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## The Role of Digital Marketing in Increasing Customer Loyalty in Start-Up Businesses at PT Elther Jaya Solusindo

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**Abstract:** This research aims to analyze the role of digital marketing in enhancing customer loyalty in the start-up business of PT Elther Jaya Solusindo. The study employed a descriptive qualitative method with data collected through interviews, observations, and documentation studies. The findings reveal that digital marketing strategies significantly influence customer loyalty through improved trust, engagement, and customer experience. The company utilizes social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and WhatsApp Business to establish interactive and responsive two-way communication. Key factors affecting customer loyalty include response speed, digital content quality, and personalized approaches that foster emotional attachment. Overall, PT Elther Jaya Solusindo's digital marketing strategy effectively builds long-term relationships and strengthens customer loyalty amid the digital transformation era.

**Keyword:** Digital Marketing, Customer Loyalty, Engagement, Start-up

### INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology in Indonesia has had a significant impact on the business world, particularly in marketing strategies and customer relationship management. In the post-pandemic era and amidst the accelerating digital transformation, companies are required to adapt to changes in consumer behavior, which has become increasingly dependent on digital technology. The use of digital media has evolved beyond a mere communication tool to play a strategic role in building brand image, expanding market reach, and enhancing customer loyalty as well as increasing sales through company promotions. According to the DataReportal (Digital 2024: Indonesia) report, the level of digital penetration in Indonesia has grown rapidly, as shown in the following table.

**Table 1. Digital Penetration Rate in Indonesia**

<b>**Category</b>	<b>Number / Percentage</b>	<b>Description / Source**</b>
<b>Total Population of Indonesia (2024)</b>	± 278.7 million people	DataReportal, <i>Digital Indonesia</i> 2024:
<b>Internet Users</b>	185.3 million users (66.5%)	Increased by 4.5% from 2023
<b>Active Mobile Connections</b>	353.3 million (126.8% of population)	More than one device per individual
<b>Active Social Media Users</b>	139 million (49.9%)	Dominated by Instagram, TikTok, and WhatsApp
<b>Average Daily Online Time</b>	7 hours 42 minutes	Mostly spent on social media and e-commerce
<b>E-Commerce Growth</b>	+18.2%	Supported by the adoption of digital payments
<b>Dominant Internet Access</b>	98.6% via smartphones	Highlights the importance of mobile marketing
<b>Most Popular Social Media Platforms</b>	WhatsApp (88%), Instagram (84%), TikTok (73%)	DataReportal, 2024

The data presented in Table 1 indicate that more than two-thirds of Indonesia's population are now active internet and social media users, making digital channels the primary medium for reaching customers. This condition provides a significant opportunity for companies, particularly PT Elther Jaya Solusindo as a start-up business, to utilize digital marketing as a key strategy in enhancing customer loyalty. As a company engaged in technology and digital services, PT Elther Jaya Solusindo faces increasingly intense competition in the digital era. The company's success depends not only on product quality but also on its ability to build long-term relationships with customers through effective and personalized digital marketing strategies.

The rapid development of digital technology has transformed how companies interact with their customers, including start-ups such as PT Elther Jaya Solusindo. The main research question addressed in this study is how digital marketing contributes to increasing customer loyalty amid the high level of competition and dynamics of the digital market. The author aims to explore how the company's digital marketing strategies are implemented in building long-term customer relationships, which factors of digital marketing have the most significant influence on customer loyalty formation, the extent to which these strategies are effective in retaining existing customers, and the challenges faced by PT Elther Jaya Solusindo in optimally implementing digital marketing strategies to achieve sustainable customer loyalty.

The primary objective of this research is to analyze and gain an in-depth understanding of the role of digital marketing in enhancing customer loyalty in start-up businesses at PT Elther Jaya Solusindo. Furthermore, the study seeks to identify the key factors in digital marketing strategies that affect customer loyalty, evaluate the effectiveness of the company's digital marketing implementation in creating sustainable long-term relationships with customers, and reveal the obstacles that may arise during the process. The research findings are expected to provide strategic recommendations for the company in developing a more efficient and adaptive digital marketing model that aligns with changing customer loyalty behavior.

This study is expected to make a scientific contribution to the development of research on digital marketing and customer loyalty, particularly in the start-up business sector. It aims to enrich modern marketing literature by reinforcing concepts such as digital engagement, customer experience, and trust-based loyalty within the context of a dynamic digital market. Practically, the results of this research will be beneficial for PT Elther Jaya Solusindo in optimizing its digital marketing strategies to increase customer loyalty, as well as to build more personal and sustainable relationships with customers.

The novelty of this research lies in its integrative approach, which combines the analysis of digital marketing's role in customer loyalty with the consideration of digital engagement,

customer trust, and interactive experience as mediating variables. This study not only evaluates the extent to which digital marketing influences loyalty but also examines how customer engagement and the trust-building process strengthen this relationship. Moreover, it focuses on the context of Indonesian start-up businesses undergoing post-pandemic digital transformation, thereby offering new perspectives on digital marketing strategies relevant to the local industry landscape. Thus, this research is expected to contribute both academically and practically to the implementation of loyalty-based digital marketing strategies in the era of the digital economy.

## METHOD

This study employs a descriptive qualitative method, as the researcher aims to gain an in-depth understanding of how digital marketing plays a role in enhancing customer loyalty in start-up businesses at PT Elther Jaya Solusindo. This method was chosen to enable the researcher to provide a realistic depiction of the digital marketing strategies implemented by the company, as well as the perceptions and experiences of customers toward those strategies.

According to Sugiyono (2019), descriptive qualitative research is a method used to understand social phenomena by describing the condition of the research object based on facts found in the field without any intervention or manipulation. The purpose is to obtain a deep understanding of the behaviors, perceptions, and motivations of subjects through direct interaction between the researcher and the informants.

In line with this, Wicaksana et al. (2021) state that digital marketing has a significant impact on customer loyalty because the ease of online communication can strengthen emotional connections between customers and brands. Meanwhile, Nasution et al. (2022) emphasize that consistent and integrated digital promotional strategies across various social media platforms can build trust and increase long-term customer loyalty.

The data collection techniques used in this study include:

1. In-depth interviews, conducted to obtain information from internal parties (marketing team and management) as well as customers regarding their experiences with the company's digital activities.
2. Direct observation, carried out on promotional activities and customer interactions through digital channels such as social media platforms and the company's official website.
3. Documentation study, by reviewing secondary data such as marketing reports, digital content, customer testimonials, and social media activity records.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The research results obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation studies conducted at PT Elther Jaya Solusindo provide a detailed overview of the implementation of digital marketing strategies in enhancing customer loyalty. The data collected through various methods were analyzed to understand the role of digital marketing and the behavior of loyal customers. Interviews were conducted with three groups of informants: company leaders, digital marketing staff, and active customers. The findings reveal a common perspective that digital marketing plays a significant role in building closeness and long-term relationships with customers.

### a. Interview with Company Leadership

The company leadership explained that digital marketing strategies began to be prioritized in 2022 as an effort to strengthen brand image and increase customer loyalty. According to the leader:

“We don't want digital marketing to be just about promotion, but more about building sustainable relationships.”

The leader further added that personalized messages, quick responses, and a human-centered approach are the main principles to make customers feel valued.

**b. Interview with Digital Marketing Staff**

The digital marketing team utilizes Instagram, TikTok, WhatsApp Business, and the company website to reach audiences. Educational and interactive content are the main focus. One staff member stated that consistent posting and quick interaction with customers increased engagement. In addition, the team regularly conducts digital promotions, such as giveaways, to strengthen customer participation and engagement.

**c. Interview with Customers**

Most customers expressed satisfaction with the company's digital services. They highlighted the speed of response and the friendliness of the administrators as key advantages. Customers also appreciated the educational content, which helped them better understand the benefits of the company's products. Many stated that this positive experience made them remain loyal and even recommend the company's products to others.

**1. Observation Results**

The researcher observed digital marketing activities over a three-month period across several online platforms. It was found that Instagram and TikTok serve as the main promotional channels, while WhatsApp is primarily used for customer service.

The company posts 3–5 times per week, with varied themes such as product education, technology tips, customer testimonials, and promotional campaigns. Customer interaction was relatively high, particularly on participatory content such as quizzes, Q&A sessions, and inspirational posts. The social media admin actively responds to comments and messages within an average of 30 minutes, demonstrating professionalism and responsiveness that help strengthen customer trust.

Furthermore, the company's website presents comprehensive information on products, services, and informative articles. It also functions as an efficient sales conversion channel, being integrated with the online ordering and customer service systems.

**2. Documentation Analysis**

Documentation included digital campaign reports, social media engagement data, and customer testimonials. Internal data show that the engagement rate increased by 25%, and the number of active customers rose by 18% over the last six months. Educational and interactive promotional content generated the best performance among all content types. The campaign titled "Technology Tips for Digital Business" reached over 10,000 users within the first two weeks.

Customer testimonial analysis further revealed that 90% of customers were satisfied with communication and service provided through digital channels. The most frequently mentioned factors were quick response, engaging content, and friendly staff behavior. These findings affirm that digital marketing at PT Elther Jaya Solusindo not only drives short-term sales but also fosters long-term relationships based on trust and satisfaction, which in turn strengthen customer loyalty.

## **Discussion**

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that digital marketing at PT Elther Jaya Solusindo plays a significant role in enhancing customer loyalty. The company's digital strategy goes beyond mere promotion, focusing instead on creating positive customer experiences and emotional connections.

**a. Digital Strategy Aspect**

The company successfully utilizes social media and digital platforms to increase brand awareness while retaining existing customers. Consistent, educational, and engaging content helps build a credible brand image. This digital strategy aligns with Kotler & Setiawan

(2021), who argue that the success of digital marketing lies in its ability to create added value and relevance for customers.

**b. Interaction and Communication Aspect**

The findings indicate that two-way interaction is a vital component in building customer loyalty. Customers feel appreciated when they receive fast responses and personalized communication. This supports Wicaksana et al. (2021), who assert that active and relevant digital communication strengthens emotional connections between customers and brands.

**c. Customer Experience Aspect**

Customer experience is proven to be a major determinant of loyalty. Through observation, customers reported satisfaction with the company's user-friendly, informative, and enjoyable digital experiences. Educational content combined with fast service reinforced positive perceptions of the company. This finding supports Maduwinarti and Kusbianto (2025), who state that personalized and interactive digital experiences significantly enhance loyalty.

**d. Trust Aspect**

Customer trust is built through consistent service and honest digital communication. Documentation results show that transparency of information and quick responses from the digital marketing team have strengthened customer trust. According to Nasution et al. (2022), trust is the fundamental foundation of customer loyalty in the digital era — a concept successfully demonstrated by PT Elther Jaya Solusindo.

**e. The Role of Digital Marketing in Customer Loyalty**

Overall, the company's digital marketing efforts have resulted in positive outcomes, including increased repeat purchases, higher customer engagement, and greater word-of-mouth recommendations. This indicates that customer loyalty is influenced not only by product quality but also by satisfying digital experiences.

A study conducted by Tiris Sudrartono (2020) titled "The Influence of Marketing Mix Strategy on the Development of MSMEs at the Office of Cooperatives and Small and Medium Enterprises, Bandung Regency", published in *Jurnal Coopetition* by the Indonesian Cooperative Institute (IKOPIN), found that the implementation of marketing mix strategies — including product, price, promotion, and distribution — significantly affects the development of small and medium enterprises (SMEs). The relevance of Sudrartono's study to this research lies in the transformation of traditional marketing mix strategies into a digital context, as implemented by PT Elther Jaya Solusindo to enhance competitiveness, customer satisfaction, and loyalty.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the research findings regarding the role of digital marketing in enhancing customer loyalty in start-up businesses at PT Elther Jaya Solusindo, it can be concluded that digital marketing strategies have a significant influence on the formation and maintenance of long-term relationships with customers. The implementation of consistent, interactive, and customer-oriented digital strategies has been proven to increase trust, engagement, and customer satisfaction.

Digital marketing at PT Elther Jaya Solusindo is carried out through various channels such as Instagram, TikTok, WhatsApp Business, and the company's website. These platforms are used to deliver educational content, interactive promotions, and effective two-way communication. The company has successfully created a positive digital experience for customers through quick responses, engaging content, and friendly service. This has strengthened customer loyalty, as reflected in the increase in repeat purchases and customer recommendations for the company's products.

Furthermore, the results of interviews, observations, and documentation studies indicate that there are three main factors contributing to customer loyalty:



1. A high level of customer engagement,
2. Trust built through consistent and transparent communication, and
3. A satisfying digital experience.

Therefore, it can be concluded that PT Elther Jaya Solusindo's digital marketing strategy has been effective in creating and maintaining sustainable customer relationships.

The conclusion must be linked to the title and answer the research formulation or objectives. Do not make statements that are not adequately supported by your findings. Write down improvements made to industrial engineering or science in general. Don't create further discussion, repeat abstracts, or simply list research findings. Don't use bullet points, use paragraph sentences instead.

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