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Utilization of Word-of-Mouth Marketing Strategy in Culinary Business

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Abstract. The purpose of this study is to analyze how the benefits of the Word of Mouth marketing strategy (word of mouth marketing) are in supporting the improvement of the culinary business. This study used qualitative research methods. The results of this study are the application of the Word of Mouth strategy in the culinary industry sector in increasing sales and building brand awareness and growing public trust in products and companies. The presence of the Word Of Mouth strategy maximizes the development of the culinary business industry with a very wide reach. This study was conducted to determine how effective and influential the use of the Word of Mouth strategy is in the culinary business. In the end, the Word of Mouth marketing communication strategy can be utilized and beneficial for culinary business people in this modern era. Word of mouth marketing communication strategy is very helpful in promoting and attracting potential customers and retaining repeat customers.

Keywords: Marketing Strategy, Marketing Communication, Industry

1. Introduction

Competition in today's business world is getting tougher, so a marketing communication strategy is needed to maintain and develop the business. Competition can be said to be a competition between business actors to market products and create awareness and foster public trust, there is one marketing communication strategy that is quite important for business, namely the Word Of Mouth Marketing Communication Strategy, especially for businesses in the culinary field, this marketing strategy becomes a structured and comprehensive plan made by business actors in carrying out business activities to gain profits or introduce public brands [1]. The use of this Word of Mouth marketing communication strategy is considered very effective in increasing the brand or brand, especially in the culinary field at no cost because if they already have regular customers, they will recommend these culinary products to others without realizing this word of mouth strategy has gone hand in hand with talk about the business. Customers often tell about their experiences related to what they have tasted, one example of which is the experience in terms of cuisine delivered by word

of mouth. Word of Mouth can quickly spread almost completely without having to use expensive tools or promotions. This is a benchmark for business people in intensifying word of mouth for their businesses which ultimately aims to make profits and be known in the community [2].

A study on the Word of Mouth marketing communication strategy was conducted by Atmariansi Artanti, et al. In the study, it was stated that the word of mouth marketing communication strategy in the culinary business was considered stronger in influencing sales intensity because of the habits of people who often gathered and told their experiences to others. This word of mouth marketing communication strategy is very successful and is able to influence purchasing decisions [3]. Research owned by Hasta Nirmaya states that this marketing communication strategy can strengthen cooperation between marketing groups both pre-sales and post-sales and help satisfy consumers [4]. This is also in line with the research of Anwari, et al. that the word of mouth marketing communication strategy begins with discussing and explaining the product, its advantages, and how it can influence the recipient of the message to participate in discussing and deciding to buy [5]. Based on the research results of Michael L. Dougherty, word of mouth is the most important way for business people to bring together buyers and their products and is the main key in bridging between customers and business producers. Word of mouth is the most powerful method of promoting and introducing business entrepreneurs, this is also an important factor in the development of culinary and other businesses [6]. According to McKinsey & Company explaining that word of mouth is very effective in reaching the market quickly and accurately, many out there who need millions of funds just for advertising campaigns and the preparation is not easy. However, it is still difficult for customers to recognize. The free marketing strategy, namely word of mouth, is the most powerful and credible source [7].

It is important for marketers to comprehend the importance of WOM communication that drives the decision-making process and attitudes of buyers. This requires an in-depth understanding of, and the developing of appropriate WOM communication strategies. Therefore it is necessary to study the process of WOM communication in the business-to-business context, to identify influential information channels which actively propagate WOM to other businesses. Marketers therefore need to study their products and services carefully if they are going to establish a strong presence in the competitive market. They should persuade consumers to talk positively with other potential consumers about the products and services they offer. This requires that they concentrate on improving service quality and meeting the targets and satisfaction of consumers to provide a satisfactory experience. Customers who have satisfactory experience with the products and services offered will spread positive WOM and will share profitable information [8].

Therefore, from these studies and research, we can see and conclude that the use of word of mouth marketing communication strategies plays an important role in today's business world. The purpose of this research is to analyze the benefits of Word of Mouth marketing strategy (word of mouth marketing) in supporting the improvement of the culinary business. This study uses descriptive analysis with qualitative research method.

2. Method

The research was conducted using a qualitative approach with a descriptive analysis method as the research design. According to Sugiyono, qualitative research is research with a post-positivist basis and background that focuses on the study of the condition of natural objects. Data collection in descriptive qualitative research method using interviews,

observation, and triangulation techniques [9].

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Marketing Strategy

Branding strategies are used by business actors in developing brands, images, and sales strategies to get a positive reputation and position the brand in the public's memory. Many business people run their businesses with the help of marketing strategies. Based on observations made through the use of social media, most marketing communication strategies are dominated by brands that are engaged in the culinary business, both in snacks and heavy meals. Each strategy has its own goals and objectives. These goals can appear if you know and analyze the market. Although in the last two years, the world was hit by a serious disease outbreak, marketing communication strategies can still work because communication strategies have a great influence on brands and businesses.

Marketing strategy is the most important asset and factor in the success of a business or business strategy. Marketing communication strategies allow business people to continue to innovate in developing their products and reach interactions between consumers and business people and promote directly or indirectly a business in order to gain knowledge, opinions, and brand awareness.

To realize an effective marketing communication strategy, it must be accompanied by the right, structured, and organized strategies and procedures. This is used in order to reach the target correctly and in accordance with the plan that has been made. When the marketing communication strategy for a business product has been successfully implemented, the business automatically gains audiences and customers because interest and awareness have been formed with the application of the right marketing communication strategy.

Marketing communication strategies have various forms that can be adapted to the wishes of business people, such as what marketing communication needs are desired to be known by customers and potential customers.

Things that make a marketing communication strategy important to a business:

1. Make it easier for business people to promote their business. SME/SMEs really need a marketing communication strategy so that brands are quickly recognized.
2. Business goals are more focused and structured.
3. The team becomes more active in developing marketing strategies for the business

3.2. Word of Mouth

According to the opinion of Kotler and Keller in their book (2009:174), word of mouth is communication that is carried out either orally or in writing, directly or through electronic media between communities [10]. Word-of-mouth communication is usually directly related to the superiority of a product or experience in using a product, goods, or services. Word of mouth is considered very effective in business because it can increase public trust through reviews or recommendations that are persuasive and convince others to buy the business product, so that sales and the image of the business will increase.

In addition, almost every company or business that uses a word-of-mouth strategy almost never pays anything to promote its products and services. Because, in essence, word-of-mouth marketing allows customers to make sales in the business independently or indirectly without having to consider other concepts, ideas, or marketing [11]. The word of mouth strategy is considered effective for business actors. The Word of Mouth strategy certainly has a big impact on a business, because it basically means that someone will believe more in what other people say who have bought a product, especially if it is reviewed positively by well-known people,

such as influencers with a fairly large influence. The more widely the product is discussed, the better.

In this era of digitalization, "Word Of Mouth" is not only communication by word of mouth, but has advanced to the electronic world known as "Electronic Word of Mouth." An electronic word of mouth is a positive or negative statement from the opinion of a consumer who buys a product that can be accessed by the virtual world community. The use of electronic word of mouth on social media is very effective because it can spread to the wider community. Business people who apply electronic word of mouth will benefit because reviews or experiences from consumers uploaded on social media will convince other potential consumers to buy the business product.

Electronic word of mouth communication through electronic media is able to make consumers get information about a business product not only from someone they know, but also from a group of people from different geographical areas who have experience with the product or service in question (Christy, 2010) [12].

The description of the word-of-mouth strategy is a typical topic of conversation for food and companies. In understanding food from various culinary business worlds through word of mouth strategies, various questions can be found about how we think about the strategy, how to do it, and what kind of impact or effect it will have [13].

3.3. Culinary Business

Indonesia is a country that has a variety of cultures, from Sabang to Merauke. Each region has its own characteristics. There are various types of cuisine and culinary delights from each region that can attract people both domestically and abroad. Due to the high level of public interest in the culinary arts, this could be an opportunity for entrepreneurs to start a culinary business.

The culinary business is one of the most promising business categories today, because food is a basic need in society. Currently, the culinary business in Indonesia is mostly run by SMEs. With sufficient capital and good strategic ideas, the culinary business can run well too.

In the culinary business, taste is one of the basic concepts that must be considered. In this case, culinary business people must know what flavors are in demand by the surrounding community. To find out, businesspeople must conduct a survey. The second basic concept is lifestyle. As important as taste is at this time, food is part of people's lifestyles, so it is very important for business actors to determine the target market of the culinary business they are running. Furthermore, the basic concept of the culinary business is purchasing power, as a business actor must know whether the purchasing power at the destination location is high or low. Therefore, business actors must determine the price of the product to be sold and adjust it to the purchasing power of the people around the destination location. The last basic concept that is important in the culinary business is a marketing strategy. Before determining how the culinary business will be run, it is better for business actors to determine appropriate and effective marketing techniques so that the culinary business runs smoothly. It will only waste time and money if the marketing strategy is ineffective and off-target.

In improving the word of mouth marketing strategy in the culinary business, there are several things that must be considered so that the strategy can be effective, namely:

3.4. Have a creative or out of the box idea for a program

The idea referred to in the word-of-mouth marketing strategy is in the form of marketing, branding, and even PR campaigns that can increase the name of the business. The trust that is



built in a business brand will get good recognition from customers or the public. A campaign (campaign) is one very good idea for improving word of mouth marketing strategy because campaigns usually have ideas that can touch various aspects of human beings, such as the emotional side, such as being touched by a campaign program or other things. If a business, especially one in the culinary industry, can touch the emotions of prospective customers, it is certain that their memories will always remember the name of the business because there is already an emotional connection.

3.5. Business and Community

It is impossible for only one person who runs a business to be recognized and successful. Running a business using the power of a community that is still relevant to business development is one of the word-of-mouth marketing strategies that can improve various aspects of its marketing. For example, a heavy food culinary business that collaborates with the community on an event, be it music events, charity events, or other events.

3.6. Influencers are Brand Power

Currently, influencers are a very good attraction for businesses looking to improve their businesses, both in the clothing, automotive, and food industries. The role of influencers is very large in introducing the culinary business to their followers in cyberspace and outside the virtual world (the real world). The presence of these influencers triggers very fast and rapid profits. Indeed, sometimes using the services of an influencer means having to pay a lot of money. However, this is not detrimental because it gets good returns for business benefits from a financial and reputational perspective.

3.7. Customer Testimonials

It is a good idea for every business to establish a good relationship with customers in order to get good feedback from them too. Because good reviews from customers are something that other customers consider when choosing our brand for them to make their buying decisions. Maintain good relationships in order to get testimonials from customers in terms of food taste, cleanliness, comfort, and attitude from employees.

3.8. Mie Gacoan

"Mie Gacoan" is a culinary brand that is the number one spicy noodle restaurant in Indonesia and is a subsidiary of PT Pesta Pora Abadi. Established since the beginning of 2016, the "Mie Gacoan" brand has grown to become a market leader. Carrying the concept of modern dining at affordable prices, the presence of "Mie Gacoan" has received tremendous appreciation in every place where it is present to serve tens of thousands of customers every month, and Mie Gacoan is often discussed everywhere.

Mie Gacoan is the best noodle place to eat, especially for students, where they can hang out, do assignments, and chat casually. With an attractive place and also equipped with various facilities such as wifi, power plugs, and updated music, it is guaranteed to make customers feel at home and always want to come back to Mie Gacoan.



Figure 1. Mie Gacoan Restaurant

Figure 2. Mie Gacoan

One of the things that makes Mie Gacoan viral and many people interested in buying it is the Word of Mouth Marketing Communication Strategy, where a lot of reviews and comments from people who have bought Mie Gacoan are widely spread so that someone who reads or sees the review becomes curious and interested in buying Mie Gacoan. The use of Word of Mouth is very influential in the culinary business because it can persuade other potential consumers to buy Mie Gacoan.

Here are some positive reviews about Mie Gacoan taken from Google and pergikuliner.com



Figure 3. Review from Google “Mie Gacoan Bandung”



Figure 4. Review “Mie Gacoan” from pergikuliner.com

Apart from reviews or comments from the internet, people are directly affected by word of mouth from their relatives, such as family, friends, and people around them, because usually someone will believe more and be quickly influenced by what people closest to them say, so word of mouth is very influential. on the sale of Mie Gacoan.

The following are some informants who have tried Mie Gacoan as a result of word of mouth from relatives

Table 1. Respondents of Interview

No	Name	Profession	Age	Description
1	Entri Melyani	Student	22 Tahun	Mahasiswi
2	Kinanti	Student	18 Tahun	Pelajar SMA
3	Wulan Setyodewati	Student	41 Tahun	Ibu Rumah Tangga

The results of some of the informants above explain that they found out about Mie Gacoan not from finding out themselves but by being informed by relatives, family, and people in cyberspace. This makes them sure to come to the most popular culinary business place. According to our three sources, Mie Gacoan is indeed delicious, as said by their relatives who told us about Mie Gacoan. It's not only the good taste and large portions but also the atmosphere of the place and the crowd at Mie Gacoan that makes you want to come again. According to our three sources, what makes Mie Gacoan always crowded is that they not only sell noodles but also dimsum, fried dumplings, rambutan shrimp, cheese shrimp, and drinks with various



flavors.

This word of mouth marketing strategy went very well and was implemented beyond expectations, considering that all Mie Gacoan in all branches in Indonesia experienced a drastic increase. When opening Mie Gacoan on an online food delivery application, Mie Gacoan almost always says "closed" because it's already too crowded in the place. Until now, word of mouth from Mie Gacoan is still going well. According to narratives such as reviews and feedback from customers on Google or on social media, it also proves that Gacoan is a noodle that is crowded due to Word Of Mouth marketing strategies both offline and online. The use of word of mouth marketing strategies in the culinary business, for example, Mie Gacoan, is very well implemented and includes a successful culinary business to date in 2022.

4. Conclusion

Competition can be said to be a competition between business actors to market their products, create awareness and foster public trust. There is one marketing communication strategy that is quite important for businesses, namely the Word of Mouth Marketing Communication Strategy. This marketing strategy becomes a structured and comprehensive plan made by business actors to carry out business activities to gain profits or introduce brands to the public. The last basic concept that is important in the culinary business is a marketing strategy. Before determining how the culinary business will be run, it is better for business actors to determine appropriate and effective marketing techniques so that the culinary business runs smoothly. If the marketing strategy is not effective and not on target, it will only waste time and money. One of the things that makes Mie Gacoan viral and many people interested in buying it is the Word of Mouth Marketing Communication Strategy, where a lot of reviews and comments from people who have bought Mie Gacoan are widely spread so that someone who reads or sees the review becomes curious and interested in buying Mie Gacoan. The use of Word of Mouth is very influential in the culinary business because it can persuade other potential consumers to buy Mie Gacoan.

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