
BRANDING STRATEGIES IN BUILDING CONSUMER TRUST FOR HAJJ AND UMRAH TRAVEL

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Abstract :

The Hajj and Umrah travel industry in Indonesia has shown significant growth in line with the increasing number of pilgrims each year. In the service sector, which is intangible in nature, consumer trust is a key factor in determining the choice of service provider. This study aims to analyze the application of branding strategies by Hajj and Umrah travel companies and their contribution to building consumer trust. The research method used is a qualitative approach with an associative descriptive method. The results show that branding not only functions as a business identity, but also as a guarantee of trust and spiritual commitment. Elements of branding strategies such as brand awareness, brand association, and perceived quality play an important role in creating a positive image and consumer trust. Testimonials, support from religious leaders, the legality of the agency, and consistent Islamic values in brand communication have been proven to strengthen positive perceptions and emotional closeness of consumers to the company. These findings confirm that an integrated and religiously-oriented branding strategy is a key factor in increasing consumer trust and loyalty towards Hajj and Umrah travel services.

Keywords : *Branding Strategy, Consumer Trust, Hajj and Umrah*

Abstrak :

Industri perjalanan haji dan umrah di Indonesia menunjukkan pertumbuhan signifikan seiring meningkatnya jumlah jamaah setiap tahun. Dalam sektor jasa yang bersifat tidak berwujud, kepercayaan konsumen menjadi faktor kunci dalam menentukan pilihan terhadap penyedia layanan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis penerapan strategi merek (branding) oleh perusahaan travel haji dan umrah serta kontribusinya terhadap pembentukan kepercayaan konsumen. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode deskriptif asosiatif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa branding tidak hanya berfungsi sebagai identitas bisnis, tetapi juga sebagai jaminan kepercayaan dan komitmen spiritual. Elemen-elemen strategi merek seperti brand awareness, brand association, dan perceived quality berperan penting dalam menciptakan citra positif dan kepercayaan konsumen. Testimoni, dukungan tokoh agama, legalitas biro, serta nilai-nilai Islami yang konsisten dalam komunikasi merek terbukti memperkuat persepsi positif dan kedekatan emosional konsumen terhadap perusahaan. Temuan ini menegaskan bahwa strategi branding yang terintegrasi dan bernuansa religius menjadi faktor kunci dalam meningkatkan kepercayaan serta loyalitas konsumen terhadap layanan perjalanan haji dan umrah

Kata Kunci: *Strategi Merek (Branding), Kepercayaan Konsumen, Haji dan Umroh*

INTRODUCTION

The Hajj and Umrah travel industry is one of the service sectors that has experienced significant growth, especially in countries with a Muslim majority such as Indonesia. Every year, millions of Muslims from around the world, including Indonesia, perform the Hajj and Umrah pilgrimages, which require safe, comfortable, and reliable travel services. In this context, consumer trust is a key factor in determining their choice of travel service provider. One important element that can influence this trust is the branding strategy implemented by Hajj and Umrah travel companies.

Branding not only includes the company name, logo, or symbol, but also reflects the values, reputation, and service promises offered to consumers. In the service sector, where the products sold are intangible, consumer perceptions of the brand are crucial (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Therefore, travel companies need to build a strong brand identity in order to instill a sense of security and confidence in the minds of consumers, especially given the many cases of raud or failed departures that have occurred in this industry.

An effective brand strategy can increase customer loyalty, create differentiation from competitors, and strengthen the company's position in the market (Aaker, 1997). In the context of Hajj and Umrah travel, branding also plays a role in building the company's religious and professional image. Aspects such as brand communication, customer experience, testimonials, and service consistency are key elements in building that trust (Mowen & Minor, 2002).

This study will discuss how brand strategies are implemented by Hajj and Umrah travel companies and the extent to which these strategies contribute to building and maintaining consumer trust.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with an associative descriptive method, (Moleong, 2017). which aims to determine and analyze the relationship between branding strategies and consumer trust in Hajj and Umrah travel services. Data collection methods include observation, interviews, and documentation related to Branding Strategies in Building Consumer Trust in Hajj and Umrah Travel.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study indicate that in the context of Hajj and Umrah travel services, branding not only functions as a business identity, but also as a guarantee of trust and spiritual commitment.

Referring to David A. Aaker's (1997) theory, brand strategy elements such as brand awareness, brand association, and perceived quality are key to creating trust. In practice, Hajj and Umrah travel services that successfully build brand associations with values of honesty, religiosity, and professionalism find it easier to gain consumer trust.

Furthermore, as stated by Kotler and Keller (2016), consumer trust is formed from experience, consistent brand communication, and social proof. In this case, positive testimonials, support from religious leaders, and the legality of the agency are the main factors that create a positive perception of the brand.

The emotional aspect is also very dominant. Hajj and Umrah are sacred and hopeful spiritual activities. Therefore, consumers are more sensitive to brand image and the symbols used. Branding that emphasizes Islamic values, spiritual services, and convenience during worship will more easily build emotional closeness and long-term trust.

From the company's perspective, branding is carried out through a comprehensive approach: from visual communication design, involvement in religious activities, customer service, to the selection of ustaz (religious teacher) partners. This strategy demonstrates an understanding that a brand is not only visual, but also an experience, values, and a promise.

CONCLUSION

Brand strategy in the Hajj and Umrah travel industry plays an important role in building consumer trust. Effective branding—built through reputation, communication, religious associations, and customer experience—can create a sense of security, loyalty, and positive recommendations from consumers.

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