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Social Media as Digital Marketing in the Brand Image of "Hangry" Food and Beverages

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the role of social media as a digital marketing tool in shaping and strengthening brand image in the food and beverage industry, with a case study on the brand "Hangry". The approach used is descriptive qualitative, through literature analysis and case studies related to digital branding strategies. The results of the study show that social media plays a significant role in expanding market reach, increasing brand visibility, and building emotional relationships between consumers and brands through creative content, personalized messages, and Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM). The implementation of digital marketing strategies by Hangry has successfully strengthened brand image through a combination of conventional and digital branding, creating a consistent and relevant customer experience across various platforms. Despite challenges such as global competition and brand identity consistency, strategic social media integration has proven to be able to increase customer loyalty and brand value in a competitive market.

Keywords: *Brand Image, Digital Marketing, Food and Beverages, Social Media.*

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1. | INTRODUCTION

The digital age has transformed business practices by reshaping customer interactions, shopping behavior, and brand engagement. The growth of e-commerce, social media, mobile applications, and other digital technologies has provided consumers with greater access to information, choices, and influence. Consequently, businesses must move beyond offering quality products or services and focus on creating exceptional customer experiences that encourage loyalty, advocacy, and long-term value (Rusnaini et al., 2024). Consumers increasingly use the internet to fulfill their shopping needs due to technological development, improved infrastructure, changing lifestyles, and the rapid availability of information. Online shopping enables customers to compare products and services easily, making customer experience an important factor in purchasing decisions. Online customer experience refers to consumers' perceptions formed through their interactions with products, services, and businesses based on various sensory and digital experiences (Anshu et al., 2022). A positive experience can increase satisfaction, build trust, encourage retention, and strengthen relationships between customers and brands.

In the digital era, effective branding through digital technology has become essential for businesses facing intense competition. Digital branding enables companies to increase brand awareness while establishing direct and meaningful relationships with consumers through digital platforms. This approach is particularly relevant for MSMEs, which can use digital branding to strengthen competitiveness, reach wider markets, and build consumer trust. Creative content is also an important component of digital marketing because attractive and relevant content can increase audience engagement and strengthen brand presence. Social media provides businesses with an effective channel for distributing creative content, communicating with consumers, and promoting products. In addition, digital optimization through market analysis, search engine optimization (SEO), and social media utilization can expand marketing reach and improve branding effectiveness. Thus, technological transformation provides businesses with greater opportunities to develop efficient digital branding strategies, enhance customer experiences, and build stronger and more sustainable relationships with consumers.

2. | RESEARCH METHOD

This research employs a descriptive qualitative approach to explore in depth the digital branding strategies implemented by companies to strengthen their brand image in the digital era. The qualitative method is appropriate because it enables researchers to understand digital branding phenomena through detailed interpretation of non-numerical information. Data are obtained and analyzed from relevant sources, including previous academic studies, case studies, company-related information, and other supporting literature. The analysis focuses on how companies utilize digital platforms, social media, creative content, customer engagement, and other digital marketing

activities to develop and maintain a positive brand image. Through this approach, the research seeks to identify patterns, strategies, and practices that demonstrate how digital branding contributes to consumer perceptions, customer relationships, brand visibility, and the overall development of a stronger and more competitive brand image in the digital marketplace.

3. | RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A business strategy is an action plan developed to achieve long-term goals and improve business performance through market analysis, product development, resource management, and marketing activities (Bahtiar et al., 2024). In the digital era, branding increasingly utilizes social media, content marketing, SEO, and other technologies to reach consumers, increase brand visibility, and strengthen brand value. Digital and social media marketing also support customer engagement and the development of customer journeys (Dwivedi et al., 2021). Thus, marketing strategies focus not only on promoting products but also on communicating value and building consumer relationships.

For Hangry, digital marketing through platforms such as Instagram and TikTok is important for increasing brand visibility and customer engagement. Attractive visual content, promotional campaigns, product information, and interactive communication allow Hangry to introduce its diverse culinary products to digitally active consumers. Social media marketing can strengthen brand image and purchase intention (Waworuntu et al., 2022), while it can also influence brand experience and consumer attitudes (Sohail et al., 2022).

Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) is another important element of Hangry's marketing strategy. Satisfied customers may share positive reviews regarding food quality, service, packaging, delivery, and overall experience through social media and online food-delivery platforms. Such recommendations can increase information credibility and influence potential consumers. Hossain et al. (2021) found that E-WOM credibility contributes to brand image and purchase intention, while Sitinjak and Pramudita (2021) showed that social media marketing and E-WOM positively influence purchase intention through brand image. Therefore, positive customer reviews can strengthen Hangry's reputation in the competitive F&B market.

Content personalization also supports Hangry's digital marketing activities. By considering consumer preferences, demographics, purchasing behavior, and interaction patterns, the company can deliver more relevant messages to different customer segments. Personalized communication can strengthen emotional connections, increase engagement, and encourage repeated interactions. However, Hangry also faces challenges, including intense competition, changing digital trends, maintaining consistent brand identity across platforms, and the need for adequate technological infrastructure and human resources. Integrating digital marketing with offline activities, such as local collaborations and promotional events, can help maintain consistent brand communication.

Brand image reflects consumers' overall perceptions of a brand based on its identity, products, services, communication, and experiences. A strong brand image can influence trust, purchasing decisions, and loyalty. Huang et al. (2020) found that brand image contributes to customer loyalty through cognitive and affective brand trust, while Alić et al. (2020) linked brand image with brand loyalty and commitment. For Hangry, brand image is shaped by its diverse culinary brands, visual identity, product presentation, communication, and customer interactions.

Customer experience is equally important in strengthening Hangry's brand image. The experience includes the entire customer journey, from searching for information and ordering to payment, delivery, consumption, and post-purchase interaction. Positive experiences can create perceptions of quality, convenience, trustworthiness, and reliability. Mukuan et al. (2022) found that customer experience and brand image influence customer satisfaction, while Violeta and Farida (2023) showed that brand image and customer experience contribute to customer loyalty through satisfaction. Consistent positive experiences can encourage repeat purchases, recommendations, and stronger emotional relationships, whereas negative experiences may quickly damage reputation through online reviews.

Established in 2019, Hangry operates as a multi-brand F&B company with brands including Moon Chicken, San Gyu, Kopi Dari Pada, Ayam Koplo, Bu Tumbar, Hot Side Story, Accha, Uno Chicken, Barendang, Bacem Tresno, Mak Dura, Habibi, Bli Agung, Bawang Putri, Bishi Bento, and TerSerah. The integration of digital marketing, E-WOM, customer experience, and brand image provides Hangry with opportunities to expand market reach, strengthen consumer relationships, and develop sustainable brand value. Figure 1 presents the various Hangry products and brands.



Figure 1. Hangry Products

4. | CONCLUSION

Social media plays a crucial role as a digital marketing tool in building and strengthening the brand image of food and beverage (F&B) products quickly, efficiently, and interactively. Social media allows F&B brands to reach a very wide audience without intermediaries, directly to their target market. Brands can use social media to project a unique and memorable persona, making the audience feel connected and understand the brand's values. The F&B industry relies heavily on visual appeal. Social media, especially platforms like Instagram and TikTok, is an ideal platform for showcasing high-quality, mouth-watering photos and videos of food and drinks. Consumers, especially Gen Z, often seek information and read reviews from other customers on social media before making a purchase. Social media provides analytics features that enable businesses to effectively monitor and evaluate the performance of their marketing campaigns, understanding what is working and what needs improvement. Overall, the implementation of digital marketing strategies by Hangry has successfully strengthened brand image through a combination of conventional and digital branding, creating a consistent and relevant customer experience across various platforms. Despite challenges such as global competition and brand identity consistency, strategic social media integration has proven to be able to increase customer loyalty and brand value in a competitive market.

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Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

Ethical Approval and Originality Statement

Ethical approval was obtained for this study. The manuscript represents original work and has not been previously published, nor is it under consideration by another journal.

Data Disclosure Statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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