



Utilization of Digital Technology in Marketing Education Services at Kusuma Bangsa High School Palembang

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ABSTRACT

This research discusses the utilization of digital technology in the context of marketing educational services at Kusuma Bangsa High School Palembang. This research is a type of qualitative research with descriptive characteristics that explores various qualitative aspects in understanding marketing strategies involving digital technology. In this study, data were obtained through interviews, observations, and documentation from various parties, including the principal, vice principal for student affairs, multimedia experts, and other resource persons who have related information. Data analysis was conducted through data reduction, data presentation, and data verification. To ensure data validity, the research used data triangulation, which includes triangulation of sources, methods and techniques. The results showed that the utilization of digital technology is an important key to the existence of educational institutions in the digital era. Kusuma Bangsa High School Palembang implements an education services marketing strategy through various digital platforms, with content curation and public relations team training. The utilization of digital technology in marketing education services at Kusuma Bangsa High School Palembang has succeeded in maintaining its existence and attracting public interest. This research provides in-depth information about the importance of digital technology in marketing education services and how educational institutions can utilize it effectively. The implications of this research are expected to be useful for other educational institutions that want to improve marketing efforts through digital technology.

Keywords: *Digital Age, Digital Technology, Educational Services*

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INTRODUCTION

The development of science and technology certainly cannot be denied by every institution including educational institutions. Education is a source of the development of science and technology, to improve the quality of education and the discovery of a scientist who has carried out education and made innovations to develop it. Over time, technology has become a necessity in the field of education, both from the need to manage data, learning and even to one of the media for marketing educational services. Globally,

our world is experiencing the rapid development of science and technology, especially in the world of digital technology and information (Asmani, 2011).

Digital technology is an information technology that prioritizes computer/digital activities over human labor (Triaji, 2017). Digital technology as a medium for marketing educational services is one of the things that is not easy to do for every educational institution, especially for educational institutions that are basically backward from information and communication on social media. Currently, Indonesia has implemented all learning to the implementation of exams using a system of digital technology. To face these challenges, at that time educational institutions had to evolve from not understanding digital technology to having to understand it and also practice it daily to support learning and education in educational institutions.

With more advanced education, human value will increase because having knowledge and good attitudes and skills will make humans more developed in today's digital age (Sarifudin & Maya, 2019). The increasing development of knowledge, attitudes and skills possessed by humans cannot be felt in a short period of time but humans need a process of adapting which requires time to process long enough because it involves many kinds of things in life.

The transition process from offline to online learning becomes an obstacle and constraint from students and teachers in several educational institutions. Limitations in using digital technology and accessing digital learning. Educational institutions need to keep up with developments and changes in the times, so that students and teachers are able to understand the way learning is currently developing (Fitrianna & Aurinawati, 2020). Educators also need to understand how to manage educational institutions digitally, especially in the field of marketing to be more innovative and creative.

Market expansion to attract new customers is certainly necessary to increase the number of students who can carry out learning in an educational institution, but market expansion does not need to be done by walking far and distributing brochures in the area, but market expansion can be carried out using digital technology. Marketing education services involves offering education services that cover everything from formal education such as schools and colleges, to training and skills courses. In this ever-changing and diverse environment, educational institutions need to understand their market needs and develop effective marketing to win the hearts and minds of prospective students and parents.

The importance of marketing educational services lies not only in increasing the number of applicants or new students, but also in building a positive image of educational institutions, retaining existing students, and creating long-term relationships with customers (Erwin, 2015). In this effort, educational institutions are required to understand consumer behavior, identify competitive advantages, and design marketing strategies that are relevant to the vision, mission, and values of the educational institution. To face these challenges, at that time educational institutions had to evolve from not understanding digital technology to understanding it and also practicing it daily to support learning and education in educational institutions.

In the past, marketing education services was often limited to conventional methods such as advertisements in local newspapers, pamphlets or word of mouth. However, in recent years, technology has dramatically changed the landscape of marketing education services. The internet, social media, online learning platforms, and various smart devices have opened doors to connect educational institutions with prospective students around the world.

Conventional methods of marketing educational services include traditional strategies such as brochures, print advertisements, education fairs and promotion through local media (Syukur, 2021). While these strategies are still widely used, they face a number of shortcomings that educational institutions need to be aware of. First, in today's digital age, conventional methods are often less responsive to the needs of consumers who are increasingly connected and seeking information online. The limitations in reaching a wider audience, especially outside geographical areas, are also an obstacle. Secondly, the costs involved in conventional marketing campaigns can be a significant burden for educational institutions, especially those with limited budgets. Printing brochures, placing print advertisements or participating in education fairs require substantial investment, and the results cannot always be accurately measured.

In the era of globalization and rapid technological advances, education continues to develop and transform. Educational institutions need to keep up with the times so that students and teachers can understand the way learning is currently developing (Fitrianna & Aurinawati, 2020; Firmansyah, Amma, & Mudawamah, 2023; Firmansyah, 2022). The utilization of digital technology not only allows educational institutions to reach a wider audience, but also provides tools to measure and understand the behavior of prospective students. Data analytics and artificial intelligence help educational institutions identify effective marketing trends and adapt them to the needs of a rapidly changing market.

In addition, marketing education services must also accommodate the development of information and communication technology. With the internet and social media, educational institutions have access to a global market and can develop efficient digital marketing strategies. Engaging educational content, responsive websites, and an active presence on social media platforms are key in reaching prospective students and parents (Syukur, 2021). Market expansion to attract new customers certainly needs to be carried out to increase the number of students who can carry out learning at an educational institution, but market expansion does not need to be done by walking far and distributing brochures in the area, but market expansion can be carried out using digital technology which is currently developing so rapidly. This is proven by the results of a survey of digital technology users such as in Indonesia in 2019-2020 according to APJII (Association of Indonesian Internet Service Providers) reaching 196.7 million users with a penetration of 73.3 percent of Indonesia's total population of around 266.9 million (Salendar, 2023).

The use of digital technology is not as difficult as using tools that still use manual systems, even the use of digital technology is easier to do something and is faster, more practical, and saves energy. The world of education seems to never stop to keep up with

all the changes and updates in digital technology that are currently developing, even in the expansion of marketing educational services in several educational institutions digital technology has become one of the effective and efficient tools to improve the quality of marketing educational services (Buchari & Ratih, 2019).

Through research and preliminary studies that have been carried out at Kusuma Bangsa High School Palembang together with one of the managers, namely multimedia experts, that the marketing of educational services currently used for market expansion has used website-based digital technology and also social media which is currently used by most Indonesians, namely digital marketing through Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, and website platforms. However, there are several things that are an obstacle for these educational institutions, namely in managing social media and having limited ideas and innovations to improve it, especially the education staff who manage social media is quite limited and not much is one of the problems that occur today. This is as expressed by (Sugeng, 2022), (Fajar Sri Utami, Mudofir, 2022), (Hakim, 2021) which reveals the urgency of marketing educational services using digital technology. However, these studies have not comprehensively examined marketing strategies using digital technology. This means there is an opportunity to conduct more in-depth and complete research on this topic to fill the knowledge gaps that exist in the literature. It also shows the need for further research to understand more deeply the use of digital technology in marketing education services.

In this regard, based on an interview with one of the education personnel, Kusuma Bangsa High School Palembang has several obstacles faced, namely the lack of innovation and development of ideas for marketing educational services through digital media, especially education personnel in some schools are people who do not understand digital technology to the fullest. Based on the results of interviews with managers at Kusuma Bangsa High School Palembang, there are several education personnel at the institution who have not been able to manage and adopt the use of digital technology to the fullest because they have not been able to transform from print media to digital media for a short period of time. There is a need for understanding and regular training for learning and even to expand the market for educational services through digital technology. The research objective is to describe the digital technology utilization strategy used by Kusuma Bangsa High School Palembang in marketing educational services.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research uses qualitative methodology to describe the phenomena that occur in the field in depth (Sugiyono, 2018). Qualitative research describes a method that emphasizes interpretation and in-depth understanding of various aspects of the problem being investigated. This research is usually conducted in a natural context with the aim of absorbing and interpreting phenomena based on the meaning given by the individuals involved. Educational research methods can be defined as a scientific approach to collecting valid data with the intention of discovering, developing, and presenting certain

knowledge. This knowledge can later be used to understand, overcome, and predict problems that arise in the field of education (Sugiyono, 2022).

The characteristics in this study use the theory of Bogdan and Biklen (1982) which is quoted by Albi Anggito, namely using more descriptive qualitative characteristics (Anggito & Setiawan, 2018). In collecting data, there are four types of techniques used, namely observation, interviews, record keeping, and triangulation (a combination of several methods). Data were collected through three methods, namely observation, interviews, and documentation. According to Miles and Hubberman, there are three steps in the analysis process, namely data reduction, presentation and conclusion drawing (Huberman, 2014). Data reduction involves shrinking raw data into a more organized form. Data presentation includes writing text that expands the understanding of the phenomenon under study. Meanwhile, conclusion drawing/verification in this study was carried out to answer the formulation of research problems. The data analysis process involves data triangulation, where data from various sources are confirmed to strengthen the validity of the research results. Data validity was checked using triangulation of techniques and sources.

The objectives of this type of qualitative research can vary depending on the situation and the research subject. In general, qualitative research aims to explore the meanings, values, and experiences of individuals or groups related to the phenomenon under investigation. This includes understanding the feelings, thoughts, and behaviors of individuals in a particular context. Furthermore, the aim of this research is to provide an in-depth and comprehensive description of the phenomenon under study. This involves a more complete understanding of the context, variables and other relevant aspects. This research usually focuses on a specific context and has a limited degree of generalization. In essence, the goal is to understand the deeper aspects of a particular context rather than trying to produce generally applicable generalizations. With this qualitative research, the research aims to provide a realistic picture of the situation in schools in marketing educational services by utilizing digital technology. The results of the research are expected to provide a deeper understanding of the phenomenon under study.

This research discusses the Utilization of Digital Technology in Marketing Educational Services at Kusuma Bangsa High School Palembang, the type of research used is qualitative, with data collection techniques through interviews, observation and documentation. In analyzing the data, researchers started from data collection, continued with data presentation and ended with data verification. The time of this research began with initial observations on November 27, 2022, then continued with other data collection techniques, namely interviews, observation and documentation until March 2023. Respondents who became partners were the principal, vice principal for student affairs, multimedia experts, as well as other respondents who could provide information related to this research.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In this study, researchers will analyze the utilization of educational services marketing through digital technology that has been implemented by Kusuma Bangsa High School Palembang. In the era of rapidly developing technology and information, many educational institutions are still lagging behind in marketing educational services and still using old methods, causing a decrease in students and even the closure of educational institutions. With the changes in new trends and other technological developments require adaptation in marketing educational services, marketing is the key to maintaining existence and presenting quality education, as well as a way to gain more students.

Based on the results of interviews with the head of Kusuma Bangsa High School Palembang, the school has utilized digital technology in marketing educational services. The school uses digital media such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and the school website to upload interesting content that promotes school activities. The marketing approach used is comprehensive, with good planning for every aspect of the activity.

The Vice Principal for Student Affairs of Kusuma Bangsa High School Palembang added that the importance of content curation in social media is a must in educational competition in this era. They publicize student activities, achievements, and focus on school excellence. Through this strategy, the school's image is strengthened, and the community comes to believe in students' abilities in religious and academic aspects. By utilizing various digital media platforms such as Website, Facebook, Instagram, and Youtube. In line with this, through quality content on platforms such as Instagram, Facebook and YouTube, the school has succeeded in building their identity in the eyes of the digital community.

According to one multimedia expert, in an ever-changing era with digital technology that is as uncertain and ever-changing as a living organism, managing the digital space is a challenge that demands adaptability and ever-evolving skills. Kusuma Bangsa High School Palembang has successfully utilized digital media as an important tool in their marketing and communication. One of the main media used is their website, which is regularly updated with enrollment information and student activities. This digital media management not only involves the PR team in managing the website and social media, but also involves collaboration with communities that support the development and maintenance of their digital platforms. This is done to ensure that Kusuma Bangsa High School Palembang remains competitive and relevant in the ever-changing digital era, especially in marketing educational services.

Based on the results of an interview with one of the multimedia experts at Kusuma Bangsa High School Palembang, in an effort to improve the quality of content in digital media, the public relations team regularly participates in various trainings. The training not only focuses on formal certificates, but also on developing individual skills and writing styles in copywriting for social media. He added, that "Effective training is training that can develop our creativity and writing skills, which we obtain through participation in various seminars and communities that support media management."

Digital media management is not only related to individual skills, but also to equipment updates that support the quality of content and concepts that can attract the attention of the audience. Kusuma Bangsa Palembang High School understands the importance of maintaining equipment and continuously innovating on how they present information and content to their audience. With today's technology, schools must be able to manage digital media as part of marketing the educational services of Kusuma Bangsa Palembang High School. Based on the results of researcher observations in January 2023 that with their commitment to continue to develop and adapt to the development of digital technology, Kusuma Bangsa Palembang High School has succeeded in utilizing digital media as an effective tool in marketing their educational services. In this ever-changing world, the ability to innovate and adapt is the key to success in maintaining existence and relevance.

In an interview with the vice principal for student affairs, the involvement of students in social media content creation is one of the important factors that support the smooth process of social media updates. It allows the publication to run according to a predetermined strategy, as students can provide first-hand insights into what is of interest to them and their peers. For the number of new students at Kusuma Bangsa High School Palembang based on the documentation that researchers received that there has been a significant increase in the number of students in recent years, indicating that they have managed to maintain their existence as an educational institution that is in demand by the community.

The principal of Kusuma Bangsa High School Palembang also said the importance of having adequate and motivated human resources in facing the challenges of digitalization. Motivation to learn and willingness to enrich knowledge in the context of digitalization are very important supporting factors. Attracting as many students as possible is an indicator of the success of marketing education services at Kusuma Bangsa High School Palembang, in marketing of course digital technology is a good option in achieving it all.

Based on the description above, the utilization of digital technology in marketing educational services has become one of the important factors in increasing the existence of educational institutions in today's digital era. Kusuma Bangsa High School Palembang has shown how the right digital approach and strategy can help schools in expanding their reach to the wider community and strengthening their position in the world of education. Digital marketing refers to marketing activities that use digital platforms and the internet to communicate promotional messages to targeted audiences. This change has a significant impact on educational institutions and companies that depend on marketing through digital platforms (Sarifudin & Maya, 2019). According to Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, there are five key aspects in digital marketing, namely: digital marketing strategy, search engine optimization (SEO), paid advertising (PPC), social media marketing, and digital analytics (Erwin, Ardyan, Ilyas, Ariasih, Nawir, Sovianti, & Munizu, 2023).

Digital technology adaptation in education refers to the ability of an educational institution to adopt and utilize digital technology to meet its needs and achieve its goals. According to Rogers in his book 'Diffusion of Innovations', the acceptance of new technology by organizations is influenced by factors such as relative advantage, suitability, complexity, trial and error, and observability (Rogers, Singhal, & Quinlan, 2008).

In the era of rapidly evolving technology and information (Syamsuar, & Reflianto, 2018), educational institutions around the world face major challenges in marketing their educational services (Denanti, Muhanif, & Januaripin, 2023). These challenges include intensifying competition, changing consumer trends, and the need to adapt to evolving digital technologies. Kusuma Bangsa High School Palembang is not standing still in the face of these challenges. Kusuma Bangsa High School Palembang has taken proactive steps to utilize digital technology in marketing their education services, and the results are exemplary. The utilization of digital technology in marketing education services has become increasingly important in recent years (Nurbawani, 2021). Many educational institutions still rely on traditional marketing methods, which are often not effective enough in reaching a wider audience, especially the younger generation audience who are more accustomed to technology (Wahyudi, 2022). In this context, marketing education services through digital technology is not only an option, but also a necessity to maintain existence and deliver quality education.

Kusuma Bangsa High School Palembang is one of the schools that has understood the importance of utilizing digital technology in marketing educational services. Kusuma Bangsa High School Palembang uses digital media in marketing education services such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and the school website. Through these digital media, the school uploads interesting and informative content that promotes school activities, student achievements and their strengths. The marketing approach used by Kusuma Bangsa High School Palembang is comprehensive, with good planning for every aspect of the activities, from content creation to publication scheduling. The implementation of an appropriate and comprehensive educational marketing strategy can increase public interest in the educational institution, enable the institution to compete with other institutions, and highlight the advantages that attract public interest (Zulfiah, Putri, & Fadhilah, 2023).

In the context of social media marketing, content curation is an essential key factor. Content curation refers to the process of selecting, editing, and presenting content to be published on social media platforms (Syafrial, 2023). Content curation involves several aspects, including the selection of the type of content to be uploaded (such as images, videos, articles, or info graphics), selection of topics relevant to the target audience, and editing to ensure the quality and appropriateness of the content (Kudri, Azhara, Agustiana, & Fahreza, 2020). This process allows educational institutions to maintain consistency in their brand and ensure that published content reflects the vision and values of the institution. The Vice Principal for Student Affairs at Kusuma Bangsa High School Palembang emphasized the importance of selecting and publishing relevant and interesting content. In the current education competition, where many schools compete for the

attention of prospective learners, publicizing student activities, achievements, and focusing on school excellence can strengthen the school's image and increase public confidence in students' ability in academics (Karsono., Purwanto., & Salman, 2021). Kusuma Bangsa High School Palembang understands this and utilizes various digital media platforms such as Website, Facebook, Instagram and Youtube to reach a diverse audience.

One of the keys to the success of Kusuma Bangsa Palembang High School in utilizing digital media is the ability to build an identity in the eyes of the digital community. Utilizing digital media allows schools to shape and strengthen their identity in the eyes of the wider community (Juledi, Munthe, Harahap, Nasutio, & Irmayani, 2023). With digital media, schools can present their values, vision, mission, and advantages effectively and attractively to their audiences. With the social media Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube, Kusuma Bangsa Palembang High School has succeeded in building a strong and positive image. Kusuma Bangsa Palembang High School is not only a school that follows trends, but also a pioneer in utilizing digital media as a tool to promote quality education.

Digital media management is not only about producing quality content, but also about managing digital space wisely (Maryani, Gemiharto, Sintaningrum, & Priyadharma, 2022). Kusuma Bangsa Palembang High School has successfully utilized digital media as an important tool in marketing and communicating with its audience. In managing digital media, Kusuma Bangsa Palembang High School not only involves the school's public relations team, but also collaboration with communities that support the development and maintenance of their digital platforms. This collaboration ensures that Kusuma Bangsa Palembang High School remains competitive and relevant in the ever-changing digital era.

Individual skill development within the PR team is also an important focus in digital media management. In an ever-changing era with uncertain digital technology, individual skills in writing copywriting for social media and keeping up with digital marketing trends are essential (Munandar, 2022). Kusuma Bangsa Palembang High School understands the need to hold regular training for the public relations team in managing the school's digital media. The training should not only focus on formal certificates, but also on developing individual skills and effective writing styles for social media. This is in line with Nugraha, Putu Virgananta and Virginiya (2023), that management training helps introduce digital marketing, online marketing strategies, use of social media, creating interesting content, measuring digital marketing results, and doing copywriting. In addition, Kusuma Bangsa Palembang High School also emphasizes maintaining equipment and continuing to innovate in how it presents information and content to audiences. In this ever-changing world, the ability to innovate and adapt is the key to success in maintaining existence and relevance (Tarsan, 2016; Zulfiah, Putri, & Fadhilah, 2023). As the results of a survey of digital technology users such as in Indonesia in 2019-2020 according to APJII (Association of Indonesian Internet Service Providers) reached 196.7 million users with a penetration of 73.3 percent of Indonesia's total population of around 266.9 million (Salendar, 2023; Firmansyah, Fatimah, Ali, Zulkipli, & Kanada, 2023).

By utilizing technology in marketing, Kusuma Bangsa High School Palembang has managed to maintain its existence as an educational institution that is in demand by the community. The number of new students that has continued to increase in recent years is proof that marketing educational services through digital technology has provided positive results. This is in line with the statement (Kuat & Kurniawan, 2023), that digital marketing can be used as a strategy to increase the interest of new student applicants and be able to compete with other schools in the neighborhood in the digital era. However, the importance of marketing educational services lies not only in increasing the number of registrants or new students, but also in building a positive image of educational institutions, retaining existing students, and creating long-term relationships with customers (Erwin, 2015).

The principal of Kusuma Bangsa High School Palembang also acknowledged the importance of having adequate and motivated human resources in facing the challenges of digitalization. As according to Halidin, facing the rapid development of technology today, teachers and school staff must make learning an endless journey. Teachers and staff are required to keep learning and updating their knowledge to keep up with technological developments (Halidin, 2022; Firmansyah, Ali, & Prasada, 2023). This is important so that they are not left behind in the use and utilization of technology in education, so as to provide relevant and effective education to generations of learners.

Marketing education services through digital technology is an important step that educational institutions must take in the era of ever-evolving technology and information. Kusuma Bangsa High School Palembang is a successful example of utilizing digital media to promote their education services. They have taken proactive steps in managing digital media, from quality content creation to collaboration with supporting communities. Individual skill development and student engagement have also been important factors in their success. Thus, this school has proven that marketing education services through digital technology is an effective step in maintaining existence and relevance in the ever-changing world of education.

This study has important theoretical implications, with the potential to contribute to the understanding of the utilization of digital technology in marketing educational services, as well as the development of educational services marketing theory. Practically, the results provide insights and guidance to school principals and staff in marketing education services using digital technology. In addition, this study provides valuable input to education policy makers to design policies that support the improvement of quality and marketing of education services in various schools and potentially increase new student enrollment.

CONCLUSION

The utilization of digital technology in marketing educational services is an important factor in increasing the existence of educational institutions in the digital era. The results of this study show that Kusuma Bangsa High School Palembang has successfully implemented an educational services marketing strategy through digital

media. Kusuma Bangsa High School Palembang is a successful example of using various digital platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram and YouTube, to reach diverse audiences. An effective strategy involves content curation, the establishment of a strong digital identity, as well as individual skills training within the PR team. With good digital media management, the school has managed to maintain its existence and attract public interest in the educational services they offer.

In addition, this research provides guidance for other educational institutions in utilizing digital technology for marketing their educational services, so that they can compete and remain relevant in the evolving digital era. The involvement of teachers and staff in continuing to learn and keep up with technology is also the key to success in maintaining the existence and relevance of educational institutions in the ever-changing world of education.

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