

Implementation of Digital Marketing Strategy with SOSTAC Model Approach in Increasing the Attractiveness of Prospective New Students

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Abstract. This study aims to implement a digital marketing strategy using the SOSTAC model approach in increasing the attractiveness of prospective new students. An excellent framework for digital marketing strategy planning is the SOSTAC Model, which stands for Situational Analysis, Objectives, Strategies, Tactics, Actions, and Control. The SOSTAC model can pinpoint the most important aspects of marketing analysis and planning that must be considered to achieve goals. Educational institutions are required to provide accurate and transparent information to prospective students and parents. This research uses a qualitative approach. The type of data in this study is a type of qualitative data in the form of interview results, and the type of data is primary data collected through interviews and observations. The analysis technique used triangulation technique. The results of this study show that the school has identified strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and threats faced in the school environment that continue to grow. This provides strong basis in the implementation of a good digital marketing strategy by adopting the analysis of the strategy set. The application of the 4P marketing mix (Place, Promotion, Price and People) helps to design an effective digital marketing strategy. Schools can also design, control and evaluate the implementation of digital marketing strategies through websites and social media (ig, and FB) effectively.

Keywords: Attractiveness, Digital Marketing Strategy, SOSTAC

1 Introduction

To get the most out of the implementation process, it is important to manage and conduct assessments. Customers or potential customers can get fast, clear, and accurate information with today's digital marketing tactics. As a result, company goals may be affected with the establishment of an e-marketing plan. [1]. An important part of the digital transformation strategy is digital marketing. New technologies, data-driven multi-channel strategies, and responsive and measurable marketing communications are the foundation of digital marketing, which distinguishes it from conventional forms of advertising [2]. To increase brand recognition, positive customer perception, and ultimately, revenue, businesses engage in online marketing and social media. [3]. One of the most effective methods to reach clients and maintain their interest is through digital marketing tools [4].

Some of the advantages of digital marketing include the following: sell, talk, serve, save, and attract. [5]. The selling part is about making more sales, both online and offline, while the talking part is about interacting with consumers and trying to find out what they need. Value is added through content and offers, costs are reduced through replacing old techniques, and the customer experience is enhanced, and the brand is extended online through service. One of the cornerstones of marketing strategy is market customization, known by the acronym STP (Segmentation, Targeting, and Positioning). Businesses can learn more about their customers' wants and needs by using market segmentation. After that, businesses position their goods to build a distinct and memorable brand, after which they choose the market categories and customers that can compete with [6]. [6]. When developing a successful marketing strategy, especially for services, it is important to keep in mind the seven components that make up the 7P marketing mix. By adding three more components related to services marketing, it expands the conventional marketing mix idea of the 4Ps: product, price, place, and promotion. [7]. The product or service itself, including its attributes, quality, brand, and design; this is the first component. Second, price, or the amount the buyer has to pay. (3) Location, including the method of distribution (both physical and digital). Fourth, advertising and sales promotion are examples of promotional actions in marketing.

(5) People, specifically company staff involved in marketing. (6) Systems, more specifically, the company's system for satisfying customer demand. (7) Tangible Evidence, in this case the tangible evidence of a service or product. Companies cannot create a comprehensive and successful marketing plan to meet client demand in a service marketing environment without these essential components.

Promotion is a huge element integrated marketing communication, which is critical to the success of modern marketing in a globalized world. With the rise of digital marketing, educational institutions can no longer ignore it. [8]. Advertising educational institutions online has become increasingly important in recent years. Higher education institutions can raise awareness of the high-quality, outstanding and successful graduates they produce through digital marketing. [9]. , information can be easily shared thanks to the digital age. A trustworthy and reliable marketing plan for educational services is necessary in the increasingly competitive education industry. Improving the quality of education is inseparable from marketing management in educational institutions, which includes conveying information to the public and potential new students about the procedures and achievements of the institution in an attractive and comprehensive manner. Higher education institutions engage in educational service activities that benefit students, foster teamwork towards common educational goals, and aim to meet student needs. The purpose of marketing is to ensure public or customer satisfaction with the service. Educational services are the result of schools and other learning institutions. If the community or prospective new students are informed, convinced of the factual reality, and interested, then the excellence of the school will be seen and appreciated [10]. [10].

An excellent framework for digital marketing strategy planning is SOSTAC Model, which stands for Situational Analysis, Objectives, Strategy, Tactics, Actions, and Control. [11]. Universitas Putera Batam applies the SOSTAC Model, so as to identify opportunities and challenges in the digital marketing environment [12], formulate clear objectives [13], develop relevant strategies [7], and measure the effectiveness of strategy implementation [14].

In the 1990s, SOSTAC was first proposed by [15] and then, in 2011, it developed rapidly. According to this research, the idea proposed by [15] and also referring to previous research [16] which is a convection startup that carries the concept of SOSTAC. In essence, SOSTAC is a step in the marketing strategy process. According to the SOSTAC approach, [17] [18] [19] can help businesspeople in developing and planning their marketing strategies to be closer, effective and efficient. The stages in this method according to [15] are Situation Analysis, Objectives, Strategy, Tactics, Action, and Control.

An accessible framework for strategic planning, the SOSTAC model (Situation Analysis, Objectives, Strategy, Tactics, Actions, and Control) can pinpoint the most important aspects of marketing analysis and corporate planning that must be considered to achieve goals. [20], It consists of six steps: (a) The company's environment can be better understood through the use of situation analysis.

Businesses can use this state analysis to inform the development of their digital marketing strategy. To achieve the goal, the situation analysis looks at the past, present, and future of the business. Applying SWOT Analysis is an excellent way to assess a situation. Organizations can benefit by conducting a SWOT analysis, which involves considering the positives and negatives within the company as well as the possibilities and risks outside the company. Opportunities and dangers are external influences, while strengths and weaknesses are internal. This helps businesses formulate plans that take advantage of possibilities while mitigating risks, by capitalizing on their strengths and addressing their weaknesses.

(b) The goals that the organization has set for itself. "5S" stands for "sell", "serve", "speak", "save", and "sizzle", which are common goals. (c) Strategy-This is an important part of this document because it contains the plan to achieve the goals. If you have a solid plan, achieving your goals will be much simpler. (d) The manner in which a company creates systems and tactics, which stem from the strategy it formulates, is called tactics. (e) Actions are the actual things a business does after deciding on strategies and tactics. (f) Control is concerned with assessing and verifying whether activities are proceeding as planned and in accordance with objectives to get the best results.

Digital marketing tactics using SOSTAC will be revealed and examined in this research. Among the many benefits of SOSTAC is its ability to outline the key actions required to achieve a goal. [17]. Indeed, digital marketing has been the subject of a number of studies conducted by previous scholars. Research [21][12] [23] found that social media is still the backbone of digital marketing strategies to increase brand recognition and attract consumers. So far, the only tactic used in digital marketing campaigns is promoting products through social media. Increased revenue and consumer engagement are the only metrics used to measure a number of studies. Digital marketing tactics must also be appropriate if they are to maximize consumer engagement and revenue growth. Nevertheless, the results of these investigations are usually decisive [24] [25] [26] in digital advertising. Since there has not been much research on the topic of SOSTAC implementation, this study adds to the existing knowledge by applying this approach to educational institutions that have not been previously used frequently.

Education managers must first ascertain the state and condition of the surrounding community, which is important to education stakeholders, before developing a marketing strategy and marketing mix. This includes

identifying supporting and constraining elements[10]. Marketers have a deep understanding of market demographics, including gender, age, profession, income, purchasing power, habits, culture and more. By doing this, the school's guiding principles, goals, and resources will be better able to meet market demand. [27]. Educational institutions are obliged to provide accurate and transparent information to prospective students and parents. It is important to do this at the educational institution where the researcher conducted the research because there is a downward trend in students from year to year, new student enrollment for the 2019/2020 school year amounted to 161, in 2020/2021 amounted to 150, in the 2021/2022 school year amounted to 90, in the 2022/2023 school year amounted to 76 and in the 2023/2024 school year after using digital marketing there was an increase in registrants of 130. So that the educational institution where the researcher conducted this research must actively adapt to technological and digital trends in order to remain competitive in attracting prospective students, maintaining existing students, and building a strong school image. Therefore, the main objective of this research is to implement a digital marketing strategy using the SOSTAC model approach in increasing prospective new students.

2 Methods

This research uses a qualitative approach. According to post-positivist theory, qualitative research is superior to experimental methods in studying real-world phenomena because: the researcher plays an important role in the research process; data is collected through purposive and snowball sampling; data collection is carried out using triangulation (combination) techniques; data is analyzed using inductive and qualitative methods; and the findings emphasize meaning rather than generalization [28]. [28]. Because the main objective in qualitative research is to make facts/phenomena understandable [29]. This research was conducted at an educational institution located in Jabon District, Sidoarjo Regency. Consideration of location selection is based on marketing strategies in educational institutions but not optimal results, so that further studies are needed for the implementation of marketing strategies with the SOSTAC method approach in exploring the potential of educational institutions to provide information to the public or prospective students of educational institutions.

The type of data in this research is qualitative data in the form of interview results and group notes and conversations that will be studied later. Primary data collected through interviews, observations and document reviews form the backbone of this research. The Principal, Student Guardians (School Committee), Teacher Council, Education Institution Foundation Management, Community Leaders and the Education Office (Regulator) became informants.

2.1 The Main Focus of this Research

Strategic analysis based on the SOSTAC model will be carried out after observation and joint discussion. The following is the sequence of SOSTAC stages: #1) Assessing the Current Situation. As part of this process, the internal and external environment of the educational institution is examined in relation to the activities taking place there. Beyond that, marketing and addressing internal and external issues become the main topics of the relationships that the educational institution fosters. Usually, a SWOT matrix serves as the output of this step. 2) Niche. Creating a digital marketing strategy, with an emphasis on social media platforms such as Instagram and TikTok, is the current focus. The goals to be achieved by implementing the plan are the main emphasis of this task. By painting a broad picture of the school,

Scenario analysis enables the setting of more realistic and measurable goals through the use of digital marketing. The presence of target segments in the formulation of the strategic plan is also validated in this step. 3. Approach. Market features, target markets related to the needs, and wants of the community or prospective students are part of the development of this strategy. The goals and positioning of prospective students provide insight into the context in which they will utilize educational offerings. In addition, this stage is when the educational institution brings out its selling characteristics. 4) Tactics, which are essentially part of the strategy, are the means by which digital marketers achieve their goals. The marketing mix is still part of the instruments used in this strategy. [3] [7] combines the four pillars of the marketing mix: place, promotion, process, and people. 5) After deciding on the strategy and tactics, educational institutions take action, which is the real way to make it happen. To get the most out of things, step 6) control, which includes assessing and verifying that things are going according to plan.

3 Results and Discussion

The strategic analysis based on the SOSTAC model carried out by observation, interview and discussion with the School Foundation Board, Principal, Teachers and School Committee is as follows: First, assessing the current situation using SWOT analysis, by identifying the internal environment. The results of the research are internal factors that exist in schools that aim for the process of preparing the School's marketing strategy. This internal analysis aims to determine the strengths and weaknesses in facing competition. Identification of the internal environment, among others: a). Strengths: densely populated environment, pesantren environment, has several excellent programs, adequate school access. B). Weaknesses: infrastructure facilities are still lacking, low student interest in learning, lack of involvement of student guardians in the learning process. After identifying the internal environment, it must also identify the external environment that exists in the school. The results of researchers analyzing external factors that lead to opportunity and threat factors. Opportunities can lead to education and learning process activities in schools while threats can hinder education and learning activities carried out. Identification of the external environment, among others: a). Opportunities: increasing prospective students from various regions, showing school achievements, alumni network, b). Threats: the emergence of new educational institutions that are more innovative, fluctuations in the trend of prospective students in choosing a school.

The second stage of SOSTAC is objective analysis. The school implements marketing strategies through websites, social media platforms with promotional videos, distribution of brochures or pamphlets and open houses. And pick up the ball with promotions to schools that target prospective new students and provide several scholarships. The third stage is strategy analysis. The school has identified the segmentation of prospective students, but it has not been maximized because there are several obstacles faced, including no special personnel to manage the identification data of prospective students.

The fourth stage is tactics analysis. The 4P marketing strategy (Place, Promotion, Price and People) still part of the instruments used in the tactics analysis. school has a strategic place or school location, in the middle of a densely populated settlement and pesantren environment. And this school can be accessed from Surabaya Malang or alternative routes. Promotion has been done but not maximized. The school has several programs. The school has a number of excellent programs including Tahfidz, special skills (soft skills) such as sewing, welding and automotive, with affordable school fees. And for school performance from the Foundation, principals and teachers and student guardians are good but there needs to be continuous communication for school progress. The fifth stage is action analysis. The school has implemented several stages in the digital marketing strategy, such as those that have been implemented through websites and social media platforms, but not yet maximized. The last stage is control analysis. The foundation and principal monitor and evaluate the stages of the school marketing strategy that have been carried out by looking at the progress of enrollment of prospective new students and those who are actually registered as school students. The SWOT matrix can help schools capitalize on their comparative advantage and achieve strategic goals when combined with other managerial tools. The SWOT matrix is compiled based on the identification of the school's internal and external factors that describe the strengths and weaknesses as well as the associated opportunities and threats.

The results of the researcher's analysis of internal and external factors are organized systematically and can be used in the preparation of strategies that must be implemented, as follows:

Table 1. SWOT Matrix

IFAS	Strength (S) a. densely populated neighborhoods, b. pesantren environment, c. has several excellent programs, d. adequate school access	Weakness (W) a. infrastructure is still , b. students' interest in learning is low. c. lack of guardian involvement students in learning process	
EFAS	Opportunity (O) a. an increase in prospective students from various regions, b. showing the school's achievements, c. alumni network	SO strategy a. Improve digital marketing strategy to attract new students b. Learner competency mapping c. Improved student academic and non-academic achievement	WO Strategy a. Fulfillment of school infrastructure b. Innovative learning strategies c. Increased participation of student guardians, community and partnerships

Threats (T)	ST Strategy	Strategy (WT)
a. the emergence of new, more innovative educational institutions, b. fluctuations in the trend of prospective students choosing schools	a. School management development b. Improving competence c. Socialization of the school's flagship program through digital platforms	a. Fulfillment of facilities work, learning and assessment b. Improvement implementation of innovative learning c. Improvement of character values

Source: Data processed by researchers

The results of the SWOT analysis show that strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and threats can be used to develop strategies that can be optimized. Strengths in SWOT refer to internal initiatives that perform well. These can be compared to other initiatives or external competitive advantages. Weaknesses in SWOT refer to internal initiatives that are underperforming. Analyzing strengths before weaknesses to create a baseline of success and failure is a good idea. Opportunities in SWOT are the result of existing strengths and weaknesses, along with any external initiatives that would put in a stronger competitive position. Threats in SWOT refer to areas that could potentially cause problems. Threats differ from weaknesses in that they are external and generally out of control. From the identification that strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and threats are several strategies that support the implementation of digital marketing strategies in increasing new student acquisition. This means that the implementation of digital marketing strategies must show the environment or condition of the school in the education and learning process and other supporting components, such as school facilities and others, so that it can attract new prospective students to register. First, the SO (strength - opportunity) strategies that must be implemented are: a) Improve digital marketing strategies to attract new prospective students, through optimizing the use of websites, social media (ig and FB); b). Mapping the competence of students, through: input screening and registration of new students is carried out selectively, extracurricular mapping and self-development based on interests; c). Improving academic achievement and non-academic students, through: mapping of achievement development for competitions based on interest and selection second, the WO (weakness - opportunity) strategies that must be implemented are: a). Fulfillment of minimum school infrastructure facilities, through: repair and maintenance of classrooms, teachers' rooms, libraries, UKS, canteens and other supporting infrastructure facilities; b). Innovative learning strategies, through: strengthening student character, training teachers according to their fields and competencies, developing learning documents; c). Increasing the participation of student guardians, communities and partnerships in the education and learning process.

Third, ST (strength - threats) strategies that must be implemented are: a). School management development, through school-based management development training, etc.; b). Increasing the competence of educational and non-educational personnel, through training on improving ICT-based learning, etc.; c). Socialization of school excellence programs through digital platforms

Fourth, the WT (weakness - threat) strategies that must be implemented are: a). Fulfillment of work, learning and assessment facilities, through the fulfillment of creative and innovative textbooks and readings, equipping extracurricular facilities, etc.; b). Increasing the implementation of innovative learning, through implementing ICT-based learning; c). Improvement of character values, through counseling services, motivation for the formation of character values

The school implements various online marketing strategies through the website, social media platforms with promotional videos and offline with open houses and pick-up the ball with promotions to schools targeted by prospective new students to increase the number of applicants. This includes well-segmented digital advertising campaigns, as well as special promotions that can attract the attention of prospective new students. In order to understand the needs and expectations of parents, schools must actively communicate with them. In this case, it can use communication channels such as WA groups for students and WA groups for student guardians in each class. Satisfaction surveys and student and guardian discussion forums to listen to their sharing and input.

The school's Strategy Analysis is to determine the strategy by using the STP strategy. (a)Segmentation, by identifying different segments of potential students. This can include segments based on educational background, or geographical. For example, schools may differentiate between students from the area around the school, outside the area or from boarding schools, (b) Targeting, by determining which segments are most attractive and of high value to the school. This may involve assessing the segment's growth potential, profitability, and fit with the school's values and mission. (c) Positioning by developing messages that can portray the school as the best solution for the needs and desires of the segment. Associated with the advantages and values offered by the school. This positioning should create a positive image and differentiate from other schools.

The marketing strategy in the tactics analysis is implemented in accordance with the 4P marketing mix instrument, namely Place, Promotion, Price and People. The school has a strategic school place or location, in the middle of a densely populated residential area and a pesantren environment, this can be an attraction for parents to send their children to school in a place with a religious environment. And this school can be accessed from the Surabaya Malang route or alternative routes, making it easier to pick up and drop off students. Promotion must be maximized with digital marketing that has been initiated by the school through social media. The school must strengthen the brand online, ensuring that digital content carried out on social media (ig and FB) highlights the achievements and excellence of the school which can ultimately build a strong image in cyberspace so that it becomes attractive to students, student guardians and school partners. The purpose of the digital marketing strategy through websites, IG, Facebook and TikTok is to provide insight to prospective new students about the education and learning process at school with an innovative learning process with experienced teachers in their fields. The school location can be reached by adequate transportation and can be accessed through several routes, a conducive school environment and in a pesantren environment. The school also has several excellent programs including Tahfidz, special skills (soft skills) such as sewing, welding and automotive so that there is a process of screening students' interests and talents which will be continued by including students in academic and non-academic achievement events. And the cost of education and learning at school is very affordable for all segments and there are still scholarship opportunities provided.

To plan and evaluate its digital marketing strategy, the school designed task identification, start date, duration estimation, schedule development, monitoring, and flexibility for adjustments, so that someone is responsible for the implementation of its digital marketing strategy.

4 Conclusion

The digital marketing strategy using the SOSTAC model approach in increasing the attractiveness of prospective new students began to be well implemented by the school. In the situation analysis, the school has identified the strengths, opportunities, Weaknesses and Threats faced in the school environment that continues to grow and is used in the preparation of strategies. This provides a strong basis for implementing a good digital marketing strategy by adopting the analysis of the strategy set. The application of the 4P marketing mix (Place, Promotion, Price and People) helps design an effective digital marketing strategy. Schools can also design, control and evaluate the implementation of digital marketing strategies through websites and social media (ig, and FB) effectively. It is expected that schools can increase engagement on other digital channels on YouTube and TikTok channels to produce more informative content to attract potential new students.

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