

Promotion of Sharia-Compliant Hotels Through Digital Media: A Halal Marketing Approach

¹Anne Maryani, ²Anne Ratnasari, ³Oji Kurniadi

¹Faculty of Communication, Doctor of Communication Sciences
Universitas Islam Bandung
Bandung, Indonesia
anne.maryani@unisba.ac.id

²Faculty of Communication, Bachelor of Communication Sciences Study Program
Universitas Islam Bandung
Bandung, Indonesia
anne.ratnasari@unisba.ac.id

³Faculty of Communication, Bachelor of Communication Sciences Study Program
Universitas Islam Bandung
Bandung, Indonesia
oji.kurniadi@unisba.ac.id



Abstract— This study explores the strategic use of digital media in promoting Sharia-compliant hotels, focusing on Cinnamon and Narapati Syariah Hotels in Bandung, Indonesia. With the rise of halal tourism and increasing demand for Sharia-compliant accommodations, this research examines how digital platforms—specifically Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, WhatsApp, and tour and travel marketplaces—are utilized to strengthen Islamic brand identity and enhance public awareness. Using a qualitative case study approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and content analysis of social media and digital promotional materials. The findings reveal that both hotels have established dedicated teams to manage promotional content in alignment with Sharia principles. All content is reviewed to ensure compliance with Islamic ethics, and collaborations with selected influencers are strategically curated to maintain brand integrity. The study highlights the importance of ethical digital marketing practices grounded in Islamic values and offers a replicable model for other Sharia-compliant hospitality businesses aiming to connect with modern consumers through digital platforms. The research contributes to the growing discourse on halal marketing and digital transformation in Islamic economic practices.

Keywords— Halal Marketing, Sharia Hotel, Digital Media, Islamic Ethics, Promotion Strategy.

I. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is home to the largest Muslim population in the world. According to data from the Indonesian Central Statistics Agency (BPS) in 2022, the Muslim population in Indonesia reached 229.45 million, accounting for approximately 88.21% of the country's total population [1]. This demographic profile positions Indonesia as a highly promising market for the halal industry, including the rapidly expanding halal tourism sector. Halal tourism has emerged as one of the fastest-growing subsectors within Indonesia's tourism industry, driven by a growing awareness among the Muslim community regarding the importance of consuming halal-certified products and services. Data from the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy (Kemenparekraf) indicate that in 2022, Muslim tourists in Indonesia numbered 30.7 million, representing 64% of the total foreign tourist arrivals [2].

Sharia-compliant hotels (SCHs) are a type of accommodation that offers facilities and services aligned with the principles of Islamic law (Sharia). These hotels provide an alternative for Muslim tourists seeking a halal and comfortable travel experience. However, public awareness of the existence and concept of Islamic hotels in Indonesia remains relatively low. Several issues can be identified about the promotion of halal tourism through digital media as a means of increasing public awareness of Islamic hotels. These include: (1) a general lack of public understanding regarding the concept of halal within the tourism industry, (2) limited availability of information about Islamic hotels on digital platforms, and (3) minimal participation of Islamic hotels in digital promotional activities. In academic discourse, the topic of Islamic hotels has increasingly garnered attention. Nonetheless, concerns persist among stakeholders, including hotel management and guests, regarding the authenticity and consistency of the Sharia-compliant hotel concept. Questions arise as to whether these establishments truly adhere to Sharia principles or whether inconsistencies may lead to public confusion or skepticism. Given these challenges and the emerging opportunities to further develop the SCH concept within the Islamic tourism and hospitality sectors, this study aims to explore the topic in greater depth [3].

To address the aforementioned challenges, an effective halal promotion strategy via digital media is essential. Such a strategy should aim not only to enhance public understanding of the halal concept within the tourism industry but also to disseminate comprehensive and accurate information regarding Islamic hotels. One viable approach is to strengthen the identity of Islamic hotels through various digital platforms. This identity can be cultivated through several components, including website design, social media content, and the communication style adopted in digital interactions. Empirical data supports the potential of digital media as a catalyst for raising public awareness. According to the [4] Approximately 82% of Muslim travelers rely on social media to obtain information about Islamic hotels. Similarly, another study reveals that 70% of Muslim travelers are more inclined to choose Islamic hotels when relevant information is readily accessible online [5], [6].

Based on these insights, the author is interested in exploring the topic "Halal Promotion in Digital Media as a Catalyst for Public Awareness of the Existence of Islamic Hotels in Bandung City: Strengthening Islamic Hotel Identity through Digital Media." This study represents the implementation of a proposed research initiative at the Islamic University of Bandung. The findings are expected to contribute to the acceleration of sustainable development in Indonesia, with a specific focus on improving the quality of human resources from an Islamic perspective as part of broader efforts to realize a civil society. Furthermore, the research aligns with strategic national priorities, particularly those concerning the impact of technology on human behavior and social relations. This study aims to describe and analyze the promotion of Sharia-compliant hotels through digital media, including the conceptualization and practical implementation of halal promotion strategies, with the ultimate goal of fostering greater public awareness of Islamic hotel offerings.

II. THEORETICAL REVIEW

The activities of social media users can be examined from multiple perspectives, particularly through the lens of their experiences, which offer insights into how individuals construct self-awareness in relation to digital platforms. Phenomenology, as the study of conscious experience from a first-person perspective, provides a useful framework for analyzing such experiences. Several scholars have emphasized the significance of phenomenology in understanding social cognition, arguing that phenomenological evidence derived from social interactions can inform or challenge existing theories of social cognition [7], [8], [9], [10], [11].

The utilization of Islamic religious content on social media by millennial youth, for instance, can be interpreted through the symbolic representations that reflect users' self-identity. This phenomenon is aligned with [12] theory of social influence, which distinguishes between three psychological processes: compliance (behavior driven by external expectations), identification (adopting behavior based on self-concept), and internalization (behavior guided by internal values and beliefs) [13]. Social media also serves multiple functions, such as fostering relationships, facilitating interaction, enabling self-actualization, and constructing self-identity. With the rapid growth of platforms like Twitter and Facebook, users increasingly use these spaces to share emotions, daily activities, future plans, and to engage in the exchange of news and ideas [14]. Additionally, social network theory provides a structural perspective on these interactions. According to [15], social networks describe patterns of interaction and exchange within a social unit, where an individual (actor) is embedded. These patterns influence the outcomes experienced by the actor, shaped by both the constraints imposed by their network structure and the opportunities enabled by their position within the network.

Digital Marketing in Islamic Economic Perspective

According to [16], the advancement of digital technology has given rise to the concept of digital marketing, which is defined as the utilization of digital tools and platforms to promote products and achieve organizational goals by more effectively addressing consumer needs. Digital marketing encompasses a wide range of activities involving the promotion of products through electronic means. It leverages digital devices such as smartphones, tablets, laptops, desktop computers, smart TVs, gaming consoles, and virtual assistants (e.g., Amazon Echo), as well as other devices connected to the Internet, which collectively referred to as the Internet of Things (IoT) [17].

These devices are often integrated with digital platforms that are accessible via web browsers or dedicated applications, including widely used services such as Google, YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. In addition, digital marketing involves the collection and utilization of consumer data, which must be managed in compliance with national data protection laws to safeguard consumer privacy. The primary aim of digital marketing is to address the limitations of traditional marketing philosophies, many of which have proven inadequate in responding to the rapidly evolving characteristics of modern markets. Several key factors have contributed to these market transformations, including population growth, rising purchasing power, increased connectivity and communication networks, and ongoing technological advancements [18]. These dynamic environmental shifts necessitate adaptive and data-driven marketing strategies to remain competitive and consumer-centric [19].

Marketing in Islamic Concept

According to [20], Islamic marketing is the process and strategy (hikmah) used to fulfill human needs through halal (ṭayyib) products and services, grounded in mutual agreement and aimed at achieving falah, also known as the material and spiritual well-being of both buyers and sellers, in this world and the hereafter. While it incorporates conventional marketing principles, Islamic marketing is fundamentally rooted in ethical values and divine guidance. Several studies emphasize that Islamic marketing involves formulating and applying strategies to maximize value for both marketers and society, all within the ethical framework provided by the Qur'an and Sunnah [21], [22].

The primary goal of Islamic marketing is to generate revenue in ways that align with Islamic ethical principles. From this perspective, marketing is seen not merely as a commercial activity but as a means of fulfilling permissible (halal) life necessities, provided it is conducted ethically and free from elements of deceit or injustice. Furthermore, the integration of digital technology into Islamic marketing strategies significantly enhances business performance [23], [24]. The adoption of these strategies positively influences sales and revenue generation, which in turn contributes to improving the socioeconomic welfare of both small-scale and large-scale business communities [25].

Sharia Promotion and Promotion Review

In an Islamic perspective, the marketing of goods and services must adhere to a set of principles grounded in Islamic values. [26] formulates an Islamic marketing strategy using the following conceptual framework: (Needs and Desires) + (Product or Service) + (Value, Satisfaction, and Quality) + (Change, Transactions, and Relationships) + Marketing = Maximizing Satisfaction. This approach integrates both spiritual and practical dimensions of commerce in order to ensure ethical and mutually beneficial outcomes.

In the specific context of halal products and services, [27] propose the Islamic Market-Oriented Model (IMOM), encouraging businesses to design marketing strategies that are not only effective and efficient but also clearly reflect Islamic ethical principles and values. While this model highlights the distinctiveness of Islamic marketing, some scholars argue that the fundamental principles of marketing strategy, such as value creation, customer focus, and relationship management, remain universally applicable, regardless of whether the product is halal or non-halal [20].

Further scholarship has focused on aligning the conventional marketing mix (product, price, place, and promotion) with Islamic teachings. For example, [28], in her article "Trade Law in Islam," examines Islamic trade regulations through the lens of the marketing mix. Her study links the components of marketing strategy with Qur'anic verses and hadiths while also identifying prohibited commercial practices (muamalah) in Islam. The current study builds upon such previous research by providing a more comprehensive

and detailed interpretation of the marketing mix in accordance with Sharia principles, thereby offering deeper insight into the ethical foundations of Islamic business practices.

Transactional Theory in Islam

Communication, as an essential aspect of human life, is comprehensively regulated in the Qur'an. This is evident in Surah Al-An'am (6:38), which states:

بَلِّغْ أَلاَ يَفْ أَنْ أَطْرَفَ أَمْ مَكَلَّاتِ أَمْ مَمَّالٍ إِهْ أَتَحَاجِبُ رُيْ طَيَّرَ نَبْطَلْ وَضَرَّ رَأَى أَلاَ يَفْ ةَبَّادَ نِمَ أَمْ وَنَ وَرُشَ أَخِي مَ إِهْ بَرَى لَئَمْثَ إِهْ أَشْ نِمَ

“There is no creature on earth or bird that flies with its wings except [that they are] communities like you. We have not neglected in the Register a thing. Then unto their Lord they will be gathered” (Q.S. Al-An'am: 6:38)

This verse suggests that every living being, including humans, is part of a divinely ordained system of communication and interaction [29]. The Qur'an thus provides holistic guidance encompassing all aspects of life, including how individuals are to communicate. In alignment with this view, [30] argues that the success of an individual is closely linked to their ability to communicate effectively, indicating the fundamental role communication plays in social and professional achievement.

In the domain of transactional communication, particularly between producers and consumers, the transactional theory of communication holds that interactions are maintained through reinforcement mechanisms. George C. Homans' social exchange theory provides a useful framework for understanding this dynamic. According to Homans, exchanges occur when individuals engage in interactions that they believe will result in mutual benefit. These transactions are not merely economic; they are embedded within broader social contexts, where respect and emotional reciprocity also serve as key motivators [31].

In more complex social exchanges, individuals anticipate positive reinforcements, such as esteem, affection, or trust, which would further lead to valued behaviours. This understanding implies that economic transactions, such as the exchange of goods or services for money, are just one facet of a larger and more intricate process of social communication and exchange [31]. Hence, communication in Islamic and sociological contexts is seen not merely as information transfer but as a deeply relational and value-laden act grounded in both divine guidance and social reciprocity.

III. RESEARCH METHOD

The method employed in this study is qualitative research using a case study approach. The subjects of this research are promotional managers of Sharia-compliant hotels (SCHs) in Bandung City. Data were gathered through in-depth interviews, field observations, and document analysis. The purpose of this qualitative case study is to explore Halal Promotion in Digital Media as a Catalyst for Public Awareness of the Existence of Islamic Hotels, with a particular focus on Strengthening Islamic Hotel Identity through Digital Media. This study was conducted in an authentic setting, with data collected from various sources to ensure depth and diversity, as emphasized by [32], [33].

The object of this research is “Promoting Sharia Hotels Through Digital Media: A Halal Marketing Approach.” Data analysis in this qualitative study was carried out iteratively and continuously, both during fieldwork and after the full data set had been collected. This approach ensured the saturation of data, where no new insights emerged from additional data collection. The selected research sites include two Islamic hotels in Bandung City: Cinnamon Hotel and Narapaty Hotel. The research subjects, chosen through purposive sampling, were hotel managers who (1) were actively involved in halal marketing and promotion strategies, and (2) had held a promotional role for a minimum of six months.

Primary data sources consisted of interviews with key informants responsible for the halal promotional strategies at the selected Sharia hotels, supported by observation of their digital promotional content and documentary analysis from both internal hotel documents and online platforms. Data analysis involved a phenomenological description of experiences, followed by the inventory and classification of data into meaningful categories, culminating in a synthesized narrative that reflects the essence of the subject's lived experiences.

To ensure the trustworthiness of the study, several validation strategies were applied. These included credibility, achieved by aligning findings with participants' realities, and transferability, which refers to the extent to which the findings can be applied to other contexts. The latter depends on the degree of contextual similarity between the study's setting and other environments. As such, researchers must collect empirical evidence that highlights contextual parallels to facilitate knowledge transfer [34].

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Promotional strategies for Narapati Syariah Hotel are collaboratively developed by the hotel owner and the marketing team to align with the property's Sharia-compliant identity. The primary platforms for dissemination include Instagram and various travel marketplace websites. A study by [35] found that using Instagram as part of a tourism marketing communications strategy in the post-COVID-19 "new normal" significantly increased engagement and efficiency, especially when business-specific features were used thoughtfully. They concluded that Instagram effectively bridges the gap between tourism businesses and consumers by streamlining information sharing and facilitating real-time interaction.

Additionally, [36] demonstrated that Instagram and TikTok influencer content positively influences tourists' decisions by shaping both cognitive and affective destination images. Their survey of 373 active Instagram users revealed that emotionally driven content (affective imagery) was particularly impactful in inspiring visits. This underscores the importance of leveraging emotional appeal on platforms like Instagram to build resonance and trust with target audiences.

Given that Narapati's target demographic consists primarily of millennials and Generation Z, who favor visually compelling, relatable content with authentic brand voices, Instagram proves to be both cost-effective and highly engaging. [37] observed that Instagram's unique rhythms, including the strategic timing of posts and curated visual narratives, enhance content visibility and reinforce brand positioning. Together, these studies affirm that Instagram serves as a critical marketing communication channel capable of efficiently reaching and influencing younger audiences.

The content shared on Narapati Syariah Hotel's Instagram is intentionally curated to reinforce its Sharia-compliant identity. Posts often include Islamic-themed materials, such as greetings for Eid al-Fitr, celebrations of Santri Day, and highlights of events hosted by Islamic institutions at the hotel, ensuring that the platform serves not only as a marketing channel but also as an avenue for worship and communal engagement. In this way, digital communication transcends commercial intent, embodying Islamic ethical values through every interaction with consumers.

To maintain spiritual integrity, promotional messaging remains deliberately modest and refrains from manipulative tactics that could undermine the halal nature of business proceeds. This approach reflects the ethical framework defined in Islamic marketing, which emphasizes integrity, balance, transparency, and benevolence. [38] highlight that Sharia marketing ethics include principles such as *tawhīd* (monotheism), *ʿadl* (justice), *ikhtiyār* (free will), *fard* (responsibility), and *Ihsan* (excellence), which must guide all promotional activities. Their study also stresses honesty in messaging, fulfillment of promises, and avoidance of deception or coercion, which are the core tenets of Sharia branding that uphold ethical standards in digital marketing practices.

Further supporting this approach, [39] affirm that Sharia-compliant digital marketing must align with Islamic ethical standards inherited from the Qur'an and Sunnah. While its operational methods mirror those of conventional digital marketing, such as the creation of branded websites, social media profiles, and content marketing, the integration of Islamic values differentiates it. Effective Sharia digital marketing requires that every content piece, including Instagram captions, visuals, and calls to action, reflects a character-driven business ethic consonant with Sharia guidelines.

Additionally, recent empirical research by [40] demonstrates the value of visually rich content, such as photos, videos, and reels, on Instagram for Sharia hotels. Their analysis of 202 posts from five Indonesian Sharia hotels revealed that high-quality visual materials significantly enhance electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) and positively shape consumer perceptions, whereas reliance on hashtags and external links had no noteworthy impact. This finding underscores the strategic importance of aligning Instagram content quality with religious identity and marketing effectiveness.

Sharia-based marketing, as emphasized by [41], mandates strict adherence to ethical principles: avoiding deception, honoring contractual commitments, and refraining from exaggerating product attributes or exploiting consumer vulnerabilities. The overarching goal is to ensure that every promotional activity embodies integrity, transparency, and justice—core values that define Sharia-compliant commerce. This ethical framework is not merely theoretical but is actively operationalized in the social media strategy of Narapati Syariah Hotel.

Narapati's digital marketing ethos reflects its founder's commitment to Islamic principles, framing marketing not as a purely commercial endeavor but as a form of worship and community service. This approach aligns with Andespa et al. (2024), who underscore that ethical branding rooted in religious values enhances consumer trust and long-term loyalty. By shaping communications around moral responsibility rather than profit, Narapati cultivates stakeholder goodwill and upholds its spiritual obligations through practice.

Moreover, all promotional efforts are firmly grounded in muamalah (Islamic commercial jurisprudence) and formal legal contracts, consciously avoiding impermissible activities such as *riba* (usurious interest) or *gharar* (excessive uncertainty). Recent research by [43] suggests that hotels that transparently disclose service terms, without resorting to excessive disclaimers or coercive tactics, tend to earn higher customer satisfaction and stronger ethical credibility. This ethical consistency not only secures compliance with Sharia guidelines but also fosters a brand image that is sincere, trustworthy, and socially responsible.

In addition to official content, user-generated content plays a role in the hotel's promotional strategy. Guests often share their experiences at Narapati Syariah Hotel via TikTok, highlighting the hotel's facilities and hospitality. These visitor-generated videos serve as organic endorsements, offering authentic testimonials that reinforce the hotel's brand image. Promotion is thus implemented through both direct (hotel-created content) and indirect (guest-generated content) means, utilizing platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and web-based travel marketplaces.

While Narapati Hotel primarily focuses on Instagram, Cinnamon Hotel Boutique Syariah utilizes a broader range of platforms, including TikTok and Facebook, to reach various demographic groups. The selection of social media platforms is strategic: TikTok appeals to teenagers, Instagram targets young to middle-aged adults, and Facebook is often preferred by older users. Given that the primary market for both hotels consists of families, Instagram is identified as the most appropriate channel.

In the contemporary digital era, promotional efforts are inextricably linked to online platforms due to their unparalleled reach and interactive capabilities. Recent studies emphasize that digital technology is not only instrumental in executing marketing strategies but also pivotal in supporting data-driven decision-making and personalization. For instance, [44] demonstrate how advanced analytics tools embedded within social media platforms can capture user behavior and preferences, enabling organizations to tailor promotional messages and optimize campaign performance. Similarly, [45] found that customer segmentation based on demographic and psychographic data notably increases engagement rates and conversion among hotel guests.

Platforms such as Instagram excel at fostering dynamic interactions with prospective customers, nurturing brand-consumer relationships through features like interactive polls, "swipe-up" links, and personalized direct messaging. Syahputri et al. (2024) highlight that these features not only enhance customer engagement but also facilitate instant feedback loops, creating opportunities for real-time adaptation. Moreover, [47] underscore the significance of selecting social media platforms that align with demographic profiles. Their qualitative study of Southeast Asian hospitality brands found that when promotional efforts are tailored to match the preferences and usage patterns of target audiences, the return on marketing investment, which can be measured in direct bookings and customer referrals, is considerably higher.

Collectively, these findings affirm that marketing and communications managers in the hospitality sector must possess a comprehensive and strategic understanding of the distinct characteristics inherent to each social media platform. This expertise includes, but is not limited to, knowledge of user demographics, such as age, location, behavior patterns, and cultural preferences, as these factors significantly influence how audiences engage with promotional content. Equally important is the familiarity with platform-specific content formats, including image-based posts on Instagram, short-form videos on TikTok, long-form updates and community engagement on Facebook, or professional branding through LinkedIn. Each format caters to different consumer behaviors

and content consumption preferences, necessitating tailored messaging that resonates with target audiences while remaining consistent with the brand identity and values of the hotel. Moreover, marketing professionals must understand the algorithmic dynamics of these platforms, such as engagement prioritization, hashtag optimization, timing of posts, and the role of paid promotion versus organic reach. Algorithms govern the visibility and virality of content, and failure to align promotional strategies with these mechanisms can result in significantly reduced reach and engagement.

Beyond technical understanding, ethical considerations must also be central to strategy development, especially in Sharia-compliant institutions like Narapati Syariah Hotel. Digital promotion strategies must not only be effective but also uphold Islamic ethical values, such as honesty, fairness, transparency, and the avoidance of deceitful or coercive marketing tactics. In this context, a well-rounded digital marketing manager is not just a content creator but a strategist who bridges technology, consumer psychology, religious ethics, and brand positioning. Their role is pivotal in ensuring that each promotional effort contributes not only to short-term business performance but also to long-term brand trust and alignment with Islamic moral and business principles.

V. CONCLUSION

The promotional strategies employed by Cinnamon and Narapati Syariah Hotels demonstrate a deliberate and structured approach to integrating Sharia values into digital marketing practices. Utilizing a range of digital platforms—including Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, WhatsApp, and tour and travel marketplaces—both hotels ensure their outreach aligns with Islamic ethical standards. Promotional content is carefully curated by a dedicated internal team and is preceded by collaborative discussions to maintain consistency with the company's vision and values. Furthermore, strategic partnerships with influencers are selectively pursued to amplify promotional reach without compromising Sharia principles. By maintaining strict adherence to Islamic ethical frameworks in both messaging and media selection, these hotels not only strengthen their brand identity but also build consumer trust within a growing market segment seeking halal hospitality experiences. This approach serves as a replicable model for other Sharia-based businesses aiming to leverage digital media while preserving their religious and ethical commitments.

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