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Promotion Mix Strategy of MSME Om Arab in Increasing Sales of Food Products

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Abstract

This study aims to find out how to implement a promotion mix strategy to increase sales of Om Arab MSMEs. The data analysis technique used in this research is inductive qualitative data. Through interviews, field notes, and documentation, data were collected systematically. The results indicate that ‘Om Arab’ has implemented the promotion mix strategy properly and correctly. However, there are still some parts, such as advertising, direct selling and sales promotion that need to be improved to increase store sales. Suggestions for improvements that can be made by ‘Om Arab’ are maintaining Instagram accounts, creating sales promotions that are more relevant to their customers and avoiding unplanned or sudden promotions.

Keywords: Promotion, Promotion Mix Strategy, MSEM, Marketing, Increasing Sales

INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, MSMEs play an important role in the Indonesian economy. Based on data released by the Ministry of Cooperatives and SMEs in 2019, it shows that there are 65.4 million MSMEs in Indonesia. This number managed to absorb 123.3 thousand workers. With a contribution of 60.5% to national GDP. MSMEs in Indonesia have proven to have enormous potential to continue to be developed and increase their role in the economy.

However, in today's digital era, culinary MSMEs are often faced with challenges in business competition with more modern and large culinary businesses. Intense competition, changes in consumer behavior, and technological developments require MSMEs to continue to innovate and adapt. One of the important keys that

affects the survival of MSMEs is the marketing strategy implemented. With the rapid development of technology today, opportunities for marketing are increasingly widespread. Social media platforms, e-commerce, and various other digital tools allow MSMEs to reach a wider target market and build brand awareness.

‘Om Arab’ have high potential in sales in 2021-2022. This is because the price is relatively cheap compared to other Middle Eastern cuisine shops and the location of the outlet is also strategic, which is near 2 universities. This makes ‘Om Arab’ require an evaluation of its promotional strategy, because despite these advantages, the promotional strategy used by ‘Om Arab’ still relies heavily on buyers who come to visit the outlet. Therefore, this

encouraged researchers to conduct this research. This study aims to find out how to implement a promotion mix strategy to increase sales of 'Om Arab'.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Promotion Definition and Purpose

Promotion is a more specific concept regarding communication activities to promote a product or service to the market. Promotion is an effort made by the seller to introduce products or services to potential consumers and persuade them to buy these products or services (Buchari Alma and Ratih Hurriyati in Uluwiyah, 2022: 2). Meanwhile, according to Kotler (1983: 59), promotions are various activities carried out by companies to communicate the benefits of their products and to convince target consumers to buy them.

The purpose of promotion according to Mulyana (2019), is to help achieve marketing goals and company goals at large by providing information, increasing sales, stabilizing sales, positioning products and shaping product images. The ultimate goal of promotion is for someone to buy a product or service offered by the company.

Promotion Mix

According to Kotler and Armstrong (2001: 111), the promotion mix is a special blend of advertising, personal selling, sales promotion and public relations that companies use to achieve their advertising and marketing objectives. The 5 main elements of the promotional mix are advertising (advertising), sales promotion (sales promotion), personal selling (personal selling), direct marketing (direct selling) and public relations (public relations). The promotion mix is one part of a broader marketing mix. The target is to build a marketing network that connects with consumers at every step of the purchase.

METHODOLOGY

The data analysis technique used in this research is inductive qualitative data. Through interviews, field notes, and documentation, data were collected systematically. Furthermore, the data was organized into categories and broken down into smaller units. The synthesis and patterning process was carried out to identify important points which were then selected and analyzed. The resulting conclusions are expected to be easy to understand. The theory of the promotion mix strategy of Om Arab MSMEs will be applied in this analysis to reach a conclusion.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This research was conducted on culinary MSMEs in Surabaya and specifically focused on evaluating the promotion mix strategy of Om Arab MSMEs. MSME "Om Arab" owned by Mr. Fahir Syraif has been established since 2020. Located on Gunung Anyar Street, Gunung Anyar District, Surabaya. The choice of this location is because the place is close to residential housing, offices and between two universities.

Result

1. Advertising

From the results of the interviews conducted, it was found that 'Om Arab' have carried out advertisements with the aim of brand awareness and also reminding customers of 'Om Arab'. The budget spent on making these advertisements is 30% of monthly income. Various media are used for promotion, including shopfront banners, Instagram, WhatsApp, as well as the Grab, Gojek and Shopee applications. From this effort, advertising on Grabfood succeeded in increasing turnover by 29%. However, unfortunately, other promotional media did not produce any results.

2. Sales Promotion

'Om Arab' run sales promotions with the main objective of increasing turnover. The media utilized include social media (Instagram and WhatsApp), e-commerce, and banners in physical stores. On e-commerce platforms, the type of promotion applied follows the program provided by the platform. Meanwhile, offline promotions are more varied. 'Om Arab' routinely change the type of promotion almost every week based on its success or failure, with references from other shops or restaurants as well as internet searches. Unlike the promotional strategies of other stores that may focus on less-selling menus, 'Om Arab' choose to create promotions with in-demand menus. They believe that promoting less popular menus has a higher failure rate than promoting menus that are already popular. Overall, all promotional efforts that have been made have succeeded in increasing turnover by 10%.

3. Personal Selling

'Om Arab' implement a personal selling strategy by monitoring the frequency of customer arrivals. This data is obtained through direct interaction and introductions with customers, where they are invited to chat and given contacts for further communication. These contacts not only serve as a means of offering promotions, but also to receive direct orders and convey important information related to 'Om Arab', such as closing schedules or participation in certain events.

4. Direct Selling

'Om Arab' implement direct marketing tailored to their selling locations. The main objective of this effort is to increase brand awareness among the surrounding community, which is expected to lead to increased sales. For online direct marketing, 'Om Arab' use digital posters with attractive designs that include discount information. These posters are then shared through social media, such as WhatsApp stories and Instagram stories. Meanwhile, offline direct marketing is done by distributing printed brochure.

The results of this direct marketing strategy show that offline marketing is successful in increasing brand awareness among students and local residents. In addition, this method also serves as a reminder for local people who have been customers of 'Om Arab' before. Unfortunately, online direct marketing did not yield any results.

5. Public Relations

'Om Arab' actively conducted public relations by participating in two bazaar events on the campus of Universitas Pembangunan Nasional "Veteran" East Java in 2024. They got information about these two events from their customers who are UPN students. After receiving the information, they immediately looked for more details about the event and developed a sales plan. Their sales method at this bazaar was different from usual; they did not cook on the spot, but instead cooked at the store and then delivered the cooked and ready-to-sell products to the bazaar location. However, the drawback of this method is the limited menu options that can be offered.

When participating in both events, 'Om Arab' notified their customers via WhatsApp. However, this notification was only addressed to customers who were still active UPN students, so customers who worked or students from other universities were not notified. The results of this public relations activity were quite successful; they managed to increase sales on that day and attract back old customers who did not know that 'Om Arab' had moved.

Unfortunately, from the interview results, they did not succeed in attracting new customers after participating in both events.

Discussion

1. Advertising

According to the researcher's analysis, the form of promotion in advertising at 'Om Arab' by installing banners in front of the store is appropriate, because this can help as a marker of the store's existence. Then for advertising on e-commerce platforms and social media is also appropriate. This has been supported by several studies, such as research conducted by Hartawan (2021), Dewi (2024) and Subagyo (2021) which state that there is a positive effect of advertising on social media and e-commerce. However, 'Om Arab' still have to pay attention to the maintenance aspect of Instagram accounts to increase the success of advertising on Instagram.

However, Om Arab's advertising is arguably less effective. This can be seen from the absence of a significant increase in turnover from all promotional media. In addition, the results of interviews with customers show that none of the customers have seen Om Arab's advertisements on social media. This can happen because both Om Arab's accounts are poorly maintained. On the @om_arab_1 account, the last post was on October 25, 2024, while on the @omarab.surabaya account on December 2, 2024. Meanwhile, in the current era, promotion on social media plays an important role in the success of a company. To increase advertising, 'Om Arab' can advertise on the Instagram platform after performing account maintenance.

2. Sales Promotion

According to the researcher's analysis, the type of promotion carried out by 'Om Arab' is appropriate, because many customers like this type of promotion. This is supported by several studies, such as research conducted by Hanafia (2023) and Wijaya (2020) that there is a positive effect of price bundling type promotions, although it is not high because it is determined by the type of product being bundled. Research conducted by Suwinovia (2022) states that there is a positive and significant influence between free gifts and product purchasing decisions. As for research conducted by Auli (2021) which states that discounts and free shipping promotions affect customer purchasing decisions. Apart from the type of promotion carried out, it must also be considered the type of product being promoted and the target of the promotion so that a promotion is successful.

The results of the promotions carried out have not yet had a significant profit impact. The majority of the increase in turnover comes from free shipping promotions, not from all types of promotions. This is because the promotion of 'Om Arab' is too oriented towards group purchases (two or more people). Meanwhile, according to the observations of researchers, it shows that the majority of Om Arab's customers are individuals. This condition makes the promotion irrelevant or less successful in reaching target customers. Therefore, it is recommended that 'Om Arab' implement sales promotions that target individual purchases, for example with discounts or distribution of product samples. A study conducted by Antunes (2022) entitled "The Effectiveness of Sales Promotion Techniques on the Millennial Consumers' Buying Behavior" reinforces the finding that millennials respond positively to various sales promotion techniques, especially those in the form of discounts and free samples.

Another thing that makes sales promotion in 'Om Arab' less effective is its unplanned and sudden nature. Researchers found, through interviews and observations, that the promotional messages carried out were made suddenly on that day and the validity period of the promotion was very short. This condition is supported by Kanwal's study (2025) entitled "The Dark Side of Unplanned Discount Promotions: Examining Its Negative Impact on Brand Image and Sales Performance with the Moderating Role of Perceived Brand Value". The study shows that unplanned promotions can have a negative impact because customers with high brand expectations can see them as inconsistent with brand identity. In addition, sudden discounts have the potential to create a perception of reduced quality or exclusivity. The end result is the erosion of consumer trust and loyalty, which makes it difficult to build long-term advocacy.

3. Personal Selling

According to the researcher's analysis, personal selling of 'Om Arab' is appropriate, because they are very active in explaining, promoting their products and providing information about 'Om Arab' to their customers. Not only that, giving their number to customers is also the right thing to increase sales. This is supported by several studies conducted by Julitawaty (2020), Hendra (2020) and Yanto (2020) which state that there is a positive and significant influence between personal selling and sales effectiveness.

4. Direct Selling

According to the researcher's analysis, the type of direct selling carried out by 'Om Arab' is appropriate. Doing direct selling offline and online can increase brand awareness higher than if you only do one of them. This is supported by several studies conducted by Kurniawa (2021), Salsabiila (2023) and Cindy (2025) which state that there is a positive and significant effect on product purchase interest. However, what is still not right and must be considered by 'Om Arab' is the offering of media accounts for the maintenance of their social media accounts, namely Instagram accounts. Even though they have an Instagram account, their account is less active and not very well maintained, so that the direct selling carried out is not maximized.

To increase the direct marketing of 'Om Arab', the main focus that needs to be addressed is the maintenance of social media accounts, especially Instagram. This account maintenance includes beautifying the appearance of feeds and regularly uploading content both feeds and reels. Instagram not only serves as a promotional medium, but is also effective for communicating and conveying information to customers. As for supporting research, namely a study conducted by Elvira (2022) with the title "The Effect of Social Media Marketing Instagram on MSME Culinary Purchasing Decisions" underlines several important points, namely content sharing and interaction (connecting) on social media partially influences purchasing decisions, consumer purchasing decisions are influenced by content content, information presented, taste reviews from influencers or celebrities, how MSMEs communicate with their followers, ease of purchase, and collaboration with accounts with a large following on Instagram and the content sharing variable has the most dominant influence, indicating that content sharing and interaction on MSME Instagram accounts have a huge impact on purchasing decisions.

5. Public Relations

According to researchers, the public relations actions of 'Om Arab' by participating in the bazaar at UPN "Veteran" East Java are the right actions. Because this can increase the brand awareness of 'Om

Arab' towards students who are also their target customers. This is also supported by research conducted by Daniel Joel Immanuel Kairupan and Olivia Ayu Yovanda (2021) with the title 'The influence of public relations, advertising, and word of mouth on brand awareness of MSME products: Case Study at X Cake and Bakery Shop' that there is a positive and significant influence between public relations activities and brand awareness.

A. Bits and Pieces together

In this approach combine all your researched information in form of a journal or research paper. In this researcher can take the reference of already accomplished work as a starting building block of its paper.

Jump Start

This approach works the best in guidance of fellow researchers. In this the authors continuously receives or asks inputs from their fellows. It enriches the information pool of your paper with expert comments or up gradations. And the researcher feels confident about their work and takes a jump to start the paper writing in a journal.

CONCLUSION

'Om Arab' has implemented the promotion mix strategy properly and correctly. However, there are still some parts, such as advertising, direct selling and sales promotion that need to be improved to increase store sales. Suggestions for improvements that can be made by 'Om Arab' are maintaining Instagram accounts, creating sales promotions that are more relevant to their customers and avoiding unplanned or sudden promotions.

Despite these findings, this study has certain limitations. First, although the promotion mix strategy has been outlined (advertising, sales promotion, personal selling, direct selling, and public relations), there is no quantitative analysis or clear qualitative indicators to assess the effectiveness of each component. Second, it was not explained how the assessment of "success" or "failure" was done objectively. For future research, researchers can expand and clarify the analysis of each promotion mix component by adding qualitative or semi-quantitative assessments and conducting comparative studies.

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