

## Developing Effective Marketing Strategies for Herviolet After COVID-19 Pandemic: A Case Study of Herviolet

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### Abstract

The recent COVID-19 pandemic has limited many ethnic modern-style fashion brands' selling and promotional activities to almost a halt. Their previous primary source of income and publicity, through national conventions and exhibitions, became unavailable due to pandemic policies and restrictions. These brands must now find a way to capitalize on the usage of digital marketing as a way to promote and sell their product. Herviolet is one of the modern ethnic brands affected and struggling with their marketing efforts due to an ineffective marketing strategy. As stated by Herviolet's owner, the company does not have a marketing department, goal, or strategy. Therefore, this research is designed to solve Herviolet's marketing strategy problems that will help them increase their brand awareness and product knowledge. An internal and external analysis will be conducted using PESTEL and Porter's Five Forces Analysis and summarized with a SWOT Analysis. A qualitative methodology will also be conducted, using semi-structured interviews with Herviolet's owner and two regular customers, where the interview results will be analyzed using open coding. A monthly social media performance analysis will also be conducted, where the account insights, data, and performance will be analyzed to give an image of Herviolet's current social media performance. This research developed three solutions for Herviolet to improve its marketing strategy, brand awareness, and product knowledge.

**Keywords:** Brand Awareness; Ethnic Modern; Herviolet; Marketing Department; Marketing Strategy.

### A. INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has limited many economic activities in Indonesia, especially the fashion sector. In response to the growing number of infected people, the government made a government regulation policy no. 21 of 2020 that implements the policy of Large-Scale Social Restrictions, Social Distancing, and Work From Home (WFH) to curb the spread of the virus. The policies resulted in shopping centres, exhibitions, and other face-to-face economic activities coming to a halt. Exports and local brands were struggling to sell their products; as data showed by East Asia Forum (2020), Indonesia's textile and textile product exports, which include clothing, dropped by a massive 52% compared to the same month in 2019 in May 2020.

The apparel market size in Indonesia is worth USD 4.58 billion in 2022 and is projected to grow by 5.43% annually until 2027. However, during the COVID-19 pandemic government restrictions, the fashion industry was severely affected, as retailers were not allowed to open due to physical restrictions, and exhibitions such as INACRAFT were cancelled. Herviolet, a small ethnic-modern fashion brand, lost a considerable part of its sales then and had to resort to digital marketing to sell its products. According to an article by Appnova (2018), to be successful as a fashion brand through the digital sphere, brand awareness, involvement with influencers, and a clearly defined brand and marketing plan and strategy are detrimental to establishing a presence in the digital sphere.

Herviolet has not capitalized on the lower number of competitors. Their marketing strategy has not been thoroughly optimized, as evident in a messy and unorganized Instagram feed, and they only use one social media to promote their products. Herviolet is also evident that they are not using influencers or key

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opinion leaders. Therefore, it is paramount that the researcher evaluates and develops a marketing strategy for Herviolet to help them take advantage of the low competitor situation and gain market share, brand awareness, and sales.

## **B. RESEARCH METHOD**

This research utilizes a qualitative methodology. According to Taherdoost (2022), Qualitative data answers the "how" and "why" of the nature of data. It is associated with feelings, perceptions, and emotions of the data, using unstructured approaches such as interviews for data collection. In this research, the researcher will employ the semi-structured interview with Herviolet's owner and two of Herviolet's regular customers, respectively, as this will give the researcher an external and internal perspective.

This research will be conducted with a semi-structured interview. Semi-structured interviews allow the researcher flexibility in their approach to the interview. A researcher can employ various themes to discuss specific topics, allowing the interviewee to respond (Deterding & Waters, 2018). Paz-Soldan et al. (2014) noted that semi-structured interviews capture topics in their natural forms. The interviewee's inner voice is drawn when active participation from both parties is underway, and the data gathered provided a richer context and was easier to process.

The interview data will be analyzed through the use of open coding. The researcher will start by finding the open codes based on the interviewee's responses, which will be input in the proof clauses column. Key takeaways of the interview based on the open codes will be created to uncover strengths and weaknesses Herviolet has. A table of axial and selective codes will then be created, and new insight will be uncovered and used to create a revised and updated SWOT matrix, which will be further used to create solutions.

Moreover, a social media performance analysis will be conducted by the researcher. The social media platform will be Instagram, the only major social media Herviolet uses for marketing. The tool to analyze Instagram performance will be from Instagram's analytic tools. The metrics of Instagram performance that will be analyzed are their account engagement rates based on their likes, profile visits, content shared, accounts reached, and their follower count based on previous months. The target is to find insights regarding Herviolet's marketing problems and create strategies to combat them.

## **C. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS**

Based on the interview with Herviolet's owner, they do not feel pressure from more prominent companies and are confident in their position as other competitors folded due to being unable to survive the pandemic. Moreover, they are also said to be known for the quality and design of the products and the owner's focus on customer service and after-service. This has made customers prefer Herviolet over any other ethnic modern bag producer. However, Herviolet also has its flaws. The owner got confused about Herviolet's marketing goals in the interview and said they had none. Moreover, they are not only yet to move to Tiktok; they have not set up a marketing team or department for this case. This is severely disadvantageous as the marketing activities, planning, and strategy, therefore, are not structured and organized, not to mention that the owner solely controls its social media without help.

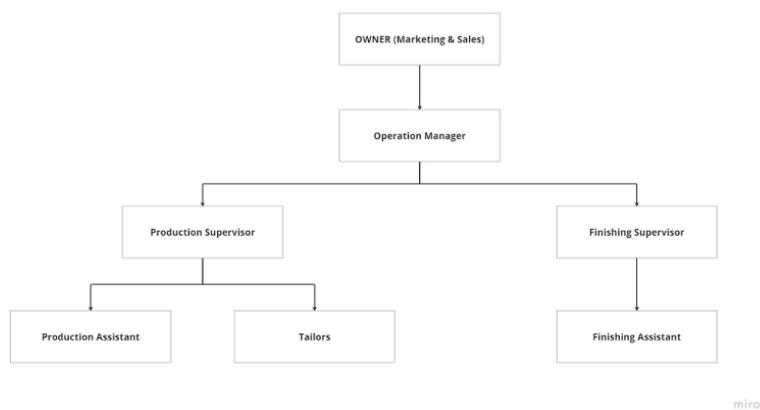
Based on the interview with two of Herviolet's regular customers, both agree that Herviolet has surpassed their standards with unmistakable product, material, and finishing quality. They also value the unique designs offered by Herviolet's traditional cloth styling. Moreover, even with the high price tag, their customers perceive the product to be worth the price due to the quality offered by Herviolet. Moreover, their customers agree and are avid users of Instagram, Herviolet's leading social media platform. They believe

that Tiktok is a viable choice of social media platform that can be used to promote products alternative to Instagram, and they agree on influencers' impact on their followers. These are all positive key insights for Herviolet.

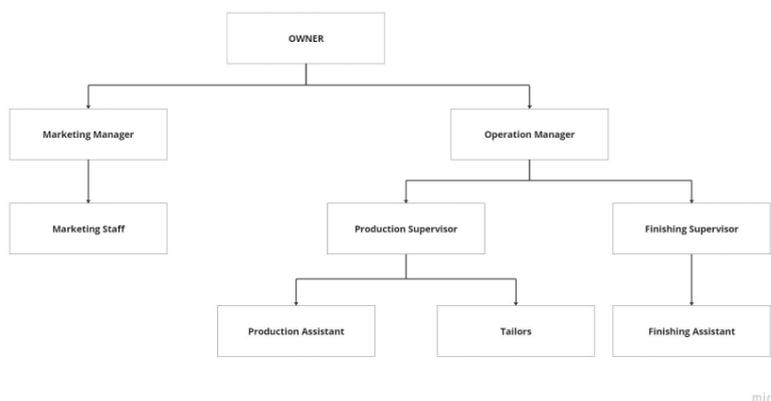
Analyzing the Instagram insights shows that Herviolet has a steady growth of followers, increasing by 1,657 during this research period. However, 67.5% of the new followers were gained after Herviolet utilized Instagram ads to boost their content and awareness. With a follower count of more than 27.500, Herviolet's Instagram account is considered a micro-influencer. Based on the preceding chapters, Herviolet's problem's root cause is an ineffective marketing strategy. The researcher proposes three new solutions to combat the problem.

*Create a Marketing Department, and Construct a Marketing and Content Plan*

The first solution is to create a marketing department, which is considerable since, as Herviolet's owner stated, she runs the marketing activities independently. A marketing plan, defined by Ward (2010), is a particular set of activities that a company will set in motion to attract potential customers and clients to purchase their products and services. A marketing department will help the owner regulate the marketing activities, strategize, and plan while allowing the owner to supervise other business activities to ensure a more optimal workflow. The researcher suggests restructuring the company, where a senior and a young employee will be assigned to be a marketing supervisor and assistant, respectively, and senior tailors, which are abundant, will take their place as the production supervisor and assistant. The restructuring is shown below.



**Figure 1. Herviolet's Old Company Structure**



**Figure 2 Revised Herviolet Company Structure**

After creating the marketing department, a marketing and content plan will be designed. The marketing plan will revolve around the marketing's strategy, objective, and budget. The marketing plan will use the Google Sheets platform, a web-based application allowing real-time online data sharing, where users can create, update, and modify spreadsheets. A Google Sheets document can be modified by multiple users concurrently, with each user's changes being tracked (Chai, 2021). This can be useful so that coordination between the marketing team and the owner can be seamless and time-effective.

Herviolet's owner will lead the marketing plan, but the marketing supervisor has the authority to give campaign or project ideas, of which the supervisor will do the task distribution, list, and update. The marketing plan allows them to strategize new ideas, campaigns, and projects in advance and directs them toward their marketing goals. The layout of the marketing plan is shown below.

1	Status	Tanggal	Prioritas	Campaign / Projek / Tugas	Deskripsi	Keterangan	PIC	Deadline	% Selesai	Biaya	Keterangan
2	ON GOING			Kolaborasi bersama Influencer	- Menjalin kolaborasi bersama Influencer untuk promosi dan menambah awareness Herviolet - Menambah follower sosmed - Membuat konten video elegant bersama Influencer seperti Model - Promosi sekalian buat insorart Maret					Perkiraan Biaya: Rp10.000.000	
3	Selesai	19/2/2024	Rendah	Mencari Potensial Influencer	Cari 5 influencer	- Ga harus amat - Harus piner fashion - gayanya elegant dan dewasa	Ani	19/2/2024	100%		
4	Selesai	19/2/2024	Tinggi	Design brief konten	Brief konten video harus: - Gagasan - Tema hidup get ready with me - Lengkapi dari setting dan waktu, angle video	Link: <a href="https://docs.google.com/boards">docs.google.com/boards</a>	Fadil	19/2/2024	100%		
5	Selesai	20/2/2024	Tinggi	Sorting Influencer	Cari yang imaginya cocok buat video yang akan dibikin		Fadil	20/2/2024	100%		
6	Delay	18/2/2024	Tinggi	Hitung budget marketing	Hitung budget biaya influencer, videographer, mua, ke rumah, transportasi	Kontak sama bos tentang biaya	Hani	21/2/2024	80%		
7	Sedang Diperjakan	21/2/2024	Menengah	Bikin Surat kerjasama	- Jelasin syarat dan ketentuan - perant? pihak - discase budget dan keuntungan influencer	Menunggu budgeting URGENT Budgeting link: <a href="https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets">docs.google.com/spreadsheets</a>	Ani	22/2/2024	30%		
8	Belum Mulai	22/2/2024	Menengah	Kontak influencer terpilih	- Langsung abis surat selesai	Kontak langsung ke management apa bisa cepat	Ani	23/2/2024	0%		
9	Belum Mulai	24/2/2024	Menengah	Shoot video dan edit	Its jnsjang waktunya ya	Max 7 hari dari videographer	Semua	2/3/2024	0%		
10	Belum Mulai	3/3/2024	Menengah	Posting Video di IG dan Tiktok	- Posting di IG dan Tiktok - IG collaborate post, Tiktok di tiktok influencer apa		Ani	3/3/2024	0%		
11	PLANNING			Menambah kewan eksklusifitas Herviolet	- Ubah feeds menjadi minimalis biar terkesan eksklusif - Tekenin di limited qty produk					Perkiraan Biaya: Rp15.000.000	

Figure 3. Marketing Plan

Along with the marketing plan, a content plan will also be created. A content plan includes all the marketing materials and information-gathering activities required to accomplish the objectives specified in the plan (Tague, 2020). For Herviolet's Case, the content plan will refer to their Instagram and newly-built Tiktok content. Similarly, the plan will be using Google Sheets. The Marketing Supervisor will mostly be in charge of the assistant accompanying, while they will join with the owner to create the content. All three parties can contribute to the ideation of the content, and the information will be updated daily to ensure Herviolet's social media will always have activity. The design of the Google Sheets is displayed in Figure 4.

1	Tanggal	MEDIA	JENIS KONTEN	KATEGORI	JUDUL	COPYWRITING KONTEN	VISUALISASI DESAIN	KETERANGAN	STATUS	REVISI? ATAU SARAN
2	Tanggal	Media sosial yang akan jadi wadah konten	format konten	berdasarkan tujuan post	judul atau topik	isi yang menjelaskan konten mengenai apa, tujuan apa, visualisasi seperti apa, sekaligus apa saja copywriting yang ada di dalamnya	referensi desain, atau hasil edit sendiri	informasi lebih	status postingan	tulis keterangan apa yang harus direvisi/diisi
3	Tanggal	Instagram	IG Story	Interaktif	selamat pagi	foto tas di halaman rumah pakai tema selamat pagi, model lagi seruput teh (ibu mungkin?)			1 Konsep Selesai	
4	Tanggal	Tiktok	Video	Edukasi	Batik Lombok	Batik Lombok. (isi informasi)			2 Perlu Revisi!	kurang banyak foto closeup
5	Tanggal	Instagram dan Tiktok	Video	Promosi	Promosi Tanggal besar	Promosi Idul Adha			3 Uploaded	
6	Tanggal	Instagram dan Tiktok	Posting	Pengumuman	Herviolet akan Rut INACRAFT Oktober				1 Konsep Selesai	
7	Tanggal								2 Konsep Selesai	

Figure 4 Content Plan

This solution is hoped to assist Herviolet in overcoming their lack of marketing strategy and plan, or budgeting, by providing Herviolet with the necessary tools in order for them to track their marketing progress and plan out their strategies better in the future. This tool will also help them brainstorm and create more promotional strategies in the future, as they can now have the objective and count the budget required.

*Establish a presence in Tiktok.*

Herviolet primarily uses Instagram to promote its products; with over 25 thousand followers, they already have a considerable follower base. However, it would undoubtedly benefit them more if they had another social media. Taking advantage of Tik Tok can provide Herviolet with an extra medium to promote their products. Tik Tok is third of the five most prominent social networks in the world; where between 2019 to 2021, it doubled its users from 291.4 million to 655.9 million and currently has 834.3 million monthly users worldwide in 2023. The growth rate of Tiktok is estimated to be double of Snapchat and 2.5 times that of Instagram. (Yuen, 2023). However, Herviolet does not have a marketing department, and only the owner can handle social media. With the added marketing department from the previous solution, the researcher proposes distributing the job description to the owner and marketing staff. The distribution is depicted below.

**Table 1. Job Distribution Table**

Position	Job Description
Owner	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Create New Campaign and Project Ideas</li> <li>2. Monitor marketing activities of the department</li> <li>3. Final quality control of finished content before posting</li> <li>4. Be a daily model and content producer for daily Instagram story posts</li> <li>5. Delegate tasks and responsibilities to marketing members for projects or campaigns</li> <li>6. Handle communication with external outsourced marketing agencies for photoshoots or events</li> <li>7. Give content ideas to the marketing team, which will be realized</li> </ol>
Marketing Supervisor	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Handle projects and campaign progress and tasks</li> <li>2. Update data regularly on the marketing plan and content plan spreadsheet</li> <li>3. Handle Tiktok direct messages, which will be forwarded to the owner</li> <li>4. Create content and the plan in advance</li> <li>5. Quality Check of content before handing it to the owner</li> <li>6. Search for potential dates for content or project/campaign</li> <li>7. Edit content</li> <li>8. Delegate tasks to an assistant and communicate directly for content arrangement.</li> </ol>
Marketing Assistant	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Assist the supervisor in updating the content plan</li> <li>2. Create new ideas for a content plan, search visual references, and copywriting</li> <li>3. Edit content</li> <li>4. Assist the Supervisor and/or Owner in creating content</li> <li>5. Answer the Supervisor or Owner's concerns</li> </ol>

Source: research data, 2023

*Collaborate with Key Opinion Leaders*

Even with being a respectable brand with multiple marketing methods in the past, Herviolet has yet to involve key opinion leaders in their marketing strategy. In this solution, the researcher proposes that Herviolet use Key Opinion Leaders as social media influencers. According to Morgan (2016), social media influencers are individual third-party promoters who use social media to share their daily lives, advice, and tips with their thousands of or more followers. Influencers in the fashion and beauty product categories have a special hold on consumers' spending decisions, with a high chance of swaying their followers to purchase their recommended products (Nafees, Stoddard, Cook, and Nikolov, 2021).

The researcher will suggest a list of influencers in Table 2. The determining conditions for influencers to be included in the list are based on their follower count, suitability of fashion style, and promotion presentation. The influencers will be based on Instagram, owing to Herviolet's already established base in social media.

**Table 2. Influencer List**

No.	Name	Instagram ID	Followers	Tier
1	Dian Sastro	therealdisastr	8.8M	Ultra - Macro

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No.	Name	Instagram ID	Followers	Tier
2	Ayla Dimitri	ayladimitri	405K	Macro
3	Rania Yamin	raniaayamin	204K	Macro

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Source: research data, 2023

Having to do influencer marketing, Herviolet must have the budget and people to plan and manage the influencer's content and communicate with them or their representative. With the reorganizing of the company, Herviolet could assign either the Marketing Supervisor or Assistant to be the communicator with the influencer's party, while the owner could delegate her responses or have the option to talk on her own accord. This solution will fix Herviolet's occurring avoidance of Influencer participation. Herviolet could also utilize the influencer's exposure as part of their exhibition promotional strategy to further boost visitors and awareness of Herviolet's participants, as with the pandemic lifted, offline exhibitions are starting to reopen and become crowded again.

#### D. CONCLUSION

Being one of the survivors of the harsh pandemic, Herviolet has the edge in its digital marketing presence, attributed to losing competitors and outgrowing those who could stand their ground during the pandemic. However, lacking a marketing department and strategy has led them to lose direction. Therefore, the researcher developed three solutions to help further them develop effective marketing strategies, optimize their efforts, and increase the company's sales and market share. The solutions are 1) Create a Marketing Department and Construct Marketing and Content Plan; 2) Establish a presence in Tiktok; 3) Collaborate with Key Opinion Leaders.

This study will support the industry of modern ethnic, traditional products to grow significantly when nationalism and pride in using local products are rising. To help a rising fashion brand, in this case, Herviolet, in the theme of modern ethnic products, the study analyzes the effects of the business and legal environment, the company environment, social media, and their competitors. This study adds to the field of management science by presenting a comprehensive problem-solving methodology that covers the stages of problem analysis, formulation of the root cause problem, and development of numerous methods for delivering the most effective solutions to related problems.

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