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Digital Promotion Strategy of Café Shelter 26 Reborn in Pekanbaru: A SWOT-Based Case Study

Wijaya Pandu Wicaksono, Rahmat Ingkadijaya, Sofian Lusa, Sri Mariati

Institut Pariwisata Trisakti

**srimariati@iptrisakti.ac.id*

Abstract

This study aims to evaluate the digital promotion strategy of Café Shelter 26 Reborn in Pekanbaru, Riau, and formulate an effective development framework to enhance business sustainability in a highly competitive culinary market. This research employs a qualitative descriptive approach with a case study design. Data was collected through surveys involving 45 costumer sample. The analysis utilizes IFAS and EFAS matrices, followed by a SWOT analysis and Grand Strategy Matrix to determine the optimal strategic direction. The findings indicate that Café Shelter 26 Reborn possesses significant internal strengths, notably high visual aesthetic quality and authentic branding that aligns with the customer experience. However, the cafe faces weaknesses in utilizing two-way interactive features and limited technical capacity for creative content production. Externally, the cafe benefits from strong influencer/KOL leverage and a loyal mature market segment, though it contends with intense competition and rapidly shifting digital algorithmic trends. The Grand Strategy Matrix positions the cafe in Quadrant I, necessitating an aggressive growth strategy. To maintain a competitive advantage, the study recommends a strategic shift from product-centric to experience-centric content, emphasizing the "third space" concept. Furthermore, management should prioritize human resource development in multimedia skills and implement interactive two-way communication strategies on Instagram and TikTok to foster deeper emotional engagement and long-term customer loyalty.

Keywords: digital promotion strategy, café, customer experience, SWOT analysis, Pekanbaru

A. Introduction

Increasing economic growth has also influenced the behavior and lifestyles of Indonesians. One obvious change is consumer behavior, particularly among the upper-middle class. A modern lifestyle characterized by spending a significant portion of their time in cafes is one example. They typically socialize, gather with friends, and enjoy food and drink. Some even visit cafes solely to take photos and share them on social media, this growing public interest in cafes has led to a proliferation of cafes in various cities, both large and small. From small to large, from standard to unusual menus, from unique to unique locations, businesses are now offering a wide range of options to capture the market.

This, of course, has also resulted in increasingly fierce competition in the cafe business. Cafes, which once focused solely on the taste of their food, are no longer focused on the taste of their food. Cafes must also attract customers with their uniqueness. Therefore, promotion and marketing are crucial factors for cafe owners to attract customers. Digital marketing strategies are also needed by MSMEs in Indonesia because they can support the tourism sector. MSMEs in Indonesia face significant challenges in maintaining business sustainability. Globally, more than 50% of small businesses in the tourism sector close within the first five years due to poor planning and technology adaptation (OECD, 2023). In Southeast Asia, challenges are exacerbated by seasonal fluctuations and dependence on local markets (Bain & Company et al., 2019). In Indonesia, nearly 70% of MSMEs fail to survive the first three years (Kemenkop UKM, 2023), particularly in the tourism subsector due to a lack of managerial experience (Purnomo et al., 2024) and low business resilience in non-metropolitan areas (Zeqiri et al., 2023). This demands a robust adaptive strategy and digital transformation.

Many factors contribute to the failure of MSMEs in the tourism sector in the early stages of their growth. Rodrigues, Franco, and Sousa (2023) stated that the main problems causing the closure of tourism MSMEs are poor market understanding, lack of product differentiation, limited qualified human resources, and the lack of effective use of information technology. Furthermore, many MSMEs lack a clear marketing strategy and tend to rely on conventional methods that are unable to compete in the digital age. These obstacles are exacerbated by intense competition from larger, established businesses with better capital and infrastructure, making it increasingly difficult for MSMEs to maintain their business continuity.

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) are the backbone of the national economy, and their role at the regional level, particularly in Pekanbaru City, Riau Province, is increasingly significant. Government data shows that the number of MSMEs in Pekanbaru continues to increase, dominated by the culinary and creative economy sectors (PPID Riau, 2024). In fact, data from the Riau Cooperatives and SMEs Office since 2016 places Pekanbaru as the city with the highest number of MSMEs in Riau Province, driven by the proliferation of culinary businesses (Agus and Juliana, 2025).

The growing phenomenon of the cafe (coffee shop) business in Pekanbaru reflects a shift in people's lifestyles. Cafes now serve more than just places to drink coffee, but have become a third space for young students and the younger workforce to work, socialize, and express themselves (Musfar et al., 2023). This has made Pekanbaru one of the cities with the most dynamic coffee ecosystem growth on the island of Sumatra (BertuahPos, 2025). Quantitatively, by 2018, the number of cafes or coffee shops in Pekanbaru had reached at least 320 outlets spread across 12 districts (Musfar et al., 2023). This number is certain to continue to grow post-pandemic, creating a highly crowded and competitive market.

Amid this competition, conventional marketing methods are considered ineffective and inefficient. Culinary MSMEs must adapt to the Industrial Revolution 4.0, where digital technology is the primary battleground. Implementing digital promotions is no longer an option but a necessity. Two key data points reinforce this urgency at the regional and national levels: Indonesia's high digital penetration rate: By 2024, Indonesia is projected to have 242 million internet users (93.4% of the population), with 167 million active social media users. Popular platforms like YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok are accessed for an average of 3 hours and 14 minutes per day. The majority of these activities involve communication, searching, and social media entertainment, and photo/video sharing, which are ideal spaces for culinary promotions (RRI, 2024), and Riau as the Province with the Highest Social Media Usage for MSMEs: Data from the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII) notes that Riau Province ranks highest in social media usage for selling products or services among all MSMEs in Indonesia, even surpassing the national average. This indicates that MSMEs in Riau, including cafes, have a high level of technological awareness and are accustomed to conducting business online (Media Center Riau, 2022).

The use of well-implemented digital marketing has been shown to have a positive and significant impact on increasing brand awareness (Chinoss Coffee, Kopi Kenangan), improving product quality, and most importantly, increasing purchasing interest and even purchasing decisions in Pekanbaru coffee shops (Arrianda et al., 2024; Adjie Opa & Astuti, 2024). This strategy includes utilizing features like Instagram Reels for engaging visual content, paid advertising (ads), and even offering discounts through apps, all aimed at expanding marketing networks and increasing purchase orders.

To obtain an in-depth and contextual analysis, this research selects Café Shelter 26 Reborn in Pekanbaru as the focus of its case study. The café possesses several characteristics that make it compelling, notably its unique concept centered on the theme of "rebirth." It features a distinct identity: the name "Shelter 26"originally associated with mountaineering gear has been transformed (or "reborn") into a modern café. This concept fosters a comfortable and welcoming atmosphere, complemented by comprehensive facilities and a strategic location. Furthermore, Café Shelter 26 Reborn serves as a representative example of the cafés currently emerging in Pekanbaru..

The challenge in implementing digital initiatives arises from the fact that the café already possesses a distinct concept and a strong, unique character. The core problem addressed in this research is the suboptimal use of digital channels for promoting "Café Shelter 26 Reborn" in Pekanbaru—a situation stemming from a lack of innovation and limited human resource capacity. This is significant, as digital promotion has the potential to increase sales and customer visits, which are essential for the sustainability of this small-to-medium enterprise (SME). Consequently, this research focuses on the following question: what digital promotion strategies can Café Shelter 26 Reborn develop to leverage its physical advantages and unique concept, enabling it to compete effectively within the highly saturated digital market of Pekanbaru? Therefore, this study examines the development of digital promotion in this specific context, aiming to uncover effective strategies, identify the gap between the café's potential and its current digital presence, and formulate relevant recommendations for further development.

B. Literature Review

Digital Promotion

Promotion is an element implemented to advertise and attract new products or services to a company through advertising, in-house sales, and promotions. Promotion plays a crucial role in bridging the gap between producers and consumers. According to Kotler and Keller (2016), promotion is an activity that communicates product benefits and entices target customers to purchase. In the era of evolving globalization, the role of information technology (IT) is becoming increasingly dominant in business operations (Fadilah et al., 2024; Mellolo et al., 2025). Information technology is not limited to computers but also encompasses communication technologies that facilitate information delivery, data management, and operational efficiency (Reynaldi et al., 2025). According to Fadilah et al. (2024), digitalization enables businesses to promote their products more cost-effectively than conventional methods. This phenomenon makes digital marketing an inevitable strategy for various business sectors, including micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) (Mellolo et al., 2025).

Social Media as a Promotional Tool

According to Kotler and Keller (2021), social media is a means for consumers to share text, audio, images, and videos with others, with companies, and vice versa. Social media further enables businesses to build a public voice online. Communicating using social media can both save and strengthen information gathering activities, creating a long-term marketing tool in the process. Social media has become the most popular marketing medium, replacing print media due to its ability to reach a broad and personal audience (Sekarwangi et al., 2022; Victoria & Purwianti, 2022). The use of social media platforms by culinary businesses is not only for product promotion, but also as a space to build communication and strengthen loyalty (Sekarwangi et al., 2022; Victoria & Purwianti, 2022; Reynaldi et al., 2025).

Effective social media marketing strategies include: (1) Content Presentation: The use of engaging and innovative visual content is crucial for attracting consumer attention (Fadilah et al., 2024; Sekarwangi et al., 2022); (2) Interaction and Engagement: Fadilah et al. (2024) and Sekarwangi et al. (2022) emphasize that the ability to build direct interactions with audiences and adjust content upload schedules are key elements of success; (3) Use of Influencers/Content Creators: Kuiliem et al. (2024) and Reynaldi et al. (2025) state that the use of content creators has been proven to increase customer engagement and influence purchasing decisions; (4) Consumer Education: Febriana et al., (2023) stated that an education-based marketing approach aims to provide added value to make consumers feel more informed as buyers, while also addressing audience boredom with standard advertising content.

Although social media offers great potential, businesses often face challenges such as intense competition, dynamically changing trends, and limitations in content management and strategy evaluation (Fadilah et al., 2024; Sekarwangi et al., 2022; Reynaldi et al., 2025). Therefore, continuous strategy adaptation and the use of dedicated personnel are necessary to ensure promotions achieve their targets. (Fadilah et al., 2024; Sekarwangi et al., 2022; Mellolo et al., 2025).

C. Research Methods

This research uses a qualitative approach which aims to identify phenomena, processes, events or developments in detail and comprehensively. Using a descriptive analytical approach, this approach is carried out systematically through facts found during diverse and more in-depth data collection. This approach also contributes to presenting and elaborating in-depth descriptions of writing, speech and behaviour that researchers will observe from individuals, groups and parts of society which will ultimately be studied in detail.

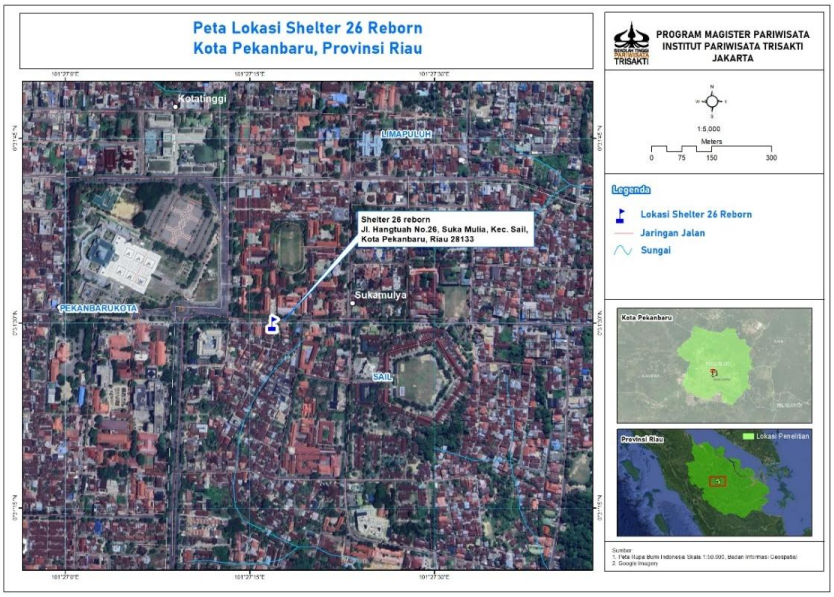


Figure 1. Map of Location Research

In order to obtain results from this research, the researcher determines the time and place that will be used as a reference and research object in limiting the scope of this research. This research is planned to be carried out from January-April 2026 in Shelter 26 Reborn Café in Pekanbaru.

Population and Sample

The population of this study is: (1) Café Shelter 26 Reborn Pekanbaru, namely all staff working at Café Shelter 26 Reborn Pekanbaru; (2) Visitors to Café Shelter 26 Reborn, namely all visitors to Café Shelter 26 Reborn. The sample for the in-depth interviews is the manager of Café Shelter 26 Reborn Pekanbaru is 1 person, namely the manager of Café Shelter 26 Reborn.

The sample for analyzing the current use of digital promotion, as well as the innovation and human resource capacity regarding the implementation of digital promotion at Café Shelter 26 Reborn, is determined based on the approach by Hair et al. (2022) (as cited in Mariati, 2025). This is because the total population of visitors to Café Shelter 26 Reborn is unknown; the formula used is (number of indicators + number of variables) × 5. Following these guidelines, the maximum sample size for this study is (7 + 2) × 5 = 45 sampels. The criteria for the sample group completing the Likert scale are as follows: (1) People have visited Café Shelter 26 Reborn in Pekanbaru; (2) Willing to provide responses to the questions included in the Likert scale; (3) Aware of the social media platforms used by Café Shelter 26 Reborn.

Instruments

The questionnaire with a Likert scale measurement was compiled based on digital structure variables (indicators of active involvement, strengthened by influencer authority, and leading to consumer loyalty through educational value) and Innovation variables in Human Resources (HR) management (indicators of idea creation, concept development, experiments & trials, and visitor perceptions after visiting).

Data Analysis

To analyze this data, the SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) method is employed. This method processes the collected data in depth by categorizing and establishing connections between the four aspects of the SWOT framework (Rangkuti, 2009).

D. Result

Analysis of the conditions encountered in the digital promotion of Shelter 26 Reborn Pekanbaru cafe, covering internal and external conditions.

Internal Analysis

Strengths include: (1) Visual Aesthetic Quality and Information Clarity: The cafe excels in presenting attractive photos/videos and clear menu, pricing, and location information (achieving the highest score of 4.29), this transparent information facilitates consumer decision-making; (2) Branding Authenticity

(Customer Experience Match), the positive image on social media aligns with the actual taste of the menu, the friendliness of the staff, and the physical atmosphere of the location (Score: 4.22–4.24); the cafe has successfully built trust by avoiding over-promoting; (3) Agile Digital Customer Service: The management staff is very responsive and informative in managing the comments section and direct messages (Score: 4.24), this responsive emotional connection is a key feature of the cafe's digital service.

Weaknesses include: (1) Low Utilization of Interactive Features: Active audience engagement through features such as story quizzes, polls, Q&A, or live streaming is the weakest point in the current promotional strategy (recording the lowest score, at 4.02), content still tends to be one-way communication; (2) Lack of Sharp Unique Selling Point: The digital promotional idea was deemed to have not fully succeeded in highlighting what sets Café Shelter 26 Reborn apart from similar competitors in Pekanbaru (Score: 4.14); (3) Technical Capacity for Content Production: Pure technical capabilities such as neat graphic design, stable video capture, and editing skills were scored at 4.13, slightly lagging behind the communication service aspect.

External Factor Analysis

Opportunities consist of: (1) Strong Influencer/KOL Marketing Leverage: The involvement of food vloggers and local influencers has proven effective in increasing trust (Score: 4.24) and convincing consumers to try cafe products. This strategy has significant potential for further development to expand market share; (2) Mature Age Group (>50 Years): Based on the respondent data profile, the majority of cafe digital promotion users are mature age groups with established jobs (Entrepreneurs & Civil Servants). This group has high purchasing power and tends to be highly loyal if the cafe's physical service meets their digital expectations; (3) Effective Focus on Instagram & TikTok: With 39 out of 45 respondents focusing on Instagram and TikTok, cafes have a significant opportunity to save marketing costs by focusing their entire advertising budget solely on short-form video production (Reels and TikTok) rather than print media or other platforms.

Threats consist of: (1) High Density of F&B Competitors in Pekanbaru: If digital promotions fail to clearly communicate their USP, the cafe is at risk of being lost among the numerous competitors, including coffee shops and similar modern casual dining establishments that continue to emerge in Pekanbaru. (2) Speed of Algorithmic Trend Shifts: The team's ability to integrate current viral trends with the cafe's identity scored 4.16. The dynamism of digital trends requires the creative team to be constantly on top of trends; delays in adaptation will cause the cafe's account to lose relevance among a younger audience.

Table 1. IFAS and EFAS Table of Digital Promotion of Café Shelter 26 Reborn

	Average Weight Indicator BxR Rating Consideration Based on interviews	Average Weight Indicator BxR Rating Consideration Based on interviews	Average Weight Indicator BxR Rating Consideration Based on interviews	Average Weight Indicator BxR Rating Consideration Based on interviews	Average Weight Indicator BxR Rating Consideration Based on interviews
Strength	S1: The visual quality of product photos and videos is highly aesthetic and engaging.	0.18	4.29	0.77	Premium visuals are a major draw for Pekanbaru's urban consumers.
	S2: The clarity of menu information, pricing, amenities, and location on social media is very transparent.	0.18	4.29	0.77	This accelerates the consumer decision-making process before they even visit the location.
	S3: The match between social media branding and the reality of the menu's taste and physical atmosphere.	0.16	4.22	0.68	This builds high levels of trust by eliminating over-promoted strategies.
	Total Strengths	0.52		2.22	The cafe's internal strength is very solid on visuals & branding honesty.
Weakness	W1: Utilization of two-way interactive features (story quizzes, polls, Q&A) is still very minimal.	0.17	4.02	0.68	Social media accounts still tend to be one-way communication.
	W2: Limited technical	0.15	4.13	0.62	he content management

		Average Weight Indicator BxR Rating Consideration Based on interviews	Average Weight Indicator BxR Rating Consideration Based on interviews	Average Weight Indicator BxR Rating Consideration Based on interviews	Average Weight Indicator BxR Rating Consideration Based on interviews	Average Weight Indicator BxR Rating Consideration Based on interviews
		capacity in content production (graphic design and advanced editing).				team needs to improve its artistic skills.
		W3: Digital promotional messages lack clarity in highlighting the cafe's unique features (USP).	0.16	4.14	0.66	The cafe risks looking similar to its competitors if its USP isn't emphasized.
	Total Weakness		0.48		1.96	The main weakness lies in audience interactivity.
	S+W (IFAS)		1.00		4.18	Posisi Faktor Internal
Opportunity		O1: Involving local influencers/KOLs significantly increases public trust.	0.18	4.24	0.76	Influencer marketing strategies in Pekanbaru have proven to have high leverage.
		O2: Honest recommendations from food vloggers effectively convince consumers to try new menu items.	0.18	4.24	0.76	Consumers tend to trust independent, third-party reviews.
		O3: Regular discount offers and special events motivate direct visit conversions.	0.16	4.22	0.68	Short-term incentive-based promotions are highly effective in driving physical visits.

		Average Weight Indicator BxR Rating Consideration Based on interviews	Average Weight Indicator BxR Rating Consideration Based on interviews	Average Weight Indicator BxR Rating Consideration Based on interviews	Average Weight Indicator BxR Rating Consideration Based on interviews	Average Weight Indicator BxR Rating Consideration Based on interviews
Total Opportunity			0.52		2.2	The biggest threat comes from the activity of local competitors.
Threats	T1: Shifting digital trends and the highly dynamic and rapidly saturating viral audio cycle.	0.16	4.16	0.67		This requires creative teams to monitor social media algorithms daily.
	T2: High competition among similar F&B businesses in Pekanbaru.	0.17	4.15	0.71		Consumers have numerous alternative hangout options.
	T3: Risk of audience saturation if visual templates are not regularly updated.	0.15	4.12	0.62		Consumers can easily shift their attention if content becomes monotonous.
	0.48		2	Ancaman terbesar berasal dari keaktifan kompetitor lokal.		
	O+T (EFAS)	1.00		4.2		Posisi Faktor Eksternal

SWOT Result Formulation Strategy: (1) S-O Strategy (Use Strengths to Seize Opportunities): Leverage the cafe's already aesthetic visual quality (4.29) to collaborate with Pekanbaru Influencers/KOLs (4.24). Create honest review content that highlights the cafe's comfortable atmosphere to attract families or mature workers (civil servants/entrepreneurs) seeking authentic service quality; (2) W-O Strategy (Minimize Weaknesses with Opportunities): Use the dominant consumer platforms of Instagram and TikTok to activate a two-way feature. Instead of simply uploading product photos, create interactive polls or quizzes to explore which menu items are most popular with the audience, rewarding them with instant discount vouchers when they visit the café; (3) S-T Strategy (Use Strengths to Counter Threats): To fortify yourself against the onslaught of competitors in Pekanbaru, leverage your core strength, authentic branding alignment (4.22). Highlight real customer testimonials about the consistency of the food's taste and the physical reality of the place that aligns with the promotion, to create a stronghold of customer loyalty amidst the seasonal cafe trend.

Table 2. SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
High Visual Quality & Information Transparency (Score: 4.29)	Minimal Utilization of Two-Way Interactive Features (Score: 4.02)
Alignment of Expectations & Experiential Reality (Score: 4.22–4.24)	Product Differentiation/USP Not Yet Prominent (Score: 4.14)
Social Media Admin Response Speed (Score: 4.22–4.24)	Limited Technical Capacity for Creative Production (Score: 4.13)
Opportunities	**Threats**
High Impact of Trust via KOLs/Influencers (Score: 4.24)	Fierce Competition in Pekanbaru's F&B Industry
Characteristics of a Mature Market with Loyalty and High Purchasing Power	Very Short Digital Viral Trend Cycles (Score: 4.16)
Optimizing Content Based on Instagram & TikTok	

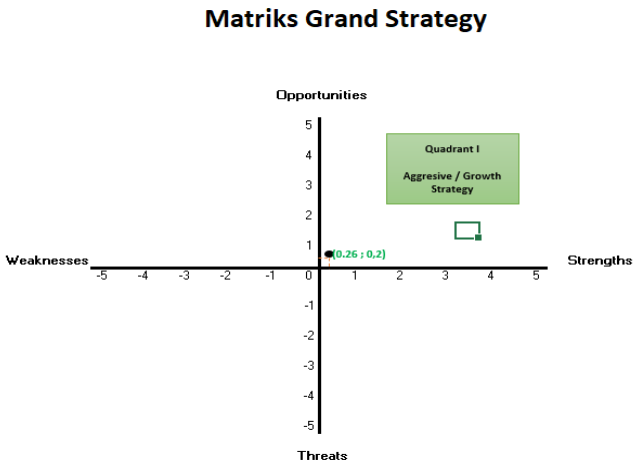


Figure 2. Digital Promotion Strategy for Café Shelter 26 Reborn Pekanbaru

E. Discussion

Based on the SWOT analysis results, which placed Café Shelter 26 Reborn in an aggressive position (Quadrant I), future digital promotion strategy development should focus on synchronizing visual content and real-time customer experiences. Referring to the findings of Febianti et al. (2026), the success of a digital marketing strategy in the café sector is determined not only by the intensity of posts but also by the credibility of the information conveyed. Café Shelter 26 Reborn needs to strengthen the consistency between digital narratives and physical reality, as information transparency has been shown to be a key determinant in building long-term customer trust (Febianti et al., 2026).

Furthermore, the integration of the two-way communication strategy proposed in the SWOT analysis has a strong theoretical basis from marketing practices in similar culinary industries. As found in the Critoe Coffee case study (Adhiesa & Putra, 2023), the use of interactive features such as storytelling on social media serves not only as a promotional tool but also as a psychological effort to build emotional closeness with the audience. Café Shelter 26 Reborn can adopt this engaging approach by utilizing Instagram or TikTok currently the dominant channels for audiences in Pekanbaru not simply as one-way content distribution channels, but as a responsive dialogue space (Febianti et al., 2026; Adhiesa & Putra, 2023).

Café Shelter 26 Reborn's comparative advantage, which lies in the authenticity of the reborn concept and high visual aesthetics, should be positioned as a Unique Selling Point (USP) in its marketing content. In line with the findings of Adhiesa & Putra (2023), informative, persuasive, and creative messaging is key to winning the competition amidst the densely saturated café market. Future development strategies should include:

The Relevance of the "Third Space" Concept to Research Findings

The "third space" concept is highly applicable here, given that 39 out of 45 respondents identify Instagram and TikTok as their primary platforms channels that are visually ideal for showcasing the physical atmosphere of a café. This strategy is bolstered by the café's core strengths: its visual aesthetic quality (scoring 4.29) and the strong alignment between its digital branding and the actual customer experience (scoring 4.22–4.24).

Furthermore, this approach allows for precise targeting of existing market segments: mature individuals (over 50) such as entrepreneurs and civil servants who seek authentic comfort, while simultaneously serving as a space for socializing and working for university students and young professionals.
Focusing on "experience-based" content will directly address the café's most significant current weaknesses: low two-way interaction (scoring 4.02) and a lack of a distinct "Unique Selling Point" amidst intense market competition (scoring 4.14).

Content Types

Atmosphere-Driven Video (Vlogs & Mini-Tours): Create short-form video content for Reels and TikTok that goes beyond merely showcasing the menu; instead, highlight the comfort of the physical space such as ergonomic seating, reliable WiFi, or a tranquil ambiance suitable for working, relaxing, or gathering with family. Social Validation & Honest Reviews: Collaborate with Key Opinion Leaders (KOLs) or local food vloggers (an opportunity with an effectiveness score of 4.24) to produce authentic "third space" reviews, featuring genuine customer testimonials regarding the comfort of the venue. Two-Way Interactive Content: Implement a W-O (Weakness-Opportunity) strategy by creating quizzes, polls, or Q&A features on Instagram Stories (e.g., "Which corner is the best spot to get some work done today?") and offering rewards such as discount vouchers for immediate use upon visiting.

Posting Frequency

To address the issue of a management team that currently operates reactively and lacks long-term planning, the café must implement a consistent content calendar. Core Frequency: Post 3–4 Reels or TikTok videos per week, focusing on the café's atmosphere. Interactive Frequency: Post 2–3 interactive Instagram Stories daily to foster regular, two-way communication.

Engagement Targets

Actively increase audience interaction ratios to overcome the current weakness of one-way communication (score: 4.02). Quantitative Targets: Achieve a minimum of 50 active participants for every poll or quiz on Stories, and aim for a 20–30% increase in the Engagement Rate (combining likes, comments, shares, and saves) on Reels and TikTok posts over the course of one quarter.

Evaluation Period

Weekly/Monthly Tactical Evaluation: Monitor content performance at the end of each month to ensure the creative team can adapt to the highly dynamic shifts in viral audio trends (an external threat with a score of 4.16). Quarterly Strategic Evaluation (every 3 months): Conduct a comprehensive review of visual designs and campaign messaging to update templates and prevent audience disengagement caused by visual fatigue (a threat with a score of 4.12). This strategy is expected to strengthen Café Shelter 26 Reborn's position amidst the intense competition in the culinary industry in Pekanbaru, as supported by Ardiansyah & Sarwoko (2020), who emphasized that effective SMM (consistency and interaction) positively contributes to consumer decisions to visit.

E. Conclusion

This study concludes that to effectively compete in Pekanbaru's saturated digital market, Café Shelter 26 Reborn must adopt an aggressive growth strategy (Quadrant I) by shifting its digital promotion from a product-centric approach

to an experience-centric narrative that highlights the "third space" concept. While the café demonstrates strong internal capabilities in visual aesthetics and authentic branding, its current digital presence is hindered by low audience interactivity, a lack of a clear Unique Selling Point (USP) in its messaging, and limited technical human resource capacity. To address these gaps, the study proposes several measurable managerial implications: management should implement a consistent, long-term content calendar that mandates routine two-way interactive posts (such as polls and quizzes) on Instagram and TikTok, allocate specific resources for multimedia skills training to improve the staff's technical production capacity, and formalize periodic collaborations with local Key Opinion Leaders (KOLs) to secure social validation.

F. Conflict of Interest

The authors report no competing interests that may have affected the conduct or presentation of this study. The research was undertaken independently, and the authors had no financial, professional, or personal affiliations that could have influenced the assessment of Café Shelter 26 Reborn's digital promotion practices. The strategic evaluations and recommendations presented in this article reflect the research evidence and the authors' academic judgment.

G. Declaration of AI Use

ChatGPT (OpenAI) was utilized during the initial development of this study to assist the authors in constructing and refining the research framework. The tool provided support in exploring the conceptual connections among digital promotion, social media engagement, customer experience, and business development, as well as in organizing these concepts into a coherent framework relevant to the research objectives. The suggestions generated by ChatGPT were reviewed, critically assessed, and adapted by the authors with reference to the study's context and relevant academic literature. ChatGPT was not used to collect research data, conduct interviews, calculate IFAS and EFAS scores, perform SWOT analysis, or establish the research findings and conclusions. The authors retain full responsibility for the research framework, analytical process, interpretations, and final content of this manuscript.

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