

Ibarbo Park brand activation strategy to increase consumer interest through the @ibarbopark TikTok account in 2024

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Abstract

In the digital age, social media plays an important role in strengthening brand image and appeal. TikTok, as a short video-based platform with a high level of interaction, is used by Ibarbo Park to expand its marketing reach and build emotional connections with its audience. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to analyze Ibarbo Park's brand activation strategy in increasing consumer interest through its TikTok account @ibarbopark. The research method used is descriptive qualitative with data collection techniques through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. Research informants include the head of the marketing division, the main figure behind TikTok content (Mr. Owner), and strategic content planners. Data analysis was carried out through the stages of reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing with validity testing using source triangulation. The results of the study show that Ibarbo Park's brand activation strategy was carried out using Regina Luttrell's Circular Model of SOME theory. The use of short comedy content and informative videos, active interaction through the comments section, and incentives such as vouchers and free tickets successfully increased engagement and created an emotional connection with the audience. In addition, the use of the "Pak Owner" character as a brand identity strengthened the brand's personality, making it memorable and likable to the public.

Keywords

Ibarbo park, Consumer interest, Brand activation

Introduction

In today's era, social media provides great benefits to society, facilitating communication, providing quick access to information, and even serving as a means of livelihood. Social media is defined as an internet-based application that allows users to exchange information with other users [1]. Social media is considered a virtual public space that can be used positively for various purposes, including sharing and influencing daily life [2]. There are several types of social media, such as social networking, blogs, microblogging, media sharing, social bookmarking, and wikis [3]. One example of this

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category of social media is the currently very popular platform TikTok. TikTok is a platform that displays content in the form of photos and short videos to inspire creativity [4]. TikTok allows individuals to build personal branding or communicate their image online [5], it's not just about personal branding, but this also applies to companies. TikTok is a popular entertainment app that features short videos, allowing users to access and create content according to their needs. With its for you page (FYP) algorithm, it is able to drive the virality of short content based on user relevance, such as likes, comments, shares, and saves.

TikTok has evolved from a marketing strategy into a personal branding tool through viral content and authentic interactions, reaching Gen Z through live streams, challenges, influencer collaborations, or by leveraging the Stitch feature in line with trends to generate high engagement. By creating engaging and consistent content, the reach of the FYP algorithm expands further, emotionally connecting users to the content created by others and serving as personal branding tied to the content produced. For example, challenge hashtag content encourages users to create movements using specific products for awareness, and point-of-view (POV) content showcasing the daily life of content creators.

In the field of marketing, social media offers new opportunities, one of which is through brand activation activities. Brand activation is a way to effectively improve communication with customers, with the hope of increasing sales and positioning the brand in the right place according to the company's wishes. Kolter argues that brand activation is effective for conducting marketing activities and creating content on social media [6]. Previous research supports this, such as a study on JJ Steak which found that brand activation strategies through direct marketing, which includes synchronizing messages directly using Point of Interest tactics and holding live cooking sessions in front of audiences, can increase emotional connections, boost loyalty, and encourage brand awareness [7]. In addition, Camille Beauty's marketing strategy utilizes various TikTok features, including hashtags, live features, and discounts/giveaways, with the aim of raising brand awareness [8]. In the Ibarbo study, the TikTok platform was used as a marketing tool with content presented by the character Pak Owner regarding admission ticket information, updates on the latest rides, challenges, distribution of free ice cream vouchers, social experiments, visitor impressions and messages, and interactions with Ibarbo Park employees using humor and jokes. Thus, this content also generated direct marketing through direct interaction with visitors. Sometimes, Pak Owner gives entrance ticket vouchers to people he accidentally meets at other locations. The unique character of Pak Owner has become ingrained and serves as a personal brand, characterized by friendliness, humor, and a love for interaction. This study examines how social media marketing and direct marketing can occur simultaneously, making the marketing activation process more complex.

Regina Luttrell's Circular SoMe model was used as the basis for analyzing the brand activation strategy of the @ibarbopark account. Ibarbo Park is a recreational park in Yogyakarta that faced a lack of public awareness of its existence. To overcome this, they implemented a strategy that differed from competitors such as Suraloka Interactive Zoo and Saloka Theme Park, namely featuring the head of the marketing division as a character named "Pak Owner" in TikTok content. This character became the brand's identity with a casual, entertaining, and informative style. In addition, Ibarbo Park built closeness with consumers through direct interaction and the giving of free ice cream vouchers, which also strengthened engagement in the comments section. Based on this background, the novelty of this research lies in the description of the Brand Activation strategy, which focuses on a personal approach through the owner's mascot on TikTok, who also interacts directly in the field, and its impact on the surge in consumer visits to the recreation park. Therefore, this study aims to describe Ibarbo Park's brand activation strategy in increasing consumer interest in the TikTok account @ibarbopark.

Method

The type of research used is descriptive qualitative, based on the Circular Model of SOME concept. Qualitative research aims to understand the phenomena experienced by the research subjects as a whole, including behavior, perceptions, and actions [9]. The qualitative approach refers to the background and the individual as a whole [10]. In this model, there are four stages: Share, Optimize, Manage, and Engage, each of which has the responsibility to build relationships with audiences effectively through social media platforms [3]. Using a social media management model, various opportunities through the @ibarbopark TikTok account were evaluated, including: share, which is using social media strategies; optimize, which is optimizing shared content; manage, which is managing content on social media; and engage, which is building stronger engagement with the audience [11]. The researcher conducted direct interviews with the head of marketing as the main actor of Pak Owner and the marketing supervisor as well as the strategic planner of content, documentation and observation on how the strategy can be implemented. The data obtained through interviews shows an increase in visitors, in 2024 from January to June there were 260,000 visitors, July to December there were 470,000. The factors contributing to the increase in visits include the rise in social media engagement on TikTok @ibarbopark, driven by innovative content creation and evaluations of previous content, which successfully attracted viewers and fostered active interaction through comment sections and the FYP algorithm. Additionally, the increase in visits was influenced by religious holidays such as Eid al-Fitr, Christmas, and New Year's.

Data collection techniques

1. Interview

An interview is a type of verbal communication used to obtain information, more precisely a method of data collection that involves the researcher and research

subjects in a question and answer session [10]. In this study, interviews were used to obtain information from the head of the marketing division at Ibarbo Park, with the aim of describing brand activation strategies.

2. Documentation

Documentation is an activity or process of providing various documents using appropriate evidence based on records from various sources [12]. Used as a supplement and reinforcement of authenticity, such as photos of consumers visiting Ibarbo Park.

3. Data analysis techniques

Data analysis is an important stage in research after data collection. The problems encountered and the research design used are highly dependent on the techniques used to perform the analysis [13]. In the data analysis process, several stages are carried out namely:

a. Data Reduction

It is the process of selecting data by testing data relevant to the research topic.

b. Data Display

Activities to convey information that has been sorted and organized, presented in the form of words or verbal phrases.

c. Conclusion Drawing

The process of explaining the meaning of research results in short, easy-to-understand sentences, reviewing the research results to ensure the accuracy of the conclusions.

d. Validity Test

Data validity testing is conducted to ensure that the data findings are consistent with the data collected in the field [14]. Data triangulation is a technique used in qualitative research methods with the aim of ensuring that certain data is accurate by comparing it with data collected from additional sources at various stages of field research at different points in time [15].

Results and discussion

The data obtained was then collected through interviews with parties actively involved in brand activation strategies to increase consumer interest. Those involved in the brand activation strategy included Lalu Nabil as Marketing Manager and the mainactor behind the TikTok content @ibarbopark, and Wisnu Aditya as Marketing Supervisor and strategic content planner. Furthermore, the data presented will be analyzed alongside relevant data to address the research question and describe how Ibarbo Park

implements its brand activation strategy using the TikTok platform as a tool to increase consumer interest.

Results

Based on the analysis results, the strategy used by Ibarbo Park is an effective combination through the SOME model approach, namely share, optimize, manage, engage, as well as social media activation and direct marketing activation accompanied by the SOME model.

In the Share stage, Ibarbo Park uses TikTok as its main short video platform that is accessible to users, demonstrating an understanding of the right channel to reach its audience, with content that is funny yet informative. This has led to marketing activation on social media show in Figure 1.



Figure 1. Direct activation by “Pak Owner” and Ibarbo Park actively replies to comments

In the Optimize stage, the character “Pak Owner” always appears on the TikTok account @ibarbopark, serving as the brand identity with a relaxed, entertaining, and informative approach. This is an effort to optimize the brand image so that it is easily remembered and liked by the public.

In the Manage stage, Ibarbo Park maintains consistency on social media by actively creating video content in response to the audience, replying to comments, and responding to comments with the “stich” feature. The success of Ibarbo Park's strategy is measured by the number of consumer visits, which has increased significantly from 260,000 to 470,000 visitors.

In the Engage stage, active interaction through comments strengthens the emotional connection with the audience. Ibarbo Park also uses direct marketing carried out by “Pak Owner” when visiting directly and will provide incentives such as ice cream vouchers and free admission tickets at random. Sometimes, people who meet “Pak Owner” in person elsewhere and greet him are given free admission vouchers. This happens because the public knows the figure of “Pak Owner” as a result of marketing

activities through social media. This is a direct effort to engage the public in learning more about Ibarbo Park and turning brand awareness into visits. This strategy also enables direct marketing activation. Direct marketing activation is carried out through personal interaction between “Pak Owner” and visitors at tourist sites, including the distribution of free ice cream vouchers. This aims to build emotional closeness and provide courteous service.

Ibarbo Park's brand activation strategy on TikTok has proven successful in increasing consumer interest, as measured by the number of visits. The number of consumer visits increased significantly in 2024, from an average of 260,000 visitors in the January to June period to 424,700 visitors in the July to December period. This surge was driven by the completeness of the rides, the long religious holidays, and the creation of unique and funny TikTok content.

Discussion

The significant surge in consumer visits can be interpreted as the success of Ibarbo Park's combination of personalization and social media strategies. The approach centered on the character “Pak Owner” is an effective implementation of Direct Marketing Activation. Brand activation aims to improve communication with customers. The use of a personal touch through direct interaction in the field (giving out free ice cream vouchers) creates emotional and social closeness [6]. Companies are required to engage in social media activities if they want to share messages or information so that the public can connect with each other. The social media used must have a share element. Thus, public trust will be built when the public begins to share messages to achieve a successful, widespread information network and public trust [16]. Optimization is the phase of using social media for business that emphasizes the aspects of “listening and learning,” which involves listening to what customers are saying on social media and finding ways to participate in those discussions [17]. The main focus at the manage stage is improving digital communication systems, which includes monitoring social media and responding quickly to emerging issues [18]. The engage stage is to increase audience engagement through direct interaction on social media and collaboration with various parties, including influencers [18]. This also shows that by implementing the Circular Model of SOME with consist of four stages of share, optimize, manage, and engage it's to form emotional connections and increase community involvement [19]. The concept of virality that occurred on Ibarbo Park's TikTok account was able to influence the number of visitors, due to consistent and up to date content management that became the FYP algorithm that appeared on users' feeds, as well as the creation of interesting content.

The use of TikTok social media with consumer interest has successfully utilized the nature of social media as a means of livelihood and personal branding development [5]. Funny, informative, and responsive content has built high engagement. This strategy is in line with other case studies, such as research [8] which proves that the use of social media features, rewards, and relevant content can trigger brand awareness and

ultimately increase consumer interest. The increase in visits from 260,000 to 424,700 shows that Ibarbo Park's strategy has successfully converted brand awareness into action (visits).

Conclusion

The brand activation strategy implemented by Ibarbo Park through its TikTok account @ibarbopark uses four SOME elements, namely sharing, optimize, manage, and engage. In the share stage, the @ibarbopark TikTok account chose TikTok as an effective brand activation platform to reach audiences and understand interaction patterns with various types of content creation to make it look attractive. In the optimize stage, the @ibarbopark TikTok account has increased social media activity by responding to audiences through DM, comments, and likes to ensure that the content shared can engage with the audience. In the Manage stage, the @ibarbopark TikTok account manages and filters communication system activities with quick responses, providing excellent service including positive feedback. In the Engage stage, the @ibarbopark TikTok account reaches its target audience by creating content that is up-to-date, cheerful, easy to understand, tailored to the current mood, and uses humorous elements. With this content creation, it is well received by the audience, especially with short videos that are not boring, presented by the Owner as part of Ibarbo Park branding. With this strategy, there has been an increase in consumers, as the audience who previously only viewed the @ibarbopark TikTok account now visit directly.

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