



APPLICATION OF THE PROMOTIONAL MIX STRATEGY TO ATTRACT TRAVELERS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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ABSTRACT

Article History

Submitted:

4 September 2022

Reviewed:

1 November 2022

Accepted:

15 November 2022

Published:

15 May 2023

Located in the city of Yogyakarta, Muki Travel is a travel agency business that is growing. As it develops, Muki Travel offers tourism services like selling vacation packages and meeting lodging needs. Specifically during the COVID-19 pandemic, Muki Travel is required to take new steps or use the most recent strategies in order to draw tourists during the pandemic. The goal of this study is to determine how the bauran promosi is implemented. Both field research and library research are methods used to obtain data. According to study conducted at Muki Travel, which used five different techniques of the promotionmix strategy, two of them—advertising and sales promotion methods—are more prevalent than the other five.

Keyword: : travel agency ; tourism ; marketing ; tourists, Yogyakarta

INTRODUCTION

The tourism industry is particularly susceptible to the effects of change; changes in the economy, politics, weather, and climate have a significant impact on the industry as well (Ismayanti, 2021). It is necessary to change and renew; to resist the update is to oppose a need. In theory, if you don't do it, other actors will update the system.

As a result, tourism needs to be prepared and keep evolving to adapt to new circumstances. A tour planner, a person hired by a travel agency and in charge of creating tour packages, trip planning, and other related tasks, must be able to develop a new product that is distinctive and intriguing. (Rachmadi, 2016).

As a result, in order to increase value for customers without compromising the quality of these services, travel companies must be focused on ensuring their contentment. The catchphrase used in business generally, "Customer is partner," serves as an example of this.(Bertens, 2000).

Rachmadi (2016) stated that in an effort to understand the factors that influence travel behavior, particularly for business objectives, travel behavior is also the focus of tourism research. People in the travel industry are aware of the



importance of comprehending travel behavior, particularly the decision-making process, in the current, fiercely competitive travel industry. Effective marketing strategies are built on an understanding of the "why" and "how" of travel behavior. Models of tourist behavior are altered or tailored to fit tours.

The decision-making process for individual, family, or group travel and activities is divided into four stages: (1) The reason for selecting tourist destinations (DTW). To create criteria for selecting tourist destinations, this stage incorporates demographic factors based on conscious and unconscious recollections, as well as outside influences. (2) A review of the options. The primary activity drivers linked to financial restrictions are used to determine the tourist locations. (3) Over the festive season. This phase follows the completion of the first and second phases. Due to the potential for new stimuli to emerge, produce new choices, and even cancel scheduled operations, this stage is particularly dynamic. (4) The act of reflecting about oneself. The planning for the subsequent trip is impacted by the appraisal of current tour. Individual interpretations and dynamic memories change with conditions and time (Rachmadi, 2016).

When the COVID-19 pandemic struck in early 2020, it exposed this weakness and had an impact on the entire world, including Indonesia. As a result, Indonesian tourism was stopped in early 2020, and the year will go down in history as one of the most dangerous and paralyzing outbreaks ever. each nation's economic sector. This outbreak is known as COVID-19, or Corona Virus Disease-19, and it was first identified in May 2020 in Wuhan City, China. Confirmed cases in Indonesia Since the corona virus was initially identified in early March 2020, there have been 1,066,313 confirmed cases worldwide.(CNN, 2021).

The community has a crucial role to play in breaking the chain, according to the Decree of the Minister of Health of the Republic of Indonesia Number HK.01.07/MENKES/382/2020 concerning health protocols for the community in public places and facilities in the context of preventing and controlling the corona virus disease 2019 (COVID-19). transmission of COVID-19 to avoid creating new sources of transmission or clusters in areas where people move around, interact with one another, or congregate in large numbers. In the COVID-19 pandemic condition, the community must be able to resume its normal activities by establishing new, healthier, cleaner, and more obedient behaviors that are practiced by all community members and maximize the use of all available resources. Implementing health protocols is the community's responsibility in order to break the COVID 19 chain of transmission (risk of contracting and transmitting). (Keputusan Menteri Kesehatan Nomor HK.01.07/MENKES/382/2020 - Regulasi | Covid19.Go.Id, 2020).

Because of the disease's rapid spread, the government is attempting to contain this outbreak by working with medical professionals to take preventative measures. Consequently, a lot of potential tourists have planned a vacation, but they visiting tourist attractions no longer. This effect indirectly influences travelers' decision-making interest in traveling. (Rosita, 2020).

In order to determine which of the five promotion mix tactics will be most effective in luring tourists during the COVID-19 epidemic, researchers want to look at how effectively Muki Travel is implementing their promotional mix strategy.

METHOD

The data that the researcher will gather comes from or through the interview process, field notes, personal notes, and other official paperwork. The researcher utilizes a qualitative descriptive method, thus the data obtained is not in the form of numbers. In order for the findings of this study to accurately reflect the field's real events (Ahmadi, 2014).

In the following phase, the researcher will select informants who are familiar with and involved in the research being conducted. The researcher employs a deliberate sampling approach, which aims to identify informants who have all the data required for the study. The quantity of respondents does not always indicate accuracy; the chosen informants may not accurately represent the population while still providing information. Typically, individuals with greater experience go on to become tourism actors (Rijali, 2019).

When performing research, the sample will be chosen, and the major objective of this study is to find someone who has correct data. The following samples will be used in this study:

Tabel 1. Research Sample

No.	Informant	
	Status	Amount
1.	Owner of Muki Travel	1
2.	Marketing team	1
3.	Content creation team	1
4.	Social media admin	1
5.	Team tour leader	1

Source: www.jurnal.ampta.ac.id, accessed 19 November 2021

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A developing travel agency business is Muki Travel. Because it was founded on October 25, 2019, this business is quite new. Mukhlisin, a 24-year-old student from Yogyakarta, is the creator of muki travel. The growth of Muki Travel is now focused on 2021; in 2019, it only offered private trips. In contrast, Muki Travel currently offers a number of products and collaborates with numerous travel agencies in Indonesia, including those in Bali, Nusa Penida, Labuan Bajo, Surabaya, Jakarta, Bromo, and other cities.

Although the brand-new business Muki Travel always offers the greatest service, it must endure and get through the pandemic phase in order to continue operating. Following are a few examples of promotion mix strategy implementations that have been done:

Implementation of the Promotional Mix Strategy at Muki Travel to Attract Tourist Interests During the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Researchers tried to use many components of the promotion mix, including as advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, public relations, and direct marketing, to Muki Travel in order to determine how effective this technique is at luring travelers during the COVID-19 epidemic.

Application of Marketing (Marketing) Elements on Muki Travel to Draw Tourist Interests During the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Muki Travel uses advertising through engaging in both online and offline activities. Online advertising includes using social media, one of which is Instagram. This is because Instagram advertising is more effective and influential than employing influencers. (Ikayanti et al., 2021).

The use of social media Instagram Muki Travel has utilized a number of Instagram features that are helpful for a business account, such as the insight feature, which allows the marketing team and owners of Muki Travel to keep an eye on market trends and decide when it is best to post new content so that all Instagram users can see products from Muki Travel. Utilizing Instagram's insight feature is crucial for business users that want to increase the efficiency of marketing their goods and services. (Alfajri et al., 2019).

Regarding other applications, like Facebook, the Muki travel team started out by joining a number of groups, the travel community, and a number of communities engaged in tourism. By doing this, more networks will be created, and opportunities for collaboration between travel between regions will become available. The marketing plan of a company will be significantly and favorably impacted by customers who participate in the community. (Ramadhayanti & Martiwi, 2020).

Next, researchers and the Muki Travel team conduct offline promotion by handing out brochures and giving presentations about their products. Finally, throughout visits, researchers and the entire Muki Travel team always follow safety procedures. Researchers and the Muki Travel team visited some locations while making sales calls, including businesses and communities in Yogyakarta. In addition to Yogyakarta, researchers and the Muki Travel team also distributed brochures to researchers' and teams' places of origin, such as Salatiga City researchers. The Muki Travel Team made these sales calls in an effort to boost business so that customers would remember Muki Travel even throughout the pandemic. In the hopes that after the epidemic is under control, tourists or customers won't forget Muki Travel if they need to travel for business purposes or other activities. or authority.

It is hoped that the Muki Travel team will become more well-known in the future and be able to get through the crisis period while this pandemic is still on. As for the effect that is obtained or the result of the implementation of the promotional mix factor, namely the advertising factor, this is very helpful because within a period of 2 weeks the intensity of tourists who contact Muki Travel, even if it is just to ask what products Muki Travel has, but from the movement it can become.

There is a positive response in its use to draw tourists during the COVID-19 pandemic, as evidenced by the research's findings that Muki Travel's implementation of the promotional mix strategy has been carried out, has worked fairly well, and has developed positively for both old customers and new prospective customers. Regarding the most recent marketing strategy to draw travelers during the COVID-19 epidemic, the Muki Travel team has future goals that include;

Marketing (Marketing), for future plans to expand Muki Travel in marketing Muki Travel will always improve tourist attractions, tourist amenities,

accessibility, transportation, restaurants, and also selfie locations for tourists, tour packages as mentioned by Mukhlisin as follows.

"I prefer to update the latest tourist hits with two components that must exist and always update the package, and to make packages always look for good and interesting videos and photos that can make tourists interested in using Muki, and for tourists for the first time to Jogja, it will be recommended to go to typical Jogja tourist tours, while old tourists will always visit again."

The advertising factor simultaneously influences consumer visits or purchasing decisions (Setyawan & Bustan, 2017). Therefore, Muki Travel likewise employs this tactic in one of its promotional mix techniques.

Muki Travel's future plans for running sales promotions include using a variety of prizes like those Mukhlisin mentioned.

"In the future, we plan to give away more items such as vouchers and t-shirts that are still related to brands and tourism." Because it is another way to indirectly promote."

The simultaneous distribution of prizes or giveaways can boost a brand's appeal, which will result in greater consumer awareness of the product. (Afif et al., 2020).

Personal selling, for future plans or future strategies in carrying out individual sales tactics, Muki Travel will further educate or sharpen the team in the tourism industry so that what tourists desire may be served with real and nice, as mentioned by Mukhlisin.

"In the future, for individual sales, I will include my team in attending several seminars related to their field, with the goal of honing and developing their skills properly, because if they are confident in their abilities, they will do well. doing individual sales, in another sense, they become confident about what they can do, I see..."

Mukhlisin picked this method for a reason—personal selling has a big impact on people's decisions to visit tourist attractions or buy tourist goods. (Prasetyo & Ridwanudin, 2017).

Muki Travel will carry out several activities or collaborations with larger communities, several larger companies, and there is a new plan that is to invite groups of orphans to travel with Muki Travel and strengthening product knowledge by the team as expressed by Mukhlisin in the area of public relations for future plans or future strategies.

"In the future, I hope that Daya and the team can improve and expand their network with the surrounding community, such as being able to reach companies in all regions and doing study tours.

I hope that this pandemic will end soon, because schoolchildren will soon be doing offline activities, allowing me and the team to do or apply for study tours or comparative studies to all schools, and there are more future goals or plans, I want to invite children orphans to travel with Muki Travel, and to be able to hire several drivers for freelance and local guides to return to their activities and work again."

The strategy was selected because, according to statistical analysis, public relations marketing has a positive and large impact on tourists' decisions to purchase tourism goods in extremely high categories. (Widjajanta, 2008).

Direct Selling, Muki Travel intends to establish teams in each region that has a tourist destination, as indicated by Mukhlisin, in order to carry out future plans or future strategies in carrying out direct marketing techniques.

"My future objective is to try to engage with local people in numerous places to build a local team, so that Muki Travel is present in every location, and it will be simpler to do direct marketing in each area, every community in a given area, and can encourage tourism." in each of these areas".

The decision to use a direct selling method is consistent with research showing a 40% impact of direct marketing on consumer behavior (Fatihah & Desmawati, 2019).

CONCLUSIONS

If we consider of advertising as a door to four other elements, through advertising both online and offline, then the advertising strategy (advertising), and promos (sales promotion), are the most prominent of the various strategies adopted, namely from the five promotional mix methods. offline will inform visitors about Muki Travel's identity, the items it offers, and the services it offers.

Through all forms of social media, the web, as well as directly through consumer email, the display of Muki Travel advertisements that are constantly appealing and current will pique the interest of tourists and draw them to travel-related activities. Tourists who see online advertisements for Muki Travel on social media are most likely to get in touch with the company to make offers regarding travel-related activities.

The relief offered by Muki Travel through the campaign will be taken into consideration by tourists, who find the promotion or sales promotion to be quite alluring since it gives each traveler the impression that they are receiving something for nothing and that they are lucky.

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