

OPTIMIZATION OF MARKETING USING SOCIAL MEDIA AND ADVERTISING MEDIA IN INCREASING SALES AT THE UNITYLIGHT ONLINE STORE IN MAKASSAR CITY

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Abstract

Digital marketing through social media and advertising media has become one of the important strategies in facing the challenge of low sales volume in the current digital era. Amid the increasingly fierce online business competition, optimal utilization of social media becomes the key to reaching consumers widely and boosting sales. This research aims to identify the optimization strategies for marketing using social media and media advertising to increase sales at the Unitylight Online Store in Makassar City. This study uses a qualitative descriptive method with data collection techniques through observation, interviews, and documentation. The strategies implemented include creating feed and reels content, adding Call To Action (CTA) links, using automated messages, compiling product catalogs, and utilizing Instagram Ads. Data analysis employs the AIDA model (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action) approach to illustrate an effective marketing communication flow. The research results show that the implemented digital marketing strategy has impacted the increase in sales volume, profit acquisition, and supported the growth of Unitylight Online Store. These findings contribute to MSME actors in utilizing digital technology in a more targeted and strategic manner.

Keywords: Digital Marketing, Social Media, Media Advertising, AIDA, Sales.

INTRODUCTION

In the rapidly developing and sophisticated digital era, the growth of technology, especially in daily life, is closely related to the internet, such as social media. Social media is a set of applications related to the internet, where social media is built on the ideological and technological foundation of Web 2.0, providing opportunities for media users to create and share content they produce. Social media has changed the way individuals communicate, share information, and even how companies conduct their business. Platforms like Instagram and WhatsApp have become very effective tools in reaching a wide audience. Social media is not only a means of communication but also a medium for promotion and marketing for business operators, including small and medium enterprises (SMEs) (Herdiyani et al., 2022).

Currently, business actors have also started using social media to boost and sustain their businesses to keep them running and profitable. These business actors use various social media platforms with the aim of marketing the products or services they offer. One of the methods often used in social media marketing is the use of media advertising. Through this method, business actors can target a more specific audience based on their demographics, interests, and behaviors, making the marketing message more precise. The level of social media usage, which has a wide and massive reach, is the reason why business actors also utilize social media as a promotional tool. The higher the number of users, the greater the opportunity for the advertisements to reach the target market. Additionally, the unlimited use of social media also allows for the widespread dissemination of promotions, making them accessible to all internet users (Kurniawan & Irwansyah, 2021).

According to the We Are Social Hootsuite research released in February 2024, Indonesia's population in January 2024 reached 278.7 million people. At the beginning of 2024, there were 185.3 million internet users in Indonesia, with an internet penetration rate of 66.5%. Additionally, Indonesia had 139 million social media users in January 2024, equivalent to 29.9% of the total population. The number of active mobile connections in Indonesia at the beginning of 2024 reached 353.3 million, which is equivalent to 126.8% of the total population. This data shows that Indonesia's population increased by 2.3 million (+0.8 percent) from the beginning of 2023 to the beginning of 2024 (Kemp, 2024). From the findings of this research, it is evident that various companies and institutions see promising potential in utilizing new media at present. According to (Hootsuite, 2024), the use of social media in Indonesia is dominated by several major platforms. Here is a summary of social media usage in Indonesia (Gradianto et al., 2024):

Table 1. Social Media Users in Indonesia

Platform Media Sosial	Persentase Pengguna di Indonesia
Whatsaap	90,9 %
Instagram	85,3 %
Facebook	81,6 %
Tiktok	73,5 %

Source: UHO Communication Science Journal: Journal of Social Science and Information Research Studies (Wearesocial, 2024)

This shows great potential for entrepreneurs to utilize social media as a means of promotion and marketing. However, despite this wide-open opportunity, not all entrepreneurs are able to take full advantage of it. Many businesses still face challenges in managing their social media effectively, either due to a lack of knowledge on how to optimize digital marketing or limited resources.

Social media is a digital platform that allows users to interact, share content, form virtual groups, and connect with others online. This platform offers various features that enable users to communicate, share information, and follow content from other users or brands. Social media has become an important part of daily life and has changed the way we interact, share, and communicate. Through social media, users can interactively engage with other users around the world to share information and communicate (Zuniananta, 2021).

One of the main features of social media is its ability to facilitate social interaction. Users can connect with friends, family, and others around the world, and interact with them through comments, messages, or various other features. This allows the formation of strong online communities around interests, hobbies, or specific topics, enabling the exchange of valuable information and experiences. In addition, social media has also become an important platform for sharing content. Users can post text, images, videos, and more to share with their followers. This includes various types of content, ranging from personal thoughts to news, entertainment, or product information. The ability to share content quickly and easily has made social media a primary source for obtaining information and entertainment for many people (Apriani & Bhaihaki, 2024).

Yoo & Gretzdel (2011) state that social media is capable of fulfilling consumers' needs for knowledge by offering factual, specific, experience-based information that can be obtained and accessed through various information beyond the boundaries of the consumers' social lives. Social media is an online social network based on the internet that allows its users to interact, collaborate, share, and communicate with other users quickly (Armilda et al., 2024).

One of the businesses that wants to take advantage of this opportunity is Unitylight Online Store, an online store engaged in the field of electronic commerce. Unitylight Online Store was established in January 2024 in the city of Makassar, focusing primarily on the sale of Slim Light Boxes and Dura Trans paper. The Slim Light Box is a modern lighting device that uses LED lights to display images, posters, or information attractively. This product is very suitable for use as a promotional medium, information board, or decorative element in various places such as stores, restaurants, and public spaces. Additionally, Dura Trans paper, which is a high-quality transparent printing material, also serves as a main complement to the products offered by Unitylight Online Store. Although this product has great market potential, the sales achieved so far have been unsatisfactory. The reality of the social media marketing utilization by Unitylight Online Store is that the marketing has not been effective in reaching consumers. It can be seen in the sales table of Unitylight Online Store below.

**Table 2. Sales Volume of Slim Light Box & Dura Trans Paper
from January 2024 to December 2024.**

Month	Year	Sales of Slim Light Box	Paper Sales Dura Trans
January	2024	2	1
February	2024	1	1
March	2024	0	1
April	2024	0	0
May	2024	0	0
June	2024	0	0
July	2024	3	2
August	2024	1	1
September	2024	1	0
October	2024	0	1
November	2024	1	0
December	2024	2	3
Total jumlah		11	10

Source: owner unitylight, Makassar 2024

Based on Table 1.1, the sales data generated by Unitylight Online Store from the sales of Slim Light Box & Dura Trans paper shows that there are fluctuations in sales. This indicates that the optimization of social media in the marketing applied has not yet been optimal in reaching consumers. Therefore, efforts are needed to improve marketing effectiveness in order to increase product sales.

Currently, Unitylight Online Store is facing challenges in increasing its product sales. One of the causes is the suboptimal use of social media as a promotional medium. In fact, social media plays a very important role in introducing products to potential customers. With a specific target market and the need for attractive product

visualization, social media platforms like Instagram and WhatsApp can be very effective tools for promoting Unitylight Online Store's products. However, to achieve optimal results, a proper strategy is needed, including the use of advertising media (ADS) to increase reach and interaction with potential customers. The use of advertising media on platforms like Instagram and WhatsApp provides an opportunity for Unitylight Online Store to enhance the visibility of its products. Through ADS, Unitylight Online Store can target audiences based on specific criteria, such as geographic location, age, interests, and shopping habits. Additionally, ADS allows Unitylight Online Store to display ads in engaging formats, such as images, videos, or stories, which can capture the audience's attention and encourage them to make a purchase. With the right strategy, the use of ADS can help Unitylight Online Store not only increase sales but also strengthen the brand and build better relationships with customers.

RESEARCH METHOD

The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative. The qualitative approach according to Moleong is research that uses data in the form of written or spoken sentences that observe the behavior of the people involved. The interview process is conducted in such a way that the researcher asks questions according to the interview guidelines. The information collected in the form of words or text is analyzed and interpreted to reach the deepest meaning.

This design serves as an initial guide for researchers to conduct the research process in a directed manner, starting from problem identification to the formulation of conclusions and recommendations.

1. The first stage that the researcher will undertake is to directly observe the field conditions to identify actual problems that are worthy of investigation. In this case, the researcher will observe the digital marketing conducted by Unitylight Online Store. From the results of this observation, the researcher will formulate the problem statement that will serve as the main basis for directing the focus of the research.
2. After the problem statement is determined, the researcher will begin conducting research on the issue using a descriptive qualitative approach. To obtain the necessary data, the researcher will use several data collection techniques, namely observation, interviews, and documentation, with the main focus on the digital marketing strategy implemented by Unitylight Online Store.
3. Subsequently, the obtained data will be analyzed to provide a detailed description of what is happening in the field. The researcher uses the AIDA model (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action) as an analytical framework for the communication flow of the marketing strategy implemented.

4. After the analysis process is conducted, the researcher will strive to compile the findings that address the problem formulation, then draw conclusions and provide recommendations based on those results.
5. The design of this research illustrates how the researcher will carry out the stages of the research, from problem identification to conclusion formulation, as part of a structured scientific process. To clarify the research stages that will be conducted, the flowchart of the research design can be seen below, depicting the stages from problem identification to conclusion and recommendation formulation in this research.

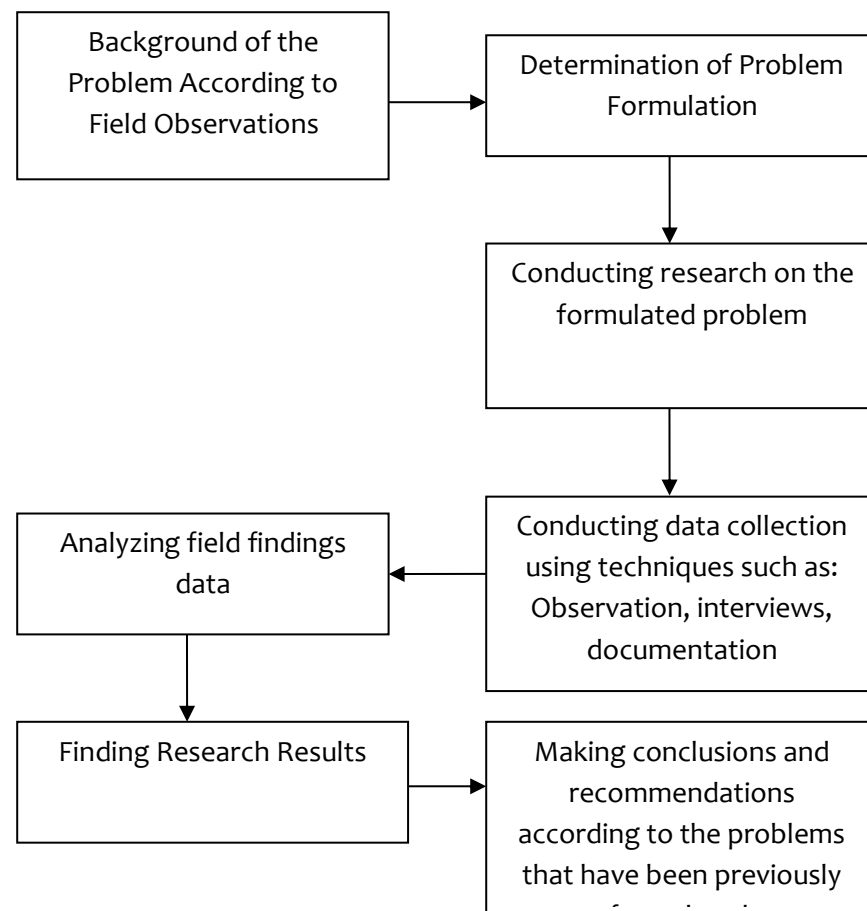


Figure 1. Research Design

1. Research Object

The object is related to the problem or topic that will be studied. Sukardi (2020) states: "The subject of research is the attributes, qualities, or values of a person, object, or activity that show a certain variation determined by the researcher to be studied and from which conclusions are drawn." The object of the research for the researcher is the optimization of social media and digital marketing used in product marketing, namely ADS Marketing through Instagram and WhatsApp "Unitylight."

2. Research Subject

A key informant is a reliable source who can open doors for the researcher to enter the research object, and the key informant can also assist in determining the research techniques, such as the selection of other participants. The key informant in this research is the owner and manager of the "Unitylight Online Store."

The focus of this research is to examine the optimization of marketing through the utilization of social media and media advertising as strategies implemented by the Unitylight Online Store in Makassar City in an effort to enhance promotional effectiveness and sales volume. This research will focus on the use of social media platforms and relevant advertising techniques to expand market reach.

The description of the research focus is a detailed explanation of the main topic that serves as the central point of focus in a study. This focus encompasses specific aspects that will be researched, the main questions that need to be answered, as well as the limitations set to keep the research on track. Therefore, the focus of the strategy to be implemented is.

1. Creation of Feed and Reels Content on Instagram

Creating feed and reels content is a key step in capturing audience attention. Visual content is packaged with attractive and informative designs to reflect the product's identity. The main goal of this strategy is to increase engagement and reach more potential customers organically through Instagram's exploration and algorithm.

2. Addition of Call To Action (CTA) Link in Instagram Bio

Embedding a CTA link in the Instagram bio, such as this link, directs customers to WhatsApp Business so they can communicate and place orders directly. This strategy shortens the transaction flow and increases conversion effectiveness.

3. Utilization of WhatsApp Business: Automated Messages

WhatsApp Business is used to set up an auto-reply system so that every message from customers receives an instant response. This increases customer satisfaction and speeds up the transaction process. This feature also helps manage communication **during high message surges without having to wait for a manual response.**

4. Product Catalog Compilation

The flagship products of Unitylight Online Store, such as the Slim Light Box and Dura Trans paper, are compiled into a WhatsApp Business catalog. This catalog is created with a professional appearance and concise yet clear information. The goal is to help customers quickly understand the product specifications and immediately be interested in making a purchase.

5. Use of Advertising Media (Instagram Ads)

Instagram Ads are used to expand the reach of promotions and target new audiences based on location, interests, age, and behavior. Ads are created in the form of dynamic visuals such as stories and reels, with integrated Call To Action (CTA) to

facilitate the purchasing process. The goal is to increase product visibility and drive sales conversions.

a. Primary Data

According to Umi Narimawati (2008;98) in her book "Qualitative and Quantitative Research Methodology: Theory and Application," primary data is data that originates from original or primary sources. This data is not available in compiled form or as files. This data must be sought through informants or, in technical terms, respondents, who are the subjects of our research or the means through which we obtain information or data.

b. Secondary Data

Secondary data is data that refers to information collected from existing sources. The source of secondary data is records or documentation from businesses, government publications, industry analyses by the media, websites, the internet, and so on (Uma Sekaran, 2011). Secondary data is a source of data that does not directly provide data to the data collector (Sugiono, 2008: 402). This secondary data is data that supports the needs of primary data such as books, literature journals, and company reports related to the implementation of this research.

a. Observation

The observation conducted by the author in this research is participatory or direct observation, meaning the author directly participates on-site or is present to obtain field information about the existing issues. This method is used to understand the conditions in the field. With this method, it is hoped that researchers will obtain valid information based on data and facts in the field. Based on the type of observation, it is divided into two types, namely:

1. Non-participant observation

That is, the researcher does not directly participate in the observation activities. That is by observing and viewing marketing activities through Unitylight's social media accounts, specifically Instagram, Facebook, and WhatsApp. The observation is conducted by reviewing posts and comments to understand consumer interests and desired products.

2. Structured observation

That is, the author uses guidelines previously created by the researcher to complement the observation. Observations were conducted by directly watching the sales process and the posting of content on social media.

b. Interview

The interview conducted by the author consists of direct question and answer sessions with Unitylight informants to identify the issues faced by the owner, so that product sales can be improved again. In this interview, the author interviewed the owner of the Unitylight Online Store.

c. Documentation

Documentation involves tasks related to collecting/obtaining, processing, and disseminating information, especially in the form of scientific reports, semi-publications, statistics, and other library materials (Sulistyo Basuki, 2004) (Nugrohadhi, 2015). The documentation carried out as part of this investigation includes screenshots of Instagram social media posts and WhatsApp from the Unitylight Online Store, product images, sales data during the specified period, and photos with the interviewed informants (Rusdiana, 2021).

Data collection instruments are tools used to measure the data to be collected. The data collection instrument is essentially inseparable from the data collection method. Here are the instruments used in this research:

a. Researcher

One characteristic of qualitative research is that the researcher acts as both the instrument and the data collector. Instruments other than humans (such as interview guidelines, observation guidelines, and so on) can also be used, but their function is limited as a support to the researcher's role as the key instrument. Therefore, in qualitative research, the presence of the researcher is essential, as the researcher must interact with both human and non-human environments within the research context. His presence in the field must be explained, whether it is known or unknown to the research subjects. This relates to the involvement of the researcher in the research arena, whether actively or passively involved (Murni in Rusdiana, 2021).

b. Interview Guidelines

These are notes of questions in the form of a question list and are not accompanied by a set of answer choices.

c. Writing Instruments

The writing instruments used are books and pens. The writing instruments are used in this research as tools to record data obtained from the subjects. The researcher records all information from the subjects related to the study.

d. Documentation

Documentation instruments were developed for the research using an analytical approach. In addition, it is also used in research to seek historical evidence, legal foundations, and regulations that were once in effect. The subjects of the research can include books, magazines, documents, regulations, meeting minutes, diaries, and even historical objects such as inscriptions and artifacts. Documents in qualitative research are used to complement the data obtained from interviews and observations that have been conducted. Documents in qualitative research can be in the form of writings, images, or monumental works from the object being studied (Anufia, 2019).

Validity Test of Findings The validity of findings in qualitative research according to Sugiyono is to prove that the research conducted is truly scientific research and to test the data obtained (Sugiyono, 2019). The technique for testing data validity in this research uses triangulation. Triangulation is a technique for checking data validity that combines various data collection techniques.

1. Technique Triangulation

Technique triangulation for testing data credibility is conducted by checking data from the same source using different techniques. On the data obtained, for example through interviews, it is then checked with observations, documentation, or questionnaires (Sugiyono 2019). In this research, observation, interviews, and documentation techniques are used.

According to Miles and Huberman, data analysis consists of three steps that must be carried out, namely:

1. Data Reduction

Data reduction is the process of combining and standardizing all types of data (interviews, observations, and documentary study results) into a written form that is ultimately analyzed. Data reduction includes data aggregation, coding, and tracking.

2. Presentation of Information

The presentation of information is the process of processing information, uniting it in written form (script) and a clear thematic flow, presenting quality information in the form of narrative text.

3. Drawing Conclusions

Conclusions are the final stage, leading to answers to the statements in the interview guide and revealing the "what" and "how" of the information gathered in the field.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study indicate that the optimization strategy for digital marketing through social media Instagram and Whatsapp Business, as well as the use of advertising media in the form of Instagram Ads, has a positive impact on the increase in sales volume at the Unitylight Online Store. The strategies implemented, such as creating feed and reels content, adding Call To Action (CTA) links, using automated messages, compiling product catalogs, and inserting paid advertisements, gradually increased interactions, conversions, and product sales.

These findings are in line with the research conducted by Khoirunnisa & Hayati (2024), which examined the endorsement strategy on the Fivefourite Instagram account. Wear. Although Unitylight does not implement endorsements, the visual approach through engaging feed and reels content has become an effective strategy in building consumer awareness and interest, similar to the Attention and Interest stages in the AIDA model also used in that study.

This research is also in line with the findings of Mentari et al. (2023), who studied the business development strategy of the Faculty of Tuak through Instagram optimization using the AIDA approach. Unitylight clearly implements the AIDA stages: attracting attention through content design, building interest through product education, creating desire through promotions, and encouraging purchase actions through CTAs and automated messages.

Research by Mesran et al. (2024) using TikTok social media to boost SME sales also shows relevant results. Although Unitylight has not yet utilized TikTok, the approach of using short, informative video reels that broadly reach user algorithms provides the same effect as creative videos on TikTok. Therefore, this research can be said to be somewhat aligned in terms of utilizing video-based media and the use of paid ads.

The research by Nurfadilah et al. (2023) on digital marketing strategies in the marketing of Asha Leather's home industry shows that the use of social media such as Instagram and WhatsApp is effective in expanding market reach and increasing customer loyalty. Unitylight also utilizes Whatsapp Business to automatically respond to messages and display product catalogs. This aligns with a direct communication strategy that brings business operators closer to consumers.

Sofiyantu's (2024) research states that optimizing digital platforms such as Instagram, WhatsApp, marketplaces, and websites has a significant impact on increasing sales and visibility for MSMEs. Unitylight has implemented most of these strategies, particularly in the use of advertising features, content management, and direct links through CTA. Therefore, the findings of this research are also in line with Sofiyantu's study, especially regarding the effectiveness of utilizing digital technology to drive business growth.

The effectiveness of this strategy is clearly evident in the increase in sales volume after the implementation of digital marketing. Based on Table 1.2, Unitylight Online Store was only able to sell 11 units of Slim Light Box products and 10 sheets of Dura Trans paper during the year 2024. However, after optimizing digital marketing from March to May 2025, total sales reached 94 units, with total revenue amounting to Rp 35,700,000 (Tables 4.1–4.3). This shows a significant increase compared to the previous year. According to Tjiptono (2009), effective sales reflect the success of marketing strategies in delivering product value to consumers and generating purchase decisions. In this case, Unitylight Online Store has successfully implemented digital strategies into real transaction growth.

Table 3. Product Sales Before and After Optimization

No.	Year	Month	Product	Sales Volume	Income (Rp)
1	2024	Jan–Dec	Slim Light Box & Dura Trans (11 unit box, 10 sheet trans)	21 unit total	-
2	2025	March	Slim Light Box A3 & Dura Trans	28 total units	Rp 8.540.000
3	2025	April	Slim Light Box A3 & A1, Dura Trans	33 total units	Rp 11.580.000
4	2025	May	Slim Light Box A3 & A1, Dura Trans	33 total units	Rp 15.580.000
Total After Optimization				94 total units	Rp 35.700.000

Based on the data in the table above, it can be concluded that the implementation of digital marketing optimization strategies has significantly improved the sales performance of Unitylight Online Store. If previously only a total of 21 units were sold throughout 2024, then after the digital strategy was implemented, sales reached 94 units in just three months. This increase reflects the successful implementation of a digital strategy in accordance with the marketing theory by Kotler & Keller (2021), which emphasizes the importance of market segmentation, product positioning, and the selection of appropriate promotional media. The efforts of Unitylight Online Store not only succeeded in increasing transaction volume but also in building stronger customer interactions, expanding market reach, and enhancing product image through a structured and sustainable digital approach.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research conducted on the Unitylight Online Store in Makassar City, it can be concluded that the strategy of optimizing digital marketing through social media and advertising media has a significant impact on increasing sales. The strategic use of Instagram and WhatsApp Business platforms through the creation of feed and reels content, the addition of Call to Action (CTA) links, the compilation of product catalogs, and the implementation of automated messages successfully increased consumer engagement and expedited communication and transaction processes. Additionally, the targeted use of Instagram Ads expanded marketing reach and enhanced product visibility. The implementation of the marketing communication approach using the AIDA model (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action) has proven to be effective in building awareness, interest, desire, and encouraging consumer purchasing actions. As a result, Unitylight experienced an increase in sales volume, gained profits, and was able to support sustainable business growth.

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