Consumer Brand Awareness in Using Instagram as A Brand Communication Media (Study On Instagram Account @Pasar.Idmalang)

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Abstract: Pasar.Id Malang is an e-commerce that encourages traditional market businesses to adapt digital systems and virtual buying and selling activities through an online platform, namely the Pasar.Id website. To introduce to the public, Pasar.Id Malang uses Instagram as a branding medium. However, when compared to several e-commerce Instagram accounts that also focus on selling consumer goods, small and medium enterprise (MSME) products, and basic necessities, Pasar.Id Malang still has a relatively small number of followers. This research method is qualitative with a virtual ethnography approach with the aim of uncovering and describing all subject interactions in the virtual world in this case branding activities carried out by Pasar.Id Malang through Instagram social media. Data is collected through virtual observation activities and also in-depth interviews to test the validity of the data. From the results of the study, the social media strategy that @pasar.idmalang in conducting branding to build brand awareness is an audit or discovery, determining plans in using Instagram, optimizing Instagram content, and evaluating the use of Instagram. In addition, it was found that the brand awareness of followers of Instagram @pasar.idmalang is at the supported awareness level which shows that consumers only know or remember Pasar.Id Malang when other people mention the brand.

Keywords: Social Media Strategy; Brand Communication; Instagram; Brand Awareness

Abstrak: Pasar.Id Malang merupakan e-commerce yang mendorong para pelaku usaha pasar tradisional untuk mengadaptasi sistem digital dan kegiatan jual beli secara virtual melalui platform daring yaitu website Pasar.Id. Untuk memperkenalkan kepada masyarakat, Pasar.Id Malang menggunakan Instagram sebagai media branding. Namun jika dibandingkan dengan beberapa akun Instagram e-commerce yang juga fokus menjual barang konsumsi, produk usaha masyarakat kecil menengah (UMKM), dan sembako, Pasar.Id Malang masih memiliki jumlah pengikut yang relatif sedikit. Metode penelitian ini adalah kualitatif dengan pendekatan etnografi virtual dengan tujuan untuk mengungkap dan mendeskripsikan semua interaksi subjek di dunia virtual dalam hal ini kegiatan branding yang dilakukan oleh Pasar.Id Malang melalui media sosial Instagram. Data dikumpulkan melalui kegiatan observasi virtual dan juga wawancara mendalam untuk menguji keabsahan data. Dari hasil penelitian, strategi media sosial yang @pasar.idmalang dalam melakukan branding untuk membangun kesadaran merek adalah audit atau discovery, penentuan rencana dalam menggunakan Instagram, optimasi konten Instagram, serta evaluasi penggunaan Instagram. Selain itu, ditemukan bahwa kesadaran merek followers dari Instagram @pasar.idmalang berada pada tingkat supported awareness yang menunjukkan konsumen hanya tau atau baru mengingat Pasar.Id Malang ketika orang lain menyebutkan merek tersebut.
INTRODUCTION

In order for a product in the form of goods, services, or companies to be recognized by the public, it must have an identity. This identity is also known as a brand. According to AMA (American Marketing Association) a brand is a name, term, design, symbol, or anything that can be used as an identity to identify and distinguish one product from another (Wainira, Liliweri, & Mandaru, 2021). A brand is important because there are philosophical values attached to it. In addition, a brand has the essence to describe how strong its persistence is, how confident its suitability or fit is with consumers, and how it can inspire, and is able to change and direct a person’s behavior (Robichaud, Richelieu, & Kozak, 2012).

To introduce a brand, companies need to do branding, which is an activity in communicating with the aim of building and growing a brand (Mulyadi & Zuhri, 2020). With interactive features, social media can transmit and communicate information from one person to another more quickly than using conventional (Manurung, Rewidinar, & Marta, 2020). This also applies to marketing communications, including branding. The existence of social media helps business owners or companies carry out marketing strategy activities, including branding activities more effectively and leave traditional media to introduce their products (Anaqhi, Putri, & Zuhri, 2021).

At present, Instagram is very instrumental as a medium for conducting marketing communication activities. Instagram has attracted public attention globally since its release in 2010 (Rochmana, et al., 2022). In Indonesia, Instagram ranks second as the favorite social media platform of internet users aged 16 to 64 years (Kemp, 2022). With the right strategy, Instagram will easily and quickly reach the intended market at a low cost (Smit, 2017). Instagram is one of the easy choices for marketers or companies, including Pasar.Id to build their brand awareness.

Pasar.Id is one of the new services launched in June 2020 by one of the conventional banks in Indonesia, BRI. This service was created based on the needs caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Pasar.Id adopts digitized transactions and they provide e-commerce services that help their consumers to buy and deliver goods from traditional markets without having to make physical contact. Pasar.Id Malang utilizes the Instagram feature to spread brand messages in the form of images and videos uploaded through Instagram feeds and story posts. By using Instagram, Pasar.Id Malang can optimize the features provided as a medium of communication and branding. That way, they will have the opportunity to increase brand awareness and invite the public to get involved by sharing content, using hashtags, and conducting digital events.

In a quantitative research journal entitled “The Effect of Content on Instagram on Brand Awareness”, it is stated that Instagram is a platform that has a positive and significant influence on brand awareness (Kalkautsar & Listiani, 2021). However, when compared to several e-commerce Instagram accounts such as @sayurboxsurabaya which joined Instagram in July 2020 and also focuses on selling consumer goods, small and medium enterprise (SME) products, and basic necessities, Pasar.Id Malang still has a relatively small number of followers with a total of 301 followers. This is also very little compared to the population in Malang over the age of 17 which amounts to approximately 101 thousand people (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2020). This research aims to understand how Brand Awareness in Using Instagram as a Brand Communication Media. The subject of this research is the Instagram account Pasar.Id Malang with the username @pasar.idmalang with a total of 314 posts since October 2020.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a type of qualitative research. Qualitative is a type of research to answer questions related to who, what, where, and how an experience occurs to be studied in depth with the aim of finding patterns that arise in related events (Yuliani,
Through this type, the analysis of the data obtained is not written through numbers or statistical numbers, but through exposure to the situation or condition studied in the form of narrative descriptions (Margono, 2003).

The approach used in this research is virtual ethnography, which is a method to reveal and describe all subject interactions in the virtual world (Achmad & Ida, 2018). Virtual ethnography describes interactions, subject experiences, phenomena that occur in cyberspace, explores meaning and sees the transformation of the subject’s digital life that occurs with the development of communication technology (Rochmana, et al., 2022).

The data collection method used in this research is by tracking uploaded content and interactions in the form of comments, questions or answers on the @pasar.idmalang account. Furthermore, researchers conducted in-depth interviews with a total of 7 informants, namely 1 admin @pasar.idmalang, 1 transaction monitor Pasar.Id Malang, and 5 followers @pasar.idmalang.

Interviews with admins and transaction monitors @pasar.idmalang were conducted to find out Instagram branding communication activities. While interviews with followers were conducted to find out the position of brand awareness formed in their minds, motivation, and engagement on Instagram for @pasar.idmalang content.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Using Instagram As A Branding Communication Media

The benefits of companies using social media are enormous and undeniable. There are several reasons why companies should use social media including as a platform for branding through Instagram media, one of which is the size or number of people who use social media (Roche & Mizerki, 2019). The existence of social media helps business owners to carry out marketing strategy activities, including branding strategies and leave traditional media more effectively to introduce their products (Anaqhi, Putri, & Zuhri, 2021). This shows the power of social media which provides great potential in reaching consumers and provides features to communicate directly. Social media has a significant role for internet or web-based media services and has characteristics, namely reach that can cover the scale of small audiences and global audiences, and is more easily accessible to the public at a more affordable cost (Rumata, 2018).

"Obviously there is, because without Instagram we can’t promote anywhere else. Social media is for that, no need to spend money on brochures, just use Instagram" (interview with Instagram Admin @pasar.idmalang, November 14, 2022).

Instagram as social media is used for companies for reasons of higher efficiency than other traditional media (Darmawan & S.P., 2020). This is similar to Pasar.Id Malang in using social media, Instagram provides assistance as a branding and promotional media with a wide range without having to use traditional media such as brochures to introduce the Pasar.Id Malang brand to Malang residents.

To use Instagram as a branding media, of course, a strategy is needed. Breakenridge developed a Social Media Strategy wheel with the aim of providing a visualization of the important and core components of social media strategy and planning (Breakenridge, 2012). This strategy will then become the focus of related research on Branding Strategy through Instagram Social Media on Pasar.ID Malang’s Instagram account, namely @pasar.idmalang.

Figure 1. The Social Media Strategy Wheel

In implementing this, Pasar.Id Malang first conducts an audit or discovery. This helps @pasar.idmalang to determine goals or ultimate goals and objections (specific
goals) in using Instagram as a branding medium. According to the Transaction monitor, @pasar.idmalang, it is stated that the target of Pasar.Id Malang is all Indonesian citizens from all walks of life. The admin of Instagram also stated that the target of using Instagram is housewives and students. This then shows the use of Instagram by @pasar.idmalang as a branding medium, namely to introduce the use of the Pasar.Id website to Malang residents and build related brand awareness.

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After determining the objectives, @pasar.idmalang conducts observation or tracking and monitoring on topics and information relevant to the audience. In this case, @pasar.idmalang creates content that suits the target audience such as recipes, information on the nutritional content of food. The purpose of tracking and monitoring carried out by @pasar.idmalang is to find approaches to followers and build brand awareness.

The social media actively used by @pasar.idmalang is Instagram. The use of the platform as a distribution medium or channel in conducting branding activities by @pasar.idmalang is the result of consideration from related companies in seeing the development and use of social media used by the target target. From the results of interviews conducted, the Transaction Monitor from Pasar.Id Malang said that this was due to differences in the use of social media from the target community range, such as mothers who use Facebook and Instagram more and young people or adults who use Twitter and Instagram more. This then makes Pasar.Id Malang mediate the problem by using Instagram as a branding media.

"I once knew there was Facebook and Twitter too, but I'm not active anymore. I prefer Instagram now maybe because it is easier and has a wide reach by adding hashtags. Instagram is one of the social media that is often opened ..." (interview with Informant 1, Instagram Admin @pasar.idmalang, November 14, 2022).

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Figure 2. Instagram Content @pasar.idmalang
Source: Instagram account @pasar.idmalang, 2022

Brand awareness is the ability of a brand to appear in consumers' minds when they are thinking about a particular product category and how easy it is to bring up the name or brand (Herdana, 2015). Consumers who have a positive image of a particular brand or brand, allow them to have a good perception and influence their satisfaction in using the brand. Brand awareness makes a significant contribution and becomes a pressure on consumers' minds to encourage them to make repeat purchases (Mulyono, 2016).

According to Torelli (2013), there are three types of brand awareness measurements, namely

1. Spontaneous awareness, shows an indicator of the percentage of consumers who are able to give certain brand names
without the help of others. This indicator also shows the reality of how consumers or customers place brands in their fields.

2. Top of mind knowledge, measuring from seeing how consumers mention brand names in the first order or the brand first comes to consumers’ minds. This shows that the brand is deeply rooted in the buyer's awareness or consciousness.

3. Supported awareness, shows how consumers only know or remember a product when someone else mentions the brand. This shows that the relationship between brands and consumers is still poor.

To find the position of brand awareness and buying interest of Pasar Id Malang consumers, researchers use brand element indicators, namely memorable, meaningful, and likeability (Kotler & Keller, 2016) with the following explanation:

a. Memorable or easy to remember
b. Meaningful or has meaning
c. Likeability or interesting and fun

From the findings of interviews with 4 informants, researchers found that as followers, the informants did not have a strong memory of the @pasar.idmalang account. Informant 3, CY mentioned that @pasar.idmalang content has too much writing, making it difficult for related informants to remember the Pasar.Id Malang brand. Furthermore, according to Informant 4, CR and Informant 5, NA stated that Pasar.Id Malang has not shown a special identity from other competitors but can remember the brand with the help of the logo used.

Informant 6, ME stated that it was difficult to pay attention to brand messages because the highlights of the products offered were still less prominent and the Instagram design used as branding media by Pasar.Id Malang did not help informants to embed brand information into the informants' memories. The results of these interviews are also supported by the calculation of the Instagram engagement rate @pasar.idmalang, which is at 0.50% with an average interaction per post of 1 like and 0 comments...

**Figure 3. Calculation Of Engagement Rate**

This shows that the brand awareness of Instagram followers @pasar.idmalang is still at the Supported Awareness level and consumers only know or remember a product when someone else mentions the brand (Torelli, 2013).

**CONCLUSION**

Based on the formulation of the problem and the analysis that the researchers have described with the virtual ethnography method regarding Consumer Brand Awareness in Using Instagram as a Brand Communication Media (Study on Instagram Account @pasar.idmalang), the researchers drew conclusions. Researchers found that in conducting brand communication through social media, @pasar.idmalang conducts several stages, namely audit or discovery as well as budget planning and target targets that help Pasar.Id Malang in optimizing the use of Instagram as a branding medium and conducting evaluations. And finally, from the results of the study it was found that the form of design and engagement activities carried out by @pasar.idmalang is still lacking so that it makes followers or audiences less aware of the existence of the brand.
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