

**THE USE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES
IN MARKETING STRATEGY OF SMART READER KIDS**



UNIVERSITI TEKNIKAL MALAYSIA MELAKA

APPROVAL

I/We hereby declare that I/We have read and go through this dissertation/report/thesis and certify that, this dissertation/report/thesis is satisfactory in the sense of scope and quality as a partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor's Degree of Technology Management (High Tech Marketing) with Honours



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**Report submitted to meet the requirements for the Bachelor of
Technology Management (High Technology Marketing) with Honours**

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JANUARY 2023

DECLARATION OF ORIGINAL WORK

**“I hereby declare that this thesis with the title
is the result of my research except as the cited in references.”**

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate the appreciation to my family members and friends that always supported and inspired me when completing the research. Thanks to my family who are always unwavering supported me mentally and physically throughout process. Besides, my supervisor Profesor Madya Dr. Mohd Syaiful Rizal Bin Abd Hamid had guided my research, and my panel, Dr Johanna Binti Abdullah Jaafar, and my course mates helped me complete the research journey.



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ABSTRACT

There is a need for education centre to use marketing tools such as Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) to promote their programs and values because the existing great competition amongst the public and private education institution especially after the movement control order (MCO) period. These strategies will guarantee that each preschool continues to provide more valued services to the parents and students. As a result, the purpose of the study was to explore the use of ICTs that benefited the Smart Reader Kids education centre. At this study, an exploratory research design and a qualitative research method were used because it allowed the researcher to obtain a deeper understanding of the use of ICTs in the marketing strategy of Smart Reader Kids through collecting information from the interview session. The first research question had been achieved as the ICT tools used in marketing strategy of Smart Reader Kids included website, email and search engine. The second and third research objective had also been achieved. Overall, this research is beneficial to both the researcher and educational institutions in order to create a successful marketing strategy that involved ICTs to face strict competition.

Keywords: Marketing, Information and Communication Technologies, ICTs

ABSTRAK

Terdapat keperluan untuk pusat pendidikan menggunakan alat pemasaran seperti Teknologi Maklumat dan Komunikasi (ICT) untuk mempromosikan program dan nilai mereka kerana persaingan hebat yang wujud di kalangan institusi pendidikan awam dan swasta terutamanya selepas perintah kawalan pergerakan (PKP). Strategi ini akan menjamin setiap prasekolah terus memberikan perkhidmatan yang lebih bernilai kepada ibu bapa dan murid. Hasilnya, tujuan kajian adalah untuk meneroka penggunaan ICT yang memberi manfaat kepada pusat pendidikan Smart Reader Kids. Pada kajian ini, reka bentuk kajian penerokaan dan kaedah kajian kualitatif telah digunakan kerana ia membolehkan pengkaji mendapatkan pemahaman yang lebih mendalam tentang penggunaan ICT dalam strategi pemasaran Smart Reader Kids melalui pengumpulan maklumat daripada sesi temu bual. Soalan kajian pertama telah dicapai kerana alat ICT yang digunakan dalam strategi pemasaran Smart Reader Kids termasuk laman web, e-mel dan enjin carian. Objektif kajian kedua dan ketiga juga telah dicapai. Secara keseluruhannya, penyelidikan ini memberi manfaat kepada penyelidik dan institusi pendidikan untuk mencipta strategi pemasaran yang berjaya yang melibatkan ICT untuk menghadapi persaingan yang ketat.

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Kata kunci: Pemasaran, Teknologi Maklumat dan Komunikasi, ICT

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ICTs	Information and Communication Technologies
FB	Facebook
MCO	Movement Control Order



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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction



Pre-school education, also known as kindergarten education, provides children in the range of four to six years old to develop their positive school readiness attitude so they can be well-prepared before entering primary school (Ministry of Education Malaysia). Different kinds of kindergarten exist in Malaysia due to our nation's diversified culture and diverse range of demands. As a result, kindergarten may provide differentiating education depending on the curricular methods, religious orientation, and the language of instruction, such as English, Malay, or Chinese (Zabariah et al., 2005). According to Mustafa et al. (2014), kindergartens that use a variety of marketing techniques build their curriculum on the preferences, requirements, and desires of the parents. This makes it possible for kindergarten operators to outperform their rivals in terms of value.

According to UNESCO (2002) “ICT is a scientific, technological and engineering discipline and management techniques used in handling information and application and association with social, economic and cultural matters”. Information and communication technology, or ICT, is defined as the combination of informatics technology with other, related technologies, specifically communication technology. (Megha Gokhe 2000). ICT has infiltrated and impacted many facets of our life to the point that we now live in a consumer-driven environment driven by technology (Semenov 2005).

According to Surabhi Singh (2020), it is undeniable that ICT is an effective marketing tool that is prevalent in a lot of business. It enables businesses in seeing prospects and putting marketing communications into practices through a variety of different media such as radio, email and blog. It also contributes to growth of performance and loyalty of customer. Moreover, ICT in marketing makes it simple for businesses to obtain a wealth of global data sources and streamlines the decision-making process. (Surabhi Singh 2020). Generally, the use of ICTs is also suitable to support the marketing strategy of kindergarten. This chapter will briefly describe on the use of ICTs in marketing strategy for branded private kindergarten.

1.2 Background of Study

Communications, audio-visual processing, and network-based administration and monitoring are all examples of “Information and Communication Technology (ICT)”. ICT is utilized extensively by most firms in order to increase efficiency. There are two types of information technology: web-enabled and mobile-powered. Children's education is aided by the use of ICT tools to find and implement learning opportunities and outcomes. A wide variety of media outlets can be used to distribute marketing messages. Consequently, it helps diversify revenue streams, boost customer happiness, and gives clients 24-hour convenience (Minamatov, & Nasirdinova, 2022).

According to the research, ICT is essential “in early childhood education for at least three reasons”. With today's technology breakthroughs, think about how young children can learn from people and places in their community. New technology can help improve the quality of early childhood education. “Young people can get access to a wide range of global information resources in a couple of seconds thanks to ICT in marketing”. Marketers can use a variety of ICT-enabled strategies, such as social media marketing, SEO, content creation, affiliate promotion, and more. A network of agents can help businesses like the education sector by covering the target area and recruiting new students. ICT must spend on the essential marketing activities and promote sales through its network in order to expand the customer's brand and manage the exclusive representation of their products in the region (Barakabitze, et, al. 2019).

1.3 Problem Statement

Many nations have been forced to implement movement control order (MCO) and travel restrictions as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. The Covid-19 pandemic's propagation has an impact on global health and has a direct impact on most nations' economies. (Bartik et al. 2020). Many companies are struggling financially and cannot meet their financial obligations. To address this issue, a variety of tactics are required. Businesses may benefit from the scenario and employ ICT to the fullest through digital apps while also looking into other chances to incorporate technology into their own operations. This is due to the fact that when Covid-19 strikes the entire nation, companies must have digital skills in order to survive over the long term, or the digital platform may be used exclusively in the future. Additionally, ICT is a viable instrument for commercial intervention in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic. (Sharples 2020).

According to the Department of Statistics Malaysia's 2017 Children Statistics, there are more children enrolled in private kindergarten than in public preschool. In addition, parents most usually cite the capacity of private kindergartens to cater to each child's unique requirements, higher standards of education, and research-based curricula and teaching methods as the reasons for selecting private kindergarten over government pre-schools (Mustafa et al.,2014). Therefore, it can conclude that the competition amongst kindergarten is high.

A wide range of commercial and instructional management programs are available to early childhood education centres. There may be more flexibility for individual centres, because of this. There may be a reduction in the ability to share information throughout systems and locations. There was no major shift in the use of ICT in teaching and learning despite the increased use of ICT for marketing objectives. Therefore, it showed that there is strict competition amongst education field. (Zhang, et, al. 2022).

Research on "The use of ICTs in marketing strategy of Smart Reader Kids" explored how implementation of ICTs brings benefits and the challenges involves. Finally, a real-world application of ICTs in Smart Reader Kids' marketing strategy has been attempted.

1.4 Research questions

The research explores the following key questions:

1. What type of ICTs are used in marketing strategy of Smart Reader Kids?
2. What are the benefits of the using ICTs in marketing strategy of Smart Reader Kids?
3. What are the challenges of using ICTs in marketing strategy of Smart Reader Kids?

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1.5 Research objectives

The core objectives that this research is meant to achieve include:

1. To identify the type of ICTs used in marketing strategy of Smart Reader Kids.
2. To determine the benefits of using ICTs in marketing strategy of Smart Reader Kids.
3. To point out the challenges of using ICTs in marketing strategy of Smart Reader Kids.

1.6 Significance of study ‘

This research will focus on studying the implementation of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in marketing strategy of a private kindergarten. The findings will benefit the management of kindergarten on better decision making on the use of ICT in their marketing strategies. Besides, the study also provides information on the challenges of using ICTs in marketing strategy.

1.7 Scope and limitation

The scope of the research is to study the use of ICT in marketing strategy of private kindergarten and its benefits as well as challenges involved. The targeted respondents were Smart Readers Kids education centres branches in three states of Malaysia: Johor, Selangor and Negeri Sembilan. Furthermore, qualitative studies can help to evaluate in detail how implementation of ICTs in marketing strategy brings benefits to them and its challenges along the ways of implementing ICTs in marketing strategy.

However, several limitations occurred over the process of this research, including time restrictions and constrained locations. This research has a strict tight schedule because the data must be completely collected within 6 months. The study results only included small amount of data analysis because the study was major focus only in three states of Malaysia, which are Johor, Selangor and Negeri Sembilan.

1.8 Research Structure

This research consists of 5 chapters altogether structured and described as follows:

Chapter 1 present an overview of the use of Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs) in marketing strategy of a private kindergarten which is Smart Reader Kids. The research background that explained development and the progress of the theme, problem statement as to why this research is being done. Then, the research question has been set to achieve the research objective. The scope of research which helps to specialize the content.

Chapter 2 present an overview of Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs) and the core components of ICTs that can applied in marketing strategy of private kindergarten.

Chapter 3 describes the method and approach to study the use of Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs) in marketing strategy. Focus is made on qualitative method as the proposed method to collect data from Smart Readers Kids kindergartens in three states of Malaysia.

Chapter 4 discussed on data according to the research questions and objectives. The data collected was based on the interview conducted in selected kindergarten.

Chapter 5 identified the conclusion of the research. The chapter also cover the limitations of research and recommendations for future studies.

1.9 Summary

The basis of this study has studied the implementation of ICT in marketing strategy of Smart Reader Kids kindergarten.

The background of the study has been written down in the report. This chapter also included two research questions, objectives, and significance of the research. There are various limitations that cannot be avoided in the research such as restricted time and locations. Lastly, this research will provide information for firms to focus on the use of ICT in marketing strategy of Smart Reader Kids education centre.



CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter examined the literature review and relevant theoretical model. It begins with the definition of ICT and its variety. Next, it followed by the description of using ICT in marketing strategy included its benefits and challenges.

(Vershitskaya, et, al. 202) presented that as a result of the rise of social media, clients increasingly have specific needs tailored to their interests. Marketers, customers, and innovators now have a place to connect and exchange ideas. As information and communication technology (ICT) progresses, a growing number of innovative e-business models are emerging (ICT). CRM, ERP, and the intranet are all examples of this type of technology in use. Using ICT to advertise a company's products and services has become standard practice for well-run businesses. Marketing has shown the value of information and communication technologies. An IT infrastructure is almost impossible to envisage in a firm (ICT).