Building Brand Relationship Through Millennial Generation Behaviors: Marketing Strategy on Instagram

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ABSTRACT

The theme of this research is the preparation of a marketing strategy in social media by considering the market and considerations of the aforementioned social media platforms. This study aims at the behavior of the intended target market and the development of suitable methods for that market to improve the performance of content development on Instagram social media. This research is based on the theory that has been put forward by marketing experts and business innovation which can be applied simply in the marketing activities held. The close relationship between the brand and the target market will show the role of communication through targeted marketing activities, especially in Indonesia.

Keywords: Brand, Target Market, Instagram, Communication, Marketing Strategy.

INTRODUCTION

Target market is an important aspect in the marketing activities of a brand. Target market is a term used to refer to the subjects that will receive the benefits of a brand's product or service. In marketing activities, target market is determined through identifying demographics and psychographic segmentation of a certain group of people. In addition to identifying the right target market, another related aspect that is used to determine target market is the relationship of that brand with the intended target market's needs.

Each brand has distinctive characteristics and diverse target markets according to the connection between the brand and its intended subject. However, it

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is uncommon for brands to experience communication failure with their target market. The marketing strategy employed by a targeted brand is demographic identification and psychographic segmentation, which still cannot cover the entire target market which is supposed to be the main target of a brand (Christensen et al., 2020). Using this method to determine target market can cause many layers of society to fall into groups that are actually not suitable for their existence (John et al., 2017; Miller, 2017). As an illustration, imagine a person who goes to a fast-food restaurant in the morning for breakfast and goes to a high-end restaurant for dinner, meanwhile these two eating establishments have different target markets.

In Indonesia, at least in the last 5 years, the relationship between brands and target markets has often been built through social media technology. This provides opportunities for new approaches, such as designing content for consumers and designing strategies to reach new individuals who have yet been identified in the determined target market. Recently, most of the social media users are millennials with an average of above 60% of the entire millennial community who consume the internet every day (Utomo & Noormega, 2020) and also Generation Z who understand technology skillfully since social media is their primary source of information (Southeast Asia, 2021). These two user groups have now become the focus of marketing and branding activities that are lately being encouraged.

This study aimed to analyze how brands build relationships with the right target market through marketing strategies on Instagram. This study is divided into several sections to facilitate the discussion in order to get a more coherent understanding on the topic being discussed.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study was desk research in nature, using literature reviews as data resources to get a deeper understanding of research topics on target market, brand, and marketing strategy on social media. Three research questions were answered through employing this literature study: 1) how to recognize behaviors of the

intended consumers; 2) how to develop measurable methods to improve content development performance, and; 3) how to analyze the way brands build relationships with the right target market through implementing marketing strategy on social media. This study would be beneficial for further researchers who are interested to conduct research on the similar topic.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
The Roles and Characteristics of Target Market

Generally, personas, ethnographic research, focused group discussions, and competitive analysis can become a starting point in determining important aspects as a part of a process of identifying target market (Christensen et al., 2020). In this process, society is divided into various groups determined by certain characteristics, which will later form smaller communities or groups that share a common ground. These smaller groups have common needs such as obstacles, difficulties, or concerns that they must face (Godin, 2008). With the advancement of technology, the needs of these groups have begun to shift. Technology has generated a new problem that comprises emotional needs, products and brands perceptions, and new ways to interact with online shopping platforms (Yarrow, 2014).

However, these groups' behaviors can be directed by a certain influence by means of persuasion. It can start with voicing something that is closely related to what they hold and belief (Godin, 2008). These groups are subjects who will become users of a certain product or service of a brand, which holds similar belief with them. This is a starting point for the formation of a brand's target market, which is not based on demographic identification and psychographic segmentation. A brand is built not only through the existence of internal groups, but also through the existence of external parties outside the brand itself such as consumers, partners, and competitors (Neumeier, 2006). Competitors play significant role in helping the brands to know deeper the core of their consumers' needs because brands can do more than just analyzing products or services output from competitors regarding more detailed needs and characteristics about consumers.

The brands can understand about their consumers more by describing things their consumers want to get and digging deeper into consumers' minds (Dawar, 2013). Furthermore, for consumers' needs, a brand needs to understand the position of its consumers empathetically. A brand must know the point where consumers currently position themselves and assist them to achieve their next destination. Doing these to the brands' consumers will not only provide benefits to them, but also provide a good image to them (Goodman & Cause Communications, 2006).

Brand Existence for Consumers

The most important things in a brand are the product or service definition and meaning of the brand itself. A brand differentiator, which differentiates between that brand and its competitors, can become a focus of study in terms of its product or service credibility provided by the brand (Neumeier, 2006). A brand differentiator should be communicated as well as possible by emphasizing on its significant impact to the target market and advantages over other competitors (Neumeier, 2005). Many brands fail to communicate this as there has no underlying method applied. In this case, creating a brand persona to support brand storytelling with aims to communicate brand values can help target market understand those values easier and more memorable (Herskovitz & Crystal, 2010). A brand persona can be useful in creating a marketing strategy that is suitable to the brand while at the same time leaving a memorable impression imprinted on the target market's mind.

An intrapersonal relationship between the brand and the target market bridged by authentic, sincere, and confident communication can result in a strong and trusted perception for the audience (Yarrow, 2014). This principle can be applied through brand visualization that reflects a persona with the brand's values. These strong brand characteristics will later build a consistent image with a humane side that can bring the relationship between the brand and its consumers or target market closer than before. Moreover, consumers will think and act more flexibly since the presence of visual markers of the brands subconsciously influence their actions and thoughts (Yarrow, 2014).

Marketing activities by means of storytelling that are centered on persona narratives aim to make consumers or target market acquainted with the characteristics of the brand more easily, without having to remember complicated things. Being able to present a rough picture of a brand in the mind of the target market is the successful goal of branding activities. If able to achieve this, the next marketing activities of a brand will be accepted by the target market more easily because they already have a deeper sense of brand recognition as resulted from earlier activities (Herskovitz & Crystal, 2010). The right target market will form an association in the form of groups, which facilitate them indirectly in exchanging ideas and communicate about brands that meet their needs (Osterwalder & Pigneur, 2010; Yarrow, 2014).

Brand Relationship and Intended Target Market

Target market, in this case, is not only seeking for "consuming something" experience, they want to be involved "more". Consumers do not merely purchase a brand, they also join the brand and get involved in the brand formation itself (Neumeier, 2015). Consumers will consider several aspects before selecting the brands they want to explore more, such as the brand relevance with their respective personalities. They tend to prefer relevant aspects for them such as style of speech, point of view, and personal style to adjusting themselves to those aspects (Yarrow, 2014). Understanding this is a challenge for a brand. One way a brand can do to find out a rough description of what a consumer wants is by imagining target market subjects in a big picture (Dawar, 2013). For instance, an approach a brand can try to do is to examine its consumers deeper by using specific or typical metaphors or expressions as an attempt to attract consumers who resonate with such styles.

To these days, the movement of brands and consumers is becoming increasingly visible with the existence of technology, more specifically through social media. Consumers' behaviors on social media can become a focus of study on understanding consumers' behaviors. There are several motives of using social media

by the consumers, such as to communicate with each other digitally and to improve their self-image in front of other social communities. There is an expectation that social media they use can channel their desire to improve and announce their expressions (Kilgour et al., 2015). These consumer behaviors can indirectly affect the rapid development of marketing effectiveness through content, which can also be used by brands as an effort to understand their consumers better than before while at the same time to imprint a good image on their minds.

Throughout a consumer journey, treating consumers as the main actor can provide insight for the brand in order to facilitate their journey from the starting point to their desired point. Brands are expected to provide direction to ensure that the consumers can travel well to get to their destination. Therefore, brands have position as a supporter of the consumers, not the other way around. A supporter must provide what consumers need and assist them to achieve their goals. This can provide a new and closer bond with the consumers and gain their higher trust as well which will later reduce the possibility of these consumers switch to the other brands (Miller, 2017).

Unfortunately, strategies applied by brands to always put consumers first will gradually decline and become mundane. To overcome this problem, it is essential for the brands to have a point of view of creating innovations needed by consumers, by considering Raymond Loewy's principles, "Most Advanced yet Acceptable" or MAYA (Neumeier, 2005). At the core of these principles is providing innovations that are well received by the consumers. Such innovations must have a balance of novelty and familiar aspects. If it is too familiar with the consumers' behaviors, it cannot become a new breakthrough. On the contrary, if it is very new for consumers or far from their habitual behaviors, then it cannot be accepted well by them due to its incompatibility with their behaviors.

In brand and consumer communication activities, announcing what the brand is doing to the public is still less effective. This strategy can be overcome by modifying its format from one-way communication to involving consumers who already form a community where each member can influence each other and share

similar desires and point of views (Godin, 2008). Every idea and communication shared and discussed within that community can be evaluated naturally by reviewing other members' responses. Furthermore, brands can classify ideas into categories of tangible results in order to enlarge and expand brand movement more massively in the hope of reaching individuals who have yet become part of the existing consumer community (Ponnamma Divakaran, 2016). This classification effort can be done by considering motives behind ideas originated from consumers. Knowing what consumers believe and what they are dealing with can provide a deeper and thorough understanding for the brands to meet their consumer needs through various methods (Goodman & Cause Communications., 2006).

There is an indication that the role of social media is to provide unlimited access for consumers to connect with the other consumers. Previously it has been explained that brands with consumers involved in a community can maximize this opportunity to increase consumer advocacy, not only to make ends meet but also to participate actively in order to be closer to other consumers (Romero & Ruiz-Equihua, 2020). One strategy that can be done to increase consumer advocacy activities is to combine communicative messages on a regular basis to existing consumers. By implementing this strategy, brands can achieve several marketing goals that indirectly occur resulted from the activities of consumers who are appointed as brand ambassadors.

Since consumers' life in cyberspace is already quite intense, communicating with them on a social media basis can become a fruitful method (Tafesse & Wien, 2018). At this stage, it must be re-emphasized that through assisting consumers and adjusting to them, brands must adhere to its beliefs and values. The key to genuine and authentic communication is to prioritize the reason of why a brand was formed at the first place. The main foundation or reason of why a brand exists and what the brand's primary goal is must be communicated well without being too intrusive (Neumeier, 2015).

Activities on social media are very diverse and offer many options for brands to reach their consumers. Generally, consumers who crave for a brand

that really meets their needs will tend to desire for added value as well. To facilitate this, brands can create activities that require intensive participation from consumers such as holding a challenge. Such event will benefit the brands in the form of increased publicity (Yarrow, 2014).

The Roles of social media As a Communication Media

Social media has a potential to provide opportunities for both the brands and the consumers to establish good and close relationships. With the help of social media and its developed metrics, brands can target the right consumers. If the brands implement communication forms properly, it can have impacts for the consumers such as triggering their curiosity and creating visualization in their mind of their relationship with specific brands (Kilgour et al., 2015; Stanko et al., 2019; Tafesse & Wien, 2015). 2018). An effective way for a brand to communicate its message is to return to its primary focus of communication goal itself, which is providing a storyline for consumers to make easier for them to digest the message conveyed by the brands, and facilitating them in receiving that message (Miller, 2017).

This method will be very effective if implemented at the right moment and in accordance with the humane characteristics of consumers, which are characterized by the effectiveness of human brain to digest important information in the morning and the lighter one in the evening (Kanuri et al., 2018). To emphasize, all steps and strategies implemented by the brands must have similar characteristics with consumers' behaviors and habitual routines in using social media in a consumer community (Godin, 2008; Osterwalder & Pigneur, 2010). An effective way to convey brand communication messages must return to the focus of the communication goal, which is to provide a storyline to make it easier for consumers to digest the message that the brand wants to convey and how consumers receive the message (Miller, 2017).

CONCLUSION

Based on the results explained in the previous sections, it is clear that there is a relationship between brands and consumers that is facilitated with communication methods through social media. There are two main aspects to consider before determining the right target market for a brand, namely characteristics and persona of a brand and behaviors, and habitual routines of appropriate target market. The process of determining target market with this approach is different from other methods that use demographic and psychographic segmentation to determine target market. This method can become an alternative or even complement to other existing methods in order to get a comprehensive and concrete picture of the target market. Within a process of communication and establishing a relationship between brands and target markets, social media can be used as a tool to analyze consumers' habits on a specific platform and brands can place themselves at a certain point of consumers' habitual routine. Social media has numerous facilities that brands and target markets can use, such as connecting brands with their target markets. The results of this study indicate the brand' understanding on its values and trusted identity gives a good impression to a suitable target market, so they are aware that this brand fulfills their needs and corresponds to their existence. Thus, this study provides a broader picture of target market's diversity and the role of social media in brand marketing activities.

This study has two limitations. Firstly, this study has not explored deeper understanding and explanation on communication and marketing strategies that are suitable for consumers' characteristics in the society. Secondly, the method used in this study is literature study which is widely used by other marketing practitioners, therefore new evidences are needed to regarding the right and appropriate target market for certain brands. This method is proven useful in providing a very thorough explanation or a broad understanding of a marketing topic and its relationship with brands and target market.

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