

MARKETING STRATEGY FOR PRODUCTS RESULTING FROM INDEPENDENCE BUILDING THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA AND E-COMMERCE AT THE MALANG CLASS I CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION



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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the marketing strategy for products made by inmates through social media and e-commerce at Malang Class I Correctional Institution. The research uses a descriptive qualitative approach, with data collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. The findings indicate that the correctional institution has implemented the marketing mix concept (product, price, place, and promotion) in its digital marketing strategy. Products produced by inmates demonstrate good market potential; however, several challenges remain, including limited stock management, insufficient digital promotion, and distribution systems that have not yet operated optimally. Although social media and e-commerce platforms such as Instagram and Shopee have been utilized, their use has not been fully optimized due to limitations in human resources and digital infrastructure. Despite these challenges, the marketing strategy has contributed positively to inmate empowerment and improved the public image of the institution. Therefore, improvements in digital content management, employee training in digital marketing skills, and strengthening of the distribution system are necessary to achieve more effective and sustainable marketing outcomes.

Keywords: *Digital Marketing; Independence Training; Correctional Institutions; Social Media; E-Commerce; Prisoners*

INTRODUCTION

Corrections in Indonesia play a very important role in the criminal justice system. Correctional institutions not only serve as places for the execution of sentences, but also as institutions for the guidance and social rehabilitation of prisoners. This is emphasized in Law No. 22 of 2022 on Corrections, which states that the main objective of the correctional system is to improve the quality of character and independence of inmates. This objective emphasizes the importance of the guidance process as an effort to reform inmates into individuals who are able to integrate positively into society after their sentences have ended (Simamora & Simamora, 2025). The functions of correctional services are outlined in Article 4 of the same Law, which include service, guidance, community guidance, care, security, and observation. These functions form the basis of a more humanistic approach to correctional services, emphasizing guidance rather than mere punishment. In this context, independence guidance is one of the important pillars designed to equip prisoners with productive skills and abilities that will be useful for their future lives.

Independence training is a training process that aims to provide new skills to inmates. This program is designed so that prisoners can have skills that are relevant to the needs of the job market or independent entrepreneurship after leaving prison. Zaki and Anwar (2022) explain that personality development and independence training are two main aspects of this process. Personality development focuses on character and mental development, while independence training is directed at mastering technical skills and productivity.

Table 1
Data on Skills Development at the Class I Correctional Institution in Malang

Activity Name	Number of Inmates	Activity Results
Orchid and Mushroom Cultivation	50	Oyster mushrooms ready for sale, high-quality orchid seedlings
Barbershop	3	Neat hair
Paintings	6	Paintings by prisoners
Hand-drawn batik	10	Lowokwaroe hand-drawn batik
Snack catering	15	Fried snacks, moon cakes, bread
Screen-printed T-shirts	6	Sound From The Prison T-shirts

Source: Malang Class I Correctional Institution, 2025

One of the institutions that actively implements independence training programs is the Malang Class I Correctional Institution. At this prison, inmates are given the opportunity to participate in various skills activities such as orchid and mushroom cultivation, barbershop, painting, batik, snack making, and T-shirt screen printing. Based on data as of February 28, 2025, dozens of inmates are involved in this program, producing works of art that have aesthetic value and marketability. Several leading products, such as Lowokwaroe Hand-Painted Batik, Sound From The Prison T-shirts, and orchid seedlings, have become attractions in their own right, even sought after by officials and partners within the Ministry of Immigration and Corrections. To increase the selling value and exposure of products made by inmates, Malang Class I Prison has made a

breakthrough in terms of marketing strategy. In addition to conventional methods such as exhibitions and direct sales by officers, the prison also utilizes social media and e-commerce as digital marketing tools. Social media platforms like Instagram (@batiktulislowokwaroe and @lsimastore) and Shopee are used to promote and sell products to a wider audience. This strategy is considered an appropriate step, given that social media and e-commerce can reach consumers flexibly, cheaply, and quickly. However, the implementation of this digital marketing strategy still faces a number of obstacles. Instagram account activity is still minimal, with a limited number of posts that do not attract much attention. In addition, the Shopee page created to sell batik products has not shown optimal sales activity and was last active more than seven months before the data was collected. Limited human resources, lack of digital marketing training for staff, and the absence of a professional content management system are the main obstacles in the development of this digital marketing strategy. This has resulted in products that actually have high selling value not being widely recognized by the public.

Another issue that exacerbates the situation is the low level of followers and interaction on social media, which indicates that the digital communication strategy has not been implemented to its full potential. In fact, with the right approach, social media and e-commerce can be effective promotional tools, as well as a bridge to improve the image of residents in the eyes of the public. The poor performance of digital marketing signals the need for a more structured and professional strategy in managing digital platforms. The digital marketing strategy at the Malang Class I Prison is important to review, given the great potential of products resulting from independence training and the urgency of increasing Non-Tax State Revenue (PNBP), which is also regulated in the Decree of the Minister of Law and Human Rights Number M.HH-07.OT.01.03 of 2020. Optimizing the marketing of inmate products will not only have an economic impact on the prison but also serve as a tangible form of social reintegration and empowerment of inmates through the creative economy. This study focuses on analyzing the marketing strategy for products made by inmates through social media and e-commerce at the Malang Class I Correctional Institution. This study aims to understand how the strategy is designed and implemented, evaluate its effectiveness in reaching consumers, and identify various obstacles encountered during the marketing process. It is hoped that the results of this study can contribute to the development of a better marketing model, particularly in the context of correctional institutions, and serve as a reference for other correctional institutions in Indonesia in improving the effectiveness of independence training for inmates through a digital approach.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Several previous studies have shown the effectiveness of digital marketing strategies in increasing business competitiveness, especially in the Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) sector. Azizah et al. (2022) in their research on digital marketing strategies at the Nyemil Cemil Online Shop in Tulungagung, emphasized that the use of social media and e-commerce platforms is key to increasing sales volume. This study highlights the application of the 7P Marketing Mix approach, which includes product, price, place, promotion, people, process, and physical evidence as the foundation of an integrated digital marketing strategy. Promotions through social media such as Instagram, WhatsApp, and TikTok, as well as the use of marketplaces such as Shopee and Tokopedia, have proven effective in reaching consumers more broadly and efficiently.

Marketing Strategy Theory

Marketing strategy is the conceptual foundation for designing a company's approach to effectively and efficiently meet the needs and desires of its target market. According to Kotler and Keller (2016), marketing strategy is a mindset or plan used to achieve marketing objectives through social and managerial processes, whereby individuals and groups obtain what they need and want by creating and exchanging value with others. This strategy includes three main stages, namely market segmentation, market targeting, and market positioning.

Market segmentation is the process of grouping markets into segments that have similar characteristics, needs, and behaviors, enabling companies to design more specific and relevant approaches. After segmentation, the next step is targeting, which is the process of selecting the most potential segments that are in line with the company's capabilities to be the main focus of the marketing strategy. This stage is very important so that resources can be optimally directed to the right consumer group.

The final stage is positioning, which refers to efforts to shape a distinct perception and image of a product or service in the minds of consumers. Positioning aims to create competitive advantages and differentiate products from competitors, making them more attractive to the target market. These three components form the basis for developing an integrated and effective marketing strategy to build customer value and loyalty.

Marketing Mix Theory

The marketing mix theory is a strategic tool used to implement marketing strategies operationally. According to Kotler and Armstrong (2021), the marketing mix is a combination of various marketing tools used by companies to generate the desired response in the target market. The most well-known marketing mix model is the 4P concept, which consists of product, price, place, and promotion.

A product is any form of offering from a producer that is designed to meet the needs and desires of consumers. Products include goods or services, designs, quality, features, and variations offered to consumers as solutions to their problems or needs. Price is the amount that consumers must pay to obtain the product. Pricing must take into account customer value perception, cost structure, and market competition conditions in order to create a balance between value and market purchasing power. Next, place refers to the distribution channels used to reach customers. This includes logistics systems, retail networks, and various forms of intermediaries that enable products to reach consumers efficiently. Good distribution channels will affect product availability and the overall customer experience.

Finally, promotion is a series of communication activities aimed at conveying product information, persuading consumers to buy, and forming a positive image of the product and company. Forms of promotion can include advertising, personal selling, sales promotions, and digital marketing, which is now increasingly dominant. These four elements are interdependent and must be managed in an integrated manner to create a holistic marketing strategy. In the context of marketing products made by inmates, the use of the 4Ps can provide a structure for designing effective strategies to increase the visibility, appeal, and accessibility of products to consumers outside correctional institutions.

Digital Marketing Theory

With the development of information and communication technology, marketing has

undergone a paradigm shift towards a digital approach. Digital marketing is a marketing strategy that uses digital platforms and internet technology to reach and interact with consumers directly, measurably, and personally.

According to Kotler and Armstrong, digital marketing encompasses a series of activities aimed at creating long-term relationships with consumers through relevant content, personalized user experiences, and real-time two-way interactions. Digital marketing involves several important dimensions. First, an omnichannel strategy that integrates the customer experience across various digital platforms such as websites, social media, marketplaces, and mobile applications. This strategy allows consumers to move seamlessly from one channel to another, thereby increasing convenience and satisfaction in the purchasing process. Second, personalization is a key advantage in digital marketing. By utilizing consumer data, companies can tailor content, offers, and product recommendations to individual preferences and behaviors. This increases the relevance of marketing messages and drives higher conversion rates.

Third, customer engagement is a major focus in building brand loyalty. Interactions through social media, email campaigns, or interactive content allow consumers to actively engage in the communication process and create an emotional connection with the brand. Fourth, content marketing strategies play an important role in building trust and credibility. Quality and consistent content not only attracts the audience's attention but also increases the visibility and position of the brand in digital searches.

Fifth, social media marketing has become one of the main channels in digital marketing. Through platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok, companies can reach a wide market and build a loyal customer community through direct interaction, paid promotions, and collaborations with influencers. Sixth, mobile marketing is becoming increasingly important with the rise in mobile device usage. This strategy ensures that marketing content and campaigns are optimized for user experience and convenience on mobile devices. Finally, analytics and measurement enable real-time evaluation of campaign performance. Through analytical data, companies can understand customer behavior, measure campaign effectiveness, and make timely and accurate strategy adjustments.

METHOD

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach that aims to gain an in-depth understanding of the marketing process of products resulting from independence training through digital marketing strategies at the Malang Class I Correctional Institution. A qualitative approach was chosen because it allows researchers to explore social phenomena naturalistically and gain a holistic understanding of the reality in the field. The researcher acted as the main instrument in data collection through direct observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation studies. This process was carried out without using statistical analysis, but with descriptive analysis that focused on the narratives, meanings, and experiences of participants involved in the coaching and marketing activities.

The research design used refers to Creswell's descriptive design, which describes a systematic strategy for extracting information from the natural environment of the research subjects. The focus of this study is to reveal the actual conditions at the Malang Class I Prison regarding the marketing strategies for products made by inmates who participate in the independence training program. This design does not aim to make broad generalizations but to provide a detailed description of the observed phenomena.

The data sources used in this study consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data was obtained directly through in-depth interviews with various key informants involved in the product development and marketing process at the prison, such as the Head of the Prison, the Head of Work Activities, the Head of Work Guidance, prison officers, third-party partners, and the community as potential consumers. Meanwhile, secondary data was obtained from supporting documents such as training reports, work activity schedules, policy archives, and relevant literature and regulations such as the Minister of Law and Human Rights Regulation.

Data collection techniques were carried out using three main methods, namely observation, interviews, and documentation studies. Observations were conducted directly at the research location to understand the dynamics of coaching activities and the digital marketing strategies implemented. In-depth interviews were used to obtain information directly from key informants, who were selected based on their involvement in the coaching and marketing processes. Meanwhile, documentation studies served as a supplement, examining various relevant official and informal documents, including activity reports, documentary photos, and supporting regulations. The collected data was then analyzed using qualitative data analysis techniques.

The analysis stages included data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. In the data collection stage, researchers obtained data through observation and interviews. Next, data reduction is carried out to filter important information and formulate the main themes according to the research focus. Data presentation is carried out in the form of descriptive narratives that allow for comparison and integration between primary and secondary data. Finally, conclusions are drawn by examining the relationships between data, identifying patterns of findings, and formulating interpretations of research results relevant to the research objectives.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Digital Marketing Strategy for Products Resulting from Independence Training at Malang Class I Prison

The Malang Class I Correctional Institution (Lapas) has shown innovation in developing a digital marketing strategy for products made by inmates as part of their independence training program. This strategy was implemented in response to the challenges of limited space and access in marketing products made by inmates, which until now have only been marketed through physical exhibitions or direct sales. The use of digital media is considered a breakthrough in line with contemporary marketing dynamics. Through its official Instagram account, @galeri.karyawbp, the Malang Class I Correctional Institution actively publishes various products made by inmates, such as wood crafts, paintings, snacks, and carpentry products.

The use of attractive visuals and product narratives that touch on emotional and humanitarian aspects are key to building rapport with the community. In addition to social media, the prison also utilizes e-commerce platforms such as Shopee by opening store accounts that allow the public to purchase products online. This strategy not only opens up a wider market but also creates a modern and efficient distribution channel without the need for physical exhibitions, which require large costs. The marketing strategy applied is based on the 7P marketing mix concept, namely product, price, place, promotion, people, process, and physical evidence.

Products are tailored to market trends and the capabilities of inmates; prices are set competitively; the place is an online store that can be accessed by anyone; promotion is carried out through social media; people or human resources are developed through

digital training; the sales process is managed in an integrated manner under the supervision of the prison; and physical evidence is in the form of documentation of product results that is consistently updated. Thus, the strategy developed is comprehensive and systemic, making digital marketing not just a promotional medium, but a structured marketing system.

The Role of Officers and Inmates in Digital Marketing Implementation

The success of digital marketing strategies cannot be separated from the active role of correctional officers and inmates. Correctional officers act as content managers, product curators, and liaisons between internal prison activities and the outside world. Some officers also serve as social media operators responsible for creating, uploading, and maintaining digital content. These tasks require not only technical skills, but also communication and branding abilities that represent the mission of rehabilitation.

On the other hand, inmates are directly involved in the production and documentation process. They are trained to understand the value of the product, its aesthetic appeal, and the narrative that will be conveyed in the promotion. This involvement is not solely for the sake of production, but also an integral part of the social reintegration process. Through these activities, inmates gain relevant work experience, interpersonal skills, and the confidence to face the outside world after their release. This approach reflects the modern correctional paradigm, which views inmates as active subjects in the process of change, not merely objects of guidance. Empowering inmates in digital marketing strategies not only improves product quality but also strengthens their moral and economic value as productive human beings.

Challenges in Implementing Digital Marketing Strategies

Although the digital marketing strategy implemented by Malang Class I Prison has shown progressive development, there are a number of significant challenges in its implementation. One of the main challenges is limited human resources, both in terms of quantity and quality. Not all prison officers have skills in digital marketing, especially in terms of managing social media accounts and utilizing online marketing algorithms. In addition, limited access to a stable internet network within the prison environment is a significant technical obstacle.

Content uploading procedures, audience interaction management, and information updates cannot be done in real-time. This has implications for reduced marketing communication effectiveness and delayed responses to potential consumers. Regulatory factors are also a separate obstacle. As an institution under the Ministry of Law and Human Rights, all prison activities must be within the framework of official policy, including the use of technology and social media. Therefore, digital marketing activities in prisons must remain subject to strict security, privacy, and public ethics regulations. The balance between innovation and legal compliance is a conceptual and operational challenge in the implementation of digital marketing strategies.

The Implications of Digital Marketing on Prison Reputation and Social Reintegration

One of the positive implications of the success of digital marketing of products made by prisoners is the improved public image of correctional institutions. Through a digital approach, the public can see firsthand how inmates are actively working and being empowered behind prison walls. The narrative is no longer about restrictions and punishment, but about rehabilitation, skills, and social contributions.

Digital marketing also has significant implications for the social reintegration process of inmates. When they are empowered through direct involvement in production and marketing, they not only gain technical skills but also form a new identity as productive individuals. This plays a major role in reducing recidivism rates and increasing their chances of success in society after release. Moreover, the community involved as consumers of inmates' products indirectly becomes part of the reintegration process. They not only buy products but also support the social and moral recovery of prisoners. Thus, digital marketing is not only a business strategy but also a social strategy that builds bridges between correctional institutions and the wider community.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of research conducted at the Malang Class I Correctional Institution, it can be concluded that the digital marketing strategy for products made by inmates has adopted the main elements of the marketing mix (4Ps) according to Kotler and Armstrong, but its implementation still faces a number of significant challenges. In terms of product, the correctional institution has produced a variety of works that have high market potential and selling value, such as hand-drawn batik and screen-printed T-shirts.

However, the lack of production planning based on market analysis has led to an imbalance between production volume and consumer absorption. In terms of price, although the products are marketed at affordable prices, the attachment to the WBP and PNPB premium system makes prices inflexible to market dynamics. In terms of distribution (place), direct marketing through exhibitions is quite active, but online channels such as Shopee have not been maximized, as evidenced by the lack of products on display and the absence of an efficient delivery system. In terms of promotion, the use of social media such as Instagram has begun, but it has not been managed consistently and professionally, so it has not been able to reach a wide audience. Structural barriers, staff limitations, and internal regulations are factors that contribute to these limitations.

Overall, the strategies implemented have paved the way for the modernization of marketing for products from rehabilitation programs, but further strengthening is needed in managerial, technical, and human resource aspects. The strategic role of digital media in enhancing the institution's image, empowering inmates, and building bridges between prisons and the community should be leveraged as a driving force for improving this marketing system in the future.

To improve the effectiveness of the digital marketing strategy for products made by inmates at Malang Class I Prison, several strategic steps need to be taken. First, in terms of production, the prison is advised to conduct regular market demand assessments to avoid stockpiling unsold inventory. Developing a simple but efficient inventory management system will help control stock and maintain product quality. The aspects of packaging design and brand identity strengthening are also important to ensure that the products are highly attractive and able to compete in the free market. Second, in terms of pricing, it is necessary to develop a more accurate cost of production calculation system so that the prison can implement adaptive pricing strategies, including discounts, bundling, or seasonal promotions. This step is important so that the products not only have social value, but also commercial competitiveness.

Third, in terms of distribution, there needs to be a showroom or display center, both inside and outside the prison. If building a physical outlet is not possible, collaborating with local retail partners or commercial space providers can be an alternative. The activation and optimization of e-commerce accounts such as Shopee must be done through regular catalog updates, the addition of product information, and

the integration of ordering and delivery systems. This will expand product accessibility and increase online sales potential. Fourth, in terms of promotion, it is highly recommended that prisons form a special digital marketing team responsible for managing social media and other online platforms. Training prison officers in digital marketing skills is a must to ensure that the content published is informative, consistent, interesting, and evokes public empathy. The use of storytelling narratives about the rehabilitation process of inmates, consumer testimonials, and professional visual content will increase public trust and participation in supporting these products.

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