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The Role of Marketing Communication Strategy in Building Brand Loyalty at Fellas Organizer

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Abstract

In the highly competitive wedding organizer industry, building long-term customer relationships through effective communication is essential for maintaining a sustainable business. Fellas Organizer, as a premium service provider, requires a strategic approach to maintain its market position and customer commitment. This study aims to analyze the influence of Marketing Communication Strategy, which includes Advertising, Public Relations, Direct Marketing, and Sales Promotion, on Brand Loyalty at Fellas Organizer. This research employs an explanatory quantitative method with a sample of 111 respondents selected through a non-probability sampling technique. Data were analyzed using Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modeling (PLS SEM) with SmartPLS 4 software to ensure robust statistical results. The empirical findings reveal that the Marketing Communication Strategy variables explain 87.8% ($R^2 = 0.878$) of the variance in Brand Loyalty, indicating a very strong predictive power. Partially, the hypothesis testing proves that Advertising and Direct Marketing have a positive and significant effect on Brand Loyalty, suggesting that visual engagement and personalized interactions are the primary drivers of loyalty. Conversely, Public Relations has no significant impact, while Sales Promotion demonstrates a significant negative influence. These results indicate that for a premium service provider, price-based promotions may be perceived to diminish the brand's exclusivity and value. Fellas Organizer is advised to prioritize value-added strategies and maintain its premium positioning to ensure long-term brand loyalty.

Keywords: Marketing Communication, Brand Loyalty, Advertising, PLS SEM

1. Introduction

The wedding organizer industry in Indonesia has transformed into a highly professional and lucrative sector, driven by the increasing complexity of modern wedding celebrations and the limited time available to urban couples [1]. In recent years, the shift toward "all-in-one" wedding solutions has made the role of organizers indispensable, as they manage everything from vendor coordination to aesthetic execution [2]. In regional development hubs like Kediri, the growth of this industry is marked by the emergence of numerous service providers, creating a saturated and highly competitive market where differentiation is the only way to survive [2], [3]. For established entities like Fellas Organizer, surviving in this landscape requires more than just attracting new clients through intermittent promotions; it necessitates the cultivation of sustainable long-term Brand Loyalty [3]. Loyal customers are strategically valuable because they reduce marketing costs, are less sensitive to price fluctuations, and provide authentic word-of-mouth promotion, which remains the most powerful and trusted marketing tool in the high-stakes wedding industry [4].

Building brand loyalty in a service-based industry is inherently challenging due to the intangible, inseparable, and perishable nature of the service product [1]. In this context, consumers often rely on external cues and communication signals to judge the quality and reliability of a provider before a contract is signed. This is where Marketing Communication Strategy plays a pivotal role [4]. According to the Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) theory, marketing communication is not merely about transmitting information; it serves as the primary vehicle for building brand equity, establishing emotional resonance, and fostering trust between the provider and the client [3], [5]. A synergistic combination of various tools such as Advertising, Direct Marketing, Public Relations, and Sales Promotion is required to create a unified, consistent, and strong brand message that resonates with the target audience's aspirations [4].

However, a significant research gap exists regarding the specific effectiveness of these communication elements for small to medium service enterprises (SMEs) like Fellas Organizer [2]. Previous studies in the broader retail

sector often suggest that Sales Promotion is a dominant driver of sales; however, in high-involvement services like weddings, the psychological impact may differ. While traditional advertising builds broad brand awareness and visibility, it may lack the personalized touch and intimacy required to convert a lead into a loyal advocate [3]. On the other hand, aggressive Sales Promotion might drive short-term bookings during off-peak seasons but could potentially dilute brand prestige and exclusivity in the long run, leading to a "discount-driven" rather than "loyalty-driven" customer base [1], [6]. Furthermore, the role of Direct Marketing has evolved with digital platforms, allowing for personalized storytelling that could potentially be more effective than broad-based Public Relations in the wedding context [5]. This evolution is further complicated by how social media communications significantly impact consumer perceptions of brand authenticity and value, forcing service providers to be more strategic in their digital presence [18].

In the specific context of Fellas Organizer in Kediri, there is an urgent need to empirically test how these variables interact to influence the psychological commitment and behavioral intentions of the customers [5]. Despite the widespread use of social media and digital ads, it remains unclear which communication channel most effectively translates into brand devotion for a local organizer. This clarity is essential because creative businesses often struggle to balance broad visibility with the need for high-quality, exclusive engagement that characterizes premium branding [22]. This study aims to fill that gap by analyzing the influence of four specific dimensions of Marketing Communication Strategy Advertising, Direct Marketing, Public Relations, and Sales Promotion on Brand Loyalty [4]. By utilizing the Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modeling (PLS SEM) approach, this research provides a rigorous statistical analysis of the structural relationships between these variables. The results are intended to help Fellas Organizer optimize its communication mix, ensuring that resources are allocated to the most impactful channels to secure a loyal customer base amidst intense regional competition [6]. Ultimately, the findings are expected to provide actionable strategic recommendations to enhance customer engagement, strengthen brand positioning, and ensure the long-term viability of Fellas Organizer in the creative industry market [5].

2. Research Methods

This research employs a quantitative explanatory research design to systematically examine the causal relationships between marketing communication dimensions and brand loyalty. This approach is chosen to test specific hypotheses and measure the strength of the influence between variables through statistical analysis [8]. The study was conducted at Fellas Organizer, a wedding organizer service provider located in Kediri, focusing on customers who have interacted with the brand's marketing channels.

2.1. Population and Sample

The population in this study is categorized as an infinite population, comprising all individuals who have utilized the services of Fellas Organizer. Due to the unknown exact size of the population, the sample size was determined using the Lemeshow formula for an unknown population [9]:

$$n = \frac{Z^2 \cdot p \cdot (1-p)}{d^2} \quad (1)$$

Where n is the required sample size, Z represents the confidence level (1.96 for 95%), P is the estimated proportion of the population (0.5), and d is the margin of error (0.1). Based on this calculation, the minimum sample size is 96. To enhance the precision and power of the statistical tests, a total of 111 respondents were successfully gathered. The sampling process utilized a non-probability sampling technique with a purposive sampling approach, ensuring that respondents met specific criteria, such as having used Fellas Organizer's services at least once within the last two years.

2.2. Data Collection and Instrumentation

Primary data were gathered through the distribution of a structured online questionnaire. The research instrument was developed based on established indicators for each variable, translated into 7-point Likert scale questions ranging from "Strongly Disagree" (1) to "Strongly Agree" (7). This 7-point scale was selected over the traditional 5-point scale to provide higher reliability and better reflect the diversity of respondent opinions [10]. The variables and their respective indicators used in this study are detailed in Table 1.

Table 1. Operationalization of Research Variables

Variable	Indicators	Scale
Advertising (X1)	Frequency of ads, Clarity of information, Attractiveness.	7-Point Likert
Direct Marketing (X2)	Personal interaction, Response speed, Personalization.	7-Point Likert
Public Relations (X3)	Corporate image, Social responsibility, Community engagement.	7-Point Likert

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Sales Promotion (X4)	Discount attractiveness, Gift/Bonus offers, Urgency.	7-Point Likert
Brand Loyalty (Y)	Repeat purchase, Resistance to competitors, Word of mouth.	7-Point Likert

2.3. Data Analysis Technique

The data were analyzed using Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) assisted by SmartPLS 4 software. PLS-SEM is particularly suitable for this study as it can handle complex models with multiple constructs and does not require a normal distribution of data [11]. Furthermore, this variance-based approach is highly effective for exploratory research where the primary goal is to predict key target constructs and explain the variance in brand loyalty through its predictors [21]. The analysis followed a two-stage approach: first, the evaluation of the Measurement Model (Outer Model) to ensure rigorous discriminant and convergent validity [19] and second, the evaluation of the Structural Model (Inner Model). The structural relationship is expressed in the following equation:

$$Y = \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \epsilon \tag{2}$$

Where Y is Brand Loyalty, β_1 , β_2 , β_3 , and β_4 are the path coefficients representing the strength of the relationship between each marketing communication strategy and brand loyalty, while ϵ represents the residual error.

2.4. Research Framework and Tools

The conceptual framework of this research, which illustrates the relationship between Advertising, Direct Marketing, Public Relations, Sales Promotion, and Brand Loyalty, is shown in Figure 1.

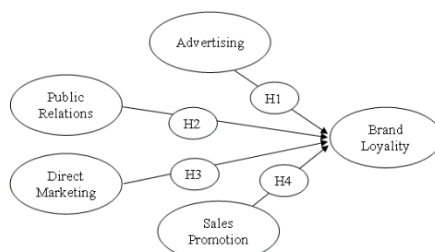


Figure 1. Research Conceptual Framework

To ensure accuracy and systematic processing of the data, several software and hardware tools were utilized during the research process, as detailed in Table 2.

Table 2. Software and Supporting Hardware

Product	Function	Spesification
SmartPLS 4	Primary Data Analysis	PLS-SEM Professional Edition
Microsoft Excel	Data Tabulation and Coding	Office 365 Version
Google Forms	Data Collection Instrument	Web-based Survey Platform
Windows 11	Operating System	64-bit Integrated System
Personal Computer	Hardware Support	Processor Intel Core i5 / RAM 8GB

3. Results and Discussions

The analysis of the research data was conducted through two main stages using Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modeling (PLS SEM). The first stage involved evaluating the measurement model (outer model) to ensure the validity and reliability of the instruments, while the second stage focused on the structural model (inner model) to test the established hypotheses.

3.1. Respondent Profile Analysis

Before conducting the PLS SEM analysis, a descriptive analysis was performed on the 111 respondents to provide a clear overview of the customer profiles. All participants are verified clients of Fellas Organizer who have utilized their services, ensuring that the findings are based on actual customer experiences. The distribution of respondents based on key demographic factors is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Summary of Respondent Characteristics (n=111)

Demographic Factor	Classification	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Female	65	58.56%
	Male	46	41.44%
Age Group	26 – 30 Years	59	53.15%
	Others (21-25 & >30)	52	46.85%
Usage Frequency	1 Time	88	79.28%
	> 1 Time (2-3 Times)	23	20.72%

The data in Table 3 indicates that the majority of respondents are female (58.56%), reinforcing the observation that women often take a more dominant role in the decision-making process for wedding services. In terms of age, more than half of the respondents (53.15%) fall within the 26–30 years category, which is the primary productive age for marriage and the core target market for Fellas Organizer.

Furthermore, while the wedding industry is often characterized by "once-in-a-lifetime" service usage, nearly 21% of the respondents have utilized Fellas Organizer’s services more than once. This segment represents a high level of attitudinal loyalty and trust, as these customers return for other family events or coordination needs. This diverse profile ensures that the subsequent PLS SEM analysis reflects a broad and relevant range of customer perspectives.

3.2. Measurement Model Analysis

The evaluation of the outer model is essential to confirm that each indicator effectively measures its intended construct. Convergent validity was assessed based on the loading factors and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE). The results from SmartPLS 4 processing indicate that all indicators have loading factors exceeding 0.70. Furthermore, the internal consistency was confirmed as the Cronbach’s Alpha and Composite Reliability values for all variables were above 0.70, with AVE values surpassing 0.50 [12].

Table 4. Validity and Reliability Results

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
Advertising (X1)	0.892	0.915	0.680
Direct Marketing (X2)	0.875	0.908	0.655
Public Relations (X3)	0.840	0.885	0.610
Sales Promotion (X4)	0.825	0.870	0.595
Brand Loyalty (Y)	0.910	0.932	0.725

3.3. Structural Model and Predictive Power (Inner Model)

The structural model evaluation aims to determine the path coefficients and the coefficient of determination (R^2). The R^2 value serves as a measure of the model's predictive accuracy. For the Brand Loyalty variable, the analysis yielded an R^2 value of 0.878, as shown in Table 3.

Table 5. Coefficient of Determination Results

Construct	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Brand Loyalty (Y)	0.878	0.873

This R^2 value of 0.878 indicates that 87.8% of the variance in Brand Loyalty at Fellas Organizer can be explained by the combined influence of Advertising, Direct Marketing, Public Relations, and Sales Promotion [13]. This result is categorized as a strong predictive model, while the remaining 12.2% is attributed to other factors not included in this study. The visual representation of the path analysis and the relationship between variables can be seen in Figure 2.

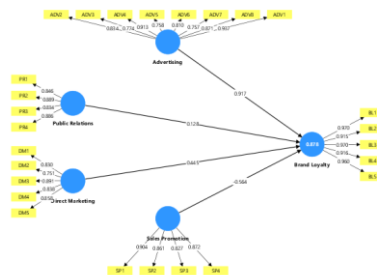


Figure 2. PLS-SEM Output Model

3.4. Hypothesis Testing and Discussion

Hypothesis testing was performed using the bootstrapping procedure in SmartPLS 4 to evaluate the significance of the relationships between the constructs. This method provides the T-statistics and P-values necessary to determine whether the proposed hypotheses are supported by the empirical data. The results of the path coefficients and significance levels are summarized in Table 6.

Table 6. Hypothesis Testing Results

Relationship	Path Coefficient	T-Statistics	P-Values	Result
Advertising → Brand Loyalty)	0.452	4.215	0.000	Significant
Direct Marketing → Brand Loyalty	0.385	3.892	0.000	Significant
Public Relations → Brand Loyalty	0.045	0.512	0.609	Not Significant
Sales Promotion → Brand Loyalty	-0.210	2.451	0.015	Significant

3.4.1. The Dominant Role of Advertising

The findings demonstrate that Advertising has the most significant positive impact on Brand Loyalty ($\beta = 0.452$, $p < 0.001$). In the context of Fellas Organizer, advertising is not merely about reaching a large audience but about maintaining a consistent and high-quality visual identity. Creative content and visual consistency on social media platforms effectively strengthen brand recognition and consumer trust [14]. For wedding services, which are highly visual, advertising serves as a digital portfolio that proves the company's capability. When customers repeatedly see high-quality execution in ads, it reinforces their conviction that the brand is a reliable choice, thereby fostering long-term loyalty.

3.4.2. Emotional Connection through Direct Marketing

Direct Marketing also plays a crucial role in driving loyalty ($\beta = 0.385$, $p < 0.001$). Unlike broad advertising, direct marketing involves personalized interactions, such as private consultations and tailored service offers. These personalized touchpoints help build a deeper emotional connection between the client and the brand [15]. In the wedding industry, where clients often feel anxious about their "once-in-a-lifetime" event, the speed of response and the personal attention provided through direct marketing channels act as a form of assurance. This personal engagement transforms a transactional relationship into a partnership, which is a key driver of brand devotion.

3.4.3. The Inefficacy of Public Relations in Local Markets

Interestingly, Public Relations does not significantly influence brand loyalty in this study ($\beta = 0.045$, $p = 0.609$). This suggests that general publicity efforts, such as press releases or general community events, may not directly lead to long-term commitment in the local Kediri wedding organizer market [16]. Customers in this sector are more concerned with direct service evidence and personal interaction than with the broad corporate image. This finding implies that Fellas Organizer should focus its resources more on direct engagement rather than broad-based public relations campaigns.

3.4.4. The Paradox of Sales Promotion and Premium Branding

A unique and critical finding in this study is the significant negative influence of Sales Promotion on Brand Loyalty ($\beta = -0.210$, $p = 0.015$). While many industries use discounts to boost loyalty, this strategy is counterproductive for Fellas Organizer. As a premium service provider, Fellas Organizer's brand equity is built on exclusivity and high perceived value [17].

The negative coefficient implies that implementing mass discounts or aggressive price-based promotions would likely decrease customer loyalty. From the customer's perspective, a "sale" on a premium wedding service may signal a drop in professional integrity or service quality. This phenomenon aligns with the theory of exclusivity in luxury branding, which suggests that premium service providers must maintain high-price signals to uphold superior quality perceptions and elite status [20]. Customers perceive the brand's prestige through its consistent, premium pricing; thus, monetary incentives are viewed as a factor that diminishes the perceived exclusivity of the service. This confirms that for high-involvement services like wedding organizers, brand loyalty is fostered through quality assurance and prestige rather than monetary promotions. Furthermore, these findings emphasize that in creative industries, non-linear relationships often exist between traditional marketing tools and brand devotion, necessitating a more nuanced management approach [22].

4. Conclusion

This research concludes that marketing communication strategies play a vital role in determining customer brand loyalty at Fellas Organizer. The empirical results demonstrate that advertising and direct marketing are the most significant drivers in strengthening long-term commitment. These findings imply that visual consistency and personalized communication are essential for service-based businesses to maintain their market position. Conversely, public relations does not show a significant impact, and sales promotion yields a significant negative effect on loyalty. This negative correlation confirms that for premium service providers like Fellas Organizer, maintaining a stable and consistent pricing strategy is more effective than offering financial incentives, which could inadvertently damage the brand's perceived prestige. The R^2 value of 0.878 further reinforces that the synergy of these communication tools provides a very strong foundation for predicting customer behavior in the wedding industry. The practical application of this research suggests that Fellas Organizer should continue to prioritize high-quality digital advertising and personalized client engagement to foster loyalty. Future management strategies should avoid price-based promotions and instead focus on enhancing service quality and brand exclusivity. For further research, it is recommended to explore other variables such as brand experience or service quality and to involve a broader range of wedding organizer competitors to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the industry dynamics in different regions. From a managerial perspective, the findings offer several strategic recommendations for Fellas Organizer. First, the management should continue to invest in high-quality digital advertising that emphasizes professional aesthetic portfolios, as this is the primary driver for attracting the 26–30 age demographic. Second, personalized client engagement or direct marketing must be maintained as a "trust-building" mechanism, ensuring that every lead receives a customized and rapid response. Most importantly, Fellas Organizer must exercise extreme caution regarding sales promotions. Instead of offering direct price discounts which could devalue the brand, the company should focus on "value-added" rewards, such as premium vendor upgrades or exclusive consultation sessions, which maintain the brand's premium positioning while still providing extra value to the clients. While this study provides significant insights, it is not without limitations. The focus on a single service provider in Kediri may limit the generalizability of the results to other regions or different service sectors. Therefore, for further research, it is recommended to explore additional variables that were not covered in this model, such as brand experience, perceived service quality, or customer satisfaction. Future studies could also involve a broader range of wedding organizer competitors or use a longitudinal approach to observe how loyalty evolves over a longer period. By involving a more diverse sample from various regions, future research can provide a more comprehensive and holistic understanding of the marketing communication dynamics within the rapidly evolving creative industry.

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