



The role of digital marketing in increasing brand awareness at PT. bumi serambi mekkah tour and travel padang panjang

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ABSTRACT

The development of digital technology has driven changes in how people seek information, including when choosing hajj and umrah travel agencies, making digital marketing an important strategy for building a company's brand awareness. This study aims to analyze the role of digital marketing in increasing brand awareness at PT. Bumi Serambi Mekah Tour & Travel Padang Panjang. This research employs a qualitative, descriptive approach. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation involving internal company parties and pilgrims. Data analysis was carried out through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The results indicate that digital marketing through social media helps increase brand recognition, strengthen the company's positive image, and foster public trust in the services offered. Content in the form of pilgrimage activity documentation, dissemination of umrah program information, and testimonials supports brand awareness. Digital marketing also helps expand the company's reach and introduce it to potential pilgrims. The study concludes that digital marketing has a strategic role in enhancing brand awareness at PT. Bumi Serambi Mekah Tour & Travel Padang Panjang. The implications of these findings emphasize that consistent, informative digital media management can be an effective strategy to strengthen the brand position of hajj and umrah travel companies amid industry competition.

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1. Introduction

The development of digital technology has brought significant changes in how people seek and obtain information [1]. The internet and social media are now the main sources of information, including when choosing Hajj and Umrah travel agencies. This condition encourages travel companies to adjust their marketing strategies to remain competitive and build a brand presence in the community. The Hajj and Umrah travel industry in Indonesia continues to experience significant progress [2], along with the increasing number of people

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waiting to perform Hajj, the growing public interest in carrying out Umrah as an option for Hajj and Umrah queues in Indonesia continues to develop, and the increasing public interest in carrying out Umrah as an alternative. Competition among travel agencies is getting fiercer, including in Padang Panjang, a city in West Sumatra [3]. In this situation, the company is not only required to provide competitive services and rates, but also to create a brand awareness that is easily recognizable and memorable to worshippers.

PT. Bumi Serambi Mecca Tour & Travel Padang Panjang is a Hajj and Umrah travel agency operating in Indonesia, located in Padang Panjang, West Sumatra, a city with a strong Muslim-majority population that holds strong religious values. This makes one of these cities a potential market for worship travel services such as Umrah. The following is data on the number of Umrah pilgrims of PT. Bumi Serambi Mecca Tour & Travel Padang Panjang from 2022 to 2024.

Table 1. The number of Umrah pilgrims of PT. Bumi Serambi Mecca Tour & Travel Padang Panjang 2022 – 2024

Year	Total Pilgrims	Percentage
2022	467	19,06%
2023	770	31,43%
2024	1.013	41,35%
Total	2.450	100%

Source: PT. Bumi serambi mecca tour & travel padang panjang (2025)

Based on company data, the number of Umrah pilgrims departing has increased every year. In 2022, the number of pilgrims was recorded at 467; in 2023, it increased to 770; and in 2024, it increased again to 1,013. It is seen that PT. Bumi Serambi Mecca Tour & Travel Padang Panjang has successfully dispatched Umrah pilgrims every year. This data not only comes from the head office, but also from the combined number of pilgrims from the branch office of PT. Bumi Serambi Mecca Tour & Travel Padang Panjang operates in various regions of West Sumatra. This increase is due to the number of alums who repeatedly use the service or bring relatives and family, which is inseparable from employees' performance and alums's active roles.

However, based on initial observations, the use of digital marketing at PT. Bumi Serambi Mecca Tour & Travel Padang Panjang is still not optimal. The content presented on social media tends to be documentary and less interactive, so it has not been able to maximize audience engagement. This condition indicates a gap between the company's success in building trust offline and its level of brand awareness in the digital world.

Given these problems, this research is important for analyzing the role of digital marketing in increasing brand awareness at PT. Bumi Serambi Mecca Tour & Travel Padang Panjang. This study is expected to present a real picture of the implementation of digital marketing and serve as an evaluation tool and a source of strategic advice for companies to improve digital marketing in the future.

Literature Review

Digital marketing

Digital Marketing is a general term for the marketing of goods or services that are targeted, measurable, and interactive using digital technology [4]. Digital marketing is a broad term

for promoting a product or service that is specific, measurable, and interactive, using digital technology. Digital Marketing is a marketing activity that uses digital technology to reach consumers more broadly, measurably, and interactively. Digital Marketing also includes all forms of marketing that utilize internet-based media to build relationships between companies and consumers. The main goal of Digital Marketing is to attract, retain, and grow customers by building interaction and value through digital channels [5].

Digital marketing enables the rapid, measurable, and targeted dissemination of information and facilitates the evaluation of marketing performance through real-time interaction and audience reach data [6]. In addition, Digital Marketing can reach a wide range of people without geographical restrictions at a relatively low cost and is more effective than traditional marketing. Through Digital Marketing, companies can also build and strengthen brands, as potential consumers often look for product or service information on social media before making decisions [7].

Digital Marketing indicators include accessibility, interactivity, entertainment, credibility, and information. Accessibility is related to the ease with which pilgrims can access information through digital media. Accessibility also refers to the ease of approach; the approach in question is a means to meet various interests, including better understanding the object to be achieved or obtaining certain information according to individual needs. Besides that, accessibility also reflects the ease of interaction. Interactivity demonstrates the company's ability to engage the audience actively. Interactivity is a level of two-way communication that shows the ability to respond to communication between advertisers and consumers, as well as to respond to responses received. Entertainment concerns the appeal of the content conveyed, as well as the ability of advertising to entertain consumers. These entertaining ads not only entertain, but also include various information. While credibility refers to beliefs that describe the extent to which consumers trust the advertisements displayed, as well as some reliable information conveyed, whether neutral, competent, and focused [8]. Moreover, the last is informative, reflecting the extent of trust and clarity of the data conveyed to prospective pilgrims [9]. Informative is also related to the ability of advertising to convey information to consumers, as the main purpose of the advertisement itself. In addition, ads need to provide proper explanations about the product to be profitable for both sellers and buyers.

Brand awareness

Brand awareness is the ability of customers to recognize or remember a brand and associate it with a specific product type. Brand Awareness is the likelihood that potential buyers know or remember that a brand belongs to a certain product category. Brand awareness is a key aspect of brand equity. A brand is not considered to have equity until the customer becomes aware of its presence among all brands, so that the customer can remember it, even if they have not used the product before. Brand Awareness also includes the ability of potential customers to dig into and recall that a brand is part of a product category [10].

Brand Awareness has an important role in shaping consumer perception of a brand. High brand awareness can foster positive associations because brands are easier to remember and stick in consumers' minds. In addition, the high level of brand awareness creates a sense of familiarity and emotional closeness, so consumers are more likely to like and trust the brand. Brand Awareness also reflects the brand's presence and commitment in the market,

as it is widely known to the public. Brands that are top of mind are more likely to be considered by consumers during the purchase decision-making process [11].

Brand Awareness can be measured along several dimensions: Brand Recall, Brand Recognition, Brand Choice, and top-of-mind awareness. The level of consumer recall when asked Brand Recall questions indicates consumers' ability to remember a brand spontaneously when presented with a specific product category. Brand Recall is a good way for consumers to quickly recognize a brand when they see a specific type of product. Brand recall is also related to the brand that they usually remember and mention first [12]. Brand recognition is the ability of consumers to recognize a brand through characteristics such as logos, colors, or symbols without needing to see the brand name. Brand choice shows the power of the brand in influencing consumers to choose and include the brand in the purchase decision directly, brand choice is also the consumer's reminder to include the chosen brand in the shopping cart [13]. Meanwhile, top of mind awareness is the highest level of brand awareness, where a brand is the first brand that appears in the minds of consumers when thinking about a product or service category.

2. Method

This study uses a field research method with a descriptive qualitative approach. Research data was obtained in the form of narratives, both written and oral, sourced from the research subjects. The research is located on Jl. Prof. M. Yamin No. 114, Pasar Usang, West Padang Panjang District, Padang Panjang City, West Sumatra. This research began on July 15, 2025, and continued until it was declared complete. The data sources in this study include primary data and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through direct interviews with the company's internal parties involved in managing digital marketing, as well as with several PT. The earth is like Mecca. Secondary data were collected from internal company documents, reports on the number of pilgrims, and relevant literature.

The data collection techniques in this study include observation, interviews, and documentation. Observations were made to assess the implementation of the company's digital marketing activities, especially on social media platforms. The interview was conducted using a semi-structured approach to delve deeper into digital marketing strategies and efforts to increase brand awareness. Meanwhile, documentation is used as research support, including archives, photos, and other relevant documents. The data analysis process in this study comprises three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion. Meanwhile, data validity is assessed through source triangulation to ensure the accuracy and credibility of the data obtained.

3. Results and Discussion

The Role of Digital Marketing in Increasing Brand Awareness at PT. Bumi Serambi Mecca Tour and Travel Padang Panjang

In this study, the discussion of the theoretical basis focuses on the role of Digital Marketing in increasing Brand Awareness at PT. Bumi Serambi Mecca Tour & Travel Padang Panjang. In the Hajj and Umrah travel service industry, pilgrims' trust is the main factor influencing interest in the company's services. Therefore, the right marketing strategy is needed to build and strengthen that trust. Digital marketing not only serves as a means of promotion but also as a communication medium that shapes the congregation's perception and awareness of the company's brand. Through digital media, companies can convey information,

demonstrate operational activities, and build a credible, professional image. Strong brand awareness will help the company become better known and more memorable to the congregation. Based on this, PT. Bumi Serambi Mecca uses Digital Marketing to strengthen brand awareness. This study focuses on digital marketing indicators, which include accessibility, interactivity, entertainment, credibility, and informativeness as the basis for research analysis.

From the aspect of accessibility, PT. The Bumi Serambi Mecca is considered easily accessible to pilgrims through various platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, and WhatsApp. This ease of access allows pilgrims to obtain information about Umrah packages, departure schedules, and company activities without experiencing obstacles. Exposure to consistent, easy-to-access digital content makes pilgrims more familiar with PT's name and activities. Bumi Serambi Mecca, so that the brand's existence remains even stronger in pilgrims' memories. In the aspect of interactivity, PT. Bumi Serambi Mecca can build responsive two-way communication through digital media, especially WhatsApp. Pilgrims receive quick, clear responses from the company when asking questions about packages, facilities, and the registration process. This interaction does not happen just once; it continues through ongoing conversations, whether in private or group messages. This communication pattern helps pilgrims gain a deeper understanding of the company and form a positive image as an active, open, and trustworthy travel agency, thereby strengthening brand recognition. From the results of the previous research, namely by Nyoman Sri Manik entitled *The Role of Digital Marketing in Increasing Brand Awareness XCOVID20* that in digital marketing, through interaction, succeeds not only in increasing brand awareness but also building closer relationships with consumers, where XCOVID20 creates opportunities for deeper dialogue and stronger engagement, which ultimately helps strengthen brand awareness [14].

In terms of entertainment, PT. Bumi Serambi Mecca utilizes visual content in the form of documentation of pilgrim activities, routine manasik, and company operational activities. The content presented is real, not made up, to provide an interesting and educational visual experience for pilgrims. Manasik content displayed regularly is among the most memorable and liked by worshippers because it provides added value through continuous worship coaching. This affects brand choice, where pilgrims tend to choose PT. Bumi Serambi Mecca is known for the quality of its coaching and the readiness of its worship. The credibility aspect is also an important finding in this study. The information conveyed through PT. The Bumi Serambi Mecca is designed in accordance with the real conditions pilgrims encounter during the pilgrimage journey. This credibility is not only built through digital content, but also strengthened by the direct experience of pilgrims who have used the company's services. This positive experience fosters a strong sense of trust, so that pilgrims feel confident using PT's services. Bumi Serambi Mecca or recommend it to others.

Meanwhile, from the aspect of informativeness, PT. Bumi Serambi Mecca can provide clear, relevant initial information about the Umrah services it offers. Although the limitations of the format and duration of the content mean that information has not been conveyed in detail, digital media still serves as an effective means of initial introduction. More detailed information is then obtained by the pilgrims through direct follow-up communication, either via WhatsApp or in-person visits to the office, so that digital marketing serves as a trigger for initial interest. Based on previous research by Hayyina Rahma and Nanik Haryana on the use of digital marketing to increase PT's brand awareness. Zilla Akademi Indonesia Products. In

2023, it was found that the use of digital marketing significantly increased PT's brand awareness. Zilla Akademi Indonesia product.

The use of social media platforms like Instagram has proven effective in strengthening brand reputation, expanding reach, and fostering better interactions with audiences through engaging visual content and targeted paid advertising [15]. The findings are similar to this study, especially in highlighting the important role of digital media in increasing brand awareness. However, this study focuses slightly differently, namely on the use of social engagement via WhatsApp as the most dominant digital media for building PT's brand awareness—the Land of Mecca. The results of this study show that intense, personal, and continuous interaction through WhatsApp, both individually and in groups, has a stronger influence on pilgrims' awareness of and closeness to the brand. Overall, Digital Marketing of PT. Bumi Serambi Mecca plays a role in shaping Brand Awareness at various levels, from Brand Recall and Brand Recognition to Top of Mind Awareness. WhatsApp is the most dominant channel for increasing brand awareness because it enables intense, personal, and continuous communication, while Instagram plays a supporting role in strengthening brand visuals. Thus, Digital Marketing serves as a reinforcement and sustainer of brand awareness, though the pilgrims' final decision is still influenced by service quality and direct experience.

4. Conclusion

After conducting research, presenting, analyzing, and describing the role of Digital Marketing in increasing Brand Awareness at PT Bumi Serambi Mecca Padang Panjang, it can be concluded that Digital Marketing plays an important role in increasing PT Bumi Serambi Mecca Padang Panjang's Brand Awareness. Bumi Serambi Mecca Padang Panjang. Digital marketing not only serves as a promotional medium but also reinforces recommendations from the congregation's social environment (word of mouth), helping build brand recognition, strengthen trust, and encourage pilgrims' confidence in choosing travel services. Through easy access to information, responsive interaction, informative content, and continuous digital communication, especially through personal WhatsApp, PT. Bumi Serambi Mecca can maintain the brand's presence in pilgrims' memories even after the worship process is complete. Thus, Digital Marketing serves as a strategy to strengthen and maintain brand awareness, continuously supporting PT's brand improvement—the Land of Mecca. After presenting the research results, the author can offer a brief suggestion: digital marketing should be managed more effectively to reach a wider audience. The consistent, strategic use of digital media can increase brand recognition and strengthen brand awareness across society. In addition, interactive, sustainable digital communication is important for maintaining closeness with worshippers so the brand remains memorable.

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