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**THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PROMOTIONAL
STRATEGIES IN ENHANCING CUSTOMER
AWARENESS IN UNIT TRUST INDUSTRY**

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DECLARATION

“I hereby declare that the work of this exercise is mine except for the quotations and summarize that have been duly acknowledge”

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Date :

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my parents, Abdul Samat bin Mat Desa and Hedayah binti Isnin. I hope that this thesis achievement will complete the dream that you had for me all those many years ago when you chose to give me the best education you could.

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ABSTRACT

Promotional strategies are the most important method in enhancing customer awareness of a product or brand name. Most of the customer will look at a promotion for less than ten seconds, so promotional strategies needed to be designed well enough to convince them to purchase the product in short amount of time. For that reason, this study was conducted to identify the factors affected promotional strategies to enhance customer awareness. The data were collected using questionnaires from 400 respondents in Johor, Melaka, Negeri Sembilan and Kuala Lumpur. The results of the data analysis showed recognizable has significant impact on customer awareness in Unit Trust industry. There was thought-provoking when information, attractiveness and consistency were not significant on influencing the customer awareness in Unit Trust industry. The results of this study contributes exceptional judgment to marketers and Unit Trust companies in Malaysia.

Keywords : Promotional strategies, customer awareness, Unit Trust industry
Malaysia

ABSTRAK

Strategi promosi adalah kaedah yang paling penting dalam meningkatkan kesedaran pelanggan terhadap produk atau jenama. Kebanyakan pelanggan akan melihat promosi kurang daripada sepuluh saat, jadi strategi promosi perlu direka dengan baik untuk meyakinkan mereka untuk membeli produk dalam masa yang singkat. Oleh itu, kajian ini dijalankan untuk mengenal pasti faktor-faktor yang terlibat dalam strategi promosi untuk meningkatkan kesedaran pelanggan. Data yang telah dikumpulkan dengan menggunakan soal selidik daripada 400 responden di Johor, Melaka, Negeri Sembilan dan Kuala Lumpur. Hasil analisis data menunjukkan faktor mudah dikenali mempunyai kesan yang besar ke atas kesedaran pelanggan dalam industri Unit Amanah. Manakala, pengkaji mnedapati maklumat, daya tarikan dan konsisten tidak berperanan dalam mempengaruhi kesedaran pelanggan dalam industri Unit Amanah. Hasil kajian ini menyumbang pemahaman yang luar biasa kepada pemasar dan syarikat Unit Amanah di Malaysia.

Kata Kunci: *Strategi promosi, kesedaran pelanggan, industri Unit Amanah, Malaysia*

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS/SYMBOL

PR	=	Public Relation
FYP	=	Final Year Project
RQ1	=	Research Question 1
RQ2	=	Research Question 2
H1	=	Hypothesis 1
H0	=	Hypothesis 0

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the researcher had covered the background study of the research topic which is promotional strategies and customer awareness. In addition, the researcher included about the Unit Trust industry. Furthermore, problem statement, scope and limitation of study, important of research and research questions were presented in this chapter.

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Promotional strategies are the strategic element that increasingly agrees that standardization is often limited (Chase et al., 1984). The purpose of the agreement was to understand what communication is a linked culture. Cultural consolidation was a validation only for a particular culture. The effectiveness of marketing communication depends on the sender and the recipient were getting the true meaning of the marketing messages. Different languages may interpret differently for a particular individual and need translation. Therefore, it can prevent the complete standardization of promotional strategies in each company. The ability to use successful marketing strategies in market competition was critical to a firm's performance (Mavrogiannis, Bourlakis, Dawson, & Ness, 2008). There were several promotional strategies activities that could help increase the performance of the company which are advertising, public relations (PR) and sales promotion.

Advertising was the most important element of the promotional mix. It was any form of impersonal (unidirectional) paid communication in which the company was identified. A good advertising campaign would allow the company to reach a large number of people effectively. In addition to that, marketers can use Public Relations (PR) to build a positive public image for a company, support new product launches and sales, helped a company to evaluate public attitudes and communicate the company's overall goals. Public Relations (PR) activities include publications, event sponsorships, press releases, speeches, public service activities and the media (Kotler, 2003).

In order to increase sales performance, the seller also use sales promotion is another tool in promotional strategies. It contains the method of stimulating the purchase of consumers and is generally based on a short-term or immediate objective. Examples of sales promotion activities are contests, raffles, gifts, free samples or coupons.

The Unit Trust industry in Malaysia was established in 1959 by British investors with the introduction of Malaysia Unit Trust Ltd (Azizi, Noordin, Rabiatul, Jamaludin, et al, 2009). A Unit Trust was a set of trusts (usually called as unit holders). It allowed participants to diversify risks and professional management of investments. The assets of the trust are held by a trustee and were managed by a Unit Trust fund manager, who was responsible for investment management, fund accounting, appraisal, negotiation and reporting. The overall benefits in Unit Trust was to save time to keep up with market information because money were managed by professional fund managers, and the investor may diversify the money which means you can distribute your risk, little initial amount to invest. It was easy to buy and sell and are likely to be loaded with fewer brokerage commissions.

The researcher tried to study "Promotional Strategies and their Relationship with Customer Awareness". There were now several promotional strategies that are used to capture the customer's awareness to invest in their products such as advertising through print and electronic media, financial planning seminars, sales promotion, as well as each year highlighted event and the Public Relations (PR), In Unit Trust Malaysia is widely promote or not. Unit Trust announcements do not provide the information you need to make optimal investment decisions.

The Unit Trust companies use known techniques to increase the likelihood of your ads being noticed, but they also use known techniques to decrease the number of readers of your ads. In addition, they rarely included convenience information (Bruce A. et al., 2015). Based on the above scenario, it is necessary to identify the most effective advocacy strategies to increase customer awareness in Malaysia.

According to Tan Shamad Kama Piah Che Othman, the director of PNB "the purpose of promotion strategies is to increase sales for the product" (Utusan Malaysia, March 24, 2005). Therefore, with a proper promotion strategy, it will help to attract and develop an investor's intention to invest in trust unit. Therefore, the purpose of this chapter is to give a brief background to the subject of the study, in other words, it will give readers an overview of the study. It will also follow the statement that will be provided for the research problem, the research question and also the objectives or objectives of this research.

At the end of this chapter, the significance, scope and limitation and short key concept had been concluded in this study. The findings of this research identified the actual strategy that can be used to help Malaysia's Unit Trust companies to increase customer awareness in the Unit Trust industry. It also gave some ideas to develop promotional strategies for the Unit Trust companies.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENTS

The problem statements of the study was to find the factors of minimum customer awareness towards promotional campaign for Unit Trust industry in Malaysia. This happened because we can see the others promotional campaign of financial institution's product received biggest response from the customer. The researcher had been an internship program in CIMB Principle Asset Management Berhad, Johor Bahru. The researcher had been assigned in Sales & Marketing Department as a Financial Consultant. Throughout 6months of the internship program, there were slightly a decrease in number of total sales the researcher found there was less number of customer aware about Unit Trust industry. During the internship, the researcher had been given several tasks, which the researcher had to achieve the target sales. According to the table below was the total unit holder or customer that purchase Unit Trust product:

Table 1.0 Unit Holder Rank at 31th July 2016 of PMB Shariah
(Source: End Year Report of PMB Shariah Aggressive Fund
31th July 2016)

Unit holder size	Total unit holder	Percentage of Total unit holder (%)
< 5,000	5,391	66.12
5,001 < 10,000	867	10.63
10,001 < 50,000	1,438	17.64
50,001 < 500,000	439	5.38
500,001 >	19	0.23
Total	8,154	100.00

**Table 2.0 Unit Holder Rank at 30th September 2016 of
RHB Investment**

(Source: RHB Investment)

Size of Holdings	Account Holders		No. Of Units Held*	
	No.	%	('000)	%
< 5,000	423	30.61	1,023	1.85
5,001 < 10,000	786	56.87	14,527	26.26
10,001 < 50,000	112	8.10	7,732	13.98
50,001 < 500,000	50	3.62	8,575	15.50
500,001 >	11	0.80	23,460	42.41
Total	1,382	100.00	55,317	100.00

On top of that, many studies had been conducted pertaining Unit Trust performance and the results showed that the historical performance of Malaysian Unit Trust was unattractive to enhance customer awareness (Shamsher & Annuar, 1995; Leong & Aw, 1997; Fauziah & Mansor, 2007; and Low, 2007). In order to achieve the target sales the researcher used different promotional strategies. However, the researcher did not know which marketing strategies were suitable in order to capture customer awareness. In fact, the promotional strategies studies in the Malaysian Unit Trust services context was considered outdated, as only one had been found (Shanmugam, 2009). Hence, to get the highest performance and total sales, the Unit Trust industry could not get the most suitable promotional strategies in order to increase the total sales. Therefore this study was seek to examine the effectiveness of promotional strategies of Unit Trust industry in enhancing customer awareness where such study in Malaysia was still lack of.

1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

It was essential for marketers to study into depth on promotional strategies to gain better understanding of which promotional strategy was the most effective on capturing customer awareness. The objective of this research was to understand the effectiveness of promotional strategies of Unit Trust industry Johor, Melaka, Negeri Sembilan and Kuala Lumpur. Therefore, the primary purpose was listed as below:

- I. To identify the factors affected promotional strategies to enhance customer awareness.
- II. To identify the relationship between promotional strategies and customer awareness.
- III. To analyze the most significant factor needed by promotional strategies in order to enhance the customer awareness.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The question intended to be answered in this study were based on the research objectives:

- I. What are the factors affected the promotional strategies to enhance customer awareness?
- II. What is the relationship between promotional strategies and customer awareness?
- III. What is the most significant factor needed by promotional strategies in order to enhance the customer awareness?