

The Role of Digital Marketing for Generation Z

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p>Keywords: Role, Digital Marketing, Generation Z, Customer Experience, Consumer Engagement</p> <hr/> <p>Email : ismailrazak.zain@gmail.com</p>	<p>Generation Z. Generation Z, as a group of consumers born between the mid-1990s and early 2010s, grew up in an era of very sophisticated digital technology. Therefore, a deep understanding of how digital marketing strategies can influence Generation Z consumer behavior is important for marketers and researchers. This research aims to identify and analyze the role of digital marketing in influencing product preferences and purchasing decisions among Generation Z. This research uses a qualitative approach with descriptive methods. The research results highlight that Generation Z, as consumers who have grown up in the digital era, shows a tendency to place high value on authentic, engaged and personalized experiences. A successful digital marketing strategy to reach this group involves utilizing creative, interactive, and relevant content that aligns with their values. Additionally, supporting social and environmental issues can be a key element in building a positive brand image in the eyes of Generation Z. The success of digital marketing also depends heavily on responsiveness to mobile device use, with optimization for a good mobile experience being essential in attracting and maintain their attention.</p> <p>Copyright © 2022 Jurnal JEAMI .All rights reserved is Licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution- NonCommercial 4.0 International License (CC BY-NC 4.0)</p>

INTRODUCTION

Rapid technological developments have brought the world into an all-digital era, having a significant impact on various aspects of life, including the world of marketing (Isdarmanto, 2020). This digital transformation encourages marketers to continuously adapt their strategies to remain relevant in the face of constant changes in the business environment. The digital era provides great opportunities and challenges at the same time, forcing industry players to increase creativity and innovation in achieving their marketing targets (Prihanto, 2018).

In this context, digital marketing is the main key to gaining consumer attention and trust. Social media, online platforms, and other technologies enable marketers to connect directly with their audiences, understand preferences, and optimize customer experiences (Rumondang et al., 2020). Marketing strategies that previously only focused on print, television or radio advertising have now developed into digitally integrated campaigns (Putra et al, 2020).

The biggest challenge faced by marketers is the gap between technological developments and changes in consumer behavior (Yunus, 2022). Therefore, marketing strategies must be able to not only follow technological trends, but also understand the dynamics of psychology and consumer preferences that continue to develop. Creativity in creating relevant and value-added content is the key to winning the hearts of consumers in this digital era (Adha, 2022).

In the face of this change, marketers need to explore the full potential of available digital tools, such as data analytics to understand consumer behavior, content personalization to increase engagement, and leveraging new technologies such as artificial intelligence to increase the efficiency of marketing campaigns. By continuing to develop and perfect their digital marketing strategies, marketers can position their brands optimally amidst the dynamics of an all-digital market (Widiana & Sinaga, 2010).

The last decade has witnessed an extraordinary transformation with the emergence of Generation Z as an economic force that is changing the marketing paradigm (Rumondang et al, 2020). This group, which includes individuals born between the mid-1990s to the early 2010s, substantially influences not only consumption patterns but also the dynamics of interactions between brands and consumers. Growing up in the era of the internet, social media and mobile technology, Generation Z brings unique characteristics that differentiate it from previous generations (Kaihatu, 2020).

Generation Z is known as a seeker of authenticity. They not only look for quality products, but also value values such as transparency and personalization from the brands they support (Febriani, 2021). Therefore, brands that successfully reach Generation Z must be able to demonstrate sustainability and authenticity in all aspects of their communications (Hutamy et al, 2021).

Along with high concern for social and environmental issues, Generation Z also demands more than just products or services. They tend to choose brands that are committed to social responsibility and sustainability (Susanto & Wijarnako, 2004). Therefore, marketing strategies that highlight sustainability initiatives and build emotional connection with social values will be more successful in reaching the hearts of Generation Z (Darmanto & Dwiyani, 2015).

The new marketing era faced by Generation Z places digital content, sustainability and engagement as key elements. They have a preference for getting information through digital platforms, and marketers must be able to present interesting and relevant content in cyberspace (Wijoyo et al, 2021). In addition, direct interaction via social media or digital communication platforms is key in building strong relationships with Generation Z consumers.

Literature Review

Digital Marketing

Digital marketing is defined as marketing activities including branding that use various web media such as blogs, websites, email, Adwords, or social networks (Kannan, 2017). Digital marketing as a promotional media aims to convey or disseminate or market about a product so that it can influence consumers to buy it (Charlesworth, 2014). The definition of digital marketing according to Bala & Verma (2018) is activities, institutions and processes that are facilitated by digital technology in creating, communicating and conveying values to consumers and other interested parties (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, (2019) define digital marketing as the use of technology to assist marketing activities aimed at increasing consumer knowledge by adapting to their needs.

Digital marketing is an activity in the field of marketing that utilizes platforms on the internet to reach target consumers. Apart from that, digital marketing is defined as marketing products or services via the internet or is called i-marketing, web marketing,

online marketing, e-marketing, or e-marketing. -commerce (Sihombing et al, 2022). Digital marketing activities are utilized by business people so that the application of internet media in the market increases. There are two benefits of digital marketing:

- 1) The costs are relatively cheap, meaning that marketing using digital marketing is much cheaper and easier to reach a wider range of potential consumers than conventional advertising. The nature of digital marketing allows consumers to examine and compare one product with another more comfortably.
- 2) Large information content is the use of digital marketing to provide a large and extensive amount of information compared to conventional media such as print media, radio and television. Digital marketing is also able to accurately store data needed by the company.

Generation Z

Aseng (2020) found that generation Z has a different identity from previous generations. Even millennials, who are the previous generation, are significantly different from generation Z (Stillman & Stilman, 2017). This generation likes to work together in carrying out flexible work, understands challenges and is motivated by achievement, and likes to explore new methods in solving problems. Budmian & Dananjoyo (2021) provide an understanding of the term generation Z, which since then has been widely referred to as the digital generation, a young generation that relies heavily on digital technology for its development and growth. Generation Z has unique characteristics, and the Internet is starting to develop along with the development of digital media. Each generation of population, which usually occurs every 15 to 18 years, has different demographic indicators from the previous and subsequent generations (Pratama & Elistia, 2020).

METHOD

In the framework of this research, a qualitative approach is considered the main method that is most relevant for answering the questions asked in this research. The analytical descriptive research method was chosen for this type of research, where existing phenomena are described in detail and then analyzed further by the researcher (Yulianah, 2022). This approach allows research to produce in-depth understanding that corresponds to the evolution of the phenomenon from the past to the present. In collecting qualitative data, a combination of primary data and secondary data is used. In-depth interviews were conducted by researchers as a primary data collection method to obtain information related to the problems that had been formulated. Meanwhile, secondary data was taken and analyzed from the results of previous research conducted by other researchers. Data collection techniques include searching for data through library sources, including books, journals, articles, online books and journals, as well as official websites related to the research topic. By using this method, the research aims to provide a comprehensive and in-depth picture of the phenomenon that is the focus of the research, thereby allowing further investigation into the key aspects involved.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Digital marketing has become an integral part of modern business strategies. In an era where technology continues to develop rapidly, one group that is the main focus of marketers is Generation Z. Generation Z, or also known as the post *-millennial generation*, is the generation born in 1995-2010. This generation is the generation most familiar with digital technology, so they are very active in using the internet and social media. This makes generation Z a very potential target market for businesses. The role of digital marketing among Gen-Z includes:

Influence through Social Media

Generation Z, a group that grew up in the digital era, shows very high engagement on various social media platforms, such as Instagram, TikTok, and Snapchat. These three platforms are the main forum for Gen Z to interact, share experiences, and search for interesting content. Therefore, the role of digital marketing becomes increasingly crucial in designing strategies that can attract the attention and maintain the interest of Gen Z in this dynamic online environment.

Digital marketing is not just about placing ads, but also about understanding the nuances of each social media platform used by Gen Z. Building an authentic and relevant brand presence requires creativity in messaging and adaptation to fast-evolving trends. In addition, direct interaction and participation in viral trends or challenges on TikTok, for example, can be the key to creating a strong bond between brands and Gen Z. In this context, digital marketing not only functions as a promotional tool, but also as a means of forming a brand identity that fits the values and preferences of this generation.

Content Marketing

Generation Z, as a consumer group that grows up amidst ever-expanding information, shows a unique tendency in evaluating brands and products. They are not just looking for products or services, but also appreciate the added value and authenticity that brands provide. Therefore, in a digital world full of information, the role of digital marketers is very significant in adapting their approach to suit the preferences of Gen Z. The focus on added value and authenticity requires an emphasis on content that goes beyond product advertising.

In responding to the needs and expectations of Gen Z, digital marketing focuses on content that is not only interesting, but also relevant and informative. The content presented must be able to provide solutions or provide in-depth understanding regarding the product or brand. Digital marketing uses various content formats, such as videos, infographics and creative articles, to illustrate the added value and authenticity that you want to convey. Utilizing strong narratives and engaging visuals is the key to creating compelling and immersive consumer experiences.

In an effort to build engagement, digital marketing focuses not only on direct sales but also on building long-term relationships with Gen Z. Content that reflects the added value and authenticity of the brand not only creates initial interest but also encourages active engagement from consumers. Thus, digital marketing becomes an effective tool to illustrate added value and authenticity, creating a deep bond between brands and Gen Z in a digital environment full of competition.

Influence Through YouTubers and Influencers

Collaboration with YouTubers or influencers has become a very effective strategy in introducing products or brands to Generation Z. As consumers who are accustomed to online content, Gen Z has a tendency to trust recommendations from online figures who are considered authentic and relevant to their interests. In such a dynamic digital world, influencers have significant appeal, and working with them gives brands direct access to a wide and relevant audience.

Collaborations with popular YouTubers or influencers allow brands to not only reach the Gen Z audience, but also build credibility and trust. Personalized recommendations from respected online figures can create stronger bonds with consumers, because they feel that the recommendations come from sources they consider trustworthy. Content created by influencers can also provide a more in-depth look at a product or brand, providing Gen Z with more detailed and contextual information that they might not obtain through conventional advertising.

Exploration Through Search Engines

Generation Z, known as consumers who are active online, often conduct independent research through search engines before making purchasing decisions. They rely on search engines like Google to explore information, read reviews, and compare products or brands before making their choice. In this context, search engine optimization (SEO) becomes crucial in digital marketing strategies to ensure that the products or brands offered appear relevant and easily accessible in search results.

An effective SEO strategy helps increase a brand's visibility in search engines, making it more likely to be found by Gen Z who use specific keywords related to the product or service they are looking for. This includes keyword optimization, quality link building, and ranking content that is relevant to the needs and interests of the target audience. By having a strong presence in search results, brands can win the trust of Gen Z, who tend to place a high value on organic search results that appear naturally.

Experience Based Marketing

Digital marketing is increasingly focused on creating interactive experiences to meet the needs of Generation Z who are accustomed to engaging and engaging content. Through online quizzes, games or content accessible through Augmented Reality (AR) filters, brands can build unique engagement and increase their appeal. Generation Z, growing up in an era of ever-evolving technology, demands experiences that are more than just passive information. The use of AR technology provides a new dimension to online interactions, enabling Gen Z to actively participate in brand experiences.

Interactive content such as online quizzes create opportunities for deeper engagement, while games or AR filters provide a fun entertainment aspect. This creates a more emotional and personal connection between brands and Gen Z, as they can participate directly in the content created. In creating a more interactive experience, digital marketing not only creates visually attractive content but also invites Gen Z to be actively involved, creating stronger connections and building brand loyalty. By leveraging creativity and innovation in interactive experiences, digital marketing can be an effective tool to attract and retain the attention of Generation Z who are always looking for new and unique experiences in their online interactions.

Engagement Through Mobile Platforms

Generation Z has changed the digital consumption paradigm with the dominant use of mobile devices. In this context, digital marketing must prioritize optimization for an optimal mobile experience to reach and interact effectively with Gen Z. As consumers who are always connected and mobile, they tend to access content, search for information, and shop via their mobile devices. Therefore, the success of a digital marketing strategy lies in its ability to present responsive content, according to the screen size and layout of the mobile device.

Responsive advertising is key in attracting the attention of Gen Z, because visual content that is attractive and easy to understand on mobile device screens can trigger higher engagement. Additionally, company websites should also be optimized for mobile responsiveness to ensure a smooth and accessible user experience. Responsive and intuitive design helps minimize horizontal swiping or zooming, provides more convenient navigation, and ensures that content is presented clearly and attractively on mobile device screens. Through a focus on a good mobile experience, digital marketing not only meets the preferences of Generation Z consumers, but also increases the effectiveness of marketing campaigns. The success of digital marketing in this era lies in its ability to adapt content and strategy to the way Gen Z interacts, and optimizing for a seamless mobile experience is an essential element in achieving this goal.

Response to Social and Environmental Issues

Generation Z exhibits high levels of social and environmental awareness, prioritizing the values of sustainability and fairness in their consumer decisions. In facing this dynamic, digital marketing plays a key role as a means of amplifying voices and supporting issues that concern Generation Z. Through its platforms, digital marketing can utilize campaigns that are social or environmental in nature, voice sustainability values, and support movements or organizations that align with the aspirations and views of Gen Z.

Building an emotional connection with Gen Z audiences becomes more possible through delivering in-depth and relevant messaging on social and environmental issues. These campaigns can include outreach, awareness campaigns, or donations to charitable causes. Through involvement in issues they care about, digital marketing can be an agent of change and create a more positive brand image in the eyes of Generation Z.

Personalization

Generation Z, who grew up in the era of technology, demands a personalized experience in every digital interaction. In response to this need, digital marketing utilizes data and technology to present more relevant and personal messages to Gen Z members. Through analyzing consumer behavior data, digital marketing can understand individual preferences, habits and interests, enabling the delivery of messages tailored to each consumer. specifically.

Personalization in digital marketing doesn't just include the use of names or personal information, it also includes content tailored to the consumer's stage of the journey. By utilizing artificial intelligence technology and predictive analysis, digital marketing can identify consumer behavior patterns and provide content that suits their needs and expectations. These tailored messages create more meaningful experiences for Gen Z, increasing brand appeal and forming deeper relationships.

Personalized digital marketing opens the door to deeper interactions and higher engagement with consumers. By presenting content that meets individual expectations, brands can build a more positive image and increase consumer loyalty. Personalization is key in achieving resonance with Gen Z who are always looking for unique and relevant experiences in every aspect of their lives, including digital interactions with brands.

CONCLUSION

A successful digital marketing strategy for Generation Z involves a thoughtful approach and being responsive to their unique characteristics. Generation Z, growing up in the digital age, demands authentic, engaged and personalized experiences. Therefore, digital marketing strategies need to focus on creative, interactive and relevant content that can attract attention and build emotional engagement. Social and environmental issues also have a significant role in building a positive brand image in the eyes of Generation Z. Digital marketing can utilize its platforms to support and voice sustainable values, create stronger emotional connections and build meaningful relationships. In addition, an emphasis on a good and responsive mobile experience is key, considering that Generation Z is dominant in using mobile devices. Digital marketing must be optimized to ensure content that is easily accessible and engaging on mobile devices, meeting the expectations of mobile-connected consumers. Overall, combining these elements in a digital marketing strategy opens up huge opportunities to build sustainable relationships with Generation Z, create a relevant brand, and win consumer loyalty in this ever-evolving digital era.

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