

Digital Marketing Strategies to Boost Brand Awareness at Depo Air Biru Surabaya

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ABSTRACT

Depo Air Biru has utilized various digital marketing channels effectively to achieve the goal of increasing their brand awareness. Some of the strategies implemented include the use of social media, SEO, content marketing, paid advertising, and collaboration with influencers. Through these strategies, Depo Air Biru succeeded in introducing their brand to a wider audience, increasing interaction with customers, and building a positive brand image. This research contributes to the understanding of effective digital marketing strategies to increase brand awareness, especially in the context of small to medium businesses such as the Air Biru Depo in Surabaya. Apart from that, the results of this research also show how obstacles in implementing digital marketing can be overcome with careful planning, the use of appropriate technology, and the active involvement of a competent team.

Keywords: Digital marketing; Brand awareness; Digital marketing strategy; Social-media; Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)

INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of digital technology has transformed the way businesses operate and market their products and services (Böttcher et al., 2023). One of the most prominent shifts is the widespread adoption of digital marketing as a primary strategy to reach consumers more effectively. This digital transformation is fueled by developments in hardware, software, and increasingly accessible internet connectivity, offering not only greater efficiency but also new opportunities that were once out of reach (Mauladi et al., 2022). Among its most profound impacts is the transformation of communication patterns. Social media, instant messaging applications, and internet-based platforms now allow individuals and organizations to interact rapidly and globally, driving innovation across sectors, including education, healthcare, manufacturing, and public services (Buana & Karawang, 2023).

Within the business sphere, digital technology has become a catalyst for both operational and marketing transformations. Companies now utilize tools such as big data, artificial intelligence, and analytics to better understand consumer behavior and make informed decisions. (Dwivedi et al., 2021) Digitalization empowers businesses of all sizes to reach broader markets more efficiently than traditional methods (Danuri, 2019). However, alongside these benefits, it also brings challenges such as data privacy concerns, cybersecurity risks, and digital inequality. Thus, adopting digital technology wisely and inclusively is essential in navigating this continuously evolving era.

Marketing strategies have also evolved dramatically in response to the digital age, with digital marketing emerging as a dominant approach (Adzhani et al., 2023). Through platforms such as social media, search engines, email, and online advertising, businesses can engage with their audiences more directly and personally. Digital marketing as achieving marketing objectives through digital technologies that connect companies with consumers (Hidayat et al., 2021). A key goal of digital marketing is to build and strengthen brand awareness—the degree to which consumers recognize and remember a brand (Dewi et al., 2022; Dwivedi et al., 2021). This awareness significantly influences consumer decisions and loyalty, making it

a vital aspect of business success in today's competitive environment.

Unlike traditional marketing, digital marketing extends beyond the internet to include mobile communications (SMS and MMS), display advertising, search engine marketing, and various other forms of digital media (Suwitho, 2022). It continuously evolves, reshaping longstanding business processes and accelerating innovation through technologies like artificial intelligence and cognitive computing. These tools not only enhance customer engagement but also transform behavioral patterns and experiences, offering significant strategic advantages across the value chain. As such, companies are increasingly relying on digital marketing to stay relevant and competitive in a rapidly changing market landscape.

Brand awareness, as noted by (Kotler et al., 2017), is critical in influencing consumer choices. It reflects how easily consumers can recognize and recall a brand, often determining whether a product is selected or overlooked. Digital marketing is especially effective in building this awareness by allowing businesses to tailor messages to target audiences through channels such as search engine optimization (SEO), social media marketing, email campaigns, and paid advertising. Despite its many advantages, implementing digital marketing is not without its challenges. Businesses often encounter difficulties related to limited knowledge, resource constraints, and rapidly shifting market trends. Overcoming these barriers requires strategic planning, appropriate technological tools, and active involvement from skilled teams.

In Indonesia, Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) are key contributors to the national economy, both in terms of GDP and employment generation. One such enterprise is *Depo Air Biru*, a refill drinking water service known for its commitment to quality and affordability. With a simple and accessible business model, the company has significant growth potential in the local market. However, like many MSMEs, it faces difficulties in building strong brand awareness due to limited marketing reach and intense competition. To address this, digital marketing presents a promising solution for *Depo Air Biru* to enhance its visibility and competitiveness.

By leveraging digital tools such as social media, SEO, and online advertising, *Depo Air Biru* can expand its reach and strengthen customer relationships. Its business approach, which embraces collaboration rather than competition, further reinforces brand loyalty. For example, many customers resell *Depo Air Biru*'s products as their own business ventures, and the company allows other depots to benefit from its brand without viewing them as threats. In addition, branding efforts are consistently executed through traditional media (magazines, newspapers, radio, and billboards) and local outlet promotions, with each outlet playing an active role in market development. Ultimately, this research aims to examine the implementation of digital marketing strategies in building brand awareness for *Depo Air Biru*, and to identify the obstacles encountered in the process. The outcomes are expected to provide practical insights for the company, contribute to academic discourse, and serve as a reference for future research.

In the contemporary business landscape, management is regarded as a dynamic process involving planning, organizing, leading, and controlling organizational resources to achieve goals efficiently and effectively (Robbins, 2017). Modern management demands innovation and adaptability in response to a rapidly changing environment, where technology and strategic decision-making play key roles in organizational success (Chen & Chen, 2021). Within this framework, marketing management emerges as a strategic activity aimed at creating value for both the company and the customer. Marketing management as the analysis, planning, implementation, and control of programs designed to bring about desirable exchanges with target markets (Huang & Li, 2018). Marketing, is not only about selling

products but also about developing strategies that build strong customer relationships and brand equity.

Digital marketing, as an evolution of traditional marketing, leverages various digital platforms such as websites, social media, email, and search engines to reach consumers more effectively (Kotler et al., 2017). Digital marketing involves the use of digital tools to create demand, optimize campaign performance, and embrace emerging trends like artificial intelligence and social media analytics (Suwitho, 2022). These strategies provide businesses with real-time insights into consumer behavior, allowing for cost-effective, scalable, and measurable campaigns. The benefits of digital marketing include increased cost-efficiency, personalized communication, global reach, and stronger customer interaction, all of which enhance an organization's marketing effectiveness and competitive positioning.

The primary objective of digital marketing is not only to promote products but also to strengthen brand awareness in an increasingly saturated market. Digital marketing helps brands increase visibility, foster direct interactions with consumers, and convert engagement into loyalty and sales (Kotler et al., 2017). Personalized content, interactive campaigns, and precise targeting all contribute to higher conversion rates. Furthermore, the integration of advanced analytics enables marketers to measure campaign performance and return on investment (ROI) accurately. Interactive social media campaigns can significantly enhance brand recognition, while storytelling and video content foster emotional connections (Dunne et al., 2010). These elements collectively make digital marketing an indispensable tool in building a strong and memorable brand identity.

Brand awareness itself refers to a consumer's ability to recognize or recall a brand as part of a particular product category (Adi et al., 2022; Dewi et al., 2022; Wu et al., 2020). The higher brand awareness creates a competitive edge, as consumers are more likely to choose brands they recognize and trust (Suwitho, 2022). Building brand awareness involves creating a strong identity through consistent marketing messages and positive consumer experiences. The key components in this process include relevant content, social media presence, influencer partnerships, and consistent brand visuals (Wirtz et al., 2021). Additionally, customer engagement, data-driven insights, and digital word-of-mouth (such as online reviews) play significant roles in embedding the brand into consumers' minds. Ultimately, brand awareness leads to greater customer trust, emotional connection, differentiation in the marketplace, and long-term business sustainability.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach using a case study method to gain an in-depth understanding of digital marketing strategy implementation and its impact on brand awareness at Depo Air Biru, Surabaya. The qualitative approach was chosen because it allows for a contextual and comprehensive exploration of the phenomenon, aligning with the study's aim to explore the lived experiences of both business practitioners and consumers in the digital landscape (Jaya, 2020). By focusing on a single subject, Depo Air Biru this case study enables a specific and thorough analysis of digital marketing practices within a local business context.

Data collection involved two main groups: the management team of Depo Air Biru (including the owner and marketing staff) and their loyal consumers. The researcher employed several methods to gather data, including in-depth interviews, observation of digital activities (such as social media interactions and marketing content), and documentation (such as campaign reports and promotional materials). These methods provided a well-rounded picture of the strategies implemented and how they were received by the consumers, both in terms of engagement and brand perception.

The collected data were analyzed using a thematic approach to identify emerging patterns related to the effectiveness of digital marketing strategies and their influence on increasing brand awareness. This study not only contributes theoretical insights but also offers practical guidance for other local businesses seeking to implement digital strategies effectively. It demonstrates that integrating social understanding, digital technology, and local context is essential in designing relevant and impactful marketing efforts.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Despite the significant potential of digital marketing strategies to boost brand awareness at Depo Air Biru in Surabaya, several challenges hinder the full effectiveness of these efforts. These challenges stem from both internal and external factors that influence the implementation and outcome of the strategies. One of the main obstacles is the **limitation of resources and budget**. Digital marketing requires significant investment in areas such as skilled personnel, paid advertisements, quality content production, and social media management. Without sufficient budget and resources, implementing a comprehensive and effective digital strategy becomes difficult, limiting the potential reach and impact of brand awareness campaigns.

Another significant challenge is the **intense competition in the digital market**. Surabaya, being a large city, is home to numerous competitors in the bottled water industry who are also leveraging digital marketing to promote their products. This crowded market makes it challenging for Depo Air Biru to stand out. If the content produced does not resonate with consumers or fail to distinguish the brand, it may struggle to build a strong presence in the competitive digital landscape. Additionally, **the lack of a deep understanding of digital marketing techniques** among some of Depo Air Biru's management can impede the effective implementation of strategies. Without a solid grasp of SEO, content marketing, and paid advertising, the company may not utilize digital channels to their full potential, leading to inefficiencies in its marketing efforts.

Other challenges include **changes in platform algorithms**, such as those on social media and search engines, which can disrupt the visibility and effectiveness of digital campaigns. These unpredictable changes can alter how content appears to audiences, forcing Depo Air Biru to adapt continuously. Furthermore, the **difficulty in increasing customer engagement** is another issue. While engaging audiences through digital platforms is a key goal of digital marketing, Depo Air Biru may face challenges in keeping customers actively involved due to irrelevant content or an inability to grab the attention of a wider audience. These obstacles, combined with **consumer trust issues** with online platforms and the **lack of adequate infrastructure** in certain areas of Surabaya, further complicate the digital marketing landscape for Depo Air Biru.

To address these challenges, several **solutions** have been identified in the study. Depo Air Biru has implemented three primary digital marketing strategies: **SEO (Search Engine Optimization)**, **content marketing**, and **social media** along with **paid advertisements**. SEO is crucial in making Depo Air Biru's website more discoverable by consumers, ensuring that they can easily find the brand online through relevant search terms. Content marketing has been used to share valuable information, such as articles and videos on hydration and clean water, which helps build the brand's authority in the industry. Social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok play a significant role in promoting the brand, engaging with customers, and increasing visibility through interactive and educational content. Lastly, paid advertisements on platforms like Google Ads and Facebook Ads allow the brand to reach a wider, targeted audience quickly, boosting visibility and generating leads. These strategies not only support digital marketing goals but also offer valuable insights into the effectiveness

of digital advertising, providing Depo Air Biru with the tools to adapt and improve their marketing efforts based on customer behavior and feedback.

CONCLUSIONS

This study concludes that the digital marketing strategies implemented by Depo Air Biru in Surabaya have significantly contributed to increasing the company's brand awareness. By utilizing social media, SEO, content marketing, paid advertising, and influencer collaborations, Depo Air Biru has successfully expanded its audience reach, enhanced customer interaction, and built a positive brand image. These strategies demonstrate that a well-planned digital approach can have a tangible impact on brand recognition, especially for small and medium-sized enterprises.

The findings of this research offer valuable insights into practical digital marketing applications in a local business context. The results may serve as a reference for similar businesses seeking to optimize digital strategies to build brand awareness. Another implication is that the success of digital marketing strategies depends not only on the platforms used but also on the readiness of human resources, the application of appropriate technologies, and continuous audience engagement. Therefore, digital marketing management must be strategic, measurable, and sustainable.

This study has several limitations, including its focus on a single business entity, Depo Air Biru which means the findings may not be fully representative of similar businesses in other regions or industries. Additionally, constraints in data sources and the study period limited the depth of analysis on the variables influencing digital marketing success. External factors such as changes in social media algorithms and the evolving behavior of digital consumers were also not comprehensively explored.

Future studies are encouraged to broaden their scope by involving multiple companies to obtain a more comprehensive perspective. Furthermore, adopting quantitative methods or a mixed-methods approach may enrich the analysis and provide stronger generalizability. Researchers are also advised to further investigate the impact of specific digital marketing channels on particular elements of brand awareness, and to consider emerging technologies and the continuously changing behavior of digital consumers

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