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Implementation of Personal Selling and Direct Marketing in Increasing Sales Turnover at Agency Centre HNI Cianjur

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ABSTRACT

Marketing strategy is one of the company's tools for achieving marketing goals. Many marketing strategies that can be used, but whether these strategies are appropriate and effective for increasing sales turnover or not. This research aims to determine the effectiveness of implementing personal selling and direct marketing strategies in increasing sales turnover at the AC HNI Cianjur. The data used in this research are primary data and secondary data, with data collection techniques through interviews, observation and documentation. Meanwhile, this type of research uses a qualitative approach, with descriptive data analysis techniques. The results of this research are that direct marketing strategies are more effective in increasing sales turnover, but it turns out that personal selling also plays an active role in obtaining this turnover. It turns out that in this research there are aspects that show that apart from personal selling and direct marketing, there are many ways and strategies to increase sales turnover, but in this research, the researchers only focused on personal selling and direct marketing strategies.

Personal Selling, Direct Marketing, Sales Revenue

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INTRODUCTION

A decrease in sales turnover is a problem that is often experienced by business people, especially when the covid-19 virus outbreak hits almost all corners of the world. The risk of transmission has an impact on social concerns, and can have a significant impact on the economic stability of a country, one of which slows down the economic growth of the community which results in an increase in the number of unemployed. The government imposed outdoor restrictions in order to reduce the spread of the virus, these restrictions caused people's economic activities such as distribution of goods, production of goods and marketing of products and services throughout the country, export and import activities to be hampered, which means that national and global supply chains are disrupted. Therefore, after the government announced that outdoor

activities were allowed again, companies tried to get back up to restore their financial condition, therefore an appropriate strategy was needed that could restore the company's condition so that the company's goals were still realised.

Marketing strategy has a very important role, because marketing strategy functions as a determinant of the company's economic value. The scope of marketing strategies is very broad, but the focus of this research only discusses personal selling and direct marketing. These two strategies both have the concept of promoting products directly to customers, but personal selling promotion is done face-to-face by building personal relationships with consumers, while direct marketing is done directly through media such as SMS, Telephone, E-mail, or direct message.

As stated by (Assauri, 2018) "personal selling is a relationship between two or more people face to face to create a reciprocal relationship in order to create, change, use, and or foster communication relationships between producers and consumers". In other words, a personal selling strategy is a personal marketing strategy with an exchange of communication between sellers and buyers to introduce a product using sentences that invite and attract potential customers' buying interest.

Meanwhile, direct marketing places more emphasis on direct communication without intermediaries by contacting consumers one-on-one. Delivery of product promotion messages is usually via e-mail, mail, telephone or SMS, this is in line with the statement (Musnaini, 2021) that direct marketing is the use of mail, telephone, or the internet to communicate directly by requesting responses or dialogue from certain customers and prospects.

Even though there are so many consumers or potential consumers, in this way the seller can personalise the message by providing personal information such as the name or residence of the recipient which can improve the relationship between the seller and the buyer (Farhana, & Anasrullhoh, 2022).

Follow up is an important part of marketing, a seller must ensure that the recipient of the message responds to the message sent, and as a seller must respond as quickly as possible to consumer replies, because every reply given to consumers is an indicator that indirectly makes consumers feel valued.

Declining sales turnover can be a sign that the marketing strategy carried out by a company is not right, this often happens to companies that believe too much in personal assumptions, assuming that the strategy can be effective in generating profits if implemented in their business without understanding and research first (Kase et al., 2023). In developing marketing strategies, companies must provide relevant information and use the right data to make effective decisions. According to KBBI in Umkmindonesia.Id, sales turnover is the

amount of money from the sale of certain merchandise during a selling period, in other words, sales turnover is pure income or gross income obtained by the company before deducting operational costs, production costs, and other costs. The strategies to increase sales turnover include the company must evaluate market trends, strengthen product branding or optimise the service provided to customers, and or the company can also provide exclusive offers to existing customers. With these efforts, it is hoped that the company's sales will be able to be better than before.

RESEARCH METHODE

The research was conducted at the HNI Cianjur Agency Centre located at Kp. Pasir Kuda, Village. Pasir Baru, Kec. Pagelaran, Kab. Cianjur. This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study type. The subject of the research is the Agency Center HNI Cianjur Team which amounts to 3 units of analysis and to 4 agents and 3 Agency Center HNI Cianjur customers as data comparison. This research data comes from primary data and secondary data obtained through interview, observation and documentation techniques. Research data processing uses descriptive analysis techniques and data validity testing techniques using source triangulation techniques (Lubis & Ritonga, 2023).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study uses the interview method in interacting with informants to obtain research data, the informants are the AC HNI Cianjur team totalling 3 people. The results of interviews with the AC HNI Cianjur team show that the personal selling strategy is more effective in increasing sales turnover than the direct marketing strategy. With the personal selling strategy, the AC HNI Cianjur team not only gets the benefits of selling but in this strategy the AC HNI Cianjur team can recruit new members where the addition of agents affects the percentage of the seller's commission.

In this study, researchers used additional data sources which included interviews with 7 people, consisting of AC HNI Cianjur agents and active customers. The results of these interviews provide an in-depth insight into the marketing strategies used by AC HNI Cianjur and how these strategies contribute to the increase in sales turnover. Information from the 7 informants showed that the direct marketing strategy made a significant contribution to the increase in sales. Direct marketing allows agents to reach potential customers directly, at a relatively low cost and fairly simple way of working. This method seems to reduce operational barriers, allowing agents to focus on their core

tasks without much administrative or logistical hassle. This is in line with previous research (Matta, 2016)

However, it is important to note that the interview results also highlighted the importance of personal selling in AC HNI Cianjur's marketing strategy. Personal selling, which involves direct interaction between agents and customers, allows for closer relationships and more personalised communication. Agents mentioned that this approach focuses not only on selling products, but also on building long-term relationships with customers and recruiting new agents. In this context, personal selling becomes an effective tool to expand the network and increase brand visibility of AC HNI Cianjur.

This finding is in line with previous research which states that a combination of direct marketing and personal selling strategies can provide optimal results for companies. For example, research by (Sari & Wijaya, 2020) states that direct marketing provides benefits in terms of cost efficiency and the ability to target specific markets, while personal selling offers a personal touch that can increase customer trust and loyalty. In the context of AC HNI Cianjur, direct marketing seems to be the main tool to boost sales, while personal selling plays a role in strengthening relationships and creating opportunities for long-term growth.

This research has several practical implications. Firstly, companies adopting similar marketing strategies may consider allocating appropriate resources to both methods. The combination of direct marketing and personal selling seems to provide a good balance between efficiency and customer engagement. Secondly, the results of this study suggest that companies need to consider proper training for agents, so that they can conduct personal selling effectively and recruit new agents for network expansion. Both are also findings in the research conducted (Maulana et al., 2022).

Thus, the results of this study provide a broader understanding of effective marketing strategies and emphasise the importance of a diverse approach in achieving sales goals and business growth. The findings also show that an effective marketing strategy is a flexible strategy, which is able to adapt to changes in the business environment and customer needs (Yanti et al., 2021).

The increase in sales and the number of new members joining an agent not only impacts the increase in turnover, but also the level or status of the seller's agency. While registering new members can be done through various means, such as through online platforms or other media, research shows that many customers are more comfortable and trusting when the registration process is done in person. This shows the importance of the personal selling approach in

creating strong relationships with potential customers and in increasing the chances of conversion.(Widayanti, 2024).

Personal selling allows agents to interact directly with customers, explain product benefits, and answer questions in real-time. This is like the findings of previous research (Puspita, 2020). This approach also creates opportunities for agents to build ongoing relationships with customers, which in turn can result in loyalty and repeat purchases. In addition, personal selling provides an opportunity for agents to introduce products in a more personalised and convincing way, especially when promoting new products or recruiting new members.

On the other hand, direct marketing offers a more structured and repeatable approach, with a wider reach. This method allows agents to reach larger customers in a relatively short time and at a more efficient cost (Aisyah, 2020). Direct marketing can include the use of social media, email, or other digital marketing strategies that can reach a wider audience without the need for direct interaction (Mardhatilla et al., 2021).

Based on this study, the researcher concluded that both personal selling and direct marketing have relatively the same effectiveness in increasing sales turnover at AC HNI Cianjur. Each strategy has its own advantages and roles in supporting sales and revenue growth. Personal selling tends to be effective in building personal relationships and increasing trust, while direct marketing provides efficiency and a wider reach.

The implication of this research is that companies like AC HNI Cianjur need to implement a combination of marketing strategies that include both approaches. By combining personal selling and direct marketing, companies can optimise their sales in an effective and efficient way. In addition, this combination of strategies allows companies to achieve a balance between broad reach and personalised relationships with customers, providing a solid foundation for business growth and customer loyalty in the long run.

CONCLUSION

This research is a qualitative study with the aim of determining good and effective marketing strategies for increasing sales turnover seen in personal selling and direct marketing. In this study, the implementation of personal selling and direct marketing has the same effectiveness in increasing the sales turnover of AC HNI Cianjur. As it turns out in this study there are aspects that show that apart from personal selling and direct marketing there are many ways and strategies to increase sales turnover, but in this study researchers only focus on personal selling and direct marketing.

The suggestions for AC HNI Cianjur are that AC HNI Cianjur must re-optimize promotions through digital marketing, such as using visuals that attract readers, and take advantage of e-commerce for selling media. Then AC HNI Cianjur needs to analyse the characteristics of the target market by conducting research to find out the right promotional strategy to reach consumers. And AC HNI Cianjur also needs to increase the frequency of personal selling per month, which was originally only 4-6 times, the promotion can be increased again to be more frequent.

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