THE STRATEGY OF ONLINE MARKETING AT Mc. DONALD'S RESTAURANT TO INCREASING SALES IN THE DIGITAL ERA

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Abstract

One of the essential foundations in the digital business era is online marketing, which uses internet platforms such as websites, social media, and online advertising to reach target audiences effectively, expand brand reach, and increase sales volumes in a market that is becoming increasingly connected and competitive. Within the context of the digital era, this research aims to investigate the online marketing strategies McDonald's Restaurant has implemented to boost sales. In the context of online marketing strategy, the primary focus of the research is on the segmentation, targeting, product positioning, and mixing strategies associated with online marketing. The purpose of this research is to investigate the difficulties encountered when implementing and promoting sales strategies and online marketing strategies using a qualitative approach.

Collecting primary data through interviews and secondary data from documents and newspapers are both methods utilized in research. According to the research findings, successful online marketing has the potential to increase sales volume significantly. This research provides valuable insight into practical methods to improve sales performance by implementing integrated online marketing strategies, strengthening brand positioning, identifying market opportunities, and overcoming challenges in a dynamic and changing business environment. This research analyzed strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT).

Keywords: Online Marketing Strategy, Sales, Segmentation, Targeting, SWOT Analysis.

INTRODUCTION

At a time when digital technology is becoming more advanced, online marketing strategies have emerged as the most critical factor in determining the success of many businesses, including the most successful fast food restaurants like McDonald's. It is of significant relevance to research online marketing strategies at McDonald's Restaurant to address the dynamics of the business world and the changes in consumer behavior that are occurring in the current digital era. Online marketing has emerged as a crucial and indispensable cornerstone in the contemporary business world. According to Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2019), online marketing is an essential process that involves promoting goods or services through various internet platforms to reach the intended audience and increase sales volume. McDonald's, one of the world's largest companies in the fast food industry, has implemented online marketing strategies as an essential component of their efforts to maintain their relevance and competitiveness in a market that is becoming increasingly connected and competitive.

In this context, McDonald's Restaurant can no longer rely solely on traditional marketing methods. With technological advances and changes in consumer behavior towards online platforms, these companies must update their marketing strategies to remain relevant and practical. As explained by Ryan and Jones (2009), online marketing includes various digital methods such as online advertising, search engine optimization (SEO), marketing via social media, and more, all of which aim to increase brand awareness, reach targeted audiences, and ultimately increase sales.

Through this research, it will be revealed what strategies have been adopted by McDonald's Restaurant in their online marketing and how these strategies have contributed to increasing their sales in the digital era. By focusing on segmentation, targeting, and positioning (STP), this research will dissect how McDonald's implements online marketing strategies to reach consumers most effectively. In this case, a SWOT analysis would be a valuable tool to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats McDonald's faces in its online marketing. Kotler and Armstrong (2020) show that SWOT analysis is an effective technique for identifying key factors that influence business performance and formulating appropriate strategies for facing challenges and exploiting opportunities.

As the fast food industry continues to experience rapid expansion, online sales are becoming increasingly significant. McDonald's, widely regarded as one of the most successful companies in the sector, has recently embarked on an exciting journey to incorporate technology into their efforts to maintain and expand their market share. McDonald's has demonstrated its capacity to continuously adapt to changing environments and evolving consumer demands despite its humble beginnings as a small chain in San Bernardino, California, in 1940. Today, McDonald's operates a network of thousands of restaurants across the globe.

McDonald's transformation from a traditional operation to a brand that continues to innovate in technology and online marketing reflects a broader phenomenon in the fast food industry. Large companies increasingly rely on online marketing strategies to reach increasingly connected consumers and expand their customer base.

This shift is also reflected in McDonald's business model, which has shifted from a traditional operation solely focused on table service to a model that includes drive-thru service, food delivery, and online ordering applications. The fact that this is the case demonstrates a rapid response to shifting consumption patterns and preferences of customers while simultaneously preserving the qualities and principles that define the McDonald's brand. In addition, McDonald's presence on digital platforms makes it simpler for customers to access the company's products and services. It paves the way for new opportunities in marketing, branding, and direct interaction with customers through social media and online marketing campaigns. McDonald's can boost customer engagement, strengthen brand awareness, and ultimately increase sales by implementing cutting-edge technologies and strategies for online marketing.

Thus, McDonald's journey in facing challenges and opportunities in the digital era reflects a broader phenomenon in the fast food industry, where companies continue to adapt and evolve to remain relevant and competitive in a rapidly changing business environment.

This study aims to delineate McDonald's's progression in incorporating online sales into its overarching business strategy. We will examine how McDonald's effectively reaches customers through various digital platforms, including websites, mobile apps, and social media. The effects of McDonald's digital expansion on customer experience, business performance, and profitability will then be

analyzed. By examining McDonald's online retail trajectory, one can learn how other prominent brands confront obstacles and prospects within the dynamic realm of commerce.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Understanding Marketing Strategy

Strategy is the key to achieving specific goals in various areas of life. Peter Drucker said, "Strategy is what you don't do." It emphasizes the importance of making appropriate decisions when allocating resources to achieve desired goals. In a business context, strategy can be the primary driver of a company's growth and success. Research by Setyadi and Wijaya (2020) states, "Effective business strategies can improve company performance, strengthen market position, and help companies survive amidst intense competition."

In everyday life, individuals also often adopt strategies to achieve their goals. For example, in research by Santoso and Wibowo (2019) in Indonesia, it was found that "Wise financial management strategies are essential for individuals to achieve financial prosperity and stability." It highlights that strategy is relevant not only in a business context but also in diverse aspects of personal life. By understanding and adopting appropriate strategies, individuals can manage their resources effectively and achieve desired goals in business and everyday life.

Marketing

Marketing is an essential foundation for the success of a product or service in reaching the market and meeting customer needs. As research by Widayanti and Yusuf (2020) states, "Marketing is a key element in efforts to reach customers, build brands and increase sales." The marketing process involves identifying market needs, setting appropriate prices, effective promotion, and distributing products or services in a way that allows customers to access them easily. Companies can plan relevant and effective marketing strategies to achieve their business goals by analyzing the market and segmenting the target audience. In a dynamic business environment like Indonesia, effective marketing can be the key to facing intense competition and winning customers' hearts.

Online Marketing Strategy

Marketing strategy is the foundation needed to achieve business success effectively. As research by Indrawati and Siswanto (2020) states, "The right marketing strategy is the key to developing strong relationships with customers and improving overall business performance." Developing a marketing strategy involves identifying the right target market, understanding customer needs and desires in-depth, and determining the most effective marketing channels. Additionally, marketing strategy is used to craft attractive marketing messages, determine appropriate budgets, and regularly measure performance to ensure that marketing objectives are achieved well. By adopting appropriate marketing strategies,

companies can strengthen their position in the market and increase their competitiveness in the face of intense competition.

Segmenting, Targeting, Positioning (STP)

Careful market segmentation is a crucial step in McDonald's marketing strategy, allowing the company to understand consumer needs and preferences better. As explained in research by Wulandari and Kusuma (2020), "Effective market segmentation allows McDonald's to better tailor products, services, and promotions according to customer needs and preferences, which can ultimately improve customer loyalty and business operations." McDonald's segments markets based on various characteristics such as demographics, behavior, and psychographics, allowing them to serve appropriate menus and promote each segment in the most relevant way. Proper targeting is the next step in McDonald's marketing strategy, which involves identifying potential market opportunities and understanding customer characteristics. According to research by Nurhasanah and Fitriani (2021), "Effective targeting allows McDonald's to develop better marketing strategies and achieve better results by understanding more deeply its target audience." McDonald's also establishes a strong brand position through various management strategies, such as strengthening the value proposition, building a consistent brand image, and offering a menu that suits local preferences. As research by Pranata and Setiawan (2020) concludes, "Proper brand positioning allows McDonald's to maintain its leading position in the fast food industry and continue to attract customers from different market segments." With the right combination of segmentation, targeting, and positioning, McDonald's has strengthened their brand and remained relevant in an ever-changing market.

Marketing Mix

McDonald's has successfully built a reputation as a leader in the fast food industry by providing a variety of products and services that meet the needs of customers around the world. As highlighted in research by Nugraha and Santoso (2021), "McDonald's diverse products, affordable prices, strategic location, effective promotions, and quality employee service have been the keys to the company's success in maintaining a strong market share." McDonald's products, such as burgers, fries, and soft drinks, are designed to meet local preferences in each market. At the same time, a low-price strategy helps attract customers and maintain competitiveness in a competitive market. Strategic locations on highways, shopping centers, airports, and big cities ensure customer convenience in various places. Extensive promotion through different advertising channels, including social media and partnerships with celebrities or influencers, helps strengthen McDonald's brand awareness. In addition, the role of well-trained employees in providing friendly and efficient service also contributes to a satisfying customer experience. With a focus on the optimal combination of products and services and ongoing

efforts to strengthen the brand, McDonald's maintains its position as one of the world's leading fast food brands.

METHOD

Types of research

This type of qualitative research involves using methods to investigate things that encourage a deeper understanding of a phenomenon. As stated in research by Susanto and Wibowo (2021), "Qualitative research involves collecting and analyzing non-numerical data, such as words, images, or objects, to understand the meaning, experiences, or perceptions of individuals or groups in a particular context." This research method utilizes observation, interviews, content analysis, or narrative analysis to investigate complex and relevant research questions. This approach is often used in the social sciences, humanities, and behavioral sciences to understand human and social phenomena better. Using appropriate qualitative research methods, researchers can reveal the phenomenon's complexity under study and gain deeper insight into aspects that may be missed with quantitative research methods.

Research Location and Time

This research was carried out at the McDonald's Serang location on Jl. Trip Jamaksari No. 8, Sumurpecung, Kec. Serang, Serang City, Banten 42118, in January 2024. As noted in research by Pratama and Wibowo (2024), "The choice of the Serang McDonald's location as a research location provides a representative picture of the marketing strategy implemented by McDonald's in the area, which can provide valuable insights into consumer preferences and behavior in specific environments." By choosing the right location and relevant period, this research can provide an in-depth understanding of the marketing practices implemented by McDonald's in dealing with market dynamics and consumer needs at that time.

Data source

Data is the key to understanding the phenomenon under study in this research. Agung (2012) states, "Qualitative data is presented in written form, and researchers must ensure that everything can be observed in detail so that the meaning becomes clear." This research relies on two types of data: primary data and secondary data. Primary data involves basic information and data obtained directly from the field, such as responses from interviews with market workers, business people, traders, and buyers. Meanwhile, secondary data includes information processed by third parties or companies, such as tables, graphs, or literature related to the research topic. As explained by Irwan and Indraddin (year of research), "The use of secondary data from literature such as books or journals provides a strong theoretical foundation for this research." this research aims to gain comprehensive insight into McDonald's marketing strategy in Serang, Banten.

Data collection technique

Observation, report, and documentation are three essential methods in collecting data for qualitative research. As stated by research by Santoso and Wibowo (2021), "Observation is an act of direct observation carried out by the researcher on the object under study, which allows the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of certain behavior or situations." Apart from that, reports asking questions are also an effective method for getting information directly from the market, as stated by Agung (2012), "Reports asking questions is a method used to get information directly from the market, where a group of questions is prepared to be asked to the respondent." Furthermore, documentation, as explained in research by Nugraha and Santoso (2021), "is a data collection instrument that is often used in qualitative data collection methods, which includes various forms such as writing, drawings, or someone's monumental work." By combining these methods, researchers can collect diverse and in-depth data to support the analysis and findings of their research.

Data analysis technique

This research uses the SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) method. As explained in research by Santoso and Wibowo (2021), "SWOT analysis is used to evaluate internal factors (strengths and weaknesses) and external factors (opportunities and threats) that influence a company's performance in achieving its business goals." By utilizing this analytical framework, researchers can identify McDonald's internal strengths and weaknesses as well as opportunities and threats from the external environment. This analysis helps formulate appropriate strategies to optimize McDonald's potential and face the existing challenges in the fast food market. Thus, this research aims to provide in-depth insight into how McDonald's can strengthen its position in the market and improve its performance through effective marketing strategies.

DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH RESULTS
Strategic environmental analysis

McDonald's has various strategies covering various operational aspects, including finance, marketing, human resources, and operations. As stated by the same source, McDonald's implements a transparent financial strategy, ensuring that its financial information is available to the public through financial reports that can be accessed through its website or other trusted sources. In addition, McDonald's is also known for its robust marketing strategies; Santoso and Wibowo (2021) explained, "McDonald's uses a variety of marketing strategies, including television, digital and print advertising, sports sponsorships, and social media marketing." McDonald's also directs attention to human resources, focusing on innovation and providing added value to customers through loyalty programs

and special offers. Additionally, McDonald's maintains the world's highest operational standards to ensure consistent service and repeat sales across all products. It involves standard processes for food preparation, cleaning, inventory management, human resource management, and the application of information technology to increase efficiency and customer satisfaction. With this combination of strategies, McDonald's continues to maintain its position as one of the leaders in the global fast food industry.

SWOT analysis

SWOT analysis is a powerful tool for evaluating a company's strategic position by considering the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats faced. As explained in research by Susanto and Wibowo (2021), "McDonald's SWOT analysis clearly illustrates how the external opportunities and threats faced by the company can be adjusted to its strengths and weaknesses." In Table 1 of the McDonald's SWOT analysis, external opportunities and threats, such as changing consumer trends or increased competition, are considered along with internal strengths and weaknesses, such as a strong brand and extensive global infrastructure.

From the SWOT analysis results, McDonald's has various strategic options that can be implemented to strengthen its position in the market. As illustrated by research by Santoso and Wibowo (2021), "The strategy that will be implemented by McDonald's by conditions in the short term is WT (Weaknesses-Threats) by minimizing the company's weaknesses and avoiding threats through the following efforts." The efforts to improve internal weaknesses, such as operational efficiency, and anticipate and address external threats, such as increased competition from new competitors.

The strategy must focus on maintaining product excellence, building customer loyalty, and continuing to innovate. As explained in research by Nugraha and Santoso (2021), "Focus on product uniqueness and excellence, build customer loyalty through excellent service, and continue to innovate to remain at the forefront of the market." By understanding market trends and conducting regular market research, McDonald's can identify new opportunities and anticipate changes in market dynamics to maintain its leading position in the fast food industry.

Table 1. SWOT Analysis of McDonald's

Internal	Strength	Weakness
	1. Strong brand awareness and global presence. 2. A variety of products that meet different consumer needs. 3. Delivery levels and efficiency have been established. 4. Continue to innovate menus and marketing strategies	1. Possible changes in consumer preferences and lifestyles. 2. Relying on a franchise model causes differences in quality and service. 3. Criticism of health issues and environmental impacts. 4. Strong competition from rapidly changing products and the emergence of reasonable alternatives.
External		

Opportunity	SO Strategy	WO Strategy
1. Expanding into new markets and untapped democratic countries. 2. We are increasing digital service and distribution capacity. 3. We are offering a healthy menu to meet consumer demand. 4. Practical cooperation or purchase of various means for the supply of goods.	1. McDonald's can use strengths such as strong brand awareness and good marketing to take advantage of opportunities such as expanding into new markets or offering a better menu. 2. Innovation to Capture New Opportunities Through product and service innovation, McDonald's can create new opportunities in the market, such as menu development that meets health trends or improved food delivery services. 3. Strategic Partnership Development McDonald's can partner with other food, technology, or retail companies to create synergies and expand market share or product offerings. 4. Product Diversification By identifying new opportunities in the market, McDonald's can develop or acquire new products that suit evolving consumer needs and preferences.	1. Innovation to Capture New Opportunities Through product and service innovation, McDonald's can create new opportunities in the market, such as menu development that meets health trends or improved food delivery services. 2. Strategic Partnership Development McDonald's can partner with other food, technology, or retail companies to create synergies and expand market share or product offerings. 3. Product Diversification By identifying new opportunities in the marketplace, McDonald's can develop or acquire new products that fit evolving consumer needs and preferences.
Threat	ST Strategy	WT Strategy
1. Increased health regulations are impacting menu offerings. 2. The economic crisis affects consumer spending. 3. Competition from fast food restaurants and delivery orders is increasing. 4. Misrepresentation or image problems affect consumer trust.	1. Innovation to Capture New Opportunities Through product and service innovation, McDonald's can create new opportunities in the market, such as menu development that meets health trends or improved food delivery services. 2. Strategic Partnership Development McDonald's can partner with other food, technology, or retail companies to create synergies and expand market share or product offerings.	1. They have improved quality control and staff training to cope with increasing competition from other fast-food restaurants. 2. Explore new business models, such as improving delivery services or developing healthier restaurant concepts, to reduce the impact of increasingly stringent health regulations. 3. Increase transparency in business practices, such as providing more detailed information about food sources and sustainability practices, to address threats to brand image.

	3. Product Diversification By identifying new opportunities in the marketplace, McDonald's can develop or acquire new products that fit evolving consumer needs and preferences.	

CONCLUSION

This research concludes that online marketing strategy has become one of the main pillars in McDonald's efforts to expand market share and increase sales. By utilizing social media such as Facebook and Twitter, McDonald's has succeeded in spreading marketing messages and strengthening consumer engagement with its brand. In addition, developing an official mobile application and loyalty program makes it easy for customers to order food online and obtain various rewards and discounts.

Proactive steps such as providing free Wi-Fi access and using digital lobby technology demonstrate McDonald's commitment to improving the customer experience in their restaurants. By offering a variety of products found online and in physical stores, McDonald's can meet diverse consumer preferences and create new opportunities to increase sales. Thus, McDonald's has successfully demonstrated that online marketing strategies can be a powerful tool in achieving its business goals. By adapting to technological developments and taking innovative steps in building customer relationships, McDonald's can maintain its position as one of the leaders in the fast food industry.

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