

Analysis of Promotion Strategies through the Addition of Play Areas with Cats at Mostcat Cafe Batam

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ABSTRACT

Mostcat Cafe is the first cafe in Batam that integrates the concept of direct interaction with cats. Adopting the "*cat cafe*" model popular in Taiwan since 1998, this cafe offers a relaxing experience while enjoying food and drinks, as well as the opportunity to interact with various breeds of cats. This study aims to analyze the marketing strategy implemented by Mostcat Cafe, including the Marketing Mix elements: product, price, promotion, and location. The method used is a qualitative approach with in-depth interviews and field observations. The results showed that the addition of a play area with cats increased customer loyalty and frequency of visits, and the price set was in line with the experience provided. Mostcat Cafe succeeded in creating a solution for cat owners and providing a space for cat lovers to gather, thus strengthening the cafe's position in the thematic culinary industry in Batam. This research is expected to provide valuable insights for similar business owners in developing effective marketing strategies.

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Introduction

Mostcat Cafe is a cafe that combines the concept of a cafe with direct interaction with cats for the first time in Batam City as well as a distinctive feature of this cafe compared to other cafes. This concept was first introduced in Taiwan in 1998 (Sri Hariyatmi, 2022). The concept combines aspects of relaxation and enjoyment of food or beverage consumption with the opportunity to interact with cats, which provides added value for customers.

This cafe has an attention-grabbing innovation that uses the concept of a "*cat cafe*". This growth is particularly noticeable in big cities and tourist areas, which have become centers for the emergence of *thematic* cafes, including cafes that present unique concepts such as cat cafes. A thematic cafe is a type of cafe that is designed with a specific concept or theme that is unique and interesting (Afida Rossa, 2024). A contributing factor to the popularity of cat cafés is the constraints faced by some urban residents regarding pet ownership, mainly due to space limitations and housing regulations that do not allow the keeping of animals (Robinson, 2019). As such, cat cafés offer an alternative for individuals who wish to experience the presence of a pet without having to assume the full responsibilities of an owner, while creating a unique recreational experience.

Mostcat Cafe's cat play area is located right on the second floor, where customers can play with a variety of cats of different breeds. According to the owner, there are 12 cats consisting of Persian, Bengal, Main Coon, Himalayan, Munchkin and Domestic breeds. This area is specially designed for visitors who want to interact directly with cats, whether they are well-groomed cats or street cats that have been rescued and cared for.

This floor is also utilized as a "*cat hotel*", an innovative cat boarding facility. Visitors can not only enjoy food and drinks while interacting with the friendly cats at the café, but also have the option to drop off their own cats while traveling. What sets the *cat hotel* apart from other pet boarding services is the flexibility of the rental duration, the affordable price and the fact that the boarded cat can play with the cats at Mostcat Cafe. Cat owners can rent a room from a matter of hours to a matter of days. This system greatly accommodates the needs of cat owners who may only require short-term care, for example when attending events that do not allow the presence of pets. This concept not only offers a practical solution for cat owners, but also creates a unique setting where cat lovers can gather, share experiences, and enjoy time with their beloved pets in one location.

In this case marketing is needed to build promotions to increase the number of visitors. Marketing itself is a social and managerial process in which individuals and groups seek to fulfill their needs and desires through the creation and exchange of value with other parties. According to (Masari, 2020) Marketing includes aspects such as promotion, product quality, and services offered by a business. The main element in marketing is known as the Marketing Mix, which consists of product, price, promotion, and location (Fakhrudin et al., 2022).

Research Methods

According to (Dr. H. Zuchri Abdussamad, S.I.K., 2021) Qualitative research is a type of research in social science that raises natural paradigms and is principled in the theory of phenomena to investigate social problems in an area. This research uses a qualitative approach with the Mostcat Cafe case study. This method was chosen to gain an in-depth understanding of the perspectives and experiences of cafe owners in developing their business. The main participant in this research is the owner of Mostcat Cafe Batam, based on direct knowledge and experience in managing the cafe and planning business development strategies. Data collection will be conducted through structured in-depth interviews with cafe owners. The interview will last 60-90 minutes. In addition to interviews, researchers will also conduct field observations at Mostcat Cafe to understand the physical context of operations, and customer interactions. These observations will help in validating and enriching the interview data.

Data validity will be ensured through several strategies, including triangulation of data sources (interviews, observations, and surveys), member checking (verification of interpretations with café owners), thick description (detailed description of the research context), and researcher reflexivity (maintaining awareness of personal biases). The research will adhere to the ethical principles of research, including consent from café owners, confidentiality of data, the right to withdraw research from the study and storing data securely. Through this methodological approach, the research aims to generate rich and contextualized insights into the analysis of promotional strategies at Mostcat Cafe Batam, with a particular focus on the addition of a play area with cats. The results of this study are expected to make a valuable contribution to the thematic cafe management literature and provide practical understanding for similar business owners.

Results and Discussion

Based on researcher observations, Mostcat Cafe has implemented the Marketing Mix effectively where each element has a major influence on consumer behavior.

1. Product

According to (Kotler & Armstrong, 2018) a product is defined as anything offered to the market that can satisfy a want or need that can influence consumer purchasing decisions. Since its inception, Mostcat Cafe has strived to provide a unique and different experience for its visitors by creating a comfortable atmosphere, while bringing happiness through direct interaction with cats. In addition to a place to play with cats Mostcat Cafe also provides a "*cat hotel*" an innovative cat daycare facility. Where in addition to playing with cats they can also leave their pets.

Based on (Hsiang Chun-Lin, 2022) direct interaction between customers and café thematics, such as cats, has been shown to increase visitor satisfaction levels, which in turn leads to engagement that can potentially increase the frequency of repeat visits. This suggests that interactive experiences have an important role in driving customer loyalty and are one of the effective strategies in advancing the culinary business.



Figure 1. Mostcat Cafe second floor

Source: Researcher's personal data, 2024

2. Price

According to Husein in (Syarif, 2019) price is the value that consumers exchange for the benefits of owning or using a product or service whose value is determined by the buyer through the bargaining process set by the seller.

With an entrance ticket price of IDR 50,000 for adults on *weekdays* and IDR 55,000 on *weekends* while IDR 40,000 for children on *weekdays* and IDR 45,000 on *weekends* and customers can also purchase cat food for IDR 7,000, customers can enter the cat play area available at Mostcat Cafe and enjoy playtime for one hour. In addition, every ticket purchase also comes with a bonus of one *mini cake*.

In addition, cat owners can rent a room from a matter of hours to a matter of days, with rates starting at IDR 65,000. This system greatly accommodates the needs of cat owners who may only require short-term care, for example when attending events that do not allow the presence of pets. This concept not only offers a practical solution for cat owners, but also creates a unique setting where cat lovers can gather, share experiences and enjoy time with their beloved pets in one location.



Figure 2. Entry price

Source: Researcher's personal data, 2024

3. Promotion

According to Buchari in (Tulandi, 2018) promotion is a form of marketing communication which is an activity to disseminate information, influence, and remind the target market of the company and its products to be willing to accept, buy and be loyal to the products offered by the company to those concerned. Promotional activities carried out by Mostcat Cafe are the use of social media such as Instagram and Tiktok, organizing themed events, and collaborating with cat lover communities.

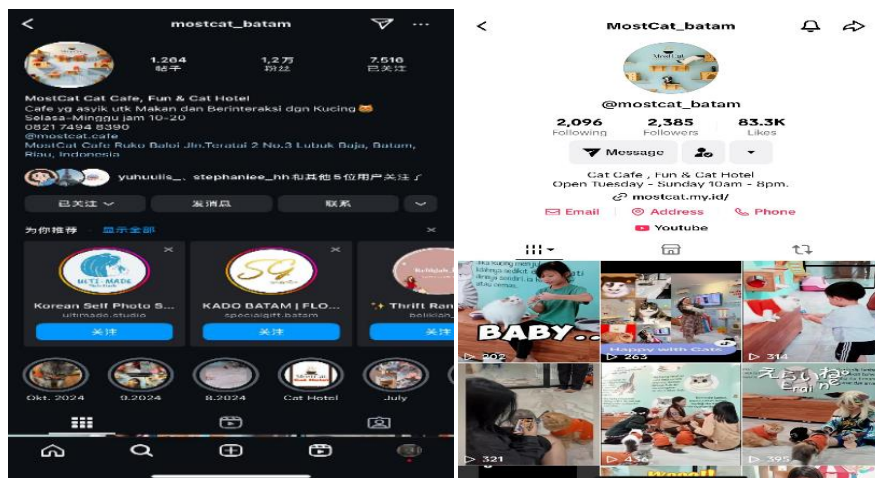


Figure 3. Social Media

Source: Researcher's personal data, 2024

4. Location (Place)

According to Raharjani in (Syahidin, 2022) location strategy is an important value in consumer behavior, companies must choose a strategic location in placing a business location in an area close to the crowd and community activities. Mostcat Cafe, a cafe located at Baloi Shophouse, Teratai Street 2 No.3 Lubuk Baja Kota, Batam, Riau, Indonesia, has been established since December 19, 2021.



Figure 4. Mostcat Cafe

Source: Researcher's personal data

The following are the results of interviews and discussions obtained by researchers from the owner of Mostcat Cafe.

1. What prompted you to create the *cat playground* addition at Mostcat Cafe Batam?

As consumer interest in animal experiences increases, cat-themed cafés offer added value to customers through unique interactive experiences. Previous research emphasizes the importance of memorable experiences in increasing customer loyalty and encouraging repeat visits. (Darmawati, 2024). This was confirmed by an interview with the owner of MostCat Cafe, who stated that "The motivation behind adding a play area with cats is to enhance the customer experience through direct interaction with cats, with the hope that this move can attract more visitors, especially families with children and cat lovers."

Customer response to the addition of the play area has also been very positive, especially among children and cat lovers. According to the owner, customers feel more at home and enjoy spending time at the café, leading to increased visitation time and more enthusiasm. This is in line with the findings of (Crossman, 2020) which suggest that interaction with animals can help reduce stress levels and improve customer mood, an important factor in the hospitality industry.

2. Is the price set by Mostcat Cafe in accordance with what customers get?

From the interviews it was also found that the play area with cats directly contributed, the owner of the café reported, "We saw a significant increase in sales." This suggests that increased customer interaction with the physical environment of the café has an effect on consumer behavior, which encourages them to spend more time and money during the visit. With an increase in the number of visitors and a longer time. "By paying an entrance ticket they can spend 1 hour playing with the cats at Mostcat Cafe and also with each entrance ticket purchase customers get a bonus *mini cake* that can be enjoyed after playing with the cats.

3. What forms of promotion have Mostcat Cafe done?

To maximize the results of this innovation, MostCat Cafe also implemented several well-planned promotional strategies, including the use of social media, organizing themed events, and collaborating with cat-loving communities. The owner stated that "We actively posted photos and videos of the cats in the new play area through our Instagram and TikTok accounts, and organized events such as cat birthdays, cat photo competitions, and cat care workshops." This proved to be

effective in increasing customer engagement and building brand awareness. Social media-based promotions have a significant impact on customer engagement, as the visualization of interactions with cats can attract consumer attention and expand audience reach digitally. (Prisca, 2019).

4. What are the advantages of this cafe compared to other cafes?

It is known that the increase in the number of cafes reaches 15-20% per year (Kristian, 2019). This growth is particularly noticeable in big cities and tourist areas, which are centers for the emergence of thematic cafés, including cafés with unique concepts such as cat cafés. This phenomenon reflects the growing public interest in cafés that offer different and value-added experiences, both in terms of ambience and social interaction. This approach demonstrates the café's commitment to animal welfare, which is an important part of the success of any business that involves interaction with animals, as outlined by (Von Essen, 2020) in their study on animal welfare-friendly business practices.

As one of the fast-growing cities in terms of industry and tourism, Batam is also following this trend with the emergence of various thematic cafes that try to attract consumers with innovative concepts. One such example is Mostcat Cafe, a cafe that combines the concept of a cafe with hands-on interaction with cats. The owner states "Since its establishment, Mostcat Cafe has strived to bring a different experience to its patrons, by offering a cozy atmosphere while bringing an element of happiness through interaction with cats. This sets it apart from other cafes that generally only provide facilities to consume food and drinks.

Conclusion

Overall, the addition of a cat play area at Mostcat Cafe Batam proved to be a successful promotional strategy through the addition of a cat play area. The findings of this study can provide important insights for other business owners who wish to adopt a similar concept, although further research is needed to understand the long-term impact of this strategy on business sustainability and Mostcat Cafe has effectively implemented the Marketing Mix in each of its elements namely product, price, promotion and location which are arranged in a structured and clear manner.

It is hoped that Mostcat Cafe can provide package offers to consumers that include entrance tickets and food at promotional prices that can be given at certain hours so as to attract customers to visit. From the location aspect, it can be done by opening branches in other areas that can expand consumer reach, while in terms of products Mostcat Cafe can increase the variety of services by creating more interactive play facilities for visitors, especially play areas for children such as cat care classes and creative *workshops* to educate children about responsibility in caring for cats.

Future researchers can discuss several aspects to deepen understanding of the comparative study of Mostcat Cafe's promotional strategies with similar cafes in other cities so as to see differences in strategies and consumer references in various locations, analyze the long-term impact of adding a play area with cats on customer loyalty which can help assess the effectiveness of the strategy. It is hoped that these suggestions can provide insights for the development of a more effective and sustainable thematic cafe business.

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