MARKETING COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES FOR INCREASING THE SALES OF DIGITAL PRINTING PRODUCTS

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ABSTRACT

The printing industry, especially digital printing, has experienced rapid advancement amidst fierce competition and increasing technological progress. Marketing communication strategies have become crucial in achieving product marketing goals. This study focuses on understanding marketing communication strategies in the printing industry, specifically digital printing. Utilizing the 7P marketing mix theory, the study employs a qualitative descriptive method with data collection through observation, interviews, and documentation. The post-positivism paradigm is adopted with triangulation technique for data validity. The aim is to uncover company marketing strategies, enhance sales, and identify supporting and hindering factors in marketing. The results of the current study show that the implementation of marketing strategies seem to yield positive effects. The latter points are caused by factors such as product quality, affordable price and excellent after-sales quality. The implications of the results are also discussed.

Keywords: Digital Printing, Increasing Sales Strategy, Marketing Communication, Marketing Mix.
1. Introduction

In the increasingly fierce competition in various business sectors, the printing industry is experiencing rapid progress driven by ever-increasing technological developments. The change from manual to automatic technology has brought significant changes in product quality. Every company that engages in either service or manufacturing, has the same goal: to survive and develop. However, to achieve this goal, improving product quality is imperative in order to build long-term trust in consumers and meet their expectations.

Thus, a company needs to apply strategies to survive. In this regard, strategy is a crucial element in selling products for a company. Anthony, Parrewe, & Kacmar (1993) state that strategy refers to the elaboration of the mission and goals of the organization, which includes an action plan that takes into account competitive conditions and external factors that affect the continuity of the company. In achieving sales targets, a marketing communication strategy is an effective tool. Hence, marketing communication can be defined as the company's way of informing, persuading, and reminding consumers, either directly or indirectly, about the products or brands sold by the company (Firmansyah, 2020, p.6). Thus, marketing communication is a tool for companies to convey information, influence, and attract consumer interest in the products or brands offered.

Marketing communication strategy is an important foundation for the continuity of a company. This becomes a tool for companies to achieve goals in marketing their products. However, the steps in this strategy must be adapted to the situation and environmental conditions that exist. Before planning a marketing communication strategy, companies must consider the type of marketing needed to meet consumer needs and help them understand the brands and products offered. A targeted and mature marketing strategy allows consumers to choose products easily, build loyal customers, and ultimately increase product sales.
In regards to the present study, the printing industry is one of fields that experiences a rapid technological change. The latest form of printing industry is digital printing. The latter is considered more effective and efficient. One of companies that focuses its business in digital printing is Printmate. In order to survive, Printmate has also conducted several marketing strategies. Investigating marketing strategies seem important because the studies can provide more information to the industries as well as the educators on strategies to promote services or products. Several studies have managed to investigate marketing strategies of a company. Haris et al (2022) examine marketing strategies that can be taken to expand market share in the era of 4.0. In contrast, Fatimah & Harahap (2020) explore strategies taken by Sibolga’s community to promote Pandan beach. In addition, Purnomo et al (2022) analyze the effects of marketing communication strategies on customers’ loyalty and satisfaction. Despite multitude studies on marketing strategies, there is a lack of studies which analyze the marketing strategies of digital printing industry. Hence, the current study’s objective is to analyze the marketing communication strategies of digital printing company. Furthermore, the present study will specifically analyze the marketing communication strategies taken by Printmate.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Marketing Communication

Marketing communication is a tool used by companies to inform, persuade and remind consumers about the products and brands they offer, either directly or indirectly. According to Cangara (1998, p.20), communication is not only limited to spoken language, but also involves expression, art, technology, and various forms of human interaction that influence each other. Marketing, as explained by Abdullah & Tantri (2013, p.2), is a comprehensive system of commercial activities that design, determine prices, promote and distribute goods and services to meet
the needs of current and potential consumers.

In the perspective of Kotler and Keller (2012, p.498), marketing communication is an instrument used by business people to inform, persuade, and remind consumers about the products and brands offered. In this context, marketing communications become a bridge of exchange between sellers and buyers through various relevant media. Through this communication process, companies provide information that consumers need about their products, promote them to attract interest, and build relationships that influence consumer purchasing decisions.

### 2.2 Marketing Communication Strategies

Companies need to promote their business. In order to do that, they need to perform marketing strategies. In this regard, marketing communication strategies involve techniques used by companies to send messages regarding their business to potential customers (Shrivastava & Daweel, 2020). The companies need to perform successful marketing communication strategies so that their products or services can reach the wider public, creating a sense of belonging that may make the customers loyal or do repeat orders.

Marketing Mix, refers to the strategies used by companies to design product or service offerings to customers. Alma (2014, p.143) describes it as a strategic effort in compiling optimal combinations to achieve satisfactory results. In addition, Kotler and Armstrong (2014, p.76) describe the marketing mix is a set of tactical tools used by companies to create the expected response from the target market. This concept emphasizes several elements that play an important role in achieving marketing objectives, consisting of 7P. Following are the descriptions of 7P:

- **Product (Product):** Refers to the goods or services offered to customers. Product quality is the main determinant in influencing purchasing decisions and building positive experiences for consumers.
• **Price**: Concerning the monetary value that customers pay in return for the product. Setting the right price can influence the perception of value and market demand.

• **Place**: Relates to the location or distribution of the product. Strategic locations can strengthen the company's image and facilitate customer access.

• **Promotion**: It is an action to make consumers aware of the products and brands being offered. Promotion aims to attract attention, convince, and move consumers to buy.

• **People (People)**: Involve employees or officers who provide services. HR quality has a direct impact on interactions with customers and service quality.

• **Process**: Refers to the method or procedure of delivering services to customers. Process monitoring is essential to ensure a consistent customer experience.

• **Physical Evidence (Physical Appearance)**: Is a visual image or appearance of the company. The design of the place of business, product packaging, and the image that is built are supporting factors in shaping positive consumer perceptions.

Several studies have analysis on marketing communication strategies. First, a study of Iswati et al (2023) analyses the effects of social media communication toward brand attitudes, consumer purchase intentions and brand equity. Their study applies a quantitative research design by conducting an online survey and a structural equation model (PLS-SEM). Their findings suggest positive effects of marketing communication strategies on brand equity but lack of significant effects on brand attitudes. Second, Dicky & Manor (2020) develop a set of marketing communication strategies to improve the brand awareness of a fashion brand. Their study uses both external and internal analysis to...
understand the conditions of the fashion brand. Their study suggests the use of Instagram advertising and paid promotion to reach the customers. Third, Elrod & Fortenberry (2018) formulate communication strategies to improve healthcare experience. Those studies show that marketing communication strategies significant to improve the brands.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

For the purpose of this study, the researchers chose a qualitative descriptive research design. Moleong (2017, p.6) defines qualitative research as an observation that aims to comprehensively describe phenomena such as behavior, perceptions, motivations, actions and others in certain contexts using various natural methods. This method was chosen because researchers can collect data directly from research informants. The data collected can be in the forms of expressions, writing, or numbers that need to be observed.

3.2 Research Informants

Arikunto (2016, p.26) explains that research subjects are objects, things or people who are the location of research variable data. For the purpose of this study, researchers used these informants. First, B as Marketing Manager, S as Sales Manager, and H as Marketing Support Manager, as well as four Printmate Indonesia customers who can provide the information needed by researchers.

3.3 Research Objects

Sugiyono (2017, p.39) describes the object of research as an attribute or feature or value of a person, object or activity that has certain variations determined by the researcher to be studied and then concluded. It can be concluded that the object of research is a target or thing that will become a reference to be examined by a researcher for further study. The research object to be examined by the researchers are the marketing communication strategies in Printmate Indonesia.

3.4 Data Collection
The present study uses a qualitative descriptive design. Therefore, in qualitative research, appropriate steps to collect data include observation, interviews, and documentation. Because the data obtained is non-numeric in nature, interviews are an important element, which allows researchers to interact directly with sources. The informants involved in this study were three key informants; Sales Manager, Marketing Manager, Marketing Support Manager, and a Printmate customer.

3.5 Data Analysis

The process of data analysis in this study was carried out with the aim of processing data, looking for patterns, identifying important things, and determining information that can be conveyed to other parties. This process follows the three stages of Miles and Huberman's flow model; data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions or verification. Data reduction involves reducing the amount of data from the field by summarizing and arranging it systematically. Data presentation involves selecting essential data that supports the problem, and data analysis comes from in-depth interviews and observations. Finally, drawing conclusions or verifying results in new findings that might answer the initial problems, by talking about field findings with related theories in the literature review.

In order to ensure the validity of the data, researchers used triangulation as an evaluation technique. This triangulation aims to verify and confirm information obtained from various different sources, by reducing the differences that occur during data collection and analysis. This technique is applied by collecting data through observation, documentation, and interviews with informants, and then comparing them. Additional approaches such as participant observation, written documents, archives, and photographs are also used to obtain more accurate information. In this process, each method provides different perspectives and data related to the phenomenon under study, which collectively provides a more comprehensive and
accurate understanding to validate data.

4. Results and Discussions

The results of research show the implementation of an effective 7P marketing mix. Based on observations, interviews, and documentation, the company is able to make good use of the elements of the marketing strategy. First, on the product aspect, Printmate Indonesia has a variety of digital printing machine products that are tailored to the needs of various market segments. In overcoming this problem, the company focuses its marketing efforts on quality products that suit customer needs. The products offered have a variety of models, sizes and brands, which reflects its flexibility as a distribution company.

“When discussing products from Printmate, in my opinion the quality is very good. I use one of their machines, namely the Gongzheng GZC+ type to print banners and stickers. When compared to similar machines from competitors, especially in terms of machine durability and construction, I think Printmate products are of good quality. This is why I am very satisfied with the machine from Printmate” (Consumer A)

From the explanation in the interview, it was revealed that Printmate Indonesia has several significant market segments in the digital printing machine industry in Indonesia. These market segments include: Sign graphic printers; creative printers; engraving and laser machines; textile and apparel printers.

"In the digital printing machine market that we market in Indonesia, we have several quite significant segments. One of them is the Sign Graphic, Creative, Engraving & Laser Machines market segment, as well as Textile & Apparel Printers. We see that these markets have great potential and continue to grow. In addition, to support the productivity and quality of our customers' print results in the digital printing industry, we also provide a variety of supporting needs, from paper, ink, chicken eye finishing machines, to machine spare parts." (Consumer B)

The intended market segment:

1. Sign graphic printers. Consists of UV-LED Roll to Roll Printers, Solvent Roll to Roll Printers, Eco Solvent Roll to Roll Printers, Laminator Machines, Electric Machines, Electric Roll to Toll Trimmer;
2. Creative printer. Consists of a printing press UV-LED Flatbed Printers, 3D Printers, UV-LED Hybrid Printer;

3. Engraving and laser machines. From Laser Cutting and Marking Machines, CNC Router Machines;


Each of these market segments has huge growth potential. In addition, the company also pays attention to the needs to support the productivity and quality of print output of customers in the digital printing industry. Therefore, Printmate Indonesia provides various needs such as paper, ink, chicken eye finishing machines, and machine spare parts. Printmate Indonesia's goal is to provide complete solutions and quality products to customers, so that they can achieve satisfactory printing results and be successful in their business.

Second, on the price aspect, Printmate Indonesia managed to set prices that varied according to the quality of the products offered. The right pricing is done through an understanding of market segmentation and the value provided by the product. By providing competitive price ranges, companies are able to influence customer interest to make purchases.

“The role of price is very important in this context, as an Authorized Dealer company for leading brands such as Mimaki, Gongzheng, and HP (Hewlett-Packard), we offer machines at a more varied price. We strive to provide competitive prices so that buyers can meet their needs in running a digital printing business. The price range for digital printing machines that we offer for small machines starts at Rp. 2,500,000 and for large machines starts at Rp. 45,000,000, depending on the brand chosen, be it from Japan, China or Europe. We are always ready to adjust the specifications of the digital printing machine according to the needs and preferences of the buyer.” (S, Sales Manager of Printmate Indonesia)

It can be concluded that price plays an important role in attracting consumers and retaining buyers. Printmate Indonesia is able to offer
various prices for customer needs. Determination of pricing strategy by the company affects the attractiveness of customers to buy products. By offering varied prices in line with the quality of the products offered, Printmate Indonesia has experienced an increase in sales turnover.

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<th>Year</th>
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**Table 1. Printmate Indonesia Sales Turnover for 2018-2022.**

Furthermore, in 2021, along with the transition from the pandemic to the new normal, turnover will start to increase again to IDR 177,451,091,730. In 2022, Printmate Indonesia managed to record the highest turnover in the last 5 years, namely IDR 226,908,235,228. This increase in turnover shows the success of the marketing communication strategy implemented by Printmate Indonesia during the pre-pandemic and post-pandemic periods by utilizing the 7P marketing mix strategy.

Third, the aspect of place is an important element in product distribution. Printmate Indonesia strategically chooses the location of the head office and branches in major cities in Indonesia, so as to be able to cover a wide sales area. Precise location support and branches in various cities also facilitate interactions with customers from various regions.

“Our head office is located in the West Jakarta area which has a strategic advantage because it allows us to reach buyers in the Jabodetabek area easily…” (B, Marketing Manager Printmate Indonesia)
Printmate Indonesia has an effective placement strategy with its head office located in the West Jakarta area. This location provides a strategic advantage because it facilitates access and marketing of products to the Greater Jakarta area. In addition, the existence of a showroom at the head office is an important means of displaying the digital printing machines offered to customers. Through this showroom, prospective buyers can test print samples, so they can see first-hand the performance of the digital printing machines offered by Printmate Indonesia.

Place is an aspect related to product distribution. Place refers to the location or place where the company operates and conducts its business activities. It is important to establish a strategic place to distribute products and secure ownership from producers to consumers. Tjiptono in Santoso & Widowati argues (2011, p.183), the choice of the place is often a factor considered by consumers when visiting producers or companies.

This location selection decision is very important because it relates to sales potential, competitiveness, and business continuity, and thus can help maximize company profits. So for aspects of Printmate Indonesia it has fulfilled aspects of this theory with distribution channels and locations that support it.

Fourth, the promotion strategy implemented by Printmate Indonesia includes both offline and online promotions. Through door-to-door visits, open house events and industry exhibitions, the company succeeded in expanding its market reach and attracting potential customers. Online promotion is also effective through social media to convey information, product descriptions, and printouts of the machines offered.

On social media platforms, Printmate Indonesia conveys information about promotions, product descriptions, printouts from the machines being sold, as well as the schedule of upcoming events that the company will participate in. All of these promotional strategies have
proven successful in expanding market reach and reaching a wider range of potential customers.

"At the beginning of the establishment of this company, we started promotional efforts by doing canvassing for digital printing businesses through our sales team. As the company develops, we regularly participate in various digital printing machine exhibitions, both nationally and locally, and hold open houses or internal exhibitions every year. Our goal is not only to attract buyers, but also to introduce our superior products as well as the latest products to buyers. (H, Marketing Support Printmate Indonesia).

The company has implemented various promotion strategies to increase their existence and sales. At first, they used a direct approach through the sales team to reach digital printing businesses. As the company grows, they also regularly hold open houses and participate in digital printing machine exhibitions, both nationally and locally.

Fifth, the company understands the important role of human resources in providing the best service to customers. Printmate Indonesia prioritizes a positive attitude, good ethics, and commitment to serving customers. The divisions in the company work together to provide satisfactory services, including
installation, training, and after-sales service.

"In our sales team, we always emphasize the importance of understanding customer needs and providing the right solutions to meet their expectations. All of our employees have the passion and dedication to achieve excellence in service and ensure customer satisfaction is always a top priority." (S, Sales Manager Printmate Indonesia).

Printmate Indonesia has three divisions which include sales marketing division, warehouse division, and technical division. The company always motivates employees and presents clear job descriptions to improve the quality of services provided to customers. Printmate Indonesia also consistently shows a polite, friendly attitude and behaves according to work operational standards.

The customer perspective, also reinforces the importance of the technician team in Printmate Indonesia's services. The availability of a large number of technicians in the Jabodetabek area ensures a quick response to requests for technician visits. Positive experience illustrates that the technician service from Printmate is able to handle requests in a short time.

Overall, Printmate Indonesia recognizes employees as valuable assets in facilitating the marketing process and customer service. The company's commitment to providing a professional and well-trained sales team underscores their determination to provide superior service to customers. This is in line with the views of customers, who also appreciate the presence of responsive and competent technicians. All of this shows that humans have a vital role in achieving success in the company's marketing and service strategies.

Sixth, the process of product offering which involves payment, delivery, installation, and after-sales service is well regulated. Printmate Indonesia offers a variety of flexible payment options, ensures on-schedule deliveries, and provides the technical support required by customers.

"I feel very satisfied with the installation process, from the time the
machine arrives until the machine starts operating. The sales team also supervises the installation process carried out by the technician. Sales are responsible until the machine I bought is completely ready for use." (Consumer C)

This process starts from ordering by consumers until they finally receive the product or service according to their wishes. Process is a crucial element in the marketing mix. This reflects how services are provided to consumers during the process of purchasing goods or services.

Printmate Indonesia offers customers a variety of flexible payment options, including cash payments or using credit facilities. In addition, this company ensures customer trust by guaranteeing the delivery of machines by the warehouse team according to the agreed schedule. Experienced technician team is in charge of installation and provide training to customers' machine operators. Printmate Indonesia also emphasizes the importance of after-sales service by carrying out routine machine maintenance and repairs if necessary. This shows the company's commitment to providing the best service to customers.

Finally, the physical facilities provided by Printmate Indonesia, such as the head office and showroom, show the company's seriousness in providing an adequate environment for all parties involved. This facility also helps optimize employee performance in carrying out their duties and provide satisfactory service to customers.

"The existence of a machine demo at the Printmate Indonesia showroom gives a direct idea of the machine's performance. This gave me the opportunity to see the test print results before buying the machine" (Consumer D)

Printmate Indonesia provides physical evidence that reflects the quality of their services. Their office is equipped with security services and a receptionist who is ready to serve customers and a meeting room is available for customer needs. Complete office facilities such as computers, laptops, printers, wifi access, and CCTV systems also demonstrate the company's commitment to providing an adequate environment.
Physical facilities play an important role in influencing consumer interest in purchasing or using the products offered. Printmate Indonesia has physical facilities which are an effective means of influencing customers and potential customers in deciding to buy the products offered.

Figure 2. Printmate Indonesia product

D's statement, as a Printmate Indonesia customer, shows how machine demonstrations in the company's showroom provide a real picture of product performance before making a purchase. This reflects the transparency and trust that Printmate Indonesia has built through the physical evidence they offer.

Overall, Printmate Indonesia pays clear attention to physical evidence that influences customer perceptions of service and product quality. This illustrates the company's commitment to creating a supportive environment and encouraging positive relationships with customers, by providing convincing physical evidence of the quality of the services and products they offer.

Significant supporting factors include quality products, varied prices, good after-sales service, and company reputation. This helps Printmate Indonesia in building trust and attracting customer interest. However, there are inhibiting factors such as intense competition, fast technological developments, problems with installment payments, and constraints on making product samples. Companies must overcome these obstacles to execute marketing strategies more effectively.

The implementation of the 7P marketing mix strategy has a proven positive impact through the achievement of sales turnover. Quality products, appropriate prices, effective promotions, good after-sales service, and representative physical facilities help Printmate Indonesia gain customer trust and achieve increased sales turnover. This positive trend was seen from 2018 to 2022, despite the

In this regard, Printmate Indonesia has succeeded in implementing an effective marketing communication strategy based on the 7P marketing mix concept. These elements help companies increase product sales by considering product quality, competitive prices, strategic locations, effective promotions, quality services, good processes, and adequate physical facilities. Therefore, this strategy is able to achieve the company's goal of increasing sales turnover of its products.

5. Conclusion

Marketing communication strategies are important to help companies promote their service or products. The present study examined marketing communication strategies applied by Printmate Indonesia, a digital printing company. The results of the implementation of a marketing communication strategy by Printmate Indonesia has had a significant positive impact on increasing the sales volume of their products. By integrating the 7P marketing mix principles, the company has succeeded in building a solid foundation for influencing consumer buying patterns. The success of this strategy is influenced by factors such as an emphasis on product quality, prudent and competitive pricing, and a focus on good after-sales service. Maintained product quality and effective after-sales service help build long-term relationships with customers, while balanced pricing makes it attractive to potential customers. Overall, Printmate Indonesia's success is a clear evidence that an integrated approach to marketing strategy can have a positive impact on business results. This underscores the importance of adapting to market changes and continuous innovation to meet evolving consumer needs.

Hence, Printmate Indonesia is advised to maintain their product and service quality, innovate to remain relevant in a dynamic environment, and continue to build a good reputation. For customers, interacting with the company and taking...
advantage of the after-sales service are important steps in maximizing the buying experience. For future researchers, it is suggested to broaden the scope of research by considering external factors that influence the company's marketing strategy. The combination of quantitative and qualitative methods can also provide deeper insight into strategy effectiveness and customer perceptions.

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