

TRANSFORMING AND SUSTAINING SMES AMID MCO THROUGH SOCIAL  
MEDIA MARKETING: A STUDY ON FARHAN BINA TEGUH ENTERPRISE

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A project report submitted in partial fulfilment of requirements for the award of  
degree of Master of Business Administration (Marketing)

International Business School  
Universiti Teknologi Malaysia

FEBRUARY 2022

## **DEDICATION**

I'm dedicating this thesis to my parents, husband, family and friends who have always helped me to be positive at this moment in the face of adversity. Also, to the lecturer for this subject, Dr Zuraidah Binti Sulaiman, Senior Lecturer in Marketing at Azman Hashim International Business School, provides guidance that always understands the difficult situation I am encountering now.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

In preparing this thesis, I was in contact with many people, researchers, academicians, and practitioners. They have contributed towards my understanding and thoughts. In particular, I wish to express my sincere appreciation to my main thesis supervisor, Professor Dr. Zuraidah Sulaiman, for encouragement, guidance, critics and friendship. I am also very thankful to my co-supervisor Dr. Maizaitulaidawati Md Husin Senior Lecturer & Head of PhD Program for their guidance, advices and motivation. Without her continued support and interest, this thesis would not have been the same as presented here.

My fellow postgraduate student should also be recognised for their support. My sincere appreciation also extends to all my colleagues and others who have provided assistance at various occasions. Their views and tips are useful indeed. Unfortunately, it is not possible to list all of them in this limited space. I am grateful to all my family member.

## **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this study is to investigate how the Social Media Marketing Transforming and Sustaining Smes Amid MCO, in this world of digitalization, digital marketing is a worldwide trend that used in an organization or any institutions even in education. Digital marketing refers to digital ads, such as search engines, blogs, social media, email and smartphone applications, offered by digital platforms. Amid the MCO many businesses face caused massive dislocation among small businesses just several weeks after its onset. Many businesses had temporarily closed and only essentials business operate partially or not fully capacity. This study is focus on selected SMEs company in Food and Beverages (F&B) sector which is an essential business. Mix method are used in data collection and nonprobability sampling techniques was adopted in this study. The data analysis methods are descriptive analysis, Reliability test, Normality test, Multiple Regression test and T-test analysis adopted in this research. The questionnaires were distributed through media social. The aim of the study is to explore the marketing issues on Farhan Bina Teguh Enterprise related to awareness and preferences, to analyse the consumers' awareness and preferences through digital marketing on social media amid MCO, and to identify the relationship of consumers' awareness and preferences towards purchase intention. This paper allows SMEs to effectively incorporate and adopt digital marketing as a tool in its business plan and to understand the competitive market effectiveness of digital marketing.

## **ABSTRAK**

Tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk menyelidiki bagaimana pemasaran sosial media mengubah dan mengekalkan perniagaan kecil dan sederhana semasa Perintah Kawalan Pergerakan (PKP), dalam dunia digitalisasi ini, pemasaran digital adalah trend di seluruh dunia yang digunakan dalam organisasi atau institusi manapun dalam pendidikan. Pemasaran digital merujuk kepada iklan digital, seperti mesin pencari, blog, media sosial, aplikasi e-mel dan telefon pintar, yang ditawarkan oleh platform digital. Di tengah MCO, banyak perniagaan yang dihadapi menyebabkan penempatan besar di kalangan perniagaan kecil hanya beberapa minggu selepas permulaannya. Banyak perniagaan ditutup buat sementara waktu dan hanya perniagaan penting yang beroperasi sepenuhnya atau tidak sepenuhnya. Kajian ini tertumpu pada syarikat kecil dan sederhana terpilih dalam sektor Makanan dan Minuman (F&B) yang merupakan perniagaan penting. Kaedah campuran digunakan dalam pengumpulan data dan teknik persampelan bukan kemungkinan diadopsi dalam kajian ini. Kaedah analisis data adalah analisis deskriptif, Uji normaliti akan dilakukan dan ujian kebolehpercayaan. Soal selidik diedarkan melalui media sosial. Tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk menganalisis minat beli pengguna di tengah MCO melalui pemasaran digital SNS, untuk mengenal pasti pilihan pengguna terhadap pemasaran digital media sosial di tengah MCO dan menganalisis kesedaran pengguna mengenai pemasaran digital media sosial di tengah MCO. Kajian ini membolehkan Smes menggabungkan dan mengadopsi pemasaran digital secara berkesan sebagai alat dalam rancangan perniagaannya dan memahami keberkesanan pemasaran digital yang kompetitif.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

UTM                      Universiti Teknologi Malaysia



## **LIST OF SYMBOLS**

UTM                      Universiti Teknologi Malaysia

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Introduction

Many local small and medium sized businesses are struggling to sustain in businesses amid movement control order due to pandemic Covid19. Most companies were grappling with financial fragility. According to the economists, the downturn in the momentum of economic activity began without a clear end date from March 2020 onwards (Segal & Gerstel, 2020). For those consequences, this research intends to explore deeply how social media transforms and sustains local SMEs, focusing on three research questions. First, what are the marketing issues on Farhan Bina Teguh Enterprise related to awareness and preferences? What is the relationship between awareness and preferences towards purchase intention? How Does social media improve awareness and increasing preferences amid MCO towards Farhan Bina Teguh Enterprise? The goals of the current research study are to explore the marketing issues on Farhan Bina Teguh Enterprise related to awareness and preferences, to identify the relationship of consumers' awareness and preferences, to analyse whether social media marketing improves awareness and increases preferences on Farhan Bina Teguh Enterprise. Introduction of digital marketing through media social has since made it possible for small and medium-sized companies to access global information from a single venue. Digital marketing entails advertising practises and strategies that allow SMEs to benefit as of a range of resources and products operating their companies either at home or in the global market. This study will also evaluate the awareness, preference and purchase intention of consumers amid MCO through media social. Secondary data is obtained that can lead to a stronger demonstration of social media marketing in local small and medium-sized businesses.

## **Keywords**

Digital Marketing, pandemic, Social Media, digital platform, Small and medium-sized, businesses, effectiveness, marketing, movement control order, covid19.

### **1.2 Information about the case company**

Farhan Bina Teguh enterprise is a local small and medium enterprises business. Operating in Malaysia located at Pasir Gudang Johor. Farhan Bina Teguh provides a variety of food and beverage products and the concept of the business applied food court concept. Farhan Bina Teguh enterprise offering products such as fried foods and local beverages.

### **1.3 Problem Statement**

On 18 March 2020 the Malaysian government declared Movement Control Order (MCO) in which the peoples are mandatory to practice 'social distancing' to avoid further outbreak of COVID-19. Amid the MCO food and beverage sector still operating their business in partially or in less operation capacity. The consequences that faced by the SMEs from the MCO policy, two factors that have led business owners to face namely inability to physically engage with customers and social distancing impact the business performance despite drastic drops in revenue. The new

normal of social distancing policy is expected to affect how Smes function for the foreseeable future.

The coronavirus (Covid19) epidemic has wreaked havoc on the global economy and companies, with many unsure whether they can continue to operate. These interruptions have a wide range of consequences for businesses, and many of them are struggling financially as a result (OECD, 2020). In many large advanced economies, the overall direct first impact to GDP is generally between 20 and 50 percent (OECD, 2020). Many businesses have had to lay off employees, while others have had to decrease their working hours (Edgecliffe-Johnson, 2020). The Pandemic has wreaked havoc on the world economy, forcing the delay or cancellation of sports, religious, political, and cultural events, as well as significant supply shortages (Turner and Akinremi, 2020). During the lockdown, there was a surge in the use of social media and the internet ((Donthum and Gustafsson, 2020). Larger businesses may be able to withstand shocks better than SMEs since they have significantly greater financial resources (Verbano and Venturi, 2013). An SME is exposed to increased levels of strategic uncertainty as a result of an environmental shock or the danger of an extreme event (Neyer,1982), which has an influence on its daily operations and, in some circumstances, threatens its existence (Sullivan-Taylor and Branicki, 2011). As a result of the Covid19 Pandemic, several nations throughout the world are experiencing unprecedented problems.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

RQ1: What are the marketing issues on Farhan Bina Teguh Enterprise related to awareness and preferences?

RQ2: What is the relationship between awareness and preferences towards purchase intention?

RQ3: How Does social media improve awareness and increasing preferences amid MCO towards Farhan Bina Teguh Enterprise?

To answer these research questions, the present study explores the marketing issues on Farhan Bina Teguh Enterprise related to awareness and preferences impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic through social media marketing, and identify the relationship of consumers' awareness and preferences towards purchase intention and analyses the consumers' awareness and preferences through digital marketing on social media amid MCO. This study undertakes a case-study based on qualitative and quantitative approach to investigate the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic towards Smes and the use of social media marketing to increase customers awareness and customers preferences. In this research, a qualitative research technique used to find out the answer for research question 1, as it works efficiently where the numerical data is not available as well as the research question 1, is exploratory in nature. Also, it helps to narrow down a vast research field into one easily researchable topic. The interview was conducted with the business owner of Farhan Bina Teguh Enterprise. Quantitative research technique used to find out the answer for research question 2 as well as research question 3. The research applied surveys and questionnaires to social media users for data collecting.

## **1.5 Research Objectives**

RO1: To explore the marketing issues on Farhan Bina Teguh Enterprise related to awareness and preferences

RO2: To identify the relationship of consumers' awareness and preferences towards purchase intention.

RO3: To analyse whether social media marketing improve awareness and increase preferences on Farhan Bina Teguh Enterprise.

## **1.6 Research Role**

- Anticipating research issues and promptly resolving them
- Writing proposals and delivering presentations when required
- Transforming raw scores into practical numbers and figures

## **1.7 Research Ethics**

- Protecting the anonymity and confidentiality of participants
- Obtaining informed consent from participants.

## **1.8 Significance of the Proposed Research**

### **Policy makers and the practitioners**

The results or the findings of the research will be illustrated in the Advice for Small and Medium-sized Businesses, which will demonstrate how to develop and retain critical productivity skills in the digital marketing era. Furthermore, businesses

with SMEs are scheduled to Propagate the research's conclusions. These events raise visibility among the participating companies and other SMEs involved in the subject matter. The findings would also provide state and national decision makers with information, which will in turn contribute to more tailor-made policies for SMEs.

### **Future researcher**

- provide the real issues relating this problem with the evidence
- As a reference to find the gap and limitation within this research in More depth.
- As a reference to improve research methodology in the future.

### **Entrepreneur**

- Give information about the needs of using digital marketing
- Provide data for further improvements in uncertainties or to ride the disruption in economic issues.

## **1.9 Definition of term**

Definition of terms that has been in this research which is including



Digital technologies are computer instruments, programmes, computers and services that produce, store or process information.

Media is the communication channels or tools used to produce and distribute information, knowledge and data in the broadest sense of the word store.

Media enables people to make some sense of the experience of the social world virtually.

Movement Control Order (MCO) is a government directive that specifies approved mass movement and gatherings in Malaysia, and includes standard operating protocols such as contact tracing, social distancing or physical distancing, and quarantines.

According to (Brennen and Kreiss 2016), digitalization is defined as the process in which many domains of social life (including businesses) are restructured around digital communication and media infrastructures.

### **1.10 Implication of the study**

The results of the study show how significant the findings will be for strategy, procedure, theory, and subsequent analysis. The consequences of analysis are simply the conclusions you take from your observations and explain how the results can be relevant for strategy, experience or philosophy.

### **1.10.1 Theoretical Implications**

This research paper has aimed to highlight how digital marketing transforms and sustains local SMEs amid MCO within Johor Malaysia. also, to find out how the use of digital marketing gives a positive impact to the participants and, to see what tools are more effective in terms of creating awareness, and purchase intentions. The study showcases one local SMEs who can provide knowledge and information regarding it. It has been noticed that there is a less devotion for research within this area in previous studies which points to the fact that no detailed current framework exists. If, however, there existed such a detailed framework it could provide a deep understanding of how the SMEs in Johor within the SMEs sector market themselves and what is most beneficial for them when it comes to digital marketing. This study manages to contribute with a somewhat deeper understanding of the one marketing tool and that they are not usually utilised by the SMEs. Furthermore, this research paper also adds awareness regarding the fact that social media marketing is mostly utilised in SMEs for marketing purposes only and not as a sales channel as well as that there exists a lack of resources for utilising it but not a lack of knowledge regarding the benefits digital marketing can provide.

### **1.10.2 Managerial Implications**

The conducted study makes a minor contribution to understanding the field of digital marketing within SMEs, within Johor, Malaysia. It is believed that this study can inspire further research regarding this subject. SMEs need to be more aware of the fact that not having a proper established digital marketing plan within the organization can lead to loss of potential benefits like, for example, company performance. When understanding the organization's own capacities in terms of resources and personnel, it might in turn lead to creating possibilities for SMEs to tackle the limitations within

this area. For the companies that lack a framework or strategy for their social media channels the authors suggest that they collect inspiration from for example the Honeycomb model. Both previous research and the data in this study claim that the common problem for SMEs is the challenge regarding limited resources, hence reducing the focus of firms digital marketing such as social media marketing activities. Thus, the managerial point of view of digital marketing should be corporate and beware of how they deal with questions regarding this to broaden their knowledge as well as show more interest since this study has shown that social media marketing can be a very beneficial marketing tool if used correctly, especially for SMEs. It is also believed that interest and knowledge begin at a managerial level in all businesses and that the managers have the responsibility to inform the whole organization regarding the importance of this. If they do not have the knowledge regarding certain areas such as social media marketing, it could be favourable for both them and the company to reach out for help from others, it could be for example employing someone from the younger generation, who has a deeper understanding about it, as an intern, if the company lacks monetary resources. This way it could lead to that the manager gets a clearer view and greater insight of how it works and how useful it can be if utilized correctly. Furthermore, hopefully the readers of this report will be inspired when getting an insight of the SMEs experiences and create motivation to implement it more within their marketing strategy.

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