THE UTILISATION OF FACEBOOK GROUP IN BUILDING SOCIAL MEDIA-BASED BRAND COMMUNITY BY A SMALL MEDIUM ENTERPRISE IN YOGYAKARTA

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Abstract

Internet and social media play important role in fostering both the creation of identities and the development of brand community. Brand community is a community of consumers of a specific brand that are socially constructed and shaped. However, researches on this topic are mostly investigated at large enterprises context, leaving some gaps at small-medium enterprises (SMEs) context. SMEs, particularly in developing countries such as Indonesia, hold important role to the country's economic development. Therefore, this study aims to examine how SMEs build social media-based brand community by using qualitative research as its approach and applied a case study research method to investigate a Yogyakarta-based SME, AB. Findings show that AB build social media-based brand community on Facebook group with the help of its loyal customers. Strong relationship and intense interaction formed between the AB's owner and some loyal customers are characteristics of social media-based brand community found in this research.

Keywords: *Social Media, Facebook, Brand Community, SMEs, Indonesia*

Intisari

Internet dan media sosial memainkan peran penting dalam mendorong penciptaan identitas dan pengembangan komunitas merek. Komunitas merek adalah komunitas konsumen dari merek tertentu yang dibangun dan dibentuk secara sosial. Namun, penelitian tentang topik ini sebagian besar dilakukan di perusahaan besar. Akibatnya

sangat sedikit pengetahuan mengenai hal ini di tingkat usaha kecil-menengah (UKM). UKM, khususnya di negara-negara berkembang seperti Indonesia, memegang peran penting bagi pembangunan ekonomi negara. Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menguji bagaimana UKM membangun komunitas merek berbasis media sosial dengan menggunakan penelitian kualitatif sebagai pendekatannya. Penelitian ini menerapkan metode penelitian studi kasus untuk menyelidiki UKM yang berbasis di Yogyakarta, AB. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa AB membangun komunitas merek berbasis media sosial di grup Facebook dengan bantuan pelanggan setianya. Hubungan yang kuat dan interaksi yang kuat yang terbentuk antara pemilik AB dan beberapa pelanggan setia adalah karakteristik komunitas merek berbasis media sosial yang ditemukan dalam penelitian ini.

Kata Kunci : Media Sosial, Facebook, Komunitas Merek, UMKM, Indonesia

Introduction

The rapid increase of social media use has attracted many scholars and practitioners in business, because its characteristics allows users to post, tag, dig, or blog on the internet[1]. Van Dijk and Poell argued that the characteristics of social media allow firms to connect and collaborate with more people and parties[2]. These abilities enable social media users to create, initiate and circulate various contents on the internet. Hence, social media platforms provide an important basis for building brand communities, promoting products and services and reaching potential market niches[3]. In addition, social media channels offer a place to develop an online brand community which then becomes a learning and interaction space for companies and customers. With the massive use of social media, brand communities are also growing rapidly. Consequently, social media-based brand community is increasingly gaining attention from scholars.

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1 Rongjing Xiang, Jennifer Neville, and Monica Rogati, "Modeling Relationship Strength in Online Social Networks" (paper presented at the Proceedings of the 19th international conference on World wide web, 2010).

2 José Van Dijck and Thomas Poell, "Understanding Social Media Logic," *Media and Communication* 1, no. 1 (2013).

3 Barbara Gligorijevic and Benjamin Leong, "Trust, Reputation and the Small Firm: Building Online Brand Reputation for Smes" (paper presented at the Fifth International AAAI Conference on Weblogs and Social Media, 2011).

Social media-based brand community is a relatively new concept in the research of community. It is based on the concept of brand community, which defined as a community that bound to a brand. It can be created by the owner of the brand or customers and typically has rules, regulations and/or rituals[4]. However, research on this topic are mostly investigated at large enterprises context. There have been limited study at small-medium enterprises (SMEs) level in building social media-based brand community. Consequently, there are some gaps in the body of knowledge. SMEs, particularly in developing countries such as Indonesia, hold important role to the development of this nation as shown in their contribution to the country's employment and Gross Domestic Product (GDP). In 2013, there were 57.8 million SMEs in Indonesia, accounting for more than 90% of all companies. Indonesian SMEs were the largest source of employment, covering 114 million people or 97% of the country's total workforce. SMEs also contribute 60% of Indonesia's GDP in 2014.

Considering the importance of SMEs for Indonesian economic development and the massive use of social media in the country, there is a need to explore this issue in the context of Indonesian SMEs. As such, this study sought to investigate how Indonesian SMEs manage social media, especially Facebook group, in building a social media-based brand community. Contributing factors in building social media-based brand community at SMEs level were also examined.

Applying case study research method, this study examined how a Yogyakarta-based SME, AB, builds its brand community. This study found that AB manages its Facebook group with the help of its loyal customers. Relationship was formed between the owner and some loyal customers, who suggested to create Facebook group. Strong relationship and intense interaction are two most important factors that contribute to the development of social media-based brand community. Based on these findings, this study contribute to the body of knowledge by adding new insight on how small-medium enterprises utilize social media and manage it to build strong brand community.

Brand Community: Definition and Benefit

The importance of brand community for business has been

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4 Albert M Muniz and Thomas C O'guinn, "Brand Community," *Journal of consumer research* 27, no. 4 (2001).

studied by many scholars, among others, Cova and Pace[5]; Füller, Matzler, and Hoppe[6]; Gummerus *et al*[7]; McAlexander, Schouten, and Koenig[8]; Muniz and O'guinn's[9]; Schau, Muñiz Jr, and Arnould[10]; Sicilia and Palazón[11]. The concept of brand community was defined by Muniz and O'guinn's as ''a specialized, non-geographically bound community based on a structured set of social relations among admirers of a brand.''[12]. Three main characteristics of brand communities are: (1) shared consciousness; (2) rituals and traditions; and (3) a sense of moral responsibility for the group.

Muniz and O'guinn's definition emphasize brand community on the characteristics of the community. McAlexander, Schouten, and Koenig expanded it on the relationship of the focal customers with the brand, the product, the firm, and other customers. According to Muniz and O'guinn's, brand community is "a fabric of relationships in which the customers is situated"[13]. Based on a longitudinal research of two automotive brand, Jeep and Harley-Davidson, they categorized relationships in brand community into four types: customer-brand, customer-firm/company, customer-products, and customer-customer relationships. Customer-brand relationship is shown in the relationships and attitudes between customers, branded products, and competing brands. Furthermore, customer-company relations are seen in the relationships between customers and employees of the company, such as customer service. Customer-product relationships occur in the relationship between customers and products or services related to the brand. Finally, customer-customer relationship refers to the relationship among members of the brand community.

5   Bernard Cova and Stefano Pace, "Brand Community of Convenience Products: New Forms of Customer Empowerment–the Case "My Nutella the Community"," *European journal of marketing* 40, no. 9/10 (2006).

6   Johann Füller, Kurt Matzler, and Melanie Hoppe, "Brand Community Members as a Source of Innovation," *Journal of Product Innovation Management* 25, no. 6 (2008).

7   Johanna Gummerus et al., "Customer Engagement in a Facebook Brand Community," *Management Research Review* 35, no. 9 (2012).

8   James H McAlexander, John W Schouten, and Harold F Koenig, "Building Brand Community," *Journal of marketing* 66, no. 1 (2002).

9   Muniz and O'guinn, "Brand Community."

10   Hope Jensen Schau, Albert M Muñiz Jr, and Eric J Arnould, "How Brand Community Practices Create Value," Journal of marketing 73, no. 5 (2009). Hope Jensen Schau, Albert M Muñiz Jr, and Eric J Arnould, "How Brand Community Practices Create Value," Journal of marketing 73, no. 5 (2009).

11   Maria Sicilia and Mariola Palazón, "Brand Communities on the Internet: A Case Study of Coca-Cola's Spanish Virtual Community," *Corporate Communications: An International Journal* 13, no. 3 (2008).

12   Muniz and O'guinn, "Brand Community," 412.

13   Ibid., 38.

In contrast to Muniz and O'Guinnwho states that the brand community has limited responsibility, In a more recent study, Schau, Muñiz Jr, and Arnould show that social networking practices take place beyond brand boundaries[14]. They found that major brand communities have twelve practices of value creation, such as welcoming, empathizing, governing, evangelizing, justifying, staking, milestoning, badging, documenting, grooming, customizing, and commoditizing. In this case, the discussion conducted by members of the brand community may not only limited to brand-related topics, but other trending topics, such as current political issues or global trends. The fact that some people remain members of the community even though they no longer use the brand's products or services is the evident of such social networking practices.

With the development of information and communication technology, such as Internet, some scholars have extended their research into brand community on social media. Therefore, Muniz and O'Guinn's definition of brand community highlight a significant characteristics of the community, that is, "a non-geographical bound community"[15]. In this case, Internet facilitates this particular charateristic because it expands the reach of communities. As a result, community member can interact and communicate effectively[16].

Social Media and The Emergence of Social Media-Based Brand Community

The advent of social media has created new ways to interact, participate, cooperate, and collaborate with various parties in daily life, including business. Social media offers an internet-based interactive application that allows users to share information, participate, interact and modify contents[17]. Such features are beneficial for SMEs with limited resources and capabilities.

Scholars have defined social media from various views. For example, Safko and Brake emphasized the importance of conversational media in their definition because this feature enables users to create

14 Schau, Muñiz Jr, and Arnould, "How Brand Community Practices Create Value."

15 Muniz and O'guinn, "Brand Community," 412.

16 Poul Houman Andersen, "Relationship Marketing and Brand Involvement of Professionals through Web-Enhanced Brand Communities: The Case of Coloplast," *Industrial marketing management* 34, no. 3 (2005).

17 Some studies of social media, among others: Boyd and Ellison (2007); Kaplan and Haenlein (2010); Kietzmann et al., (2011); Safko and Brake (2009).

and transmit content in various forms, such as text, pictures, video, and audio[18]. In addition, Kaplan and Haenlein pointed out the main features of social media, Web 2.0 and user-generated content; distinguish social media from other internet applications[19]. Thus, social media refers to "a group of internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, that allows the creation and exchange of User Generated Content"[20]. Furthermore, Kietzmann et al. highlighted the importance of the interactivity of web platforms stating that social media are "those interactive web platforms via which individual and communities share, co-create, discuss and modify user-generated content"[21]. These characteristics have shifted the power to control and manage content and messages from firms to customers, allowing consumers to create, share, and consume information. In this research, the term social media will refer to those interactive web platforms that enable users to share, create, and exchange information and knowledge in the form of text, video, audio, and pictures.

Various studies have shown that brand communities created and based on social media have a positive role to support business continuity. Habibi, Laroche, and Richard in a research on consumer relations with social media-based brand community elements (i.e. brands, products, companies, and other consumers) on brand trust, showed that three of the four elements of the community positively influenced brand trust[22]. However, customer relationships with other customers negatively affect brand trust. According to the authors, community involvement strengthens the relationship between consumers and elements of the brand community and has a moderate effect in translating the effect of the relationship on brand trust.

Furthermore, Luo, Zhang, and Liu investigated how harmonious online brand communities affect the benefits of customer-perceived relationships (i.e., confidence, special treatment, and honour)[23]. This

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18 Lon Safko and David K Brake, "The Social Media Bible–Tactics," *Tools & for Business Success*, Hoboken, New Jersey (2009).

19 Andreas M Kaplan and Michael Haenlein, "Users of the World, Unite! The Challenges and Opportunities of Social Media," *Business horizons* 53, no. 1 (2010).

20 Ibid., 61.

21 Jan H Kietzmann et al., "Social Media? Get Serious! Understanding the Functional Building Blocks of Social Media," ibid.54, no. 3 (2011): 241.

22 Mohammad Reza Habibi, Michel Laroche, and Marie-Odile Richard, "The Roles of Brand Community and Community Engagement in Building Brand Trust on Social Media," *Computers in Human Behavior* 37 (2014).

23 Nuan Luo, Mingli Zhang, and Wenhua Liu, "The Effects of Value Co-Creation Practices on Building Harmonious Brand Community and Achieving Brand Loyalty on Social Media in China," ibid.48 (2015).

study shows that a harmonious brand/brand community strengthens the perceived benefits of relationships between customers on social media, thus, influence community satisfaction and positive advertising from word of mouth. In addition, community engagement strengthens the influence of a harmonious brand community on the role of harmonious community relations. Futhermore, Sicilia and Palazon showed that members of online brand community collectively produce brand culture through various ways, such as self-construction, emotional relationships, storytelling, and ritualistic practices[24]. Using netnography as its research method, this research shows that members of the online brand community are curators of online brand culture. As the results, the study identifies actions and interactions needed to facilitate the construct of online brand culture.

In line with the conclusions and results of the literature review above, this research argues that the social media-based brand community has a positive impact on business development, especially at the SME level. However, based on the literature review above, there are still gaps in the body of knowledge about how SMEs build social media-based brand community. In particular, this research explores characteristics of a social media-based brand community that affect the development of social media-based brand community. 3.

Muniz and O'Guinn focus their empirical studies to the brand community of some large enterprises, such as Macintosh and Saab. They conclude that brand community is a customer-brand-customer triad, in which brands are socially constructed and customers are actively shaping both the brand and the product. Based on the research, there are three essential markers of community, namely consciousness of kind, rituals and traditions, and shared moral responsibility. Shared consciousness refers to the solid connection feeling a member of community has not only to the brand, but also to other members [25]. This feeling create a sense of belonging to the community, which in turn create differentiation and separation between users of their brand and users of other brands[26].

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24 Sicilia and Palazón, "Brand Communities on the Internet: A Case Study of Coca-Cola's Spanish Virtual Community."

25 Muniz and O'guinn, "Brand Community."

26 Richard P Bagozzi and Utpal M Dholakia, "Antecedents and Purchase Consequences of Customer Participation in Small Group Brand Communities," *International Journal of research in Marketing* 23, no. 1 (2006); Massimo Bergami and Richard P Bagozzi, "Self-Categorization, Affective Commitment and Group Self-Esteem as Distinct Aspects of Social Identity in the Organization," *British Journal of Social Psychology* 39, no. 4 (2000); Susan Fournier, "Consumers and Their Brands:

In perpetuating consciousness kind, two social process are involved: legitimacy and oppositional brand loyalty. Legitimacy refers to "a process whereby members of the community differentiate between true members of the community and those who are not, or who occupy a marginal space"[27]. In this process, 'true member' is known for their knowledge of the product and the brand. They do not only having or buying the product, but appreciating the culture or history of the product and the brand. In contrast, the 'not-true member' are those who buy product for the sake of buying or having it. They may be buy the product for 'wrong reasons' or may not have knowledge about its history. With regards to oppositional brand loyalty, the authors refer it to social process the community members to derive important aspects of their community experience and component of meaning of the brand. This process allows community members to distinguish 'what the brand is not and who are the band community member are not'[28]. For example, Macintosh community members considered themselves oppositional to PCs, Pc users, and PC software Microsoft.

Furthermore, rituals and traditions in brand community refers to the social process by which members of the community do in maintaining, strengthening, and disseminating the culture and history; the norms and regulations; and the value of the community. Such social process can be held within and beyond the community[29]. For example, Muniz and O'guinn found that some Saab community members flashed their car's light whenever they passed or saw other Saab cars. To maintain, strengthen, and disseminate rituals and traditions, it is important to appreciate history of the brand and share brand stories. Appreciating the history of the brand allows true members to differentiate themselves from the opportunistic ones. It is also a form of cultural capital that serves as member's expertise, status, and commitment. Moreover, sharing brand stories such as sharing members experience in using the product, is important to reinforce consciousness of kind between the brand members, assist in learning community's values, and to secure members' feeling about the brand and the product.

Lastly, moral responsibility relates to a sense of commitment to

Developing Relationship Theory in Consumer Research," *Journal of consumer research* 24, no. 4 (1998).
    27 Muniz and O'guinn, "Brand Community," 419.
    28 Ibid., 420.
    29 Luis Casaló, Carlos Flavián, and Miguel Guinalíu, "The Impact of Participation in Virtual Brand Communities on Consumer Trust and Loyalty: The Case of Free Software," *Online information review* 31, no. 6 (2007).

other community members and to the community as a whole[30]. Muniz and O'guinn noted that moral responsibility are seen in the attitude of community members in retaining old members and integrating new members as well as supporting them to relish brand consumption experience.

To analyze how SMEs build social media-based brand community, this research uses markers of brand community as its theoretical foundation. Social media-based brand community in this research is a Facebook brand community of an SME in Yogyakarta. The next section will explain methodology and important findings of this research.

To achieve the purpose of this research, qualitative approach was used to explore characteristics of social media-based brand community[31]. Creswell states that qualitative case studies employ theory in different ways[32]. For example, in a descriptive study, theories might be absent. However, in an explanatory research, theories is important to guide the study. In other case study, theories can be employed toward the end of the study. In this research, theories guided the research in the explanatory way. A single case study method was selected by examining a Yogyakarta-based small medium enterprise, AB, and its Facebook group.

Data in this research were collected using semi-structured interview and participant observation. Interviews were conducted with fifteen people that include the firm's owner, group's moderators, and members of the Facebook group. The interview was guided by the interview protocol. Each interview lasted for sixty to forty five minutes. All of the interviews were recorded and transcribed for analysis.

Participant observation was done by joining and becoming a member of the group. The researcher actively participated in all group activities, both online and offline, to identify factors that influenced the development of AB's social media-based brand community. Such participation were giving votes on polls about the latest bag designs, uploading product photos, posting statuses, and commenting on

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30 Stefano Brogi et al., "The Effects of Online Brand Communities on Brand Equity in the Luxury Fashion Industry," *International Journal of Engineering Business Management* 5, no. Godište 2013 (2013); Casaló, Flavián, and Guinalíu, "The Impact of Participation in Virtual Brand Communities on Consumer Trust and Loyalty: The Case of Free Software."; Muniz and O'guinn, "Brand Community."

31 Robert K Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods* (Sage publications, 2013).

32 John W Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (Sage publications, 2013).

other members' posts on the Facebook group page. In addition, the researcher attended offline monthly meetings and annual gathering in Yogyakarta.

Development and Characteristics of Social Media-Based Brand Community: A Case Study of AB

1. The Development of AB's Social Media-Based Brand Community

AB, located in Jogjakarta, was founded by TJ (female, 44 years old) and her husband AD (male, 45 years old) in 2009. This SME produces and sells leather bags for women and men. With a capital of IDR 2 million, TJ and AD bought several sheets of cow leather and made five women's bags. The bags sold out, then they started to receive orders from their friends, government offices and private companies. Now, it can produce an average of more than 500 items per month, including leather wallets, pouches, laptop cases, and leather gifts. AB products' price range is from IDR 200,000 to IDR 800,000 per item.

AB has eight staff responsible for distribution and other administrative jobs. There is a production team, which consists of three groups of craftsmen, each group having five to ten craftsmen. It also collaborates with leather supplier from Jogjakarta and Klaten (a city near Jogjakarta) and Lurik (traditional hand-woven fabric) craftsmen also in Klaten.

In 2009, TJ created a Facebook account and used it to sell its products. Due to a violation of Facebook's terms and use, the account was suspended in 2012. She then created Facebook fan page in 2015, but the fan page is also non-active now. In 2014 some loyal customers requested for permission to create a group on Facebook. TJ gave her permission and they named the group 'AB Lovers' (AL). Created as a discussion channel about leather bags, such as how to take care of leather bags and where to buy or to sell our second-hand bags, the group had more than 25,000 members in 2018 from across Indonesia, Hongkong, Qatar, Australia, Europe and other countries.

The increase number of AL's members caused the group moderators to set some regulations. For example, they changed the group from open to closed then secret group because competitors and resellers who join the group also increased. These 'intruder' (as AL's moderators named these unwanted competitors and resellers) created detrimental environment in the group. To make the group better, the

group moderators checked and filtered members' data from resellers and competitors. Members suspected as resellers or competitors were kicked out and banned from the group.

Although AL is a secret group on Facebook, everyone can join the group as long as they are invited by an existing group member and approved by the group's moderators. MN, one of the group's moderators, said that to join AL, a new member must have a real account which display at least one word of their full-real names in the account. She said if a member uses a fake account, then other group members will think that she/he cannot be trusted and they will treat him/her as an 'outsider', in which social punishment, (i.e. alienation or online bullying) was applied. In many cases at AL, members who use fake account left the group because of these punishments.

2. Characteristics of AL as Social Media-Based Brand Community

This research found that AL has the characteristics as brand community as suggested by Muniz and O'guinn (2001)[33]. The first characteristic found is shared consciousness. In the AL's case, the dynamic of AL Facebook group shows how this group evolved from a mere enthusiast-customers-group into a brand community. Shared consciousness is shown in a tagline at the 2017 AL Grand Gathering, "It is not just a bag. It's sisterhood.". The tagline implies strong connection among customers, which create members' sense of belonging to a sisterhood community. Another example of shared consciousness is shown in how they accept new members. As mentioned previously, new members have to obey AL's terms and conditions, such as invited by existing members and display at least one word of their full names.

The second characteristic is rituals and traditions. At AL, TJ, her team at AB, and the AL group's moderators are working together to set some rules and rituals at the group. For example, they set a specific day that allows group members to buy AB's products. In this dedicated day, no group members are allowed to post except for the moderators or TJ herself. As TJ explained:

> "I used to post and sell products randomly on the AL group. But some group moderators privately messaged me saying that the group members objected. They then suggested creating a week-long schedule and selecting a particular day as our 'Purchase Day'. I said, "Well, I agree with it, but how about the other members? Do they also agree with the schedule?" The group's moderators

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33 Muniz and O'guinn, "Brand Community."

assured me that the members were OK. Because it means that they don't need to monitor the group for a whole week waiting for my post."

Another example of rules and ritual set by the group's moderators and TJ is the method of purchase to accommodate members' needs and conditions. As internet infrastructure and connection in Indonesia are poor and unequal at some parts of the country, many members have difficulties in purchasing AB's product because they have to compete with others who have better internet connection. Therefore, based on intensive discussions between the owner and AL Facebook group members, the owner modified the firm's sales methods into three purchasing models: *Rebutan* (snatch model), *Antrian* (queue model), and *Pre-Order Wilayah* (regional-based pre-order model).

Moral responsibility as brand community characteristics was also shown in the AL Facebook group. Shared moral responsibilities were found in how members of the group cheer each other whenever they failed to purchase AB's products or post their bags' wish list. Another form of shared moral responsibility is by giving likes to members post on a group's competition. For example, in August 2017, AB held a bag design competition for its newest collection. More than 700 members of the group participated in this competition although there was no prize money for the winner. Only four designs were selected, however, other members who submitted their designs were allowed to purchase AB's bag through special mechanism.

This research found that sharing knowledge and information about anything, from how to care for leather bags to information about the cheapest hotels in a particular area, as a way to share moral responsibility. For example, this group was created to exchange information and knowledge on how to care of leather bags. An AL shared in her experience in washing leather bag in Fig. 1 below.

Figure 1. Example of the AL group's member sharing her experience in washing leather bag.

This post received 77 positive responses (i.e. likes, loves, and wows) and 49 comments from other members of the group. Most of the comments express positive reactions, such as 'Thank you' or 'I'll try this next time..'.

The AL group has helped AB to promote and market its products; find and collect ideas both for product and organization developments; communicate and interact with customers; and participate in offline social/charity activities. The following section discusses findings with the markers of a brand community. Limitations and recommendation of future research are also presented.

Building Social Media-Based Community in Small-Medium Enterprises

Internet and social media today have become an important place for people with the same interest to discuss about brand. Brand contributes in the creation of consumer's new identities by making them connected with other consumers of the same products. In this case, Internet and social media play important role in fostering both the creation of identities and the development of brand community.

This research found evidence of social media-based brand

community, particularly Facebook. Empirical findings in this research confirm three markers of community and qualities of the brand community, namely consciousness kind (i.e. legitimacy and oppositional brand loyalty), rituals and traditions (i.e. appreciating history of the brand and sharing brand stories), and moral responsibility (i.e. integrating and retaining members and assisting in using the brand)[34].

As a brand, AB has succeeded in positioning its name in the leather bag market. The high number of members in the AL Facebook group shows that the high demand for AB products. The fact that most AL members do not have AB's products indicates a relatively stable market for this company.

Although the findings in this study confirm all of the characteristics of a community and the social processes that occur within it, this study found several other characteristics that have not been categorised by Muniz and O'Guinn . These characteristics play an important role in the formation of brand community based social media. Firstly, as one of the social processes in consciousness kind, legitimacy distinguishes community members based on the knowledge and motivation to join the community. In the case of AL, legitimacy was shown as access to decision making at the company. In this case, proximity to AB's owner determines the extent to which access to decision making is given to community members. Such access enables some members to act as mediator between company's owners and other community members, as shown in the case of the AB's purchase schedule.

Secondly, Muniz and O'Guinn stated that moral responsibility is important for the continuity of a community, given the membership of a community is generally voluntary[35]. In the context of a brand community, someone join and become a member of a community is mainly due to their interest in the brand. However, such interest can change at any time, thus, the main challenge of a brand community is how to maintain its members to survive. In the case of AB, rules set by the moderator, which approved by the AB owner, force members to stay in the community. Member's approval by the group moderators usually takes times because the moderators must ensure that prospective members are eligible. Additionally, reward and punishment in this community is clear and strict, if there is a member who violates the rules, he will be excluded from the community and requests to become

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34 Muniz and O'guinn, "Brand Community."
35 Ibid.

a member will be ignored.

Lastly, the important aspect that distinguishes the AL community from other brand communities is its social responsibility reaches beyond the community. AL members actively participated in offline social activities, such as collecting donation for their member who are affected disaster or hospitalized, organizing charity events, or helping orphanages in providing healthy food. These social activities, show that this community is not only dealing with AB's products, but also caring for others.

Findings in this research provide several implications for both the body of knowledge and marketing practitioners. The setting of this research, which took place on social media, enrich our knowledge of the benefit of building brand community on social media for business. AB and AL group members' experiences in developing brand community and shaping its culture fills the gap in the brand community's research. Offline and online interaction have helped this community to strengthen relationship between customers and the brand, as well as among customers. Such strong relationships benefit the company because this community is a source of ideas for product development, while helping to improve organization and corporate image.

Practically, this research suggests firm's owner, particularly of those own small-medium enterprises, the importance of building brand community. Findings show that, for example, sharing experiences help members of this community to maintain their bags better in a less-expensive cost. Strong connection among members also help them to stay in the community, although they may not have the product yet. For companies, this behavior shows consumer's attachment to the brand and the firm, which if it is managed properly, will help increase profit and business performance.

Furthermore, findings in this research show that intensive interaction and communication between the owner and the customers is required in building brand community. Such interaction and communication can be both offline by meeting face-to-face and online on the community's Facebook group account and personal messengers.

Conclusion

This research aimed to explore characteristics of social media-based brand community at SME level using three markers of community and qualities of brand community suggested by Muniz and O'Guinn.

Observing and interviewing the AB Lovers (AL) Facebook group, this research confirms Muniz and O'Guinn characteristics of brand community.

As a single case study, this research has several limitations. Limitations to this research related to sample size and potential bias need to be acknowledged. Qualitative case study research typically employs a smaller sample size than quantitative research. As this is a single case study, this means that findings may not be generalizable to all Indonesian SMEs. As such, a multiple case studies could reveal different research findings. There is also the possibility of bias during data collection and analysis. Two sources of bias were considered . The first potential bias may be caused by the researcher's a priori assumptions towards the cases that may lead the content of interviews and the researcher's interpretation of data, preventing an unbiased understanding of the cases. The second potential bias lies in the effect of the researcher's presence (during data collection) that may influence participants' answers.

To provide a broader view on the issues addressed in this research, similar empirical research in different national and cultural contexts is needed. More research in different contexts or cultural backgrounds might provide different perspectives and results. In terms of research methods, further research could apply quantitative methods to capturing general trends of social media-based brand community at SMEs' level. Further research into how SMEs manage their brand is also required.

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