



Brand Activation Strategy @la.nailart_ Through Tiktok in Increasing Brand Awareness

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ABSTRACT

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Social media is an effective tool for brands to build awareness, reach a wider market, and create deeper emotional connections with audiences. The increasing number of Tiktok application users will make it a challenge for a brand to attract consumer attention. The utilization of Tiktok social media is carried out by a nail beauty business called @la.nailart_ as a medium to take an interactive approach to consumers. This study aims to describe the Brand Activation Strategy @la.nailart_ through Tiktok in Increasing Brand Awareness. This type of research is descriptive qualitative. The data collection techniques used in this research are interviews and documentation. Data analysis techniques used through data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. @la.nailart_ uses several ways to increase brand awareness, namely synchronizing brand messages, connecting the physical and digital worlds with technology, personalizing experiences, and creating unforgettable experiences. The results of the study show that @la.nailart_ prioritizes the live broadcast feature to educate about nail art and interact with users, besides that in making content, you must always follow existing trends and be diligent in uploading, and display attractive visuals.

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1. Introduction

The development of technology over time has experienced rapid progress, and of course, the more advanced the technology, the greater the advancements it will bring. The rapid development of technology has brought significant changes in various fields of life. Social media is an internet platform that allows its users to easily communicate, participate, exchange, and engage socially through networks without being limited by time (Sugito et al., 2022).

Based on the survey results from the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII), it is known that the percentage from 2018-2024 continues to increase until 2024. Data indicates that 221.5 million people out of a total Indonesian population of 278.69 million are already using the internet. This proves that 79.5% of the Indonesian population uses the internet. This number will continue to rise as the population increases. Tiktok has become an effective platform for reaching a wider audience. This application provides users with the convenience of creating and uploading creative short videos with various trending songs, filters, and special effects. The Tiktok application is not only used as a platform to express creativity and follow the latest trends but is also utilized by business actors to promote their products. The same goes for @la.nailart_ who uses the Tiktok application to help introduce their business and expand their audience reach.

@la.nailart_ is a small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) in the beauty industry that focuses on nail painting and care services. @la.nailart_ was founded by Novita Larasati in 2018 and is located in Kepuh Kulon RT 01, Wirokerten, Banguntapan, Bantul, Yogyakarta. @la.nailart_ is managed without employees, all services at @la.nailart_ are directly handled by the owner. Initially, @la.nailart_ offered home service (door-to-door service), but now only operates from their own home studio. @la.nailart_ created an Instagram account named @la.nailart_ and a new account on the TikTok app named @la.nailart_. Here is a table of some competitors of @la.nailart_ based on price and location in Jogja:

Table 1. Comparison of TikTok followers of competitor @la.nailart_

No	Account Name	Number of Followers
1.	@la.nailart_	12,800
2.	@yoshovia_nails	5,126
3.	@nailsbytris_	464
4.	@fa.nailartt	299

(Source: researcher documentasi Tiktok)
Accessed on August 10, 2024

As of now, on October 9, 2024, the Tiktok account @la.nailart_ has 13 thousand followers. @la.nailart_ frequently uploads nail art content presented in a unique and interesting way. Based on data from the insights of the Tiktok account @la.nailart_, one of the posts uploaded on March 30, 2024, until now on October 9, 2024, has seen an increase in viewership by 2.7 million, with 76% being new viewers. Not only the viewership but also likes and comments have seen a significant increase. Even that content was shared 1,755 times and saved 18,000 times. nailart_.

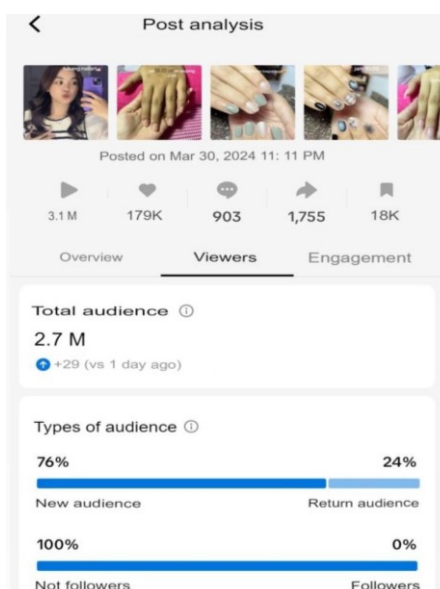


Figure 1. Tiktok Content Insight @la.nailart_
(Source: account owner @la.nailart_)

Technology and the internet have created new opportunities for businesses to expand their market reach and accelerate their growth. Social media allows businesses to build closer relationships with customers, understand their needs, and provide more personalized services. (Halim, 2023). So, what needs to be done is to understand brand activation. Shimp said that brand activation is a promotional

activity that involves direct interaction with consumers through various engaging experiences related to the brand, with the aim of attracting customer attention and creating closer relationships. (Mukalafitri & Djamal, 2023).

Brand activation strategies also become an interesting subject for research. From several previous studies discussing similar research, the first study was conducted by Muhammad Rafif Ariztiawan titled "Brand Activation Strategy at the Bandung Thrift Weekend Event," which was found that brand activation through the use of creative concept selection is the key to success in building audience awareness and engagement. (Ariztiawan & Yulianti, 2023). The second research was conducted by Celine Thang, titled "Designing Brand Activation for Starttr Branding Along with Its Promotional Media to Increase Brand Awareness." It was found that the brand activation strategy successfully attracted the target market's attention, but it was necessary to maintain visual consistency across all platforms (Thang & Iswanto, 2023). The third research was conducted by Helena Aurora with the title Brand Activation Strategy on Contemporary Beverage Brands of which she found that brand activation strategies can create loyalty and strengthen long-term relationships with consumers. (Aurora & Aulia, 2023).

2. Theoretical Framework

Digital Marketing is a marketing approach that uses internet-based promotional strategies to connect businesses with consumers. Digital Marketing facilitates easier and more effective communication between producers, marketers, and customers in the buying and selling process. (Nufus & Handayani, 2022). Currently, digital marketing has become one of the most popular marketing media among the public due to its wider reach, greater opportunities for market expansion, and ability to target consumers specifically (Susanto et al., 2020).

Brand activation strategies play an important role in direct engagement between brands and consumers through digital campaigns. This integration can enhance a company's brand awareness while simultaneously strengthening consumer relationships effectively and interactively. Brand awareness is the primary goal of marketing communication because high brand awareness can make consumers frequently remember and consider the brand when related needs arise, thus making it easier to influence purchasing decisions (Agustin et al., 2024). The main challenge for a brand in the digital era is how to make the brand stand out and leave a unique impression on consumers. (Barus, 2024). To ensure this strategy is successful, the brand must create meaningful experiences through effective integration of online and offline media. Here are some ways to consider: (1) **Brand message synchronization:** ensure that the message conveyed is complete and consistent both online and offline. (2) **Connecting the Physical and Digital Worlds with Technology:** various technologies can be used to connect from offline to online. (3) **Personalization of Experience:** use data from consumer online interactions to personalize their experience in physical stores, and vice versa. (4) **Utilizing Social Media to Enhance Offline Experience:** social media is often successfully used to enhance offline experiences. (5) **Creating an Unforgettable Experiences:** The main goal of brand activation is to create unique experiences that involve interaction with consumers so that a brand will be more memorable and frequently talked about.

3. Method

This research uses a qualitative descriptive type of research, which is a form of research used to study objects in their natural or real conditions, where the researcher acts as the main instrument in data collection. This research focuses more on a deep understanding of meaning rather than producing general conclusions (Abdussamad, 2021). The reason the researcher uses this method is that the researcher wants to understand in depth about the brand activation strategy carried out by @la.nailart_ through the social media platform TikTok in enhancing the brand in order to obtain complete and relevant data, thereby gaining a clear and detailed picture of the effectiveness of the brand activation strategy. The data collection techniques used are interviews and documentation. Interviews were conducted with two informants, those are the business owner and the content creator of @la.nailart, while documentation was taken in the form of screenshots from TikTok @la.nailart_. Interviews in this study were conducted using two forms of questions. First, structured interviews, which use a list of questions prepared in advance by the interviewer. Second, unstructured interviews, which involve

questions that arise spontaneously or flexibly, without a predetermined list of questions, and these questions usually develop from existing ones.

The data collected is based on relevant documents in the research, which consist of images taken through screenshots from the TikTok account @la.nailart_. Based on the background and problem formulation, the objective of this research is to identify the brand activation strategies used by @la.nailart_ in increasing brand awareness. Data analysis techniques are carried out through several steps: data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The validity test of the data in this study uses the triangulation method, which aims to ensure that the research is conducted accurately, so that the results and conclusions obtained can be trusted and recognized as true.

4. Result and Discussion

Based on the research conducted, there are 5 (five) stages of Dianta Hasri (Barus, 2024) used by @la.nailart_ in implementing brand activation strategies. The five stages referred to are Brand Message Synchronization, Connecting the Physical and Digital Worlds with Technology, Experience Personalization, Leveraging Social Media to Enhance Offline Experiences, and Creating Unforgettable Experiences. Here is an explanation of each stage of the brand activation strategy carried out by @la.nailart_:

1. Brand Message Synchronization

Synchronizing brand messages is important to create consistency and strengthen the brand identity on a platform. The message conveyed by @la.nailart_ includes tutorials on the latest nail art techniques through feed content, which is then reiterated and reinforced through live broadcasts. Thus, the brand message becomes more synchronized, as the produced content remains consistent and complementary. As a result, the audience receives the same message and a more connected experience, which can strengthen the audience's understanding of what @la.nailart_ conveys.

2. Connecting the Physical and Digital Worlds with Technology

Some consumers who visit the offline store @la.nailart_ often haven't found the nail art design they want to use. Therefore, @la.nailart_ directs consumers to view various nail art results from @la.nailart_ on their TikTok account as a reference. This experience increases visits from the physical world to the digital one while also introducing the social media @la.nailart_.

3. Personalization of Experience

Interactions conducted online can be used to personalize the audience's experience. Just like what @la.nailart_ does by taking an interactive approach through live broadcasts and educational content. Interactive content is packaged as attractively as possible to capture the audience's attention and provide a platform for questions or comments. In addition, live broadcasts have also become one of the important elements of brand activation strategies because they allow for interaction or Q&A sessions with TikTok users in general.

4. Utilizing Social Media to Enhance Offline Experience

On the TikTok account, @la.nailart_, content is uploaded in the form of short videos with a duration of 15 seconds to 1 minute, including Capcut videos that people usually refer to as "JJ" (Jedag-Jedug), as well as photo slides (carousel). Content is packaged attractively with the support of various TikTok features such as the use of music in line with current trends, the use of hastags like #nailartjogja, and the addition of creative and engaging text like "the journey of becoming a nail artist".

According to @la.nailart_, creating captions is better done using informal or everyday language, then crafting a strong storytelling element, so the audience will feel connected to the message conveyed. Creative visual appearances will also enhance audience appeal. Next, a schedule needs to be created for uploading content consistently, as regularly uploaded content can build audience expectations and trust.

5. Creating an Unforgettable Experience

Utilizing live broadcasts that include nail art materials and educational content can create an unforgettable experience for the audience. Because the material presented by @la.nailart_ is actually material that can only be obtained if individuals take a paid course. Some of the latest nail art

techniques are also offered for free to all TikTok users. This will make the audience remember and create a unique experience that will always be remembered by the audience from the TikTok account @la.nailart_.

4.1. Presenting the Results

The branding strategy implemented by @la.nailart_ is to use brand activation strategies, meaning that @la.nailart_ places more emphasis on direct interaction with the audience conducted on the social media platform TikTok. Based on the results of the direct interview with the business owner and content creator of @la.nailart_, it was found that an interactive approach is very necessary before conducting promotions. This strategy is implemented through five stages, which are crucial in creating a deeper relationship with the audience, resulting in increased brand awareness.

Various contents from @la.nailart_ are packaged attractively by utilizing various TikTok features such as music, hashtags, text, and so on. Consistent content, relevant to trends, and created according to the ever-evolving desires and needs of consumers, is capable of making @la.nailart_ create an unforgettable impression. This strategy not only increases loyalty but also strengthens the presence of a brand that cares about its consumers.

The success factor of @la.nailart_ can be seen from the number of viewers, likes, followers, and comments on the TikTok account. The target audience of @la.nailart_ consists of students in Yogyakarta aged 20 and above. The interactive approach and nail art content that successfully attract the attention of consumers, both women and men, enable @la.nailart_ to create a close relationship with its audience. Consumer comfort in interactions will be the top priority for @la.nailart_.

4.2. Create a Discussion

What @la.nailart_ highlights on their TikTok account is educational content that captures the audience's attention. This content provides useful information for TikTok users interested in learning about nail art. When @la.nailart_ goes live, the audience can watch the nail art process being done by @la.nailart_ in real-time. In addition, content adjusted to trends can enhance its appeal, thereby potentially attracting a lot of visits. This has resulted in an increase in the number of followers, likes, and brand awareness for the nail art business @la.nailart_ in Yogyakarta.

Live broadcasts are an important element according to @la.nailart_ for interacting with the audience. Another advantage of live streaming on TikTok is that the live stream feature can appear on other users' pages even if they do not follow the account @la.nailart_, allowing it to reach a larger audience and increase brand visibility. This is what sets the TikTok app apart from other social media platforms. The more often @la.nailart_ goes live and uploads interesting content with strong storytelling, the higher the audience's awareness of the brand. This consistency can increase the audience's curiosity, making them interested in continuously following @la.nailart_'s activities on TikTok, which can encourage the audience to try the nail art services directly at @la.nailart_.

5. Conclusion

Based on the research results of the brand activation strategy of @la.nailart_ through TikTok in increasing brand awareness, it can be concluded that @la.nailart_ implements a brand activation strategy by applying the five stages of Dianta Hasri (Barus, 2024), namely Brand Message Synchronization, Connecting the Physical and Digital Worlds with Technology, Experience Personalization, Utilizing Social Media to Enhance Offline Experience, and Creating Unforgettable Experiences. Through this stage, @la.nailart_ not only increases brand awareness but also builds stronger relationships with the audience. Consistency in content creation and engaging interactions have proven to encourage the audience to try the offered services. The impact observed before and after implementing this strategy is that consumers @la.nailart_ experienced a significant increase. The increase here starts from the number of followers, likes, and even customers who come to the offline store. Many customers keep returning and many new customers explain that they became aware of @la.nailart_ from the TikTok account. The results also have an impact on the increase in sales. This proves that the brand activation strategy carried out through TikTok social media successfully converts audiences into actual consumers. Through this strategy, @la.nailart_ has managed to outperform competitors and drive sustainable business growth.

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