

SURVIVE AFTER THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON UMRAH AND HAJJ TRAVEL INDUSTRY, WHAT IS THE BEST MARKETING STRATEGY?

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Abstract: The COVID-19 pandemic and Russian and Ukrainian wars condition have made the entire industry unstable condition, several Umrah travel industries are adjusting to the consequences of this outbreak with business closures, layoffs, and sales of business units. But at this time after the pandemic began to improve with the permitting of the implementation of Hajj and Umrah in 2022 by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Umrah travel industry must develop a health strategy to survive after the pandemic. The purpose of this article is to find alternative marketing strategies using SWOT and AHP analysis. This type of research is descriptive using a survey approach, Interviews, FGD, Direct experiments, Observations, and literature studies. The object of this research is 30 units of Umrah travel, The results of the study recommend three alternative strategies, namely improving service quality, digital marketing, and reducing prices. Practical implications and socially from this research the travel industry can take advantage of this strategy to implement marketing strategies and add to the literature of marketing strategies and increase consumer interest in traveling.

Keywords: *Digital Marketing, Marketing Strategy, Travel, SWOT, AHP, Tourism*

INTRODUCTION

Closed Hajj and Umrah travel industry by Saudi Arabia (Chulov, 2020) because height of COVID-19 victims in the east Central and Africa north (Agencies, 2020) impact the lid Some Umrah Travel business units are unable to endure the covid 19 pandemic (Kompas, 2021). The results study (Shakibaei et al., 2021) observed a change treat to travel in Istanbul Turkey, this is due to the regulation of self-society and the action government to limit travel and contact social. This situation caused the performance company to experience a drop in performance so that be in a situation the turnaround that caused continuity business threatened (Trahms et al., 2013). Lim et al (2013) the common strategy applied in this condition is savings however still many do not yet understand it. Kimathi et al (2019) chose, a defensive strategy to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic with the

use of digital marketing. spring (Adam & Alarifi, 2021) ability innovation and soul entrepreneurship are factors important for the continuity of life and growth of the business. Defensive strategy life is the strategy used by perpetrator businesses to survive life (Bercovitz & Mitchell, 2007), especially during the covid 19 pandemic management internal business alone is not enough needed there is the role of consumers, suppliers, and employees (Sudarmiatin, 2022). Gustavsson & Larsson (2020) To endure condition Crisis and uncertain environment, the company must adapt to the environment around it. In addition, the covid 19 pandemic recommends crisis management practices i.e.; Government and marketing policies are more effective than operating practices, pricing, and pricing practices.

SWOT and AHP analysis can also be used to analyze the marketing strategy product organic food. The preparation of marketing strategies also uses SWOT by

(Alamsyah et al., 2019) on expedition services company products (Ocampo et al., 2021) has used AHP to evaluate product online marketing strategies Hospitality Industry. Fhilya et al (2020) determine the marketing strategy of the Telecommunication Industry Using the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP). To develop a marketing strategy for herbal (Komari et al., 2020) use the approach of SWOT analysis. The application of SWOT and AHP is also used (Seungbum Lee & Walsh, 2011) to find marketing strategies for product sports. Application SWOT analysis is also used by (Suwanmaneepong et al., 2018) to find product marketing strategies for agriculture in Nong Chok, Bangkok, Thailand. Next (Ritonga et al., 2018) also used a SWOT analysis to develop a rural tourism marketing strategy. (Liu et al., 2021) using SWOT analysis to develop a marketing strategy for Shenzhen coastal tourism resort. SWOT analysis has been used (Xi, 2021) to Develop a marketing strategy for Huawei's International (Kurniawan & Iksan, 2021) use SWOT analysis to develop a marketing strategy at PT. Internet Gresik. The application of SWOT and AHP is used to develop product strategy agriculture Duku (Saputra et al., 2022). SWOT analysis introduced first time by a businessman in America with consultant management of Albert S. Humphrey, is a dealing tool with situation complex strategies to present and arrange information in a clear way for retrieval decisions (Learned et al., 1969).

Rahman et al (2022) analyze defensive strategy for small and medium enterprises during the covid 19 pandemic. No one has researched the Umrah travel industry yet, let alone developed and determined alternative marketing strategies for the Umrah Travel industry with the use of SWOT and AHP analysis using expert choice software. because of that, based on the description condition

on then we need the right marketing strategy so that the Umrah and Hajj travel industry can survive and thrive in the masses' gradual recovery from the covid 19 pandemic experience drop amount positive for covid 19. With the method analyzes the environment external and internal as well as knowing the current strategic position of travel and Umrah, this research is very important as an effort so that the travel and Umrah industry can Keep going up in the future although still haunted by the upcoming pandemic lower intention people to perform Umrah and Hajj in the future come. Especially with the rise of Umrah fees up to 10%-30% and the amount the procedure that must be prepared by the candidate Umrah participants of course Becomes a tough challenge for the travel party to make sure candidate Umrah pilgrims perform Umrah or Hajj.

The motivation of this research is to help the tourism industry, especially Umrah and Hajj travel, to bounce back after the Covid-19 pandemic plus the issue of the global recession in 2023 and the ongoing war between Ukraine and Russia by analyzing; How conditions Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats Umrah travel industry after the COVID-19 Pandemic?, How is a condition the position strategic Umrah travel industry after Covid the 19 Pandemic? What choice of marketing strategy Umrah travel industry after the COVID-19 pandemic? After the findings of this study, the tourism industry will know alternative strategies, strategic positions, returns and threats, and conditions of strengths and weaknesses that must be improved and improved so that the tourism industry is crowded again before the COVID-19 pandemic. The results of this study are also a new method to help all companies in developing company strategies using a combination of SWOT analysis and AHP (Expert choice software) that has never been used in

previous research, especially in the tourism / traveling industry.

LITERATUR REVIEW

The analysis of the business environment encompasses both internal and external factors, each playing a crucial role in strategic planning and decision-making. The internal environment focuses on the strengths and weaknesses within the company's functional areas, including management, marketing, finance/accounting, operations production, R&D, and information management systems. This analysis helps in understanding the company's capabilities and areas that require improvement (Hunger David, 2013).

The external environment involves monitoring factors outside the company that could impact its operations, opportunities, and threats. This includes aspects such as political, economic, social, and technological factors, as well as the competitive landscape characterized by Porter's Five Forces: competition, new entrants, product substitutes, suppliers, and buyers (Suwarsono, 2013)

Internal Factor Evaluation (IFE) and External Factor Evaluation (EFE) matrices provide structured frameworks for evaluating internal and external factors respectively. These matrices consider the weight and rating of each factor to determine its significance and impact on the company's overall performance (Rangkuti, 2016).

SWOT analysis systematically identifies the company's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. By leveraging strengths and opportunities while addressing weaknesses and threats, companies can formulate effective corporate strategies. SWOT analysis is a fundamental tool for strategic planning, enabling businesses to capitalize on their strengths and

opportunities while mitigating risks posed by weaknesses and threats (Suwarsono, 2013).

SWOT analysis, as outlined by Keller (2012), is a comprehensive evaluation of a company's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Strengths represent the company's advantages compared to its competitors, while weaknesses highlight areas where the company lags behind its peers. Opportunities are favorable circumstances that the company can exploit to its advantage, while threats are potential risks or challenges that could negatively impact the company's performance if not addressed.

Analytical Hierarchy Process (AHP), pioneered by Thomas Saaty, is a renowned method for decision-making in complex scenarios (T. L. Saaty, 2008). AHP enables decision-makers to assign relative weights to criteria and sub-criteria by comparing them pairwise. The steps of AHP involve collecting pairwise comparisons of criteria or sub-criteria, defining the problem and desired solution, structuring a hierarchy starting from the overall goal down to criteria and alternatives, and creating a pairwise comparison matrix to quantify the influence of each element on the higher-level criteria.

METHOD

Type this research as a descriptive Survey through an interview, survey, Focus Group Discussion (FGD), hands-on experiment (Become Consumers), and studies library. Interviews, surveys, and FGDs were conducted to identify Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) object of this research is to organize Umrah and Hajj pilgrimages in the Indonesia of Indonesia. Amount population based on data from the PPIU Ministry of Religion (the Operator) Umrah Worship Trips) in 2021 as many as 30 Umrah Travels (Indonesian Ministry of (Kemenag Indonesia, 2021)sampling technique used

that is census whole population Becomes sample as many as 30 Umrah Travels. Data Analysis EFAS and IFAS. Matrix After factors an internal strategy company identified, an IFAS (Internal Strategic Factors Analysis Summary) table is prepared to formulate factors of the internal strategy in the framework of Organizational Strengths and Weaknesses of the company (Hidayat & Lesmana, 2020). Meanwhile, EFAS (External Strategic Factors Analysis Summary) is a something tool analysis that presents the conditions external company for determining factor opportunities and threats that a company has company (Bastian & Shallyana, 2021). IE Matrix, Internal-External (IE) Matrix is useful for positioning something Strategic Business Units (SBU) company in a matrix consisting of over 4 cells (Zulfa & Rachmawati, 2021). The IE matrix consists of two dimensions, i.e. the total score from the IFAS Matrix on the X-axis and the total score from and EFAS Matrix on Y (Zed, 2021). SWOT-8K analysis which is a development from SWOT (Suwarsono, 2013) and (Nofrizal, 2018), first consists of four quadrants main, from quadrant I to quadrant IV, and then each quadrant is

Divided Becomes two sub-quadrants A and B so that at finally the matrix has eight (SUB) quadrant so that with clear our will determine right strategic position (Swarsono M, 2008). As is known that TOWS and SWOT have different focuses. TOWS analysis first formerly studies and identifies the choice of strategy that will be conducted externally (Hunger David, 2013). The organization or the company is also studying opportunities that exist in the market and identifying the possible done. This action allows the company can control and control present threats from outside. Rangkuti (2016) TOWS matrix has four common strategies used to enter to market and tackle threats (Wheelen, T. L., Hunger, J. D., Hoffman, A. N., & Bamford, 2017).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Umrah travel industry faces significant challenges, as indicated by its negative positioning value of -1.53, highlighting its weaknesses outweighing its strengths. Factors contributing to these disadvantages include low HR quality and poor coordination among suppliers, while strengths lie in connections with buyers and the industry's reputation.

	Strength	Weakness	
ANALYSIS TOWS	S1. The reputation of the Umrah travel industry in Indonesia	K1. Lack of reliable human resources K2. Still using Mutawif from Arab Saudi K3. Still experience low	
	S2. Skill system Information management	K4. Facilities service still not yet the maximum K5. Skill promotion	
	S3. Have social media	K6. Limitations information	
	S4. Umrah Travel's strategic location	K7. Coordination within an organization, suppliers, and the government of Saudi Arabia yet good	
	S5. The strength of the brand/ brand of the Umrah travel agency	K8. not sure about Umrah's price with the facility and the service you get pilgrims	
	S6. Connection with buyer		
	S7. Relation with supplier		
	Opportunity	SO Strategy	WO Strategy
O1. followers of Islam reach 88% of the total population in Indonesia	1. To promote to the congregation whoever using Umrah travel in Indonesia to remind through brochures or messages short on social media (S6, O1)	1. Give certainty prices to consumers so that consumers do not add costs (K8, O1, O2)	
O2. height Social Media			

	usage (Instagram, Facebook, Whatsapp, Tiktok)	2. Offer variants and facilities Umrah services with price Lowest until highest (S5, O2)	2. Update information on latest related policy from the Kingdom of Arab Saudi related to Umrah and Hajj rules (K7, O5)
O3.	Supplier available for Collaboration within nor abroad	3. Make good cooperation with party airline flights and hotels to get discounts (O6, S1)	3. Building Cooperation with pihak Saudi Arabia (K7, O2, O8)
O4.	Condition COVID-19 pandemic is back to normal, Arab Kingdom Saudi open door Umrah activities	4. Using clerics famous as brand ambassadors (S5, O9)	
O5.	Famous Lecturer and Ustadz in Pekanbaru as Brand Ambassador	5. Create a savings program for Umrah to member assembly Taklim (S5, S6, O10)	
O6.	Assembly Taklim and recitation in Indonesia		
	Threat	ST Strategy	WT Strategy
T1.	Umrah travel competitors in the same industry	1. Increase quality service to consumers (T1, S1)	1. Increase quality service by providing many companions special for people who are old, Providing companions for women and men, which Muthawif used originated from a direct travel agency no from Saudi Arabia, Give training to HR with the ability good service (K1,
T2.	Covid-19 pandemic conditions	2. Give a discount to the candidate congregati on (T4, S7)	
T3.	Regulation Performing Umrah in the country and Saudi Arabia	3. Give guarantee Umrah departures (T2, S7)	
T4.	Competitors from outside Indonesia, namely province West		

	Sumatra Province North Sumatra, and Province Jambi	K2, K3, T1, T2)
T5.	Low supervision from the government to the Umrah Travel agency	2. Increase Digital Marketing ability through social media especially Instagram and activity video publicity on Youtube (K6, T1)
		3. Promotion policy price (K8, T4)

Additionally, the industry grapples with unfavorable opportunities and threats, with competition and regulatory policies posing significant risks. In the realm of marketing, various industries exhibit unique dynamics. Huawei's strength in global marketing stems from its low operational costs and product diversification, while organic products thrive on the commitment of farmers despite challenges such as weather impacts. Meanwhile, the satisfaction of consumers with beach experiences drives the marketing strategy of the Shenzhen coastal tourism resort. In contrast, the herbal products industry presents a positive positioning in terms of strengths and weaknesses, with internet quality offering the most significant opportunity. Expedition Services Company benefits from a positive external environment, while internal conditions require improvement. Overall, these analyses underscore the importance of addressing weaknesses and leveraging strengths to navigate challenging business landscapes effectively.

Ritonga et al., (2018) condition, the strengths, and weaknesses of the rural tourism marketing strategy are positive with a score of 4.60 the factor with the most dominant power is a waterfall derivative balloon score of 0.75, while opportunities and threats get a score of 4.00 with threat biggest is wild encroachment score 0.40. Suwanmaneepong et al (2018) source the

most dominant force for marketing strategy product agriculture in Bangkok is the product has received certificate quality product with a score of 0.810 while weakness marketing not yet an interesting score of 0.950. on the opportunity value factor highest is concern about free products from chemicals scoring 0.945 and the threat biggest is price technology agriculture scoring 1,129. Paramitasari et al (2021) factor the most dominant force for marketing strategy the peak of mas tourist attraction is a unique and natural location with a score of 0.653 and weakness package tour limited to 0.433, while the opportunity enhancement visitors every year score 0.554 and the threat from disaster nature 0.564. the whole is in the negative position of -0.035. whereas results of the marketing strategy analysis (Suarja et al., 2021) in Pelagia Tourism Village the strongest force the effect is Easy to Reach Tourist Attractions score of 0.17, with weakness with a score of 0.09 Partner score from travel agencies, the highest chance is Support government 0.62 and threats with Consumers' purchasing power score 0.17. Opportunities that have a great influence on batik marketing strategy include more use of social media /internet economical cost (Suhartini et al., 2021).

Positioning strategy plays a crucial role in shaping future strategic decisions for businesses. Studies by (Nofrizal et al. 2019; Thomas L. Wheelen, 2016; Swarsono M. (2008) emphasize the significance of analyzing the internal and external environment using tools like the IE matrix (Internal - External) See Table 1. For instance, an analysis of the Umrah travel industry positions it in quadrant IX or Divest based on the IE matrix, indicating the need for strategic realignment to endure post-COVID-19. Additionally, a SWOT matrix analysis places the industry in quadrant III or Survival (turnaround),

highlighting the urgency to address the disparity between strengths and weaknesses. In contrast, studies by Komari et al. 2020; Alamsyah et al. 2019; Ritonga et al. 2018; Suwanmaneepong et al. 2018), and others examine the positioning of various industries. The food industry's herbal drinks segment, for example, is positioned in Quadrant IV, suggesting a need for central diversification—a strategy potentially beneficial for the Umrah travel industry's current challenges. Similarly, the positioning of Expedition Services in Quadrant III aligns with the Umrah industry's status, indicating shared strategic conditions. Moreover, analyses of other industries like rural tourism, Thai agriculture, and Indonesia's travel sector reveal strategic growth potentials in Quadrant II. These findings underscore the importance of leveraging strengths and opportunities while addressing weaknesses and threats to achieve sustainable growth. Regarding divestment considerations, factors such as financial performance, company size, R&D intensity, and diversification level play significant roles, as highlighted in the literature (Hitt et al., 1996; Berry, 2010). Recommendations for the travel and Umrah industry include reducing expenses, focusing on profitable ventures, and divesting assets that no longer contribute to profitability.

The study conducted an AHP analysis using Expert Choice software to evaluate alternative marketing strategies for the survival of the Umrah travel industry see Figure 1. The highest score of 39.7% was obtained for digital marketing strategies, followed closely by a 39.3% recommendation for increasing service quality. However, the least favored strategy, with a score of 21.0%, was dropping prices. Despite the proven effectiveness of digital marketing in boosting tourist visits post-COVID-19, there remains a lack of adoption of this strategy among tourism industries.

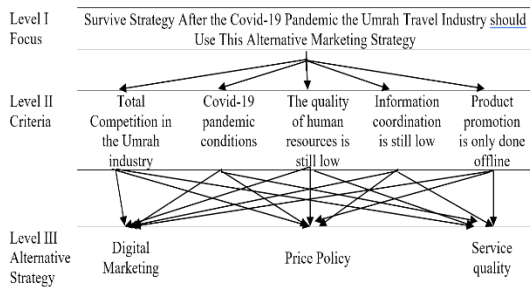


Figure 1. AHP Alternative Marketing Strategy Umrah Travel Industry

Researchers recommend implementing digital marketing strategies for the Umrah and Hajj industry, including creating social media accounts on platforms like Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, YouTube, and WhatsApp. Additionally, forming a dedicated social media team to curate and post engaging content related to Umrah & Hajj tourism, periodic posting of Umrah activities on social media to build consumer trust, utilizing artists or brand ambassadors for promotion, and creating ads on platforms like YouTube and Instagram with large follower bases.

Supporting research backs these recommendations. Studies have shown that e-marketing has a significant positive impact on the business results of travel agencies, reshaping the marketing landscape. Digital marketing through websites and email is popular among travel agents, with social media platforms like Facebook, WhatsApp, and Instagram also playing crucial roles. Additionally, digital marketing is recommended for small, micro, and medium enterprises due to its cost-effectiveness.

Moreover, digital marketing positively affects business performance and supply chain management in the tourism industry. Social media platforms are extensively used for marketing in various tourism sectors, facilitating interaction with consumers. Profit from Facebook ads and targeted marketing based on demographics has been observed in the medical tourism sector. Digital marketing is crucial for promoting

religious and event tourism, resolving industry challenges, and influencing business performance.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTION

From the results of the identification of internal and external factors, it can be concluded that the internal and external environmental positions of the Umrah travel industry have a divestment market position and survive in quadrant III using the IE matrix and the SWOT matrix. These results prove that the condition of the Umrah travel industry is not in good condition due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Meanwhile, by using TWOS analysis, there are four alternative strategies, namely (SO, WO, ST, and WT) that can be applied to increase the resilience of the Umrah travel industry after the post-pandemic. However, this study only focuses on the WT strategy because the results of the analysis of the strategic position of the Umrah travel industry are in a quadrant III position where it has many weaknesses and threats. Alternative marketing strategies to survive the post-demic are utilizing digital marketing, service quality, and price reductions. All the literature used shows that the use of digital marketing such as Facebook, Instagram, Youtube, Tiktok, and E-mail Marketing is an effective tool to improve performance, therefore, it is hoped that with the results of this research, the entire travel industry in the world can take advantage of digital marketing strategies because it has been proven to have an impact on performance and build a positive brand in consumers. For policymakers, the government must support the tourism industry because it is a source of state income, by making regulations that benefit the Umrah travel industry.

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