
Effectiveness of Promotional Media Using EPIC Model (A Case Study in Al Qadri Umrah and Hajj Bureau in Jakarta)

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Abstract

An effective promotion strategy using the right promotional media can help the Al Qadri Umrah & Hajj to increasing sales of Umrah products. Analysis of the EPIC model is applied to measure the effectiveness of the company promotional strategy by using the four critical dimensions of the EPIC model. Assessments of empathy, persuasion, impact, and communication are applied to identify the effectiveness and weaknesses as well. The company is then able to formulate new strategies to overcome existing weaknesses. Using Slovin's formula, the study involved 72 respondents. The results showed that the use of promotional media, those are Instagram, brochure, and exhibition, were considered effectively to support promotion strategy. Its persuasive and colorful wordings and images made Instagram more attractive and became the most effective promotional medium.

Keywords: Promotion strategy; Promotional media; EPIC Model; Effectiveness; Umrah.

1. Introduction

The activity of the pilgrimage is one of the most basic and oldest mobility in human history and has far-reaching implications including the political, social, cultural, and economic system as well [1]. The activity of pilgrimage became one of the phenomena known in all religions and cultures, Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, and so on. The pilgrimage is also described as a faith-based journey to shrines for spiritual purposes [2].

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The trend of travel has now changed considerably, from just getting some fresh air, to enjoying both the mountains and the beaches to finding spirituality. Pilgrimage activities experience worldwide revival, and places of pilgrimage become magnets for those with spiritual goals [3]. In Indonesia, there has been a shift in trends of tourism from “sun, sand, and sea” into serenity, sustainability, and spirituality (UNWTO). An estimated 330 million or 30% of all global tourists will flock to religious sites around the world. The visit was either based on spiritual or cognitive motives. Religious or pilgrim tourism is somewhat associated with, traditional and religious beliefs of people or groups in society. Much of the tourist activities are done by individual or group of sanctuaries, as well as to the tombs of the majestic ones or leaders, to the hallowed halls or mountains, and to the burial places of the figures as magical legends. Pilgrimage tourism belongs to special tours, as travelers who have different motivations and tend to things related to mythology. In addition to these, tourists who visit religious tourist attractions aim to know the history and architecture of existing buildings. With this in mind, visitors have a distinct satisfaction, which these religious tours (pilgrimages) are also a cultural testament to the ancients’ past [4]. As a country with Muslims as the majority population, the potency of religious tours or pilgrimage (both hajj and umrah are tremendous and are considered to be the third biggest country after Mesir and Pakistan, according to Saudi Arabia’s ministry of hajj and umrah, the number of visas issued for Indonesia in 2016 reached 699.6 thousand, 7.2 percent more than the previous year. This figure makes Indonesia the third-largest congregation in the world. As a result of the rapid growth of religious tourism in Indonesia, many travel agencies switch widely to the pilgrimage service bureau of umrah and hajj. In contrast with the hajj, with the average waiting list over 20 years, it implies to the growing demand for umrah travel products. Al Qadri Umrah & hajj is one of the 906 of the hajj and umrah travel agencies/bureaus in Jakarta. Its business focus is to sell hajj and umrah packages. In the midst of the high competition of the hajj and umrah business, the company’s ability to promote its products is needed to compete with the congregation. Promotion is a spearhead of a product’s business activity in order to reach the target market and sell umrah and hajj products. Promotional activity today is the most effective method for a company to market a product. An effective strategy of promotion should be in line with products and targeted consumers. Al Qadri bureau uses various promotional media, including brochures, social media such as Instagram, and exhibitions participation. Sales promotion offers buyers additional value as an inducement to generate an immediate sale. Sales promotion is therefore applied principally as a means to accelerate or increase sales [5]. A promotion is said to be effective if messages delivered are easily understood by the customers. It should contain true information so that the consumers can examine the information in the right way. There are three criteria that can be used to measure the effectiveness of promotions; those are sales, memory, and persuasion. The effectiveness of promotions linked to sales may be known through researches about the effects of sales. On the other hand, the effectiveness of promotions related to memory and persuasion can be known through research on the impacts of communication [6]. With the effectiveness of this promotion, companies can see whether or not the promotional process is appropriate. An EPIC model measures the effectiveness of advertising with a communication approach developed by AC Nielsen- one of the world’s leading marketing research companies that include four critical dimensions, namely empathy, persuasion, impact, and communication. These vital dimensions will obtain a range that will determine the position of promotion effectiveness [6]. The method allows for assessing each empathy, persuasion, impact, and communication separately so that it enables a company to find out the flawed dimension and set the corrected one [7]. Al Qadri Umrah & Hajj bureau develops various promotion strategies covering the use of

social media, brochure, and participation in travel exhibition. The measurement of promotional effectiveness is essential for a company to ensure the promotion strategy in line with the target consumers. Assessment using the EPIC model is performed to assure the effectiveness of promotional media.

2. Material and Method

2.1 Material

Concerning the market, consumer behavior in the buying decision process is highly dependent on consumer tastes and motivations. This is what marketers must pay attention to determine the right and intensive promotional steps so that they can target the expected customers. Thus good communication and a vast distribution network are essential aspects of the marketing process [8]. Advertising is an essential element in increasing the sales of a product. A phenomenon that occurs in today's digital world, social media is a very effective promotional tool in conducting promotions because it is considered to help provide product information widely and cheaply [9]. It is assumed that the use of online advertising and overall online promotional activities are more intense than conventional ways. Currently, building a social relationship is made easier by the presence of a network by utilizing technology. One of them is social media, which is able to connect one individual to another intensively so that they can be united with a system. [10]. Detailed information on a product is needed by consumers before they make a purchase decision. They use social networks to obtain detailed information needed because social networks are considered to be able to provide the information they need. Other customer testimonials are very important references for them before making a purchase. After buying, they also have the opportunity to provide a brand assessment of the products they have purchased. This is an important factor for marketers to treat each customer properly [11]. As one of the analysis methods to measure marketing strategies, the EPIC model has been used extensively and considered effectively. Some discussions about EPIC models are used to measure the effectiveness of a promotional strategy for both products and services [7, 12, 7; 12; 13]. EPIC model is one of the world's leading marketing research tools with four critical dimensions those are empathy, persuasion, impact, and communication [6]. Empathy shows the ability to share and understand the experiences of others demonstrated with a desire to help others [14; 15]. Empathy is a mental state by which a person identifies or feels himself in the same feeling or thought state of another person or group. It is generated when an individual appraises a specific situation in the same way that the other person appraises the same condition [16]. In the context of this study, empathy can be understood as an illustration of how tourists love an advertisement and how it describes the relationship between the ad and they are personal [6]. Advertisement with emotional appeal has a positive impact on empathy as well as an attitude toward advertising, which in turn have positive implication for engagement [17]. In communication, two purposes of achieving are how the message conveyed by the communicator can be understood and trusted by the communicant. In order to achieve that goal, communication had to be implemented persuasively [18]. Persuasion is a process of communication made to influence one's thinking and actions (invite or persuade) to conform to the communicator's attitudes, beliefs, and opinions [19]. The persuasion process to be used is determined by the level of involvement by tourists in the product message [20]. For ads to be profitable, the string of displayed sentences must make consumers comfortable, happy, and serene [21]. The desired impact of advertising results is consumer product knowledge through the level of engagement with the product and or purchasing decision. Tourists have different knowledge levels of products, which can be used to translate new

information and to make purchase options. Tourists may have four levels of product knowledge, which is: product class, product form, brand, and model. A tourist is a consumer who sees that a product has personally relevant consequences, so it is said that the tourist is involved with the product and has a connection with the product. The communication dimension provides information on the consumer's ability to remember the main messages, tourist insights, and the power of the messages' impressions [22]. Cognitive processing perspectives are at the core of developing successful promotional strategies that are a communication problem. Promotional strategies should be able to provide the cognitive effects that communicants' hope to achieve. A cognitive effect results in the growing information for communicants. The process begins when promotional sources of communication determine what information to communicate, then decode the message in the symbol. The most appropriate sign can be words, pictures, or actions. The message is then transmitted to a recipient via various media outlets, such as a television show, offers via mail, billboard, or magazine. The consumer, if led to a promotion, has to decrypt or translate the meaning. Consumers can then take action, such as going to the store or making purchases.

2.2 Methods

This study used descriptive research methods by using a quantitative approach. Descriptive research is one that presents a detailed picture of one particular condition, social setting, or relationship. Data collection used a questionnaire that is developed by using an EPIC Model. A questionnaire has 15 positive statements consisting of 4 items for the first three dimensions and three items for communication attributes. Likert scale is adopted as a measurement scale. The validity test of the questionnaire is conducted by using a Pearson product-moment formula involving 20 respondents. Validity test results that all questionnaire items are valid with the lowest correlation coefficient of 0.445. A reliability test using alpha Cronbach's formula with a cut-off point of 0.6 is performed to assure the consistency of the measurement. Statistics test results that four dimensions have an alpha coefficient of more than 0.6. The numbers of 72 respondents of Al Qadri's consumers are determined using Slovin's formula with a 10% margin of error. Data analysis is conducted using the following formula:

$$\bar{X} = \frac{\sum X_i}{n} \quad (1)$$

Wherein

\bar{X} = average score

n = number of respondents

$\sum X_i$ = sum of respondents' scores

The EPIC rate formula is applied to show the extent of the effectiveness of promotional media as follows:

Table 1: Scoring Scale of EPIC Rate

$\text{EPIC Rate} = \frac{\bar{x}_{\text{empathy}} + \bar{x}_{\text{persuasion}} + \bar{x}_{\text{impact}} + \bar{x}_{\text{communication}}}{4}$		
Scoring scale:	1.00 < x ≤ 1.80	strongly ineffective
	1.80 < x ≤ 2.60	ineffective
	2.60 < x ≤ 3.40	fair effective
	3.40 < x ≤ 4.20	effective
	4.20 < x ≤ 5.00	strongly effective

3. Result

3.1 Respondents' profile

Table 1: Respondents' profiles

Criteria	n	%
Gender		
Male	28	38.89
Female	44	61.11
Ages		
< 30 years	17	23.61
30 – 35 years	42	58.33
36 – 40 years	12	16.67
> 40 years	1	1.39
Income		
< 10 millions	23	31.94
10 – 15 millions	42	58.33
16 – 20 millions	6	8.33
> 20 millions	1	1.39
Domicile		
Bekasi	6	8.33
Bogor	11	15.28
Depok	8	11.11
Jakarta	19	26.39
Tangerang	28	38.39
Source of Information		
Internet/social media	34	47.22
Brochure	4	5.56
Relatives/friends	34	47.22

Source: research data, 2020

3.2 An EPIC model promotion strategy

So far, Al Qadri Umrah and Hajj Bureau have used social media Instagram, brochure, and exhibition participation to promote its products and services. The effectiveness of the media promotion for umrah products in the Al Qadri bureau was measured using the EPIC model. Here are the results of the EPIC model testing on each of the dimensions of research. Most of the respondents have a positive response to four items of the empathy dimension. Promotional media used are easily understood and remembered, pleased, and impressive. The minimum item score is 3.96, and the maximum 4.04 that classifies as an effective promotion strategy. It is

concluded that promotional media average score of 3.99 is effectively performed with empathy dimension-based. Arising the emotions of customers is a mandatory thing to do when implementing a marketing strategy in order to provoke customers' engagement with the products promoted. The promotions used have succeeded in generating a close relationship between customers and promotion messages [16]. There are four items presented to find out the effectiveness of promotional media in the persuasion dimension. Among 72 respondents, more than 85% of customers have positive responses toward the promotional media of Al Qadri. Products of that bureau are convinced in compliance with products advertised and reliable. Customers' confidence is then expressed to be a purchasing decision. The average score of each item is higher than 3.40, meaning that the promotional media of Al Qadri has already been effective based on the persuasive dimension. Located in East Jakarta, customers of Al Qadri, in fact, cover some areas, including Bekasi, Bogor, Depok, and Tangerang. About 38.39% of customers are coming from Tangerang. It shows that the promotion of Al Qadri effectively persuades customers to purchase its products. The ultimate goal of marketers is to increase customer's knowledge of products and services offered in order to purchase them. The increased knowledge of products and services hopefully foster customers' engagement and result in purchasing decision. Having a connection with the product mostly becomes a vital consideration for customers to buy products. After consumers decide to purchase the products offered, marketers must maintain good relationships with consumers so that they can help market the products that have been purchased. Thus marketers can expand their marketing network for the benefit of selling the products offered, and the company will automatically benefit from this step. The final goal of marketing activities is to create loyal customers. Most customers of Al Qadri respond positively to the promotion of Al Qadri, giving impact to them. They state that promotion is so creative that it distinguishes it from its competitors and be easily remembered. It also enables us to inform the benefits of the products for its customers and increase the awareness of the new function of products and services offered. Good promotion strategy should provide the cognitive effects towards communicants as they result in increasing information gained. In order to achieve this goal, marketers collaborate text and symbols presented in eye-catching colors to catch the attention of customers. It is expected to increase the power of message impression and force the customers' ability to remember the main message. Concerning with communication dimension, most of the customers also respond positively to all items. The customers think that the promotion of Al Qadri is informative and able to explain the benefits of products and services offered, and easily understood. It combines texts, pictures, and also symbols with eye-catching colors that enable the customers to get the points of the messages. With an average score of 4.14, it can be concluded that the promotional media of Al Qadri is communicative and effective in delivering the messages.

Table 2: Analysis of Dimension

Code	Item	Score of Respondents					Total Score	Average	Category
		5	4	3	2	1			
Empathy Dimension									
E1	The promotional media of Al Qadri Umrah & Hajj bureau is easily understood	2	65	5	0	0	285	3.96	Effective
E2	The promotional media of Al Qadri Umrah & Hajj bureau is easily remembered.	7	61	4	0	0	291	4.04	Effective
E3	The promotional media of Al Qadri Umrah & Hajj bureau is pleased	5	60	7	0	0	286	3.97	Effective
E4	The promotional media of Al Qadri Umrah & Hajj bureau is impressive	5	61	6	0	0	287	3.99	Effective
Total		19	247	22	0	0	1149	3.99	Effective
Persuasion Dimension									
P1	I am convinced that the products of Al Qadri are in compliance with as advertised.	12	54	6	0	0	294	4.08	Effective
P2	The promotion of Al Qadri is reliable.	8	55	9	0	0	287	3.99	Effective
P3	I intend to purchase Al Qadri products after seeing its promotional media	12	54	6	0	0	294	4.08	Effective
P4	Promotion of Al Qadri Umrah & Hajj is convincing me not to purchase products of other travel bureau	6	58	8	0	0	286	3.97	Effective
Total		38	221	29	0	0	1161	4.03	Effective
Dimension of Impact									
I1	The promotional media of Al Qadri is creative to attract the customers' positive response.	10	61	1	0	0	297	4.13	Effective
I2	Distinguished promotion of Al Qadri enables customers to remember easily.	10	59	3	0	0	295	4.10	Effective
I3	The promotion of Al Qadri enables to inform the benefits of products for customers.	11	54	7	0	0	292	4.06	Effective
I4	Promotions of Al Qadri enables to give knowledge of products and services new functions for customers.	10	55	7	0	0	291	4.04	Effective

Total		41	229	18	0	0	1175	4.08	Effective
Communication Dimension									
C1	The promotional media of Al Qadri Umrah & Haji clearly explains the information and benefits of products and services.	14	54	4	0	0	298	4.14	Effective
C2	Messages on the promotional media of Al Qadri are easily understood.	12	57	3	0	0	297	4.13	Effective
C3	Pictures/displays on promotional media of Al Qadri use the symbol and eye-catching color so that they enable to deliver the messages.	13	57	2	0	0	299	4.15	Effective
Total		39	168	9	0	0	894	4.14	Effective

Source: research data, 2020

Among the four dimensions, communication becomes the most effective for its highest score, whereas the lowest is the empathy dimension. As a whole, the effectiveness of Al Qadri Umrah and the Hajj bureau is 4.06 in the effective category.

Table 3: EPIC Model

Dimension	Average	Category
<i>Empathy</i>	3.99	Effective
<i>Persuasion</i>	4.03	Effective
<i>Impact</i>	4.08	Effective
<i>Communication</i>	4.14	Effective
Average	4.06	Effective

Source: research data, 2020

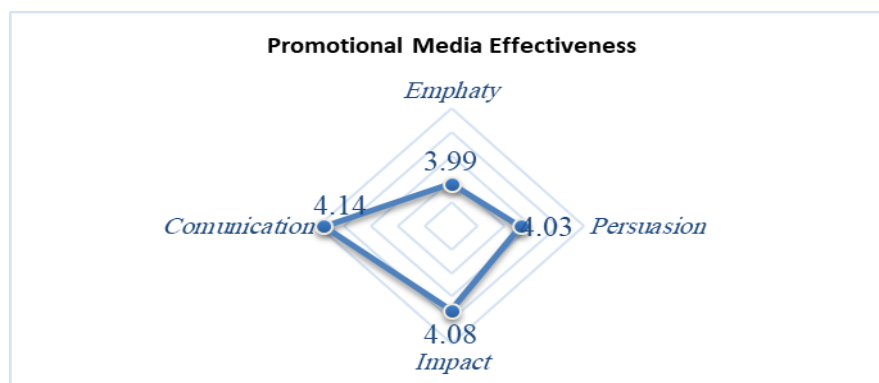


Figure 1: Promotional Media Effectiveness

3.3 Effectiveness of promotional media in Al Qadri Umrah & Hajj Bureau

In promotion activities, Al Qadri umrah & hajj uses three different types of promotional media, and those are social media of Instagram, brochures, and exhibition participation. The effectiveness of the empathy dimension was measured by using (1) easiness to understand, (2) easiness to remember, and (3) most preferable, (4) the most impressive. Research data showed that 48 or 66.7% of respondents put Instagram becoming the most easily understood promotional media. Nowadays, Instagram is becoming a social media that is widely used as promotional media. Apart from being cheap and easy to use, this social media is widely used by various levels of society, so that the promotion reach is broad. This application is also connected to other social media so as to increase its reach to consumers. It is using images as the main content to make the promotion display more attractive and easy to understand. Instagram also becomes the second most memorable promotional media, the most preferred promotional media, and the most impressive promotional media. It concludes that the contents of Instagram @alqadri_umrah haji have the ability to affect significantly the empathy of prospective buyers. In the persuasion dimension, there are four criteria used to evaluate the effectiveness of media advertising used, including (1) the most reliable promotional media; (2) the most trusted promotional media; (3) purchasing product after seeing promotional media; (4) type of promotional media that most convinced customers not to buy products on other travel bureaus. Measurements of promotional media have shown that Instagram becomes the first layer for all criteria. Instagram is considered the most reliable and trustworthy promotional media. The content of Instagram is also easily updated so that customers can have up to date information on the products and services offered and advertised. Its attractive and persuasive words also have a considerable impact on increasing customers' belief to buy products advertised. Whereas Instagram is rated the most persuasive promotional media, the brochure becomes the least. The measurement of the impact dimension uses four indicators covering (1) the most creative; (2) the easiest to remember (memorable); (3) is the most informative; (4) has the most impact on a new function and service. At the first two indicators, the respondents explained that Instagram is the most creative and memorable promotional media. In contrast, the exhibition is considered to be the most informative and impacted on new functions and services. Through exhibition activities, more interactive communications between communicators and communities are interwoven because they are face-to-face so that the transmission of the information of the product can be completed. The communication dimension is measured using some criteria, including (1) clearly provides information about a product or service, (2) the most easily understood, (3) the most attractive appearance or image. The results showed that Instagram is a highly valued promotional media. Unlike the other two promotional media that tend to pay, Instagram is an unpaid promotional media that allows some or all of the content to be updated at all times. Therefore the information presented becomes more up to date, with more decadent color design and images making it more attractive.

Based on the above results, from four dimensions of empathy, persuasion, impact, and communication, the majority of respondents chose Instagram as the most effective promotional media. The use of persuasive and colorful wordings and images makes Instagram more attractive. No funds are needed, Instagram contents are easily updated all the time. At the same time, the brochure is assessed to be the most ineffective promotional medium. Social media is able to drive people to participate in the dissemination of information. The use of social media is a shift in spreading information from the broadcast mechanism (one to many) becomes the many

to many mechanisms [23]. Social media is able to encourage (1) participation and engagement, encouraging contributions and feedback; (2) openness, social media open to accept feedback and participation; and 3) participation encourages comments, votes, and so on [24].

Table 4: Assessment of promotional media

No	Items	Instagram	Exhibition	Brochure
Empathy				
E1	The easiest promotional media to understand	48	20	4
E2	The most memorable promotional media	25	43	0
E3	The most preferred promotional media	67	1	4
E4	The most impressive promotional media	40	27	5
Persuasion				
P1	Promotional media that best suits the products the customers bought	42	27	3
P2	The most trusted promotional media	56	13	3
P3	Customers decide to purchase the product after seeing promotional media	52	14	6
P4	Type of promotional media that most convinced customers not to buy products on other travel bureaus	41	29	2
Impact				
I1	The most creative promotional media	41	22	9
I2	The easiest promotional media to remember	40	26	6
I3	The most informative promotional media for products benefits	22	49	1
I4	The promotional media that has the most impact on new functions and services	30	37	5
Communication				
C1	Promotional media clearly provides information about a product or service	56	16	0
C2	Promotional media that is the most easily understood	51	9	12
C3	Promotional media with the most attractive appearance or image	43	19	16
Total		654	352	76

Source: research data, 2020

Today Instagram is one of the digital marketing media that is widely used by marketers to offer products and services. The use of Instagram can focus on segmented customers who have a high interest in the products and services provided so that sales opportunities are more elevated. This is one of the advantages of Instagram compared to brochures, which are more random and use attractive images as the primary medium. In addition, because Instagram is connected to other social media, the marketing reach is more expansive. The information displayed on Instagram is dynamic because it is easy to update at any time according to marketers' wishes in a

short time. Apart from being random, the information displayed in the brochure is static, has a limited reach, and costs money to produce. Besides that, the information conveyed is limited because the product description must be explained using sentences so that it is less attractive. Marketing activities that use the exhibition as a medium also have many weaknesses. To carry out an arrangement, marketers need a fairly high fee. The time of the exhibition is not held at any time, depending on the schedule made by the Event Organizer. With the COVID-19 pandemic, organizing exhibitions are rarely or even nonexistent. This, of course, affects the effectiveness of promotional activities.

4. Conclusion

Based on analysis with EPIC models, it is concluded that promotional strategies made by Al Qadri umrah & hajj are either using social media of Instagram, brochures, and exhibitions are considered an effective strategy. Instagram is evaluated to be the most effective promotional media compared with the other two promotional media. Increasing promotional content and the use of digital platforms can be raised and improved. The weakness of this research is that it only focuses on using Instagram, even though there are still many types of social media that can be used, such as Twitter, Facebook, Tik Tok, and others. Based on this, researchers suggest that further research should be carried out comparing the use of Instagram with other types of social media to see the effectiveness of each of these social media.

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5.Recommendations

To increase sales of products and services, companies need to take advantage of social media other than Instagram. Even though when discussing social media, it is not only Instagram, but there are still several other types of social media, namely: Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, and other digital platforms that can be used as promotional media. In this study, the authors only focus on the effectiveness of the promotional media used but have not examined the effect of the effectiveness of the promotional media on sales figures for products and services at PT. Al Qadri. It is recommended that other researchers conduct further studies related to the influence of social media on the sales of products and services related to the use of available social media.