



THE INFLUENCE OF PROMOTION AND CONTENT MARKETING ON COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES ON BEAUTY SMEs IN THE PANDEMIC ERA

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Abstract: Pandemic over the past two years caused a stalemate of promotion in MSMEs, especially in SMEs beauty in Indonesia. In the end, SMEs must start better promotion methods including using Promotion through Content Marketing to be able to market products through their excellence. This research aims to analyze the influence of promotion and *content marketing* on the competitive advantages of SMEs beauty in the pandemic era. This research includes a type of quantitative research. This research method uses associative and causal methods. The population in this study was everyone who had already purchased products from By Lashes. The sampling technique used is Non-Probability with Purposive Sampling. The questionnaire was distributed to 100 respondents. This study uses descriptive analysis. Based on the results of research using SPSS. Through the results of this research, it can be concluded that there is a positive and significant influence of Promotion and Content Marketing on the Competitive Advantages of Beauty SMEs in the Pandemic Era.

Keywords: Competitive Advantage; Content Marketing; Promotion

INTRODUCTION

The world faces a considerable pandemic called Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). The virus originated in a group of human pneumonia cases in Wuhan City, China. The virus was first detected on December 1, 2019. Officially turned it into Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). The existence of this virus resulted in the occurrence of the pandemic era carried out in Indonesia.

The existence of the pandemic era resulted in shops, malls, places to eat, amusement rides, and even schools being forced to close by force. Because of this, the economic wheels in various countries, especially Indonesia, have stopped, and the occurrence of obstacles that makes people have to lose their jobs. One in ten people in Indonesia today lived below the national poverty line at the time. One of the most significant obstacles is the SMEs sector (Small and Medium Enterprises). SMEs can also be referred to as business activities or businesses run by individuals, households, or small business entities. Of course, SMEs experienced a decrease in offline consumer demand caused by people who reduced out-of-home activities at that time.

Based on the results of the above survey according to Katadata Insight Center (KIC) conducted on 206 SMEs in Jabodetabek, the majority of SMEs 82.9% felt the negative impact of this pandemic, and only 5.9% experienced good growth. This pandemic condition caused 63.9% of affected SMEs to experience a decrease in income by more than 30%. Moreover, only about 3.8% of SMEs experience an increase in income.

Some SMEs are finally starting to use digital marketing to promote their products, services, or brands. In using digital marketing, SMEs owners usually have many ideas and concepts, such as digital marketing providing the latest knowledge about several strategies for conducting marketing activities, one of which is content marketing. According to Kotler et al. (2019), content marketing is a marketing activity that includes creating content, selecting, dividing, and enlarging content that is interesting, relevant, and useful for a clear audience group to create interaction with existing content.

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One of them is in products from SMEs beauty in Indonesia. Many of these products are switching promotions in a new style and are more vociferous in social media. Doing content marketing will attract more target markets desired. Because with this the spread of a lot of information about the advantages of competing in the product will be wider and easier to understand.

Promotion is an activity that communicates product excellence and persuades target customers to buy it (Kotler, 2016). Promotion is also a form of recommendation and introduces the advantages of a product to attract customers. This advantage will later become a "competitor" for others. Using content to increase visitor interest starts with understanding what customers need and do not need, then sharing it through content received by customers. Content marketing plays an essential role in conveying adequate information to consumers so that companies can use it as a way of knowing the level of customer engagement in the company's business activities (Ahmad et al., 2015). Competitive advantage is a strategy to become superior to competitors (Hajar & Sukaatmadja, 2016). Each company will strive to maximize the advantages of the product compared to its competitors, so the company needs to create a strategy to deal with its competitors through its advantages. This advantage will later become a "competitor" for others.

Customers involved in the company's marketing activities will be an investment for the company in the form of Customer Engagement Value, which can provide benefits for the company in the long term. Thus, while Content Marketing focuses on increasing long-term sales, content marketing tries to do so by first developing customer engagement and trust (Bicks, 2016). Therefore, the purpose of this study is to examine the influence of promotion and content marketing on the competitive advantage of Beauty SMEs. The study was conducted using quantitative methods by collecting data through questionnaires online to 100 respondents. The respondents taken were customers of Beauty SMEs. This research can add insight, especially knowledge in marketing, especially in terms of advertising and promotion, using theories obtained from the existing reality. This research can be helpful for marketers to do promotion and content marketing that can increase the competitive advantage in their content. Marketers can also determine how much influence promotion and content marketing have on the Competitive Advantage of SMEs.

Promotion is an element of the marketing mix that focuses on informing, persuading, and reminding consumers of the company's brands and products (Tjiptono, 2015). Promotion is one element in informing, persuading, and reminding about the company's products (Diyatma, 2017). The effectiveness of an advertising promotion is closely related to the exposure carried out by the company so that the advertising message can be conveyed to prospective consumers.

In the opinion of Kotler (2014) describes several dimensions of the promotion mix as follows: (1) Advertising is a form of non-personal presentation and promotion of product and service ideas paid for by a particular sponsor to introduce products and services (Kotler, 2014). Advertising is also a promotional medium in the form of a visual message, or only audio delivered to the public with the aim of offering a product or service through a medium that can persuade to buy, (2) Personal Selling is the right promotional medium for companies in establishing good relationships with their consumers. One of the goals of salespeople is to make a sale by meeting directly where a seller from a company directly meets the customer to offer his product., (3) Sales promotion is a short-term incentive to increase the purchase or sale of a good or service where purchases are expected to be made right now. Promotional activities included in this sales promotion such as coupons, sales, contests, exhibitions, and others, (4) Public relations serves to foster good relations between institutions to



provide understanding and foster motivation and participation. All this aims to foster and develop the understanding and goodwill of the public and obtain favorable public opinion. Public relations are a variety of programs designed to promote and/or protect a company's image or its products., (5) Direct marketing is a direct relationship with individual consumers that aims to get immediate responses and foster lasting customer relationships. In direct marketing, companies/sellers tend to directly come to consumers to offer their products or services.

Based on some experts it can be concluded that promotion is a very important element in sales, namely to introduce, persuade, maintain, and inform what consumers want to give about the advantages of the product to attract consumer buying interest. Promotional activities must be thought out, designed, and applied as attractively as possible so that the information conveyed can be easily received and understood by the target market.

According to Rancati & Gordini (2014), the conclusion of their research study on Content Marketing is a tool for content sharing, but also to create high value and returns along with financial means of distribution, attractiveness, engagement, acquisition, and customer retention. According to Rancati & Gordini (2014), content marketing has three dimensions: (1) Contents: The content created must have several factors that make consumers like it. Content that is interesting, educative, and consistent with the company's image are things that must be considered in creating company content; (2) Customer engagement: Consumers become the process of creating value in the content. Internet technology makes it easier for consumers to get information and express ideas, and it will make it easier for consumers and companies to connect. Through content marketing, consumers are more connected to the company (brand); (3) Goals: The use of content marketing encourages companies to achieve goals such as brand awareness, consumer engagement, and the maintenance of customer relationships.

Based on the above definition, it can be concluded that Competitive Advantage is an innovation capability produced by products that aim to be superior to their competitors. The company must be able to have an advantage for its products to distinguish the products produced in competition to argue the advantage of competing. Because consumers prefer products that have superior value to others.

According to Sunyoto (2015) Competitive advantage is a unique position developed by the company in the face of its competitors and the company can outperform them systematically. According to him, the company must also have the ability to distinguish products produced in competition to get its competitive advantage. The product must have a key characteristic in capturing the hearts of consumers so that it becomes a special product and different from other competitors.

According to Sunyoto (2015), five dimensions can be used to determine competitive advantages, namely as follows: (1) Price; (2) Quality; (3) Delivery Dependability; (4) Product Innovation; (5) Time to market.

Based on the above definition, it can be concluded that Competitive Advantage is an innovation capability produced by products that aim to be superior to their competitors. Then the hypothesis in this study is:

- H1:** There is a positive and significant influence on the promotion directly of partial competitive advantage.
- H2:** There is a positive and significant influence of Content Marketing directly on partial Competitive Advantage.
- H3:** There is a positive and significant influence of Promotion and Content Marketing on Competitive Advantage simultaneously.



METHODS

The research used in this study was associative and causal. Associative research is research that aims to find out the influence or relationship between two or more variables. This research aims to see the influence of promotion and content marketing on the competitive advantages of SMEs By Lashes in the Pandemic era.

The sampling method used in this study is non-probability sampling. Meanwhile, sampling in this study is using Purposive Sampling. The data used are primary data by distributing questionnaires through google Forms to 100 respondents, therefore the sample used in this study is consumers who have bought products from By Lashes, especially in the Pandemic era and using social media. The type of question posed to respondents uses the Likert scale to measure the value of each question variable. After data testing, the study used Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS) to conduct data processing.

The study's data used validity tests to measure whether or not the study was accurate. If the r value calculates $> r_{table}$, then the questionnaire item is declared valid. Next is the rehabilitation test. Reliability tests are conducted to be able to find out that respondents are consistent with the answers given on the questionnaire. Reliability is concerned with the degree of consistency and stability of data or findings of (Sugiyono, 2017). When Cronbach $>.70$ it is declared reliable.

Multiple regression analysis is carried out to answer the hypothesis made by the author to determine the influence of independent variables namely promotion (X_1) and content marketing (X_2) on SMEs By Lashes in the pandemic era. Furthermore, double linear regression analysis requires a classical assumption test before testing a hypothesis. The classic assumption tests of this study are normality tests, multicollinearity tests, and heteroskedasticity tests. The t-test is used in research to determine whether there is a partial influence of promotional variables (X_1) and content marketing (X_2) on competitive advantage (Y).

The f test was used in this temporary study to find out if there was a simultaneous influence between promotion (X_1) and content marketing (X_2) on competitive advantage (Y).

This study has three variables that will be linked, this study also has a function to explain and predict a symptom. Therefore, this study will explain about the relationships between the variables studied and the extent to which they affect each other. This research will also look for the relationship between promotion and content marketing to competitive advantage. And finally, the coefficient of determination to see how much influence independent variables have on dependent variables.

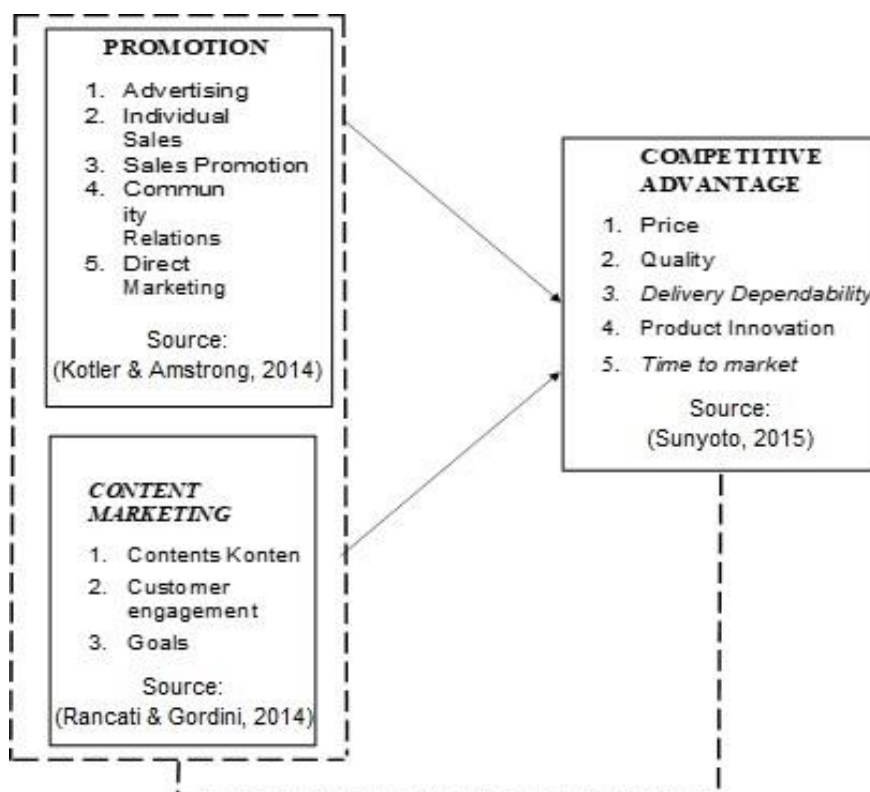


Figure 1. Framework Theory

Source: Data that has been processed by the author (2021)

Based on Figure 1 above, the framework in this research shows the relationship between Promotion (X_1) and Content Marketing (X_2) as the independent variable, which will be tested for its influence on Competitive Advantage (Y) as the dependent variable.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In obtaining this research data, to take samples of the authors using 100 respondents and the data obtained, as 100 respondents are women. It shows that the majority of users of products from Beauty SMEs are women—furthermore, consumers from Beauty SMEs are dominated by teenagers aged 17-25 years with an average income of Rp 1,000,000- Rp 2,500,000.

Table 1. Respondent's Profile

Profile	Criteria	Percentage
Gender	Female	100%
	Male	0%
Age	17-25	68%
	26-35	26%
	36-45	6%
	>45	0%
Monthly Income	500.000-1.000.000	31%
	1.000.000-2.500.000	32,3%
	2.500.000-3.000.000	17,2%
	>3.000.000	19,4%

Source: Data that has been processed by the author (2021)



Table 2. Results of the Validity Test

Variable	No. item	R _{Count}	R _{Table}	Description
Promotion (X ₁)	1	0.612	0,195	Valid
	2	0.708	0,195	Valid
	3	0.529	0,195	Valid
	4	0.741	0,195	Valid
	5	0.783	0,195	Valid
	6	0.634	0,195	Valid
Content Marketing (X ₂)	7	0.856	0,195	Valid
	8	0.723	0,195	Valid
	9	0.840	0,195	Valid
Competitive Advantage (Y)	12	0.62	0,195	Valid
	13	0.793	0,195	Valid
	14	0.661	0,195	Valid
	15	0.739	0,195	Valid

Source: Data that has been processed by the author (2021)

Based on table 2 of the results of the validity test of the questionnaire above, it is known that from 15 question report items in the questionnaire for promotional variables (X₁), content marketing (X₂), and competitive advantages (Y) that have been tested for validity, obtained r-calculation > r_{table} at significance levels of 5% ($\alpha = 0.05$) and n = 100, r_{table} is 0.195. The lowest r-calculation value in the study was 0.529 > 0.195. So, it can be concluded that all statement items are valid and can be used in research.

A Reliability test is a measurement or set of measuring instruments. The high low in empirical reliability is empirically addressed by a number called the reliability coefficient value. If the alpha value data >0.7 then it means that rehabilitation is sufficient. And if it>0.80, then the reliability of the entire test has strong rehabilitation. If alpha is low, chances are one or more items are not reliable.

Table. 3 Reliability Test

Variable	Cronbach Alpha
Promotion (X ₁)	0.748
Content Marketing (X ₂)	0.726
Competitive Advantage (Y)	0.794

Source: Data that has been processed by the author (2021)

In reliability tests, data processing results showed Alpha Cronbach values of 0.748 for promotional reviews (X₁), 0.726 for purchasing decisions (X₂), and 0.794 for competitive advantage (Y). All variables have an Alpha Cronbach value greater than 0.7, so it can be concluded that all measurement concepts of each questionnaire variable are reliable and suitable for use as a measurement tool.

Classical Assumption Test

Normality Test

This normality test uses *the Kolmogorov-Smirnov method*. If the study is normally distributed, the results obtained must be > 0.05.



Table 4. Normality Test

	Unstandardized Residual
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z	1.345
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.054

Source: Data that has been processed by the author (2021)

Based on the results of this study from the normality test using the *Kolmogorov-Smirnov* method, it obtained the results of significance (asyp. Sig. (2-tailed) of 0.054 due to significance results (asyp. Sig. (2-tailed)) By $0.054 > 0.05$, it was stated that the data in this study were distributed normally.

Multicollinearity Test

In this method, if the variable VIF (X_1) and variable (X_2) < 10 , then there is no multicollinearity. Similarly, if the Value Tolerance value is > 0.1 , there is no multicollinearity.

Table 5. Multicollinearity Test

Model	Tolerance	VIF
Promotion	.742	1.347
Content Marketing	.742	1.347

Source: Data that has been processed by the author (2021)

Based on the results of this study, it can be concluded that the vif value of the Promotion variable (X_1) and Content Marketing (X_2) is $1,519 < 10$. Moreover, tolerance value of $0.742 > 0.1$, it can be concluded that this study does not occur multicollinearity.

Heteroscedasticity Test

In this research, if there are symptoms or problems of heteroscedasticity, it will doubt or inaccurate regression analysis. Then a good regression should not occur in heteroskedasticity. The study used the Spearman Rho method. If the value is Sig.2-tailed (> 0.05), it is concluded that this study does not occur symptoms of heteroskedasticity. Similarly, if the value of Sig.2-tailed (< 0.05), the conclusion occurs symptoms of heteroskedasticity.

Table 6. Heteroscedasticity Test

Spearman's rho	Unstandardized Residual
X_1	.538
X_2	.953

Source: Data that has been processed by the author (2021)

Moreover, based on research conducted using this method, there is a Sig. 2-tailed Value of Promotion (X_1): 0.538 (> 0.05) and Sig. 2-tailed content Marketing (X_2): 0.953 (> 0.05). So, in this study, there were no symptoms of heteroscedasticity because the signification value was greater than 0.05.



Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Table 7. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Model	B
(Constant)	.351
Promotion	.400
Content Marketing	.889

Source: Data that has been processed by the author (2021)

Based on table 7 results of multiple linear regression tests above, it is known that the multiple linear regression equations that can be formulated in this study are as follows:

$$Y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2$$

$$Y = 0.351 + 0,400X_1 + 0,889X_2$$

Information:

Y = Competitive Advantage

X₁ = Promotion

X₂ = Content Marketing

a = Constant

b₁, b₂ = Regression coefficient Based on the equations of multiple linear regression analysis above, the consistent interpretation can be interpreted as follows.

α = 0.351. If the value of the Promotion variable (X₁) and the Content Marketing variable (X₂) is worth 0, then the Competitive Advantage will be worth a constant of 0.351.

β₁ = 0,400. The coefficient value of the Promotion variable produces a positive value of 0.400. It means that if each promotion variable increases by 1 unit, the level of Competitive Advantage will increase by 0.400.

β₂ = 0,889. The coefficient value of the Content Marketing variable will produce a positive value of 0.889. It means that if each content marketing variable increases by 1 unit, then the level of competitive advantage will increase by 0.889.

Hypothesis Testing

Partial Coefficient Test (T-Test)

Table 8. Results of T-Test

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	
1	(Constant)	.351	2.654	1.325	.188
	Promotion	.400	.097	.361	.000
	Content Marketing	.889	.192	.406	.000

Source: Data that has been processed by the author (2021)



Based on table 8, It can be known that the t_{count} is greater than the value of the t_{table} . The sig. for the influence of Promotion (X_1) on Competitive Advantage (Y) is $0.000 < 0.05$ and the value of $t_{count} 4.114 > t_{table} 1.984$, so it can be concluded that H_1 is accepted means there is an influence between X_1 against Y accepted which means there is a variable effect of promotion on competitive advantage. The influence of Content Marketing (X_2) on Competitive Advantage (Y) is $0.000 < 0.05$ and $t_{count} 4,625 > t_{table} 1,984$. So, it can be concluded that under H_0 is rejected and H_a is accepted, which means there is a variable influence of Content Marketing on Competitive Advantage.

Model Feasibility Test (F- Test) Simultaneously

In the criteria on F-test, the hypothesis to be submitted and proven to be true is that Promotion and Content Marketing simultaneously affect competitive advantage in SMEs Beauty is if $F_{count} > F_{table}$ and the significance value is less than 0.05 then H_0 is rejected and H_a Accepted.

This shows that there is a significant influence of promotion and content marketing variables on the competitive advantage variables. $F_{count} < F_{table}$ and the significance value is more than 0.05, then H_0 is accepted and H_a is rejected. $F_{table} = F(k;n-k) = F(2; 98) = 3.09$. This shows the absence of a significant influence of Promotion and Content Marketing on the competing excellence variables.

Table 9. Results of F-Test

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	401.375	2	200.687	38.826	.000 ^a
	Residual	501.385	97	5.169		
	Total	902.760	99			

Source: Data that has been processed by the author (2021)

Based on the significance value for X_1 and X_2 on Y is $0.000 < 0.05$, the value of $F_{count} 38,826 > 3.09$, so it can be concluded that H_3 is accepted, which means there is the simultaneous influence of X_1 and X_2 on Y. The results of the above analysis state that there is a positive and significant influence between Promotion (X_1) and Content Marketing (X_2) on Competitive Advantage (Y).

Table 10. Determination Coefficient Test Result (R)

R	R Square
0.667	0.445

Source: Data that has been processed by the author (2021)

Based on the above output known R Square value of 0.445, this means that the influence of Promotion (X_1) and Content Marketing (X_2) simultaneously on the Variable Superiority (Y) is 44.5% influenced by other factors not used in this study.

The results of data processing prove that the hypothesis that has been proposed shows a positive and significant effect. The discussion is as follows:

Hypothesis Testing (H1)

After the first hypothesis analysis proposed in this study, it can be known that the resulting t_{count} value is greater than the value of the t_{table} , i.e., the known Sig value. The influence of Promotion (X_1) on Competitive Advantage (Y) is $0.000 < 0.05$ and the value t calculated $4.4114 > t_{table} 1.984$, so it can be concluded that H_1 is accepted



means there is an influence between X_1 on Y . The results of the above analysis state that there is a positive and significant influence between promotion (X_1) and Competitive Advantage (Y). Promotion is a marketing activity to drive demand from consumers. Promotion is essential for the company because it is expected that by doing good and consistent promotions, the company can set prices, quality, and potential to compete and grab market share in its product group. If the company has a potential competitive advantage, then the company must choose several strategies to expand the way of promotion. It is also found in the results of research from Oktapriani et al. (2021), which states that promotion significantly affects by 5% competitive advantage.

Hypothesis Testing (H2)

After the analysis of the second hypothesis proposed in this study, it can be known that the resulting t_{count} value is greater than the value of the t_{table} , which is the sig value. The influence of Content Marketing (X_2) on Competitive Advantage (Y) is $0.000 < 0.05$ and t calculates $4,625 > t_{table} 1,984$. So, it can be concluded that H2 is accepted, which means an influence between X_2 and Y . The results of the above analysis state that there is a positive and significant influence between Content Marketing and Competitive Excellence (Y). Previous research from Syarifah (2016) states that content / social media marketing is very positive and significant in competitive advantage.

Hypothesis Testing (H3)

After analyzing the third hypothesis proposed in this study, it is known that the significance value for the influence of X_1 and X_2 on Y is $0.000 < 0.05$, and the value F calculates $38,826 > 3.09$, so it can be concluded that H3 is accepted, which means there is an effect of X_1 and X_2 simultaneously on Y . The results of the above analysis state that there is a positive and significant influence between Promotion (X_1) and Content Marketing (X_2) on Competitive Advantage (Y).

CONCLUSION

Based on the results, it can be said that there is a positive and significant influence between promotion and competitive advantage in this study, as well as content marketing which has a positive and significant influence on competitive advantage. These results are obtained from research conducted, the influence of promotion and content marketing if done correctly and consistently; customers can see the advantages of products that can compete with competitors. Business actors must learn and improve promotion methods through content marketing to their customers and potential customers to gain a competitive advantage in their products. These advantages will also significantly affect the interest in the product from customers and the determination of the product's price. In this study, Beauty SMEs prove that competitive advantage can be achieved if they Beauty SMEs have carried out promotions and content marketing optimally, consistently, and with the right strategy. Competitive advantage is quite significant, which is around Forty-four percent.

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