-care industry, as you might imagine. The economic sector was also subjected to a significant amount of damage (Marlinah, 2020). Limitations on community activities have an impact on company operations. People are more likely to satisfy their wants and aspirations by buying online on marketplaces and e-commerce websites as a result of this limitation on communal activities. Indonesia's position has recently been very precarious as a result of the virus's continued spread. This problem has ramifications for virtually every sector, not simply the health-care industry. Economic activity was also severely hampered as a result of the disaster (Moleong, 2007). The prohibition of social activities has an impact on the business community. Individuals are encouraged to purchase goods and services online on marketplaces and e-commerce sites in order to fulfill their needs and ambitions as a result of this restriction on community activities. In previous research according to Effendy & Sunarsi (2020) investigate the advantages of this marketplace, which is intended to reduce the complexity of company operations in order to increase efficiency and effectiveness. The Marketplace allows anybody to conduct buying and selling operations quickly, conveniently, and at a low cost since there are no restrictions on area, distance, or time with the Marketplace.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Marketing

According to (Pratama, 2020), to paraphrase Philip Kotler's definition of marketing management in his book, marketing is a social and managerial process by which people and groups get what they need and desire via the production of, offering of, and trading of goods with promotional value. According to Aboelenien, Arsel & Cho (2021) Promoting a brand or product is defined as an aspect of the marketing mix that focuses on attempts to educate, convince or recall customers about a company's brand or product, according to Tjiptono 2015. Despite the fact that direct or offline sales have reduced as a result of social constraints during the Covid-19 epidemic, individuals are encouraged to work from home during the new normal period. According to Scott,

et al., (2018) E-commerce refers to the activity of conducting purchases and sales transactions via the internet or through websites. In the world of E-commerce, there are three (three) kinds of business models, which are as follows: (1) business to business (B2B); (2) business to customer (B2C); and (3) customer to customer (C2C). On a broad level, it can be said that e-commerce is the sale and purchase of goods, information, and services electronically via the use of a computer connected to the internet network, which serves as a middleman for commercial transactions carried out by the Marketplace (Sholeh, Triyono & Rachmawati, 2020). Any and all attempts made to sell a product or service via the internet or the World Wide Web network is referred to as "marketplace." Place, on the other hand, is defined as a location in the English lexicon. Market is defined as a location or container for the promotion of goods or services via the internet or by means of other electronic media (Sugiyono, 2012).

Covid-19 pandemic

In Indonesia, the Covid-19 pandemic is a disease epidemic that happens over a large geographical region or travels worldwide and has an effect on a variety of sectors, one of which is the economic sector, among others. The COVID-19 pandemic is progressively evolving, with the virus transitioning from an offline to an online state. Future economic trends will be driven by the government's recommendation that people stay at home and take care of their families. By utilizing the electronic trading system, MSME actors have the opportunity to grow their businesses, ensuring that the COVID-19 pandemic does not imply that the disease does not provide benefits, but rather that it serves as a catalyst for MSME actors to demonstrate that domestic products and national needs can still be met (Sulaiman, 2018).

RESEARCH METHODS

The descriptive and exploratory methods used in this study were combined with a qualitative approach to get the desired results (Yustiani & Yunanto, 2017). The subject of this study was a small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) in Bandung. In this study, the researcher used a data collecting method that includes observation and interviews with one of the SMEs's workers in Bandung, Indonesia (Zaki & Wayenberg, 2021).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the beginning, MSME Bandung, which was founded in 2018, exclusively offered second-hand products. Only later in 2019, Bandung started to grow into the sale of everyday equipment by hiring two workers, and it was only in 2020 that the company hired another two employees, for a total of five employees. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Bandung promoted their goods via offline marketing during the first three (three) months of the year. Following various marketplaces' recommendations, this MSME owner eventually transitioned to an online sales approach. In 2020, the owner of a firm in Bandung started registering his company on the online marketplaces Tokopedia, Shopee, and Lazada. Lapak jaka hosts accounts from SMEs on Tokopedia, whereas Shopee hosts accounts from SMEs in Bandung. Lazada accounts may be found at lapakjaka hosts accounts from SMEs. Owners in Bandung are very pleased with their decision to join in the marketplace since the revenue from some of these marketplaces has risen. As a result of the high demand for personal protective goods like as masks and hand sanitizers on the international market during this epidemic, Bandung's revenue increased as well. In addition to promoting its goods on the Tokopedia, Shopee, and Lazada marketplaces, Bandung also advertises its products on the Facebook marketplace by using a variety of ways to disseminate information about its products in groups and communities on the social media platform.

In response to staff observations, Bandung decided to utilize Facebook as a method of sending live promotional links in a number of different markets, which was eventually adopted by the

company. In order for MSMEs in Bandung to be in the top search position, the objective is for more customers to join the live stream later on, with a target of 3000 various groups joining at the same time. This advertising activity takes place over the course of one day and lasts for three hours. This is regarded to be very lucrative for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Bandung. Because of the presence of this offer, more people are purchasing the products. When comparing sales data from the months before utilizing the marketplace to sales data from the year after using the marketplace, it may be stated that sales were low. The following is a breakdown of sales in Bandung during the first three months prior to the use of the marketplace as a promotional tool.

No	Month	Sale
1	Oktober	Rp.1.221.900
2	November	Rp.1.403.000
3	Desember	Rp.2.678.000

The following table shows the sales figures obtained by Bandung after using Marketplace as a promotional tactic.

No	Month	Sale	No
1	Januari	Rp	2.060.000
2	Februari	Rp	1.415.000
3	Maret	Rp	1.877.500
4	April	Rp	11.298.000
5	Mei	Rp	4.248.000
6	Juni	Rp	7.992.500
7	Juli	Rp	9.570.500
8	Agustus	Rp	6.432.100
9	September	Rp	7.069.000
10	Oktober	Rp	5.276.000
11	November	Rp	3.005.500
12	Desember	Rp	3.403.800

Because of the visual material created by Bandung, Marketplace, as previously said, has its own unique appeal for customers. Bandung has several benefits, one of which is customer loyalty, because to the large number of product pictures and quick admin replies. Bandung's sales are being boosted as a result of these efforts.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the researchers' observations, it can be inferred that the growth in the number of sales in Bandung SMEs is affected by the use of media and marketing techniques. The amount of sales made prior to utilizing the marketplace in the first three months of operation with an offline approach totaled about Rp. 5,302,000 in revenue. Meanwhile, the total revenue generated via the use of the marketplace reached about Rp. 5,352,000 in the first three months. The market need for personal protective equipment during the pandemic, such as cloth masks and hand sanitizers, will boost turnover in the coming months, according to the company. Because of

the present epidemic, the use of a marketplace as a promotional approach is very suitable, and the use of an online marketing strategy makes it very simple for customers to transact when they are forced to practice social distance.

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