

Digital Marketing Strategies in Secondary Schools: An Analysis of the Impact of Social Media on School Image and Popularity

Miswari

Universitas Islam Negeri Walisongo, Indonesia

Email: miswari@walisongo.ac.id

Abstract

This study analyzes the effectiveness of marketing strategies in SMP Muhammadiyah 8Mijen by focusing on the impact of the use of information technology and social media on the image and popularity of the school. This study aims to find out the extent to which the marketing strategies implemented can increase the attractiveness of schools in the eyes of the community, as well as how managing relationships with stakeholders contributes to the sustainability of the marketing strategy. This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach, with data collection methods in the form of observations, interviews, and documentation to determine the implementation, impact, and effectiveness of school marketing promotion. The results of the study show that marketing strategies that are implemented effectively through social media and information technology have increased public awareness of schools and strengthened the school's image. In addition, managing relationships with parents, alumni, and the surrounding community has proven to play an important role in supporting the sustainability of the school's marketing strategy. These findings indicate that the use of information technology and social media, as well as the active involvement of stakeholders, are key factors in the success of school marketing in today's digital era.

Keywords: Marketing Strategy, School Image, Social Media, Information Technology, Digital Marketing

INTRODUCTION

In today's digital era, marketing strategies have become a crucial component for educational institutions as they seek to remain competitive and relevant (Grewal, Stephen, & Coleman, 2019). Schools are no longer limited to traditional forms of promotion; they must now embrace the evolving landscape of communication by utilizing information technology and social media. This shift has compelled schools to rethink how they present themselves to the public, attract potential students, and maintain a strong institutional image (Cheng, & Vreede, 2017). Specifically, at SMP Muhammadiyah 8 Mijen, marketing efforts have centered around leveraging digital tools to enhance the school's reputation and draw in new student enrollments.

This study delves into the effectiveness of these marketing strategies, focusing on the role that digital tools play in shaping the school's image (Sivakumar, Jayasingh, & Shaik, 2023). Through platforms like social media, SMP Muhammadiyah 8 Mijen has been able to reach a broader audience, engaging with both current and prospective students as well as the community. The integration of technology has not only expanded the school's visibility but has also contributed to a more dynamic interaction with its audience. These efforts highlight the importance of embracing digital marketing as a core part of educational institution strategies in the modern world.

Moreover, the study also explores the significance of relationships with key stakeholders, including parents, alumni, and the broader community. These relationships play a critical role in ensuring the sustainability and long-term success of the school's marketing efforts. Effective engagement with

stakeholders can foster a positive school image, encourage word-of-mouth promotion, and build trust within the community, all of which are essential for maintaining a favorable reputation. Thus, stakeholder relationships complement digital marketing strategies, making them more effective and sustainable.

The research aims to answer two central questions. First, it seeks to understand how the use of information technology and social media influences the school's public image (Stephen, & Lehmann, 2016). By examining the impact of digital marketing tools, the study hopes to provide insights into how schools like SMP Muhammadiyah 8 Mijen can enhance their visibility and attractiveness in a competitive educational landscape. The second research question focuses on the role of stakeholder relationships in supporting these marketing strategies. The study investigates how the involvement of parents, alumni, and the community helps sustain marketing efforts and contributes to their overall effectiveness.

By addressing these research questions, the study will contribute valuable insights into the modern marketing practices of educational institutions. It will provide a clearer understanding of how schools can utilize digital tools to enhance their image and how the management of stakeholder relationships can ensure the longevity of these efforts. Additionally, the findings will offer practical recommendations for schools looking to improve their marketing strategies in the digital era, ensuring they remain competitive and successful.

In conclusion, the role of marketing strategies in educational institutions, particularly those utilizing digital tools and fostering stakeholder relationships, is pivotal in today's technology-driven environment. SMP Muhammadiyah 8 Mijen's experience offers a case study in how schools can adapt to the changing communication landscape to build a stronger public image and ensure long-term success in their promotional efforts. This research will provide key insights into the strategic integration of information technology and social media in educational marketing.

METHODS

This research employs a qualitative descriptive approach to investigate the implementation and impact of marketing strategies at SMP Muhammadiyah 8 Mijen. To gather comprehensive data, various methods were utilized (Wallace, Buil, & Chernatony, 2014). Observations were conducted by monitoring the school's digital presence, including social media platforms and overall digital marketing efforts. This allowed for an in-depth understanding of how the school interacts with its audience online. Additionally, interviews were held with key stakeholders, including school staff, marketing personnel, parents, and other community members, to gain insights into their perceptions and involvement in promoting the school. Finally, documentation was collected in the form of promotional materials, social media content, and digital archives to assess the school's marketing activities more concretely.

The collected data were then analyzed thematically to identify patterns and themes related to the effectiveness of the marketing strategies and the extent to which stakeholder engagement played a role in these efforts. This thematic analysis helped determine not only the success of the marketing initiatives but also the contribution of active relationships with stakeholders, such as parents and alumni, in ensuring the sustainability and effectiveness of the school's promotional campaigns.

RESULTS

The findings from this study demonstrate that SMP Muhammadiyah 8 Mijen has effectively implemented marketing strategies by utilizing information technology and social media, resulting in a significant increase in public awareness of the school. One of the key outcomes of these efforts has been the enhancement of the school's image. Through strategic use of platforms such as Instagram and Facebook, the school has successfully improved its visibility, which has had a positive impact on how it is perceived by parents and the broader community. The regular updates and engagement on these platforms have allowed the school to present itself as dynamic and forward-thinking, thus attracting more attention and interest.

In addition to improving its public image, the school's engagement with key stakeholders has been pivotal in maintaining the success and sustainability of its marketing strategies. By actively managing relationships with parents, alumni, and the local community, SMP Muhammadiyah 8 Mijen has fostered a sense of loyalty and trust, which, in turn, has bolstered its promotional efforts. These stakeholders play a crucial role in word-of-mouth marketing, which complements the school's digital initiatives by reinforcing its image through personal and community networks.

The sustainability of these marketing strategies is largely attributed to the school's consistent interaction with stakeholders and its sustained online presence. Regular communication and engagement with the community have ensured that the marketing efforts remain relevant and effective over time. By continually updating content and fostering relationships, the school has established a stable foundation for long-term success in its promotional activities. This approach has not only solidified its current reputation but also ensured that the school remains competitive and attractive in the future.

DISCUSSION

The results of this study underscore the crucial role of information technology and social media in shaping modern school marketing strategies. Schools that effectively integrate these digital tools into their promotional efforts are better positioned to increase their visibility and strengthen their image. The case of SMP Muhammadiyah 8 Mijen highlights how the strategic use of social media platforms, such as Instagram and Facebook, can significantly enhance a school's public profile. By engaging with a broad audience through these platforms, the school has successfully raised awareness and bolstered its popularity, illustrating the effectiveness of digital marketing in the educational sector.

Moreover, the involvement of stakeholders plays a critical role in supporting both the short-term and long-term goals of these marketing strategies. Parents, alumni, and community members contribute not only by promoting the school through word-of-mouth but also by actively participating in school-related events and online interactions. This collaboration between the school and its stakeholders strengthens the overall impact of the marketing efforts. In addition, it ensures the continuity of these initiatives, as stakeholders help maintain the school's positive image and sustain its promotional activities over time.

In today's digital age, schools that engage in proactive, relationship-based marketing strategies are more likely to succeed in competitive educational environments. These strategies go beyond simply promoting the institution; they foster strong, lasting relationships with key stakeholders, ensuring a stable foundation for ongoing success. The ability to cultivate these relationships, while

continuously leveraging digital platforms, enables schools to remain relevant and appealing to both current and prospective students.

Furthermore, the success of these digital marketing efforts demonstrates that schools must adapt to the changing dynamics of communication in the digital era (Sabah, & Altalbe, 2022). Traditional marketing methods alone are no longer sufficient in a landscape where online presence and engagement are increasingly vital. By embracing digital tools and maintaining an active online presence, schools like SMP Muhammadiyah 8 Mijen can stay ahead of the curve, meeting the expectations of tech-savvy students and parents while building a strong, positive reputation.

The long-term sustainability of these marketing strategies is not only dependent on the use of digital platforms but also on the ongoing interaction with stakeholders. Consistently engaging with parents, alumni, and the community helps maintain the relevance and effectiveness of these strategies. This continuous interaction ensures that the school's marketing efforts evolve with changing trends, keeping the institution competitive in an ever-evolving educational landscape.

In conclusion, leveraging information technology and social media, combined with active stakeholder involvement, is essential for schools seeking to enhance their image and thrive in today's digital world. SMP Muhammadiyah 8 Mijen's success serves as a model for other schools, demonstrating that a well-executed digital marketing strategy, supported by strong relationships with stakeholders, can lead to both immediate and long-term benefits.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study illustrates the successful implementation of marketing strategies at SMP Muhammadiyah 8 Mijen, underscoring the essential role that information technology and social media play in enhancing the school's image and increasing its popularity. The results clearly demonstrate that digital marketing tools, especially social media platforms, have been instrumental in raising public awareness of the school. These platforms have allowed the school to effectively engage with a wider audience, promoting its strengths and achievements. Additionally, the study highlights the critical importance of active stakeholder engagement. The involvement of parents, alumni, and the broader community has been pivotal in ensuring not only the immediate success of the marketing efforts but also their long-term sustainability.

Furthermore, the research emphasizes that in the modern digital landscape, schools must evolve and adapt to the changing dynamics of communication. By adopting proactive and relationship-based marketing strategies, schools can maintain their competitiveness in the educational environment. This approach fosters continuous growth, ensures sustained visibility, and positions schools to respond to shifting trends in both technology and stakeholder expectations. Ultimately, the study confirms that the strategic use of digital tools, combined with strong stakeholder engagement, is the key to achieving long-term success and lasting impact in school marketing initiatives.

REFERENCES

- Assimakopoulos, C., Antoniadis, I., Kayas, O. G., & Dvizac, D. (2017). Effective social media marketing strategy: Facebook as an opportunity for universities. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, 45(5), 532-549. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJRDM-11-2016-0211>

- Babić Rosario, A., Sotgiu, F., De Valck, K., & Bijmolt, T. H. A. (2016). The effect of electronic word of mouth on sales: A meta-analytic review of platform, product, and metric factors. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 53(3), 297-318. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jmr.14.0380>
- Cheng, X., Fu, S., & de Vreede, G. J. (2017). Understanding trust influencing factors in social media communication: A qualitative study. *International Journal of Information Management*, 37(2), 25-35. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijinfomgt.2016.11.009>
- Grewal, L., Stephen, A. T., & Coleman, N. V. (2019). When posting about products on social media backfires: The negative effects of consumer identity signaling on product interest. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 56(2), 197-210. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022243718821960>
- Hennig-Thurau, T., Gwinner, K. P., Walsh, G., & Gremler, D. D. (2004). Electronic word-of-mouth via consumer-opinion platforms: What motivates consumers to articulate themselves on the Internet? *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 18(1), 38-52. <https://doi.org/10.1002/dir.10073>
- Herhausen, D., Ludwig, S., Grewal, D., Wulf, J., & Schoegel, M. (2019). Detecting, preventing, and mitigating online firestorms in brand communities. *Journal of Marketing*, 83(3), 1-21. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022242919828504>
- Lamberton, C., & Stephen, A. T. (2016). A thematic exploration of digital, social media, and mobile marketing. *Journal of Marketing*, 80(6), 146-172. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jm.15.0413>
- Rosario, A. B., Sotgiu, F., De Valck, K., & Bijmolt, T. H. (2016). The effect of electronic word of mouth on sales: A meta-analytic review of platform, product, and metric factors. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 53(3), 297-318. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jmr.14.0380>
- Sivakumar, A., Jayasingh, S., & Shaik, S. (2023). Social media influence on students' knowledge sharing and learning: An empirical study. *Educational Sciences*, 13(7), 745. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci13070745>
- Stephen, A. T., & Lehmann, D. R. (2016). How word-of-mouth transmission encouragement affects consumers' behavior: The role of message-type heterogeneity. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 43(5), 782-802. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jcr/ucw061>
- Toubia, O., & Stephen, A. T. (2013). Intrinsic vs. image-related motivation in social media usage and its implications for advertising: The case of microblogs. *Marketing Science*, 32(5), 763-779. <https://doi.org/10.1287/mksc.2013.0783>
- Villarroel Ordenes, F., Ludwig, S., De Ruyter, K., Grewal, D., & Wetzels, M. (2017). Unveiling what is written in the stars: Analyzing explicit, implicit, and discourse patterns of sentiment in social media. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 43(6), 875-894. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jcr/ucw070>
- Wallace, E., Buil, I., & de Chernatony, L. (2014). Consumer engagement with self-expressive brands: Brand love and WOM outcomes. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 23(1), 33-42. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JPBM-06-2013-0326>
- Sabah, N. M., & Altalbe, A. A. (2022). Learning outcomes of educational usage of social media: The moderating roles of task-technology fit and perceived risk. *Sustainability*, 14(14), 8895. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su14148895>
- Villarroel Ordenes, F., Ludwig, S., De Ruyter, K., Grewal, D., & Wetzels, M. (2018). From online reviews to experiential stories: Analyzing the effect of text on customer engagement. *Journal of Marketing*, 82(4), 108-123. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jm.16.0486>