



Revitalizing Small Business Resilience: A Post-Pandemic Marketing Communication Paradigm in the Bag Industry

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Abstract. Tanggulangin is included in the tour of MSME centers of the bag and luggage industry in Sidoarjo Regency. Tanggulangin bag and luggage products have local brands with good quality and have been recognized by consumers. Tanggulangin bag and luggage SMEs are one of the icons of Sidoarjo shopping tourism. However, after the Lapindo mud disaster in 2006, most of the bag and luggage makers in Tanggulangin went out of business. But there are still some bag and luggage MSMEs that still survive. During the survival of bag and luggage MSMEs, Covid-19 emerged in early 2020 as a pandemic that had a direct impact on the economy, especially the MSME sector. One of the MSMEs that still survives and continues to produce until now is CV Sartika Ratu. There are seven people selected using purposive sampling technique to become informants, namely the owner as well as marketing staff and customers of CV Sartika Ratu. The method in this research uses qualitative descriptive method. The purpose of this research is to find out and analyze how marketing communication strategies to maintain their business after the Covid-19 pandemic. The data collection methods used are through interviews and observations. The results of this research explain that CV Sartika Ratu uses three marketing communication models in the marketing communication mix as a marketing communication strategy.

Keywords: communication strategy, marketing communication, marketing communication mix

1 Introduction

Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises or commonly referred to as MSMEs are a type of productive business that has developed very rapidly until now. MSMEs in Indonesia consist of agriculture, animal husbandry, processing, trade, services and communications. This is indicated by research from Wan Laura Hardilawati which states that in Indonesia MSMEs have a strategic role and a major influence on the development of the National economy with a total of 64,194,057 in 2018 by employing around 116,978,631 workers [1]. Therefore, the development of MSMEs in Indonesia is very rapid.

Tanggulangin is included in the tour of MSME centers for the bag and luggage industry in Sidoarjo Regency. Bags and luggage products from Tanggulangin MSMEs have local brands with good quality and have been recognized by consumers. Tanggulangin's bag and luggage MSMEs are one of the icons of shopping tourism in Sidoarjo. However, after the Lapindo mud disaster in 2006, most of the bag and luggage makers in Tanggulangin went out of business. While the bag and luggage MSMEs were still trying to maintain their business after the Lapindo

Mud disaster, the Covid-19 virus emerged in early 2020 as a pandemic that had a direct impact on the economy, especially the MSME sector. CV. Sartika Ratu is one of the MSMEs that has been affected by the Lapindo Mud disaster and the Covid-19 pandemic but is still trying to maintain its business. This is a challenge for CV. Sartika Ratu in maintaining its business with the post-Covid-19 pandemic situation.

In order for MSMEs to survive, marketing communication is needed to win their market segmentation. This requires an appropriate marketing communication strategy for MSME players. According to Kotler, Keller and Kevin Lane in the Hanna Shifa Journal, marketing communication is where companies try to inform, persuade, and remind consumers directly or indirectly about the products and brands being sold [2]. An MSME needs an innovative marketing communication strategy, so that the products offered will be recognized by the public.

In Novera Annisa's journal, Strategy is essentially planning (planning) and management (management) to achieve a certain goal. [3]. According to Burhan Bungin in Priyo Suswanto's journal, a communication strategy is to enable a communication action carried out by a company to achieve a communication target designed as a change target [4].

Integrated marketing *communication* (IMC) is needed as an effort made to coordinate various elements of the promotion mix and marketing activities. According to Priansa, it explains that *integrated marketing communication* (IMC) is one of the company's strategies to effectively communicate products to customers [5]. IMC is expected to create a good and strong relationship that is long-term with the aim of selling products so that profits are obtained by the company.

According to Tjiptono, an effective marketing communication process includes eight interrelated main stages, namely identifying target markets, determining communication objectives, designing messages, selecting communication channels, compiling a communication budget, determining the communication mix, implementing integrated marketing communication programs and collecting feedback [6]. Therefore, the stages in the effective marketing communication process need to be considered so that the message the company wants to convey can be conveyed properly to consumers.

According to Kotler and Keller (2009: 174), the marketing communication mix has eight communication models consisting of: a) Advertising is any paid form of nonpersonal presentation or promotion of an idea, good, or service through sponsorship. b) Sales promotion is all kinds of short-term incentives to encourage trial and purchase of a product and service. c) Events and experiences are activities and programs designed or sponsored by a company to create interactions related to a particular brand. d) Public relations and publicity, namely programs designed to promote and protect the image of the company and products. e) Direct marketing, namely communication carried out by mail, telephone, fax, e-mail, or the internet to make direct communication to request a response or dialogue with certain customers and prospects. f) Interactive marketing, namely online activities or programs designed to engage customers directly or indirectly to increase awareness, improve image, or increase sales of products and services. g) Word of mouth marketing, namely oral, written and electronic communication between people regarding the advantages of a product or the buyer's experience in using a product or service. h) Personal selling, namely face-to-face interaction with one or more prospective buyers to make presentations, answer questions or place orders [7].

Conceptually, there are four (4) components included in the marketing mix or known as 4P. This is explained in the research of Niko Al Hakim, (2021) who said that the four (4) components are as follows: (1) Product is a combination of the company's products and services offered to the market, which includes: quality, design, shape, brand and product packaging. (2) Price, many prices for products or services paid, (3) Place is an activity carried out by a company

to make a product so that it can be obtained and available to target consumers, (4) Promotion, activities carried out by companies to communicate product advantages and persuade target consumers to buy them [8].

Marketing communication aims to achieve three stages of change aimed at consumers. According to Soemanagara in Farahdiba's journal, these stages include: 1) The stage of knowledge change, in this change consumers are aware of a product. 2) The second stage is the stage of attitude change, this leads to the desire of consumers to try the product, the higher the preference for a product, it will encourage consumers to use it (buy it). 3) The third stage is behavior change which is intended so that consumers do not switch to other products and get used to continuing to use them [9].

As explained above, this research was conducted with the aim of knowing and analyzing how the marketing communication strategy used by CV. Sartika Ratu Tanggulangin to maintain its business after the Covid-19 pandemic. This research is expected to describe the analysis of CV. Sartika Ratu's marketing communication strategy through marketing activities carried out by the company's marketing team.

2 Research Methods

This research method uses a qualitative descriptive approach to determine the marketing communication strategy of CV Sartika Ratu after the Covid-19 pandemic. Where according to Sugiyono (2014: 09) states that the selection of qualitative research methods is supported by the reason that data in complex and dynamic social situations is not possible to capture with quantitative research methods, besides that researchers intend to understand social situations in depth, find patterns, and theories [10]. Qualitative research was chosen in order to understand more thoroughly and be able to describe according to the information received by the researcher.

This research was conducted at CV Sartika Ratu, which is located at Jl. Raya Kludan No. 40, Kludan Village, Tanggulangin District, Sidoarjo Regency. Researchers used purposive sampling techniques to determine informants involved in this study. The selected informants are as follows: 1) Owner of CV Sartika Ratu 2) Marketing staff of CV. Sartika Ratu 3) Some customers of CV. Sartika Ratu, both old and new customers.

The subjects in this study are data sources and all informants used in the research. The types of data sources in this study are divided into two, namely primary and secondary data sources. Primary sources are sources of observation data conducted at the CV Sartika Ratu office, as well as in-depth interviews with the owner as well as CV Sartika Ratu marketing staff and CV Sartika Ratu customers as data analysis units. After the primary data is obtained, a comparison process is then carried out, whether the results obtained in in-depth interviews are in accordance with what is in the literature review. Meanwhile, secondary data in this study is as additional material and reinforcement of research in the form of photographs, recordings and others.

The data analysis technique of this research uses the Miles and Huberman model in Doni Mardiyanto's journal, which suggests that activities in data analysis, namely a. Data reduction. b. Data display. c. Conclusion drawing or verification [11]. To test the credibility of the data, researchers used triangulation, which is defined as checking data from various sources in various ways, and various times [12]. In this case the researcher uses triangulation source which means that testing the credibility of the data is done by checking the data that has been obtained through several sources.

3 Results and Discussion

CV. Sartika Ratu is one of the MSMEs located in the Tanggulangin Luggage Bag Industry Center, in Sidoarjo Regency, East Java. Sartika Ratu is a trusted company in producing several quality products, innovative designs and is a channeling medium for several companies that need the production of merchandise and travel equipment in Indonesia. Sartika Ratu has been trusted as a supplier of Umrah and Hajj travel equipment since 1998 and has served more than 250 Umrah and Hajj trips throughout Indonesia. For more than 10 years Sartika Ratu has been serving merchandise needs for companies and institutions through procurement projects for certain activities and promotions with innovative products supported by local suppliers and export-scale factories. The products that have been produced by Sartika Ratu are hardcase luggage, softcase luggage, passport bags, cabin bags, backpacks, luggage covers, neck pillows, scarves, id card straps, ihrom cloth, t-shirts, mugs, prayer mats, and sublimation services. CV. Sartika Ratu's market segmentation is a. Hajj Umrah travel agents. b. Government agencies. c. Education offices, such as schools, universities and regional education offices. d. Private companies. Private companies.

In a business venture, there will always be obstacles from outside. These obstacles are competitors. Competitors with Hajj and Umrah travel equipment products are increasingly offering more economical and other price comparisons. This makes companies have to be more active and innovative in conducting product marketing communication. Competition between competitors like this requires several strategies in achieving a goal for the company to retain old customers and get new customers.

The Covid-19 pandemic lasted for 2 years in Indonesia. The current situation is slowly recovering. The recovery of the situation after the pandemic made MSME business people restart their businesses that had been hampered. The post-Covid-19 pandemic situation has made CV Sartika Ratu start developing its marketing communication strategy again.

Marketing communication strategies in every company generally use Kotler and Armstrong's marketing communication mix, which is explained in Achmad Arief's journal, which defines the promotion mix or marketing communication mix as a special combination of tools used by companies or industries to convince the value of communication and build relationships with consumers [13]. CV Sartika Ratu MSME is one of the companies that uses the marketing communication mix as a communication strategy in marketing its products to consumers.

The first step in the marketing communication strategy chosen by CV Sartika Ratu is through whatsapp and instagram social media. In Gilang's journal, he explains that social media is currently often used in the business world, the use of social media makes it easier for us to change the concept of sales which has turned into an online store [14]. "After this pandemic, my marketing staff and I immediately intensified promotions on social media because the situation was still post-pandemic so we were still afraid to offer products directly to customers" explained the owner. The social media whatsapp, facebook and instagram themselves were chosen because they can directly convey marketing communication messages to customers, and are included in the direct marketing communication model. This will make marketing communication more efficient and effective.

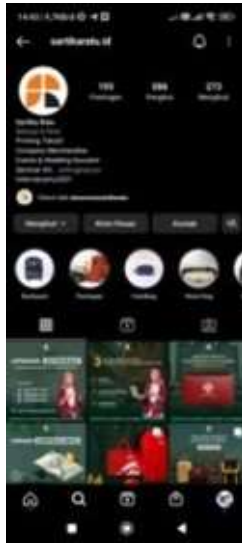


Fig. 1. CV Sartika Ratu Instagram profile
Source : Instagram : *sartikaratu.id*



Fig. 2. CV Sartika Ratu Facebook page
Source : Facebook : *Sartika Ratu*

Suka dan ikuti baru

Notifikasi Facebook baru



Pengikuti Instagram baru



Tidak ada aktivitas selama 24 jam terakhir
Tidak ada aktivitas selama 24 jam terakhir
Tidak ada aktivitas selama 24 jam terakhir

Fig. 3. New Instagram Followers and Facebook Page Likes

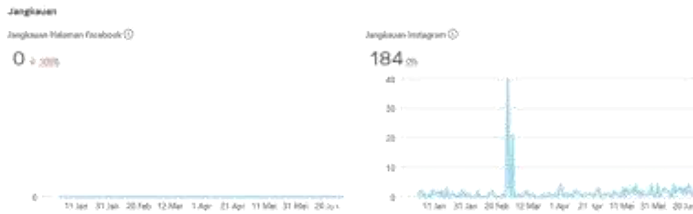


Fig. 4. Instagram and Facebook coverage



Fig. 5. Facebook Page and Instagram Profile Visitors

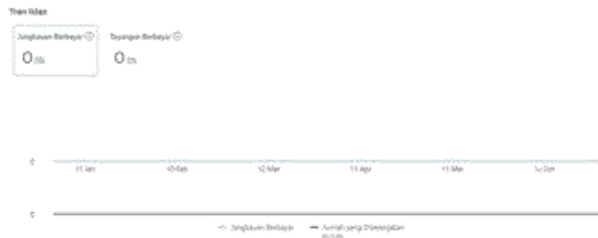


Fig. 6. Facebook and Instagram ads

Social media as direct marketing is indeed the first step of a very effective and efficient marketing communication strategy. It can be seen from the Instagram insight data above that in the last 180 days. There are no new Facebook page likes and Instagram followers. Reach from Facebook and Instagram 0%. For visits on the Facebook page 0% while visits on CV Sartika Ratu's Instagram have increased by 0.7%. From the insight data, there is no significant increase because CV Sartika Ratu does not advertise on Facebook and Instagram. But from the results of researcher interviews, there are customers who know Sartika Ratu through social media. *"I know Sartika Ratu from Instagram because I searched for accounts of Hajj Umrah travel equipment and found the right one, Sartika Ratu"* explained the customer.

Word of mouth marketing is also included in an effective marketing communication strategy. This is explained in the journal Novya and Mutiah, Word of mouth information is obtained through consumers who have bought, used, and had their own experiences, so that

prospective buyers have obtained the information needed in addition to that contained in advertisements or other promotional media [15]. It is undeniable that word of mouth marketing has made CV Sartika Ratu's market segmentation wider. This is evidenced by the number of new customers who contact directly or even make personal sales by coming to the CV Sartika Ratu office. *"I came here because of a recommendation from a travel friend, I have also seen the good products from Sartika Ratu from that friend. Finally I decided to take Hajj and Umrah travel equipment here,"* said the customer.

Table 1. CV Sartika Ratu Customer Data

Year	Travel	Government Agencies	Private Institutions	Amount
2018	246	15	8	269
2019	357	25	19	401
2020	357	59	42	458
2021	394	64	58	516
2022	487	73	64	624

The table above shows that from 2018 to 2020 there was a significant increase in CV Sartika Ratu customers from 269 customers to 458 customers. Meanwhile, at the end of 2019 to 2021 during the Covid-19 pandemic, the travel category customers only slightly increased from 357 customers to 394, while for government and private agencies there was a considerable increase in customers from 44 customers to 122 customers, and even then the products they ordered were not Umrah and Hajj travel equipment but merchandise or health kits such as masks or pouches as souvenirs. Meanwhile, in 2022, the post-Covid-19 pandemic period of the three customer categories experienced a significant increase from 516 customers to 624 customers. It can be concluded that the marketing communication strategy carried out by CV Sartika Ratu is very effective because every year there are additional customers. Even though it had experienced the Covid-19 pandemic, it did not affect the marketing communication process of CV Sartika Ratu.

Direct marketing is very effective and efficient in a post-pandemic situation. But it does not rule out the possibility that word-of-mouth marketing is also very effective in expanding the company's market segmentation. This is shown by the number of new customers who come because of recommendations from previous customers. Personal selling is also often applied in CV Sartika Ratu's marketing communication strategy. It's just that before the pandemic, the company's marketing staff visited the offices of existing customers and potential new customers. But during the post-Covid-19 pandemic, there is still no schedule to make these visits. However, there are several customers who come to the CV Sartika Ratu company to conduct personal selling as a marketing communication strategy.

4 Conclusions

Based on the results of the research and discussion described in the previous chapter on the Marketing Communication Strategy of CV Sartika Ratu MSMEs in the Tanggulangin Sidoarjo Bag Center after the Covid-19 Pandemic. Direct marketing is very effective and efficient in post-pandemic conditions. But it does not rule out the possibility that word of mouth marketing is also very effective in expanding the company's market segmentation. This is shown by the number of new customers who come because of recommendations from previous customers.

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