

# The Analysis of Marketing Communications During the COVID-19 Pandemic

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## ABSTRACT

Marketing communication strategy, is a process to widely disseminate information about the company on the products that will be offered to the target market. The COVID-19 pandemic presents challenges to business owners, especially those engaged in coffee shops. One of them is Lacku\_Id which experienced a decrease in sales because it is usually based on consumer visits to the coffee shop. This is because Lacku\_Id has a unique place and carries a home concept coffee shop. The more modern media makes it easier for marketing communication strategies to be carried out so that Lacku\_Id uses Instagram social media. The research objective was to determine the constraints of Lacku\_Id's marketing communication strategy via Instagram during the COVID-19 pandemic and to understand the implementation of the marketing communication strategy being carried out. This research is a qualitative research using case studies. The result of this research is that Lacku\_Id carried out a marketing communication strategy with promotion through Instagram by actively creating content on Instagram stories and on the Instagram timeline without being endorsed or using influencers to retain employees. The problem with the COVID-19 pandemic is that Lacku\_Id has to change its strategy, which previously focused on marketing places and inviting visitors to come but must carry out promotions by emphasizing product take away. Consumer interest in visiting and enjoying the place has forced Lacku\_Id to implement a reservation supported by the COVID-19 health protocol.

**Keywords:** COVID-19, Instagram, Marketing Communication, Case Study Marketing Communication Strategy

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The origin of the COVID-19 pandemic which was triggered by Coronavirus infection began at the end of 2019 from an area of China called Wuhan, the capital of Hubei, the world was shocked by the emergence of the new coronavirus (COVID-19). China reported the outbreak on December 31, 2019 [1]. The development of the COVID-19 virus spread very quickly and infected the population until finally, the Chinese government locked down the city of Wuhan. The development of a virus that spreads quickly and widely made WHO on January 30, 2020, declare the world entered into a global emergency related to the virus [2]. Since the beginning of the virus, it was known that in March 2020 there were 244,675 infected COVID-19 until now 20 September 2020, with the death toll reaching 9,553. Of these, 177,327 patients have recovered. The spread of COVID-19 is evenly distributed throughout the world. Until now, the spread and development of the virus have centered on the United States, and Indonesia is ranked 23<sup>rd</sup> [3]. Many business sectors in Jakarta are closed temporarily or permanently. As affected by the spread of the COVID-19 virus in Indonesia, one of the providers of food and beverage services. Lacku\_Id, a food and beverage service

provider engaged in the coffee shop, was affected, resulting in fewer visitors and decreased sales. Lacku\_Id is based on visitors and sells more places because it is unique and carries a coffee shop with a home concept. This coffee shop located in West Jakarta is considered very interesting because it was never empty of visitors before the COVID-19 pandemic. Recorded from 17 different cities in Jabodetabek, 13 cities experienced a significant decrease in daily income, namely as much as 18%, especially West Jakarta with the largest decrease in daily income. Indirectly, this situation makes a change in the consumer's behavior of people who more frequently access and shop online, and changes in behavior make an increase in taking away in the food and beverage service sector [4] Lacku\_Id is required to be able to prepare and implement adaptive strategies to encourage businesses to keep going in times of environmental change because Lacku\_Id consumers are visit-based because Lacku\_Id has a unique place and carries a coffee shop with a home concept. Marketing communication strategy is every marketing activity that includes consumer goods so that it must be able to achieve marketing objectives are satisfying customers [5] Forcing service providers Lacku\_Id to use Instagram social media to maximize sales. The PSBB regulation makes Lacku\_Id only accept take away and online orders. PSBB

PSBB is a large-scale social restriction is a term of health quarantine in Indonesia which is defined as "The restriction of certain activities of the population in an area that is suspected of being infected with a disease and/or contamination, perhaps to prevent the spread of disease or contamination.

Instagram is the media chosen and most in-demand by business people to carry out marketing communications because without having to sell or market products by meeting in person. Lacku\_Id chose Instagram to be able to continue to build communication between consumers, keep reminding of products, and provide information to consumers.

Based on the background above, a problem statement can be drawn, namely what is the marketing communication strategy carried out by Lacku\_Id via Instagram during the COVID-19 pandemic?

## 2. BACKGROUND



**Figure 1.** Lacku\_Id Coffee Shop

The Lacku\_Id coffee shop is located in Taman Palem Lestari Block CC 2 No.1, Cengkareng, West Jakarta which has a different design from the local coffee shop. Lacku\_Id was established on July 22, 2020, but officially operational on August 17, 2020.

The Lacku\_Id design takes a home-like concept. The Lacku\_Id place is divided into four parts, namely the VIP room which is located at the top which is bordered by a glass used for events, meetings, and so on. This VIP room has blackboard facilities, stationery, TV, speakers and many others to support the event. However, for the VIP room there is a minimum payment or minimum purchase in order to access the VIP room. The Lacku\_Id living room has characteristics like the living room at home, which is equipped with a sofa, TV, Playstation, and is decorated with a very beautiful chandelier so that consumers who come can watch or play Playstation accompanied by Lacku\_Id's food. The basement is still located in a house that is used for smoking consumers and what makes it unique is that the basement is made like an ancient house which was only decorated with cement color so that no color was painted. Consumers who come do not need to be afraid of the smell

of cigarette smoke because the tools for removing cigarette smoke are of high quality.

The last place is the dining room which is located right next to the bar. This section has a long table equipped with large chairs and decorative lamps. This place is usually used for consumers who come with relatives or busy friends.

The Lacku\_Id coffee shop was pioneered by Tjendra Suwandi, which has a concept like being at home so that consumers who come are not bored and not monotonous. Not only different places, but Lacku\_Id has differences in terms of products, namely yogurt ice cream. Lacku\_Id's place is unique because the owner of the business, Tjendra Suwandi, has been pursuing his field since junior high school by drawing designs and working as a hard worker in buildings in his uncle's business. During the COVID-19 pandemic, business owners prefer to save money to prevent layoffs of workers than use their money for marketing through influencers or endorsers. In smoothing the marketing communication strategy, Lacku\_Id carries out market communication planning, market communication implementation, and market communication evaluation.

## 3. METHODS

The researcher chose to use a qualitative approach. The method used by researchers is a case study. To get data about the use of Instagram as a marketing communication strategy tool during the COVID-19 pandemic, therefore researchers will use the Lacku\_Id company, namely the business owner and Instagram admin Lacku\_Id as research subjects while the object of research is Instagram social media. In this study, researchers collected data using interviews, observations, literature studies, and documentation for data collection. Researchers analyzed data on qualitative research carried out to reach conclusions by grouping the data by, describing them into units, compiling patterns, and selecting the most important ones to discuss. [6]. Researchers also conducted triangulation. Triangulation is an analysis of the subject's answers by examining the correctness of the empirical or other available data. In this case, the subject's answer is also cross-checked with other existing documents [7].

## 4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

### 4.1. Marketing Communication Planning

When you want to form a marketing communication plan, Lacku\_Id performs a situation analysis of external and internal factors and identifies the target audience. SWOT analysis is conducted to analyze opportunities and threats in the external environment, as well as the strengths and threats in the internal environment of the company [8]. External Factors Lacku\_Id is that business owners and teammates see an opportunity to be able to create a different concept by taking a concept like home. Not only houses but supported by raw materials from coffee beans, products and

others are Indonesian products, business owners really love Indonesia. Lacku\_Id also sells yogurth ice cream because the yogurt ice cream menu is considered very rare in coffee shops and many parents are confused about giving food or drinks when bringing their children to the coffee shop.

In addition to being unique in its place, business owners want to show more that Lacku\_Id has a characteristic, namely the coffee and food menus displayed are Indonesian specialties which will later be developed into Indonesian Fusion Food. Lacku\_Id is always committed to providing satisfaction in terms of taste and service to consumers. This is also supported by workers who are proven talented and well trained. Company regulations are very clear and well ordered so that workers know their duties are monitored directly by their respective superiors, this is what makes Lacku\_Id's internal factors very strong. Lacku\_Id also provides education to consumers through its barista. Education about the world of coffee, so that the younger generation can understand the world of coffee and not just enjoy it. Business owners do not only hope for a unique place because it will be a weakness so that it is also developed from other aspects.

This factor will influence the creation of strengths and weaknesses. When this factor is related to the conditions that occur in the company so that it affects the formation of company decision making. These factors include marketing, finance, human capabilities, standard procedures or systems within the company, and so on.

There are three elements that Lacku sees in identifying his target audience, namely Segmentation, Targeting, and Positioning [9]. Segmentation, a coffee shop is needed to make it easier for business owners to find out the needs of consumers from products and non-products so that it can be developed and shaped as needed. Lacku\_Id which initially was only in West Jakarta but managed to reach outside West Jakarta and received a positive response from consumers. Lacku\_Id succeeded in determining market segmentation and was able to find out the needs of consumer groups or markets so that they could develop and reach outside West Jakarta. Marketing products and places, Lacku\_Id does this through Instagram, to reach a wide range of consumers, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, Instagram social media is very useful.

In targeting, Lacku\_Id conducts an evaluation process and selects one or more market segments that are considered the most attractive to be served with company-specific marketing programs. The evaluation criteria used include segment size and growth potential, segment structural characteristics, and product and market suitability. According to Willie, the admin of Lacku\_Id social media thinks that the targeted person is the person who comes because they want to enjoy the atmosphere provided by Lacku\_Id. In the beginning, Lacku\_Id chose a target market, namely women. Women who come to do gathering activities or chat with friends, it's just that time goes by very few men or teenagers who enter Lacku\_Id so that over time the business owners and the Lacku\_Id team change their targets and the concept of the place so that it can be visited by all groups and all genders. The concept of change has an impact in terms of visitors and targets. The change in

concept had an impact on Lacku\_Id so that many consumers came and took photos. Lacku\_Id allows its products to enter the lower middle class or class B to C. Product prices range from IDR 12,000 to IDR 32,000. However, since the pandemic, the targets to be targeted are more focused on Instagram and online. Lacku\_Id does sales by making small booths and preparing staff so that consumers don't have to enter Lacku\_Id. It is difficult to do sales as usual and the number of consumer requests for the desire to use the place so that Lacku\_Id implements reservation or reservation but with maximum limits and health protocols so that consumers, workers feel safe and comfortable. Consumers can make reservations for distance and health protocols so that consumers feel safe and comfortable. This protocol is carried out strictly in advance, wear a mask, and keep your distance. Reservation does not mean that it can give consumers the freedom to bring a large number of relatives or family, but there is a maximum limit to be at the time of reservation. When implementing it, a good business owner must take steps and be taken so that unwanted things do not occur.

A customer named Tony made a reservation. According to him, Lacku\_Id had implemented the protocol well when Tony had a meeting there. He also stated that workers had used sufficiently complete attributes to avoid COVID-19 and notified the rules while on Lacku\_Id. Tony felt safe and comfortable when making a reservation. Willie, the Lacku\_Id Instagram admin stated that reservations and unique places are a plus point for Lacku\_Id because near the Lacku\_Id area many coffee shops don't survive.

Lacku\_Id has a unique place that makes consumers want to come to the place, it is natural for consumers to ask to make a reservation, according to communication expert, Dr. Firman Kurniawan stated that Lacku\_Id prioritizes places and prioritizes visiting people so that it must be seen in terms of products and consumers so that marketing communication can be adjusted properly with these two characteristics.

Positioning, Lacku\_Id wants to create a perception that the coffee shop is like being at home, has a distinctive Indonesian menu, and comfort is supported by workers who are like friends to talk to, provide excellent service, and satisfy consumers. Willie also said that the Lacku\_Id coffee shop was different because he wanted to excel its workers too. This coffee shop for business owners is a blessing for many people because it also opened Lacku\_Id during the pandemic.

Business owners want to create a perception in the minds of consumers in terms of products that their food and beverage products have a very Indonesian taste. One of the drinks such as klepon and the food is cireng, dumplings, Bandung toast, fried rice, and many more menus with a distinctive Indonesian taste. Tony, a consumer, revealed that Lacku\_Id has succeeded in instilling the minds of consumers in making its characteristics with Indonesian flavors. Tony has also tried and judged if the product is really good.

This coffee shop for business owners is a blessing for many people because it also opens Lacku\_Id during a pandemic. Since the beginning of opening until now, there have been no terminations.

According to Dr. Firman Kurniawan, a communication expert at the University of Indonesia for the COVID-19 pandemic, made many restrictions on visiting or gathering and having dinner in one serious problem for Lacku\_Id, who initially sold and favored places, so he shifted by selling his coffee. Indirectly, Lacku\_Id must put a unique position during the COVID-19 pandemic compared to competitors in the minds of consumers to create opportunities and Lacku\_Id must look at competitors who have first opened a business in the coffee shop business.

**4.2. Marketing Communication Implementation**

Lacku\_Id in carrying out market communication using Instagram social media. According to a communication expert from the University of Indonesia, Dr. Firman Kurniawan that Lacku\_Id was right to choose Instagram social media as a means of promotion during a pandemic because if he didn't have it he would have more difficulties. Using Instagram social media has made Lacku\_Id successful in collaborating and driving sales during COVID-19 by forming packages or bundles. The collaboration was carried out with Taichan Nyot-Nyot, KAMU, Crenish Lovers, BakwanDay, and Kabita Chicken.



**Figure 2.** Lacku\_Id in Instagram

Through Instagram social media, Lacku\_Id conducted a sales promotion. Promotion is carried out by creating content on the Instagram timeline and Instagram Stories. Tjendra Suwandi, the business owner said that promotion through Instagram can increase consumer loyalty and make the percentage of consumers choose Lacku\_Id over other coffee shops, thereby reminding consumers of the Lacku\_Id brand and attracting new consumers. Promotion is this variable used by a company to communicate with consumers by way of a discount or lottery aimed at making

consumers more sensitive to the incentives offered by a company [10].

Implementing product sales promotions on Instagram, Lacku\_Id carries out content planning, content uploads, and content reports. This is done to make it more organized and clear about the content and promotions made for Instagram. Content planning, this content planning can be made within a certain period of time and discussed with the team and business owners. Confusion in creating content because previously, Lacku\_Id rarely created promotional content and was supported by a different target market. The content schedule that has been prepared must also be changed.

Upload content, in this section, content or promotional content will be uploaded on Instagram which is useful for providing information or for communicating with consumers. Lacku\_Id chooses to upload more often on Instagram Stories every day because according to the business owner, Instagram Stories is easier for consumers to see than posts on the timeline. When the pandemic created difficulties and obstacles for Instagram admins in creating content and had to change the content schedule to keep creating content so that consumers didn't forget to Lacku\_Id and still attract consumers and communicate via Instagram. After all, it is easily drowned by the uploads of other users. Through content on Instagram since the COVID-19 pandemic, business owners emphasize product promotion to encourage take away sales.

Promotions carried out include purchasing coffee, non-coffee, packages, or bundles in collaboration with other brands. Since the COVID-19 and PSBB pandemic, Lacku\_Id has had a problem with the stock being kept quite a lot, so uploading stories and doing promos so that stocks are not wasted. Promotions uploaded by Lacku\_Id on the Instagram timeline are also assisted by using the hashtag (#), caption, and location features. because according to [11] these parts need to be filled so that the uploaded photo has more information, meaning, and purpose.

Having a unique place makes Lacku\_Id the venue for the Dubi-Dubi Dam RTV program hosted by Jane Callista, which indirectly promotes Lacku\_Id. Jane Callista also often promotes Lacku\_Id products through her personal Instagram. There is no doubt Jane Callista's strength on Instagram's social media in influencing her 180,000 followers and she has a separate fan page. Tony is a consumer who says he saw Jane Calista and thinks it will have a big impact on Lacku\_Id.

This is an advantage for Lacku\_Id during a pandemic. Building Lacku\_Id characteristics through a character or someone makes it easier for consumers to encourage consumers to remember Lacku\_Id characteristics.

Dr. Firman regarding Lacku\_Id's promotion that Lacku\_Id during the pandemic had to carry out promotions to keep it going because he was a new player so it became the umpteenth brand in the minds of consumers. So that in addition to marketing communications, you can do promos, free delivery fees, and so on.

On the other hand, Lacku\_Id often sends samples or gives products to Jane Callista for review or review through her social media. This is also supported by Dr. Firman

Kurniawan should do because the sample will give memory to the person who did the review.

Report content, before reporting content, the Instagram Lacku\_Id admin must make systematic observations and then describe and report to superiors. If the content does not run well and has no impact, the content will be removed or downgraded by the Lacku\_Id admin. Reporting content is made easy because it is assisted by a feature available on Instagram, namely Insights. Report content that is carried out within a certain period so that it is seen first, so it is not every day to do reports such as Lacku\_Id to do weekly reports and monthly reports along with sales.

### ***4.3. Marketing Communication Evaluation***

After conducting marketing communications, the company must know the impact created by the strategies formed on the targeted consumers. This is to determine for sure consumers how often they see the message conveyed, whether the message is easy to remember, as well as responses and attitudes when viewing messages. Companies can also measure and find out consumer behavior caused by messages such as how many consumers buy products, visit stores, or provide recommendations to other people. Willie, the admin of Instagram Lacku\_Id, stated that consumers know more about Lacku\_Id that they can book places on a reservation basis and are limited so that they still run the protocol properly and safely. Lacku\_Id becomes aware that market needs and segmentation. Lacku\_Id understands what the market wants from the number of interactions in the Instagram timeline uploads and Instagram stories. Not a few consumers direct messages to ask for a place. Promotions made during the COVID-19 pandemic are not very attractive to consumers because of consumers and the market, but those who come really like the atmosphere and the place.

### ***4.4. The Implementation of Strategy towards Consumers***

After conducting interviews with consumers, the author finds out that consumers know Lacku\_Id through Instagram Stories and uploads on the Instagram timeline so that consumers are interested in visiting Lacku\_Id's place which has a unique place or because of promotions made by Lacku\_Id. When consumers are aware of Lacku\_Id via Instagram consumers will visit, and consumers will make an assessment. If consumers are satisfied and happy with Lacku\_Id, consumers will come back. During the COVID-19 pandemic, consumers who are interested in Lacku\_Id products will continue to buy online. Business owner Tjendra Suwandi said that online purchases were clear due to promos and inexpensive shipping costs. If the price is already expensive, it will make consumers think again about buying the product.

## **5. CONCLUSIONS**

Lacku\_Id has implemented a marketing communication strategy well through promotion, it's just that consumers are more interested in visiting the place. Instagram is a social media that is very helpful during the COVID-19 pandemic without having to spend money so that it helps entrepreneurs to continue to be able to carry out marketing or promotional communications. Business owners are better off retaining employees than using endorsers or influencers. Through market communication planning, implementing market communication, and evaluating market communication, Lacku\_Id knows the market communication strategy that must be created and implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic. Having a unique place makes Lacku\_Id survive with consumers who make reservations supported by the COVID-19 health protocol. Choosing a target market that is middle to lower class or B to C is the right choice so that the purchase of products during the COVID-19 pandemic is still ongoing. Promos in collaboration with other brands. Using local materials and products because business owners love Indonesia very much.

Lacku\_Id during the pandemic was assisted by promotion through a TV show namely Dubi-Dubi Dam due to the use of the place. Jane Callista is not uncommon to promote Lacku\_Id products through Instagram Stories. Lacku\_Id experienced difficulties and obstacles during the COVID-19 pandemic because those who previously sold and promoted places but changed to more promoting products for taking away and before the COVID-19 pandemic, Lacku\_Id rarely made major promotions for products.

The purchase of Lacku\_Id products online during the COVID-19 pandemic was evident due to promotions and inexpensive shipping costs. Promotions made during the COVID-19 pandemic did not attract consumers' eyes because consumers and the Lacku\_Id market were not too interested in promotions but consumers who came did like the atmosphere and the place. Through its marketing communication strategy with Instagram, Lacku\_Id can still persuade, and remind consumers, directly or indirectly, of Lacku\_Id's products and brands.

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