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Technology-Based Marketing Strategies for SMEs to Expand Market Reach

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ABSTRACT

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The development of the matcha-based beverage industry in Indonesia has experienced significant growth, particularly among Generation Z in urban areas. This condition has intensified competition within the matcha beverage business, requiring SMEs to implement innovative marketing strategies that align with modern consumer behavior. Harumatcha is a matcha beverage SME located in M Bloc Space, South Jakarta, targeting Generation Z and urban youth communities as its primary market segment. This study aims to analyze Harumatcha's marketing strategies and provide strategic recommendations to improve its business competitiveness. The research employed a qualitative approach through interviews, observations, discussions, and focus group discussions (FGD). Interviews were conducted with the owner of Harumatcha to obtain information regarding business conditions, marketing strategies, and challenges faced by the company. The findings indicate that Harumatcha has substantial potential to establish its positioning as a matcha bar based on experiential marketing and aesthetic branding for Generation Z consumers. However, the business still faces several challenges, including low tenant visibility, an underdeveloped slow bar concept, limited and uncomfortable seating areas, insufficient digital promotion, and weak product differentiation. The recommended marketing strategies include product innovation, strengthening visual branding, enhancing customer experience, optimizing digital marketing, and developing a hangout concept that matches Generation Z characteristics. These strategies are expected to improve brand awareness, customer loyalty, and Harumatcha's competitive advantage in the increasingly competitive matcha beverage industry.

I. INTRODUCTION

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) play an important role in supporting national economic growth by creating employment opportunities and encouraging the development of Indonesia's creative industry sector. The evolution of urban lifestyles has also stimulated the growth of the food and beverage industry, particularly trendy beverage businesses targeting Generation Z and millennials. The culture of hanging out in coffee shops and matcha bars has become part of Generation Z's social identity.

Hanging out is no longer merely an activity for consuming food and beverages, but also a form of self-expression, social interaction, and representation of modern lifestyles. Coffee shops are perceived as productive and creative spaces capable of creating a sense of belonging among young people (Anggawijaya et al., 2026). Furthermore, coffee shops function as third places that facilitate social interaction, relationship building, and self-actualization in modern urban environments (Anggawijaya et al., 2026).

The emergence of the attention economy requires brands to create digital communication that is relevant, authentic, and capable of attracting audience attention within a short period of time. Generation Z consumers tend to prefer creative, aesthetic, and value-oriented visual content rather than conventional promotional approaches (Masyitah et al., 2026). Therefore, modern marketing strategies should not only focus on product sales but also emphasize customer experience and emotional relationships with consumers.

Harumatcha is one of the matcha-based beverage SMEs located in M Bloc Space, South Jakarta. Harumatcha offers a variety of modern matcha beverages targeting Generation Z consumers. The business possesses considerable growth potential due to its location within a creative and youth-oriented culinary area. Nevertheless, Harumatcha still faces several challenges, including limited tenant visibility, suboptimal digital promotion, uncomfortable seating areas, and insufficient product differentiation.

Competitive advantage can be achieved when organizations successfully build strong identities, relevant marketing strategies, and unique customer experiences compared to competitors (Handayani & Sarwono, 2023). Additionally, visual elements such as packaging design, color, logo, illustrations, and typography play an important role in shaping brand identity and influencing consumer emotions (Susilawati et al., 2023). Therefore, Harumatcha's marketing strategy should be developed through customer experience, visual branding, and Generation Z-oriented digital marketing approaches. This study aims to analyze Harumatcha's marketing strategies and provide recommendations based on customer experience, digital marketing, visual branding, and experiential marketing approaches to improve business competitiveness.

II. METHODS

This study adopts an exploratory and descriptive research framework. The study was conducted through interviews and group discussions with the owner of Harumatcha, Mrs. Jessica, in order to gain deeper insights into the business ecosystem, the intricacies of its marketing funnel, and the evolving psychology of its consumer base. Through these discussions, the researcher is able to explore the underlying "how" and "why" behind Harumatcha's business strategies and consumer behavior in a more holistic manner.

The primary research site is Harumatcha, situated within the M Bloc Space creative hub in South Jakarta. This location was strategically chosen due to its status as a cultural epicenter for the youth and creative communities in Jakarta. The high density of Generation Z visitors at M Bloc Space provides a rich, "living laboratory" environment to study contemporary consumer trends and the competitive landscape of the artisanal matcha industry. To ensure data triangulation and validity, this study employed four

distinct collection methods:

1. In-depth Semi-Structured Interviews: Primary data was gathered through intensive sessions with the owner of Harumatcha. These interviews focused on "back-end" business insights, including the brand's founding vision, historical growth milestones, supply chain logistics, and the specific operational hurdles faced in a high-traffic area like M Bloc.
2. Direct Field Observation: The researcher conducted non-participant observations over a predetermined period. This involved documenting the physical "servicescape" the visual aesthetics, interior design, and store layout as well as the organic flow of customer traffic and the "vibe" that defines the Harumatcha experience.
3. Targeted Discussions: Informal dialogues were held with staff members and patrons to capture real-time feedback on product quality and service delivery.
4. Conclusion Drawing: Synthesizing the qualitative evidence to formulate a series of actionable, evidence-based marketing recommendations



Figure 1. Harumatcha SME tenant at M Bloc Space



Figure 2. Interview and Observation Activity at Harumatcha

The data collected from these various sources underwent a thematic analysis. The process involved:

1. Data Reduction: Filtering out peripheral information to focus on core marketing and operational themes.
2. Data Display: Organizing the findings into structured narratives regarding consumer behavior and market positioning
3. Conclusion Drawing: Synthesizing the qualitative evidence to formulate a series of actionable, evidence-based marketing recommendations.

These recommendations are designed to bridge the gap between Harumatcha's current operational state and the highly competitive demands of the modern beverage industry, ensuring long-term brand sustainability and growth.



Figure 3. Focus Group Discussion Activity with owner.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Problems Faced by Harumatcha based on interviews and observations, several major issues faced by Harumatcha were identified:

1. The tenant is located in a less visible area behind the main visitor flow of M Bloc Space.
2. The slow bar concept has not been fully implemented, making the business resemble a small beverage stall.
3. The seating area remains uncomfortable due to limited outdoor seating and hot environmental conditions.
4. Digital promotion activities are still limited and inconsistent.
5. The variety of matcha menu options remains insufficient, resulting in weak product differentiation.
6. Product taste consistency is still inadequate and perceived as not fully aligned with the pricing.
7. Visual design and packaging are not yet strong enough to support aesthetic branding.

These issues prevent Harumatcha from maximizing brand awareness and customer experience.

A. Product Strategy

Product strategy is a crucial aspect of increasing Harumatcha's attractiveness amidst the intense competition within the matcha beverage industry at M Bloc Space. Observations indicate that Harumatcha still faces limitations in menu variety and product consistency, causing customers to perceive weak differentiation compared to competitors. Consequently, customer consumption experiences become less memorable.

Competitive advantage can be achieved through innovation and superior customer experiences compared to competitors (Handayani & Sarwono, 2023). Therefore, Harumatcha should develop unique products relevant to Generation Z characteristics to create product uniqueness and provide customers with compelling purchasing reasons. Recommended product strategies include:

1. Developing Harumatcha's signature menu.

2. Introducing seasonal and limited-edition menus.
3. Developing matcha-based desserts such as premium cheesecakes and soft serves.
4. Providing customization features such as sweetness levels and toppings.
5. Improving taste quality and product consistency.

Generation Z consumers generally prefer exclusive and limited products because they create curiosity and fear of missing out (FOMO).



Figure 4. Harumatcha Product Variations and Menu Display.

B. Price Strategy

Pricing strategies should align with Generation Z purchasing power and Harumatcha's positioning as a premium yet affordable beverage brand. In the modern food and beverage industry, pricing not only represents transactional value but also reflects perceived product quality and customer experience. Recommended pricing strategies include:

1. Student promotions during specific hours.
2. Beverage and dessert bundle packages.
3. Loyalty programs based on repeat purchases.
4. Membership programs for customers.
5. Instagram Story upload promotions and user-generated content incentives.

These strategies are intended to improve customer loyalty and encourage repeat purchases.

C. Place Strategy

Hangout spaces play a significant role in Generation Z's decisions when selecting coffee shops or matcha bars. Hanging out is viewed as part of social identity and modern lifestyle culture (Anggawijaya et al., 2026). Currently, Harumatcha's slow bar concept has not been optimally implemented due to limited seating areas and small tenant size. Therefore, place strategies are necessary to improve customer experience. Recommended place strategies include:

1. Expanding and improving seating areas.
2. Applying Japanese-modern aesthetic interior designs.
3. Adding aesthetic decorations and Instagrammable photo spots.
4. Installing outdoor fans and shading facilities.
5. Developing a quick hangout spot concept for Generation Z.
6. Creating a comfortable ambience through lighting and music.

Besides physical facilities, ambience should also be enhanced through appropriate music selection, lighting arrangements, and friendly customer interactions to establish emotional connections

between customers and the brand.



Figure 5. Location of Harumatcha MSME at M Bloc Space, Sount Jakarta.

D. Branding Strategy

Visual branding is an important element in building Harumatcha’s identity within the beverage industry. Visual elements such as logos, colors, illustrations, typography, layouts, and packaging designs influence consumer perceptions and emotions (Susilawati et al., 2023). Packaging design functions not only as product protection but also as a visual communication and brand experience tool. Modern consumers tend to prefer products with aesthetic and Instagrammable appearances (Susilawati et al., 2023). Recommended branding strategies include:

1. Using matcha-inspired colors and minimalist Japanese designs.
2. Developing consistent logos and visual identities.
3. Utilizing aesthetic and Instagrammable packaging.
4. Creating distinctive slogans and visual characteristics.
5. Strengthening aesthetic branding concepts.

These strategies are intended to increase brand awareness and emotional connections with customers.

E. Digital Marketing Strategy

Currently, Harumatcha still relies heavily on organic word-of-mouth promotion and has not optimized digital marketing consistently. Modern consumers tend to search for product information through social media before making purchasing decisions. Digital promotion has therefore become essential for improving Harumatcha’s brand awareness.

Generation Z consumers are generally more attracted to authentic, visual, and interactive content compared to conventional promotional methods (Masyitah et al., 2026).

Recommended digital marketing strategies include:

1. Consistently creating TikTok and Instagram Reels content.
2. Producing aesthetic content about the matcha-making process.
3. Utilizing customer-generated content.
4. Creating behind-the-scenes content.
5. Applying storytelling-based branding approaches.
6. Collaborating with local micro influencers.
7. Organizing interactive content and giveaways.

Social media-based digital marketing strategies can increase engagement and strengthen emotional relationships with Generation Z consumers (Librianty et al., 2025).

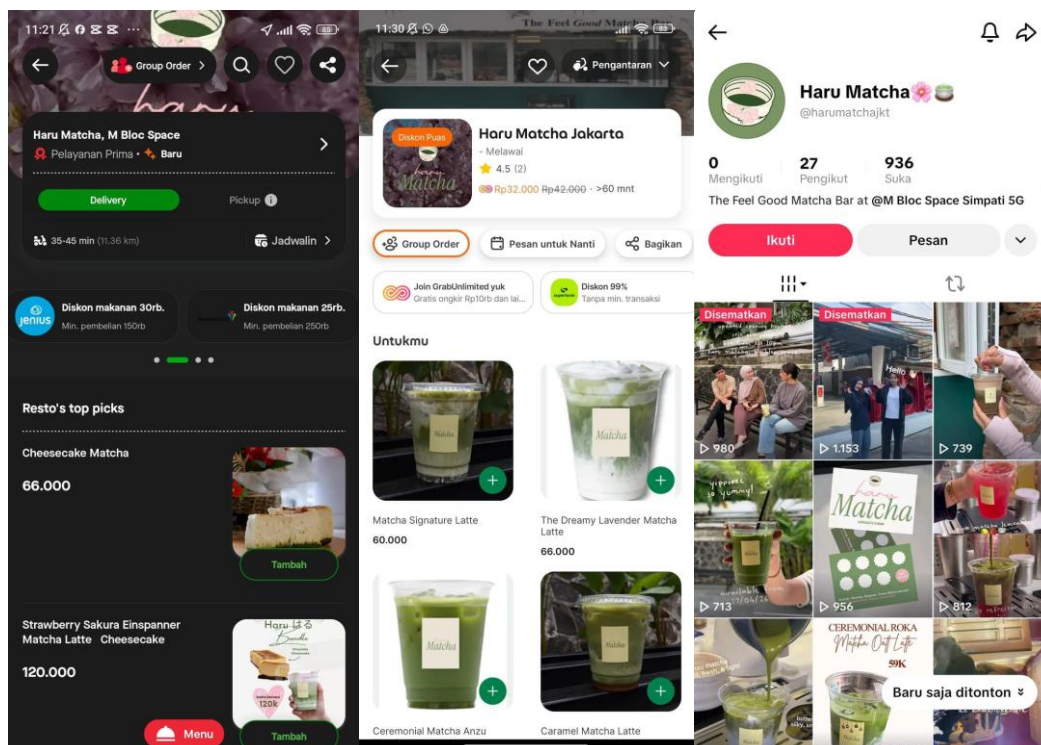


Figure 6. Digital Marketing Platforms of Haru Matcha.

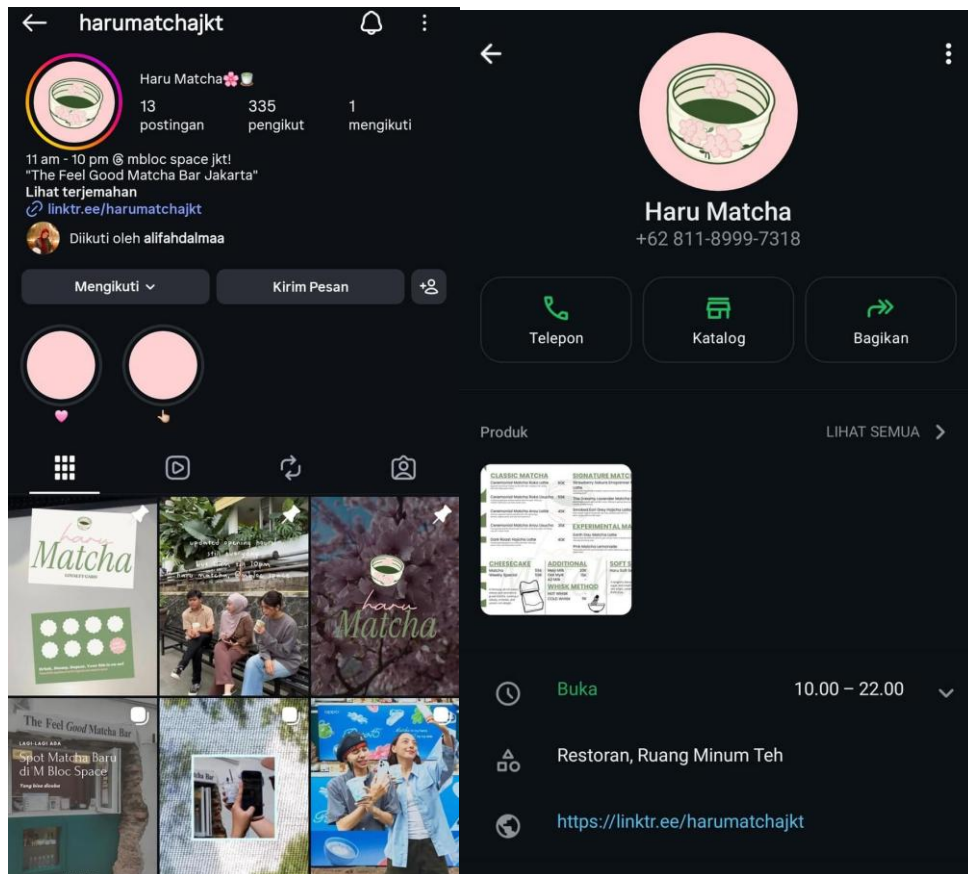


Figure 7. Integration of Instagram and WhatsApp Business in Marketing Communication.

Digital marketing strategy of Haru Matcha through the integration of Instagram and WhatsApp Business as key communication and promotion channels. Instagram functions as the primary platform for visual marketing, where the brand presents curated product images, consistent color schemes, and lifestyle-oriented content to build brand identity and engage its target audience. In contrast, WhatsApp Business is utilized as a direct marketing and customer relationship tool, enabling real-time communication, personalized responses, and easier transaction processes.

F. Customer Experience Strategy

Customer experience is an important factor in building customer loyalty. Customer experiences are formed through all interactions between customers and brands before, during, and after purchases (Puteri & Sadeli, 2026). In lifestyle-based businesses such as matcha bars, customers do not merely purchase products but also seek experiences, atmosphere, and social interaction. Common barriers experienced by matcha bar customers include insufficient digital information, unattractive packaging, inconsistent taste quality, and suboptimal store ambience (Puteri & Sadeli, 2026). Recommended customer experience strategies include:

1. Providing friendly and interactive services.
2. Offering menu explanations by baristas.
3. Improving premium and aesthetic packaging.
4. Developing customer loyalty programs.

5. Reposting customer content on social media.
6. Organizing community events and mini gatherings.

Through more personal, interactive, and experiential marketing-based customer experiences, Harumatcha can strengthen customer loyalty, increase repeat purchases, and create stronger differentiation compared to competitors.



Figure 8. Customer Service and Bavarege Preparation Activities at Harumatcha.

IV. CONCLUSION

Harumatcha is a matcha beverage SME with strong potential to grow amidst the increasing popularity of trendy beverages and Generation Z hanging-out culture. However, Harumatcha still faces several challenges, including limited tenant visibility, an underdeveloped slow bar concept, uncomfortable seating areas, limited digital promotion, and weak product differentiation.

The recommended marketing strategies include product innovation, strengthening visual branding, developing Generation Z-oriented hangout concepts, optimizing digital marketing, and improving customer experience. These strategies are expected to increase brand awareness, customer loyalty, and Harumatcha's competitive advantage within the highly competitive matcha beverage industry.

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