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Digital Marketing Transformation in Hajj and Umrah Agencies: A Systematic Literature Review

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ABSTRACT

Purpose – This study analyzes the evolution of digital marketing strategies used by Hajj and Umrah travel agencies in Indonesia from 2021 to 2025.

Design/methodology/approach – A Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach was used to collect data, analyze, assess, and conclude articles. Data analysis took place between 2021 and 2025.

Findings – From 850 articles identified, 118 were selected for analysis. The findings show a major shift from traditional marketing approaches toward fully integrated digital strategies. By 2023–2025, digital marketing became the primary tool for competition, with agencies relying on websites, SEO, social media, paid ads, WhatsApp Business, and content-based engagement to build trust and attract pilgrims.

Research implications – The study concludes that digital marketing is now essential for maintaining competitiveness in the Hajj and Umrah industry and highlights the need for personalized digital experiences and continuous adaptation to consumer behavior.

Originality/value – Previous research has focused on the interplay of digital marketing, but few studies have focused on the transformation of digital marketing in Umrah travel agencies.

Keywords Digital transformation, Hajj and Umrah Travel Agencies, Systematic literature review.

Paper type Review paper

1. Introduction

Digital marketing has become a transformative global trend in various sectors. Social networking services, microblogs, and trading sites have become potential media for promoting tourism packages (Afidah & Romli, 2019). The religious tourism industry, including Hajj and Umrah travel agencies, has also followed suit. Digital marketing strategies, SEO, and social media are expected to increase brand awareness and reach a wider audience of prospective Umrah and Hajj pilgrims (Atmadja, 2024). Therefore, digital marketing is an important aspect of tourism product promotion.

Various social media platforms are playing an increasingly important role in marketing tourism products. Online platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, and YouTube are used to display attractive travel visuals (Pratiwi et al., 2024), pilgrim testimonials, and detailed package information. Innovation in effectively leveraging various marketing channels is a strategy to maximize profits (Splendiani et al., 2023), and the use of social media can attract a variety of new customers (Mariani et al., 2014). This condition concludes that social media has a strategic and significant role in promoting the tourism industry.

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The internet has changed consumer behavior, leading them to use digital platforms and social media to search for information when making purchasing decisions. Attractive and clear package information, ease and speed of access, and the ease of booking are determining factors in marketing interactions (Armutcu et al., 2023), and social media marketing has a significant effect on the desire to book travel packages (Azhar et al., 2023). In addition, travel information on social media positively affects the selection of tourist destinations (Keke, 2019). Travel testimonials, whether delivered directly or via social media, also affect customer loyalty (Tadjine & Mebarki, 2024). Positive travel information shared on social media and other digital platforms can maintain customer trust and serve as a continuous promotional tool.

The large market for Umrah and Hajj tourism in Indonesia, with a Muslim population of 245-249 million by 2025, makes conventional marketing strategies such as word-of-mouth and print advertising inadequate. Therefore, several travel agencies have begun adapting by implementing various marketing strategies on their websites to connect with a broader range of customers, share travel stories, and build closer relationships (Afren, 2024). In addition, social media has become the medium of choice for interactive communication and promotion (Muzakkir & Istikomah, 2025), as well as for SEO to ensure visibility on search engines (Devi et al., 2024). PT. Athalah Safar Internasional in Metro City and PT. Hidayah Amanah Jamaah Indonesia is an example of a travel agency that believes that social media and digital services are key to remaining competitive, building its image, and increasing the number of pilgrims registering (Fitriyana, 2024). This situation requires Umrah and Hajj travel agencies to be responsive to evolving promotional models and to use multiple platforms to stay connected with pilgrims and prospective pilgrims.

Many studies have highlighted the role of digital marketing strategies across various aspects. However, studies on the application of digital marketing strategies in Hajj and Umrah travel agencies that focus on their effectiveness in attracting pilgrims remain limited. Several previous studies have examined marketing strategies in general, such as SWOT analysis at PT. Aufa Duta Wisata (Sadiyah et al., 2021), promotional strategies at PT. Saudi Patria Wisata (Safira, 2024), and research on the use of social media as a promotional tool. The gap lies in the absence of a comprehensive study that looks at the transformation of digital marketing strategies, including content, SEO, social media utilization, and customer experience in a single analytical framework to assess their overall impact on the interest of prospective Umrah and Hajj pilgrims in Indonesia.

This study aims to describe the transformation of digital marketing strategies implemented by Hajj and Umrah travel agencies from 2021 to 2025, specifically by identifying and detailing the various digital marketing approaches used. Theoretically, this research will fill a gap in the literature by analyzing the evolution and implementation of digital marketing strategies for Hajj and Umrah travel agencies during this period. In addition, the results of this study can serve as a guide for travel agency managers to understand trends, evaluate the effectiveness of digital marketing strategies, and consider in formulating more adaptive strategies to expand market reach in the future.

2. Method

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method. This method is applied to systematically map, synthesize, and identify the results of previous studies on Hajj and Umrah marketing strategies to develop comprehensive marketing strategies (Marzi et al., 2025). The research data were obtained from scientific articles published in 2021–2025, which were searched using the *Publish or Perish* (PoP) application connected to *Google Scholar*.

The PoP search returned 850 articles, which were rigorously selected by removing 732 that were incomplete, duplicated, irrelevant, or inaccessible. Meanwhile, 118 relevant articles that met the eligibility criteria were further analyzed

1to examine digital marketing strategies for Hajj and Umrah travel. The results of the analysis are presented descriptively through narratives, tables, and graphs to show the patterns and trends of marketing strategies used by Hajj and Umrah agencies.

Researchers were the primary instruments in this study, supported by Publish or Perish, Google Scholar, and Microsoft Excel. Data collection techniques involved document analysis of articles that met the inclusion criteria (Rogge et al., 2024), while data analysis used a qualitative descriptive approach, emphasizing logical and systematic organization, interpretation, and conclusion drawing (Tracy, 2024).

3. Results and Discussion

In 2021, research related to Hajj and Umrah marketing strategies is still dominated by the use of conventional marketing mixes, such as 4P, 7P, and the segmenting, targeting, and positioning approach. The use of digital media is beginning to appear, but it is not yet a top priority. Travel agencies still relied on traditional strategies, including direct promotion, product and price management, and information distribution through print media. These findings indicate that in the early stages, adaptation to digital marketing was still in the introductory phase and had not yet become the main source of promotional activities. Entering 2022, there has been an increase in the use of basic digital platforms such as websites, social media, and paid advertising. Travel agencies began to utilize digital content, customer testimonials, and social media features to build visibility and attract potential pilgrims. This shift reflects an increase in travel agencies' awareness of the need for modern marketing strategies, especially as people increasingly rely on the internet to search for information about Hajj and Umrah travel.

Table 1. Marketing Strategies for Hajj and Umrah Agencies

Sn.	Strategies	Total Articles
1	Marketing mix 8P	1
2	Marketing mix 7P	22
3	Marketing mix 6P	1
4	Marketing mix 5P	4
5	Marketing mix 4P	17
6	Marketing mix 3P	2
7	Advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, public relations, direct marketing, brand image, brand trust.	15
8	Segmenting, targeting, positioning.	13
9	Applications	2
10	Digital Marketing (Website, Social Media, YouTube Ads, TikTok, Facebook Ads, Instagram Ads, Pinterest, WhatsApp, WhatsApp Business, Endorsements, Testimonials, Telemarketing).	29
11	Offline (banners, brochures, pamphlets, merchandise, etc.)	7
12	Religious Marketing	1
13	Strategy SO	2
14	Integrated Marketing Communication	1

Sources: Secondary data analysis, 2025

In 2023, there was an acceleration in the implementation of digital marketing. Research this year focused on the application of advanced digital marketing mixes, such as 7P and 8P, as well as the integration of online platforms, including YouTube Ads, WhatsApp Business, and TikTok. In addition, attention to brand

image and customer trust increased significantly, indicating that competition among travel agencies was intensifying. Digital strategies are no longer complementary; they have become a central component in expanding reach and increasing engagement with potential pilgrims.

2024 shows that travel agencies are becoming more mature in their adoption of digital marketing. Research highlights the use of more comprehensive approaches such as Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) and SO (Strength–Opportunity) strategies. This year also saw the emergence of service applications as an innovation in pilgrim services. Social media, websites, and applications not only serve as promotional tools but also as platforms for integrated, interactive, and real-time information services.

Findings from 2025 indicate that digital marketing has become the standard in marketing for Hajj and Umrah travel agencies. Hajj and Umrah travel agencies not only use digital marketing strategies but have also focused on improving content quality and strengthening long-term relationships with pilgrims through digital channels. Additionally, the religious digital marketing approach has emerged as a preferred strategy that integrates religious values into marketing content to enhance credibility and trust among potential pilgrims. This period reflects a more mature digital strategy within the Hajj and Umrah tourism industry.

The study found that between 2021 and 2025, there will be a significant transformation in the digital marketing strategies of Hajj and Umrah travel agencies. At the beginning of the period, digital marketing was only used to complement conventional strategy. However, from mid-2023 to 2025, digital marketing will become the primary strategy for increasing the industry's competitiveness. This is evident in the increased use of digital platforms, religiously oriented visual content, paid advertising, app services, and interactive two-way communication. In addition, the pattern of transformation shows that marketing success is not determined solely by the product or price, but also by the travel agency's ability to build trust, deliver a good digital experience, and adapt to increasingly digital consumer behavior. In the future, the sustainability of Hajj and Umrah marketing will depend significantly on the speed of adaptation and the effectiveness of travel agencies in leveraging digital technology, alongside conventional marketing, which will certainly still have its place with a limited target market.s

4. Conclusion

The digital marketing strategies of Hajj and Umrah travel agencies have undergone significant changes, particularly in 2023-2024, shifting from conventional to digital promotion. This transformation is evident in the increased use of various digital platforms, changes in how travel agencies promote Umrah and Hajj travel packages, and in building communication with prospective pilgrims. Religious content and symbols in digital marketing have become a way to build trust among prospective pilgrims. In addition, the behavior of prospective Umrah and Hajj pilgrims in choosing a travel agency has shifted from conventional references to a preference for digital information searches.

The results of this study provide a reference point for understanding the transformation of the marketing strategies of Hajj and Umrah travel agencies in Indonesia, showing that the ability to adapt and innovate with digital promotional tools is an essential factor for business continuity in this industry. However, this study is limited to mapping the conclusions of marketing transformation through PoP in Google Scholar references; further studies using other sources remain open.

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