

THE STUDY OF TWO AFFILIATED MODERN STORES AS AN EMPHASIS AND BRAND DIFFERENTIATION

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Abstract

It is undeniable that nowadays minimarkets are getting more numerous, Alfamidi and Alfamart seem to have the same thing, but in fact the two minimarkets have differences in their marketing strategies. The purpose of this study is to determine the strategy of developing modern retail Alfamidi as a supermarket compact through the promotion of the logo, tagline, mascot, for the purpose of captivating consumers' hearts and becoming the Top of Mind. This study uses a qualitative approach with descriptive and exploratory approaches, namely collecting data based on these factors to find out their roles. The results showed that in terms of product marketing strategies, Alfamidi added a variety of products that are more segmented and varied than other competing retailers. In terms of branding, Alfamidi uses the tagline "Satisfied Shopping at Economical Prices, with a mascot that was created by giving a special touch so that it sticks firmly in the minds of the people. This is part of a differentiation strategy, or concrete steps in communicating the Alfamidi brand that is unique and different from other retail trademarks. However, the facts in the field show that Alfamidi's product marketing strategy and branding communication strategy, even though they have been able to present product uniqueness and customer enjoyment, have triggered awareness of commitment and love for the brand, but have not played a significant role in realizing customer loyalty to the brand (brand loyalty).

Keywords: *Differentiation Strategy, Branding, Brand Awareness*

Introduction

At present the retail industry still shows positive growth, if viewed from its history, in the 1960s retail which developed was a traditional market, then changed to a more modern supermarket in the 1970s, shopping was more convenient because consumers could choose, pick up their products independently and payment using the point of sale cashier system to facilitate transactions, the sales area has used air conditioning, the neat arrangement of products according to type makes it easy for consumers to find and compare one product brand with other similar products. The development of this modern market continued into the 1980s. Large-scale supermarkets or hypermarkets, began to appear in the 1990s, consumers began to prefer to shop at hypermarkets that sell more complete and varied necessities, because retail with the hypermarket concept had a larger building area, until in the early 2000s. There was a minimarket concept and started to become a market share leader in the retail industry (Pudjianto, 2013).

Looking at the type, in general the retail industry (supermarkets) has five formats that can be distinguished from the size and facilities provided, including:

1. Small mini-market (100m² to 999m²). A minimarket is actually a kind of "grocery store" or one that sells all kinds of goods and food, which distinguishes it from a grocery store, minimarkets implement a self-service system, where the buyer takes the goods himself. Need off the shelves and pay for it at the cash register counter. For example, Alfamart, Indomaret, Ceriamart etc.
2. Midimarket, has a slightly larger size than the minimarket, the parking area provided is wider and the products offered are of more varied brands, the midimarket format already sells meat and fruits. In this format, many of the shops are open up to 24 hours or only up to 24.00 hours. An example is Alfamidi, several Giant networks that were formerly known as Hero and several Super Indo networks. Large several retailers such as Alfa group and Superindo use the term midimarket as compact supermarkets.
3. Supermarkets are of medium size (1,000m² to 4,999m²). In the supermarket format, almost all the products needed by the community are available, starting from daily necessities, bicycles, TV, cameras, furniture, clothes, fish and meat, fruits, drinks etc. For examples Giant Supermarket, Toserba Yogya (West Java), Carrefour Express, Sri Ratu (Central Java), Mirota (Yogyakarta), Macan Yaohan (North Sumatra), Foodmart, Foodmart Gourmet, Super Indo, TipTop Supermarket, Puncak Supermarket (Bangka Belitung) etc.
4. Hypermarkets are larger than the supermarket format (5,000m² and above). In addition to a more complete variety of products, the hypermarket format also offers a lifestyle of secondary needs. For examples Carrefour, Hypermart, Giant Hypermarket, Lotte Mart and others.
5. Wholesalers are more spacious (5,000m² and above), in this format all goods are available so that there is loading and unloading in the wholesale center. Examples of Indo Grosir, Makro (now Lotte Mart), and others. This section discusses the purposes of the study or research problems, the contribution to knowledge, reason

researched, formulating the problem, novelty, research gap, and hypothesis (option). Length of articles writing between 5000 to 6000 words using space of 1.15 and justify. Page size B5 with margin Left 3 cm, Up 3 cm, Right 3 cm and Bottom 3 cm.

Alfamidi (PT Midi Utama Indonesia) was founded in June 2007 which was recorded in the 2018 annual report and already has 1,440 outlets; Alfamidi offers different shopping concepts and experiences according to consumer needs. The Alfamidi concept was created to adjust people's lifestyles for changes in consumer spending from monthly shopping to weekly shopping where Alfamidi was developed with a midmarket concept. Alfamidi was born from a large retail brand that was founded in 1999 and already has 15 thousand outlets throughout Indonesia (Alfamart).

In general, both Alfamart and Alfamidi are two franchises that are under one management, namely PT Sumber Alfaria Trijaya as the shareholder. Alfamart and Alfamidi are still under the same flag that carries the Alfa brand, they both use almost the same logo and corporate colors are dominated by red. However, to balance the business side and not cause competition between the two, in determining the distance / location of the shop (zoning) is also arranged in such a way between Alfamidi outlets and Alfamart outlets so that they are not in one adjacent radius so that they can tackle or kill one another.

Alfamart and Alfamidi, are retail industry brands that are in the same group, Alfamart as the parent company because they own 86.72% of Alfamidi's shares, but both have the same goal, namely to become a one stop shopping place for people who are expected to be able to provide good services. best for the community in the form of cheap shopping places and close to where they live, but of course the management builds a different concept between Alfamart and Alfamidi. The difference between the two lies in the size of the building area, the area of the sales area and also the completeness of the product.

Research Method

Based on the problems studied, the type of research used is qualitative research with descriptive and exploratory research approaches, namely collecting data based on these factors to find their role (Arikunto, 2010). The object of research in this case is the scope or things that are the subject matter in this research. This research was conducted at the head office of Alfamidi Alam Sutera Tangerang and consumers or the community around the Alfamidi Graha Raya Tangerang shop by obtaining data from key informants and other supporting literature data. During this research,

The research period was carried out from March-July 2020. Adhering to the qualitative research characteristics above, the data source in this study was the key informants who were selected by purposive sampling (Sugiyono, 2008), namely the leaders who implement policies regarding product selection. marketing promotion, marketing communication and its implementation, researchers went directly to the data sources needed in this study. Another data source is secondary data, namely

documentation issued by the company, through social media and the company's official website and other advertising channels. This research also uses books and articles that support the research.

The subjects and objects as the unit of analysis in this study are companies and people who are the objects in this study, including: Companies, namely PT Midi Utama Indonesia Tbk (Alfamidi). A company engaged in the retail and distribution of daily necessities. The informants in this study were division leaders or Person In Charge (PIC) who carried out product selection activities and marketing and promotional communications at Alfamidi. The community or consumers around Alfamidi shop and Alfamart shop in the Graha Raya area.

Sicco Van Gelder (2005) explain that a marketing expert defines a brand strategy, "The brand strategy defines what the brand is supposed to achieve in terms of consumer attitudes and behavior". Which means that a brand strategy is everything. Things that must be achieved by a brand that related to consumer behavior patterns and attitudes. In short, brand strategy is a management strategy with the aim of building a brand or brand, this is reflected in the Brand Expression owned by the company or organization, including: brand positioning, brand identity, and brand personality.

Gelder (2005) defines Brand Positioning "a way of demonstrating a brand's advantage over and differentiation from its competition", which means that brand positioning is a way to present a brand or brand based on its advantages and differences from competitors or its competitors.

Brand positioning, according to Susanto and Wijanarko (2004), is part of a brand identity and value proposition that is continuously communicated by the superiority of the brand or brand from competing brands to target consumers. So, brand positioning (brand positioning) is a method of a company to place itself in the eyes of consumers based on the advantages and disadvantages of competing brands.

Positioning also relates to the information to be conveyed precisely so that customers have a "special" assessment of the brand or brand. If there is a wrong placement, it can be fatal and it will take a lot of time and resources to change it.

According to Gelder (2005), "Brand identity as a set of aspects that convey what a brand stands for: its background, its principles, its purpose and ambitions", which means brand identity is a collection of aspects that aim to convey the brand, the brand background, the brand principles, the goals and ambitions of the brand itself.

Brand identities are characteristics that are expected to stick in the minds of customers. When they hear or see a brand, customers will immediately get a lot of information about the brand (Sadat, 2009) A brand that has a strong identity means that it has strong differentiation. This is very important to strengthen the brand's presence in the market so that the relationship between the brand and customers can be maintained. The components of brand identity are (Janita, 2011): The elements of the brand itself (name, logo, colors, jingles, design and packaging, slogans and taglines, brand endorsers, characters, website and URL). Products (Services and all marketing activities and

supporting marketing programs) (Menayang et al., 2020). Other associations whose meaning is related to the brand (A person, place, or certain event or experience)

Gelder (2005) states that "Brand personality is developed to enhance the appeal of a brand to consumers", (Gelder, 2005) which means that brand personality is a way that aims to increase the attractiveness of brands from the outside through the eyes of consumers. Crainer dan Dearlove (2003), "Brand personality is a brand acquires a character through communication about the brand and experience of the brand and those persons identified with the brand".

Regarding Brand personality, the identification from Aaker (2004) below provides a satisfactory classification (Sadat, 2009): There are four types of brand personality: Sincerity, excitement, competence, and ruggedness).

Kotler and Keller (2009) also identified 7 personality traits: self-confidence, dominance, autonomy, defense, sociability, defensiveness and adaptability. Expressing a brand theme through its various personalities to give the customer a distinct impression, it is important to choose the one that fits most of these possibilities. Some brands that have successfully developed their personalities have not allowed themselves to be static. Their brand theme may remain, but their expression as a personality needs to continually change with competitive competition.

Data Validity Test

To test the validity of the data, this study used the theoretical triangulation method. In theoretical triangulation, the researcher uses two or more theories, namely the Hierarchy of Effects Model theory and the impression management theory to combine and ensure that the data collected has met the requirements. Theoretical triangulation also includes the use of a professional perspective to translate one or a set of data or information. The approach used in this theory triangulation uses individuals from different disciplines or positions to interpret information in the same way (draw or draw the same conclusions) and then the truth is determined. (Bachri, 2010)

Qualitative data analysis is used when the data collected in research is qualitative data. Qualitative data can be in the form of words, sentences, or narratives, both obtained from in-depth interviews and observations. (Kriyantono, 2010)

The data collected and analyzed need to be rechecked for validity, according to Cresswell (2003) data validity is the strength of qualitative research and is used to determine whether the data findings are accurate from the point of view of the researcher, participant, or reader.

Brand Communication

In line with Gelder's (2005) opinion, Schultz and Barnes (1999) added an aspect of brand communication in brand expression. As a way or form of brand communication through a visualization process so that it is easy to understand and remember by customers quickly. This step aims to create a strong memory in the customer's mind of the brand

character. Brand Communication is put in this study as a factor that makes the execution of brand expressions complete and can run well. A brand expression that has been compiled must be accompanied by a brand communication.

To be able to communicate the brand to consumers, companies use internal and external communication, namely sales promotion, events, public relations, direct marketing (sending catalogs, letters, phone, fax, or email), corporate sponsorship, namely offering products or services in collaboration with other companies as sponsors, and advertising, namely ways to introduce products or services through all kinds of advertisements. (Schultz and Barnes, 1999)

Andi M. Sadat provides a definition of brand communication. Brand Communication is an effort made by a company to communicate the uniqueness of a brand to the market using various strategies (Sadat, 2009). The goal is simple, so that customers decide to consume, be satisfied, then be loyal to the brand.

In this section, the theory of the Hierarchy of Effects Model (Sadat, 2009) explains the stages of marketing (marketing communication) in planning communication targets better, namely:

1. **Awareness:** the communicator's task is to build public awareness of the brand's existence through various media.
2. **Knowledge:** Marketers can set goals with a focus on brand knowledge to target consumers
3. **Liking:** if they don't like the brand, why don't they like it? Marketers must find the answers before determining the next communication strategy that can drive brand liking.
4. **Preference:** if the fact is that the brand is not superior to competitors, then brand communication by highlighting the advantages possessed may be the right way to achieve customer preferences.
5. **Conviction:** at this stage the brand is more than just liked, but people don't have enough confidence to consume it. So, the marketer or communicator is tasked with convincing them that choosing the brand that is offered is the right action.
6. **Purchase:** communication must be continued to encourage customers to take the final step by implementing appropriate communication strategies so that brand buying decisions actually occur.

The above steps must pay attention to the way the message is conveyed as stated by Kotler (Sadat, 2009): "In conveying communication messages, at least marketers must pay attention to four things, namely what to say (message content), how to say it logically (message structure), how to say it. through symbols (message form), and who will say it (message source)."

It is very important to understand how the target customer is moving in the stage towards readiness to buy, whether the marketer wants to put something into the

customer's mind (cognitive), change the customer's attitude (affective), or encourage the customer to act immediately.

Impression management theory, this theory was first introduced by Goffman (Goffman, 1959) with the concept of impression management, impression management is a process of being able to manage verbally and non-verbally when someone is in a social situation with the appearance of clothes, words and gestures to strengthen their impression in front of others. According to him, messages can be in the form of words, actions, dress styles, and other ways that can describe and shape the perceptions of others towards us (Mulyana, 2008).

This theory is also known as dramaturgy theory, which analyzes social using the concept of drama, such as scenarios, performance, backdrop etc. Marketing is an actor who tries to combine the characteristics of a brand and is aimed at the communicant or the public through his drama performances, in which there is a front stage (front stage), back stage (back stage), team of performers (a team involved and supporting the show), and the audience. (Public). According to the dramaturgy concept, in achieving these goals, marketing will develop behaviors that support its role as expected. Furthermore, with information that is well managed to be conveyed to the public or communicants, it can control the public's meaning of a brand. It is used to inform the public about brand identity, brand personality and brand positioning.

Results and Discussion

The retail business model is growing and developing more rapidly in Indonesia because it is driven by various factors, such as the increasing demand for consumer or community needs, shifting consumer behavior or people who tend to want it easier and avoid something that troubles them, because retail is present approaching or approaching residential places. live consumers or the community, known as picking up the ball, and another factor is the ease of investing.

The business model and values offered by retailers, especially Alfamart, are well accepted by consumers or the public, the needs and expectations of consumers or society in fulfilling shopping needs are constantly changing with changes in the level of economy, education, technology, etc. Alfamart grows by expanding to various regions and expansion by creating various retail stores with different concepts to meet the needs of consumers or the public, such as Alfamidi with a midimarket concept with a wider sales area and providing fruit, vegetable and meat products.

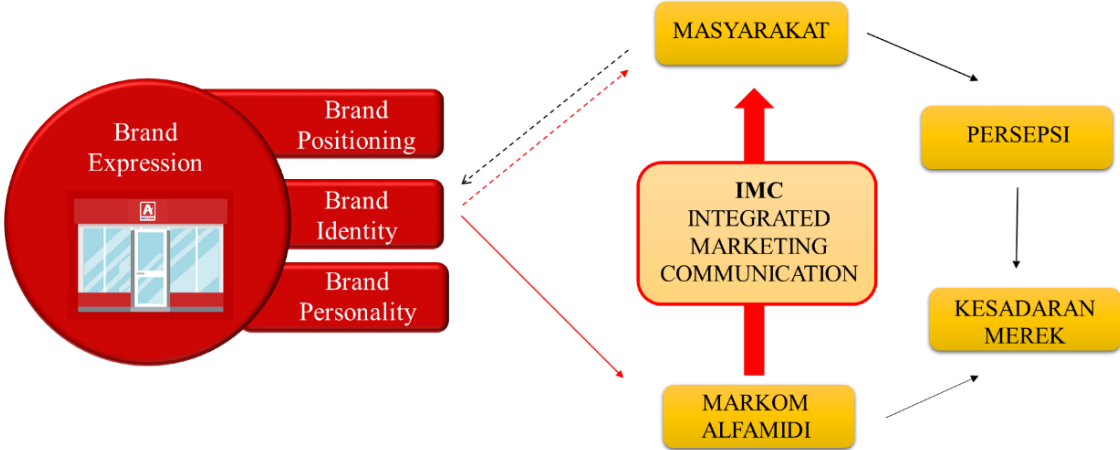
Alfamidi (PT Midi Utama Indonesia) was founded in June 2007 which was recorded in the 2020 annual report and already has 1,821 outlets throughout Indonesia, including Java, Kalimantan, Sumatra and Sulawesi, supported by more than 22,500 employees who are ready to serve millions of customers in Indonesia.

In this case, Alfamidi is presented to offer different shopping concepts and experiences according to consumer needs. The Alfamidi concept was created to adjust people's lifestyles for changes in consumer shopping from monthly shopping to weekly shopping, initially by shopping at supermarkets or hypermarkets, of course with various

preparations, such as four-wheeled vehicles to carry large amounts of groceries to stock for a month, shopping time. more is needed because of the many choices of brands to consider, the queue at the checkout tends to be longer and longer, resulting in much higher parking costs incurred.

It is different with shopping at Alfamidi, which tends to be located not far from the place of residence, and is able to provide the daily needs of consumers or the community and can stock their needs for the next week and can return to shopping the next week to prepare stocks at home such as: cleaning products home, body care, food, drinks, herbs, fruit, vegetables, meat etc. will always be fresh because the storage time is not too long.

Alfamidi with the concept of midimarket has a sales area that is not as big as a supermarket and not as small as a minimarket, making it easier for consumers to find and choose the product or goods they want, it is more practical because without having to surround a large shopping area to find the items they want to buy, so there is no need to sacrifice plenty of time to shop for daily necessities.



Picture 1. Framework (Source: Researcher Process)

Brand likeness as a competitive force

In general, both Alfamart and Alfamidi are two different retail brands and are under one management, namely PT Sumber Alfaria Trijaya (Alfamart) as the shareholder. Alfamart is a parent company because it owns the majority of Alfamidi shares, which is 86.72%, with a different concept from the two but has the same goal, which is to become a one stop shopping place for consumers or the public, and is expected to be able to provide the best service for consumers or the public in the form of cheap shopping places and close to where you live.

Alfamart as the majority shareholder of Alfamidi, is able to easily dominate the market share in Indonesia, due to the increase in the number of outlets (stores) with the Alfamidi brand that spread to Eastern Indonesia. Alfamart acquired Alfamidi so that the management of both of them carried out their own operations. Between Alfamidi outlets and Alfamart outlets so that they are not in one adjacent radius so that they can tackle or kill one another. The distribution center location arrangement is also made to make it

easier for suppliers or suppliers to send merchandise to Alfamart and Alfamidi because the locations are arranged close together in the same area.

In addition, customer or member cards are also arranged in such a way so that the benefits can be felt by consumers because they can be used both at Alfamart outlets and at Alfamidi outlets.

Efforts for brand differentiation

Alfamart and Alfamidi both carry the same brand, namely Alfa, the typeface and holding shape used for the logo both have similarities, the coloring of the logo in the word Alfa both uses blue and the word mart or midi uses the same color, namely red. Visually, all the color elements used also have the same color, which is dominated by red so that it is known by the general public as Alfamart "the red" and other competitors, namely Indomaret, as "the blue one", so that no color designation for Alfamidi is formed in society.



Picture 2. The Alfamart and Alfamidi logos after being branded refreshed in 2015 by the same agency

The basic elements of Alfamart and Alfamidi communication facilities also have the same provisions, regulated in the GSM graphic standard manual of each company with a supergraphic flag system, as a frame or border used for all visual means of communication in the below the line store as well as communication means the scope is wider above the line as the brand identity of each company.



Picture 3. Alfamart and Alfamidi program posters with a super graphic flag system

The brand refresh that was carried out by Alfamart and Alfamidi in 2015, in this activity did not change or make over the mascot "Albi" used by Alfamart and Alfamidi. Albi's mascot is a bee with a friendly, fun and hospitality character, ready to help anyone. Albi symbolizes Alfamart and Alfamidi employees who are ready to help customers with sincerity to serve. Albi puts forward collective life and goals, avoids conflict, and is always responsive to changes in his surroundings.

Since 2019, Alfamidi has done Albi's makeover mascot on the attributes he wears, but this does not change the essence of Albi's cute, cheerful and adorable figure, instead he looks more cheerful, and becomes more a child's friend, because it was proven in early 2020 before pandemic covid19 When Alfamidi held the "Let's Eat Fruit" event at Alfamidi outlets in South Jakarta, the children who were participating in the fruit theme coloring contest and fruit eating contestants surrounded the clown Albi and they wanted to queue to take pictures with Albi.

Make-over is done on the clothes worn by Albi's clown, who previously wore blue shirts, replaced with casual short-sleeved beach shirts with fruit motifs, this is done in line with the promo campaign carried out by Alfamidi in the last two years, namely the "Let's Eat Fruits" campaign. ". With the hope that the image of fresh fruit and vegetable products will stick in the minds of consumers or the public and become a differentiator from Alfamart, because the items sold are also different. Alfamart only sells various kinds of basic necessities without any vegetables and fruit. Meanwhile, as a one stop shopping, Alfamidi is more complete. Because it also provides vegetables, fruit, and various other kitchen needs.



Picture 4. Clown Albi before make over (left) and after makeover (right)

Albi's clowns at the Alfamart mascot are not made over, still using a red shirt that says Albi, the use of Albi's clowns in these two retailers Alfamart and Alfamidi have the same rules of use, Albi's clowns are presented in addition to being an icon or mascot for a company's brand as well as encouragement for participants because it always provides various gimmicks (gifts) and joy.

The Let's Eat Fruit campaign aims to differentiate Alfamidi and Alfamart and does not stop at Albi's clown makeover as Alfamidi and Alfamart mascots, digital activities and promotions are also carried out especially when the world is hit by the COVID-19 pandemic, all activities are associated with fruits, such as online drawing competition with the theme "Let's Eat Fruit" with a shopping voucher prize of millions of rupiah, on the condition that participants have to shop 1 pack of cut fruit products, photos of the results of the drawing and upload along with photos of shopping receipts to each other's Instagram, mention three other friends, mention Instagram Alfamidi and did not forget to include the hashtag #AyoMakanBuah, and this activity was attended by 540 competition participants.

Another online activity that is part of the "Come Eat Fruit" campaign communication series is the joget competition "Let's Eat Fruit". Joget can be done individually or in groups with the condition that participants have to buy 1 pack of cut fruit products, download the song let's eat the fruit above which is used as background sound when record the dance that will be contested and upload it to each Instagram by mentioning it to IG Alfamidi and three other friends with the hashtag #AyoMakanBuah, the five most interesting and energetic videos will get millions of rupiah shopping vouchers.

Education about fruit and its benefits, online quiz games, picture guessing games are all associated with fruit and those involved in these activities has the opportunity to get shopping vouchers, periodically communicated through the official social media Alfamidi Instagram and Facebook. The above has received a good response from followers, so they are willing to be involved add, like, comment (engagement) on activities carried out by Alfamidi.

Education about Alfamidi differentiation continues to be communicated to consumers by creating a song to educate and encourage a healthy life by always consuming fruit, this song is always played in the store to be heard to consumers as an audio promo.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the research, discussion and interpretation that have been described with reference to several theories and results of previous research, revealed the reality constructed by Alfamart and Alfamidi, that Alfamart believes that the presence of Alfamidi, which carries the same brand, namely Alfa, will increase the strength to compete in the retail business in Indonesia, because the number of stores is increasing and expanding to all corners of the country. Alfamidi as Alfa's second brand that comes after Alfamart wants to strengthen brand identity and brand awareness by highlighting the advantages of its products that Alfamart doesn't have.

Alfamidi continues to strive to communicate creative and innovative brands with the aim of making consumers more aware of the Alfamidi brand. Alfamidi's differentiation strategy is a concrete step in an effort to separate a strong image in the minds of consumers as basic capital in product marketing in competition with other retailers.

Through the consumer's point of view, there is an assessment and knowledge of consumers who think that Alfamart and Alfamidi are the same, because consumers see visually the store appearance, consumers see Alfamidi as Alfamart, it's just that consumers see several things that distinguish between the two, such as products, promotions, broad shops, parking areas and service opening hours of shops.

Based on the results of the research, the discussion and interpretation that have been described with reference to several theories and the results of previous research, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. Product marketing strategy and branding communication strategy Alfamidi has been able to provide product uniqueness and enjoyment through the facilities provided to consumers, thus forming a commitment and customer love for the brand. However, the commitment and love of customers to the brand has not played a significant role in realizing customer loyalty to the brand (brand loyalty).
2. The results of field studies show that customers do not have a strong relationship, in other words, customers do not feel that they have a high attachment or closeness, so that customers are unable to describe the difference between Alfamidi and Alfamart directly.
3. The product and brand marketing strategy that Alfamidi has attempted, in this study only finds the fact that these strategies are only limited to forming customer commitment and love for the brand for reasons that are more unique (different) between Alfamidi and Alfamart. However, these strategies have not played a significant role in realizing customer loyalty to the brand (brand loyalty), for example, a kind of consumer-fanatical loyalty has emerged to only shop at Alfamidi by leaving other retail competitors.
4. The facts in the field show that the strategic efforts made by Alfamidi have not reached a maximum target, such as achieving image as the top of mind, that it can generate strong loyalty to Alfamidi. Generally, customers who pay relatively balanced attention to select competing retail products other than Alfamidi.

5. The process of liking, preference, conviction and purchase stages that have been found to occur naturally, such as friendliness of shop personnel, product completeness, service opening hours and cheap price promos, are not based on perceptions constructed or built by Alfamidi so far, due to the existence of the limitations of this research are that the Alfamidi Graha Raya outlets as research objects do not fully represent the ideal shop that represents the entire Alfamidi store.

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