Al-Ulum

Educational Services Marketing Management Model for Improving the Brand Image of Islamic Boarding Schools

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Abstract

This study analyzes the educational services marketing model in improving the brand image of the Al Ikhlash Lampoko Modern at Islamic Boarding School. This type of research is qualitative with a grounded theory approach. Data sources are the leadership of the foundation, the boarding school, teachers, staff, and students. Data analysis is carried out through five systematic stages, namely problem formulation, theoretical review, data collection, analysis, and conclusion drawing. The results of the study indicate that educational services marketing is carried out in an integrated manner, utilizing digital technology through social media and websites, as well as direct marketing support through social activities and interpersonal communication. This strategy effectively strengthens the brand image with targeted geographic, demographic, and psychographic market segmentation. Digital marketing has been proven to expand the reach of Islamic boarding schools through improving brand image, synergy of the 4P (product, promotion, process, and people), utilization of digital media (websites and social media), designing attractive content, expanding relationships and communication, and improving excellent service. Regular evaluation is essential to maintain the sustainability of service quality.

Keywords: Marketing, Brand Image, Islamic Boarding School, Digital Marketing, Islamic Education

Model Manajemen Pemasaran Jasa Pendidikan Untuk Meningkatkan *Brand Image* Pondok Pesantren

Abstrak

Penelitian ini menganalisis model pemasaran jasa pendidikan dalam meningkatkan *brand image* Pondok Pesantren Modern (PPM) Al Ikhlash. Jenis penelitian kualitatif dengan pendekatan *grounded theory*. Sumber data pimpinan yayasan, pondok, guru, staf, dan santri. Analisis data dilaksanakan melalui lima tahapan sistematis, yaitu perumusan masalah, kajian teori, pengumpulan data, analisis, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pemasaran jasa pendidikan dilakukan secara terintegrasi, memanfaatkan teknologi digital melalui media sosial dan website, serta dukungan pemasaran langsung melalui kegiatan sosial dan komunikasi interpersonal. Strategi ini efektif memperkuat *brand image* dengan segmentasi pasar geografis, demografis, dan psikografis yang tepat sasaran. Pemasaran digital terbukti memperluas jangkauan pesantren melalui peningkatan brand image, sinergitas 4P (product, promotion, process, and people), pemanfaatan media digital (website dan media sosial), desain konten menarik, memperluas relasi dan komunikasi, serta meningkatkan pelayanan prima. Evaluasi rutin sangat diperlukan untuk menjaga keberlanjutan kualitas layanan.

Kata kunci: Pemasaran, Brand Image, Pondok Pesantren, Pemasaran Digital, Pendidikan Islam

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A. Introduction

Education is the most important element in a person's development and maturity, producing a useful and noble generation. To realize this goal, education is crucial for strengthening the pure values within each individual.[1] Islamic education encourages individuals to develop their potential while fulfilling their roles as ʿābid and khalīfah in a responsible manner.[2] This education system integrates all aspects of education into one coherent goal: to serve Allah SWT and become a caliph (manager and provider) of this earth.[3] Therefore, Islamic education such as Islamic boarding schools urgently needs to be managed professionally, adapting modern management theories and optimally utilizing digital technology.[4][5]

Islamic boarding schools are one of the educational models that have long been present in Indonesian society, and are even the forerunners of the Islamic education system in this country.[6]Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) are Islamic educational institutions with deep roots in Islamic history and culture. They are an integral part of the Islamic education system, particularly in Indonesia. Islamic boarding schools have long historical roots in the Islamic world. They originate from educational institutions founded by Islamic scholars in the Middle Ages to preserve and disseminate Islamic knowledge.

While Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) are characterized by their traditional, non-formal educational practices, modern-based Islamic boarding schools are currently experiencing significant development. This stems from the problematic paradigm in our society that disproportionately views pesantren and madrasahs as purely religious schools.[7]The presence of modern Islamic boarding schools plays an important role in improving the quality of Islamic education and preparing the Muslim generation to face the challenges of the modern era.

Modern Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) are a development of traditional Islamic boarding schools (pesantren), combining Islamic values with a general curriculum. Students study religion and secular subjects such as science, mathematics, languages, and technology, using innovative and interactive learning methods in line with current developments. The use of language in modern Islamic boarding schools is a manifestation of modernity in the educational system. Foreign languages are crucial for understanding various Arabic texts, not just classical texts. Similarly, English is taught

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[1]Azis Masang, "The Nature of Education", Al-Urwatul Wutsqa Journal: Islamic Education Studies, Vol. 1, No. 1, 2021, p. 16.

[2]Abdul Halik, "The Paradigm of Islamic Education in the Transformation of Traditional Belief Systems," Al-Ishlah, Vol. 14, No. 2, 2016.

[3]Ahmadi Lubis, "Integrated Islamic Schools in the History of Islamic Education in Indonesia," Journal of Historical and Cultural Research, Vol. 4, No. 2, 2018, p. 1078.

[4]S. Sakarina, et.al., "Strategic Management of Islamic Education: Revealing The Challenges of Professionalism", *Al-Tanzim: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam*, 6.3 (2022) : 778-788. http://doi.org/10.33650/al-tanzim.v6i2.3626

[5]Astuti, R., Siswanto, S., & Walid, M. "Innovation In Islamic Education Management: Enhancing Teacher's Professionalism And Techno-Pedagogical Skills". *Academic Journal Research*, *2*.2 (2024). 16–23. https://doi.org/10.61796/acjoure.v2i2.231

[6]Pratama, MRD, Ernawati, A., & Yulistiana, Y. "Designing a Modern Islamic Boarding School with a Modern Architectural Approach in Depok", Jurnal Desain, Vol. 5, No. 02, 2018, pp. 86-94.

[7]Sitti Radhiyah Ilyas S. & Husnul Fahimah Ilyas, "Model of Empowering Santri Economic Enterprises in Islamic Boarding Schools", Educandum, Vol. 8, No. 1, 2022, pp. 107-120.

using the Berlitz method. In modern Islamic boarding schools, students are taught how to speak English actively, in addition to reading and writing.[8]

Modern Islamic boarding schools also emphasize the development of practical skills relevant to job market needs. This includes training in technical, craft, or entrepreneurial fields that prepare students to become independent and contribute to the economy. Modern Islamic boarding schools play a crucial role in making Islamic education more relevant to the challenges and opportunities of the modern era. They blend tradition with innovation, enabling students to acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed for success in today's and future lives. Islamic boarding schools today even contribute to the economic empowerment of their surrounding communities.[9]

Modern educational governance is a prerequisite for educational progress, which has an impact on the advancement of the learning system in educational institutions.[10]Good marketing management is a prerequisite for educational advancement, as it creates a strong foundation for effectively introducing a modern Islamic boarding school education system. With careful planning and implementation of marketing strategies, modern Islamic boarding schools can clarify their identity, reach prospective students and parents with relevant messages, and build a positive image to enhance the boarding school's brand image. Management, as an effort to create a good and correct management method, enables efficient resource management, continuous monitoring and evaluation of performance, and adaptation to changing market needs and trends.[11] This research fills the gap in the form of the unavailability of an operational model for educational service marketing management that specifically explains the stages, tools, and mechanisms for strengthening brand image in modern Islamic boarding schools in the context of local competition and the use of digital media.

PPM Al Ikhlash is a modern Islamic boarding school, combining the traditional Islamic boarding school education system with the flexibility of modern educational needs. One of PPM Al Ikhlash's goals as an educational institution that prepares the golden generation, with the motto "Al-Ikhlash is responsive to technological developments and the times. "Educate your children according to the times." PPM Al Ikhlash emphasizes superior values, a holistic educational approach, and a commitment to moderate Islamic teachings in accordance with the times. Through the use of existing digital, PPM Al Ikhlash's marketing management focuses on developing content relevant to their target audience. The management publishes articles, videos, and photos depicting educational, cultural, and religious activities at the Islamic boarding school to build the boarding school's brand image which in turn attracts the attention of prospective students and parents.

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[8]Yuliani, W., Wati, S., & Bisdawati, B. "Modern Islamic Boarding School Education System: Case Study of Islamic Boarding School Education at the Thawalib Parabek Islamic Boarding School in Sumatra", *Journal of Education and Teacher Training*, Vol. 2, No. 1, 2024, pp. 54-63.

[9]A Sugandi, HB Tanjung & RK Rusli, "The Role of Modern Islamic Boarding Schools (Ponpes) in Community Economic Empowerment", *Tadbir Muwahhid*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 2017, p. 100.

[10]Raya Mangsi & Juniati, *Nature-Based Learning Management*, (Cirebon: Arr Rad Pratama, 2023), p. 9.

[11]Hery Sutanto and Khaerul Umam, *Marketing Management of Islamic Banks*, (Bandung: Pustaka Setia, 2013), p. 135.

PPM Al Ikhlash strives to strengthen its position in the modern Islamic education market by attracting student interest and community support. In Polman Regency, there are two main competitors: the Syekh Hasan Yamani Islamic Boarding School and the Al-Risalah Batetangnga Islamic Boarding School, which also promote modern concepts. This competition requires PPM Al Ikhlash to have a planned, structured, and systematic educational services marketing management model. Without an appropriate marketing strategy, the institution's competitiveness can be hampered, especially in meeting community expectations for quality education that is adaptive and relevant to current developments. Amidst the competition among modern Islamic boarding schools in Polewali Mandar Regency, PPM Al Ikhlash is required to build a strong brand image to remain competitive; however, the need for planned, structured, and systematic marketing management of educational services indicates strategic issues that need to be examined.

The excellence of an educational institution can be established through image building. This can be achieved if the madrasah has access to demonstrate its excellence, thereby attracting public interest.[12]The excellence of an educational institution is not simply inherited, but rather built through the image it projects. For Islamic boarding schools to attract public attention, it is crucial for them to have the opportunity to showcase their excellence. Therefore, simply possessing excellence is not enough; PPM Al Ikhlash must actively promote these strengths. In this way, Islamic educational institutions will continue to exist and survive in providing education to the community. The scientific contribution of this research is the formulation of a model that can be tested or adapted to similar Islamic educational institutions, while also enriching the study of marketing educational services in the context of modern Islamic boarding schools.

B. Research Methods

Types of qualitative research[13][14]with a grounded theory approach[15]The research location was the Al-Ikhlash Modern Islamic Boarding School, Lampoko, Polman, West Sulawesi, in 2025. The primary data sources were the foundation's leadership, the boarding school, teachers, staff, and students. The secondary data sources were related official documents. The research instrument was the researcher himself, assisted by research tools such as cameras, stationery, recording equipment, and data collection instrument guides. Data collection techniques were through observation, in-depth interviews, and document studies.[16]. Data analysis techniques are carried out with the stages of problem

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[12]Johan Indrus Tofaynudin, "Strategies for Building Brand Image in Increasing the Competitiveness of Educational Institutions", Journal on Teacher Education Vol 4, No. 3, 2023, pp. 389-399.

[13]M. Burhan Bungin, Social and Economic Research Methodology (Jakarta: Prenada Media Group, 2013), p. 124

[14]Sugiyono, Management Research Methods Approach: Quantitative, Qualitative, Mixed Methods, Action Research, Evaluation Research, (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2015), p. 347.

[15]Kurnia Oktaria, et al. "Grounded Theory", Journal of Science and Computer Education, Vol. 3, No. 1, 2023, pp. 40-49.

[16]Djam'an Satori and Aan Komariah, Qualitative Research Methodology (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2009), p. 11.

formulation, the stage of using theoretical studies, the stage of data collection, the stage of data analysis, and the stage of conclusion.[17]. Data validity test[18]carried out by extending observations, increasing diligence in research, triangulation, discussions with colleagues, negative case analysis, and member checks.

C. Results and Discussion
1. Results

Activities in PPM Al-Ikhlash includes the study of yellow books, with the main guide being Tafsir Jalalain by Imam Jalaluddin as Suyuti and Imam Jalaluddin Al-Mahally, Ta'lim Muta'allim by Syaih Zarnuji, Akhlakul Banin by Syaikh Umar bin Ahmad Baradja, Riyadush Shalihin by Imam Nawawi, Matan Jurumiyah by Abu Abdillah Sidi Muhammad bin Daud Ash-Shanhaji alias Ibn Ajurrum, Fathul Qorib Al-Mujib by Ibn Qosim Al Ghazi, Khulosah Nurul Yaqin by Umar Abdul Jabbar, foreign language training (Arabic and English), muhadarah (speech and lecture training program), tahfizul Qur'an program,[19]

The advantages and potential of Islamic boarding schools are the main focus in developing service marketing management so that they can be better known to the wider community.Effective marketing will attract the attention of prospective students and parents by highlighting the educational institution's strengths. Al Ikhlash Lampoko Islamic Boarding School has the opportunity to utilize various communication and marketing channels, both digital and traditional, to promote the quality of education it offers. The following is an informant's statement:

> The brand image of PPM Al Ikhlash is that it must remain steadfast in upholding the values of the predecessors while adopting a more innovative, adaptive, and modern educational approach. This is why the Al-Ikhlash Modern Islamic Boarding School is popular for its instillation of noble moral values, discipline, and a strong formal education system.[20]

*Brand image*PPM Al Ikhlash prioritizes the core values taught by the predecessors, who uphold the essence and principles of religion and noble morality. However, due to its focus on development, PPM Al Ikhlash also strives to adapt to current developments through a digital-based approach. This model is what the world of work will require in the future, where in addition to relevant competencies, a foundation of morality is also needed. This is also in line with the following interview results:

> PPM Al Ikhlash builds an image as an institution that integrates Islamic boarding school-based religious education with general education under the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Ministry of Religion, with an emphasis on the quality of both.[21]

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[17]Kurnia Oktaria, et al. "Grounded Theory", *Journal of Science and Computer Education*, Vol. 3, No. 1, 2023, pp. 40-49

[18]Sugiyono, Management Research Methods Approach: Quantitative, Qualitative, Mixed Methods, Action Research, Evaluation Research, (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2015), pp. 436-445

[19]Document study at Al-Ikhlas Modern Islamic Boarding School, 2025

[20]MH, Principal, Research Interview at Al-Ikhlash Islamic Boarding School, Lampoko, March 15, 2025.

[21]RR, Secretary of the Islamic Boarding School, Research Interview at the Al-Ikhlash Islamic Boarding School, Lampoko, March 15, 2025.

PPM Al Ikhlash integrates Islamic boarding school-based religious education with general education recognized by the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Ministry of Religious Affairs. This approach emphasizes strengthening essential religious education without neglecting general education, ensuring students gain a solid spiritual understanding and adequate academic skills.

PPM Al Ikhlash balances religious and general curricula to produce graduates with strong religious knowledge and strong academic skills. Students are equipped with an understanding of religious values and prepared to face modern challenges through mastery of general knowledge, producing a generation of intelligent, skilled, and noble individuals.[22]

PPM Al Ikhlash Lampoko strives to balance religious and general education. Its primary goal is to produce graduates with a deep-rooted understanding of religion as a foundation, as well as strong academic skills.

PPM Al Ikhlash continues to adapt to current developments by integrating technology into the curriculum and activities, so that students can learn interactively, quickly access information, and be ready to face modern challenges.[23]

PPM Al Ikhlash strives to stay up-to-date by integrating technology into its curriculum and Islamic boarding school activities. By utilizing technology, students can access information more quickly and easily and engage in more interactive learning. This will improve the quality of religious education provided and prepare students to face the challenges of the modern world with relevant and up-to-date skills.

Building a brand image within the community. This step should be readily apparent, even if only from the motto adopted by PPM Al Ikhlash. Because its educational foundation embraces a modern system, it's natural that many other aspects will adopt the same system, including marketing management, specifically digital marketing. An informant stated:

We utilize digital platforms for marketing and communications to widely promote the Islamic boarding school and maintain transparent relationships with parents and students. Educational facilities and programs are continuously updated to stay relevant, ensuring students receive a quality education and are prepared to face future challenges.[24]

PPM Al Ikhlash utilizes digital platforms to introduce the Islamic boarding school to the wider community and maintains effective and transparent communication with parents and students. By utilizing digital media, the Islamic boarding school can facilitate access to information and strengthen relationships with relevant parties. PPM Al Ikhlash continuously strives to update its facilities and educational programs to remain relevant to current developments, ensuring that students receive a quality education and are prepared to face future challenges.

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[22]MH, Principal, Research Interview at Al-Ikhlash Islamic Boarding School, Lampoko, March 15, 2025.

[23]TA, Teacher, Research Interview at Al-Ikhlash Islamic Boarding School, Lampoko, March 21, 2025.

[24]YES, Teacher, Research Interview at Al-Ikhlash Islamic Boarding School, Lampoko, March 21, 2025.

Direct marketing is conducted through various social activities that allow Islamic boarding schools to interact and connect directly with the community. These activities provide opportunities for Islamic boarding schools to promote and introduce various educational programs to the surrounding community, as well as to the online community.

Promotional materials include billboards, banners, stickers, brochures, and promotional videos distributed online and offline through school visits. The combination of digital and traditional promotional media is an effective strategy for attracting prospective students. The use of social media and video is crucial in the digital age.[25]

PPM Al Ikhlash uses a combination of digital and traditional promotional materials to expand its marketing reach and attract prospective students. Traditional promotional materials such as billboards, banners, stickers, and brochures remain effective in reaching the local community, while promotional videos shared through social media and other digital platforms help convey information in a more engaging and interactive way.

Digital promotion by utilizing websites and social media also aims to make the wider community more familiar with the Al-Ikhlash Lampoko Islamic Boarding School, and most importantly, digital promotion allows for wider public reach, because it can be seen by anyone and anywhere as long as there is internet access.

We utilize social media and our website for digital marketing to expand our reach and make it easier for the public to learn more about our Islamic boarding school. This combination of the two approaches has proven effective in introducing Lampoko Islamic Boarding School to the public.[26]

PPM Al Ikhlash utilizes digital marketing through social media and its website to expand its reach and make it easier for the public to learn more about the Islamic boarding school. These steps enable the Islamic boarding school to gain greater recognition and recognition, while ensuring that relevant and important information can be disseminated quickly and effectively.

PPM Al Ikhlash has an official website, alikhlashlampoko.com, which contains the pesantren's profile, educational programs, student activities, and the latest news. This website serves as the primary source of information for prospective students, parents, and the public who want to learn more about PPM Al Ikhlash.[27]

PPM Al Ikhlash, through its official website alikhlashlampoko.com, implements its online marketing strategy as a bridge connecting the understanding of the values taught in Islamic boarding schools with modern, information-hungry thinking. PPM Al Ikhlash develops flagship programs as a manifestation of its efforts to holistically manifest the intellectual and social potential of its students. The Darul Ikhlash program facilitates students to continue their studies in the Middle East with thorough preparation. This is in line with the following interview results:

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[25]SP, Head of Senior High School/Vocational High School Administration, Research Interview at Al-Ikhlash Islamic Boarding School, Lampoko, March 15, 2025.

[26]MH, Principal, Research Interview at Al-Ikhlash Islamic Boarding School, Lampoko, March 15, 2025.

[27]MH, Principal, Research Interview at Al-Ikhlash Islamic Boarding School, Lampoko, March 15, 2025.

PPM Al Ikhlash is actively collaborating with various educational institutions both domestically and abroad. This Islamic boarding school collaborates with Ummul Qura' University, Makkah, with the Islamic boarding school's principals taking short courses at the campus. On his trip to Egypt, Al Azhar University, he established partnerships with campuses in the Middle East and Africa.[28]

This program is crucial for introducing students to the international dimension of education and serving as a bridge between local scholarly traditions and the global educational world. In this regard, Islamic boarding schools prepare students to assume intellectual responsibilities in the wider world while maintaining their religious roots.

PPM Al Ikhlash faces significant challenges related to intense competition, both from formal schools and other Islamic boarding schools offering similar facilities and programs. In the Polewali Mandar region, there are numerous boarding-based educational institutions or Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) that are popular choices for the community. With so many options, this Islamic boarding school must strive to differentiate itself to continue attracting prospective students. This presents a significant challenge, given the increasing number of educational institutions offering similar facilities and programs:

Our challenge here is fierce competition with other formal schools and Islamic boarding schools offering similar facilities and programs. The fact is, Polewali Mandar has a large number of boarding-based educational institutions, or Islamic boarding schools. The public perception has emerged that formal schools are superior academically.[29]

The growing public perception that formal schools are superior academically is one of the obstacles faced by Islamic boarding schools (pesantren). This perception can make some parents hesitate to choose Islamic boarding schools as their children's education, even though they also offer advantages in character building and religious education. PPM Al Ikhlash needs to address this challenge with the right strategy by improving academic quality and exploring other unique strengths that distinguish Islamic boarding schools from formal educational institutions, thereby convincing the public that Islamic boarding schools are also capable of providing a quality education comprehensively. This is also in line with the following interview results:

Another challenge is competition with other Islamic boarding schools. As a solution, we focus on highlighting our boarding school's excellence in character and skills education, which is a key value that sets us apart from other Islamic boarding schools. In this way, we hope to continue attracting prospective students and improving the quality of education at the boarding school.[30]

One response to these challenges is that Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) are focusing on strengthening their distinguishing aspects: character

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[28]RR, Secretary of the Islamic Boarding School, Research Interview at the Al-Ikhlash Islamic Boarding School, Lampoko, March 15, 2025.

[29]MH, Principal, Research Interview at Al-Ikhlash Islamic Boarding School, Lampoko, March 15, 2025.

[30]SP, Head of Senior High School/Vocational High School Administration, Research Interview at Al-Ikhlash Islamic Boarding School, Lampoko, March 15, 2025.

and skills education. These strengths are considered an added value, not solely focused on academic achievement but also on developing a superior personality, which is expected to be a major draw for prospective students and their parents. Islamic boarding schools strive to emphasize the noble values that characterize them: education that prioritizes knowledge, character, and skills useful in everyday life.

The results of the evaluation of the marketing implementation model for Al Ikhlash Islamic Boarding School services:

Table 1. Evaluation of Marketing Services of Al Ikhlash Islamic Boarding School

Evaluation Aspects	Indicators/Activities	Analysis and Implications for Brand Image
Market Segmentation & Targeting	- Geographic segmentation: Polewali Mandar and outside the region - Demographic segmentation: Families who care about religious and character education - Psychographic segmentation: Parents who prioritize morals and the balance of worldly and afterlife knowledge	Proper segmentation helps Islamic boarding schools reach audiences with specific needs, strengthening their brand image as inclusive institutions that are responsive to the demands of modern society.
Educational Product Development	- Integrative curriculum (religion & general) - Featured programs: Darul Ikhlash, Writing School, Tahfidzul Qur'an - Focus on noble morals and character education	The diverse product offerings strengthen the differentiation of Islamic boarding schools, becoming an attraction for parents and students who want a quality education based on moral and academic values.
Marketing Promotion Strategy	- Official website: alikhlashlampoko.com - Social media: Instagram, Facebook, etc. - Preaching safari & social activities - Distribution of pamphlets, billboards, brochures, Maulid and Halal Bihalal activities	The combination of digital and face-to-face strategies expands the reach of promotions, builds emotional closeness with the community, and strengthens the image of Islamic boarding schools as open and communicative institutions.
Distribution Strategy	- Digital-based online registration system - Strengthening the alumni network as Islamic boarding school ambassadors - Partnerships with other schools or educational institutions	Ease of access and alumni networks build sustainable distribution, increase public trust and positive perceptions of the effectiveness of management and the modernity of Islamic boarding schools.
Evaluation of Success	- Increasing number of applicants every year - Website visitors and conversions-Social media engagement - Parent and student satisfaction	Data-based evaluation and feedback with quantitative and qualitative indicators strengthen the professionalism of the institution

Evaluation Aspects	Indicators/Activities	Analysis and Implications for Brand Image
	survey - Reputation in society and the media	and increase the credibility of the Islamic boarding school brand.
Advantages & Differentiation	- Character education: noble character, leadership Integration of technology in learning	Differentiation through character and technology strengthens the brand image of Islamic boarding schools as modern institutions that remain based on Islamic values.

The marketing management implications implemented by PPM Al Ikhlash are expected to achieve the peak of expectations, namely obtaining an increase in the number of new students every year. With an effective marketing strategy through digital media, the development of a curriculum that balances religious education and modern skills, and increased extracurricular activities involving arts, sports, and social activities, the Islamic boarding school can attract more prospective students and increase parental confidence in the quality of education provided, as shown through the following interview results:

> The marketing strategy implemented contributed to changes in the number of new student registrations, namely by increasing the number of prospective new student applicants who registered at the Al Ikhlash modern Islamic boarding school from year to year. [31]

The marketing strategy implemented by the Al Ikhlash Islamic Boarding School has been proven to contribute significantly to the increase in new student enrollment. The results of this marketing strategy can be seen in the year-over-year increase in the number of prospective new students registering at the Al Ikhlash Islamic Boarding School.

2. Discussion

PPM Al Ikhlash is an educational institution that balances teaching religious knowledge and modern living skills. The focus on character building makes him critically see opportunities and implement marketing schemes according to current developments. PPM Al Ikhlash is proof of commitment to building an Islamic educational institution that is professional and has character. With the motto "Sturdy in Aqidah", PPM Al Ikhlash prepares a generation of Muslims with straight creeds, improving their Islamic faith and having noble morals. The main focus is strengthening the faith.

PPM Al Ikhlash's educational services marketing aims to enhance its brand image and attract prospective students. Strategies through social media, websites, and social activities effectively expand its reach and establish the Islamic boarding school as the primary choice for Islamic boarding school education in the region. The integration of religious and academic values is reflected in classroom learning, extracurricular activities, character development, and leadership training.

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[31]RR, Secretary of the Islamic Boarding School, Research Interview at the Al-Ikhlash Islamic Boarding School, Lampoko, March 15, 2025.

Students are trained to think critically, discuss issues, contribute socially, and uphold Islamic ethics, ensuring a transformative, not merely dogmatic, education.

PPM Al Ikhlash maintains a balance between religious and general knowledge as an effort to integrate the two. This aims to produce a generation with a strong religious foundation and high academic competence to benefit society. In the digital era, PPM Al Ikhlash combines conventional marketing methods with digital platforms, social media, and modern promotions. This strategy builds a modern image without abandoning traditional values, attracting prospective students, and maintaining relevance amidst intense competition in education.

Digital marketing opens up significant opportunities for Islamic boarding schools to thrive in the modern era. Through social media, websites, and online content, Islamic boarding schools can reach a wider audience, both locally and internationally. Interaction is easier, and programs and values can be delivered quickly and engagingly, strengthening the school's adaptive image. Studies show that adopting digital marketing strategies significantly increases community participation. This means that the community becomes more interested and involved in Islamic boarding school activities, whether through support, new student registration, or program collaboration. The right digital strategy has proven to be a driving force for significant Islamic boarding school growth, transforming them into centers of religious education and active institutions engaged in technology-based communication and public service.[32]

Quoted in Khairi et al., Yasmin states that digital marketing is a modern method used by marketers to utilize electronic media to promote products or services to the market. In today's digital era, promotions no longer rely solely on conventional media, but have shifted to online platforms and mobile applications. As explained by Ingle et al., involvement in digital marketing is no longer an option, but rather a necessity for anyone who wants to stay relevant and competitive. Brands, products, and services must be present and recognized in the digital world to attract consumer attention more effectively.[33]

Digital marketing plays a crucial role in fostering the business independence of students and administrators of Islamic Boarding School Foundations. Through digital technology, Islamic boarding school products can be promoted more widely, sales increase, and financial independence is achieved. This strengthens the existence of Islamic boarding schools, including PPM Al Ikhlash, in the digital era. PPM Al Ikhlash is able to balance strong religious values with modern life skills, becoming an attraction for students and parents. In addition to religious education, this Islamic boarding school equips students with skills that meet the demands of the times. Syarifudin stated that many institutions

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[32]Rahma Nanda Nur Azizah and Mutiatus Sofiah. "Digital Marketing as a Catalyst for Change: Innovation in Building Islamic Boarding School Resilience." Journal of Management Stars 2.3 (2024): 29-40.

[33]Khairi, Ardhi, et al. "Digital Marketing Counseling at the Madania Modern Islamic Boarding School Foundation for Orphans and the Poor in Yogyakarta." Journal of Research and Community Service 1.3 (2023): 167-174.

are now combining government curricula with internal curricula to improve the quality of Islamic education.[34]

Marketing through social media and community activities has proven effective in attracting prospective students and parents. Student enrollment has increased since the Islamic boarding school became active on social media and in community activities, demonstrating that direct interaction and digital platforms can expand the reach and interest of PPM Al Ikhlash. PPM Al Ikhlash maintains its flagship Quran memorization program as an attraction for parents who prioritize religious education. This program emphasizes the commitment to producing a generation that is academically intelligent and excels in religion. The best service is achieved through coordinated skills, attitudes, attention, actions, and responsibilities.[35]

Educational service providers must be professional, responsive to student needs, and responsible. Service dominant logic is based on competence, resource configuration, and system and value integration in services.[36] With digital media and an integrated marketing strategy, PPM Al Ikhlash has been able to thrive despite competition and limitations. The focus remains on character, academics, and modern life skills. The Islamic boarding school's use of e-learning and social media demonstrates an awareness of the importance of keeping up with current developments to attract the digital generation. Building marketing relationships places trust and commitment at the center of long-term success through open communication between schools and the community as a prerequisite for the birth of trust and this is not just promotion but maintaining social relations.[37] One challenge is the limitations of this study in drawing generalizable conclusions, as the context and characteristics of each Islamic boarding school can vary greatly.[38].

Educational service marketing management plays a crucial role in designing and implementing effective marketing strategies. Digital marketing expands external reach and recognition accompanied by differentiation arguments as an indication of strengthening brand knowledge and favorable associations in the logic of brand equity.[39] Wahyudi stated that management is all activities or processes, including planning, organizing, implementing, and controlling, to

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[34]Sarifudin and Rahendra Maya. "Implementation of Educational Services Marketing Management in Increasing Customer Satisfaction at Darul Fallah Bogor Integrated Islamic Senior High School (MAT). Islamic Management: Journal of Islamic Education Management 2.02 (2019): 133-151.

[35]Muhammad Iqbal, "Marketing of Educational Services and Its Implementation as an Educational Development Strategy at Muhammadiyah 1 Junior High School, Depok, Sleman, Yogyakarta." MANAGERIA: Journal of Islamic Education Management 4.1 (2019): 127-146.

[36]Stephen L. Vargo, Paul P. Maglio, Melissa Archpru Akaka, "On value and value co-creation: A service systems and service logic perspective," *European Management Journal*, Volume 26, Issue 3, 2008, pp. 145-152, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.emj.2008.04.003

[37]Martín, S. S., Gutiérrez, J., & Camarero, C. "Trust as the Key to Relational Commitment". *Journal of Relationship Marketing*, Volume 3, Number 1, 2004, pp. 53–77. https://doi.org/10.1300/J366v03n01_04

[38]Moh Rofiki, Afifatur Rahmah, and Nadiatur Rohmah. "Local Wisdom-Based Educational Marketing Management: Efforts to Increase the Quantity of Islamic Students in the 4.0 Era." Indo-MathEdu Intellectuals Journal 5.6 (2024): 7629-7639.

[39]Keller, K. L. Conceptualizing, Measuring, and Managing Customer-Based Brand Equity. *Journal of Marketing*, *57*(1), (1993). 1-22. https://doi.org/10.1177/002224299305700101

achieve predetermined goals. Any activity requires sound management, and good management will undoubtedly impact the results or achievement of educational goals.[40]Amalia explained, Effective marketing management is a key factor for entities to remain competitive in an ever-changing market.[41]However, in addition to marketing management, other supporting factors are also needed. Alfiyanto's findings state that factors that support the marketing of educational services include: 1) Implementation of the PHI curriculum; 2) Competent human resources; 3) Complete educational facilities; 4) Promotional activities that utilize various strategies; 5) Easily accessible school locations; 6) Significant achievements in general and religious fields.[42]

The achievements of PPM Al Ikhlash are certainly the implications of an integrative marketing management strategy that has been implemented to date, demonstrating its ability to compete. This is what Wahyudi means by competitiveness for educational services. Educational marketing management plays a crucial and strategic role in the sustainability of an educational institution, especially an Islamic educational institution. Educational marketing management must start from the needs and desires of consumers (society) by estimating and determining the needs and desires of the community and delivering satisfactory services effectively and efficiently. This certainly requires educational institutions to be able to compete in the educational marketing process. Islamic educational institutions are in a competitive arena and are required to understand and manage positioning/branding for long-term existence, so that educational branding is based on institutional identity and reputation.[43] However, if an educational institution is weak in educational marketing, it is certain that interest will decrease, especially in terms of quality and achievement.[44]

Zohriah's research found that the image of Islamic boarding schools is formed through several factors: dedicated support from the community and parents, support from the foundation, and commitment maintained by each individual, thus, the existence of Islamic boarding schools in the community remains good. Parental support is needed to develop the image of the institution. Various excellent programs to meet the needs of today's society include: Arabic and English language proficiency, and many other programs. Then, Islamic boarding schools also strive to continue to maintain commitments so that the surrounding community continues to trust the institution. In addition, a positive image of the institution has two aspects that become public trust in the institution:

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[40]Kacung Wahyudi, "Educational marketing management." Kariman: Journal of Islamic Education 4.2 (2016): 99-116.

[41]Amalia, Nurul, et al. "Marketing Management and the Importance of Social Media for MSME Products at Assyifa Islamic Boarding School, Parung District, Bogor." Journal of PKM Business Management 4.2 (2024): 380-386.

[42]Afif Alfiyanto, "Marketing management of educational services based on religious culture." Adaara: Journal of Islamic Education Management 10.1 (2020): 53-62.

[43]Sufrin Hannan, "Building a Brand in Higher Education: A Review of the Literature on Higher Education Institutions Brand Management", *Proceedings of the 5th Asian Education Symposium 2020 (AES 2020),* Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research, Atlantis Press, volume 566, 2020.

[44]Kacung Wahyudi, "Educational marketing management." Kariman: Journal of Islamic Education 4.2 (2016): 99-116.

1) having the ability to meet the needs and desires of the community and 2) being able to provide trust to the community with the commitments carried out. The commitment, in this case, is that the institutional programs provided to the community must be continuously implemented so that the community continues to trust the institution.[45]

Khoriyah stated that good planning is the first step that must be taken to start a promotional activity at the Al-Urwatul Wutsqo Islamic Boarding School, which begins with deliberation and data collection between ISMA'U and the unit leaders. In this planning, the market strategy, promotional techniques, and promotional tools used must be carefully formulated. Uniquely, the promotional tools used in this Islamic boarding school are slightly different from other institutions, with a focus on more attention-grabbing methods. Second, a clear organizational structure is also very important for smooth implementation. When the ISMA'U head and unit leaders coordinate with each other, and unit leaders work together with the marketing and reporting department, all final decisions must be accounted for by the Islamic boarding school supervisor. All students, both from within and outside the boarding school, alumni, and ustadz/ustadzah, play a role as marketers. Third, effective implementation depends heavily on good work methods, which in this case involve promotions during the boarding school holidays or when students return home on leave. Every promotional activity must be carried out in accordance with the instructions set by the institution. Finally, control and evaluation are crucial elements. After promotional activities are completed, marketers must report the results to the unit leader and account for the implementation of the activities to the boarding school administrators, including the results achieved, supporting factors, and any obstacles encountered during the process.[46]

Marketing management is understood as a strategy for specific goals. Islamic education teaches the importance of trustworthiness, honesty, and the welfare of the community, which aligns with the basic principles of ethical marketing in modern management. Therefore, the application of marketing management in Islamic educational institutions is understood as a commercial endeavor, a means of preaching, and a service to the community.

1. Educational Marketing Planning

Marketing planning is the first step in managing the marketing of educational services. At the Al Ikhlash Islamic Boarding School in Lampoko, planning begins with a market analysis to understand the needs and expectations of prospective students and parents. In this context, the boarding school analyzes competition with formal schools and other Islamic boarding schools in Polewali Mandar, as well as public perception of the boarding school.

Kotler in Iqbal explains, **strategic planning**is crucial for an organization or company to achieve competitive advantage. This means companies must design

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[45]Anis Zohriah, Dimas Zuhri Ahmad, and Deni Iriyadi. "Marketing Management of Educational Services in an Effort to Improve the Image of Islamic Boarding Schools." Tadbir: Journal of Islamic Education Management 12.1 (2024): 63-82.

[46]Umi Mahfudlotul Khoiriyah and Beny Sintasari. "Promotional Strategy in Marketing Management of Al Urwatul Wutsqo Diwek Jombang Islamic Boarding School." Al-Idaroh: Journal of Islamic Education Management Studies 3.2 (2019): 1-19.

strategic steps to outperform their competitors, particularly by creating products that meet consumer needs. To achieve this, companies need to optimize their resources—be they human resources, technology, capital, or time.[47]

Marketing strategyalso understood as a form of management. To realize the educational institution certainly requires good management in improving the quality of marketing of educational services, starting with an analysis of the desires and needs of the community which is then responded to by planning a good marketing program from the most basic things to the most urgent things, then implementing the marketing with a clear orientation and continued with control over the implementation of the marketing of educational services.[48]

In planning, the Islamic boarding school sets clear marketing objectives, namely increasing the number of new student enrollments and building the image of a modern, competent, and character-based Islamic boarding school. In line with Mukmin's view, if promotions are well planned and implemented appropriately, they will significantly impact sales results (the number of customers), because advertising can generate interest in customers, thus creating a number of loyal customers to the institution.[49]By setting measurable goals, Islamic boarding schools can design appropriate strategies. One important planning step is developing an internal media team consisting of students and mentors to manage digital marketing.

2. Organizing Marketing Resources

Organization in educational marketing management involves allocating available resources to ensure the smooth implementation of marketing plans. PPM Al Ikhlash recognizes that limited human resources are a major challenge in digital marketing. The challenge facing Islamic boarding schools today is related to public perception. This parallels Syarifudin's statement that religious-based schools (madrasas) are less well-known or less popular among some members of the public. This leads to the public assuming that madrasas are second-class institutions, unable to compete with public schools. Only certain groups enroll their children in madrasas.[50]

In today's era of globalization, competition between educational institutions is intense, leading many educational institutions to abandon their users for various reasons. Therefore, professional management skills are needed to effectively market educational services, aiming to maintain and meet consumer needs and

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[47]Muhammad Iqbal, "Marketing of Educational Services and its Implementation as an Educational Development Strategy at Muhammadiyah 1 Middle School, Depok, Sleman, Yogyakarta, ..., pp. 127-146.

[48]Kacung Wahyudi, "Educational marketing management." Kariman: Journal of Islamic Education 4.2 (2016): 99-116.

[49]Baba Mukmin, "Integrated Elementary School Service Marketing Management." Isema Journal: Islamic Educational Management 5.1 (2020): 97-112.

[50]Sarifudin and Rahendra Maya. "Implementation of Educational Services Marketing Management in Increasing Customer Satisfaction at Darul Fallah Bogor Integrated Islamic Senior High School (MAT). Islamic Management: Journal of Islamic Education Management 2.02 (2019): 133-151.

enhance the institution's objectives.[51]In response, the Al Ikhlash Islamic Boarding School formed an internal team consisting of students and mentors specially trained to manage digital content. This step allows the boarding school to continue operating efficiently without relying on external experts.

3. **Implementation of Educational Marketing**

The implementation of educational marketing at PPM Al Ikhlash involves various activities carried out in a structured and systematic manner. One of the most important aspects of implementation is the utilization of social media and other digital platforms. Actuating, as the third function of management, focuses on the effective execution of work, encompassing how tasks are carried out, the direction of activities, and the appropriate timing for carrying them out. To ensure this process runs smoothly, management is crucial for providing incentives that can motivate workers to achieve organizational goals. After the implementation stage, the control function becomes crucial to ensure that all activities proceed according to plan. This oversight must be carried out as early as possible to ensure potential errors are detected promptly and prevent them from developing into larger problems. If there are deviations from the initial plan, corrective action must be taken immediately to keep the organization on track.[52]

PPM Al Ikhlash holds various social activities involving the surrounding community. This can increase the reach of the Islamic boarding school and attract the attention of prospective students and parents. Active involvement in social events also increases community awareness and trust in the Islamic boarding school, ultimately driving an increase in the number of new student enrollments. PPM Al Ikhlash ensures that communication with parents and students is transparent and open. They utilize social media and their website as channels to provide information directly to parents and prospective students regarding Islamic boarding school activities, student development, and policies. This builds a closer relationship between the Islamic boarding school and the community.

4. **Educational Marketing Evaluation**

Evaluation is the final stage in educational services marketing management and is crucial for assessing the effectiveness of the implemented marketing strategy in achieving its stated objectives. PPM Al Ikhlash regularly evaluates its marketing strategy. One way to do this is by monitoring the performance of the Islamic boarding school's social media and website, such as visitor numbers, interactions, and conversions.

Evaluation is conducted by measuring success based on the results of new student registrations. If the number of applicants increases after marketing advertisements or promotions through social media, this indicates that the

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[51]Sarifudin and Rahendra Maya. "Implementation of Educational Services Marketing Management in Increasing Customer Satisfaction at Darul Fallah Bogor Integrated Islamic Senior High School (MAT). Islamic Management: Journal of Islamic Education Management 2.02 (2019): 133-151.

[52]Umi Mahfudlotul Khoiriyah and Beny Sintasari. "Promotional Strategy in Marketing Management of Al Urwatul Wutsqo Diwek Jombang Islamic Boarding School." Al-Idaroh: Journal of Islamic Education Management Studies 3.2 (2019): 1-19.

implemented strategy has succeeded in attracting the attention of prospective students and parents, and vice versa. Islamic boarding schools also conduct satisfaction surveys with parents and students to assess whether their needs and expectations are being met. Educational institutions must be able to maintain their existence and are required to be able to market themselves. No matter how good an institution is, if it is not optimally promoted, it will result in a low number of students and the school will be unknown among the community.[53]

Table 2.Educational Services Marketing Management Model

Stage	The main purpose	Strategy/Activity	Expected Output	Success Indicators
1. Planning	Determine marketing direction and strategy	- Market needs analysis - Competitor analysis - Setting marketing objectives - Internal media team development	Strategic and realistic marketing plan	- Marketing plan document - Measurable marketing objectives - Media team formed
2. Organizing	Managing resources to implement plans	- Formation of an internal digital marketing team - Budget and content management - Promotion scheduling	Efficiency of marketing implementation	- The team is actively producing content - Marketing schedule is running - Optimal budget utilization
3. Implementation	Carry out marketing activities according to plan	- Intense promotion through social media and websites - Publication of achievements and activities - Social activities with the community - Interactive communication with parents	Building a positive image and increasing the number of applicants	- Increased online interactions - Community participation - The number of applicants is increasing
4. Evaluation	Assess effectiveness and make improvements	- Social media and web monitoring - Satisfaction survey-Registration data analysis - Strategy adjustment	Marketing management improvements	- Periodic evaluation report - Updated strategy - Satisfaction levels increase

The marketing management of educational services at PPM Al Ikhlash demonstrates that effective educational marketing requires careful planning,

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[53]Baba Mukmin, "Integrated Elementary School Service Marketing Management." Isema Journal: Islamic Educational Management 5.1 (2020): 97-112.

sound resource organization, structured implementation, and ongoing evaluation. Facing intense competition, the Islamic boarding school successfully developed a marketing strategy that emphasized its strengths in character education, life skills, and the transparent and engaging use of digital technology.

The research of Fathatul Jannah, et al., has a strong intersection with the findings of this research, good service, positive image, synergistic collaboration (product, promotion, process, and people), digital media, and the distinction of Islamic boarding schools become public attraction.[54] The findings of C. Chatimah & N. Kholifah A., emphasize that web & social media platforms with attractive content designs are the main strengths in increasing public interest in Islamic boarding schools.[55] Gómez Bayona's research emphasizes that relational strategies & institutional management contribute to strengthening brand identity, namely relationships (trust-communication) and marketing strategies influence the brand image of educational institutions.[56] Furthermore, Barr emphasizes that value/brand is built through service and communication interactions that strengthen public recognition and trust.[57] Thus, this research is strengthened by the results of previous research that the application of marketing management is considered relevant in improving the brand image of Islamic boarding schools, the synergy of 4P (product, promotion, process, and people), the use of digital media (websites and social media), attractive content design, expanding relationships and communication, and improving excellent service.

D. Conclusion

The implementation of educational service marketing at the Al Ikhlash Lampoko Islamic Boarding School is carried out by emphasizing the use of digital technology as the main promotional media. The marketing strategy implemented by integrating digital marketing through social media and websites, as well as direct marketing through social activities and interpersonal communication. Evaluation of educational service marketing at the Al Ikhlash Lampoko Islamic Boarding School in Polman Regency shows that the implemented marketing strategy is effective in strengthening the brand image through market, geographic, demographic, and psychographic segmentation, so that the Islamic boarding school management can reach prospective students and the wider community. The implications of Al Ikhlash Lampoko Islamic Boarding School marketing management can improve the Islamic boarding school's brand image, as evidenced

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[54]F.B. Fathatul Jannah, D. Hidayati, dan Badruddin, "Marketing Management of Educational Services in Improving The Image of Islamic Boarding Schools", *Al-Tanzim: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam,* 7.1 (2023), pp. 56-66, https://doi.org/10.33650/al-tanzim.v7i1.4353

[55]C.Chotimah & N.Kholifah A. "Digital Marketing for Improving Brand Image at Al-Munawwir Komplek Q Islamic Boarding School in Yogyakarta", *Jurnal Tarbiyatuna,* 15.1 (2024), pp. 43-53, https://doi.org/10.31603/tarbiyatuna.v15i1.10491

[56]Gómez-Bayona, L., Valencia-Arias, A., Orozco-Toro, J. A., Tabares-Penagos, A., & Moreno-López, G.. Importance of relationship marketing in higher education management: the perspective of university teachers. *Cogent Education*, *11.*1 (2024). https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2024.2332858

[57]Barr, M., Relja, R., Ward, P., Hill, J. L., Tran, Q. P., Hoang, D. T. Q., & Moganathas, P. Value propositions: application of service-dominant logic in transnational marketing management education. *Journal of Marketing Management*, *41.*13–14 (2025), pp, 1427–1466. https://doi.org/10.1080/0267257X.2025.2554134

by the increasing trend of new student registrations each year, high community participation, and recognition from other institutions.

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