Marketing Strategy in Event Sponsorship and Social Media of PT Telkomsel Surabaya

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Abstract

This study explores the marketing strategies employed by PT Telkomsel Surabaya through event sponsorship and social media platforms. Amidst increasing competition in the telecommunications industry, the integration of offline and online marketing strategies becomes essential to maintain brand relevance and consumer loyalty. Event sponsorship aims to enhance brand image and foster direct engagement with consumers, while social media serves as a platform to expand market reach and facilitate interactive communication. Using a qualitative case study approach, this research combines data from interviews, observations, and social media content analysis. The findings reveal that Telkomsel's collaboration with local events successfully boosts brand awareness and strengthens its community-oriented image. Meanwhile, the strategic use of Instagram and TikTok fosters customer loyalty through engaging and dynamic content. This study highlights the importance of synergizing event sponsorship and social media strategies to achieve effective marketing outcomes. Practical implications are provided for companies to innovate in their marketing efforts and adapt to evolving consumer behaviors.

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I. Introduction

In today's era with the development of technology and digitalization, several telecommunications companies in Indonesia face challenges to continue to maintain the company's goals and competitiveness. PT Telkomsel as one of the largest telecommunications companies in Indonesia. Must continue to innovate in its marketing strategy in order to reach consumers more widely and gain loyalty from consumers, especially the Surabaya area which is the target market in Indonesia (Sartika, 2023). In facing tight competition, Telkomsel carries out two important marketing strategies, namely event sponsorship and social media.

Sponsorship events are one of the main strategies used by Telkomsel to introduce products or brands and build relationships with consumers. Through sponsorship events, be it sports, music or cultural events. Telkomsel seeks to improve brand image and customer loyalty with the company's products or brands. With sponsorship events, Telkomsel can interact directly with consumers and promote brands by participating in various events, so that they can be recognized by the public who come directly to the event. So, it is hoped that by using this sponsorship event marketing strategy, it can increase brand awareness and consumer involvement in Telkomsel products and services in Surabaya.

In addition to event sponsorship, social media is also an alternative to introduce products and services available at Telkomsel Surabaya. In today's digital era, social media plays an important role for Telkomsel to expand market reach and strengthen relationships between brands and consumers. PT Telkomsel utilizes social media platforms such as Instagram and Tiktok to convey information about products and services available at Telkomsel in a more personal and interactive way. By creating interesting and varied content, the company can easily interact with consumers. By doing this, Telkomsel can increase consumer loyalty and build a positive image for the company.

This study aims to test the influence of the two marketing strategies on the effectiveness of Telkomsel's marketing in Surabaya. In this case, the two main variables explained are the event sponsorship marketing strategy and the social media marketing strategy, which are expected to influence several aspects such as brand awareness, customer loyalty and the company's brand image. Thus, this study aims to provide more insight into how these two marketing strategies can interact with each other to achieve marketing success at Telkomsel.

II. Empirical Literature Review

Research on marketing strategies has become an important topic in the business world, especially in the context of event sponsorship and social media to market products and services. Both of these strategies have a

significant impact on marketing effectiveness such as increasing brand awareness, consumer engagement, customer loyalty and brand image.

Event sponsorship is a form of promotion that utilizes an event to introduce a company's brand. According to Meenaghan (2013), event sponsorship can increase positive perceptions of a brand through direct engagement with the audience. Another study conducted by Cornwell and Coote (2005) showed that effective sponsorship can increase consumer emotions towards a brand, especially if the sponsored event is relevant to the company's target. In a local context, research conducted by Kurniawati and Widyastuti (2019) showed that event sponsorship is carried out by many companies in large cities such as Surabaya, because it has the potential to increase brand awareness and create a strong brand image. Several factors that can be the key to the success of sponsorship include the relevance of the event, the type of brand activity and the level of audience participation.

Social media is currently a platform for marketing a product or service effectively. According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), social media is used by companies to interact directly with consumers, create two-way dialogue, and increase brand loyalty. Research conducted by Felix, Rauschnabel, and Hinsch (2017) highlights the importance of consistent, interactive and relevant content to build long-term relationships with consumers. In Indonesia, research conducted by Pratama and Sari (2020) revealed that companies that use platforms such as Instagram and Twitter are able to achieve high levels of engagement, especially through creative and interesting content. Several factors that play an important role in the success of a marketing strategy in social media include posting frequency, response to user feedback, and the use of visual elements.

Marketing effectiveness is often measured through various indicators such as brand awareness, engagement, customer loyalty, and brand image. Keller (2001) explains that brand awareness is a basic element in building brand awareness, while customer loyalty is influenced by positive consumer experiences with the brand. Research conducted by Wijaya and Rahman (2021) shows that the integration of event sponsorship and social media can create synergy that can increase marketing effectiveness. The combination of event sponsorship and social media can enable companies to reach consumers offline through an event and strengthen relationships with consumers through social media online.

III. Research methods

This study uses a qualitative approach with the aim of understanding in depth the implementation of PT Telkomsel Surabaya's marketing strategy through event sponsorship and social media. This approach was chosen to find out the views, experiences, and perceptions of various parties related to the implementation of marketing strategies at PT Telkomsel.

The research method used is a case study with a focus on event sponsorship activities carried out by Telkomsel Surabaya and marketing strategies using the company's social media. Data were collected through interviews, direct observation and analysis of content on social media.

IV. Results and Discussion

The results of this study demonstrate that the marketing strategies employed by PT Telkomsel Surabaya—event sponsorship and social media—have proven effective in increasing brand awareness and consumer engagement. Through interviews and observations, it was found that event sponsorship activities such as music concerts and school activities have attracted a broad audience, enhancing Telkomsel's brand visibility. On the other hand, social media platforms like Instagram and TikTok have enabled Telkomsel to reach younger demographics with interactive and innovative content.

1. Event Sponsorship

Event sponsorship emerges as a powerful tool to directly engage with consumers. Events sponsored by Telkomsel, such as local music concerts, not only provide entertainment but also strengthen the emotional connection between the brand and its audience. According to Meenaghan (2013), event sponsorship is an effective strategy to create positive brand perceptions through direct engagement. Similarly, Cornwell and Coote (2005) argue that sponsorship activities aligned with the target audience's interests enhance brand loyalty and emotional attachment.

For instance, research by Kurniawati and Widyastuti (2019) on sponsorship in Surabaya indicates that local events are instrumental in boosting brand image and fostering consumer trust. In Telkomsel's case, the variety of events they sponsor—ranging from cultural festivals to youth-targeted school events—supports a diverse reach, further solidifying their position as a community-focused brand. However, the effectiveness of this strategy depends significantly on the quality and relevance of the sponsored event. Poorly executed events or mismatched audiences can dilute the intended impact.

2. Social Media Strategy

Telkomsel's social media marketing complements its offline strategies by amplifying reach and interaction. Platforms like Instagram and TikTok allow Telkomsel to deliver creative campaigns that resonate with younger audiences, utilizing engaging visuals, short videos, and timely responses to consumer feedback. This aligns with the findings of Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), who highlight the importance of interactive and consistent content in fostering brand loyalty.

In comparison, Pratama and Sari (2020) emphasize that companies utilizing creative content on social media platforms achieve higher consumer engagement and stronger brand connections. Telkomsel's ability to promptly respond to comments and questions on social media has positively influenced its brand perception, as observed in increased customer interactions and favorable feedback.

However, challenges persist, such as the rapid evolution of social media trends and increasing competition from rival companies. Felix et al. (2017) note that staying relevant on social media requires continuous innovation, including monitoring trending content and adapting to shifting consumer preferences. For Telkomsel, maintaining a balance between promotional and interactive content is critical to sustaining consumer interest.

3. Synergy Between Strategies

The combination of event sponsorship and social media amplifies the effectiveness of Telkomsel's marketing. Offline events create direct consumer experiences, while social media extends these interactions into the digital space, fostering long-term engagement. Research by Wijaya and Rahman (2021) supports this synergy, demonstrating that integrating offline and online marketing strategies enhances overall brand performance by leveraging the strengths of each platform.

For example, during sponsored events, Telkomsel's use of hashtags and live streaming on social media maximizes audience reach beyond physical attendees. This dual strategy not only strengthens consumer relationships but also generates user-generated content, further increasing brand exposure. However, Telkomsel must address challenges such as ensuring content alignment and maintaining quality across both platforms to achieve consistent messaging.

4. Comparative Insights

Comparing Telkomsel's approach to other industry players reveals both strengths and areas for improvement. For instance, Indosat Ooredoo, another major telecommunications company in Indonesia, has successfully utilized esports sponsorships to tap into the growing gaming community. Their partnership with esports events has demonstrated high engagement levels among younger audiences, a demographic Telkomsel also targets. Incorporating similar strategies, such as sponsoring digital or tech-focused events, could further diversify Telkomsel's reach.

Internationally, brands like AT&T in the United States have effectively integrated event sponsorship with social media by launching interactive campaigns during major sports events. AT&T's strategy of creating event-specific hashtags and exclusive behind-the-scenes content has strengthened consumer engagement and brand loyalty. Telkomsel could adopt similar practices, leveraging unique content to enhance audience interaction during events.

5. Challenges and Recommendations

While the results are promising, Telkomsel must navigate several challenges to sustain its marketing success. First, the reliance on trending social media content requires agile content creation teams that can respond quickly to consumer demands. Second, the quality of sponsored events must remain consistent to avoid negative consumer experiences. To address these challenges, Telkomsel can:

- Invest in advanced social media analytics tools to monitor audience behavior and optimize content strategies.

- Collaborate with event organizers to ensure high-quality execution and alignment with target audiences.

- Expand sponsorship to include niche events, such as environmental or technology-focused activities, to tap into diverse market segments.

- Enhance integration by creating immersive digital experiences, such as augmented reality (AR) campaigns during events, to bridge offline and online engagement.

V. Conclusions and Implications

In this study, it can be concluded that the marketing strategy carried out by PT Telkomsel Surabaya through sponsorship events and social media can increase the marketing of the company's products and services. By using sponsorship events, companies can introduce their brands to consumers directly and can provide memorable experiences and interactions, where by doing so they can increase brand awareness and consumer

engagement. Meanwhile, marketing carried out through social media also plays an important role as a supporter in expanding marketing, increasing customer loyalty, and strengthening the company's brand image through interaction with consumers. However, with this study it can be seen that to achieve the success of this strategy depends on the success of the sponsored event. So that the event runs well also affects interesting social media content.

The results of this study provide an important impression for Telkomsel Surabaya and other companies to be able to optimize their marketing strategies. From a managerial perspective, PT Telkomsel can expand the types of event sponsorships such as activities with diverse communities such as technology, education, or environmental events to be able to reach a wider market segment. And companies need to continue to monitor trending content at this time to be able to produce interesting content for consumers.

On the other hand, this study contributes to showing the effectiveness of online and offline strategies to achieve marketing targets. This study can also be a reference for further research to be able to combine marketing strategies in other industries. However, for consumers, an effective marketing strategy can provide a positive experience, increase brand loyalty, and ensure that their needs are met to be able to communicate with others easily.

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