
IMPLEMENTING MARKETING MIX STRATEGIES TO ATTRACT POTENTIAL UMRAH PILGRIMS

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Abstract :

This study aims to identify the marketing strategies implemented by PT. Nur Haramain Mulia in its efforts to attract prospective Umrah pilgrims. The method used is a qualitative approach, with data collection techniques through interviews with relevant sources. The research process includes observation, factual data collection from sources, and supporting documentation to complete the information. The results indicate that PT. Nur Haramain Mulia implements a marketing mix strategy encompassing seven elements (7P): Product, Price, Place, Promotion, People, Process, and Physical Evidence. The obstacles faced in implementing this marketing strategy include: the increasing number of competitors in the Umrah travel industry; price fluctuations that affect package selection; and the existence of Umrah travel agents not registered as PPIUs but still operating illegally.

Keywords : *Marketing Mix Strategy, Interest of Prospective Umrah Pilgrims*

Abstrak :

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi strategi pemasaran yang diterapkan oleh PT. Nur Haramain Mulia dalam upaya menarik minat calon jemaah umrah. Metode yang digunakan adalah pendekatan kualitatif, dengan teknik pengumpulan data melalui wawancara dengan narasumber terkait. Proses penelitian mencakup observasi, pengumpulan data faktual dari narasumber, serta dokumentasi yang mendukung kelengkapan informasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa PT. Nur Haramain Mulia mengimplementasikan strategi bauran pemasaran atau marketing mix yang mencakup tujuh unsur (7P): Produk, Harga, Tempat, Promosi, Orang, Proses, dan Bukti Fisik. Adapun kendala yang dihadapi dalam pelaksanaan strategi pemasaran ini antara lain: meningkatnya jumlah pesaing di industri travel umrah, kedua, fluktuasi harga yang memengaruhi penetapan paket, serta. Ketiga, keberadaan agen perjalanan umrah yang tidak terdaftar sebagai PPIU namun tetap beroperasi secara ilegal.

Kata Kunci: *Strategi Marketing Mix, Minat Calon Jemaah Umrah*

INTRODUCTION

A number of companies in the travel industry are competing to recruit prospective Umrah pilgrims as part of their business competition. Indonesia, as a country with a Muslim majority population of around 85% of the total population, has an important religious obligation for Muslims, namely the Hajj and Umrah pilgrimages. However, currently, the Hajj has a very long waiting period, which can even reach 33 years, and the Covid-19 pandemic situation has further extended the waiting period. This condition has encouraged most people to choose to perform the Umrah first. One of the driving factors is the growing belief among the community that human age is unpredictable. Although the Umrah is not an obligation like the Hajj, many Muslims still perform it as a form of love for the Prophet Muhammad SAW. In addition, the desire to visit historical sites in Mecca and Medina while still given the opportunity to live is also a major motivation for them to perform the Umrah (Arifin, 2014).

The high interest of Muslims in performing the Umrah pilgrimage has received a positive response from various travel agencies in Probolinggo, including PT. Nur Haramain Mulia Kraksaan, a company engaged in religious travel and tours, which was founded on August 15, 2011. In its first year in 2016, PT. Nur Haramain Mulia successfully sent 413 umrah pilgrims. Subsequently, in the period from 2017 to 2023, the number of pilgrims increased significantly, with an average of 1,500 pilgrims per year. This data shows that the growth in the number of pilgrims is inseparable from the important role of the marketing strategy implemented by the company. (Fajar, 2024)

A marketing strategy is a comprehensive, integrated, and coordinated plan in the field of marketing. Specifically, an umrah marketing strategy can be understood as a set of objectives, targets, policies, and operational guidelines used to direct the company's marketing activities in a sustainable manner. This strategy is implemented at various levels and operational areas, taking into account the dynamics of the external environment and the ever-changing level of competition (Anoraga, 2009).

The large number of travel agents offering various umrah packages has created competition in marketing their respective products to attract public interest. Therefore, each travel agency is required to be able to showcase its competitive advantages in an innovative, creative, and efficient manner in order to become the main alternative for prospective pilgrims. (Kotler, 2000). Thus, it is hoped that through the implemented marketing strategy, the public will be attracted to the products offered by travel agencies. Umrah marketing plays a very important role in increasing the interest of prospective umrah pilgrims, because the overall success of the umrah trip is highly dependent on the marketing efforts made. (Oentoro, 2012) In running its business, PT. Nur Haramain Mulia is required to be able to compete with other tourism companies engaged in similar fields. Therefore, this travel agency implements a competitiveness strategy as an effort to create various profitable market opportunities. The success of this competitiveness greatly depends on the effectiveness of marketing. Through the implementation of this strategy, the travel company uses the marketing mix concept, which is a strategy related to determining how the company presents its products to specific market segments in order to attract potential pilgrims to use the services of PT. Nur Haramain Mulia.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a field study type that includes intensive direct observation and observation of the phenomena that occur. Sugiyono. (2013). The research methods used include interviews, observations, and document analysis. The research location was carried out at PT Nur Haramain Mulia which is located on Jl. Ir. H. Juanda 370 Patokan Kraksaan Probolinggo and Data Sources, Primary Data in the form of Information obtained directly from sources through interviews. Secondary Data, namely Information obtained from various sources such as books, journals, articles, the internet, scientific works, and documents/archives of PT NHM.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Marketing strategies play an important role in achieving the goals set by a company. This is because marketing strategies provide clear and focused guidance on how to take

advantage of various opportunities. Marketing strategies are essential for determining priority consumer segments, enabling companies to understand and meet consumer expectations and satisfaction. According to Kotler, a strategy is a structured and focused plan to achieve specific goals. In this context, marketing is an activity carried out by individuals to meet the needs and desires of the community through a process of exchange (Keller, 2013). Thus, a marketing strategy is the basis for actions taken to manage a company's marketing activities or efforts in the face of competition and a dynamic changing environment, with the aim of achieving the expected results (Philip, 2004).

Hajj and Umrah travel agencies have different marketing strategies compared to other companies in the Umrah sector and face unique marketing challenges in their operations (Sri Irsanti Husen, 2022). Every company certainly has goals or a vision that it wants to achieve together. Therefore, companies need to design effective marketing strategies to attract potential pilgrims to choose the services of PT. Nur Haramain Mulia. As a Hajj and Umrah travel agency, Nur Haramain Mulia has developed well-structured and well-planned programs to achieve the company's success.

In terms of umrah departures, in order to provide the best service to all pilgrims, Nur Haramain Tour always coordinates with relevant stakeholders. Since obtaining a license as a Umrah Travel Organizer (PPIU) with number 612 in 2016, over the past four years, Nur Haramain Tour has sent more than 1,500 umrah pilgrims each year. All umrah trips organized by Nur Haramain Tour are well documented in the existing system. The Umrah Travel Plan Report (LRPU) issued by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia is submitted through online applications such as SIMPUH, SIPATUH, and the latest is SISKOPATUH. (Ridho, Z. et, al. 2024)

PT. Nur Haramain Mulia implements a strategy utilizing elements of the marketing mix, also known as the 7Ps: Product, Price, Place, Promotion, People, Process, and Physical Evidence.

Product, Products are one of the marketing options available to attract potential pilgrims, thus attracting them to use the services offered by PT. Nur Haramain Mulia, tailored to their needs and preferences.

Each umrah product offered has a departure schedule listed in the PT. Nur Haramain Mulia brochure. With a wide variety of products, the company is able to attract prospective pilgrims to join and register with this travel agency.

In order to market its products and attract pilgrims to choose this travel service, PT. Nur Haramain Mulia must have its own advantages. Therefore, here are some of the superior products offered by PT. Nur Haramain Mulia:

- a. Transportation
- b. 3, 4 & 5-star hotels close to mosques according to the program
- c. Indonesian food menu
- d. Friendly and attentive guides
- e. 24-hour professional TG
- f. Accompanied by a doctor if the group has more than 75 pilgrims
- g. Full of worship
- h. TGS tools are available to help optimize umrah worship guidance

The marketing strategy implemented by PT. Nur Haramain Mulia plays an important role as a tool to achieve competitive advantage in winning market competition.

Although the products offered are similar to those available on other travel websites, the uniqueness of the packages described above sets them apart and attracts the interest of prospective Umrah pilgrims. These advantages are the main factors that make prospective pilgrims choose to use the services of PT. Nur Haramain Mulia. The marketing strategy implemented by this travel company is effective in attracting the attention of pilgrims.

(Price) PT. Nur Haramain Mulia not only offers products, but also emphasizes quality service to pilgrims. Pricing is determined with consideration so as not to burden pilgrims, so that they feel satisfied and not disadvantaged by the services they receive. The company prioritizes the comfort of pilgrims during their worship, with the aim that their worship will be accepted as *mabrur*. This level of comfort positively contributes to the company's reputation, as the positive experiences of pilgrims who have performed the umrah through PT. Nur Haramain Mulia have the potential to be an effective source of promotion. Testimonials and recommendations from these pilgrims can attract the interest of other prospective pilgrims to use the services of PT. Nur Haramain Mulia, thereby creating sustainability in the company's customer growth (Sri Irsanti Husen, 2022)

(Place) For its distribution activities, PT. Nur Haramain Mulia chose a location at Jalan Ir. H. Juanda No. 371, Kp. Arab, Patokan, Kraksaan, Probolinggo, East Java as its head office. The branch office is located at Perumahan Berlian Cluster Blk. A. No.3, Bangah, Gedangan, Sidoarjo, East Java. PT. Nur Haramain Mulia chose a location that is very close to community activities and easily accessible by transportation because it is located on the side of the road, close to an Islamic boarding school which is also under the same auspices. The choice of this very strategic location can attract the attention of the community to use the services of PT. Nur Haramain Mulia.

(Promotion) Promotion plays an important role in attracting and retaining customers. One of PT. Nur Haramain Mulia's goals in promoting its products is to convey information about the various products offered to potential customers and to increase their interest. To achieve this, PT. Nur Haramain Mulia implements a promotional strategy through three methods (Sri Irsanti Husen, 2022).

(People) Humans are one of the crucial components in the form of human resources (HR). Employees at PT. Nur Haramain Mulia are HR assets that can provide a competitive advantage for the company, because good quality human resources will have a positive impact on company performance. According to Mr. Khairul Wahdad, an alumnus of the umrah congregation, the service provided by PT. Nur Haramain Mulia employees is considered very friendly, satisfying, and professional. In addition, the guides also provide good service by consistently accompanying the congregation and providing guidance patiently. The quality of service provided by employees and guides has a positive impact and creates a good impression of the company's image.

(Process) The process is an element related to PT. Nur Haramain Mulia's handling of pilgrims. This section begins with registration and ends with the completion of the Umrah pilgrimage. According to Aizzatul Ulumiyah, the services provided by PT. Nur Haramain Mulia are considered very satisfactory by pilgrims, from departure to Mecca and Medina, the performance of the Umrah pilgrimage, visits, tours, to the return to their homeland. Pilgrims feel that they are constantly accompanied by a team of assistants and company staff throughout the process. From these findings, it can be concluded that the services provided by PT. Nur Haramain Mulia are able to leave a positive impression on

pilgrims, which in turn has the potential to increase the interest of prospective pilgrims in using the company's services. (Ridho, Z. et, al. 2024)

Physical Evidence) Physical appearance is one of the important elements related to a company's image, including the design and layout of its business premises. In the context of PT. Nur Haramain Mulia, this physical aspect reflects the visual impression of the company. Based on an interview with Holisotul Muyassaroh, one of the umrah pilgrims, it is known that the appearance of the PT. Nur Haramain Mulia building is simple and not luxurious. However, the added value of this company is the quality of its service. Although physically simple, the friendly and patient service, especially towards elderly pilgrims, provides satisfaction for the pilgrims. Thus, it can be concluded that the aspect of service plays a dominant role in shaping pilgrim satisfaction, exceeding the physical appearance of the company itself.

CONCLUSION

PT. Nur Haramain Mulia, in its efforts to attract prospective Umrah pilgrims, implements a marketing mix strategy that includes seven elements, namely: a variety of Umrah service products, pricing that is in line with the packages offered, strategic office location selection, promotion through various channels, both direct and digital, professional and friendly human resources, well-organized service processes, and a simple yet functional office appearance. However, the company faces several obstacles in implementing this strategy, including an increase in the number of competitors in the same field, fluctuations in the price of umrah packages, and the existence of illegal umrah travel agencies that are not registered as PPIU but are still actively sending pilgrims. The marketing strategy implemented has generally contributed positively to increasing public interest in the umrah services provided by PT. Nur Haramain Mulia..

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