

Marketing Communication Strategy for Personal Selling Chackers Mahkota in The Digital Era

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ABSTRACT

Objective: This study aims to analyze the marketing communication strategies of the Krupuk Mahkota MSME in Kedungrejo Village, Jabon District, Sidoarjo Regency, with a particular focus on the effectiveness of personal selling in maintaining competitiveness in the digital era. **Method:** The research employed a descriptive qualitative approach using interviews, observations, and documentation to gain an in-depth understanding of marketing practices and consumer interactions. **Results:** The findings reveal that personal selling remains a highly relevant and effective strategy, as direct interaction, storytelling about the business journey, and friendly service foster consumer trust, emotional connection, and loyalty. Additionally, the strategy is enhanced through complementary sales promotions, such as periodic discounts and the use of customer testimonials, which strengthen the MSME's brand image. **Novelty:** This study highlights that personal selling continues to serve as a distinctive competitive advantage for MSMEs amid digital transformation, demonstrating that human-centered communication offers an irreplaceable personal experience that digital promotional media alone cannot replicate.

INTRODUCTION

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) play a crucial role in Indonesia's economic framework. Amidst increasingly complex economic challenges, MSMEs have emerged as a fundamental pillar capable of surviving and adapting to the evolving socio-economic landscape. Undeniably, MSMEs occupy a central position in the Indonesian economy. In addition to their crucial role in employment absorption and economic engagement in Indonesia, MSMEs also serve as catalysts for disseminating development benefits across various regions and localities in Indonesia. The MSME sector is recognized as a focal point of interest due to its substantial contribution to the Indonesian economic system. MSMEs are considered a sector that serves as a platform for impacting the global financial crisis, particularly because their dominant means of access are conventional [1] MSMEs have the potential to survive and remain competitive if they effectively apply management principles. The management domain encompasses various critical sectors, including marketing, production, human resources (HR), and finance. Specific concepts and strategic frameworks serve as fundamental determinants of organizational success. Comprehensive analysis of markets, consumers, and products is crucial in navigating the complex contemporary business landscape. The majority of companies, including small to medium-sized entities, tend to focus their production and operational efforts primarily on manufacturing goods. It is crucial for companies to also

consider strategic business initiatives to ensure the continuity and advancement of their existing operations, thereby maintaining their competitive advantage [2].

The cracker business in Kedung Rejo Village, located in Jabon Regency, has been recognized as a leading cracker production center since 1976. Most of the local population is involved in cracker making, thus Kedung Rejo, Jabon Regency in Sidoarjo Regency, was designated as Kampung Krupuk (Krupuk Village). Kedung Rejo is administratively subdivided into seven hamlets, identified as Tungguwulung, Bioro, Kedung Bahak, Klutuk, Biting, and Kaliwaru [3].

According to data from the Kedung Rejo community, Tungguwulung Hamlet has a total of 21 artisans, while Bioro is home to 16 artisans, and Kaliwaru has 11 artisans. The daily output of krupuk from Kedung Rejo Village is no less than 5,000 pieces, with residents collectively producing around 500 tons of various types of krupuk each month. Categories of krupuk produced include fish crackers, puli krupuk, onion crackers, and seasonal krupuk [4]. One of them is Krupuk Mahkota, which originates from Tungguwulung, Kedung Rejo. Krupuk Mahkota was founded in 1992 by the Musida family, who saw great potential in the cracker market, especially puli crackers. Starting from a small home business, Krupuk Mahkota grew along with the increasing demand for high-quality cracker products. Krupuk Mahkota UMKM now has 14 employees. The founder, Mrs. Musida, was inspired by personal experience when she had difficulty finding delicious and nutritious puli crackers. Therefore, she decided to make her own puli crackers using a traditional recipe modified with several innovations to improve taste and quality. With a strong determination to present a cracker product that is different from those on the market, Musida began producing puli crackers using selected ingredients, such as quality tapioca flour and natural spices that give it a distinctive taste. In the process, Krupuk Mahkota also pays attention to aspects of cleanliness and environmentally friendly production sustainability, so that the resulting product is not only delicious, but also safe for consumption. Initially, this business was only marketed traditionally by going from house to house, and selling through local markets. However, as time goes by and technology develops, Krupuk Mahkota began to utilize various digital platforms to expand its market reach. Now, Krupuk Mahkota has a wide market, not only in Sidoarjo, but also to various other areas, even outside the city [5]. Ms. Musida started her puli crackers business by promoting them directly to her family, friends, and neighbors. Initially, the business used a dropshipping and reseller system to minimize capital. This strategy was successful because it didn't require a large capital outlay and the product could be promoted through word-of-mouth recommendations from satisfied customers. Musida's passion for culinary arts sparked the idea of selling them, which helped the business grow rapidly, becoming what it is today, under the name "crown crackers [6].

Krupuk Mahkota MSME marketing is different from other crackers because it prioritizes a storytelling-based approach (a sales strategy that uses stories to influence potential buyers), personal selling (a marketing strategy by communicating directly with potential buyers to promote products or services) and the use of digital technology. In

their marketing strategy, Krupuk Mahkota not only offers cracker products, but also tells the story behind the product, how Krupuk Mahkota was born. This approach has proven to be effective in building an emotional connection between brands and consumers. This business prioritizes direct sales from market to market but is able to compete in the current era. In addition, Krupuk Mahkota became interested in the social media marketing strategies of Whatsapps and facebook in 2017 and after seeing the success of others who used it. After going through several experiments and evaluations, finally Mrs. Musida began to implement marketing strategies through Facebook and WhatsApps. The business made little progress in early 2017, its marketing increased by 50% because it was more efficient and could reach a wider range of consumers. Meanwhile, WhatsApp is used for more personal communication, allowing customers to order products, ask for more information, and get fast customer service. Unlike other crackers that tend to rely on direct sales at the market or physical stores, Krupuk Mahkota utilizes the power of social media to reach potential customers from various regions, even outside the city. In addition, they also optimize the use of customer testimonials and product photos to attract market interest. This digital marketing allows Krupuk Mahkota to stay connected with consumers, despite the physical distance separating them. The success of Krupuk Mahkota to become the largest in Kedung Rejo Village and Sidoarjo Regency is not a coincidence. There are several factors that make Krupuk Mahkota superior compared to other cracker producers in the area. Product quality is the main factor that distinguishes Krupuk Mahkota from competitors. In every stage of production, Krupuk Mahkota pays great attention to the quality of raw materials and the production process. The puli crackers produced have a distinctive, crispy, and savory taste, with a better texture than cracker products from other places. Krupuk Mahkota carries the principle of sustainability in production. Even though the scale of the business is getting bigger, they don't sacrifice quality for quantity. All production processes are carried out by maintaining high standards of cleanliness and using fresh and natural raw materials. This is very much noticed by consumers who are increasingly aware of the importance of consuming safe and healthy food. The success factor of Krupuk Mahkota cannot be separated from innovation in marketing strategies.

Mahkota MSMEs during the pandemic have several advantages that help businesses continue to run and grow. One of the main advantages is staying in communication with customers through Facebook, and WhatsApp Business In addition, the distribution system becomes more efficient by switching from conventional methods to direct sales through digital platforms. This reduces dependence on middlemen and physical markets, so that operational costs can be reduced and delivery to customers becomes faster. Mahkota MSMEs are also able to adapt to market demand by changing their production system from Make to Stock (MTS) to Make to Order (MTO). With this system, production is carried out based on the number of orders received, so as to avoid overstock and reduce the risk of losses due to declining demand. In terms of promotion, Mahkota MSMEs have the flexibility to attract more customers with various strategies, such as providing large discounts In addition, attractive promotions through social

media can increase the attractiveness of the product among new and old customers. Another advantage is the support from government policies that provide stimulus for MSMEs, such as additional capital, electricity payment relief, and loan restructuring. With this assistance, Mahkota MSMEs can more easily manage their finances and survive in difficult economic conditions so that their income remains stable. With these various advantages, marketing during the pandemic actually opens up new opportunities for Mahkota MSMEs to develop further and increase their competitiveness in the market. The savory taste and very crispy texture make crackers one of the complements to various foods that are popular with many consumers. Most Indonesian people feel incomplete if they eat without being equipped with crackers [7]. The production process at Krupuk Mahkota is carried out traditionally, but still prioritizes efficiency and cleanliness. Every stage of production is closely supervised to guarantee that the resulting crackers meet high quality standards. This production process involves local workers, most of whom come from Kedung Rejo Village, having a positive impact on the local economy.

In terms of income, Krupuk Mahkota is able to produce thousands of puli crackers every day, which are then marketed through various channels, both offline and online. The income obtained from the sale of crackers not only meets the operational needs of the business, but also has a positive economic impact on families and the surrounding community. In addition, the success of Krupuk Mahkota has also opened up job opportunities for many people, from production workers to marketing personnel who work to manage social media accounts and customer service. Quality is physically measured based on the products produced at the division, sub-project or project level. The functional quality is measured based on the level of fulfillment of the products produced against the standards set by the company/owner. The caliber of work is evaluated by the level of excellence demonstrated by the resulting product. In addition, quality is an important aspect of an organization's strategic approach when competing with rival companies; As such, it is crucial to engage in continuous improvement to produce superior products. Quality also serves as a fundamental determinant for the successful market acceptance of a product, since consumers, during their purchasing decisions, carry out the process of selecting products that meet their quality expectations [8]. This MSME records an average revenue of 24 million a month, with a net profit margin of around 50%. By using a personal selling approach and digital technology, Krupuk Mahkota has not only succeeded in expanding its market reach but also building closer relationships with its consumers. This success is an inspiration for other MSMEs to continue to innovate and utilize technology in developing their businesses [9]. Krupuk Mahkota in Kedung Rejo Village, Jabon District, Sidoarjo Regency, is a successful example of an MSME that is able to grow rapidly by utilizing superior product quality and creative marketing innovations. By using a personal selling approach and digital technology, Krupuk Mahkota has not only succeeded in expanding its market reach but also building closer relationships with its consumers. This success is an inspiration for other MSMEs to continue to innovate and utilize technology in developing their businesses [10].

Several studies on marketing communication strategies in MSMEs provide relevant insights for the development of Mahkota MSMEs. The first research by [11] regarding the promotional mix at UKM Batagor Sarasa Bandung shows the importance of using various promotional channels such as brochures, banners, social media, and participation in culinary bazaars to build relationships with customers [12] continued by highlighting the effectiveness of storytelling in digital marketing by women SMEs, who are able to increase loyalty and brand image through digital platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube [13] revealed that the use of integrated marketing communication, including the use of social media and personal selling by Snack Indochip MSMEs, can increase engagement and product sales. Finally, research by [14] shows that personal selling and innovation capacity have a positive influence on the marketing performance of MSMEs, with storytelling as part of innovation that can increase customer loyalty. Overall, this research provides a solid foundation for Mahkota MSMEs to optimize marketing communication strategies through a combination of creative promotion, storytelling, and direct interaction with customers.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study aims to explore the marketing communication strategy of Krupuk Mahkota in Kedungrejo Village, Sidoarjo, through a descriptive qualitative approach. The data collection process is carried out by three main methods, namely interviews, observations, and documentation. Interviews will be conducted with business owners, employees, and customers to understand their views on the implementation of marketing strategies, such as the use of social media, storytelling techniques, and personal selling [15]. These interviews are designed to dig deep into their experiences as well as how those strategies affect businesses and consumer behavior. Observations are carried out by directly observing the marketing process on site, both online through platforms such as Facebook and WhatsApp, and conventionally through direct interaction with consumers in the local market. This observation aims to get a factual picture of how marketing strategies are implemented and their impact on the daily activities of the business. Documentation is used to supplement the data by utilizing available articles, reports, and documents. The information taken from the document includes the business background, development of marketing strategies, and achievements that have been achieved by Krupuk Mahkota [16].

The collected data was analyzed using a thematic analysis approach, where information from interviews, observations, and documentation was coded into the main themes. This theme includes the effectiveness of social media in reaching consumers, the influence of storytelling in building emotional relationships with customers, and the role of personal selling in driving purchase decisions. This analysis process refers to the concept of Integrated Marketing Communication with a focus on five main components: direct marketing, interactive marketing, sales promotion, publicity & public relations, and personal sales.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Krupuk Mahkota is one of the MSMEs that prioritizes direct sales in its marketing activities, the products offered are puli krupuk and shrimp crackers, Krupuk Mahkota grows along with the increasing demand for high-quality cracker products. According to data provided by the Kedung Rejo environment, it has a total of 21 craftsmen, the crown krupuk is one of the successful MSMEs.



Figure 1. Crown Cracker MSME Products

So in this discussion this study will discuss the marketing communication strategy applied by the crown cracker based on the problems identified, The basis of analysis in this study is the IMC (Integrated Marketing Communication) theory developed by Don E. Schultz and other experts, as well as various literature related to marketing communication, each stage of the theory, is studied based on the results of interviews with several informants.

1. Direct Marketing:

In context, direct marketing is a form of marketing communication that allows producers or sellers to interact directly with their consumers without intermediaries. The main goal is to create a direct response, such as a purchase, question, or other interaction from a potential consumer. Direct marketing is usually done through mediums that allow for one-on-one communication, such as social media, instant messaging, or phone calls. To find out a broader understanding of the strategy to increase consumers in product marketing, an interview has been conducted with Mrs. Musida as the owner of the Krupuk Mahkota MSME, The results of the interview were presented. As follows:

"So, to make it easier for consumers to know the products we sell and direct marketing plays a role as one of the important components because it allows direct interaction between producers and consumers. Through social media (WhatsApp), direct marketing provides quick responses, message personalization, and closer two-way relationships."



Figure 2. shows direct marketing communications

From the explanation that has been conveyed above, direct marketing is one of the main components that allows direct two-way communication between producers and consumers. This is very different from traditional advertising which is one-way. Direct marketing actually prioritizes quick and responsive personal interactions, which aim to encourage direct actions from consumers—whether in the form of purchases, questions, or other forms of communication. From the interview conducted with Mrs. Musida, the owner of Krupuk Mahkota MSMEs, this approach seems very real. He explained that to make it easier for consumers to get to know and buy his products, he uses social media such as WhatsApp as the main means of marketing. Here it is clear that WhatsApp is not only used to disseminate information, but also as a tool to establish direct personal communication with potential buyers. This reflects the main principle of direct marketing, which is the occurrence of one-on-one communication that can tailor the message to the needs of each consumer. A quick response and warm approach also make customers feel more valued and tend to be loyal. To obtain the results, an interview was also carried out with one of the sales of crown crackers, as follows:

Wakhlul

"Usually because of that direct interaction, they feel closer. Many customers say, Muereka is comfortable because we are friendly and always patiently answer their questions. In addition, we keep in mind customer habits—for example, some people like a certain variant or order a regular every week. This kind of personal approach turns out to be very influential, because consumers feel valued. In fact, they often tell their friends or family about it, then recommend Krupuk Mahkota."

1. Sales Promotion

Sales promotion is one of the essential elements in an integrated marketing communication strategy. The main focus is to provide a short-term incentive that can

influence consumer behavior to buy products immediately. Sales promotions are usually in the form of discounts, or other activities that add value to the product for a limited time. If we look at the activities of Krupuk Mahkota, they provide discounts and help with digital marketing to make it easier for customers. This is a form of sales promotion that is very common for MSMEs. Here, sales promotions are used as a way to attract the attention of consumers at a certain place and time. People who may not be familiar with the product may be tempted to try it because it is cheaper than usual. In addition, this strategy can also build brand awareness in a faster way. When people try a product because there is a discount and are satisfied, they are more likely to buy it again at a normal price at a later date. In fact, if their experience is enjoyable, they may recommend it to others. So, sales pitches can be an effective entry point to introduce new products or expand the market. To find out a broader understanding of the strategy to increase consumers in product marketing, an interview has been conducted with Mrs. Musida as the owner of the Krupuk Mahkota MSME, The results of the interview were presented. As follows:

"We choose to do sales promotions such as discounts at certain moments because this strategy has proven to be effective in attracting the attention of new consumers, With more affordable prices, consumers are more interested in trying our products. Every few months we give discounts to customers, sales have increased quite significantly. Many consumers who initially only tried because of the promo, ended up becoming regular customers and buying again."



Figures 3&4. show some packages of crackers ready to be sent to customers.

The explanation of the picture above, the packaging is neatly arranged in a large transparent plastic bag, with a striking label that reads "Krupuk Ikan Mahkota". The presentation of products like this illustrates the readiness of distribution, both for local and out-of-town markets. This visualization also reinforces digital promotion strategies, as attractive and professional packaging strongly supports consumer confidence when viewing it on social media or when buying online. In this part, Mrs. Musida as the owner of Krupuk Mahkota MSMEs said that sales promotion strategies, such as providing discounts, were chosen because they proved to be effective in attracting the attention of

new consumers. This strategy is carried out periodically – every few months – and is able to significantly increase sales volume. Consumers who were initially interested because of the discount, eventually became loyal customers and made repeat purchases. This proves that promotions not only encourage momentary purchases, but also build consumer loyalty in the long run. To obtain the results, an interview was also carried out with one of the sales of crown crackers, as follows:

Dimas :

"Yes, we often give discounts at certain moments, for example the month of Ramadan or the end of the year. These discounts usually encourage more purchases while also attracting new customers. Some even initially only tried it because of the promo, but after feeling the quality, they became regular customers. In addition, we sometimes add small packaging bonuses for large orders."

1. Publicity and Public Relations:

Krupuk Mahkota's marketing communication strategy runs naturally through various activities that strengthen the positive image of the business in the eyes of the public. Although not explicitly referred to as a formal PR strategy, Krupuk Mahkota has harnessed the power of customer testimonials and the stories behind its business journey as a form of indirect promotion. Many consumers are familiar with this product through recommendations from friends, family, or social media posts, which indirectly builds trust and expands the brand's reach. In addition, participation in bazaars and community activities is an important means to introduce products while establishing closer relationships with the surrounding community. A positive image is also strengthened through a storytelling approach that tells the story of business owners' struggles in starting a business from scratch, thereby fostering emotional closeness between consumers and brands. To find out a broader understanding of the strategy to increase consumers in product marketing, an interview has been conducted with Mrs. Musida as the owner of the Krupuk Mahkota MSME, The results of the interview were presented. As follows:

"Yes, I often tell how the Krupuk Mahkota business started from home, and I also share that story on social media so that people know our struggle and feel closer to the product."



Figures 5 & 6. Shows the process of making crown crackers.

Based on the explanation and figures 5 & 6 which show the process of making Krupuk Mahkota, it can be explained that the publicity and public relations strategy for MSMEs is not only built from external promotion, but also from transparency and openness to the production process. The manufacturing process shown in the picture reflects Krupuk Mahkota's seriousness in maintaining the quality and cleanliness of the product consistently. Through the publication of production activities like this, the public can see firsthand how crackers are made, from raw materials to ready to be packaged, which ultimately builds trust and a positive image in the eyes of consumers.

This is strengthened by the statement of Mrs. Musida who said that she often shares the story of this business struggle through social media. The story not only depicts the business journey from scratch, but also shows the humanist and inspirational side of Krupuk Mahkota's business. In addition, the power of customer testimonials as well as word-of-mouth promotion is an important part of a PR strategy that runs naturally. When consumers see and know firsthand a clean, transparent, and dedicated production process, they are more likely to trust and feel connected to the product. This is what effective public relations is all about—building emotional closeness and trust through openness, positive experiences, and an honest image. To obtain the results, an interview was also carried out with one of the sales of crown crackers, as follows:

Fan

"We often participate in MSME bazaars and village events, so many people can try our products directly. In addition, testimonials from old customers are also very helpful. They usually share their experiences in Facebook or WhatsApp groups, and it's kind of a free promotion for us. We also tell the story of Mrs. Musida's business journey from scratch to consumers so that they feel closer and trust our products."

1. Personal Selling

Personal selling is one of the important elements that focuses on direct interaction between sellers and potential buyers. The goal is to build closer relationships, convince consumers personally, and provide services tailored to individual needs. This strategy is particularly effective for creating customer trust and loyalty because it involves more warm and convincing face-to-face communication or live conversations. Krupuk Mahkota personal selling is the most commonly used in marketing strengthened by the use of storytelling strategies, where the story behind the birth of this business is conveyed directly by the owner to consumers. This approach not only drives purchase decisions, but also creates an emotional bond between the customer and the product. Consumers feel more trusted and valued because they are served directly by the owner, who understands their needs personally. This is what makes personal selling a key pillar in the marketing success of Krupuk Mahkota, and an inspiration on how a simple approach can have a big impact on building customer loyalty. To find out a broader understanding of the strategy to increase consumers in product marketing, an interview has been conducted with Mrs. Musida as the owner of the Krupuk Mahkota MSME, The results of the interview were presented. As follows:

"I prioritize a personal approach in selling Krupuk Mahkota products because through this way I can directly explain to customers about the quality and uniqueness of our products. This approach also helps me build closeness, so that customers feel more confident and comfortable when buying. In addition, I often tell the story behind this venture directly, especially at exhibitions or when meeting with customers, so that they know our struggle from scratch to be able to grow as it is now. This approach has proven to have a huge impact on customer loyalty – many initially just try it out because they know it firsthand, then become regular customers and even participate in promoting our products to others."



Figures 7 & 8, showing the production and drying of crown crackers

Based on the explanation and figures 7 and 8 which show the production and drying of Krupuk Mahkota, it can be concluded that this activity is an important part of the personal selling strategy implemented by the MSMEs. The production and drying processes displayed not only depict daily activities, but also a means to build consumer trust through transparency. In personal sales strategy, Mrs. Musida not only relies on direct communication, but also conveys the story of the struggle of the business that started from a small scale to developing as it is now. Through this approach, consumers not only buy the product, but also feel emotionally connected because they see firsthand the clean, traditional, and diligent manufacturing process. The appearance of the image supports the narrative that Krupuk Mahkota is a product made with sincerity and quality, and this is the main strength in building customer loyalty in a sustainable manner. To obtain the results, an interview was also carried out with one of the sales of crown crackers, as follows:

Wind

"It's very important. Many consumers are more confident after we explain the quality of the materials and the production process directly. When there is an exhibition, we can tell the story behind this product – that Crown crackers are made from recipes passed down from generations, without preservatives, and hygienic. This personal approach makes consumers feel closer to us, not just buying products, but also supporting the struggle of local MSMEs. From here, many customers become loyal and even help with word-of-mouth promotion."

The results of the interview show that Krupuk Mahkota MSMEs are able to maintain their existence in the midst of competition in the food industry through the implementation of an integrated marketing communication mix (IMC), where direct marketing is not only limited to conveying product information via WhatsApp, but also combined with a personal selling approach in the form of friendly interactions, reminders of customer habits, and conveying stories about the quality and history of the business that fosters trust as well as emotional closeness; sales promotion is carried out through the provision of discounts and bonuses at certain moments that effectively attract new buyers while encouraging consumers to become regular customers; publicity and public relations are built through active involvement in the MSME bazaar, the dissemination of consumer testimonials, and business journey narratives that provide a positive image and increase public trust; while personal selling is the main strategy in creating long-term relationships because consumers feel more confident when they get direct explanations about the quality of the product, so they not only buy because of necessity but also feel that they support the struggle of local MSMEs – all of these strategies then encourage customer loyalty, expand the market, and strengthen word-of-mouth promotions that are very important for the growth of Krupuk Mahkota

Discussion

Krupuk Mahkota's success in maintaining competitiveness in the digital era largely stems from its strategic integration of traditional marketing practices, such as personal selling, with modern digital tools. The use of direct marketing via WhatsApp and other social media platforms allows the business to maintain direct and personal interactions with customers, facilitating a responsive, one-on-one communication channel that builds trust and enhances customer relationships. This approach aligns with Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) theory, where personal selling, storytelling, and sales promotions combine to create a cohesive and engaging customer experience. Krupuk Mahkota's strategy highlights the importance of human-centered communication in fostering emotional connections with consumers, a factor that digital marketing alone cannot replicate.

Moreover, Krupuk Mahkota's effective use of sales promotions and customer testimonials has significantly contributed to its growing market presence. Periodic discounts and attractive promotions not only encourage trial purchases but also convert first-time buyers into loyal customers. By using social media platforms for marketing and leveraging word-of-mouth recommendations, Krupuk Mahkota is able to expand its market reach efficiently. The strategic blend of digital marketing with personalized interactions allows the business to maintain its unique position in a highly competitive market, where the combination of quality product offerings and promotional strategies helps differentiate it from competitors.

However, while Krupuk Mahkota has successfully embraced digital tools, its reliance on personal selling remains a core pillar of its marketing strategy. This approach fosters customer loyalty by offering personalized service, where the business owner herself communicates the story behind the brand. Such transparency and personal

engagement create a strong emotional bond with consumers, which is invaluable in building long-term customer relationships. The business's marketing efforts demonstrate that even in the digital age, personal selling remains a powerful tool, especially when combined with innovative marketing techniques and modern technology. This case serves as an inspiring example for other MSMEs aiming to enhance their competitiveness through a customer-centric, integrated marketing approach.

CONCLUSION

Fundamental Finding : This study concludes that the success of Krupuk Mahkota MSME in sustaining and growing its market share lies in the effective integration of marketing communication strategies, particularly the reinforcement of personal selling within the broader Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) framework. Personal interactions, storytelling, and customer engagement play a vital role in building trust, loyalty, and a strong brand image. **Implication :** The findings imply that MSMEs can achieve competitive advantage by balancing traditional marketing approaches, such as personal selling, with modern digital tools to enhance market reach and consumer relationships. **Limitation :** However, the study is limited to a single case within a specific local context, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings to other industries or regions. **Future Research :** Further studies should explore comparative analyses across different MSME sectors and incorporate quantitative measures to assess the effectiveness of IMC elements in improving business performance in the digital economy.

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