

## Social Media Marketing Strategies to Increase Student Enrollment in Online Qur'an Learning Services

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### ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the marketing strategies of Qur'an learning services through social media in an effort to increase the number of students at the Qur'an30Challenge institution. The background of this research is based on the high rate of Qur'anic illiteracy in Indonesia and the growing competition among online learning institutions that utilize social media as a promotional tool. The research method employed is descriptive qualitative, with data collection techniques including in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation involving institutional leaders and students. Data analysis was conducted descriptively through a triangulation approach to ensure data validity and reliability. The results of the study indicate that the marketing strategies implemented by Qur'an30Challenge generally meet digital marketing standards and have had a positive impact on increasing student enrollment. However, several aspects still require development, such as market segmentation expansion, pricing adjustments, brand communication consistency, long-term evaluation, promotional budget optimization, the use of influencers, as well as content innovation and service quality improvement. This study underscores the importance of adapting marketing strategies to the dynamics of social media and consumer behavior as a key factor for the success of online learning institutions.

**Keyword:** Marketing; Social Media; Qur'an Learning Services; Qur'an30Challenge Institution

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Modernization in the digital era has brought significant changes across various aspects of life, including the education system. The advancement of information technology and the internet has facilitated access to information and expanded the reach of online learning (Prastowo & Manunggal, 2022). This transformation has fundamentally altered the way people interact with information, culture, and learning processes. Traditional, conventional models of education have shifted toward more interactive and flexible approaches, encouraging active student engagement in understanding complex materials (Hasnida et al., 2023).

These developments have also had a positive impact on Indonesia's education system, particularly through the emergence and growth of online educational institutions. These institutions creatively utilize social media to promote educational programs, adapting to the needs and preferences of the public. The high penetration of social media in Indonesia supports this trend, with internet users reaching approximately 202 million in early 2022, and average daily usage exceeding seven hours. Of these users, 98.3% access the internet via mobile devices (Annur, 2023).

On the other hand, the high rate of Qur'anic illiteracy remains a major challenge. Data show that around 65% of Muslims in Indonesia are still unable to read the Qur'an (Nursalika & Mukhtar, 2023). This condition has prompted the emergence of various online Qur'anic learning initiatives. One such initiative is Qur'an30Challenge, which has been active since 2019 and features a flagship program, One Day One Juz

(ODOJ), delivered through WhatsApp groups. This program not only aims to increase participants' engagement with the Qur'an but also seeks to foster honesty, discipline, and consistency in worship (Muzakki & Muksin, 2021).

However, the growth of online Qur'anic education institutions is also accompanied by increasing competition. Many institutions are losing participants due to a lack of adaptive management and marketing strategies (Sarifudin & Maya, 2019). In a constantly evolving world, the ability to adapt to contemporary dynamics is crucial for institutional sustainability, including for non-profit educational organizations (Nurmalasari & Masitoh, 2020).

In the context of Qur'anic educational institutions, efforts are needed to offer competitive advantages, such as innovative teaching methods, integration of technology in learning processes, and services that meet learners' needs. The use of online platforms also enables institutions to reach a broader audience without geographical limitations. Nevertheless, another challenge arises from the rapidly changing trends on social media. A survey by Sprout Pulse (2023) found that nearly half of marketers struggle to keep up with constantly evolving trends. Therefore, educational institutions must develop adaptive and responsive marketing strategies grounded in a deep understanding of digital audience behavior (Barnhart, 2024).

## 2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach, which aims to explore and describe social phenomena in a comprehensive and in-depth manner. This approach focuses on understanding the experiences of research subjects within a specific context. According to Moleong (2007), a descriptive qualitative approach is a research procedure that generates descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from individuals, as well as observable behavior. In this context, the qualitative approach was used to examine in depth the phenomena experienced by participants, such as the declining trend in student enrollment at an institution. Data collection was carried out through various sources of information, which were then analyzed comprehensively to gain a holistic understanding of the issues under investigation.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on interviews and observations conducted at the Qur'an30Challenge institution, it was found that the marketing strategies for educational services implemented through social media have demonstrated a high level of effectiveness in attracting learners. These strategies align with key principles of educational marketing, particularly in the areas of market segmentation, pricing, promotion, and evaluation. The institution targets adult workers with limited time by offering flexible learning options and affordable, installment-based pricing schemes. This approach matches the socioeconomic conditions of the target audience and is consistent with Kotler and Keller's segmentation principles, which include geographic, demographic, psychographic, and behavioral segmentation (Kotler & Keller, 2010).

Qur'an30Challenge offers flexible and affordable pricing tailored to the needs of busy adult learners, making the strategy effective in reaching the intended market. According to Kotler, price represents the value consumers pay for the benefits of a product or service and must consider consumer needs, costs, and market conditions (Sitorus, 2022). Qur'an30Challenge's pricing strategy adheres well to this principle.

The institution has successfully built brand awareness through a presence on social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and TikTok, offering flexible and accessible Qur'anic learning to its adult audience. By utilizing storytelling, participant testimonials, and consistent visual content, the institution has enhanced brand recognition and recall while also fostering emotional engagement by emphasizing spiritual values and creating spaces for peer interaction. According to Kotler and Keller, brand awareness refers to consumers' ability to recognize and recall a brand, shaped by exposure, emotional connection, consistency, and visibility (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Customer engagement levels include enthusiasm, attention, absorption, interaction, and identification, which reflect the depth of a customer's relationship with a brand (Asmoro, 2021). Through relevant, informative, unique, and trustworthy content, Qur'an30Challenge has the potential to further strengthen its brand identity, expand visibility, and increase audience loyalty.

In terms of brand awareness, Qur'an30Challenge leverages various platforms—Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and TikTok—strategically selected based on the demographic characteristics of the target audience. The content shared emphasizes spiritual, emotional, and meaningful aspects of the Qur'anic learning journey. Nevertheless, limitations in search engine optimization and the use of digital influencers present challenges in expanding the reach of their promotional efforts.

The institution has demonstrated serious efforts in developing educational and promotional content with strong spiritual value, supported by participant testimonials and narratives that resonate with religious sentiment. However, limitations in human resources, particularly in the area of communication, pose a significant challenge. The lack of professional personnel in marketing communication has led to messaging that is not always effective in reaching the audience. This is reflected in the relatively low engagement levels on posted content, despite the content being contextually relevant and well-designed.

Marketing evaluation efforts at Qur'an30Challenge generally focus on short-term indicators, such as the number of likes, comments, and followers. While these metrics are important, there is no clear integration between short-term performance and long-term goals such as conversion rates, participant loyalty, or the growth of the learning community. In-depth quarterly or annual evaluations have not yet been systematically implemented, making it difficult to measure the long-term effectiveness of marketing campaigns.

Despite these challenges, the institution has succeeded in generating a high level of participant satisfaction and loyalty. Approximately 80% of participants expressed satisfaction with the services provided, with many remaining enrolled for one to two years. This indicates the institution's success in building personal, empathetic, and needs-oriented relationships with its participants. Consistent two-way communication has proven effective in fostering emotional closeness, which contributes to long-term loyalty.

Overall, Qur'an30Challenge has demonstrated a strong foundation in digital-based educational service marketing. However, to achieve greater effectiveness, improvements are needed in areas such as communication strategy innovation, digital promotion optimization, and the development of long-term, data-driven evaluation systems. Strengthening human resource capacity—particularly in educational communication—also plays a crucial role in supporting the institution's strategic sustainability and growth.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The marketing strategies implemented by the Qur'an30Challenge institution have proven effective in increasing student enrollment and meeting social media marketing standards. The use of relevant and authentic content has contributed to strengthening emotional connections with the audience and building a positive brand identity. However, several aspects still require improvement, particularly in expanding market segmentation, leveraging influencer marketing, and establishing advertising quality standards. Limitations in communication resources pose challenges to optimal message delivery, which in turn affects audience engagement and may hinder institutional growth.

On the other hand, the institution's success in achieving participant satisfaction indicates that responsive services and a personalized approach are effective strategies for building loyalty and sustaining long-term relationships with learners. Therefore, the optimization of communication and marketing strategies must be continuously developed to support the institution's sustainability and competitiveness in the digital era.

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