

BRAND POSITIONING STRATEGY THROUGH DIGITAL MARKETING OF COMMERCIAL RICE PRODUCTS AT PERUM BULOG JEMBER BRANCH

STRATEGI BRAND POSITIONING MELALUI DIGITAL MARKETING PRODUK BERAS KOMERSIAL DI PERUM BULOG CABANG JEMBER

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ABSTRAK

Perkembangan teknologi informasi, khususnya dalam bidang digital marketing, telah membawa perubahan signifikan dalam cara perusahaan berinteraksi dengan konsumen dan membangun citra merek perusahaan, termasuk Perum BULOG Cabang Jember. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk meningkatkan kesadaran merek "Beras Kita" sebagai produk beras komersial premium BULOG dan memperkuat posisi merek di benak konsumen dengan strategi brand positioning yang meliputi perancangan visual identitas, yaitu desain logo dan tagline baru, serta melalui strategi digital marketing untuk produk beras komersial premium di Perum BULOG Cabang Jember. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode Multi-Expert Multi-Criteria Decision Making (MEMCDM) untuk pemilihan logo dan tagline, serta metode Analytical Hierarchy Process (AHP) untuk menentukan prioritas strategi digital marketing. Strategi digital marketing yang direkomendasikan dan memiliki prioritas tertinggi adalah penggunaan influencer lokal. Implementasi strategi ini diharapkan dapat memperbaiki citra merek yang kurang baik dan memperkuat posisi merek "Beras Kita" di pasar.

Kata kunci: AHP, beras kita, brand positioning, digital marketing, MEMCDM, perum BULOG

ABSTRACT

The development of information technology, especially in digital marketing, has brought significant changes in how companies interact with consumers and build company brand images, including Perum BULOG Jember Branch. This research aims to increase awareness of the "Beras Kita" brand as BULOG's premium rice product and strengthen the brand's position in the minds of consumers with a brand positioning strategy that includes designing a visual identity, namely designing a new logo and tagline, as well as through a digital marketing strategy for premium rice products. premium at Perum BULOG Jember Branch. This research uses the ME-MCDM (Multi-Expert Multi-Criteria Decision Making) method for selecting logos and taglines and the AHP (Analytical Hierarchy Process) method to determine digital marketing strategy priorities. The recommended digital marketing strategy, which has the highest priority, is using local influencers. Implementing this strategy is expected to improve the unfavorable brand image and strengthen the position of the "Beras Kita" brand in the market.

Keywords: AHP, beras kita, brand positioning, digital marketing, MEMCDM, Perum BULOG

INTRODUCTION

Advancements in information technology, particularly digital marketing, have transformed how companies engage with consumers and shape their brand image (Sarwar et al., 2019). Digital marketing utilizes digital technology and online platforms to reach target audiences, providing opportunities for companies to get closer to consumers through various strategies such as influencers, social media, Search Engine Optimization (SEO), and online customer service (Smith et al., 2012).

Perum BULOG faces significant challenges in responding to the increasingly competitive market dynamics. In addition to its public service duties, Perum BULOG has business duties to seek profit.

Perum BULOG has two products: premium rice product and PSO (Public Service Obligation) rice. While the premium commercial rice is recognized for its high quality, its brand image is adversely affected by consumer perceptions of PSO rice. Many consumers associate BULOG's commercial rice with PSO rice, often viewed as lower quality due to its history of being distributed as subsidized food aid. This negative perception not only undermines the perceived value of the premium commercial rice but also creates a stigma around the 'Beras Kita' brand, making it difficult for it to establish a distinct and positive identity in the market (Tampubolon et al., 2019).

Although consumers recognize the quality of BULOG's premium commercial rice, brand

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awareness of 'Beras Kita' remains low. This low awareness is primarily due to ineffective promotion and a weak brand identity, characterized by a less striking logo and an unappealing tagline. Additionally, the association of 'Beras Kita' with PSO rice, which is perceived as lower quality, further complicates its brand positioning (Keller, 2013). Firm logos and taglines can strengthen the brand image in the minds of consumers, helping consumers remember the brand better (Aaker, 2012).

A brand positioning strategy is an attempt to create and maintain a brand image in the minds of consumers that can differentiate it from competitors (Kotler *et al.*, 2018). Logos and taglines that are simple, memorable, and relevant to consumers are essential in creating a strong brand identity (Airey, 2014). Current conditions show that digital marketing strategies are increasingly crucial in building and maintaining brand image (Jeswani, 2023). Effective digital marketing strategies can help increase brand awareness and strengthen brand positioning (Chaffey and Smith, 2022).

This research objective is to formulate a brand positioning strategy by designing a new logo and tagline as well as a digital marketing strategy for BULOG Jember Branch's "Beras Kita" commercial rice product. The integrated strategy is expected to increase brand awareness, strengthen positive image, and compete better in the market. This improved strategy can build product brand awareness and consumer brand loyalty (Wei *et al.*, 2023).

RESEARCH AND METHODS

This research has two stages: identifying brand positioning and designing a digital marketing strategy. The identification of brand positioning is focused on visualizing the brand identity by designing a new logo and tagline. Furthermore, the design of digital marketing strategies aims to improve the brand image in the minds of consumers. Data collection was conducted by observation and in interviews with an internal staff of the BULOG Jember Branch as informants, consumers, and experts. The experts included the head of PMO (Project Management Office) of Perum BULOG central, the deputy branch manager of Perum BULOG Jember, and the Assistant Manager of Commercial Business.

The design of the logo and tagline comes from discussions with experts and literature reviews as material for design ideas. The research stages are presented in Figure 1.

Identify Brand Positioning

Identification of brand positioning at Perum BULOG Jember Branch uses descriptive methods. Mason (2018) emphasizes that descriptive methods help researchers collect rich and in-depth qualitative data, which is essential for comprehensively

understanding respondents' perspectives. The decision-making process for selecting a new logo and tagline alternatives was conducted using the ME-MCDM method developed by Yager, (1993) which allows for evaluating various criteria to choose the most suitable options based on consumer preferences and organizational goals. ME-MCDM (*Multi Expert-Multi Criteria Decision Making*) is a method used to resolve complex situations where decisions must be made by considering various criteria that are often independent or conflicting (Mardani *et al.*, 2016). According to Marimin, (2004), the steps for determining alternative logos and taglines with the ME-MCDM method are as follows:

1. Determine the criteria and alternatives for the logo and tagline
2. Determining the level of importance of criteria using 7 Fuzzy rating scales, such as Perfect, Very High, High, Medium, Low, Very Low, Least
3. Calculate the negation of the criterion importance level using the formula:

$$Neg(W_k) = W_q - k + 1$$
 Description:
 $k = \text{Indeks}$
 $q = \text{Number of scales}$
4. Aggregation process on criteria using the formula:

$$V_{ij} = \min [Neg(W_{ak}) \vee V_{ij}(a_k)]$$
5. Aggregation process on experts using the formula:

$$Q_k = \text{Int} \left[1 + \left(k * \frac{q-1}{r} \right) \right]$$
 Description:
 $q = \text{Number of scales}$
 $r = \text{Total Expert}$
6. Process of aggregating criteria on experts by using the formula

$$V_i = f(V_j) = \max [Q_j \wedge b_j]$$

Knowing the results of the selected alternative with the highest score.

Designing a Digital Marketing Strategy

This *digital marketing* strategy design uses the AHP (*Analytical Hierarchy Process*) method. This method is used to assist in overcoming complexity when having to make choices among several alternatives. AHP determines each element's relative weight or priority in the hierarchy (Saaty, 2008). This method can be a tool for prioritizing alternative *digital marketing* strategies to improve the brand image (Nguyen *et al.*, 2021). To make decisions in an organized manner that generates priorities, the decision-making process should be decomposed into the following steps (Saaty, 2008):

1. Define the problem and determine the type of knowledge required.
2. Structure the decision hierarchy: Begin from the top with the overall goal, followed by the objectives from a broader perspective, move through the intermediate levels (criteria on which subsequent elements depend), and down to the lowest level (usually consisting of the alternatives).

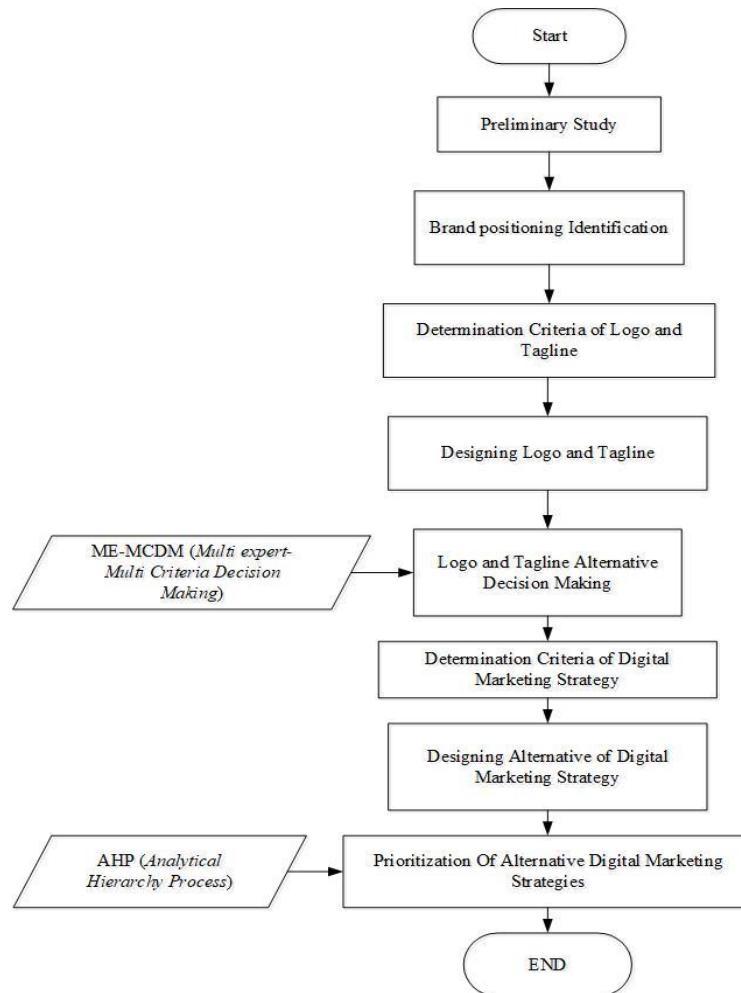


Figure 1. Research stages for identifying brand positioning and designing a digital marketing strategy for commercial rice products at Perum BULOG Jember Branch

3. Construct a set of pairwise comparison matrices
4. Use the priorities obtained from the comparisons to weigh the priorities at the level immediately below; perform this for every element. Then, for each element in the lower level, sum its weighted values to obtain its overall or global priority. The scale used is based on the fundamental scale of absolute AHP numbers ranging from 1 to 9 (Saaty, 2008). This scale reflects varying degrees of importance, with 1 indicating equal importance between two elements and nine indicating that one element is extremely more important than the other.
5. Calculating VE (Eigen Vector) using the formula:

$$VE_i = \sqrt[n]{\prod a_{ij}}$$
6. Calculation of Priority Vector with the formula:

$$VP_i = \frac{VE}{\sum VE}$$
7. Calculation of the maximum eigenvalue with the formula:
 Vektor Antara (VA) = $a_{ij} \times VP$ which is $VA = (VA_{ai})$
 $VB = VA/VP$ mean $VB = (V_{bi})$

7. Perhitungan konsistensi rasio dengan formula
 Consistency Index $CI = (\lambda \max - n) / (n - 1)$
 Consistency Rasio $CR = (CI) / (RI)$

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Brand Positioning Identification

Perum BULOG Commercial Rice, under the brand name “Beras Kita,” is a premium, high-quality commercial rice from Perum BULOG. The existence of this rice is due to BULOG's commercial duties to seek profit. The target market of this product is the middle to upper class. It is offered through various distribution channels, including traditional markets, grocery stores, supermarkets, and e-commerce. The product has a broken percentage of less than 20%. It is produced with reasonable quality control using modern milling equipment to produce white and fluffy rice without groats from local farmers. Despite its quality, the product is often affected by the negative image of PSO (Public Service Obligation) rice, which causes a lack of consumer awareness and hinders potential sales and market acceptance.

PSO rice is a subsidized rice product due to Perum BULOG's service duties. PSO rice is generally distributed through various subsidy programs, such as food assistance initiatives, rice price stabilization, or other social assistance programs. The availability of PSO rice is usually determined by government policy and set periodically, such as monthly or quarterly, by the social assistance distribution schedule. This rice has a damage rate of >20%, so many parties claim that this rice is poor quality. The negative image of PSO rice attached to premium rice products affects consumer perceptions, making "Beras Kita" products challenging to accept by the public and difficult to compete with its competitors. Consumers who do not recognize the brand tend to choose products they already know or have a better image. This makes it difficult for "Beras Kita" to compete with other products that are better known in the market, resulting in limited market share and decreased sales potential.

The results of identifying the brand positioning of the premium commercial rice product "Beras Kita" at Perum BULOG Jember Branch for improving marketing strategies and strengthening brand positioning in the minds of consumers. Proper brand positioning can help improve a poor brand image in the eyes of consumers (Solomon *et al.*, 2014). By effectively communicating the values and advantages of "Beras Kita," such as the quality of white and fluffy, with good quality control and commitment to rice products originating from local farmers through logo visualization and a strong tagline, the company can change consumer perceptions. The results showed that many consumers do not or are not aware, even unfamiliar, of the logo and tagline "Beras Kita." The current tagline is considered less evocative and does not reflect the product's premium quality. Effective logos and taglines should be memorable, attractive, relevant to the target audience, and able to convey the product's or brand's core message (Keller, 2013).

The visuals of the logo and tagline serve as tools to create a strong first impression and a memorable memory. A unique and simple logo and a clear and catchy tagline can help differentiate "Beras Kita" from its competitors and make this brand more memorable to consumers. According to Kotler and Keller (2016), effective brand positioning requires consistent efforts to differentiate products from competitors and instill a positive image in the minds of consumers.

The logo and tagline of "Beras Kita" have not been able to create a deep impression and are different from competitors in the aspect of uniqueness, so the position of this product compared to competitors is still weak because the current logo and tagline are not able to reflect the advantages and premium quality. Therefore, it is necessary to redesign the logo and tagline to align more with consumer expectations and reflect the premium quality "Beras Kita" offers.

Visual Identity Design of New Logo

In visually designing a new logo for the commercial rice product "Beras Kita" at Perum BULOG Jember Branch, the results showed that three design alternatives needed to be designed. These three design alternatives aim to provide various options that can be evaluated based on predetermined criteria, such as easy to understand, visual appeal (aesthetics), compatibility with the brand, memorable, consistent, and relevance to the target audience's level of importance criteria. The presentation of several logo design alternatives can assist companies in choosing a logo that best fits the brand identity and consumer preferences (Wheeler, 2013).

Based on the research results, three alternative designs of the "Beras Kita" logo are designed to reflect the values and messages Perum BULOG Jember Branch's premium commercial rice wants to convey through discussions with experts, as seen in Figure 2.




 <p style="text-align: center;">Logo 1</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;">Logo 2</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;">Logo 3</p>
<p>Description:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The use of green color means growth and coolness. 2. The shape of the upward curve, which represents the supporting fingers, reflects the cooperation of various stakeholders. 3. Britanic Bold Font creates an elegant and robust impression. 	<p>Description:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Green color means coolness, growth, and health. 2. The use of blue color in "Beras Kita" writing has a meaning of trust. 3. Britanic bold font: The selection of this font has a thickness and firmness that the viewer will easily read 	<p>Description:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Orange color gives a friendly and warm impression. 2. The circular green in "Beras Kita" writing reflects trust and coolness. 3. Suifak font: This font selection has a thickness and firmness that the viewer will easily read, creating the impression of modern elegance.

Figure 2. Alternative logo design "Beras Kita"

Based on calculations using the ME-MCDM (*Multi Expert-Multi Criteria Decision Making*) method from the results of aggregating criteria on experts, it shows that alternative logo 1 has a value of S (medium), alternative logo 2 has a value of S (medium) and alternative logo 3 has a value of T (high). That is why Logo Alternative 3 was chosen as the new logo design.

Logo alternative 3 was chosen because it best fits the criteria for visualizing a unique brand identity through logo design. It conveys the message and value of the “Beras Kita” brand, which reflects premium quality and a commitment to the sustainability of rice from local farmers. The design is visualized with a simple and elegant design using colors and fonts that reflect a modern impression but still have classic elements. The selection of logo alternative 3 shows that the alternative can fulfill the criteria well, especially in relevance to the target audience, and is easy to understand and remember. According to Geismar *et al.*, (2011), logo design emphasizes the importance of simplicity and compatibility with brand identity to have an inherent level of awareness in the minds of consumers.

New Tagline Design

Based on the agreement with the expert, the selection of 3 alternatives in the design was carried out to provide sufficient variety and choice in the evaluation. Three alternatives provide flexibility to ensure that the final solution is the most suitable and effective in achieving the desired goals. Based on the existing criteria, three alternative taglines were obtained. Here are the alternative taglines that were created:

1. “Balance of Taste, Family Happiness, Our Rice”.
2. “The Right Price, The Right Quality, Our Rice is the Solution”.
3. “Quality Guaranteed, Happy Family, Our Rice”.

In selecting a tagline to strengthen the brand positioning strategy, the MEMCDM (Multi Expertise Multi-Criteria Decision Making) method is a foundation for informed and structured decision-making. The tagline must reflect the brand's central message, namely premium quality at affordable prices and sustainability of rice with local farmers, and meet predetermined criteria (Ismiyadi *et al.*, 2022). Based on the aggregation results of the experts, the three alternatives above have the following values: Alternative 1 has a medium value (S), alternative 2 has a high value (T), and Alternative 3 has a medium value (S).

Based on the assessment, the second tagline alternative is the most suitable and can be chosen to strengthen the *brand positioning* strategy. The selection of the second alternative shows that it can fulfill the criteria well, especially in terms of uniqueness, memorability, consistency with the

branding strategy, and relevance to consumers. Regarding relevance to the brand, the tagline reflects the values the “Beras Kita” brand desires: quality, affordable prices, and reliable solutions for consumers. Using clear and direct language, the tagline is also relatively simple and easy to remember.

The second alternative conveys a reasonable price and good quality that can attract consumer attention. The balance between price and quality and reflecting brand values has the potential to create an emotional connection with consumers (Kotler and Keller, 2016). Thus, the second alternative was chosen because it can fulfill the criteria well and potentially strengthen the “Beras Kita” brand image in the eyes of consumers.

Digital Marketing Strategy

Brand positioning through identity visualization, such as logos and taglines, is key to creating a strong impression in the minds of consumers. In the digital era, digital marketing strategies are essential in strengthening these efforts (Faisal and Ekawanto, 2022). This research uses the AHP method to determine the priority of digital marketing strategies. The following is a hierarchical process of AHP's digital marketing strategy presented in Figure 3.

Based on Figure 3, it is known that the alternative digital marketing strategy that has the highest priority is the utilization of influencers, with the highest weight of 0.357. This strategy utilizes local influencers who can share the new “Beras Kita” logo and tagline with their audiences, strengthening brand impressions and increasing consumer awareness. Yusof and Ariffin (2016) said that brands promoted by influencers tend to get greater attention from consumers.

Local influencers are particularly effective due to their close connection with the community, reflecting the cultural and geographical nuances of the target market. Research shows that consumers are more responsive to endorsements from figures they perceive as relatable and trustworthy (Yusof & Ariffin, 2016). Given that the Jember region has its unique cultural landscape, utilizing local influencers allows BULOG to resonate more deeply with consumers by aligning brand messages with local values and interests (Audrezet *et al.*, 2020). This localized approach enhances brand credibility and encourages community engagement, making it easier for consumers to differentiate 'Beras Kita' from PSO or subsidized rice products.

Additionally, Customer service via WhatsApp is also an alternative that can be chosen to increase brand awareness of "Beras Kita". Using customer service through WhatsApp can increase consumer engagement and provide convenience in interacting with the brand.

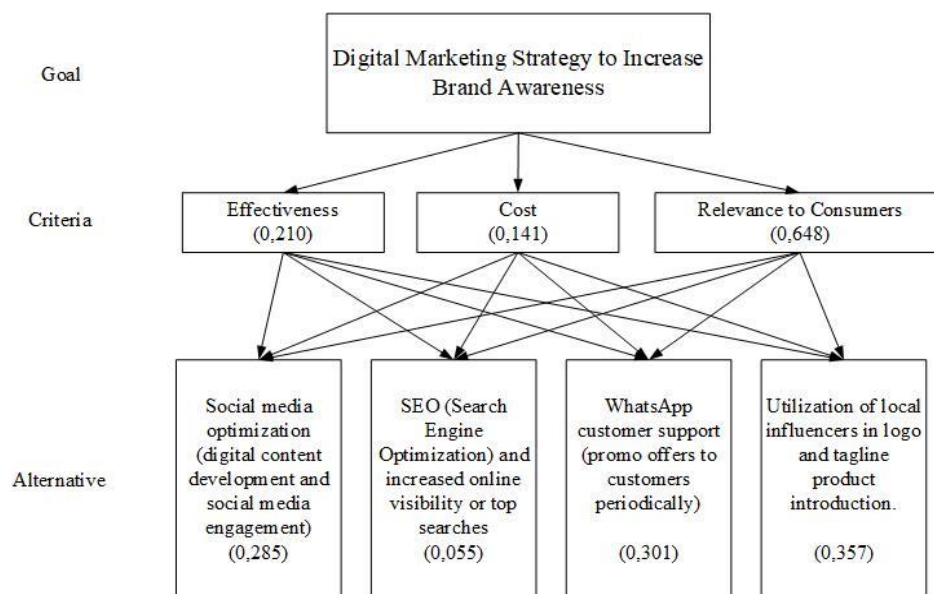


Figure 3. Hierarchy of digital marketing strategy for commercial rice products at Perum BULOG Jember branch

Utilizing WhatsApp as a customer service platform to interact directly with consumers, providing information about the advantages and values of “Beras Kita”, which are reflected in the logo and tagline. WhatsApp is one of the most popular communication platforms in the world, so utilizing it as a customer service channel can increase consumer convenience and satisfaction (Dixon, 2024). WhatsApp allows for more personalized two-way communication. Personalization of customers can show brand loyalty towards increasing customer satisfaction (Kumar and Shah, 2014).

The social media optimization alternative has a lower weight (0.285) but remains an important strategy in this context. Support from social media can significantly expand brand reach and increase consumer engagement. Integrating influencer marketing with social media strategies can create a more holistic approach, where influencers can amplify brand messages through their platforms while driving traffic to Perum BULOG's social media pages. This synergy can lead to a more cohesive brand narrative and increase consumer engagement. According to Tuten *et al.* (2020), social media facilitates more direct and personal brand-consumer interactions. Social media has become one of the effective marketing tools for reaching the right target audience and building closer relationships with consumers. Integrating influencer marketing with other digital strategies is becoming increasingly essential for businesses of all sizes, enhances brand visibility, and fosters deeper consumer engagement by creating a cohesive narrative across multiple platforms. Influencers can share authentic experiences with products, encouraging their followers to interact, share, and engage with the brand (Jeswani, 2023).

The SEO (Search Engine Optimization) alternative has a lower weight of 0.055. The SEO strategy received the lowest score and the last priority because, in the context of this research, the main focus is on strengthening brand awareness of Perum BULOG's commercial rice product “Beras Kita.” The Jember Branch of Perum BULOG requires a quick increase in brand awareness, a strategy that provides faster results. In addition, SEO requires deep technical understanding and consistent content updates to stay relevant to the ever-changing search engine algorithms. According to Chaffey *et al.*, (2019), marketing on social media and instant messaging services allows for more personalized and quick interactions, which is crucial for building brand awareness and loyalty. Therefore, SEO strategies are placed in the last position in the digital marketing strategy priority hierarchy.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

Conclusions

1. Identify brand positioning using a new logo design and tagline. The selected logo is alternative logo 3, characterized by its simple, elegant, and modern design. The orange evokes a friendly and warm impression, while the circular green in the "Beras Kita" text symbolizes trust and coolness. Additionally, the choice of Suifak font, with its thickness and firmness, enhances readability and conveys a sense of modern elegance. The design concept and colors carried are relevant to the values and messages that the product wants to convey, namely premium quality and simple shapes that can easily stick in the minds of consumers. The tagline chosen is the second alternative, which reads “Pas Harganya, Kelas Kualitasnya, Beras

Kita Solusinya.” This tagline best reflects the brand message or value regarding competitive prices and good quality.

- The digital marketing strategy with the highest priority value is the utilization of local influencers. The local influencer strategy can allow Perum BULOG to increase its brand visibility, expand market share, and create a positive impression in the minds of consumers. Perum BULOG should regularly assess and adapt its influencer partnerships based on performance metrics and consumer feedback to capitalize on this dynamic nature of digital marketing. Additionally, it is recommended that BULOG invest in training for influencers to ensure their messaging aligns with the brand's values and explore collaborations across multiple digital platforms to maximize reach and engagement.

Recommendation

Recommendations in this study conduct a structured evaluation of *digital marketing* strategies by changing market *trends* and consumer responses so that companies continue to improve the effectiveness of strategies from time to time. Then, they should carry out active socialization or broadcasting in branding the logo and product tagline “Beras Kita” to increase product brand awareness.

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