

PROMOTION STRATEGY PLANNING WITH FIT IN FURNITURE CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to devise a promotion strategy plan in a new startup business, Fit In furniture. The promotion strategy plan devised will be applied in order to increase brand awareness of the furniture startup business for Fit In furniture. The study used mix marketing theory as a step to determine promotion strategy with AISAS as communication tool to decide on promotion strategy steps. Promotion strategies used are advertising concept, personal selling concept, sales promotion concept, and public relations and direct marketing. This study employed descriptive qualitative method by collecting data through interview of four informants using in-depth interview method. The result of the study is a three-stage strategy with the first stage being going online starting from advertising in social media, consumer communication and discount promotion. Second stage is direct sales through workshop and exhibitions. Third stage is monitoring through communicating and building trust with consumers, creating a comfortable relationship with consumers after purchase and before purchase.

Keywords: promotion strategy, go online, direct sales, monitor

Introduction

Opportunity for furniture businesses to grow in Indonesia is still extensive. Furniture is one of the primary household needs, and Indonesia is known as one of the countries that produce high quality furniture and is backed with strong historical tradition in the crafting of wooden furniture. Domestic consumption in Indonesia reached 9 billion Rupiah in year 2013. Furniture consumers increase significantly in year 2016 after fluctuations in the previous 5 years and the decreasing tendency in year 2015. The factors that encourage furniture consumer growth is the growth in property sector and consumer's purchasing power, those two factors are drive behind the growth in furniture consumption after year 2015. AEC or ASEAN Economic Community gave opportunities for foreign investors to compete in Indonesian market. A growth of 7% in the furniture retail sales in year 2015 was recorded as a result (Euromonitor, 2016) competition became fiercer in the furniture market. Foreign brands such as Zara home has a small growth since it can only reach upper market (Euromonitor, 2017). In direct-to-consumer business segment, local customers have the tendency to demand cheap furniture but with reasonable quality. Indonesian market is still not in par with the needs of international market. In the future, following foreign trend in developing innovation and product design can be considered, since following international trend is important to predict the market's demand.

Business competitors pushed Fit In Furniture owner to innovate with different furniture designs to that of competitors. Innovating on design by adjusting to foreign taste but by using local/ Indonesian resources and material can be one idea to create an innovative furniture business, aligning with the current market and lifestyle. Fit In furniture's business vision is to produce innovative furniture, with trending designs that fit the current lifestyle. Devising strategy is chosen to develop Fit In furniture startup business with aim to introduce the product to public so that public will know of the existence of Fit In product, bringing brand awareness and Fit in products to public and therefore Fit In can sell products to the public or the public can start finding out information of Fit In product through the promotion media provided by the company.

Study conducted by Cindy et al. (2015). The aim of the study is to devise a promotion strategy for startup business. The result of the study suggested that competitors will choose social media such as Instagram, Facebook, website and exhibition for promotion since it's cheaper and easier to reach by the buyer. Promotion through Instagram is done through product endorsement by bloggers or celebrities. Endorsement is chosen because competitor's data and endorsement specialists are very influential strategy to increase sales. Choosing bloggers and celebrities to endorse can be done by searching for bloggers that rarely accept

endorsement but have many followers. Another promotional method liked by customers is giving discount and showing attractive photos. Developing business through the use of indonet network and website is a step to expand internationally. For conventional promotion media, joining exhibition or bazaar can be done. This promotion strategy is done because it can have an impact on brand awareness and product sales to public, and joining exhibition can attract new buyers or customers. The result of the study suggest that online and conventional promotion strategy can be successful to increase sales.

Study conducted by Jose (2016). The aim of the study is to examine the relationship between customer's experience gathered from online and offline marketing, and the case study taken was on customer's experience in booking and staying in hotels. The results of the study revealed that multichannel experience (online and offline) could strengthen the relationship between the company and customers for future purchases. However it needs to be in addition with developing marketing strategy in hotel management so that it can improve brand equity. This study strengthen the idea that both offline and online marketing strategies are equally important, and when used hand in hand can strengthen the company's branding and the possibility of the customer returning and purchasing more.

According to Kotler and Keller (2016) promotion is an activity used to communicate information about product that will be sold to the potential customers. Aside from communicating information about a product, promotion is also used as a medium to convince and influence customer to consume a product. According to William Shoel (in Alma;2018) promotion is an effort done by marketer to communicate with potential audience. Promotion can be concluded as a type of marketing communication that gives explanation to convince potential customer about a product or service. Therefore in this study, the researcher will discuss about devising promotion strategy in the new startup business, Fit In furniture. The promotion strategy designed as a result of the study can be applied as an effort to improve brand awareness for Fit In furniture business. Theoretical background used is the five-mixed marketing by Kotler and Amstrong (2015, in Kansa *et al.*

2017) whereby it is a mix of advertisement, personal selling, sales promotion, public relation and direct sales used by the company to achieve its advertisement and marketing target. Communication analysis stage is known with the AISAS (Attention, Interest, Search, Action, Share) formula. The communication relationship between the marketer and customer need to be well built in order to improve product-marketing effort. The limitation to this study is that measuring how effective the promotion was not conducted. After obtaining data from the field that are related with promotion communication stage, subsequently analysis and discussion were done, which would result in a planning. Therefore the study aims to devise a promotion strategy plan for Fit In furniture business as an effort to improve brand awareness in the business.

Research Methods

Based on the research problem and aim previously discussed, the researcher used descriptive qualitative design format. This type of study still relies on accurate and reliable qualitative analysis, but the effect of quantitative thought line is still strong and deeply rooted in the study. Descriptive qualitative is more influenced by deductive-quantitative views, which refers to theory that is still used as analytical tool throughout the selection and discovery of the problem, building hypothesis, even until field observation and data evaluation (Bungin, 2017). Data collection method in the study for business promotion planning of Fit In furniture is through in depth interviews with informants, which are startup home décor business players, business consultant experts, and customers. The informants are selected through purposive sampling procedure that is expected to understand the study object information. The validity of the study is tested using source triangulation technique, whereby triangulation process is done continuously throughout the process of data collection and data analysis, to the point where the researcher is sure that there were no more differences and there was nothing else to confirm with the informants (Burhan, 2017;260). **Discussion**

Discussion of this study will be about the analysis of the data obtained from the interviews on the informants of the study and therefore the data used was obtained directly from the source on the field. The result is the connected to the promotion communication mix based on the theory used in this study and is then connected to the business condition as object of study, finally ended with discussion to create the promotion concept plan.

- Advertisement Concept

Based on the field result, to build awareness Fit In can initially go through digital platform such as Instagram, Tokopedia and Bukalapak. Garnering public's attention or interest to Fit In product by posting attractive photos and posting it on Instagram page. Seller need to also be active

in posting on Instagram, such as around 1-2 times or posts per week. Aside from posting on the feeds page of Instagram, features such as Instagram stories can also be used to Fit In's advantage, stories can be about short videos on how to use the products or other interesting pictures about Fit In products or interior design.

In improving public's desire for ease of searching Fit In products or Search, whereby it refers to customer's want in searching the product, from the two steps mentioned above the next step from the customer can likely be finding out further about the product, and as seller Fit In needs to include keywords or hash tags in each posts. In realizing the action stage, whereby Fit In's strategy is to make customer interested in purchasing. The display of interesting photos and endorsement by influencer can encourage public's interest in purchasing the product.

- Personal Selling Concept

Personal selling can be done by Fit In through participations of various exhibition events where Fit In can also rent a booth and design the booth attractively so that it can garner awareness and interest through this activity. Direct interaction gives Fit In a chance to introduce and explain comprehensively about their products. Suggestions from informants, the stand/ booth can also be arranged in photo booth style so that public will be inclined to take pictures there and they will distribute the photos to their family, friends or upload as their profile picture and indirectly publicize the company. Aside from exhibition events, Fit In also needs to conduct workshop and collaborate with businesses from other fields. Conducting workshops such as DIY furniture and planting, and cooperating with home planting to make cabinet furniture that can also double as pot to plant and decorate the cabinet. Not only workshop, simultaneously company can also sell by creating a small attractive booth.

- Sales Promotion Concept

The easiest promotion concept that Fit In can do is to give discounts, such as price discount of around 20%. Having buy 1 get 1 promotion, free delivery for long distance orders, interesting merchandise for customers that participated in quizzes that Fit In can conduct in their Instagram account, and also giveaway programs. With those promotions, it can impact customer's willingness to purchase even though at the time they did not particularly need the product, but due to the promotion they might purchase Fit In products. These promotional activities can be shared through Fit In Instagram account, through feeds posting, and announcements through WA and Instagram stories. Other sales promotion that can be done include collaborating with other prominent figures or brands from other industries. In the future, Fit In can collaborate with the agriculture/ botanical sector, so that Fit In can create good outdoor furniture to arrange plants in house terraces.

- Public Relation Concept

Building good relationship is the first and foremost that needs to be paid attention to build trust between the seller and customer, and we preserve that trust by maintaining product quality so to not disappoint.

Another way to do it is to build feeling of comfort or sense of comfort in the customer for us the sellers, and this can be achieved if the seller can really convince the customer that the product we are selling is in accordance with their expectation. This can impact our relationship with the customer in the future. Seller need to also provide service for clients and treat them as king. As a seller, Fit In needs to really pay attention to the products used by the customers, and actively follow up with the buyer directly through WA and ask buyers in general through Instagram stories. Fit In can also do interaction to maintain good relationship by conducting workshop and collaborating with brands or sellers in other fields, which can be combined into one common activity. This can also help build good relationship with the customer and to understand through different media of interaction.

- Direct Sales Concept

The important point in direct sales for sellers is that sellers need to interact positively and try their best to please customers. Because if the customer is pleased then they will promote their product or here we see the process of sharing by the customer. Afterwards, Fit In interaction through WA or other online chat media can be chosen as it is more convenience, comfortable, fast and easy as buyers can interact anytime with seller.

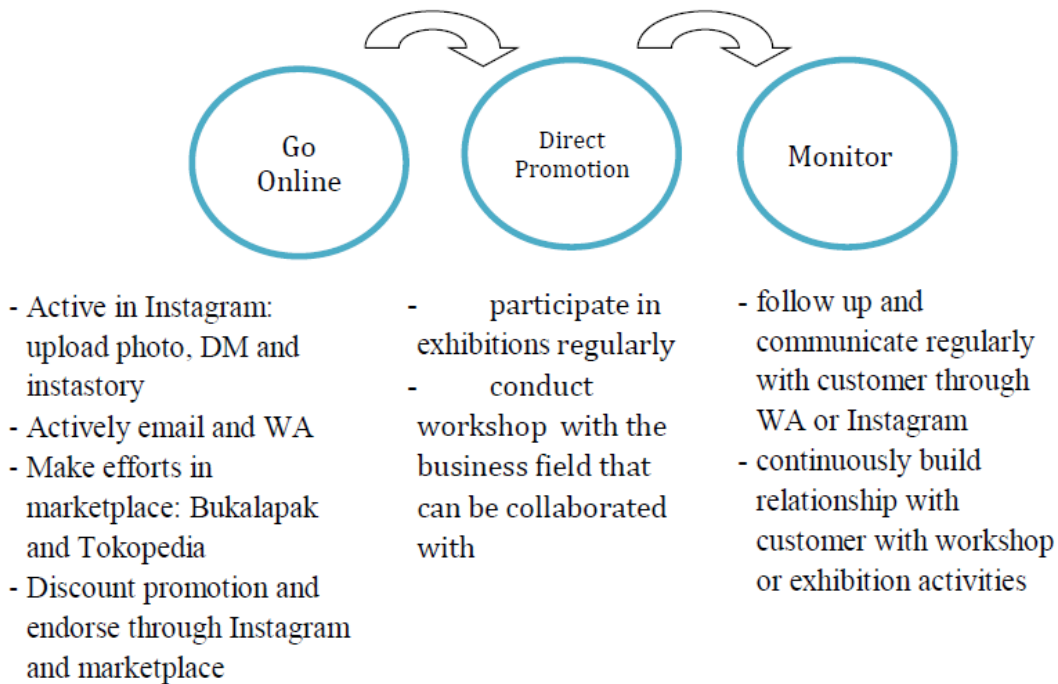


Figure 1: Fit In Furniture Promotion Strategy

Conclusion

Before conducting the study, Fit In furniture conducted promotional activities without good planning and therefore the sales target was not achieved, Fit In furniture is a newly launched business by the researcher so that there was no detailed planning of promotional activities and strategy beforehand. Based on the result of the study explained in the previous part, it can be concluded that the promotion strategy planning in the study is as follows: Fit In furniture needs to increase advertisement in digital platform such as Instastory, Bukalapak and Tokopedia. It can be said that nowadays advertisements are starting to migrate to social media through online advertising. Better descriptions are needed with more interesting words and detailed explanation of the product. Starting to plan endorsement collaboration with influencers that have many followers. Fit In furniture can also start to regularly conduct promotional activities that can be applied well such as:

- a. Price discount of around 20%. Discount can be done approximately once a month with validity period of around one week.
- b. Having buy 1 get 1 or free delivery for long distance order. This activity can be done after discount promotion is done.
- c. Preparing interesting merchandise for customers that participated in quizzes that Fit In can conduct in their Instagram page.

Direct sales that Fit In furniture can do is that customer can directly make order through online chatting, could be through Instagram or WA so that order can be made fast and easily. In the future seller can try to be more proactive in communicating with the customers. Actively check all online communication media such as Instagram DM, actively post questions in Instastory so that customers can be more aware of the product. Making sure customer is comfortable is also important, ensuring communication with customer is comfortable.

Fit In furniture can start to participate in exhibitions or events conducted by university or malls. In the future, Fit In will also conduct workshops by collaborating with business from other fields. The workshop concept is DIY furniture and planting. Collaborating with home planting to create cabinet furniture that can also function as pot for planting to also decorate the cabinet. This activity can improve brand awareness since the product can be known directly by the customer through the sellers personally.

Fit In furniture need to also build trust between the seller and customer, and that trust is maintained by maintaining the quality of the product so as to not disappoint. Next, customers' comfort can also be achieved if us as sellers can really convince customers that the product is according to their expectation. Direct follow up with customer through WA and asking in general through Instagram stories. Aside from that, conducting

workshop and collaborating with brands or sellers in other fields can be combined as one activity.

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