



RESEARCH ARTICLE

Marketing Public Relations Strategy Through Buy 1 Get 1 Promotion at Maxx Coffee

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Abstract

This study employs a qualitative methodology with a descriptive qualitative approach. Data collection techniques include in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. The key informants interviewed in this study are the Local Store Marketing & Promotion Officer of PT. Maxx Coffee Prima, and two other informants, namely the Area Manager of Maxx Coffee and the Store Manager at Maxx Coffee Pejaten Village. The three methods used for the Buy 1 Get 1 promotion greatly support the success of Maxx Coffee's marketing public relations, especially through the use of social media, considering that social media currently has a wide reach and is very effective for disseminating information. Based on the results of this study, the researcher concludes that there is a visible positive impact from the implementation of the marketing public relations strategy through the Buy 1 Get 1 promotion by Maxx Coffee through several methods, including online and offline strategies, promotional events, and publications. These three methods of the Buy 1 Get 1 promotion can significantly influence the sales of Maxx Coffee products..

Keyword: Marketing, Public Relations, Strategy, Promotion, Buy 1 Get 1

Introduction

The development of time and technology has made the business world a promising field, especially in the food and beverage sector. This is evidenced by the increasing number of new food and beverage businesses emerging, especially in major cities. Currently, the most popular technology is information and communication technology. This not only relates to communication devices and computers but also encompasses various internet and electronic activities that have become part of people's daily lives, such as e-learning, e-mail, e-library, m-banking, and others. Additionally, society tends to prefer interacting through the internet, where communication becomes easier and is not restricted by space and time. Therefore, it is undeniable that information and communication technology has become an integral part of human life (Kholik & Sugiarto, 2022). Recently, people tend to interact and communicate through the internet because of the convenience and freedom it offers, without being limited by space and time. Therefore, information and communication technology have become a basic human need (Kholik & Sugiarto, 2022).

Data from the Ministry of Industry shows encouraging growth in the food and beverage industry, reaching 3.57% in the third quarter of 2022, higher than the same period the previous year (Kementerian Perindustrian Republik Indonesia, 2022). Despite being affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, the food and beverage industry continues to grow and make a significant contribution to the overall non-oil and gas industry growth. This business is expanding with the increasing number of food and beverage outlets, especially in public places such as shopping centers, including coffee shops. The ease of accessing food and beverages through online applications, utilizing internet technology, also supports the growth of this business.

In the service business world, such as the food and beverage industry, business competition is becoming more global and focused on creating and adding value to customers or companies, not just on profit aspects. Intense competition in utilizing social media for advertising in Indonesia demands companies to offer attractive promotions to consumers. Marketing strategies become crucial to address this situation. This encourages many people to seek appropriate ways to keep their businesses active and sustainable (Heryati & Fitriawati, 2020). They actively engage in promotions and publicity to attract consumer attention. In this context, Marketing Public Relations plays a crucial role in ensuring companies can attract consumer attention. The advancement of information technology and new media is the key to accessing and disseminating information, strengthening the company's brand image, product marketing, and responding to consumer feedback. Marketing Public Relations strategies have become common practice for companies to gain benefits both in terms of positive image and financial gain from the general public or consumers (Heryati & Fitriawati, 2020). Essentially, public relations fill all aspects of communication that occur in all types of organizations, whether commercial or non-commercial. This also applies to various marketing aspects that basically require communication and interpersonal relationships, such as between companies and their product target audience, consumers, and customers (Priyono & Ahmadi, 2021).

Currently, the café business in Indonesia is experiencing rapid growth. This phenomenon is evident from the increasing number of cafes emerging. This is due to the fact that cafes have become a lifestyle for many people in this era, as they offer places with attractive interior designs and a comfortable and enjoyable atmosphere (Ba'arsyah & Lubis, 2020). The rapid development of the coffee business in Indonesia, especially in the JABODETABEK area, creates fierce competition among coffee sector entrepreneurs. This condition requires coffee shop owners to have the right strategies to face such tight competition. The high coffee consumption in Indonesia every year creates opportunities for every business actor. However, to build brand awareness, public relations is needed to design careful marketing strategies (Chayadi et al., 2021).

The development of coffee shop businesses in Indonesia is evident from the emergence of various coffee shops both

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domestically and internationally. Among the coffee shops that have emerged, Maxx Coffee is one of the domestic coffee shops that caught the writer's attention to study its public relations strategies in strengthening its brand image amidst fierce competition with other coffee shops, especially Starbucks Coffee. Maxx Coffee must continue to strive to maintain its brand image, especially because of its similarity in characteristics with Starbucks. However, with the increasing number of business players in the coffee industry, people find it difficult to choose products that suit their needs. One strategy that can be adopted by business actors is to build brand awareness to differentiate their products from competitors (Octavianti, 2012).

Marketing public relations is the process of planning and evaluating programs aimed at increasing sales and attracting customers by conveying credible information and creating impressions that connect companies and products with consumer needs and interests. There are several steps that marketing public relations can take to build brand awareness (Ruslan, 2006). In the effort to build brand awareness, coffee business actors in Indonesia adopt various strategies supported by careful planning processes. One approach used is through marketing public relations, which involves steps such as situation analysis, goal setting, strategy, targeting, message delivery, tactics, and evaluation. According to (Evita & Setyanto, 2018), marketing public relations strategies are classified into three tactics, namely Pull Strategy, Push Strategy, and Pass Strategy, each aiming to attract, stimulate interest, and influence public opinion. In this context, social media is one of the effective tools for spreading messages and interacting with audiences, helping to strengthen brand awareness among consumers.

Based on the background and problem identification presented, the objectives of this research are three main parts. First, to understand the marketing public relations strategies used by Maxx Coffee in promoting the Buy 1 Get 1 program through online (application) and offline platforms. Second, to identify Maxx Coffee's marketing public relations strategies in holding promotions for Buy 1 Get 1 through various promotional events. And third, to determine Maxx Coffee's marketing public relations strategies in introducing and disseminating information about the Buy 1 Get 1 program through publications both in print and digital forms. With these objectives, this research aims to provide in-depth insights into how Maxx Coffee implements marketing public relations strategies in strengthening brand awareness and increasing sales through the Buy 1 Get 1 promotion program.

Method

This study employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive study method, conducted at Maxx Coffee, a coffee shop in South Jakarta, in April 2024. The research subjects are individuals directly involved in Maxx Coffee's marketing public relations activities and possess relevant information concerning the issues being studied. The data collection techniques are divided into two categories: primary and secondary data. Primary data is obtained through interviews with employees from the Marketing Public Relations department, while secondary data is sourced from the internet and company databases related to the research. The data search is conducted with consideration to ensure that the data reflects the reality and facts on the ground, thus guaranteeing its validity.

To ensure data validity and continuity, this study employs data collection techniques comprising interviews, observations, and documentation. Direct interviews with Maxx Coffee's marketing public relations team will provide in-depth insights into the research topic. Observation at the research site, with permission from the relevant parties, will allow the researcher to directly witness the activities and practices conducted by Maxx Coffee. Documentation, such as photos, images, and audio recordings, will be used to support the obtained data. With this approach, it is hoped that the research can yield comprehensive and reliable data for further analysis. The data analysis process

will involve three crucial stages: data reduction, data presentation, and verification, to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the research findings.

Results And Discussion

Based on the results of observations, interviews, and documentation, as well as data analysis aligned with the research focus, information has been obtained that will be linked to the theories that form the basis of this research. According to Thomas L. Harris, marketing public relations strategies consist of three main strategies: pull strategy, push strategy, and pass strategy. In the context of Maxx Coffee, the marketing public relations strategy for the Buy 1 Get 1 promotion involves a multifaceted approach. The Pull Strategy is employed to attract consumer attention through promotions on Maxx Coffee's social media platforms such as Instagram and TikTok, as well as other media channels like print and radio. Additionally, Maxx Coffee collaborates with other F&B brands for mutual benefits, and educates consumers about their brand through content published on social media. The Push Strategy focuses on enhancing friendly and interactive service by Maxx Coffee employees (baristas) to encourage consumers to take advantage of the Buy 1 Get 1 promotion. Employees are instructed to actively promote Maxx Coffee products to consumers. Lastly, the Pass Strategy is implemented by organizing events such as family gatherings, school events, campus activities, church functions, music concerts, seminars, and workshops. Maxx Coffee also partners with other F&B brands in these mutually beneficial events. Through this comprehensive approach, Maxx Coffee effectively promotes their Buy 1 Get 1 offer and strengthens their brand presence.

Maxx Coffee employs various methods to promote the Buy 1 Get 1 offer, including online (applications) and offline promotions, publications, and promotional events. In implementing these strategies, Maxx Coffee utilizes social media platforms like Instagram and TikTok, friendly and informative employees, and engaging events to attract consumer interest. Despite some challenges in execution, these strategies are considered successful as they significantly increase Maxx Coffee's product sales.

Limitation Of The Study

The study's findings shed light on the positive impact of implementing the marketing public relations strategy through the Buy 1 Get 1 promotion at Maxx Coffee. However, several limitations should be acknowledged to contextualize these conclusions. Firstly, the research heavily relies on specific social media platforms, primarily Instagram, potentially overlooking the effectiveness of other platforms utilized by Maxx Coffee's target market. Secondly, the geographical focus of the study might not fully capture the diverse effectiveness of the promotion strategy across different regions with varying consumer demographics and behaviors. Additionally, the study's timeframe is limited, possibly failing to reflect long-term changes in consumer perceptions and behaviors related to the promotion. External factors such as economic conditions, competition from other coffee shops, and shifting consumer trends are not comprehensively accounted for, potentially influencing the promotion's success. Moreover, the study does not extensively evaluate variations in the implementation of the promotion by Maxx Coffee's staff across different branches, which could significantly impact outcomes. Furthermore, the success of promotions conducted through external events may vary widely depending on factors like scale, location, and event type, which are not deeply explored in the research. Lastly, while publications through various media channels are deemed helpful in disseminating information, the study does not directly measure the specific impact of each media type on sales enhancement or brand awareness, leaving the effectiveness of individual media channels unclear.

Conclusions

The research findings indicate a positive impact from implementing the marketing public relations strategy through the Buy 1 Get 1 promotion by Maxx Coffee. Through various methods utilized both online and offline, promotional events, and publications, this strategy has proven effective in boosting sales of Maxx Coffee products. Firstly, the online promotion of Buy 1 Get 1 through Maxx Coffee's application and social media platforms, particularly Instagram, successfully reached a wide range of consumers due to its popularity among Maxx Coffee's target market. Secondly, offline promotions were also effective with active support from employees who actively offered promotions to store visitors. Thirdly, promotional events and publications played a crucial role in expanding the reach of the promotion, attracting more consumers, and increasing the number of Maxx Coffee customers. Promotions at events outside the store area also facilitated easier product purchases for customers with lower transportation costs. Finally, publications through Maxx Coffee's information media, including print, audio, and social media, with their content, helped in disseminating information about the Buy 1 Get 1 promotion. Thus, this strategy contributes positively to increasing the popularity and sales of Maxx Coffee products.

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