

Retail Business Marketing Strategy Development

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Abstract

The Covid-19 pandemic has affected the pace of the economy and threatened the survival of companies. Several companies experienced a decline in sales to the point of closing the company. The impact of this crisis was also experienced by retail businesses. Retail companies are affected by this crisis because of the direct retail business system with consumers. This research explores how the retail company Syakira Muslimah is a retail company that is unique because it sells Sharia clothing products. Furthermore, the Syakira Muslimah carried out a survival strategy in the company's survival. Syakira Muslimah does various ways to maintain the survival of its business by doing various internal and external analyses. This research explores the Syakira Muslimah's strategy for informing customers, promoting products through digital marketing, and adding other products. This research provides insights for companies to successfully manage companies during a pandemic and after the Covid-19 pandemic. This study used a qualitative approach and determined the location of the research using a purposive method. The findings of Syakira Muslimah have a survival strategy by forming loyal customers, promoting products through digital marketing and e-commerce, as well as developing new products to make up for low sales during the pandemic.

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INTRODUCTION

The development of technology nowadays greatly supports the performance of various human activities in dealing with the impact of COVID-19 (Hafiza et al., 2021). Education, work, and business activities can be conducted online as a strategy for individuals to remain productive despite social limitations. The pandemic has had a tremendous impact, especially on the economy, and nearly the entire world has experienced a crisis, leading many businesses to adopt strategies such as closing stores, reducing staff, and shifting to online sales (Baiq et al., 2022). Several retail businesses have expanded their sales by maximizing digital marketing and implementing e-commerce platforms in Indonesia. This technological advancement provides convenience and progress in improving online sales (Anggraeni et al., 2021). The high increase in COVID-19 cases has also affected the sales of Syakira Muslimah, a retail business that relies on an online sales system.

Syakira Muslimah is a retail business that primarily operates online and utilizes digital marketing strategies to serve customers both within and outside the city. They utilize e-

commerce platforms like Shopee, create a website, and maintain a presence on social media platforms such as Instagram and WhatsApp. This approach has helped them promote their products and maintain steady sales without experiencing a significant decline (Aris et al., 2021) (Hongwei et al., 2020). The business specializes in selling Islamic clothing items such as "gamis" (Islamic dresses) and headscarves.

Syakira Muslimah has experienced a decline in sales, primarily due to government policies aimed at reducing the spread of COVID-19, such as social distancing and lockdown measures. These measures have had the following effects: Firstly, the company is unable to conduct its business operations effectively, leading many businesses to reduce their workforce. Additionally, government employees have faced reductions in their income, resulting in decreased purchasing power and a preference for cost-cutting measures (Saputra et al., 2021). Secondly, the traditional Eid al-Fitr celebration was not observed as in previous years, and people lacked the desire to celebrate with extended family members. This has led to a decrease in clothing sales during this festive period.

The challenges faced by Syakira Muslimah in the retail industry are indeed fascinating to discuss because this retailer has managed to survive amidst the changing consumer behaviors and culture during the COVID-19 pandemic. This phenomenon is worth studying in depth to understand how Syakira Muslimah has implemented various strategies to sustain their retail business until now. The aim is to provide insights and guidance for companies currently experiencing difficulties in developing their retail businesses, both during and after the pandemic.

METHOD

In this study, a qualitative research method was employed as it aims to describe and analyze phenomena, events, beliefs, attitudes, and social activities at both the individual and group levels (Creswell, 2015). The approach used in this study is a case study approach, which is utilized to investigate a particular phenomenon, understand its context, and identify contributing factors to the observed event or issue (Yin, 2018).

Data collection was conducted through in-depth interviews and observation (participant observation). The data sources were obtained from informants, namely the owners of Syakira Muslimah business. Data analysis was performed using the Miles and Huberman schema (1994) as depicted in Figure 1 below. The subjects in this research were selected purposively, including the owners and customers of Syakira Muslimah.

The data in this study were collected using the following techniques:

1. Observation: The purpose of observation was to allow the researcher to directly observe the research object and closely examine the activities involved.
2. In-depth interviews: These interviews were conducted to explore patterns of interaction, initiated verbally for a specific purpose, and focused on specific content areas, with the elimination of irrelevant materials.

The steps involved in analyzing the data include data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing.

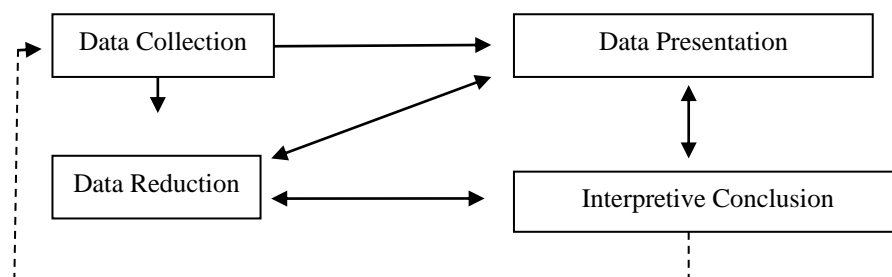


Figure 1. Model Schematic Analysis Miles and Huberman

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The research was conducted on the retail sector in the Muslim fashion industry. The findings were obtained through in-depth interviews based on guidelines. The results begin with an exposition of changes in consumer behavior, followed by an explanation of the strategies implemented by Syakira Muslimah to sustain its business

1. Post-Covid-19 Changes in Consumer Behavior

There has been a change in consumer behavior, particularly an increase in online purchases. According to Mr. HSP, "With the lockdown and social distancing, consumer behavior in terms of shopping preferences has changed...consumers are now prioritizing purchasing essential items like food rather than fashion." This shift is driven by a desire to minimize the risk of Covid-19 exposure by opting for online shopping. Mr. HSP, the owner of Syakira Muslimah, faced challenges in attracting consumer interest due to a preference for basic necessities such as food, healthcare, and hygiene products, leading to a decline in demand for non-essential items like fashion or jewelry. The impact of lockdown and social distancing policies also affected physical marketing. Mr. HSP mentioned, "When the policies were implemented, I couldn't deliver products to customers...for nearby areas, I personally made the deliveries." The owner of Syakira Store conducted a thorough analysis to address the issues related to product delivery. Additionally, some retailers resorted to collusion with retailers to overcome the decline in product sales.

In the post-Covid-19 era, consumers prefer shopping online due to the convenience and ease it offers. This necessitates companies to strengthen their presence in e-commerce and ensure a positive online shopping experience. Consumers are increasingly considering reviews and recommendations before making purchasing decisions. Therefore, companies need to offer high-quality products or services and provide a positive customer experience

2. Marketing Development Strategies

a. Digital Marketing Development through E-commerce

Syakira Muslimah had already engaged in digital marketing through various social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp prior to Covid-19. However, according to the owner of Syakira Muslimah, sales were still not optimal in the post-Covid-19 period. Consumer behavior changes led to a shift in purchasing decisions, prompting them to develop their presence on platforms such as TikTok, which allows direct interaction between sellers and buyers and has a sales feature

b. Physical Retail Location Strategy Post-Covid-19

Syakira Muslimah's strategy is not solely focused on online sales. The placement of Syakira Muslimah's physical stores in urban centers near banks, shopping centers, and offices aims to cater to customers who prefer to see products in person. The target segment is urban working women who are more likely to engage in shopping during lunch breaks or after office hours

c. Product Development Strategy

Syakira Muslimah offers a variety of products. The Covid-19 situation provided a learning opportunity for the owner of Syakira Muslimah to expand their product range. Now, Syakira Muslimah not only sells adult clothing but also children's clothing, as well as beauty products and bags

d. Pricing Strategy

To maintain sales turnover, Syakira Muslimah used a price adjustment strategy. This strategy aimed to increase demand. Syakira Muslimah implemented price adjustments by offering affordable prices to consumers and special prices during the opening of their physical stores, despite targeting the middle to upper-middle consumer segment.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings in the Muslim fashion retail industry, several important insights can be drawn. Firstly, there has been a change in consumer behavior following Covid-19, with an increase in online purchases and a decrease in consumer interest in non-essential products such as fashion clothing. Lockdown and social distancing policies have also affected physical marketing and product delivery

To address the changes in consumer behavior and market conditions, Muslim fashion business actors have adopted marketing development strategies focused on digital marketing through e-commerce. They have optimized the use of social media platforms and expanded their presence on platforms such as TikTok to boost sales. Additionally, they have considered strategic physical retail locations in urban centers to serve customers who prefer to see products in person. In terms of product development, Muslim fashion business actors have expanded their product range to include children's clothing, beauty products, and bags. This expansion aims to mitigate the decline in demand for adult clothing. In terms of pricing strategy, business actors have implemented price adjustments by offering affordable prices to consumers and conducting special promotions during the opening of their physical stores

Overall, Muslim fashion business actors face challenges in maintaining sales turnover amid the Covid-19 pandemic by adapting marketing development strategies, including digital marketing, strategic physical retail locations, product diversification, and price adjustments. These strategies aim to increase demand, retain customers, and ensure business sustainability in the era of the new normal

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