

# Product Online Marketing and Digital Branding Strategies in the Covid-19 Era

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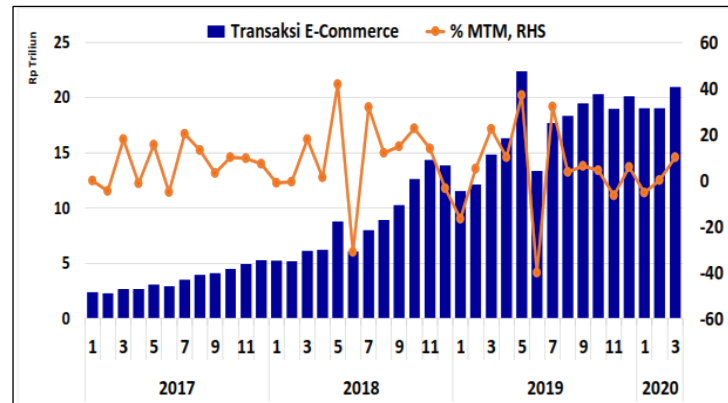
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**Abstract.** Product marketing to consumers is a strategy for a brand to be able to survive during the Covid-19. Besides, business actors could optimize the technology to communicate with their consumers. Internet as a communication medium provides its users with numerous benefits, including Digital Branding. This study aims to formulate online marketing and digital branding strategies in the Covid-19 era. The secondary data were obtained from Bank Indonesia report data for 2020. The data analysis method employed was descriptive qualitative analysis. The results indicated that product online marketing and digital branding strategies through the use of information and communication technology could be conducted by determining market segmentation, using appropriate digital media, creating logos, making attractive promotions, ensuring product safety and building a consumer database.

**Keywords:** Covid-19; Digital Branding; Online Marketing

## 1 Introduction

Covid-19 cases first appeared in China at the end of 2019. The spread of this virus moves rapidly from human to human, from one country to another throughout the world, including Indonesia. The entry of cases of the Covid-19 outbreak into Indonesia was announced on March 2, 2020. The rapid spread of the Covid-19 outbreak in Indonesia has given great impact on the world of business and economy in Indonesia. It is clearly portrayed from the enactment of social distancing, Large-Scale Social Restrictions (PSBB), and Community Activities Restrictions Enforcement (PPKM) that lead to the collapse of most businesses and the increase of employees experiencing layoffs. With the enactment of social distancing and Large-Scale Social Restrictions (PSBB), business actors are suggested to implement certain strategies to increase a product sales and sustainability. Product marketing to consumers is a strategy for a brand to be able to survive in the midst of the Covid-19. Besides, business actors could optimize the technology to communicate with their target consumers. According to David Baum in Sunarto (2009), e-commerce is a dynamic set of technologies, applications, and business processes that incorporate companies, consumers, and certain communities through electronic transactions, and the goods trade, services, and information dissemination are conducted electronically.



**Fig. 1.** E-commerce Transactions in Indonesia  
 Source: Bank Indonesia, 2020

The figure above illustrated the number of e-commerce transactions in Indonesia that continues to increase from year to year. At the beginning of 2017, for instance, the number of e-commerce transactions was 2.5 trillion rupiah. It then increased to 5 trillion rupiah at the beginning of 2018, 12 trillion rupiah at the beginning of 2019, and more significantly increased to 21 trillion rupiah in March 2020. One of the constituents in e-commerce is online marketing since e-commerce is an online buying and selling system (Boone & Kurtz, 2015). Online marketing as a part of e-commerce comprises strategies for production, distribution, pricing, and promotion through digital media. Hence, it could conceivably be interpreted that online marketing is all kinds of marketing processes of a product or service to the hands of consumers using digital media. Similarly, Armstrong and Kotler (2004) affirmed that online marketing is a form of company performance in terms of promotion and sales of goods or services through the internet. The internet as a communication medium provides its users with numerous benefits, including for Digital Branding. Digital branding is a brand identity used by a product or company through an online system, including the selection of names, logos, colors, slogans and other aspects that may affect the business. The choice must be unique and attractive so that it keeps embedded in the minds of consumers.

*Digital branding* is identity, visibility and credibility among consumers who are interconnecting with a brand on a digital platform. Companies with the desire of dominating the market are those capable of building digital power, and successful companies in the digital era are those capable of creating and utilizing the digital power to build a company brand. Business actors could not simply market their products online or digitally and expect the audience to be convinced. They need to demonstrate the values of the brand and communicate them through digital branding. The branding activities should then be carried out variously with certain creativity, whether through online media, social media, websites or other digital platforms. By building a good brand name in online marketing, the existence of a brand in cyberspace can be well-established since most people tend to search online before purchasing a product. Further, brands that are easy to remember by people affect their product purchase decision. Regarding customer loyalty, online marketing is an effective way to attract consumers to be loyal (Saniya, 2015). Drawing upon the details above, this study aims to formulate online marketing and digital branding strategies in the Covid-19 era.

## 2 Methodology

This study employed a qualitative descriptive method. It is, according to Mukhtar (2013: 10), a method used by researchers to gain knowledge or theory from a research at a certain time. This study made use of secondary data from research results and literature references related to the current research using documentation as the data collection technique. The data analysis tool used was SWOT analysis, i.e. a strategy planning technique for evaluating strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in a project (Rangkuti, 2015). The data analysis technique consists of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction is concerned with the most important things to consider from the data collected and the search of patterns and themes from the data. Data presentation is provided in the form of brief descriptions and correlations between categories. Sugiyono (2015) stated that the form of data presentation in qualitative research is narrative texts. Further, the conclusions of this study answer the formulation of the problems and research objectives. The flow of thought of this research stems from the rapid spread of Covid-19 in Indonesia that affects the enterprise and business sector in Indonesia. The enactment of social distancing and PSBB policies indicate a decrease in the sales of a product. To anticipate the impact of the Covid-19, many business people have changed their product marketing pattern from conventional to digital platform-based (online). Online marketing or online campaign are means of communicating the brand identity of a product so that it gets embedded in the minds of consumers.

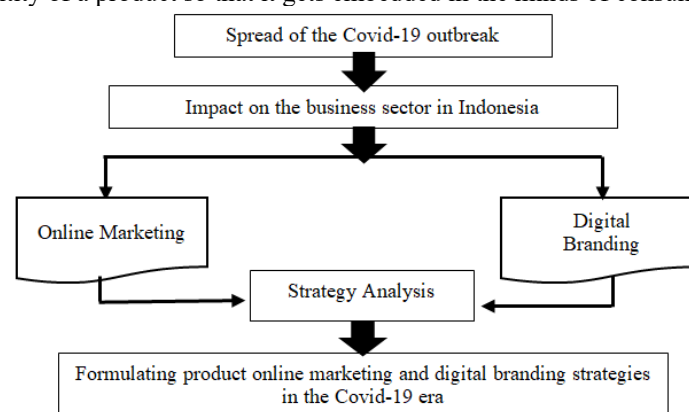


Fig. 2. Conceptual Framework

## 3 Results and Discussion

### 3.1 Online Marketing Strategy

Online marketing is a strategy and an effective way to attract people to become loyal consumers. Marketers generally have more touch points with consumers via digital channels than ever before. Online marketing allows marketers to reach consumers in new various ways. Through social media with two-way communication in it, marketers could identify and understand more about their online consumers. On the other side, consumers also expect the companies to be closer to them. Then, making them feel engaged with brand activities online is a strategy to build consumer loyalty to the brand, such as offering exclusive gifts. Not only will it attract customers to stay active in the online community, but it will also make them feel

the value of being a part of the brand.

Online marketing or online campaign strategies, according to Mayfield (2008) and Ashley and Arun (2015), may have the forms of participation and engagement, openness, conversation, community, connectedness, knowing the audience well, variety of gifts and customer service. *Participation & engagement* are associated with social media that encourages contributions and feedback from all interested people. *Openness* refers to situations in which most social media services are open to receiving feedback and participation, including voting, commenting and sharing information. *Conversation* appears in social media as a better communication medium due to the use of two-way communication conversation method. *Community* is represented by social media which allows any communities to form quickly and communicate effectively. *Connectedness* indicates that most types of social media evolve by utilizing links that could redirect certain website to other website resources. *Knowing the audience well* is imperative that marketers could precisely identify the habits and behaviors shown by customers in the online world. *Variety of gifts* is the activity of providing gifts or discounts for customers by considering the right time to attract their attention. *Customer service* allows customers to freely share their complaints or satisfactions online.

### 3.2 Digital Branding Strategy

Digital branding is a brand identity used by a product or company through an online system, including the selection of names, logos, colors, slogans and other aspects that may affect the business. *Digital branding* is identity, visibility and credibility among consumers who are interconnecting with a brand on a digital platform. Digital branding strategy comprises all strategies built upon the guiding principles and brand targets for marketers. Every business needs to review the key components of branding before creating a digital brand strategy. The components of branding for a business include brand goals, target audience, competitor analysis, and brand recognition to the public. Furthermore, digital marketing is strategically designed to include a content strategy based on platforms, digital asset creation processes, social media engagement processes, audit and implementation processes, paid advertising processes, and analytical reporting processes.



Fig. 3. Digital branding process

Based on Figure 3, the most important strategy in increasing customer loyalty is to ensure that the brand focuses its resources and energy on retaining the best customers. Loyal customers are more familiar with their favorite brands and have a greater desire to try and explore recommendations and new products offered.

### 3.3 Product Online Marketing and Digital Branding Strategies in the Covid-19 Era

The Covid-19 has led to the rapid development of digitalization in the marketing sector. The business of online buying and selling is one solution in the midst of the limitations of people visiting shopping centers. The switch to online marketing is also one of the determining aspects whether or not a product is able to survive in the midst of this pandemic.

The following are online marketing and digital branding strategies that can be conducted during the Covid-19:

a) Determining market segmentation

Market segmentation in question is a market activity to divide or classify consumers according to their respective groups. By implementing market segmentation, marketing activities will be more targeted so that the resources used will be more effective and efficient. Determining the target consumers is remarkably important to make sales. Before doing marketing, business actors must clearly target their potential customers so that businesses can remain productive during the pandemic. For instance, identifying whether or not the food products can be consumed by all ages.

b) Using the appropriate digital media

Several types of media are recurrently used, namely:

- 1) Website/Blog: It is a media page. Apart from conveying information, it can also be used for buying and selling activities and marketing of certain products and services. The website is created by the owner with free access to design and fill in any content needed.
- 2) Marketplace: It is a site provided as a safe place to buy and sell. All sellers can create online stores in the marketplace and buyers can freely make transactions with the system determined by the marketplace. Examples of marketplaces commonly used are Lazada, Shopee, Tokopedia, Bukalapak, and so forth.
- 3) Social Media: It is a media for gathering, interacting, socializing online but can also be used as a business account. Business actors should not use personal account to offer products, but they should use special business account to sell so that consumers are more convinced and trust the business actors. Selling through social media does not require large costs because it only relies on internet quota. Examples of social media commonly used include Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, WhatsApp, Telegram, Tiktok, and so on.
- 4) Digital Advertising: It is a marketing activity carried out by business actors using internet digital media advertising with the aim of reaching potential customers on target with a wide and fast reach. Digital advertising has a lower cost compared to conventional because it can be arranged based on marketing targets, time, location and media. By using digital-based advertising such as Youtube Ads, Facebook Ads, Instagram Ads and Google Ads, the effectiveness of increasing brand awareness to reach a wider range of consumers could be achieved.

c) Creating a logo

A logo is a visual identity of a brand that helps a business/brand be more easily recognized and remembered. In addition, logo is the main identity on all platforms and marketing channels, so creating a logo that reflects the personality and the soul of a brand is important.

d) Making attractive promotions

Promotion is a one-way communication medium between service providers or business actors with prospective consumers, so that business actors should demonstrate more of their product images to get known by the wider community. Some examples of attractive promotions that can be carried out by business actors during the Covid-19 are discounts, giveaways, and buy one get one free program.

e) Ensuring product safety

Product safety is crucial during this pandemic. Product safety certification and certain standards (e.g. halal labels for food) will make consumers more confident in buying the

products. If necessary, business actors can provide an overview or information on how the product safety and guarantees have been carried out, especially to minimize the transmission of Covid-19 to consumers.

f) Building consumer database

Based on the activities of using internet marketing and buying and selling, business actors can find out the consumer's cellphone number, email, and social media account. Through this information, business actors can offer various kinds of programs or new products to the consumers.

### 3.4 SWOT Analysis

**Table 1.** SWOT Analysis

<b>IFAS (Internal)</b>	Strength (S)	Weaknesses (W)
	a) 24 hour access b) Not constrained by distance c) Easy for business actors to offer information	a) Technology dependency b) Security issues c) Privacy issues d) Price transparency
	<b>EFAS (External)</b>	
Opportunity (O)	SO Strategy	WO Strategy
a) Consumers easily get information b) Low operating costs	a) A brand is to be able to survive in the midst of the covid-19 by optimizing technology as a means of communication with its target consumers.	a) Business actors can provide an overview or information on how the product safety and guarantees have been carried out, especially to minimize the transmission of Covid-19 to consumers.
Threats (T)	ST Strategy	WT Strategy
a) Technology is not evenly distributed in Indonesia b) Global competition	a) Information is quickly and easily accessible to the public as a competitive strategy at the global level.	a) Equitable distribution of communication technology and social media in product marketing and market segmentation

As can be seen from the SWOT matrix above, the strategies of a brand to survive in the midst of the Covid-19 are through the use of information technology and online media communication to introduce products and by knowing the audience well to precisely identify the habits and behaviors shown by customers in the online world.

### 3.5 Acknowledgements

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