

Evaluating Implementation of Success and Finding Competitive Advantages, Ideal Goals of Digital Inbound Marketing with Measurement Methods for Indonesian MSME Business

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to develop new knowledge related to methods in running online marketing, which we call Digital Inbound Marketing, how the implementation is carried out by MSMEs in Indonesia, competitive advantage and further in setting goals and how to measure the success of the strategy carried out. Some items measuring the implementation of digital inbound marketing methods are taken from existing literature. The qualitative method is used by interviewing 10 participants who are business owners of MSME. The analysis found that the digital inbound marketing method was good when implemented by MSME business owners. It is also known that the thing that underlies the successful implementation of digital inbound marketing methods is "customer-centric" and the ideal goal when MSME business owners run digital inbound marketing methods is a goal that focuses on economic return and monitoring metrics related to economic return. This study contributes to the successful implementation of digital inbound marketing methods that focus on customer or "Customer Centric" which will bring economic benefits to the sustainability of MSME businesses that spearhead the Indonesian economy.

Keywords: Internet, Digital, Inbound Marketing, Competitive Advantage, Economic Return

Introductions

In December 2019, a new virus appeared on the earth's surface. The World Health Organization explains that coronaviruses are viruses that infect the respiratory system. This virus infection is called COVID-19. The spread of this virus is very fast; even now, the spread has reached across countries. The Covid-19 pandemic caused an economic shock that led to a global recession. The Indonesian Central Statistics Agency (BPS) said that on August 5, 2020, the Indonesian economy in the second quarter of 2020 to the second quarter of 2019 contracted growth by 5.32 percent. Figure 1 explains that the Field of Transportation and Warehousing business is experiencing a contraction in terms of production. In terms of expenditure, the Export Component of Goods and Services and Imports of Goods and Services contracted by 11.66 percent and 16.96 percent, respectively, many companies suffered losses both material and non-material, and there were also some companies and small and medium-sized micro-enterprises that made massive layoffs to save the company and some were out of business.

That was contrary to data in 2020 from Bank Indonesia, and there was a nominal increase in e-commerce transactions of 29.6% from Rp 205.5 trillion in 2019 to Rp 266.3 trillion. In line with the rapid e-commerce transactions, value is increasing rapidly, reflected in changes in people's purchasing behavior that have changed to the maximum utilization of e-commerce.

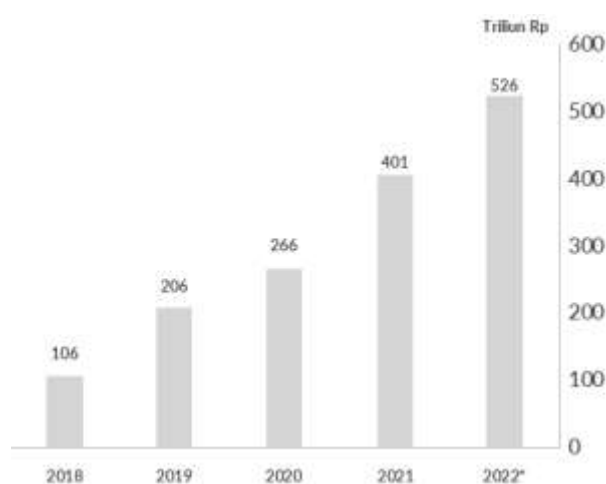


Figure 1: E-Commerce transaction value
Source: Bank Indonesia

That situation validates the words of the Coordinating Ministry for Economic Affairs Airlangga Hartarto that one of the challenges of

Indonesian MSME is digital transformation. It is intended that MSME business owners can enjoy the increase in online transactions that have continued to grow positively even during the pandemic. One of the problems that may arise when transforming Indonesian MSMEs to "Go Digital" is the strategy in the press release on May 3 2021.

One of the online marketing currently quite popular is Digital Inbound Marketing, which offers marketing activities holistically from creating relationships with prospective customers to advocating for customers to become business brand ambassadors voluntarily. This triggers researchers to find out the competitive advantage of inbound marketing activities to be applied to MSMEs in Indonesia. The variety of platforms to get business traffic confuses marketers in setting goals and how to measure them. This becomes very crucial for MSMEs because with limited resources, and they must be optimal to allocate the resources they have when doing marketing activities

Conceptual Framework

According to Patel and Chugan (2018) Inbound marketing methodology can be conducted by applying 7-step activities:

Planning an Inbound Marketing Campaign, Identify Prospects, Mark Online Presence, Accessible and Useful Content, Clear Call to Action, Continuous Tracking, and Reporting. Because the resources owned by MSME are limited, they should be able to design their inbound marketing campaign goals smartly. Some opinions say the success of the goal when conducting an online campaign mostly argues when conducting an online campaign that becomes the value of success is the social interaction with the content posted, as stated by Ledford et al. (2008). While Taiminen et al. (2015) suggested that the ideal goal when using digital platforms as a marketing campaign is to focus on sales or economic returns. Because two majority opinions state two goals when running the digital marketing campaign, there is difficulty in measuring the success of a campaign run as stated by Leeflang et al. (2014), which states that one of the challenges in digital marketing is measuring the success of a digital inbound marketing campaign.

Figure 2 below describes the inbound marketing methods represented by activities to help businesses achieve established goals and use relevant measurements as indicators of success and feedback for future campaigns.

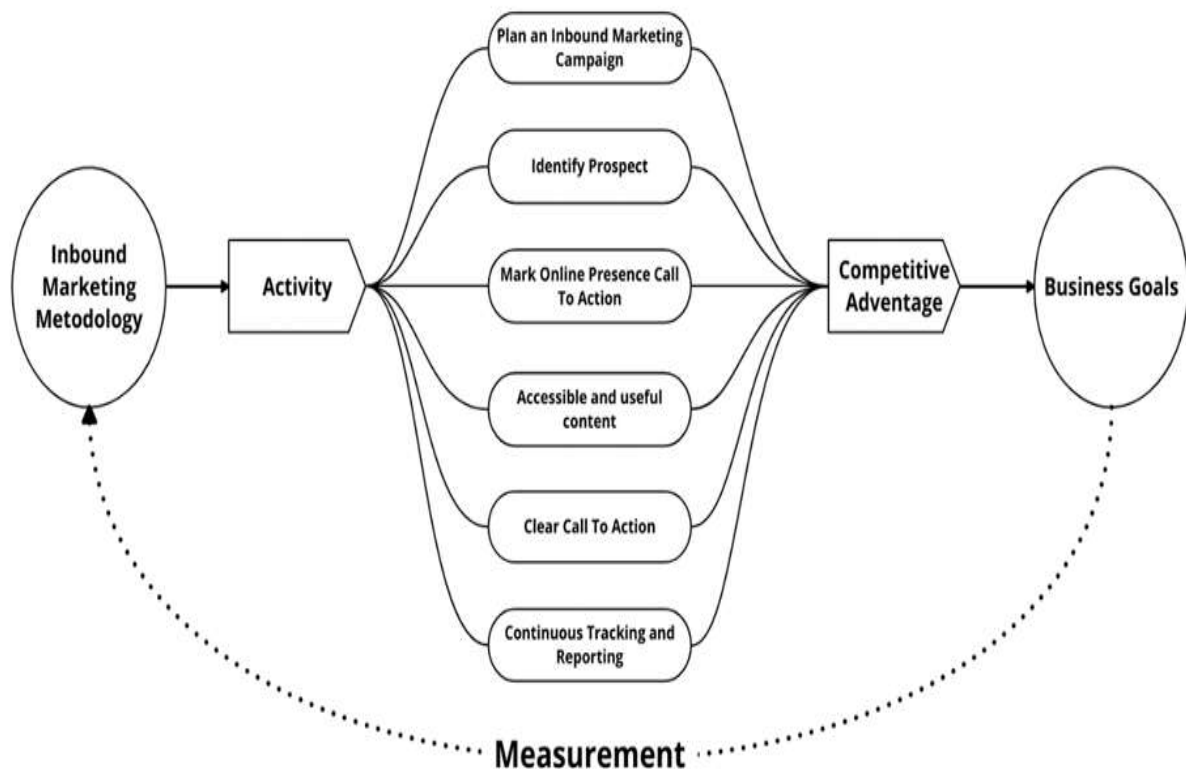


Figure 2: Conceptual framework

Refer to the conceptual framework descriptions, there are some questions proposed on this research as below:

1. How successful is the implementation of digital inbound marketing campaign activities in the MSME business?
2. What competitive advantages of digital inbound marketing activities make it successful?
3. What are the main goals that businesses should achieve, and what metrics are relevant as a guide to ensuring success when running a digital inbound marketing campaign?

Literature Review

An important part of the concept of inbound marketing is a business website that turns visitors into leads by optimizing landing pages and registration forms as well as providing content feeds as a benefit when visitors provide contact information. Potential customers also become long-term loyal customers through email marketing and CRM systems. Given the basics of inbound marketing, we must realize that this concept is nothing new. Improve and integrate some

previously known online marketing methods such as content marketing, search engine optimization, shared email marketing, and more.

Bezovski (2015) Says similarity of inbound marketing methods with previous methods that have been developed. Inbound marketing is very to the earlier marketing method called 'content marketing'. The concept of content marketing can also be related to 'storytelling in marketing', which was practised long before the internet was commonly used. Content marketing is the marketing business process for creating and distributing relevant and valuable content to attract, acquire, and engage a clearly defined target audience – with the objective of driving customer action, which creates a profit for a business.

Bezovski (2015) further said content marketing is an (important) part of an inbound marketing strategy. On the other hand, proponents of "content marketing" believe that a complete content marketing strategy incorporates inbound marketing principles to attract visitors.

Regardless of the differences, both approaches emphasize the importance of high-quality content and ideas that potential customers interested in the content must meet.

Online Marketing Objectives

Charlesworth (2018) said that businesses could be successful if they define three key objectives of online marketing: (1) branding, (2) revenue generation, and (3) customer care. In terms of brand development and online presence complements and expands the company's branding efforts. For companies that only operate offline, web-based branding becomes part of the overall branding strategy. For businesses that rely on their brand to sell, online is unlikely to take the lead in their branding efforts.

Definition of Digital Inbound Marketing

Baltes (2016) states inbound marketing is a way of communicating with a targeted audience with excellent content., which means inbound marketing is a form of marketing that requires very careful audience targeting and specialized communication through high-quality content. According to Opreana & Vinerean (2015): Explaining inbound marketing is a cycle of processes from starting to reach prospective audiences to becoming loyal customers by using traffic on online media. Which means Digital Inbound Marketing is the process of reaching and changing qualified consumers by creating and pursuing tactics in online platforms.

The concept of inbound marketing was put forward by Brian Halligan, CEO, and co-founder of HubSpot, in 2005. Inbound marketing is considered an effective way of marketing in running a business online. This concept continued to grow until it gained fame and was implemented by most businesses in 2012. Some of the most widely applied inbound marketing activities include social media marketing, blogging, search engine optimization (SEO), email marketing, setting landing pages, maintaining leads, and creating articles, videos, and infographics. Inbound marketing allows open and "smart" communication towards the customers who turned their attention to the company's products or services and created a personal relationship with them by promoting content adapted to their needs.

In terms of source traffic Erdmann (2021) elaborates that digital inbound marketing methods can be explored by focusing on 2 techniques. The first technique is a technique that stimulates traffic using organic traffic. Organic traffic is obtained from the use of platform algorithms by providing content that is considered worthy or affiliated with the content provided by a brand. One example of this organic traffic is SEO, social media followers, and blogging. The second technique is paid traffic which requires business owners to pay a certain amount of fees to the provider's platform to be given traffic to destinations set by business owners. Examples of paid traffic are Google Ads, Facebook and Instagram Ads, Tiktok Ads.

Digital Inbound Marketing Flywheel

This modern style of marketing stems from the application of a concept in physics called the flywheel effect. So, this flywheel or crazy wheel is a wheel that is used as a central change in spin speed by utilizing the inertia of the rotation. Because of this speed, this crazy wheel can collect and store mechanical energy in a short time so that it can release more energy in a faster time and in the right moment. This flywheel effect is very appropriate to use as a strategy in marketing.

As stated by Jon Dick (2019), In a Flywheel, there are several stages with customers as the central or energy source for flywheel rotation. The stage is:

- A. Attract: Attracting is about using business skills to present content and mutually beneficial conversations for the right audience.
- B. Engaging: Engaging is about making long-lasting relationships with an audience by providing benefits and solutions which align with their difficulties and goals
- C. Delighting: Delighting is giving an amazing experience that adds real value, helping the audience to be able to reach their goals, and become promoters of a business brand.

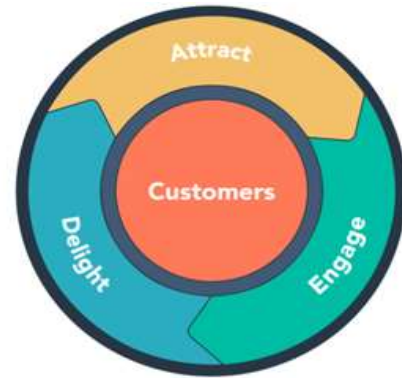


Figure 3: Inbound Marketing Flywheel

Source: www.hubspot.com

Digital Marketing Inbound Activity

Patel and Chugan (2018) explain the DIM strategy steps can be applied by the company with the following steps:

1. Plan an Inbound Marketing Campaign

A good strategy is the basis of the entire campaign. Without proper planning, all other efforts are wasted, costing time, energy, money, and of course customers. With clear objectives, the business can accurately detect deficiencies that must be improved and prepare other strategies when the expected results are not as planned.

2. Identify Prospects

Before starting the strategy, the most important thing is first to determine the target audience. With the formation of a business, the customer persona can provide a marketing program in accordance with the background of the customer segment. It is expected that the message provided can be absorbed perfectly by the targeted audience. (The right marketing program to the right persons).

3. Mark Online Presence

Today, buyers receive almost all information about their favorite product or service before buying. An active and responsive website should be a priority. This helps build brand awareness and provides potential customers' with information. When the company has a sign about the existence of online media, then the next task of marketers is how to provide traffic on the website so that the products and services offered can be known by the public.

4. Accessible and Useful Content

Nowadays, social media is the easiest and most efficient place to get the attention of many people. This is expected to provoke audience interest in the product or service sold. With the right placement of the customer in the targeted audience, it is easier for marketers to lure customers into making purchases and pursuing marketing goals that have been set.

5. Clear CTA (Call-to-action)

When a prospective customer finds the business's identity on a search engine, a business must give clear directions to visit the website page or perform specific actions that the business owner has set up. Informative words explain the benefits when search engine users log into a business website. Nevertheless, the problems haven't stopped there.

6. Continuous Tracking and Reporting

When visitors come to the website or landing page, aesthetics matter. Marketers can gain insights that can help in website design, technology, and strategy by analyzing analytical tools. The only way for marketers to follow this journey and see what works and what puts off visitors is to properly define goals and events and connect to an analytics platform like Google Analytics or the Facebook Pixel.

Measuring Results

For digital marketing in general, previous studies have shown that the majority of marketers rely on quality ratings, followed by cost-based criteria or internet-specific measures such as page views or clicks (Cheong, et. al, 2010). User reactions to advertisements are recorded in real-time, and there are many effects. For the first effect, media penetration and audience fragmentation have made traditional advertising currency, such as advertising exposure or "reach", a much less convincing indicator of media value than ever before. Second, advertisers can measure the effectiveness of their efforts and target ads only to targeted users interested in a particular category, brand, or product. Thirdly, the ability to track the relationship between advertising and sales is becoming increasingly accurate and sophisticated (Vollmer et al. 2008). These improvements form the basis for measuring interactive media; Regarding social media indicators, these indicators need to go from impression to result. Opreana & Vinerean (2015) provide details about the measurement of inbound marketing digit methods provide details about the measurement of digital inbound marketing methods. When digital inbound marketing methods are executed, at least 4 areas or categories become a measurement to evaluate the efficacy of the method: (1) Website Activity. This aspect relates to website traffic (unique visitors + returning visitors). Landing page view, new or returning visitors etc. (2) Traffic source. This aspect indicates that search terms of keywords, languages, location, media, email marketing, paid search or organic search have the most traffic for a website or campaign. The most important metrics in this category are channel traffic, including direct traffic (number of people visiting a site directly), referrals (external links from other sites), membership (visitors finding a website after a search), and social (visitors who access the site through a social media platform). (3) Type of Website Activity. Within this category, metrics to consider are login page, landing page, browser, platform, clicks, incoming links, average page time, and bounce rate. (4) Feedback and Results, in this category, digital marketers include generating leads (or user selection), most pages searched, number of downloads, requests for more information, Sales, ROI, brand awareness, content download, user engagement, and social media coverage and subscribers (blogs, emails, newsletters, etc.). (5) Integrated marketing metrics. Online businesses running digital inbound marketing campaigns in this category look at metrics like Cost of Acquisition (COCA), Customer Life Time Value (CLV), Retention Rate, Sales Lead Conversion Rate, and Score of the net advertiser (NPS). "References, profitability, revenue growth."

Digital Inbound Marketing Return on Investment

Because of this new concept of ROI formulation, it causes confusion for the use of benchmarks when running inbound marketing campaigns (Leefflang, 2014; Mishra, 2015). This will be a challenge in determining which perspective should be taken by MSMEs when determining the success of running digital inbound marketing campaigns, because with limited resources owned by MSME business owners must be able to optimize every penny spent to be closer to business goals holistically.

$$ROI = \frac{\text{Sales Generated by DIM} - \text{DIM Total Cost}}{\text{DIM Total Cost}} \times 100\%$$

Figure 4: ROI Formulation

Methodology

The primary method for this research was one-on-one interviews with a variety of MSME business owners who use internet-based media as their platform to sell products or services owned. This research, using qualitative data rather than quantitative data, consists of direct, interactive dialogues to produce a shared understanding, giving it validity and authenticity (Branthwaite & Patterson, 2011). Researchers chose participants based on convenience sampling.

In order to gain a large scope of current viewpoints, the author interviewed MSME business owners selling items with different characteristics and customer personalities. The sample included MSME businesses located in Bandung - Indonesia. The researcher sought to collect the viewpoints when executing their marketing strategy using digital inbound marketing methods to maximize their

business revenue. All perspectives and answers included in the qualitative data analysis offer a well-rounded view from each participant. Variety in product characteristics was a key component when choosing MSME business owners to interview.

The interview schedule was structured into the following 3 question sections with details of interview questions can be seen in appendix 1. The 3 sections of the interview schedule are:

- A. The first section of the participants will be asked about the activities of inbound marketing campaigns carried out on the businesses they manage. Researchers used a theory put forward by Patel and Chuggan (2018) to detail the activity of inbound marketing activities. Researchers use the principle of 5W + 1H communication to get answers in order to help researchers to catch the phenomena or symptoms presented by participants to assist researchers in answering research questions.
- B. The second section of the researcher will ask about sales data and cost structures arising from digital inbound marketing campaigns run by business owners. In this second session, researchers will also ask the actual state of business today (Pandemic Condition) and overall horizon timeframe. This second section of researchers wants to know in depth how inbound marketing performance is run by participants.
- C. The third section of the participants will be asked the improvised focus that wants to be done so that the inbound marketing campaign run by the participants is better. The researcher will ask in detail about the motivation and the results to be achieved from each improvisation that you want to do. The results of this third section will be used by researchers as material in making recommendations through the design thinking process.

In the first stage, the interview results are translated into transcripts. This text has been carefully read. So that the similarities and differences in the meaning of information can be identified (Miles and Huberman, 1994). In this way, we can provide a comprehensive understanding of phenomena and ideas capable of answering research questions. We define specific contexts and identify different themes and patterns in the data (VanWynsberghe and Khan, 2008). We then generate the initial code and classify the data.

To ensure research reliability, we used Maxqda software to encrypt data and create databases. We compared our original code with Maxqda results. There was no significant difference between our initial analysis and the Maxqda code results. In the analysis stage, several important statements made by participants during the interviews support our ideas.

Findings

All participants always make a goal before they run the campaign. Their goals make the campaign diverse that is tailored to the goals of the marketing strategy to be achieved. Specifically, if we look in more detail, there are 2 main objectives when the participants will conduct a campaign that is focused on their sales branding the product so that their product is widely known by prospective customers. There are two types of responses; the first participants are active even from the beginning of anticipating, and the second are reactive in responding to it and adjusting their campaigns in accordance with the symptoms that arise.

There are two different points of view from participants when looking at the success of a campaign; the first is a goal that approaches the branding aspect. The second is the number of sales or profits that can be generated by the campaign that is run. Participants

usually see ROI or the number of sales and cost per sale. This second point of view is the most mentioned by participants.

This is intended to make the target audience more interested in the products offered. The target audience has been validated in two ways. The first is through Whatsapp conversations; participants usually analyze the way customers communicate. The second way of validation is through split testing. At this stage, the target audience is closer to the goal of the participant conducting this campaign which will be exploited for the next campaign. All participants matched the content used in inbound campaigns with a target audience based on demographics and psychographics.

The message contains core messages, promos, pain, and gain from the audience and describes the product value that the customer will

enjoy. Participants who create an audience based on customer journey usually use the audience to be used in retargeting campaigns and become similar audiences that can be used as targeting the next campaign so that business owners can have more variety for the target audience. For viewers who do not do this, when this audience is used as targeting for inbound campaigns, the results are unsatisfactory, and the recorded event is still small, so the results are bad, how to make it usually by branding all visitor activity with tracking tools stored on the website and provide the data to platforms where to advertise to be a similar audience.

All the participants interviewed stated that all had a website. Websites are currently considered very important to support the marketing strategy of business leaders who use online company start-ups. Website functions known from the interview participants include To transfer or checkout of the purchase process, branding and representing the business's identity, increase the sense of trust of the business because by having a website, the business is considered credible, Save the customer database Convey information in detail. Most participants have not optimized their SEO; the reason most often stated is because the SEO process requires large resources, the time it takes is quite long, and the level of process complexity is high. The growth of large marketplaces today, such as Shopee, Tokopedia, Lazada, makes it difficult for small and medium-sized business owners to compete in terms of ranking improvements in search engines. To accommodate the needs of customers when searching for keywords related to managed business, business owners take several steps, including By participating in listing their products in large marketplaces so that when customers search for related keywords, their products will appear represented by SEO represented by the marketplace Registering their business on google my business, In addition to improving SEO, it is also useful to increase the trust of prospect customers Using plugins on their websites to improve their SEO score one of them is named YOASt. Participants communicate regularly with their existing customers and consider this process important to support their business. Media used to communicate with existing customers is usually Whatsapp, Email, social media, and Messages sent via live chat on the marketplace.

Urgency to make regular communication with customer arises will be even greater if the business model built requires personal touch in communicating with their customers. Expensive products sold also require businesses to communicate with customers more regularly. The participants gave a good statement about the results obtained to generate sales when they routinely communicated with their existing customers. Participants all used paid ads, but most participants focused on Facebook ads.

According to participants, the advantages of Facebook ads are easy to use, quick results obtained, results that can be tracked in real time, AI that can be more precise in providing impressions to a potential target audience, providing a manual book that can be read before the business owner starts the process of buying traffic, the cost to start is relatively small. Google ads are used by substitute participants in SEO optimization, so that websites can appear on the first page of search engines and to retarget because of their ability to reach potential customers in many places. All participants claimed to have social media and stated that social media is one of the crucial platforms in supporting inbound marketing campaigns. The first function of social media mentioned is as a communication media between brands and customers.

When managed social media provides complete information for customers, social media will be able to provide a sense of trust in customers when deciding to buy products. Most participants have plans to update content on their social media. The planning usually follows a marketing strategy as the month progresses or rigidly follows the theme set by the business owner. Before creating content, it usually starts by validating the target market, looking at insights from Instagram business or sampling from one of the followers and then checking for demographics and psychographics.

The purpose of business owners when their website appears in the word search engine usually Visit the website to be guided to do conversions in accordance with the pre-planned settings Connect to Whatsapp admin to be given details of the products or services offered Visiting managed social media Offline conversion is specific to brands that have optimized omnichannel, for example, to visit the store to make the purchase process.

All participants expressed that landing page optimization is more optimal for conversion rate results. Some channels that connect to customer service from the website are Whatsapp most widely used by participants because it has been widely used, and the results can be tracked in real-time by providing a phone number that visitors can access. This is as a filter for visitors because visitors who contact via phone number usually have greater conversion potential Live chat application installing a live chat application on the website minimizes the risk of visitors leaving the landing page, if the visitors leave the website, there is a possibility, they do not finish the checkout process.

Several participants provide more than one communication channel on the website, which is intended to make it easier for customers to make choices when communicating with customer service. To find out website visitors' behavior, business owners usually use a tracking tool that records visitor data and presents it in the form of statistical data. The most useful metric when conducting a campaign is CPR according to the campaign's purpose. Most participants have a sales goal when they conduct a campaign; the matrix related to Economic Return is the most important matrix in conducting the campaign. Usually, the matrix is The Amount of Sales Cost per Sale Return on Investment.

After optimizing online marketing strategies using inbound marketing methods, participants' businesses are not affected by pandemic conditions that many small businesses experience a decrease in sales. Even participants stated at the time of the pandemic managed businesses experienced an increase in sales. Inbound marketing methods are also very helpful for business owners to continue to grow overall since the business was founded. As for participants who experienced a decrease in sales they revealed the reason for products that are easily found in the marketplace so as to increase the level of competition. Decreased level of purchasing power so that with targeted profit margin the product becomes difficult to absorb by the market.

Participant	Total Sales	Product Price	Margin	Gross Profit	Total Cost	Net Profit	ROI
Participant 1	750	Rp200.000	50%	Rp75.000.000	Rp60.500.000	Rp14.500.000	23,97%
Participant 2	3500	Rp150.000	30%	Rp157.500.000	Rp104.000.000	Rp53.500.000	51,44%
Participant 3	1000	Rp150.000	50%	Rp75.000.000	Rp40.150.000	Rp34.850.000	86,80%
Participant 4	1000	Rp150.000	50%	Rp75.000.000	Rp35.000.000	Rp42.000.000	127,27%
Participant 5	1500	Rp150.000	50%	Rp112.500.000	Rp50.500.000	Rp68.750.000	136,34%
Participant 6	400	Rp200.000	50%	Rp40.000.000	Rp10.500.000	Rp29.500.000	290,95%
Participant 7	3	Rp5.000.000	50%	Rp7.500.000	Rp3.500.000	Rp4.000.000	114,29%
Participant 8	500	Rp100.000	50%	Rp25.000.000	Rp10.750.000	Rp14.250.000	132,56%
Participant 9	20	Rp15.000.000	5%	Rp25.000.000	Rp3.000.000	Rp12.000.000	400,00%
Participant 10	500	Rp180.000	50%	Rp45.000.000	Rp18.000.000	Rp27.000.000	150,00%

Table 1: History of Sales and Cost from All Participants

Discussion

The main purpose of this research is to find out the successful application of digital inbound marketing methods and sub-objectives that are divided into two, first finding the competitive advantages of inbound marketing digital campaign activities and knowing ideal goals and how to measure from inbound marketing digital campaigns. In this discussion section, researchers will give an interpretation of the findings obtained. This will illustrate the relevance to the research and connect with others research that has already been done.

How successful is the implementation of digital inbound marketing campaign activities in the MSME business?

From the beginning of the activity, the participants had carefully planned the results to be achieved in this case because participants managed the MSME business, and most participants got financial results. Some participants make campaign planning with the target of introducing the brand they manage, but the campaign is a campaign before finally the campaign to sell the products they have. The participants already knew they had to have a backup strategy when their goal planning did not work out perfectly. In this case, participants had enough strategies if this happened. They think actively even before the campaign begins and the strategy has been formulated. Reactive strategies usually wait for the results of the campaign after a while; if the results are not in accordance with the expected, participants usually take further action following which

element is most crucial.

Customer persona made is good enough so that the target audience has a relationship with the product or service offered. The participants could think overall about a person's motivation for the goods offered. This can be seen when participants create a target audience based on the demographics and psychographics of the participants. The customer persona that has been made is usually translated into a "keyword" when the participants make the customer persona target audience in inbound marketing campaigns. The keywords are distributed to SEO or Google search engines and become a specific interest in Facebook and Instagram ads so that artificial intelligence ad platforms can find the best audience to convert. The variety of target audience participants is still relatively lacking in making custom audiences based on customer journey events—the many benefits of creating this custom audience. The most useful is that business owners can create an audience similar to the custom audience. It can be imagined if business owners make targeting from advertising platforms, purchase events will provide a precise audience similar to previous customers who have made purchases. With this, the probability of the campaign will provide sales will be greater.

SEO is perhaps the most classic source of traffic in digital marketing, in which case the participants stated they were not focused on optimizing SEO. Furthermore, the participants expressed difficulty in optimizing SEO because it takes technical expertise, resources needed relatively bigger, and the waiting time until it produces results, is long. Business owners more deeply explain to anticipate falling behind away from their competitors by utilizing simpler things. First, they utilize google my business. Second, large marketplace resources (Shopee, Lazada, Tokopedia, Bukalapak) in supporting their SEO, and third, use plugins on websites. The participants said it was not to make the keywords appear on the first page but only to help their SEO score was not too far behind the competitor.

To provide more stable traffic, participants usually buy ads or what we more often know as "paid traffic". The platforms typically use Google Ads to help managed brands perform when search engine users are doing something relevant to their business or conducting retargeting campaigns due to Google wide platform reach. The second platform is Facebook & Instagram ads are the most widely used by participants to support traffic for their business. Business owners reveal the advantages of Facebook and Instagram ads. Broadly speaking, the advantage of Facebook and Instagram ads is artificial intelligence. They have more precision in mapping which audience is suitable for interest in the products offered, so the budget for ads issued is more appropriate.

In digital marketing, the website is the epicentre to support all activities that support sales (Bezovski, 2015). All business owners who are participants all have a website and state that the existence of the website is vital in supporting their business. More deeply the participants are aware of the landing page structure, the participants make improvements to the elements on the landing page, so that the expected conversion rate becomes more optimal. Starting from color pallets, call to action buttons and copywriting. They pay attention to these elements so that visitors are more comfortable when on the landing page. Website optimization / landing page conducted by the participants has guidance derived from website analytics (Saura et al. 2015). Website analytics is installed on the website and records all visitor activity that occurs on the website in real time. When the analytics website provides statistical data, the data is used as a guide for the improvement area.

The existence of social media today has become very important because of its range and access capabilities by almost everyone (Varma et al. 2020). This is in line with the findings of researchers who found that all participants had and felt very importance for the existence of social media. In addition to being one of the mediums in communicating with customers, social media is used as a place in playing and explaining products to be sold through uploaded content. For content planning uploaded, most participants have good planning. 8 out of 10 participants said they always plan about the content material. In creating content, participants always adjust to the background of customers or followers by looking at reporting insights on Business Instagram or by paying attention to the activities carried out by followers by sampling taken randomly. With content

with a high level of conformity with customers, it is expected that customers become more united with the brand to produce high interaction in the content itself. This is in line with the theory of inbound marketing by Baltes (2016) which prioritizes the quality of content compared to continuously attracting new followers but low interaction.

In communicating with existing customers, participants do it regularly. The media used is usually through social media, Whatsapp. What should be a concern in nurturing leads or existing customers is the automation of the use of email, even though the use of email is very useful in conveying information because it can be more detailed in conveying information and can include videos or images of products that help explain the information conveyed. Most participants use Whatsapp to communicate with existing customers or prospective customers, and this can have a less good impact because the use of Whatsapp requires dedicated customer service that must always be ready to reply to messages. This is more complicated for participant operations. One thing that can overcome this complexity is using chatbots that have not been used optimally by participants. With customer service needs being crucial, the manpower factor should be a concern for participants when they scale up.

Content information provided in the form is usually in the form of notifications about the launch of new products, promotions that are being implemented by the business, and informative content about the product, such as product usage tutorials or ways of product maintenance. The three types of content are fused together to maximize a business's revenue potential, either from leads to customers or causing repeat orders from existing customers.

The success of applying inbound marketing methods can be reflected in the sales history data presented by business owners who apply inbound marketing and experience positive sales results and ROI. That means the participants' inbound marketing activities are close to ideal in the scope of financial return. More deeply, inbound marketing is proven to help business owners develop the business they manage. With the ease of access the business owner has and the resources needed are relatively simpler, digital inbound marketing methods help MSME compete in the Indonesian e-commerce market. Even the participants stated that at the time of the pandemic, their sales also increased in line with the increase in sales of large e-commerce marketplaces and anomaly with the decline in business conditions.

What competitive advantages of digital inbound marketing activities make it successful?

The word "customer" becomes something most widely mentioned by participants and has always been the basis for all activities related to inbound marketing elements. Using the inbound marketing framework, business owners think more customer-centric in accordance with the inbound marketing flywheel as in figure 2. That puts the customer at the center of all activities in inbound marketing. From the first activity is to find a segment of consumers that match the product or service they offer, place content that suits their interests and communicate according to their habits. This will give birth to unity between the brand and the customer which will eventually result in ease in converting prospective customers and make existing customers more loyal. (Hollebeek and Macky, 2019). In marketing, attention to customers is one of the main pillars from the beginning to the present. Therefore, the entire marketing process is constantly looking to inform customers, motivate them with the company and its products, make purchasing decisions, and integrate them with the company's brand. In traditional marketing, customer focus is sometimes interrupted by the product focus on the company's marketing strategy. In inbound marketing, the real identity of the customer remains in focus. An effective communication strategy should be developed based on customer needs. As mentioned by Baltes (2016), it is not enough to only use content that only encourages buying products because the "Golden Rule" must be 80% using content that provides information and education to consumers, while content that focuses on sales creation is only 20%. Inbound marketing can improve the customer experience during the customer journey by communicating, which evokes emotion and provides value for customers. At this point, the first thing to do is to define the buyer persona; the buyer persona is the fictional

representation of the consumer base and is essential in communicating to the target audience. It is a character with the common traits and interests of those potential customers most likely to engage with the firm. While grounded in traditional segmentation, the persona takes on characteristics of the target audience. It looks to understand not just demographic and professional components but also the goals and challenges they face. The buyer persona looks to understand their values, how they get their information, and the challenges they face with achieving their goals either personally or It asks what the specific priorities and goals are relating to the concerns causing their search. What is driving them and how do they approach their challenges? By understanding both the personal values and motivations and intentions, the business leaders can differentiate and understand the value of its content for the particular target addressing customer needs beyond profits.

The next step is understanding the concerns of the persona. This means investigating the barriers the persona may have to solve a problem. It may be internal resistance to change, industry barriers, internal costs, or a lack of solutions. One way to identify the issues is to picture a day in the persona's life. Creating a narrative around the daily struggles and relationships the persona has can help marketers gain insight into their target base. If other personas naturally occur during this process, they should also be developed. This approach must be well thought-out as it may run the risk of being too broad or too methodical and narrow. As such, the inbound marketer must distinguish between being detailed enough about common traits without becoming blinded to new characteristics that might occur and attracting more customers.

What are the main goals that businesses should achieve, and what metrics are relevant as a guide to ensuring success when running a digital inbound marketing campaign?

All campaigns are always objective; in the case of this study, because examining business owners on the scale of MSME, the participants all focused on the ultimate goal of getting an economic return. Some participants aim to get awareness or engagement but the goal is usually the preliminary goal before the end goal of the business is to get revenue. In accordance with what is said by Nobel Prize-winning economist Milton Friedman 1962 once wrote that there is the business only social responsibility - to use its resources and participate in activities aimed at increasing profits, as long as it remains within the rules of the game, namely to participate in the open and free competition without cheating.

Determining which metrics are the benchmark for success when running inbound marketing campaigns will largely depend on what goals the business owner wants to achieve. When business owners run a campaign for brand awareness campaign success can be tracked with metrics ads recall lift; when business owners run campaigns to provoke interaction then the metrics that are used as a benchmark is the number of new followers or metric the number of likes, comments or clicks for the content that is being campaigned. Due to all the noise to measuring success when running inbound marketing campaigns, owners should be able to get clarity about the measurement of success of inbound marketing campaigns, the most crucial is how companies set the most appropriate metrics to measure the ability of the inbound marketing program they run in terms of the ability to bring in revenue or economic return that becomes blood for the business to keep running. Often paradoxes happen when a campaign has good social metrics such as getting good interaction, and the number of many and cheap clicks must still be run? This is very dependent on the internal condition of each business, but because of limited resources, this if left continuously, will cause leakage in terms of costs.

Researchers concluded that the participants were right in determining the important matrix to see the success of inbound marketing campaigns. The majority of participants see total sales and sales costs as the most obvious metrics when measuring success. This is in line with what was revealed by Friedman (1962) that the main task of the business is to make a profit. This is contrary to what was stated by Leeflang (2014) It is not easy to measure the financial impact when running an online marketing campaign.

The use of the ROI is one of the cases mentioned in relation to profit analysis. One of the most practical ways to measure ROI is through

the 3D module analysis framework, which provides a model for understanding the complexities of calculating ROI. This framework states that only certain categories or units of online marketing analysis can be effectively measured in terms of ROI. The first criterion, which reflects the output level of the sales funnel, can be calculated in financial terms - other criteria reflect the higher values of the funnel and are increasingly excluded from financial ROI. For example: comments, "likes", or impressions resulting from online campaigns, changed by real sales, this will negate the complexity of calculating ROI and provide more precise results in calculating the profitability of inbound marketing campaigns. (Jobs & Gilfoil, 2014).

Researchers argue that ROI is not a Golden Rule when executing a business marketing strategy; as already mentioned in paragraph 5 of this chapter that the main task of a business entity is to create profit; when a business limits itself to ROI, then the business will leave money at the table. To explain this, the researcher will use data from table 1 by comparing 2 participants who have a high level of similarity, namely participant 2 with participant 6. The table shows that participant 6 has a higher ROI of 8 times compared to participant 2, but when viewed from the net profit of participant 2 gets a greater net profit with a difference of almost Rp20,750,000 per month. It will be different if participant 2 makes ROI the main benchmark when running inbound marketing. Participant 2 will lose the potential to get additional benefits because of the smaller ROI compared to participant 6. From this case we can know one more type of cost arises when running inbound marketing campaigns, namely opportunity costs. Opportunity cost arises when the algorithms of a platform such as "Hummingbird" on Google or "EdgeRank" on Facebook which all use Artificial Intelligence by leveraging big data that they have, is optimizing or learning for our campaigns.

At the time of the learning process, sometimes they give a target that is less potential. Their way to learn is to provide random clicks and monitor each audience's attention using tracking tools, where business owners must still pay each click. The amount of opportunity cost is adjusted to the tolerance level of each business owner, they must carefully calculate the internal state of their business for the resources owned and calculate the potential strength of their product to be converted into sales which is often called conversion rate.

In accordance with the findings that have been found by researchers, namely, customer-centric which becomes the competitive advantage of inbound marketing and best fit the goal of inbound marketing campaigns from MSME business actors is to maximize sales or economic return. The recommendations will enrich both of these things, so it is expected to impact providing benefits to MSME significantly.

The first recommendation is to apply Multi-Armed Bandit (MAB) campaign methods When running any campaign, it is important for advertisers to gauge early on which creative variations are outperforming others in order to optimize and shift budget towards the better-performing variations to increase ROI. In a standard A/B test experiment, we want to measure the likelihood that one variant of a campaign is truly more effective than another while controlling the probability that our measurement is mistaken, either that we think there is a winner when there is not or that we miss detecting the winning variant. In a given experiment, we measure the mean conversion rate for each variant, but we know that the mean is only an estimate of the "conversion rate". Depending on the number of observations we have, we may be more or less confident in the value of the estimate, and we can represent this confidence using an interval where the true value might be found. However, waiting for the intervals to separate can take a long time.

The second recommendation to conduct a contest for user-generated content, one of which clearly mentions the definition of UGC is User-generated content (UGC) is any content text, videos, images, or reviews. Created by people rather than brands. Moreover, brands often share UGC on their social media accounts, website, and other marketing channels. Based on observation reports conducted by photoslurp, content UGC provides 5X greater impact to generate conversions when a campaign is run.

The third recommendation is to use a customer-oriented approach to product development strategy. In today's competitive market environment, companies are increasingly faced with the challenge of product improvement to bring new products to market faster than

competitors (Lewrick, 2008). This phenomenon has become a strategic imperative for many companies. An organization's ability to introduce new products faster, more frequently, and with higher quality is a clear competitive advantage (Liker et al. 1999).

Based on the Management Association study cited from Barczak et al. (2009) it was found that 15% of product ideas were successfully marketed in the market. The product design process is an iterative process. Doing design activities means redefining and redesigning. Customer requirements and stakeholder interpretations may be reviewed and redefined due to obvious discrepancies. Of course, coordination and communication are critical to dealing with the implementation of this iterative process, and they are proven tools for improving new product development.

The fourth recommendation is to create an intuitive custom dashboard by leveraging Big Data. The future of all industries depends heavily on companies benefiting from big data and analytics. In the digital community, we can buy goods and services remotely. These companies can invest in big data, analytics, and other customer tracking technologies, deploy low-cost operating systems on the various devices that store this collected data and offer business practices unique experiences to accommodate market downturns. Big data can also look for problems at the macro level by estimating large amounts of microdata using new tools armed with semi-organized and unregulated data (Agarwal & Dhar, 2014).

The fifth recommendation is to create landing pages and copywriting inside using the AIDA framework. Today all businesses are presented in some way on the web, but not all know how to get the most out of their web. Many business websites are created in the form of an information portal and a description of their products and services. This name stands for four words: interest, affection, desire, and action. Although it has been around for a long time, it has not lost its relevance. Businesses often create landing pages tailored to specific products or services to keep visitors coming in and transform them into leads. The landing page not only receives important information to the audience but also reaches expectations and collects their contacts for completion.

The sixth recommendation is to use CRM software. Inbound marketing is about building personal relationships that have a long-lasting impact on visitors and brands. With the right tools, businesses can create personalized journeys for current and future customers, adding value to the user experience for individual visitors. Real-time customization with your marketing automation tools allows companies to use what they know about prospects to create targeted experiences. All customers are unique, so a targeted journey increases the likelihood that consumers will find a service that fits their needs.

Conclusions

This research aims to discover in depth the successful application of digital inbound marketing methods and determine the basis of the success of digital inbound marketing methods. The digital inbound marketing method expected can be widely implemented by MSME businesses. Therefore, researchers use the qualitative method to dig and find the purpose of the study. Data retrieval is done by conducting semi-structured interviews. Sampling participants amounted to 10 people selected by the purposive sampling method. All participants are MSME business owners who rely on digital inbound marketing methods as a source of marketing channels. Successful implementation of digital inbound marketing methods is considered quite successful. MSME business owners have carried out all digital inbound marketing activities in accordance with their resources. When the process goes well, it will produce good results, reflected in their positive sales following table .1. Furthermore, based on the research results, digital inbound marketing methods successfully help business owners grow their businesses. Even in pandemic conditions, digital inbound marketing methods successfully help increase sales. Because of the success in this case, the digital inbound marketing method becomes promising when applied by other MSME business owners. The thing that needs to be highlighted here is the lack of focus of business owners in managing the SEO process.

Successful application of digital inbound marketing methods is because digital inbound marketing methods have two important elements: the target audience, which must be clearly defined and

content that must match with the target audience. By placing customers at the centre of inbound marketing digital activities, as illustrated in the Digital Inbound Marketing Flywheel, business owners think from the customer's point of view or often called "customer-centric". This customer-centric shortness provides the best-fit output strategy for each intended target audience.

In setting goals when conducting digital inbound marketing campaigns, digital inbound marketing practitioners must adjust to the goals of the organization in general. More specifically, because in this research, the participants are MSME business owners, digital inbound marketing methods focus on providing the benefits of effective and effective economic returns. The success of these goals must be monitored by appropriate metrics and support the achievement of increased revenue goals. For efficiency in conducting digital inbound marketing campaigns, many measures with indicator return on investment. Because of the many metrics presented on website analytics, many researchers have previously expressed difficulties in assessing online ROI. In this case, researchers have provided a 3D ROI analysis approach.

Researchers provide recommendations based on interviews with participants. This is intended so that the recommendations given are appropriate to the needs of the participants. The details of the recommendations provided are: (1) Create a contest to create a UGC, (2) Apply Multi-Armed Bandit campaign methods (3) Producing own products using the customer-oriented approach to product development strategy, (4) Create an intuitive custom dashboard by leveraging Big Data, (5) Create landing pages and copywriting inside using the AIDA framework, (6) Using CRM software.

Managerial Implications

When comparing online marketing and traditional marketing, traditional marketing is ineffective and expensive, and new and effective online marketing strategies should be used to produce strong business results. However, by looking at the inbound marketing method as a whole and setting clear goals from every step a business takes, it will be easier to get measurable results from inbound marketing methods. Digital Inbound marketing offers a holistic approach to the traffic source, which eliminates bad dependency if the business relies on only one traffic source.

Academic Contributions

One of the benefits of internet development is the equalization of media access. MSME businesses can reach prospective customers more efficiently and turn them into customers with strategies tailored to the resources owned by the MSME business itself. Furthermore, researchers are looking for competitive advantages from digital inbound marketing methods. What is known from the data findings is (Customer-Centric), which can be deepened or adapted when a business entity implements inbound marketing. Where requires a more in-depth theoretical contribution from academics

Future Research

Due to the limitations of this research by taking only ten samples, future research should include more sampling that is carried out with a qualitative or quantitative approach. Future research should make a real contribution to facing the challenges and difficulties for practitioners applying digital inbound marketing methods. Future research should also enlighten digital inbound marketing practitioners about optimizing the cost structure. It is hoped that the optimal cost structure will provide efficient results and maximum economic returns for practitioners.

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