

IMPLEMENTING MARKETING STRATEGY DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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Abstract

In recent years, the spread of the covid-19 pandemic in Indonesia has caused a decline in marketing. Especially in the service sector. An appropriate marketing strategy is needed to be able to overcome this situation. This study aims to describe marketing strategies and the obstacles faced in implementing marketing strategies during the Covid-19 Pandemic. The type of research used is qualitative research with a case study research design. Data collection techniques were carried out by means of observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. The results show that (1) the product strategy is carried out by innovating to create new services or diversification product, namely, virtual events, and digital printing services in the non-event sector. Pricing using the cost plus method, provide special prices for clients with large-scale events. Promotion is done door to door and utilizes social media platforms and outdoor advertisements. More strategic offices and warehouses make it easier for clients to reach. The skill, knowledge, and welfare of employees are prioritized for work professionalism. In providing the service process, it refers to SOPs, fast and creative, as well as providing free consulting services for the pre-event process, physical evidence owned, namely buildings and supporting goods. (2) the obstacles faced by Jinawi Indonesia in implementing marketing strategies during the pandemic are capital constraints and the ineffectiveness of online promotion through social media platforms. implications for event organizer companies can innovate new services under pandemic conditions, namely virtual event services and non-event services.

Keywords: marketing strategy, event organizer, covid-19 pandemic

1. Introduction

Since the end of 2019, the world has been faced with disease outbreaks that have spread not only in one region but throughout the world. The outbreak is an outbreak of Coronavirus 19 or commonly abbreviated as COVID-19. Coronavirus disease 2019 is an infectious disease that attacks the human respiratory tract. Many victims have died from this infectious disease, but not a few sufferers can recover from this disease. In March 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the Covid-19 outbreak a pandemic (Aeni, 2021). According to Fahrika & Roy (2020), the Indonesian economy has experienced inflation. This is because the pandemic has reduced purchasing power in all regions in Indonesia. Of the various industries that are still experiencing positive or stable increases during the pandemic are the pharmaceuticals and medical device industries. Not capturing the possibility that many industries or businesses are experiencing a decline, for example, micro, small and medium enterprises (UMKM) engaged in the production of goods to services.

The Ministry of Cooperatives and UKM noted that the Covid-19 pandemic impacted 67,051 UMKM actors. The data is based on provincial, district, and city offices. Based on the Katadata Insight Center (KIC) survey conducted on 2,016 MSME actors in JABODETABEK, 82.9% felt the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, and only 5.9% experienced positive growth. 30% of UMKM experienced a decrease in turnover, and 3.8% of turnover, experienced an increase. The KIC survey shows that UMKM have made several efforts to maintain their business during the pandemic. They took various steps, such as reducing production, employee number, and production working hours (Katadata.co.id, 2020).

Of the many types of UMKM that have been affected, such as food businesses, retail traders, wholesalers, and UMKM from other service sectors, the Event Organizer or EO service business have also had a considerable impact. Event Organizer is a company engaged in providing professional services. This company is engaged in organizing events or a successful team of an event that will be held by the event owner (client) (Amalia, 2017). In modern times, people prefer something instant. People tend to prefer Event Organizer services because all aspects of an event from promotion and consumption to the place of implementation, have been regulated by the Event Organizer service.

In Ngawi Regency itself, the existence of Event Organizers is no stranger to the public's ears. It is proven that there have been many Event Organizer services spread throughout Ngawi Regency, such as Afetto Event Ngawi, Ngawi Organizer Inscription, and Barokah Abadi Event Organizer. From several Event Organizer services that spread across Ngawi Regency, each event organizer has their respective advantages. So with the competition between Event Organizer services in Ngawi Regency at this time, Jinawi Indonesia Event Organizer services, which are located at Jalan Manggar, Ngale Village, Kab. Ngawi is trying to continue to compete and develop amid the proliferation of Event Organizer services in Ngawi Regency, East Java. In 2019-2020, it is proven that Jinawi Indonesia's Event Organizer services have managed to organize more than eight events, both events organized by agencies, as well as private or individual, such as the Pamelu Festival Event organized by the Food Crops Service, Plantation Holduculture and Food Security of the Magetan Regency Government. Pasar Jadul Sunday Legi in Tawun Village was organized by the Tourism and Sports Office of Ngawi Regency. Kurnia Convention Center Hall Ngawi organized the Wedding Expo exhibition of wedding equipment.

However, in terms of getting consumers or clients, an Event Organizer requires a marketing strategy. Marketing strategy is one way to win a sustainable competitive advantage for both companies and those that produce goods or services (Wibowo et al., 2015). Marketing strategy can be seen as the basis used in compiling a comprehensive corporate plan to serve as a guideline for its segments in carrying out their activities. In marketing activities, several goals are to be achieved both in the short and long term. In the short term, it usually attracts consumers, especially for newly launched products. In contrast, it is done to maintain existing products in the long term to exist (Kasmi, 2003).

The marketing strategy carried out by the event organizer service Jinawi Indonesia during this pandemic is very much in line with the policies or rules issued by the government to cut the chain of transmission of the Covid-19 virus. This strategy has made the event organizer Jinawi Indonesia survive the Covid-19 pandemic. So with the above review, the problem in this research is how the marketing strategy applied by the Jinawi Indonesia event organizer services and the obstacles faced in implementing marketing strategies during the Covid-19 pandemic.

2. Method

The type of research used in this research is qualitative research. Qualitative research is a procedure in research that produces a description of the data in the form of written or spoken words from the behavior of people who can be observed (Moleong, 2014:4). While the research design used in this study is a case study, case research is one of the research approaches with an approach in which a researcher participates in collecting data on ongoing research at the time it occurs (Sugiyono, 2016:17). Sources of data in this study are primary and secondary data sources. Data collection techniques used in this study were observation, in-depth interviews and documentation. The validity of the data in this study used source triangulation techniques and triangulation methods. The data analysis technique in this study uses an interactive analysis model according to Miles and Huberman in Sugiyono (2018: 247) consisting of 4 steps, namely data collection, data reduction, data presentation, leveraging or data inference.

3. Results and Discussion

Based on the results of research on the marketing strategy implemented by the Jinawi Indonesia Ngawi Event Organizer, East Java during the Covid-19 pandemic, the following conclusions were drawn:

3.1 Marketing Strategy for Event Organizer Services Jinawi Indonesia Ngawi East Java

- 3.1.1 The marketing strategy in the product aspect carried out by Jinawi Indonesia's Event Organizer services is to create virtual event service innovations to replace offline events that cannot be done during the Covid-19 pandemic, and open non-event services in the form of digital printing and outdoor advertising
 - 3.1.2 The marketing strategy in the price aspect carried out by Jinawi Indonesia's Event Organizer services is to take 25% of the total raw and required materials and production costs. Special prices are also given for clients who organize large-scale events.
 - 3.1.3 The marketing strategy in the promotion (promotion) aspect carried out by the Jinawi Indonesia Event Organizer service is to use 2 methods, namely direct and indirect, to directly use the door-to-door technique to visit several agencies during this pandemic while still relying on health protocols, and direct promotion through the MC (Master of Ceremony) at the end of the event. For indirect promotion through social media platforms and outdoor advertising with the most attractive design possible.
 - 3.1.4 The marketing strategy in the place aspect carried out by the Jinawi Indonesia Event Organizer service is to choose a strategic place that is easily accessible by clients.
 - 3.1.5 The marketing strategy in the people (human) aspect carried out by Jinawi Indonesia's Event Organizer services is to improve the welfare and enthusiasm of employees to produce professional services to clients.
 - 3.1.6 The marketing strategy in the process aspect carried out by Jinawi Indonesia's Event Organizer services is by referring to predetermined SOPs and free services for pre-event consultations.
 - 3.1.7 The marketing strategy in the aspect of physical evidence carried out by the Jinawi Indonesia Event Organizer is physical evidence which is divided into 2 categories, namely buildings and goods. For buildings in the form of offices and storage and product warehouses, for goods in the form of office equipment and event support, as well as digital printing
- 3.2 Constraints faced in the process of implementing the Jinawi Indonesia Event Organizer service strategy, namely capital constraints, and the lack of effectiveness of online promotions through social media platforms during the pandemic

Discussion

4.1 Jinawi Indonesia Event Organizer marketing strategy during the Covid-19 pandemic

Marketing strategy is the method used by the company to achieve the goals set by the company in the field of marketing. In this case, the Jinawi Indonesia Event Organizer makes a marketing strategy that can be carried out or applied during the Covid-19 pandemic. The marketing strategy carried out by the Event Organizer Jinawi Indonesia uses a marketing mix strategy that includes seven aspects, namely Product, Price, Promotion, Place, People, Process, and Physical Evidence (physical evidence), which is described as follows:

- 4.1.1 Based on the study results, it is shown that the marketing strategy related to the Product aspect carried out by the event organizer Jinawi Indonesia is to create virtual event service innovations. During the Covid-19 pandemic, offline events can be said to be dead because the implementation of offline events is very contrary to the health protocol rules from the government, so to adjust things and in order to survive during the pandemic, event organizer Jinawi Indonesia innovated to create event services that were held virtually. Another innovation made by Jinawi Indonesia is to open services in the non-event sector, namely digital printing and outdoor advertising. Businesses in this field can still run without violating health protocol rules, and the opportunity for enthusiasts is still high even during the pandemic. This supports the research conducted by Wan Laura Hardilawati (2020) that UMKM can do several things, including choosing to open new product lines or updating their marketing system because businesses that can survive are responsive to change.
- 4.1.2 The following marketing strategy carried out by the Jinawi Indonesia Event Organizer is in the price aspect. In determining the price, Jinawi Indonesia takes 25% of the total cost of production (raw materials and quality) and provides discounts for clients who organize large-scale events. The price determination is appropriate because the resulting price is under the target market. According

to Mia Petri (2020), determining the right price can make marketing activities run well and optimally

- 4.1.3 The following marketing strategy is a promotion. In this case, Jinawi Indonesia has two direct and indirect promotion methods. To directly promote Jinawi Indonesia with the door-to-door technique, he came to institutions and individuals, but still with the health protocol standards. The indirect method is done by utilizing social media platforms, outdoor advertising, and word of mouth (WOM). This promotional aspect aims to make the marketing of Event Organizer services more developed. This is in line with Putro Delvi Yanti's (2020) results, which state that the public can know the existence of AD Souvenir store products through promotions.
- 4.1.4 In implementing the place strategy, Jinawi Indonesia chose a strategic place. This strategic place makes it easy for the public to know. The research results by Mia Petri (2020) and Putro Yanti (2020) showed that strategic locations could make it easier for consumers to get the products or services offered.
- 4.1.5 The following marketing strategy is in the people aspect. In implementing the marketing mix strategy, the people aspect of Jinawi Indonesia prioritizes skills, knowledge, and experience and prioritizes employee welfare. These three employees will provide services to clients professionally and wholeheartedly. According to Dita (2015), employees who have good abilities will become basic competencies in the company's internal and good image.
- 4.1.6 In implementing the process strategy, Jinawi Indonesia refers to the SOP that has been determined. This is intended to minimize errors in the service process and remain in accordance with the ideas or wishes of the client. In addition, Jinawi also provides free consulting services in the pre-event process so that clients can quickly realize the pictures they want. This is in line with the research results of Sandra Rosida (2021), which states that clients who bring an idea need a party who helps them to form the event. What the client expects.
- 4.1.7 The last aspect of the Marketing Mix is physical evidence. To be able to provide convenience in service to clients, Jinawi Indonesia has two forms of physical evidence, namely buildings and goods. The two things consist of an office measuring 3x6m which provides facilities that can support client comforts such as parking lots, hand sanitizers, hand washing stations, waiting tables, air conditioners, WIFI, and other office equipment (computers, printers, stationery, etc.). Then it also has a warehouse with a size of 8x15m which is used as a place to store event supporting items such as decoration equipment, publication equipment, and other protective equipment (HT, Standing AC, large fan, monitor table, MIC, etc.). In line with Muahammad Rizky (2018) that physical evidence of this is needed, both facilities for the convenience of customers in doing financial.

4.2 Faced by Jinawi Indonesia in implementing a marketing strategy during Covid-19 Pandemic

Running a business will not be separated from an obstacle. This obstacle makes entrepreneurs evaluate the policies they have made. This also happened to the Jinawi Indonesia Event Organizer. In implementing marketing strategies during the Covid-19 pandemic, Jinawi Indonesia had several obstacles, including:

- 4.2.1 Capital constraints these capital constraints are caused by decreased turnover due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. At the beginning of the pandemic, the Jinawi Indonesia Event Organizer did not get any projects for offline events. Offline events were stopped because the implementation deviated from the health protocol rules, so the turnover automatically decreased. The solution to this capital problem can be overcome with the owner's personal savings. By using the owner's savings, the owner wants to open a non-event service that can still run and does not deviate from the health protocol rules, namely digital printing services and outdoor advertising. With this non-event service, it is intended that the owner can return the lack of capital due to the Covid-19 pandemic
- 4.2.2 The lack of effectiveness of promotion of Event Organizer services through social media, the number of items described for one event makes the lack of advertising on social media because social media can only promote in outline. This has an impact on client confidence. Jinawi Indonesia's solution to increase client trust through social media is by uploading video testimonials from clients who have used the services of the Jinawi Indonesia Event Organizer. In addition to videos, there are also written testimonials and screenshots of conversations with clients via

WhatsApp, with so it will further increase client confidence in Jinawi Indonesia's Event Organizer services. The two solutions above are also supported by Mia Muliyani Petri's research (2020). The results of Mia Muliyani Petri's research (2020) state that the solution to obstacles due to the impact of the pandemic is to maintain cash flow, innovate products, utilize social media, and can also take advantage of delivery services.

4. Conclusion

Based on the study results, the following conclusions were obtained: The marketing strategy carried out by the Event Organizer Jinawi Indonesia is to use a marketing mix that includes 7Ps, namely Product, Price, Promotion, Place, People, Process, and Physical Evidence. In the product aspect, Jinawi Indonesia has made new service innovations suitable for pandemic conditions, namely virtual event services and non-event services in the form of digital printing and outdoor advertising. During the pandemic, promotions are carried out with two direct and indirect methods. Direct upgrade is carried out using the door-to-door method, this method is very effective in describing all aspects of an Event Organizer, but it is still carried out based on health protocols. The indirect method is done by making maximum use of social media platforms, making outdoor advertisements, and word of mouth (WOM) techniques. Constraints faced in implementing marketing strategies during the Covid1-19 pandemic, namely capital constraints and lack of effective promotion through social media, solutions to capital constraints can be overcome by opening non-event services in the form of digital printing, which is opened with the owner's personal savings capital, by opening non-event services are intended to cover the shortfall in turnover during the pandemic. Then the lack of effectiveness of promotions through social media, promotions through social media are deemed less able to attract clients' interest, so the solution to attract clients is by uploading testimonials from previous clients in the form of videos, as well as narration.

The limitation of this research is when conducting interviews with resource persons because the research was conducted during working hours. And the process of retrieval of documentation data. Because Jinawi Indonesia's office has just moved, many documents have not been rearranged and are still in cardboard boxes. So that researchers need some time to get the required documents. Further research, this research is limited to discussing marketing strategies and constraints. For further researchers, it is hoped that they can conduct more in-depth research on the marketing strategy of service companies, especially Event Organizer services

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