

## Research Article

# Developing Digital Marketing During the Covid-19 Pandemic in Indonesia

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**Abstract:** The emergence of the covid-19 virus has caused various new problems in different countries, including Indonesia. Many office activities have started to apply to the work-from-home policy. This then causes various industrial activities to experience disruption. In addition, many business people complain because of social distancing, so there is a significant decrease in human interaction. These things then make it difficult for business owners to survive. Digital marketing can then be presented as a solution to this problem. This study aims to see the implementation of digital marketing developments during the pandemic. This research was conducted using a qualitative approach through data obtained from various research results and previous studies. The results of this study found that ten digital marketing strategies can be applied during the current Covid-19 pandemic, namely: staying connected with customers/clients, making sure businesses are easy to find on the internet, using pay-per-click (PPC) advertising, making sure digital assets are continuously updated, prepare the company to bounce back, find good opportunities to provide discounts, optimize 'local SEO, be flexible and apply the most relevant strategies, stay calm and don't panic, and stay positive, this situation will get better soon.

**Keywords:** Covid-19 Pandemic, Digital Marketing, Business.

## A. INTRODUCTION

Digital-based marketing has been developing for a long time. However, towards 2020, marketing techniques in Indonesia are experiencing very significant developments, especially in digital marketing. Digital marketing in Indonesia is increasingly reaching out widely in the market or marketing world, with extraordinary results. Digital developments in Indonesia evidence this, one of which is shown by social media in which the Indonesian state is listed as a user country that is always active every day (Tayibnapi et al., 2018).

So, it is likely to increase when talking about the development of digital marketing in Indonesia next year. This is because many people or even large companies have started to use digital marketing and expand their marketing without eliminating the old method, which is considered ineffective but can still contribute to income for the company. With increasingly diverse digital platforms, it is inevitable that in 2020 the digital marketing trend will increase, and many users will optimize the use of digital media for business (Wang & Goldfarb, 2017).

Digital marketing in Indonesia will continue to be a trend in 2020 because digital marketing can increase awareness. Still, it can also channel the advantages a company or brand possesses. So don't be surprised if, in 2020, many users will use digital media-based marketing (Kramarczyk & Alemany Oliver, 2020). Additionally, the current pattern of competition shown by users is focused on advertising in the digital world. So that next year, these users will focus on expanding the range of promotions to optimize the cultivation of a brand or company image so that they can invite visitors to make the goods or services offered by the brand or company essential to buy (Thorson & Wells, 2016).

In 2020, we can take an overview from 2019, where in that year, digital marketing was carried out by way of content that could be said to be quite dull for a timeline on social media.

Therefore, it is likely that in 2020 this method will be abandoned and replaced with a different one (Chan et al., 2020). Marketers produce content that can attractively represent a brand or company and increase the benefits of a product or service. So, it's not only content containing hard selling that only sells the price. So, with this new method, it is considered more worth it to attract digital market share so that they are interested in the brand or company (Ashley & Tuten, 2015).

Because the majority of visitors tend to feel bored with marketing content that is massive or too passive and only sells with lots of gimmicks that sit there. In addition, a lot of content does not prioritize original values, which gives the impression of plagiarism, so it appears that marketing from one another has similarities that are not much different (Player-Koro et al., 2018). So, by looking at this, marketers and companies must overcome the challenges of producing creative content with a more soft selling nature to be used next year. So that users or visitors feel happy with what is owned and offered by the brand or company (Andersson & Wikstrom, 2017).

In the current digital era, marketing trends continue to evolve alongside the development of ever-more-advanced technology and the expansion of the internet. Digital marketing exists as an invention in the marketing industry. Digital marketing is the promotion of a product or service through digital media or the internet. Given the increasing number of internet users in Indonesia, digital marketing has evolved tremendously (Kumar & Gupta, 2016). According to a study conducted by the Association of Indonesian Internet Service Users (APJII), the penetration and behavior of internet users in Indonesia are increasing by 10 percent annually. In 2017, there were 143.25 million internet users. It is not surprising that digital marketing in Indonesia can develop swiftly in terms of product promotion (Wijayanto & Prabowo, 2020).

Content marketplace service GetCraft released a report on developing digital marketing in Indonesia. Digital marketing trends that continue to change from time to time make us wise to see opportunities to take advantage of them (Kalogeropoulos & Nielsen, 2018). The following is a report from GetCraft about the current development of digital marketing in Indonesia:

1. Email is the most effective platform for digital marketing

According to data from Radicati, there are approximately 2.8 billion people who use email as a tool to communicate digitally. In marketing, email is also very effective because it can increase ROI. With so many email users worldwide, email is still considered the most effective marketing platform. Then followed by advertising on social media, content marketing, and influencer marketing (Kannan, 2017).

2. Digital platforms have great opportunities

Based on a survey from GetCraft, content marketing, mobile platforms, and consumer experience are the three most significant categories that can still be explored more deeply. These three things can be linked to each other to have high marketing potential using the proper integration process. With technological developments, increasingly high internet speeds, many marketing tools, and trends that are constantly changing with the market, digital marketing will become one of the most effective marketing methods. It will gradually shift other marketing methods (Ozdamar Ertekin & Atik, 2015).

3. Challenges in digital marketing

According to his analysis, the greatest obstacles for marketers in Indonesia are limited cash, a lack of skills, and inadequate resources. As for advertisers, the difficulty is a lack of comprehension of digital marketing's objective. Approximately fifty percent of advertisers do not comprehend efficient corporate marketing strategies. As a result, the

majority of digital marketing material focuses on brand awareness rather than direct sales. Numerous factors must be examined in order to effectively apply digital marketing to boost corporate earnings. Digital marketing follows the market at all times. In digital marketing, given the current state of affairs, we need simply a suitable plan and a determination of how far marketing tactics may evolve using existing digital marketing instruments (Bae & Zamrudi, 2018).

Through the brief explanation above, the researcher then intends to examine how developments occurred in digital marketing when the covid pandemic was happening in Indonesia.

## **B. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **1. Marketing Concept**

Marketing is a managerial process that enables individuals or organizations to obtain what they desire and require by generating, offering, and exchanging value products with other parties, or any actions involving the distribution of goods or services to consumers. This marketing strategy tries to attract new customers by providing higher value, establishing appealing prices, efficiently distributing products or services, effectively promoting, and maintaining existing customers while adhering to customer satisfaction standards.

The marketing concept holds that achieving organizational goals is more effective than competitors in integrating marketing activities to determine and satisfy the needs and wants of marketing objectives. In this case, the marketing concept focuses on meeting consumer needs through products and everything related to the products' creation, exchange, delivery, and consumption (Moravcikova et al., 2017).

Of the four pillars of the basic marketing concept, marketing here is oriented from the outside in. This concept begins by defining the market well, focusing on customer needs, integrating all activities affecting customers, and generating profits through customer focus (Bruhn & Schnebelen, 2017).

Before determining the target market, the company must group or divide the market into different groups of buyers. It may require other products and marketing strategies, and this is called market segmentation. The next step is to determine the target market, after deciding the target market means evaluating the effectiveness of each segment and then selecting one or more market segments to serve. The way to define the target market is by developing the size and attractiveness of the segment and then selecting the desired target segment (Lei & Moon, 2015). There are two activities used in determining the target market, namely:

- a) Market segment evaluation
  - 1) Segment size and growth, such as income and lifestyle of each segment.
  - 2) An attractive segment structure in terms of profitability, threats from substitute products, and threats from strong and aggressive competitors.
  - 3) Targets and available resources such as the availability of human resources.

- b) Selecting a segment

Selecting a segment means determining one or more segments that have high value for the company and then specifying which segments and how many can be served by the company.

Next is customer needs. Customer needs are the same as human needs in general. In this case, customer needs can be classified according to several aspects: the level of importance, nature, time, and subject. According to the level of significance, customer needs are divided into three, namely primary needs, secondary (complementary needs), and tertiary needs (needs for luxury goods) (Chen et al., 2015). According to its nature, customer needs can be divided into two: physical needs (needs related to the customer's physical) such as food and spiritual

needs (needs related to the customer's psychological) such as vacations. According to the time, customer needs are divided into current needs (needs that cannot be postponed) and future needs (non-urgent needs are immediately met). And according to the subject, customer needs can be classified into individual and collective or group needs (Terblanche, 2018).

There are two critical themes in integrated marketing: first, many different marketing activities communicate and deliver value. Second, when the coordinating process, marketing activities maximize their combined effect. The last marketing concept is profit through customer satisfaction, which means that if customer satisfaction is met or the company can meet customer expectations through the products offered, satisfaction is the profit earned by the company (Keller, 2016). This is very different from sales. Sales will only focus on material profits (measured in money) but what is meant by profit in marketing is consumer (user) satisfaction arising from the product. This is because, in addition to pleasing consumers with their products, customer satisfaction will give life to the company, and consumers will believe in it. In short, sales are only focused on the company's short-term goals and vice versa, and marketing is oriented to the company's long-term goals (Otto et al., 2020).

Marketing is a managerial process that enables individuals or organizations to obtain what they desire and require by generating, offering, and exchanging value products with other parties, or any actions involving the distribution of goods or services to consumers. This marketing strategy intends to attract new customers by providing higher value, establishing appealing prices, distributing items or services simply, promoting successfully, and maintaining existing customers while adhering to customer satisfaction standards (Eloranta & Turunen, 2016).

## **2. Digital Marketing**

Digital Marketing is a modern form of marketing that represents a new hope and breakthrough for the firm and is anticipated to have a good impact on the organization. Digital marketing enables companies to engage directly with potential consumers regardless of time and place constraints. Digital marketing is one of the most effective strategies to reduce clutter and engage directly with customers (Herhausen et al., 2020). According to Saifuddin, digital marketing is the use of electronic technology, particularly in the form of information technology, to conduct all business processes, such as purchasing and selling products, services, and information, raising demand, and providing customers with a digital touch (Leeraphong & Papisratom, 2018).

Thus, it can be stated that digital marketing is one of the promotional activities and market research conducted online using digital media and numerous techniques, including social networks. This is due to the fact that the virtual world may connect not only individuals with technology, but also people with other people from around the world (Gunawan & Sulaeman, 2020).

## **C. METHOD**

The type of research used in this research is qualitative research with a descriptive approach, namely describing or describing existing phenomena, both natural and human engineering. The data collection technique used in this research is a literature study (library research) by conducting theoretical studies and references related to the research conducted. Analysis of the data used in this study was carried out by reducing, displaying, and verifying data.

## **D. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **1. Impacts and Changes in the Business Industry Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic**

Since December 31, 2019, until now, the Coronavirus or Covid-19 has infected more than 119 thousand people and brought the death of more than 4,000 people in 119 countries. Seeing the current conditions, of course, we feel panicked, afraid, and wary of the very fast spread of this virus. Given the rapid spread, one way to protect yourself from this coronavirus is to diligently wash your hands with soap, avoid crowds, take vitamins, and use masks when traveling outside the house.

Since its emergence, the coronavirus has significantly impacted various industries. For example, the airline industry is currently in a slump because many flights have been canceled, and more than 50 airlines worldwide have suspended flights in and out of their respective countries. In addition to the airline industry, the Tourism Industry also experienced a very significant decline. Many countries have banned tourists from certain countries, especially China, South Korea, Italy, and others, to avoid spreading the coronavirus.

Tri Raharjo, chairman of Trans Co Indonesia, stated that the coronavirus pandemic had affected various commercial sectors in Indonesia. Workshops, restaurants, salons, spas, properties, mice, tour & travel, hotels, transportation, flights, malls, fashion, and several other company sectors have the potential to see a revenue downturn. Nonetheless, according to Tri, a number of business sectors have the potential to be stable and grow, including health products required during a pandemic, e-commerce, minimarkets, essential food stores, pharmacies, herbal shops, internet service providers, video conferencing services, learning from home applications, and others.

According to Sequoia Capital, the current condition is the Black Swan 2020. A condition in which all industries experience a decline, especially the economy. Like a seesaw, the other side must be on top when one side is below. This also applies to current conditions in the business area. When industry one experiences a decline, industries will undoubtedly be at the top.

A marketer must be able to see all opportunities under any conditions. The current example is Zoom. Zoom is a service provider for virtual meetings, conferences, webinars, etc. Their stock has skyrocketed from early January until today, and the increase is more or less almost 100%. This happens because of current conditions that do not allow people to hold meetings in person and choose to conduct meetings virtually with Zoom.

A business person in any industry must realize that one day there will be a season like this, where everything changes. Many significant events in the world have been canceled, such as Facebook's (FB) F8 conference and SXSW, which for 35 years they have been canceled due to current conditions. So, the effect can be felt enormous.

Considering that nowadays, people choose to stay at home, a new habit has emerged: doing everything digitally and virtually, such as virtual meetings and communicating with clients online through marketing channels. One example of conditions undergoing this change is the advertising industry. Currently, people avoid crowded areas usually filled with billboard advertising. This industry has made several changes to survive, such as switching to digital advertising through social media ads, email marketing campaigns, etc. This, of course, will more or less still help them to do advertising.

### **2. Digital Marketing: As a Business Solution during the Covid-19 Pandemic**

Coronavirus is very easy to spread and spread. However, participation can be done to prevent and reduce its spread. One way that can be done is to apply "Social Distance". Social distance is an action to minimize contact with other people and avoid doing activities in crowds. Here are 3 (three) forms of social distancing that need to be done:

- a. Avoid crowds, for example, situations, activities, or large events that many people attend (crowded).
- b. Reducing the use of public transportation.
- c. And study or work at home for a while.

In Indonesia, this has also been implemented and recommended by the government. Many have stayed at home, studying and working from home. To survive during the current pandemic, it is necessary to make adaptations. By starting to focus on digital through websites that use e-commerce, social media, and sales through the marketplace, you can also look for a team of resellers to sell their products. Because during this coronavirus pandemic, there are threats as well as opportunities.

Of course, this opportunity needs to be seized. Therefore, it is necessary to be observant in seeing opportunities and quickly adapt so that the business or business that is being built can continue to run and survive through this crisis phase. Another thing is that it can also open up business opportunities such as opening a dropshipping system and collaborating with resellers so that they can help each other economically and mutually benefit.

In times of crisis like this, it is necessary to quickly adapt to the implementation of social distancing. Because this affects significant changes in consumer behavior trends in shopping, those who used to make purchases traditionally or offline are now switching to shopping online. Like they can open a shopping service from home. Likewise, retail businesses can open message delivery services to optimize sales. There are cosmetic companies that dare to launch hand sanitizer products and are directly marketed nationally through modern retail networks and marketplaces.

Business actors in the culinary field are now starting to switch to making frozen food marketed through the concept of delivery, the idea of resellers, and selling through online shops. Education has also opened learning services from home by providing access to learning through applications that make it easier for students to learn. Even business training now can directly adapt by doing training through video conferencing applications, likewise with the workshop business, which is now starting to develop workshop services at home by calling its technicians to come to the house to repair it. Several hotel brands have changed hotel room facilities as a resting place for medical personnel.

During this pandemic, brand actors must be creative and wise in allocating their campaign funds, especially when working from home like this. Conducting CSR activities during the coronavirus pandemic by donating and opening volunteer vacancies for corona fighters who are still on the road, such as street vendors, conducting shopping campaigns from home. And create an online festival by giving special discounts and more.

During this pandemic, brand actors must be creative and wise in allocating their campaign funds, especially when working from home like this. Conducting CSR activities during the coronavirus pandemic by donating and opening volunteer vacancies for corona fighters who are still on the road, such as street vendors, operating shopping campaigns from home. And create an online festival by giving special discounts and more. The impact of the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic has been felt in the business and financial world. Marketing patterns have changed in a reasonably short time, primarily when social distancing and Large-Scale Social Restrictions (PSBB) are implemented. Marketers have to rack their brains to be able to market their products or services to consumers as a brand strategy to survive amid the coronavirus pandemic. Business people optimize online marketing and digital branding to communicate with their target consumers.

Many business people complain about social distancing because their business activities are disrupted, and demand decreases due to reduced "people to people" interactions (many are doing activities at home). Digital marketing is the right and effective solution to deal

with social distancing. Digital marketing is one way of marketing products or services using electronic devices. Through digital marketing, you can still promote your business without having to meet directly with consumers.

To do digital marketing, there are 5 (five) easy ways, including Social Media Marketing, creating a website, SEO (Search Engine Optimization), Content Marketing, or Google Ads.

a. Social Media Marketing

Based on we are social in 2020 states, 59% of the Indonesian population actively uses social media every day. As the data above shows, social media marketing is also an effective strategy to promote your current business to many social media users. Social media marketing is promoting (marketing) products or services by utilizing various social media platforms, such as Instagram, Facebook, or Youtube.

Besides that, you can also use one of the platforms that the target client widely uses. If the target client has a relatively younger age, then they can use the Instagram platform. But if the target client comes from a somewhat older group, then Facebook is the suitable social media.

Before doing social media marketing, there are 7 (seven) tips that you must know:

- 1) Research the client first.
- 2) Create clear goals or objectives.
- 3) Business competitor analysis.
- 4) Create relevant and exciting content.
- 5) Determine the right posting time.
- 6) Take advantage of Ads (e.g., Facebook Ads or Instagram Ads).
- 7) An evaluation of social media marketing has been done.

b. Create a website

So far, there is no cure for the coronavirus. The spread of the coronavirus can occur indefinitely. Therefore, there is nothing wrong if you are trying to create a website. The website will help promote the business for 24 hours because consumers can access it anytime, anywhere, and by anyone. And for the website creation process, you can also contact one of the agencies that provide website creation services.

c. SEO (Search Engine Optimization)

Given a large amount of search traffic on search engines, it can certainly be an opportunity to increase the number of visitors who come to the website. Because the more people who come to the website, the more potential customers you can get, not least amid the current COVID-19 case. But to make it happen, it is also necessary to optimize SEO. SEO is the optimization of a website for search engines to rank better in search results organically or “for free”.

There are 5 (five) SEO strategies to increase the number of website visitors:

- 1) Website optimization for Google Mobile-First Index.
- 2) Increase website speed.
- 3) Create quality content.
- 4) Create an attractive meta description.
- 5) Evaluate SEO performance gradually and continuously.

d. Content Marketing

In addition to SEO, content marketing is also one way to increase website traffic (number of visitors) who come to the website. Content marketing is an online marketing that focuses on planning, creating, and distributing relevant, consistent content and can attract the attention of many people (readers) so that they are interested in using the products or services offered. Several types of content can be used, such as articles,

videos, audio, or infographics. Then, how can content marketing increase website traffic?

Every website owner wants their website to have a large number of visitors (website traffic) to help increase website rankings in search engines.

Providing essential and valuable information on the website, for example, through articles (blogs), will make prospective clients interested in coming to the website. And the content you create must also be relevant to the product or service offered.

Before doing content marketing, there are five strategies you need to know:

- 1) Set clear marketing goals, for example, to increase sales or brand awareness.
- 2) Determine the buyer persona (target audience).
- 3) Create quality, trending content.
- 4) Distribute content created, for example, on social media, personal blogs or various discussion forums suitable for business.
- 5) Evaluate the content that has been created to see the development of the website after doing content marketing. In this case, you can take advantage of Google Analytics tools.

e. PCC (Pay Per Click)

Google Ads is a type of PPC (Pay Per Click) advertising provided by Google to promote various businesses through the Google search engine. During the current COVID-19 case, Google Ads is also one of the business marketing strategies that can be done.

Google Ads has various advantages, including:

- 1) Help find more potential customers.
- 2) Show ads using business-relevant keywords
- 3) Determine the right target audience to get more targeted consumers.
- 4) As well as helping the website be on the first page of Google.
- 5) To register a business on Google Ads, you can register on the official Google Ads website.

### 3. Digital Marketing Strategy amid the Covid-19 Pandemic

There are 10 (ten) digital marketing strategies can be applied to businesses to survive in this challenging situation.

a. Stay Connected with Customers/Clients

We understand that many people are currently in difficult circumstances, so this is an opportunity to show empathy for others. Business strategy can be done by displaying social media content that is socially concerned with business. In addition, you can also send emails in bulk to newsletter subscribers. Of course, you must remember one thing, display content that is not too “selling”. This is a unique opportunity to build a brand image.

b. Make sure the business is easy to find on the internet

PSBB does not mean that business activities have stopped. People are still buying goods or services, even though everyone does it from home. Business people must ensure that the presence of the business remains significant, especially on the internet. Due to the current conditions, public consumption of content on the internet has increased significantly. So, it is necessary to ensure that you always run a Search Engine Optimization (SEO) strategy, so your business is always easy to find.

c. Use Pay-Per-Click (PPC) Ads

Although SEO is a long-term investment, optimizing a website on search engines takes time. Suppose the business is relatively new to building or has never done an SEO strategy and of course you don't want to lose momentum. In that case, you can use pay-



per-click (PPC) advertising services so that businesses can easily find them on the internet in a short time.

- d. Ensure that digital assets are continuously updated  
Now is the right time to renew your portfolio on digital assets, whether it's a website or social media account. Always serve the audience with content related to the business industry. This is because the business seems to drown in the competition. After all, business competitors are always at the forefront of presenting content on their digital assets.
- e. Prepare the business to bounce back  
It never hurts to stay positive. As time goes by, this pandemic will end soon. Keep in mind that SEO is a long-term strategy. Usually, an SEO campaign will feel its effectiveness 2-3 months from the time it is run.  
Stopping the current SEO campaign is a bad move. This is because this pandemic may end 2-3 months from now, and a good SEO campaign means the business can be ready to bounce back.
- f. Good opportunity to give a discount  
The fact that many people are currently locked in their homes makes them think twice about spending money. People will be more frugal in their shopping, which is a normal thing nowadays. Therefore, giving discounts on products is an excellent way to get sympathy from business customers and keep the income going.
- g. 'Local SEO' optimization  
During the implementation of the PSBB, of course, the public will limit their space for movement in general. Even if it is urgent in terms of meeting needs, people will look for the closest destination to meet their needs.  
So now is the best time to optimize your local SEO business. What is local SEO? Local SEO is a type of SEO that is specifically used to optimize search engines, especially for local companies. The search engine will display businesses by area and nearest distance.
- h. Be Flexible and Apply the Most Relevant Strategy  
In an uncertain situation like today, businesses must also be flexible in terms of implementing strategies to maintain good relationships with customers.
- i. Keep Calm and Don't Panic  
Remember when the media started highlighting how dangerous this COVID-19 virus was, and people started panicking and panic buying. Many people buy toilet paper and hand sanitizer in excess.  
Don't react like that, especially if you're in the process of finding the best digital marketing strategy to implement in your business. Never make frantic, uncalculated moves. Always use metrics and analyze your data before making a decision. Use plenty of free time to complete to-do lists that were previously pending.
- j. Stay positive, and this situation will get better soon  
Believe and stay positive that this situation will improve quickly, and the business will not go out of business.

## **E. CONCLUSION**

Digital marketing is one way of marketing products or services using electronic devices. Through digital marketing, businesses can be promoted without having to meet directly with consumers. Digital marketing is considered a business solution during the Covid-19 pandemic. During this Covid-19 pandemic, several business sectors have the potential to experience a decline in sales. However, several business sectors have the potential to be stable and increase.

This is what is known as the Black Swan 2020. A condition in which all industries experience a decline, especially the economy. Ten digital marketing strategies can be applied during the current Covid-19 pandemic, namely: staying connected with customers/clients; making sure the business is easy to find on the internet; using pay-per-click (PPC) advertising; ensuring that digital assets are continuously updated; prepare the business to bounce back; an excellent opportunity to give a discount; optimization 'local SEO; be flexible and apply the most relevant strategies; keep calm and don't panic; and stay positive as this situation will get better soon.

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