CHALLENGE OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING & EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES TO ENGAGE MORE CUSTOMERS: SELECTED RETAILER CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Social media platforms have been utilized by marketing strategists to establish brand identity and awareness and to garner sales. However, translating public participation to financial growth has its challenges. Thus, the present research explored the effectiveness of social media marketing in engaging consumers and the challenges associated with this. The research focused on the food retail market in Indonesia as it presents a diversified retail pattern with a simultaneous increase in internet use and consumption of social media. A mixed methods research approach was adopted and the quantitative component helped identify the relevant factors perceived by customers that profoundly impact the effectiveness of social media marketing. The qualitative research component involved conducting interviews with social media strategists, who helped unravel the strategies adopted and the opportunities and challenges associated with social media marketing. The study was conducted on two leading retailers based in the Jakarta region. The findings from the quantitative questionnaire showed that the fulfillment of the social aspect of social media marketing was not perceived to be useful by consumers in satisfying their motivations. The motivations of belief (relevance of social media in obtaining up-to-date information and ability to share experiences), community participation (active participation in a retailer's social media page and stimulating the retail brand), and monetary (obtaining better prices and free coupons for making purchases) and psychological (seeking a sense of affiliation and belonging in the community and establishing and maintaining relationships with other members) aspects were found to be significant motivators of consumers' perception of the relevance of social media marketing.

Keywords: Indonesia; Food retail; Social media marketing; Challenges; Opportunities

1. INTRODUCTION

As the economy continues to grow and evolve the food market in Indonesia is also witnessing significant changes. The food retail sector is undergoing modernization with introduction of modern retail chains, increased purchases of packaged foods, and food imports. Indonesia is the fourth most populous country in the world, and with changing food consumption patterns it presents an easier access and opportunity for the retailers to generate brand equity through social media platforms (Dyck, Woolverton, & Rangkuti, 2012). Retail sector marketers in the midst of a digital revolution strive to keep consumers updated on various product offerings. Social media

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feeds have become the staple of millennial society, providing news and updates instantly. The social media channels offer two way communication mechanism, thereby attracting exciting media marketing strategies (Green Hasson & Janks, 2013). The extent of digital influence also tends to drive in-store sales and customers' purchasing behavior. However, the increasing awareness of retailers is yet to reach the levels where the gap between the consumer's digital expectations and the retailer's ability to deliver the desired level of experience can be filled (Lobaugh, Simpson, & Ohri, 2015). Thus, the present paper has focused on opportunities and challenges that retailers face in filling such a gap.

To elaborate upon the significance of social media, as a marketing tool, it is essential to highlight the newly evolved way of usage of World Wide Web by the users. The new pattern of usage includes the active participation of users, wherein they constantly participate in generation and consumption of the digital content. In this manner, the users these days are not merely passive viewers of the information, but also continue to add value to the internet platforms, which allow them to do so. Termed as Web 2.0, the traditional World Wide Web has transitioned into a platform of collaboration, interoperability and interactivity(Campbell, Pitt, Parent, & Berthon, 2011). With respect to online retail activities, social media has introduced exciting ways in which a user can gather information about a product, and make purchase decisions. The marketing strategies are designed as such so as to influence an individual's perception about the marketplace. However, for the digital marketing campaigns to be successful certain pre-requisites have to be met on the part of consumer (Paquette, 2013). Knowledge regarding the consumers innovation acceptance is crucial,, as it helps the marketers in designing a rewarding marketing campaign (Mady, 2011).

Marketing campaigns are run on social media, which serves as a channel for building relationships with customers, performing research on buyers, generating leads, promoting sales, and branding(Schmitt, 2012). These activities can be successfully completed and the business goals achieved if the relevant content is displayed on the appropriate social media channel. This could involve definition of customized customer engagement behaviors by taking note of consumer activities such as bookmarking, linking, clicking, referring, subscribing, and submission of enquiries (Falls, 2010). Thus, the creation of suitable social media content aims to fill the gap between marketer and consumer with respect to delivery and receipt of information. The literature shows the relevance of creative strategies for creating content that focuses on the benefits that could be reaped through unique selling propositions, superiority, and undifferentiated product class. The content designed in response to this could match the brand with consumers' aspirations, experience, and feelings. Focused content should have the ability to cognitively engage consumers, and orient their reactions with respect to their consumption patterns(Ashley & Tuten, 2015). Figure 1 illustrates the different steps that could be taken backed by an effective editorial team and a knowledge of the right words to be communicated. This method was developed by Ireland and is commonplace in the industry today. Marketers could begin with a social media follow-up of target consumers, and then decide on the manner and the frequency of the content to be delivered. Furthermore, it is imperative to define goals and objectives and formulate a social content plan, which should be constantly reviewed and improved as per the target audience's interests.

Figure 1: Steps for Developing Social Media Strategy
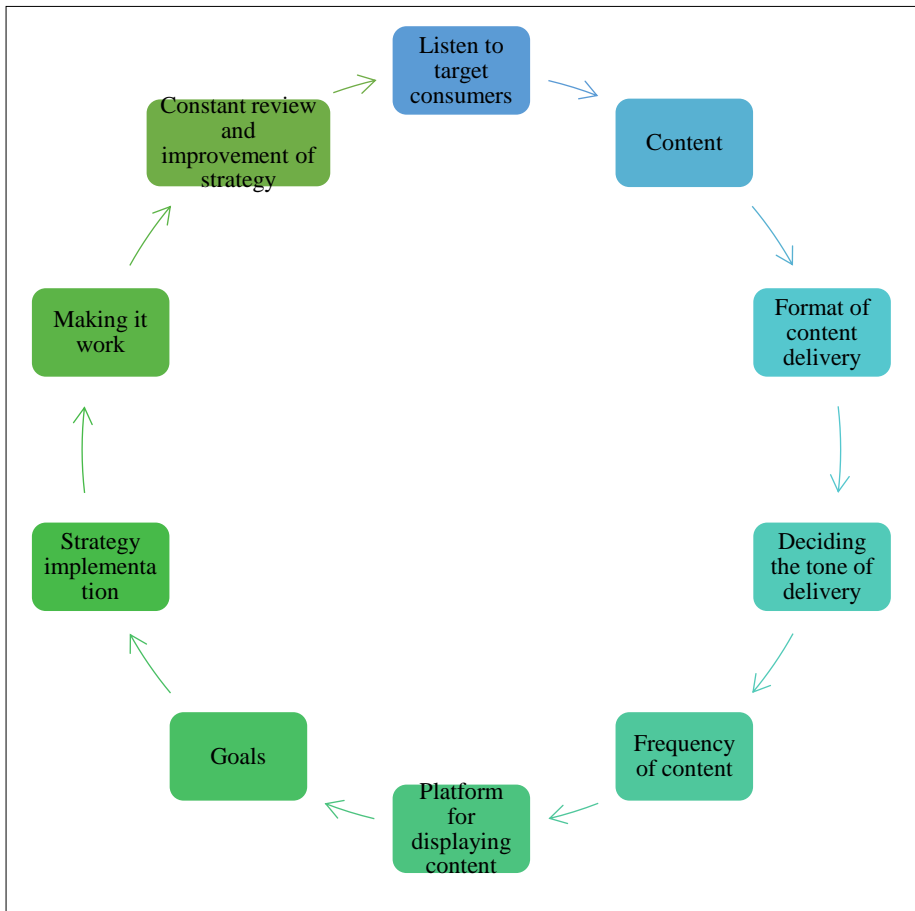
The social media channels indeed offer a wide spectrum of opportunities for the marketers to reach and influence the target consumers. However with its many opportunities such as providing competitive edge, brand recognition, improvement of brand loyalty, gaining brand authority, creating rich consumer experiences and receiving improved consumer insights, it also has a list of challenges associated with it (Rana & Kumar, 2016). The rapid nature of feedback gained from social media channels could prove both a positive and negative attribute. The quick receipt of reviews requires rapid and effective handling on the part of managers. In addition, there is no moderation of the way consumers express negative feelings toward the brand Brands need to be careful when publishing or transferring online content, ensuring adherence to legal constructs governing market research and advertising laws. The social media brings all the competitors on a single platform making it difficult for the competitors to gain an understanding of others' plan of action(Van Gorp & Batura, 2015). Timing is yet another challenge associated with social media marketing: identifying the suitable time slot for social media engagements is a challenging task. One of the major challenges of social media marketing is the management of content. One of the major challenges of social media marketing is the management of content. Social marketing

requires continuous generation of fresh content, which is again a challenging task for a number of business owners and results in unwillingness to adopt social media marketing techniques (Eriksson, 2012).

The present study aimed to identify challenges to social media marketing and effective strategies to engage more customers in selected retail stores in Indonesia. Indonesia was selected as the researcher is based there, and furthermore, is a developing market with a rapidly growing number of social media users, which makes it a lucrative opportunity for social media marketers. It also presents a diversified pattern of food retailing given the simultaneous increase in internet use and social media.

A brief overview of social media marketing shows that it is a broad concept, with numerous applications, in which marketing techniques and channels could be customized as per the needs of the brand. Social media presents significant possibilities, which need to be studied carefully to identify the most effective marketing strategy for a particular brand in relation to their target market. The present study explores such methods with respect to the Indonesian food retail sector. It has been shown that Indonesian businesses need to define customer centric experiences, develop omni-channel engagement, leverage big data, enhance cyber security, and build capabilities to develop in response to the demands of the current digital age (Das et al, 2016). Thus, the suitable strategies and challenges identified through the quantitative and qualitative research could help the Indonesian retailers unlock their digital potential.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. *Social Media Marketing in Indonesia (with Special Focus on Food Retail Sector)*

Social media marketing in Indonesia is still in the emergent stages of development, while the global digital environment is developing at a rapid pace and is achieving new heights of innovation. The relative lack of development in Indonesian digitization could be due to its weak information and technology structure. The lack of tech-savvy human capital continues to constraint the development of e-commerce systems in country (Das et al., 2016). However, the slow rate of digital growth is in contrast to a vibrant social media culture in Indonesia, presenting a paradoxical phenomenon. People continue to demonstrate a strong appetite for social networking; in a survey conducted in five Asian countries, Indonesia was found to lead social media participation. The statistics have shown that, as of 2016, 79 million of a total of 260 million Indonesians remained active on social media. The statistics have shown that out of a total 260 million, 79 million Indonesians remained active on social media, as of 2016(Johansson, 2016). The social media activities have also been found to impact the political actions of the young Indonesian democracy, wherein the social media platforms are used for the dissemination of information. Social media platforms allow users to create and publish content without any restrictions and costs. The political parties are also free to shape content on social media, without having to satisfy publishing guidelines, thus using social media platforms for political marketing(Gainous & Wagner, 2014). Social media usage patterns could also be used to assess and understand user behavior, which could prove to be crucial in designing relevant marketing campaigns, whether for political parties or any other sector. With respect to the present discussion, the literature regarding the Indonesian retail market was reviewed. The Indonesian retail market is vast and is growing via rapidly urbanizing

cities, which offers countless opportunities to business owners. A survey of purchasing behaviors indicated that Indonesian consumers tend to be more inclined towards affluence, as well as exhibiting evolving behaviors of sophisticated communication and assessment of the products they want to buy. However, the social media and internet channels do not receive a high degree of favor from the consumers while making commercial transactions. Although, they are beginning to favor the social channels for clothing, footwear, confectionary, and packaged food, for foreign and private labels(Deloitte, 2015).

It has also been indicated that the business companies need to pay attention to e-commerce and digital media channels to build effective consumer engagement portfolios to tap the immense potential of the growing digital market. To maximize impact, engage consumers prior to purchase, and influence their decisions, it is essential for retailers to identify the consumer's online presence and exploit digital media and social media platforms. Indonesian consumers continue to exhibit patterns of growing social media usage and valuable customer relationships could be established by engaging consumers in continuous dialogue via social media. Packaged food retailers could connect directly with consumers by creating an online environment that allows the free flow of dialogue between company and other consumers (Wijeratne, Teng, Caoili, & Sircar, 2016).

The promotion of loyalty programs is yet another social media marketing technique that could prove to be extremely useful for retailers. The Asia-Pacific markets have been found to have the highest percentages of consumers participating in such programs. With respect to the preferred channel, the loyalty mobile apps were deemed as very appealing by the users, wherein the third party apps allow the users to store multiple rewards in one place. The integration of digital payment systems with loyalty programs increases consumer retention and they are engaged in a repetitive interaction with the retailer (Nielsen, 2016). Furthermore, keeping in view the statistics that report Indonesian users to spent an average of three hours daily on social media, the crowd sourced social media marketing has been designated to have untapped potential. It has been suggested that following this tactic, which allows the consumers to get directly involved in the brand's marketing campaigns, could generate large following and consumer involvement (Russina Venture Company, 2016).

2.2.   *Antecedents of Social Media Marketing and Usage*

The literature indicated a developing social media culture in Indonesia, which was in contrast to the information and communication structure of the country. Hence, it was vital to investigate the factors that lead people to use social media, and in turn influence social media marketing. The discussion follows an examination of social media usage, followed by the motivational drivers of the behavioral tendencies of consumers.

Social media offers elements of interaction and provided a modern platform that enables mass participation and communication. Chat groups, online communities, and virtual groups have led to the formation of consolidated communication platforms that have eased the transmission of multimedia content (Mustafa & Hamzah, 2011). The significance of social media platforms, and their impact on marketing, has generated a significant amount of research on their usage patterns. Indonesia has been found to have 90% penetration by Facebook, an active user base of 60% for Twitter, followed by 40% for Google+. In addition, Instagram, Tumblr, and Pinterest have also

been found to have a rapidly increasing user base, with Indonesian teenagers and young adults aged 16- 34 constituting a quarter of Instagram users (European Publishers Council, 2015).

Social media marketing find its content placed in the social platforms of Facebook, Twitter and other social networks, which people interact with within the constraints of the specific platforms. Social media marketing techniques tend to focus on brand awareness and enhancing customer retention and satisfaction (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). To fulfill these objectives, it is essential for prospective consumers to engage in social activities and such engagement has been perceived as influenced by certain motivational drivers. A sound understanding of these motivations can better guide food retail companies in engaging consumers in social activities and for them to better understand and predict the consequences of such engagement. COBRA (Consumers' Online Brand-related Activities) has been found to be significant in understanding the motivational drivers behind brand-related social media usage (Augustini, 2014).

Figure 2 depicts the COBRA concept in which the motivational constructs are linked to the different drivers of motivation, which ultimately combine into consumers' social media usage tendencies (Muntinga, Moorman, & Smit, 2011). There are three dimensions to consumers' brand activities: consuming, contributing, and creating. Consuming refers to minimal online activity with respect to the brand; people participate without contributing or creating content.

Contributing refers to user-to-content and user-to-user interactions, in which people contribute to brand related content. This dimension involves engaging in conversations on a brand's fan page, contributing to forums, commenting on blogs, videos, and pictures, or any other content. Creating involves the highest level of involvement, in which people actively contribute to the brand by producing and publishing content that other participants can consume and contribute to.

Entertainment, information, and remuneration have been found to be significant motivations for the consumption dimension. Information motivation drives the reading of reviews and threads to gain information for purchase decisions. It also tends to inspire people. The entertainment motivation, with its sub-motivation of enjoyment, relaxation, and passing time, is found to be specific to consumption. Remunerations of money, job related prospects, or any other exciting proposition associated with content also attract consumers.

Contribution to brand-related content is instigated by the motivators of personal identity, integration and social interaction, and entertainment. With respect to contributing, personal identity is characterized by sub-motivations of self-assurance, self-expression, and self-presentation. Integration and social interaction involve the sub-motivations of social interaction, social identity, and helping other participants. People who contribute to social media pages tend to do so in order to interact with others with the same interests. The creating dimension includes the motivations of personal identity, integration and social interaction, entertainment, and empowerment. The similar motivations of contribution and creation differ from each other with respect to the sub-motivations that drive these factors. Hence, an overall understanding of the consumer's motivations helps the brands in making efficient campaigns, which can also specifically be directed towards specific motivations, to incite the required behaviors of consumption, contribution or creation.

Figure 2 depicts the COBRA concept in which the motivational constructs are linked to the different drivers of motivation, which ultimately combine into consumers' social media usage tendencies (Muntinga, Moorman, & Smit, 2011).

Figure 2: COBRA Concept (Source: Choi, Kim, & McMillan, 2009).
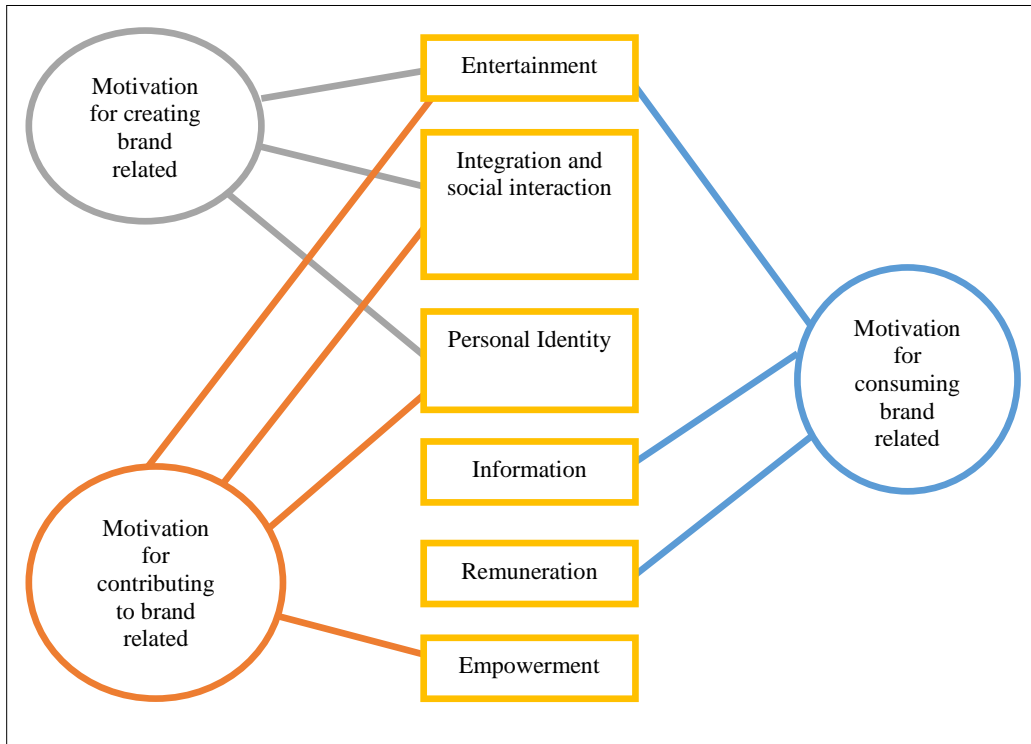
2.3.   *Common Challenges and Pitfalls with Social Media Marketing*

In addition to traditional challenges, the major challenges that could lead to the failure of a social media marketing plan include lack of clarity with respect to ownership, possible disconnect between departments, and a lack of integrated approach. (Frost & Sullivan, 2010).
The issue of unclear ownership and accountability is uncommon but continues to pose a dilemma. The companies often result in overseeing the establishment of a correct direction for conducting the social media customer initiatives. Roles and responsibilities are not clearly assigned and there is not strong involvement in task differentiation and allocation processes. Furthermore, as it is challenging to define, identify, and quantify the return on investments from initiatives on social media, department leaders are reluctant to sign off required investments and interdepartmental inconsistencies often arise regarding accountability.

A holistic and successful social media campaign requires the integrated activities of different sales, marketing, customer service, corporate communications, and other departments. However, it has been observed that these departments tend to implement their own applications, resulting in non-interacting applications, collection of redundant data, and consumer experience being fragmented across different channels. Different departments also often compete for limited IT resources, resulting in a lack of a timely and integrated approach. This could also result in generation of low

value or no value at all, as the limited IT resources are exploited without the identification of key dependencies required for the particular activity.

The other organizational and process inconsistencies might include the imperfect reporting of the sentiments resulting in undermining of the situation, imperfect measurement of the reach and awareness of the campaign causing inflated measurements, inappropriate usage of relevant metric systems for identifying the engagement levels on different platforms. If the feedback collected from the social media activities is not consistent then it can derail the campaign from the defined objectives.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The review of the literature regarding the critical considerations of the proposed study helped the researcher select relevant tools and research methods.

Data collection procedures involved the collection of secondary data to identify gaps and recognize the current position of social media marketing. Secondary sources included relevant reports, published articles, and journals. The primary sources of data collection included different sets of participants for the qualitative and quantitative methods. For the quantitative data, a structured survey was distributed online among 100 customers from two food retail stores, of which 60 agreed to participate in the survey. Qualitative data collection involved asking semi-structured open-ended questions to six social media marketers working with three different food retail companies. The retailers were chosen on the basis of their popularity, reach, and social media presence in Jakarta. The analysis of their responses is presented below

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data were subjected to different methods of analysis to obtain relevant results and to address the proposed research objectives. The results obtained were as follows.

4.1. *Quantitative Analysis*

Descriptive analysis was performed to obtain a summary of participant population demographics and information regarding the general background of the phenomenon. As shown in Figure 3a, the researcher gave equal consideration to both genders, with each constituting 50% of the respondent population. Teenagers and young adults were showed higher social media engagement and 63.3% of respondents were aged 18 to 35. With respect to the professions of the respondent population, students accounted for 30% and 28.3% of respondents were employed

Figure 3 : Percentage Distribution of Respondents in terms of (a) Gender, (b) Age, and (c) Profession
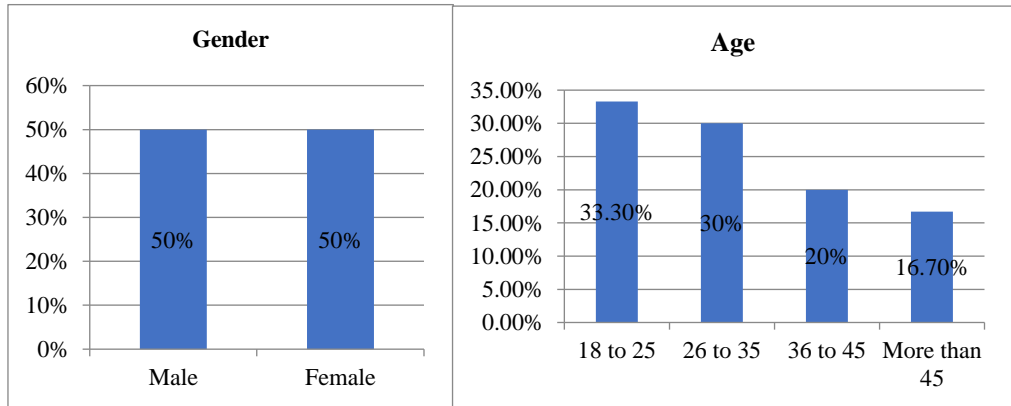

(a)

(b)
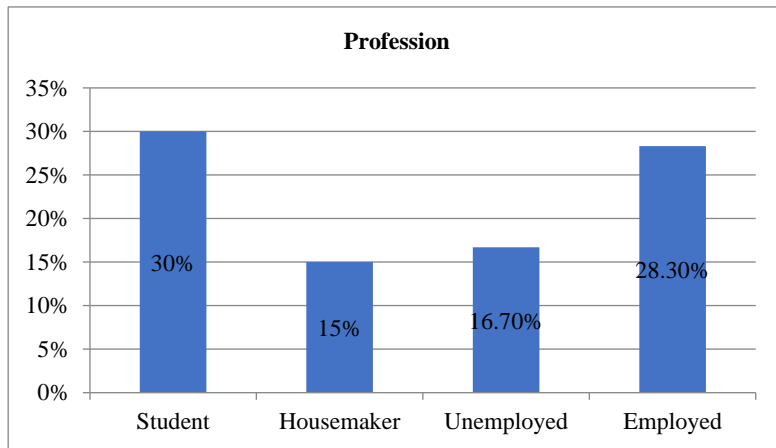
(c)

The respondent population was asked to indicate the platform they use for social media interactions and their preferred manner of communication. It was found that Facebook (26.70%) was the most popular channel for social interaction, followed by Instagram (20%), and LinkedIn (11.70%), which was the least popular. A total of 16.70% of the population reported using none of the social media platforms, whereas 8.30% of them had accounts on the platforms.

**Figure 4:** Percentage Distribution of Respondents' Platform Use
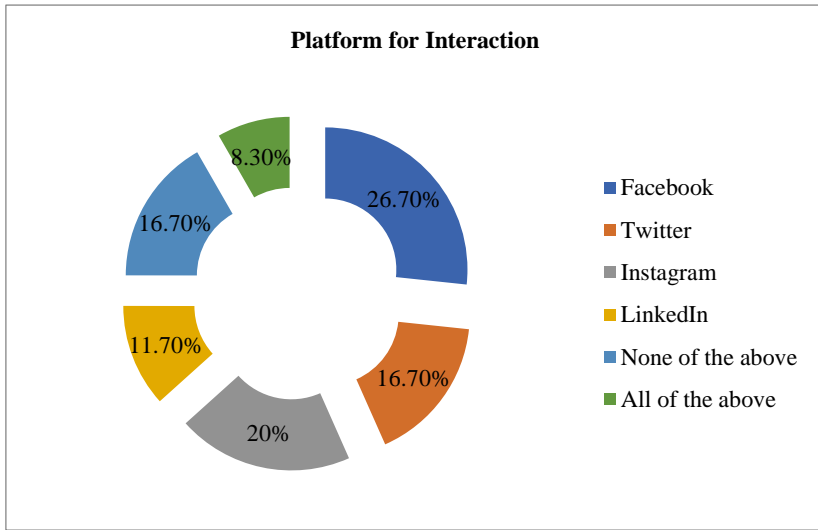
With respect to the manner of interaction, the contributing tendencies of COBRA were found to be the highest as 30% of the respondents interacted through comments, 25% through likes, and 16.70% reported no interaction. A total of 66.7% of the respondents engaged in sharing brand posts, whereas 33.30% of them did not engage in any sharing behaviors.

Figure 5: Percentage Distribution of Respondents' Manner of Interaction
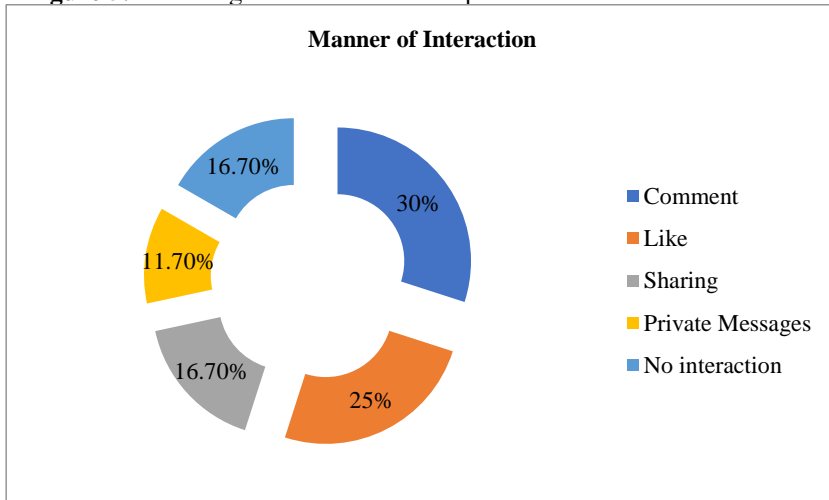

The respondents were questioned with respect to their tendency to share brand posts, and it was found that 66.70% of the respondents agreed to participation by sharing the brand posts, whereas 33.30% of the respondents did not share any brand posts. This indicated that a higher proportion of respondents were willing to participate in brand's online activities by sharing posts.

Figure 6: Percentage Distribution of Sharing Brand Posts
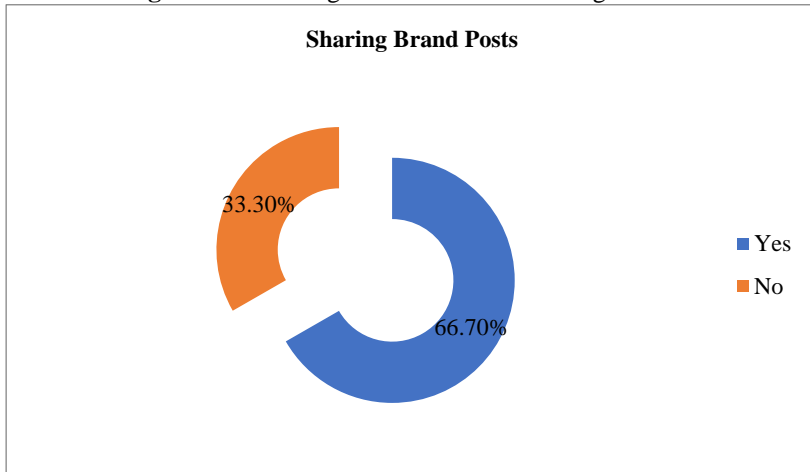
In terms of the effectiveness of the online strategies perceived by retail sector consumers, 36.70% of the respondents agreed that online marketing helped build trust, 33.30% agreed that social media marketing increases the intention to buy products, and 30% agreed that it increased brands' perceived usefulness.

Figure 7: Percentage distribution of perceived outcomes of online marketing

	Builds trust	Intention to buy increases	Percieved usefulness
Outcomes of marketing	36.70%	33.30%	30%
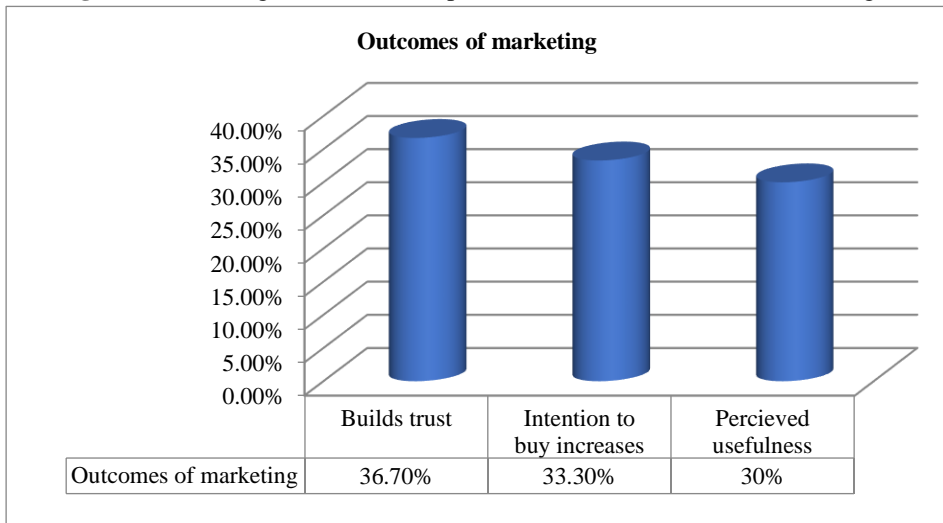
The responses regarding two different retailers were analyzed using inferential statistics. The results are shown below.

Table 1 shows the correlation and regression results for identifying the relationship between the different constructs that define the perceived benefits of engaging in social media interaction.

Marketing strategies that allowed customers to obtain relevant up-to-date information (α=.736, Sig = .000) and ability to share experiences (α=.672, Sig = .000) were found to be effective. This could be inferred from the high degree of correlation of the aforementioned statements, in addition to positive and significant regression relationships.

Table 1: Correlation and regression results for social media interaction

	Effectiveness of social media : Correlation co-efficient/ Pearson correlation	Sig.	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
				1.792	.079
Retailer's social media channel relevant for obtaining up-to-date information	.736	.000	.488	5.113	.000
Retailer's social media channel provided ease/convenience of communicating with others	.358	.000	.156	1.932	.058
Retailer's social media channel enabled to share experiences	.672	.000	.370	3.951	.000

Table 2 shows the correlation and regression results for identifying the relationship between the different constructs that relate to the social factors that determine the effectiveness of social media marketing strategies. It was revealed that none of the social factors had a very weak correlation with the effectiveness of social media strategies. As shown in Table 3, the fitness of the model tests reported the significance of the model; however, a very small r-squared value was obtained. This indicated the lack of relationship between social factors and the effectiveness of social media strategies.

Table 2: Correlation and Regression Results for Social Factors

	Effectiveness of social media	Sig.
Retailer's social media channel enables communication with other members.	.331	.010
Retailer's social media channel useful in getting involved with other members	.458	.000

Table 3: Regression Model Statistics for the Social Constructs

Model	R (Regression)	R Square	Adjusted R Square	F	Sig.
Social	0.508	0.258	0.232	9.917	0

Table 4 shows the correlation and regression results for identifying the different constructs that defined the role played by the psychological factors in determining the effectiveness of social media marketing strategies. Both factors were found to have a high degree of correlation and positive and significant regression relationships. Hence, the marketing strategies that provided customers with a sense of affiliation and belonging and helped establish new relationships were found to be effective.

Table 4: Correlation and Regression Results for Psychological Factors

	Effectiveness of social media	Sig.	Standardized Coefficients		
			Beta	t	Sig.
				1.723	.090
Retailer's social media channel helps in seeking a sense of affiliation and belonging in the community.	.693	.000	.461	5.143	.000
Retailer's social media channel helps in establishing and maintaining relationships with other members.	.701	.000	.475	5.306	.000

Table 5 shows the correlation and regression results for identifying the relationship between the different constructs that defined the role played by the monetary benefits provided by the retailer to its community members. Marketing strategies through which community members obtained relevant discounts and special deals (α=.588, Sig = .000), better prices (α=.763, Sig = .000), and free coupons (α=.751, Sig = .000), were found to be effective. This could be inferred from the high to moderate degree of correlation of the aforementioned statements and the positive and significant regression relationships. The receipt of discounts and special deals was found to have a moderate degree of correlation with the effectiveness of marketing strategies and had the least positive value of t = 2.911.

Table 5: Correlation and Regression Results for Monetary Factors

	Effectiveness of social media	Sig.	Standardized Coefficients		
			Beta	t	Sig.
				1.238	.221
Retailer's social media channel useful for obtaining discounts or special deals that most consumers do not receive.	.588	.000	.220	2.911	.005
Retailer's social media channel useful for obtaining better prices.	.763	.000	.420	4.976	.000
Retailer's social media channel provided free coupons to community members in return for making purchases.	.751	.000	.413	5.013	.000

Table 6 shows the correlation and regression results for identifying the relationship between the different constructs that defined the level of community participation allowed by the retailer's social media page. Marketing strategies that allowed customers to actively participate (α=.722, Sig = .000) and stimulate the retail brand through their contributions (α=.729, Sig = .000) were found to be effective. This could be inferred from the high degree of correlation of the aforementioned statements, accompanied by positive and significant regression relationships.

Table 6: Correlation and Regression Results for Level of Community Participation

	Effectiveness of social media	Sig.	Standardized Coefficients		
			Beta	t	Sig.
				-.175	.861
Active participation in retailer's social media page.	.722	.000	.398	4.605	.000
Provide useful information to other members.	.241	.063	.164	2.291	.026
Post messages and responses frequently.	.365	.004	.120	1.615	.112
Stimulate the retail brand.	.729	.000	.491	5.863	.000

Table 7 shows the statistics for the fitness of the models. As seen from the table, all the models were found to be significant, with high R-squared values and moderate F-statistic values. This indicated the fitness of models explained the recurring phenomenon with considerable precision.

Table 7: Fitness Statistics of the Regression Models

Model	R (Regression)	R Square	Adjusted R Square	F	Sig.
Benefits	0.815	0.663	0.645	36.794	0
Community participation	0.854	0.729	0.709	36.922	0
Monetary	0.872	0.76	0.747	59.193	0
Psychological	0.808	0.652	0.64	53.498	0

4.2. Qualitative Analysis

The qualitative data were collected via semi-structured interview questions, including responses from three social media strategists from each retail company. They were selected on the basis of the following criteria:
- Longevity in the position as a social media marketer/strategist (minimum two years).
- Active on various social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram for the purpose of branding and customer satisfaction/service.
- A combined follower count of at least 250,000.

Table 8 shows demographic details of the respondents. There was an equal representation of genders from each company and an almost equal distribution regarding age groups. However, none of the social media strategists were over 45 years of age. In terms of experience, 50% of the respondents had worked with their present company for less than 5 years.

Table 8: Descriptive Statistics of the Respondent Population

Retail brand	A		B		C	
	Respondent A	Respondent B	Respondent C	Respondent D	Respondent E	Respondent F
Age	26 to 35	36 to 45	18 to 25	36 to 45	26 to 35	18 to 25
Gender	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Experience with present brand	1-5 years	Less than 1 year	Less than 1 year	More than 5 years	1-5 years	1-5 years

The qualitative textual data collected from the respondents were carefully analyzed by the researcher, and theme-based analysis was performed.

To investigate the dimension of strategic social media marketing techniques, the respondents were questioned regarding the inclusion of internet marketing in overall strategy, the importance of social media in communicating the brand's meaning to the target audience, and the best practices of social media marketing. All the respondents responded positively to the inclusion of internet strategies in their marketing plan. With respect to the importance of social media marketing, Respondent B stated, "*social media allows direct communication with the target audience, which helps us in directly conveying the brand's value propositions to them.*" Respondent C stated, "*we utilize social media in keeping the consumer aware about the brand and helping them make*

familiar choices." Respondent F stated, "*social media channels provide a chance to engage in publicity and advertising, for building brand reputation, and this helps in branding.*"

With respect to the different applications of social media marketing and reasons for selecting different channels, Respondent A stated that "*use of social media for promoting the company's brand image among prospective consumers,* by selecting the channels that are reported to have high popularity, such as Facebook." Respondent E also reported that "*usage of social media platforms is majorly done to facilitate direct dialogues with consumers, giving them a sense of belonging to the brand by using popular platforms such as Facebook and Twitter.*" The strategists were also asked about the indicators they use to understand the impact of social media marketing campaigns. Respondent A stated, "*to define a successful online strategy, it is essential for the marketers to think outside of the theoretical constructs and follow the essence of their customer's needs.*" Respondent F stated that "*establishing an online supermarket store, stocking food products based on consumer demand, and promoting activity buttons on the company's social media accounts is a beneficial strategy.* Respondent C stated, "*the incorporation of social media systems with the core business process, and integration of digital tools to track and monitor consumer behavior could help in designing powerful digital campaigns and communicating the brand's meaning to consumers.*" It could therefore be inferred that the social media strategists indeed recognized the importance of embracing social media to build the brand.

The respondents were questioned about the different challenges faced by their companies in measuring the level of success and challenges specific to the food retail sector. Respondent B stated, "*the present era of digitization although the present era of digitization provides different tools for measuring the success of social media campaigns, however, at times the campaign reach could not be measured effectively, resulting in collection of inconsistent data.*" Respondent D reported, "*we tend to monitor the progress we make on our decided social goals by measuring engagement, traffic, fans, and shares, but selecting relevant metrics is often challenging, owing to novelty of the analytic tools and lack of trained personnel in different departments, which are supposed to coordinate with each other.*" Respondent E stated, "although data analytic tools allow *the measurement of important metrics for a media campaign, the financial returns on these campaigns such as ROI cannot be measured, and that proves to be challenging.*" With respect to challenges specific to food the retail sector "*integration between brick-and-mortar and online stores, gaining consumers' trust, aligning the stocks with social media marketing of offers, limited IT resources* and *personalization of the data analytics*" were some of the challenges reported by the respondents. With respect to challenging the dominance of Facebook, Twitter, and other popular platforms, none of the participants felt that this would occur in the near future.

To gain an overall insight into the workings of social media marketing, the participants were asked to state the opportunities the social media platforms presented for creating brand awareness, personality, and loyalty, and how the phenomenon of electronic word of mouth tends to affect the company's online brand reputation. Respondent B stated, "*Facebook has been the most significant platform, our company strategy includes conducting aggressive digital campaigns prior to launch of the product. This helps us in creating large-scale brand awareness.*" Respondent C stated, "*we enhance brand personality by focusing on the content posted on Facebook and Instagram, wherein the customization of the content as per the psychology of the consumers allows us to retain brand loyalty,*" Respondent E stated that "*the consumer's feedback allows us to gain an insight into the needs and requirements, and design and post relevant content that helps in gaining positive image*

and loyalty." With respect to electronic word of mouth Respondent D stated, "*This phenomenon tends to impact the brand reputation both positively and negatively, reviews are subject to high volatility and there is no control over the polarity and degree of hostility presented by the content posted.*"

5. CONCLUSION

The researcher aimed to conduct a comprehensive investigation of the effectiveness and associated challenges of social media marketing strategies in Indonesia. The research study showed that Indonesia is undergoing a digital awakening and that social media culture is on the rise. Indonesians exhibit considerable tendencies for technology acceptance and readiness, thereby presenting as a population whose social media potential is yet to be tapped. The results indicated the significance of factors of belief (relevance of social media in obtaining up-to-date information and ability to share experiences), community participation (active participation in a retailer's social media page and stimulating the retail brand), monetary (obtaining better prices and free coupons for making purchases), and psychological (seeking a sense of affiliation and belonging in the community, and establishing and maintaining relationships with other members) factors in influencing the consumer's perception in judging the relevance of social media marketing.

The qualitative analysis of the responses from social media strategists showed that food retail companies have also come to realize the potential of social media marketing techniques. They aim to utilize digital marketing and data analytics tools to analyze customer responses. The strategists commented that social media allowed them to establish a direct dialogue with the consumer, helping them to create positive brand value and provide consumers with enriching online experiences. They also appeared to be enthusiastic about the integration of social media practices with core business processes to gain greater benefits. The strategists also encountered a number of challenges while conducting online campaigns. Lack of clarity regarding which measures or metrics to employ for measuring the success of campaigns, lack of coordination between concerned departments, limited IT resources, alignment of stocks with online offers, and streamlining of brick-and-mortar stores with social media platforms were some of the major challenges. Despite the challenges, marketers were still keen to exploit the various opportunities offered by social media, such as to create large-scale brand awareness, retain customer retention and promotion of loyalty, and designing campaigns with relevant content. This also creates a demand on government agencies to create an up-to-date information technology infrastructure that could duly support the digital revolution.

The findings of this study are useful for social media practitioners in this industry as they reveal that Indonesian retail market consumers are increasingly using social media to make purchasing decisions and share their experience. It is essential for retailers with limited or no social media presence to increase their efforts and participate actively on this medium and maximize their network reach. However, as the selected retailers in this study revealed a lack of coordination between different departments in terms of maximizing their social media strategy efficiency, they must immediately channel their operations and communications processes to this effect. The other players in the Indonesian retail industry must also ensure to set out a clear plan for their social media entry/expansion in order to efficiently gain the maximum output. This could be seen as a major challenge for the industry in general.

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