



The Implementation of Customer Engagement Strategies through Social Media in SMEs

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ARTICLE INFO

Article History

Received : 07.11.2024

Revised : 03.12.2024

Accepted : 05.12.2024

Article Type: Research
Article

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ABSTRACT

Customer engagement strategy emphasizes marketing activities to build good relationships with customers, with the aim of increasing customer loyalty, satisfaction, and retention. customer engagement can be improved through social media. The activity partner is engaged in the business of making songket cloth, as well as cracker snacks, located in Jambi. This activity aims to assist partners in increasing knowledge about customer engagement through social media. The activity method is carried out with training related to understanding customer engagement, social media, how partners relate to customers online, how partners can build good relationships with customers so that later it will have an impact on increasing sales. This strategy also helps partners increase customer loyalty and open a wider market for the business being carried out, training is carried out online using the zoom application. Through this activity, it is hoped that it can increase partners' knowledge in building long-term relationships with customers. The output of the activity is in the form of publications to journals and HKI (Intellectual Property Rights).

Keywords: Customer Engagement, Social Media, SMEs, Training

1. Introduction

Customer engagement is a relationship between customers and a particular object or product based on the level of need and interest that can foster a sense of attachment and feasibility of the performance of the object or product. The concept of consumer 'engagement' has been conceptualized to explain consumers' interactive relationships with media channels or brands (Hollebeek et al., 2014). Brodie et al. (2011) define 'customer engagement' as "a psychological state that occurs based on the customer's interactive and creative experience with the focal agent/object (e.g. media)." In an era where online and mobile media are increasingly important in customers' lives, it is important to understand how experiences in these media lead to high customer engagement and in turn generate better business outcomes for companies. Customer engagement in this study is conceptualized as something that arises from a customer's experience (Calder et al., 2013) while browsing a shopping app on a mobile device.

E-commerce is one of the digital marketing advances experienced by almost everyone today (Irawati & Prasetyo, 2021). E-commerce comes from the development of buying and selling transactions that make it easier for writers to do business online with electronic devices such as cellphones, iPads, computers and others that have internet access (Chandra et al., 2019; Ramli, 2017). Merchants can conduct the buying and selling process directly online in the process of buying and selling goods and services but also about how to serve customers. Services that satisfy consumers will build a bond also known as Customer Engagement. Marketing through social media in the digital era is a strategy that is formed by using social media platforms and usually can also use certain sites or advertisements on social media in a paid or unpaid manner. It aims to increase

customer engagement in building businesses in this digital era, so that it can generate benefits not only in the economic sector that supports the business but in terms of owners, employees and customers themselves.

The virtual world has replaced real-world social relationships and created online communities that connect people around the world (Alalwan et al., 2017). From a business perspective, social media platforms enable interaction between customers and companies, building relationships and developing experiences that promote purchasing decisions. Customer engagement is a process that arises from a combination of calculated commitment followed by the development of trust, involvement, and finally emotional commitment. Customer engagement is very important for companies because it creates a close relationship between consumers and companies, there by influencing purchasing decisions (Nurdiansyah et al., 2020).

One of the 3 pillars of customer engagement according to Time, Inc (in Strauss & Frost (2012)) is engagement marketing activities. Engagement Marketing Activities are things used to attract audiences to media through content. Engagement marketing activities help customers build personal associations with brands, such as when customers can customize their products, comment on posts on social media, and share these posts with their friends.

The partner of the activity is named Cek Mila, who started her business through handicrafts, such as songket cloth and shawls. The business began in 2013 until now. The beginning of this business started from Cek Mila's passion in the art of making songket cloth in her hometown, Jambi. In addition, Jambi is one of the areas that has a large income through the sale of songket cloth. In running her business for many years, she has gone through various ups and downs as an entrepreneur in Jambi, then the business expanded to cracker food. The photos of the products sold by partners are:



Figure 1. Partner's Product

In an era where online and mobile media are increasingly important in customers' lives, it is important to understand how experiences in these media lead to high customer engagement and in turn generate better business results for the Company. Based on observations to partners. Partners have not maximized their understanding of customer engagement through social media in today's digital era.

2. Methodology

The method presented in the digital era with social media as the main key in partner problems is divided into 3, namely:

a) Planning Stage

Planning what business to observe and when it is found, then looking for a problem or obstacle in the business which includes social media in the digital era with discussions, questions and answers and interviews with these partners until they meet the right solution.

b) Execution Stage

Implementing solutions to problems or obstacles experienced by business owners, so that their business can develop and survive in terms of marketing in the digital era by using social media that has an important capacity. This can start from compiling methods, performing or executing methods and preparing all the needs

needed in the marketing stage using existing social media and other supporting facilities that are deepest in various kinds of social media, for example, such as increasing business advertisements so that they can be seen and attract more customers, creating websites and digital catalogs so that customers can more easily see from a distance.

c) Final Stage

Evaluate and play an important role in whether the method or solution provided is the best in assessing the success of overcoming these obstacles or problems. With the preparation of reports made in papers accompanied by methods of problems and solutions provided, which are taken in various articles and thoughts of the implementers and are the responsibility of the implementers about all related reports.

3. Results and Discussion

The history of Cek Mila's business started from selling songket cloth in 2013 and until now in 2021 it is still running very well. This songket cloth business stems from Cek Mila's family who likes to make songket cloth and indeed in the Jambi village the biggest livelihood is the songket cloth seller. Cek Mila herself was once cheated by a friend from her area, her friend brought 3 pieces of songket cloth from Cek Mila and it turned out that her friend had moved house and could no longer be traced, therefore Cek Mila herself participated in stocking songket and looking for a definite buyer. The songket cloth that Cek Mila makes is different from the songket cloth on the market because Cek Mila's own songket cloth is made from original silk cloth whose color will not change for years while what is sold by the public in general is songket cloth made from silk cloth which can change color and cannot last for years. Examples of products marketed are:



Figure 2. Partner's Products

3.1. Model of Science and Technology (IPTEK) Transferred to Partners

The activities carried out are related to implementing strategies and solutions to develop and maintain business operations through marketing in the digital era using social media, which is key to customer engagement. Customer engagement is a strategy that describes the level of involvement and enthusiasm between customers and businesses of interest. The goal is to create and foster loyalty to promote the business by effectively using social media in the digital era. Several methods that can be used:

- a) Personalized Communication: Entrepreneurs provide a good response by using personalized communication so that customers show desire for a particular brand, so that a good relationship can be created between customers and entrepreneurs. It can be through personalized emails, social media posts and marketing campaigns that are tailored to the needs and desires of customers by adjusting the entrepreneur's capabilities.
- b) Social Media Engagement: Using social media as the main tool to build customer engagement. That way, companies can interact with customers, answer questions and share interesting content as an effective marketing tool. Social media itself can be used to collect feedback and information from customers.
- c) Loyalty Program: An effective way to incentivize customers to continue to have a passion for the company. Small things like discounts, free shipping, free souvenirs and exclusive access can encourage customer intentions.
- d) Customer Service: A brand that prioritizes customer service and responds to inquiries after problems that arise after a transaction can build trust and loyalty with their customers.

4. Conclusion

Through the implementation of the activity, the following conclusions were obtained: Training on providing customer engagement was delivered through PPT presentations. Training and socialization conducted online through the Zoom platform runs smoothly. Partners show high enthusiasm in receiving the material and understanding the material that has been delivered. They were also involved in discussion sessions and Q&A sessions with activity implementers during the socialization process.

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