

## Training to Utilize the Social Media in Increasing Awareness and Influencing Purchasing Decisions

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### ABSTRACT

Social media has become an integral part of daily life and plays a crucial role in consumer purchasing decisions. This article examines the optimization of purchasing decisions for SOMETHINC products among the community in Medan through the utilization of social media. The methods used in this service include Deep Interviews, Training, Focus Group Discussions (FGD), and Collaboration. Deep Interviews are conducted to explore consumer perspectives on social media strategies and their impact on purchasing decisions. Training is provided to the SOMETHINC marketing team to enhance interaction with consumers. FGDs gather feedback from consumers and the marketing team regarding consumer needs and preferences. Collaboration with influencers aims to expand promotional reach and increase consumer engagement. The results of the service show that although SOMETHINC has been effective in leveraging social media, there are opportunities to improve engagement with consumers. Training and the implementation of new, more personal and interactive strategies have successfully increased consumer loyalty and the impact of social media on purchasing decisions. FGDs and collaboration with influencers have contributed to refining promotional strategies and expanding market reach. Therefore, the company needs to develop relevant content, actively interact with consumers, and leverage influencers to enhance awareness and the influence of social media on purchasing decisions.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Social media has become an integral part of the daily lives of many consumers (Gul et al., 2014). Its presence is strong in daily consumer communication and has taken on an important role in society. Social media encompasses activities and behaviors among communities that are connected online. It also serves as a means for sharing knowledge, information, and opinions through the use of web-based applications or media (Jashari, 2017). According to Kotler (2015:10), "the presence of advanced technology with internet networks facilitates direct interaction between consumers and businesses." Anything can be done, from merely searching for information to running a business. This aligns with

the behavior of sellers who leverage the sophistication of technology and the internet to market or promote the products they sell through social media or web marketing, which require technology and networks to access (Madyan & Tiarawati, 2018).

Each year, the number of internet users in Indonesia has significantly increased, particularly in terms of social media usage. This growth is driven by the widespread use of social media by both the public and businesses (Lukito & Aswin, 2020). According to the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII), the number of internet users in Indonesia reached 221,563,479 people in 2024, from a total population of 278,696,200 people in 2023. APJII's 2024 internet penetration survey shows that Indonesia's internet penetration rate reached 79.5%, an increase of 1.4% compared to the previous period.

The current era of social media has gradually but surely pushed many companies to change their communication methods. The widespread use of platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and other social media communication forums has forced companies to enhance their communication models. Although Facebook remains the social media platform with the largest number of users and activities worldwide, Instagram offers more than just popularity. A study by Forrester Research indicates that Instagram is now more popular as a marketing platform compared to Facebook. Forbes even describes Instagram as a highly effective sales tool. As a visual medium, Instagram has strong appeal, especially for businesses or brands with physical products (Handoyo & Nugraha, 2020).

Social media marketing has the potential to enhance business efforts and help businesses achieve optimal advantage (Dewi, Riyadi, & Haryanto, 2020). This is evident from the strategy implemented by the brand SOMETHINC, which fully utilizes social media to market its products. Two years after its establishment, SOMETHINC achieved a positive response with total sales reaching 8.1 billion Rupiah through e-commerce platforms (Kompas, 2021). The appearance of products, accompanied by superior quality in photos and videos on posts, greatly influences consumer interest (Wardani & Daniar, 2021). SOMETHINC also actively shares engaging and educational content on social media, including through TikTok, which successfully attracts consumer attention to this local skincare product (Devita, 2021). According to a survey conducted by iPrice, SOMETHINC has achieved the top position as the most popular product on TikTok, with hashtag views reaching 57.3 million times. This product has also obtained halal certification, which is an important consideration for consumers in Indonesia, given that the majority of the population is Muslim (Vivin Dian Devita, 2020).

## **2. METODE**

This article employs the Deep Interview method, chosen to explore in-depth information regarding consumer experiences and perspectives on the effectiveness of SOMETHINC's social media strategies and their impact on purchasing decisions. The second method used in this service article is Training, implemented to provide new knowledge and strategies to the SOMETHINC marketing team, focusing on improving interaction with consumers on social media platforms. The third method is Focus Group Discussion (FGD), used to gather feedback from various parties, including consumers and the marketing team, to better understand consumer needs and preferences. The final method is Collaboration, which can be conducted with influencers as an effort to expand promotional reach and increase consumer engagement, thereby making the strategies more effective in strengthening consumer loyalty and influencing purchasing decisions. The data used in this article is primary data, as the population using SOMETHINC products in Medan has not been measured, so the exact population is unknown. The sampling technique used in this article is purposive sampling, with criteria such as residents of Medan City, aged 18-25 years, and using SOMETHINC products.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### Results

Based on the results of the service through training for the SOMETHINC marketing team and discussions with several consumers, it was found that although SOMETHINC has successfully utilized social media to market its products effectively, there are still opportunities to enhance engagement or interaction with consumers. This is important to ensure that brand awareness not only remains high but also strengthens consumer loyalty and more deeply influences purchasing decisions.

Therefore, education for the SOMETHINC marketing team is necessary through a training program themed "Strategies to Enhance Social Media Engagement to Strengthen Consumer Loyalty," aimed at providing insights and new strategies to the marketing team to maximize interaction with consumers through more personal and interactive content.

Through the training, the SOMETHINC marketing team has understood the importance of engagement and has implemented new strategies that focus more on two-way interaction with consumers. As a result, there has been an increase in consumer loyalty and a stronger impact of social media on purchasing decisions, which has positively affected sales.

In addition to training, the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and collaboration with influencers are also highly relevant. FGD allows the marketing team to receive direct feedback from consumers on new ways to improve engagement. Meanwhile, collaboration with influencers can help expand promotional reach and increase interaction with a broader market segment.

#### Discussion

Social media plays a crucial role in the consumer purchasing decision-making process, allowing consumers to obtain relevant information about products or services they intend to buy. Through reviews, recommendations, and content shared by other users on social media, consumers can gain a clearer understanding of the quality, features, and benefits of a product or service. This information can then help consumers evaluate various alternatives before deciding to make a purchase. Consumer interaction and engagement on social media can also shape positive perceptions and attitudes toward a brand. For example, when consumers see friends or influencers they follow on social media using and recommending a product, it can create a positive perception and increase their interest in purchasing that product. Additionally, various marketing activities on social media, such as digital campaigns and offering discounts, can capture attention and drive consumer purchasing decisions.

These findings indicate that social media plays a significant role in influencing consumer purchasing decisions. Therefore, companies need to effectively utilize social media in their marketing strategies. Companies should build engaging and relevant content on social media. Quality, informative, and entertaining content can enhance consumer engagement and encourage them to keep following the company's activities on social media. Furthermore, companies can conduct digital campaigns, such as offering discounts or giveaways, to attract consumer attention and drive purchasing decisions. Companies also need to manage interactions with consumers on social media effectively. Responding promptly and professionally to questions, complaints, and reviews can build trust and a positive image in the eyes of consumers. This is crucial because social media has become an influential channel in the current consumer purchasing decision-making process. Companies must ensure that the content and communication shared on social media are of high quality and trustworthy. Accurate,

honest, and realistic information about the products or services offered can build the company's credibility in the eyes of consumers. This will encourage consumers to trust and decide to purchase the products or services offered. The results of this analysis provide important insights for marketing practitioners to use social media as a strategic tool to enhance consumer purchasing decisions. Further in-depth analysis of other factors affecting purchasing decisions is also needed to gain a more comprehensive understanding.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Based on this article, it was found that to increase awareness and influence purchasing decisions for SOMETHINC products among the community in Medan through social media utilization, the company should implement an integrated and targeted strategy. First, the company needs to develop relevant and engaging content that can capture consumer attention by creating informative, educational, and appealing visual and written materials about SOMETHINC products, such as product reviews, tutorials, and user testimonials.

Next, the company should actively engage with consumers through social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok to build stronger and more personal relationships. This can be achieved by responding to comments, answering questions, and hosting Q&A sessions or live streaming events. Direct engagement can strengthen the emotional connection with consumers and enhance brand loyalty.

Additionally, the company should leverage influencers and key opinion leaders who have influence in the Medan community to promote SOMETHINC products. Collaborating with relevant influencers can increase visibility and consumer trust in the products. Influencers can help disseminate brand messages through reviews, unboxing, or recommendations, which can encourage consumers to try the products.

The company should also monitor and analyze social media campaign performance regularly to understand what is working and what needs improvement. By using social media analytics tools, the company can measure engagement levels, reach, and conversions generated from each activity, allowing them to adjust their strategies more effectively.

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