

Golden Dimsum's Word of Mouth Strategy in Increasing Sales During 2023 - 2024

Bazlin Fania Farransahad*, Erwan Sudiwijaya,

Department of Communication, Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta, 55183, Indonesia

*Corresponding author's email: bazlinfaniafarransahad@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Keywords

Word of Mouth; marketing strategy;
Golden Dimsum; MSMEs

This research explores the implementation of word-of-mouth (WoM) marketing strategy by Golden Dimsum to enhance sales performance during the period of 2023–2024. The strategy was selected for its effectiveness, low cost, and ability to establish strong customer relationships. Utilizing a descriptive qualitative approach, data were obtained through interviews and documentation and analyzed using the Miles and Huberman interactive model. The results indicate that the WoM strategy was executed through five key dimensions: talkers, topics, tools, talking part, and tracking. Promotional messages were naturally disseminated by loyal customers, as well as the business owner's family and acquaintances. The most frequently discussed aspects included product taste, pricing, and service quality. Instagram and TikTok functioned as the primary communication platforms, supported by direct engagement from the owner. Continuous monitoring of customer comments and reviews was conducted to maintain satisfaction. The study concludes that WoM marketing effectively sustained sales and expanded market reach, suggesting its relevance as a strategic model for micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in the digital era.

1. Introduction

The emergence of an increasing number of businesses each year has resulted in more intense competition across various sectors, as the development of business in Indonesia has been progressing substantially. In addition to the success of large-scale enterprises, micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) have also experienced growth. The Indonesian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Kadin, 2024) has released data indicating that the food sector is responsible for the maximum number of MSMEs in Indonesia, with a total of 1,800,827 units. Street cuisine, in particular, has emerged as one of the most prevalent food sales. According to a survey conducted by the Rakuten Insight Center (Ridwan, 2023), 79% of 13,350 respondents prefer to dine outdoors, particularly from street food vendors.

Yogyakarta is renowned for its culinary heritage, which includes a vibrant street food scene that is constantly evolving. Not only travelers, but also local residents, are drawn to the diverse selection of street food options, which encompasses both traditional snacks and contemporary innovations. Street food is not only a culinary tourism destination but also a social space for gathering and leisure with friends and family. Local entertainment enhances the lively nighttime ambiance, allowing visitors to savor their meals (Wijayanti, 2022).

The Special Region of Yogyakarta, which encompasses Sleman, has a widespread distribution of street cuisine MSME production. Amanda Ayu P. founded Golden Dimsum in 2022 as a street food vendor. Dimsum, buffet style seblak, frozen cuisine, and a variety of beverages are all available at the establishment. At present, it maintains two outlets situated in Tamantirto and Jalan Godean. Golden Dimsum prioritizes the utilization of premium ingredients in all of its culinary offerings.

It is imperative that street food MSMEs implement an effective marketing strategy, particularly in light of the frequent similarities they exhibit with their competitors. MSMEs can successfully navigate the increasingly competitive markets with the assistance of a well-organized marketing strategy. By employing effective strategies, MSMEs can distinguish their products or services from those of their competitors, thereby increasing their appeal. This method allows MSMEs to enhance their brand image, attract new consumers, and expand their market reach in the face of competition (Dr Fifi Permata sari., 2023).

There are numerous reasons why viral products have a strong consumer appeal, as per (Achmad et al., 2023). Initially, they are inclined to attract a broad audience, which enhances their recognition and appreciation. Secondly, consumer confidence is bolstered by favorable reviews and recommendations from other users. Third, viral products are frequently rendered more appealing and pertinent to consumer requirements through the implementation of inventive and innovative marketing strategies. Fourth, consumer perception and purchase interest are significantly influenced by endorsements from public figures or influencers. Consequently, numerous sellers are now developing promotional content on social media platforms in order to accomplish virality.

Golden Dimsum implements a marketing strategy known as word of mouth (WOM). The business has been dependent on word-of-mouth marketing since its inception, which the proprietor regards as both cost effective and impactful. Golden Dimsum utilizes a variety of word of mouth (WOM) strategies, including digital platforms like WhatsApp, TikTok, Instagram, and Google Maps, as well as direct verbal recommendations. The business has achieved ubiquitous success through the frequent appearance of numerous TikTok videos on the platform's "For You Page" (FYP). Some of this viral content was created in conjunction with influencers to increase the reach of marketing and the engagement of viewers. This approach has resulted in consistent customer traffic and enhanced brand recognition.

In comparison to other marketing communication strategies, word-of-mouth (WOM) is regarded as one of the most potent (Juariyah, 2023). This method has been demonstrated to be effective in enhancing distribution efficacy and reducing promotional costs. WOM frequently manifests within particular social groups, as consumers are inclined to prioritize peer recommendations over corporate advertisements (Burhanuddin et al, 2022).

The objective of this investigation is to determine the strategies that Golden Dimsum employs to enhance its sales through word-of-mouth marketing. Additionally, it endeavors to investigate the effective implementation of key components of word of mouth (WOM) including talkers, topics, tools, talking parts, and tracking in the street food industry. The study aims to provide valuable insights and guidance to other MSME actors who are interested in maximizing the potential of word of mouth in their business operations by comprehending these strategies.

2. Method

This study employs a descriptive qualitative research methodology to examine the effectiveness of Golden Dimsum's word of mouth strategy in boosting sales from 2023 to 2024. The objective of descriptive qualitative research is to provide a comprehensive description of a phenomenon through the systematic examination of precise data (Sahir, 2022). This research process entails the accumulation of detailed data through interviews and documentation, which is subsequently analyzed to identify specific patterns or themes.

This investigation implements structured interviews. A structured interview is a data collection technique that enables the preparation of a research instrument in the form of predetermined questions, as the researcher or data collector already knows the precise information that is required, as per Esterberg (Sugiyono, 2018). The administrative personnel and the owner of Golden Dimsum comprise the informants in this investigation. The selection of these specific sources aims to support and facilitate the research process.

In qualitative research, documentation analysis is a supplementary approach to interviews and observation. In qualitative research, documents may manifest in various formats, including images,

writings, or creative works such as biographies, chronicles, or life histories (Sugiyono, 2018). The researcher employs the documentation data collection technique to accumulate information by way of activity records. This data encompasses sales turnover charts, images portraying a succession of marketing actions implemented through word of mouth, and photographs of Golden Dimsum's word of mouth activities.

3. Result and Discussion

3.1 Presenting the Results

This chapter presents the research findings based on interviews with the admin and owner of Golden Dimsum, analyzed using the word of mouth (WOM) theory consisting of five 5T elements: talkers, topic, tools, talking part, and tracking. The results are presented in a representative and chronological manner, supported by direct quotes from the informants.

3.1.1 Talkers

Golden Dimsum has active talkers consisting of the owner's friends and family as well as loyal customers. They play a role in spreading information through direct recommendations and social media posts.

"The most enthusiastic ones are usually the owner's friends, and of course also family or relatives." (Admin)

"Customers who are also the owner's friends... create a chain of recommendations among their peers." (Owner)

Thus, Golden Dimsum leverages talkers from its close circle and customer base as the primary source of word-of-mouth dissemination, in line with the theory that emphasizes the importance of social networks in spreading messages.

3.1.2 Topic

The most frequently discussed topics among consumers include taste quality, affordable prices, and friendly service. These topics trigger positive conversations among customers.

"They usually talk about the good taste and affordable prices." (Admin)

"It's mostly about the price, service, and the taste quality of the dimsum." (Owner)

The WOM topics that develop around Golden Dimsum reflect the strengths of its products and services, as directly experienced by the customers.

3.1.3 Tools

Golden Dimsum utilizes various digital platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, WhatsApp, and Google Maps to facilitate interaction and broaden the reach of information.

"We're active on social media, especially Instagram and TikTok." (Admin)

"Google Maps is usually used to check customer reviews." (Owner)

The use of digital communication tools at Golden Dimsum accelerates and simplifies the spread of WOM both directly and through digital channels.

3.1.4 Talking Part

Golden Dimsum actively responds to comments, answers questions, and handles complaints politely and constructively. This approach fosters closeness and trust with customers.

"We constantly try to respond to comments or DMs one by one." (Admin)

"We always respond properly... we always prioritize offering an apology." (Owner)

Golden Dimsum's active involvement in customer conversations strengthens emotional connections and demonstrates the application of effective WOM strategies.

3.1.5 Tracking

Golden Dimsum tracks consumer conversations both on social media and directly at the outlet. This monitoring is done daily without a fixed schedule to ensure quick responses to suggestions and complaints.

“We actively monitor comments and mentions on Instagram.” (Admin)

“There’s no specific time for checking it’s done continuously at any time.” (Owner)

Golden Dimsum’s consistent and responsive tracking strategy helps the brand understand consumer perceptions in real time.

Create a Discussion

This chapter provides an in-depth discussion of the research findings regarding the word-of-mouth (WOM) strategy implemented by Golden Dimsum to increase its product sales. The discussion is based on the word-of-mouth marketing theory by Grace (Haque fawzi et al., 2022), which breaks down WOM strategy into five key elements known as the 5Ts: talkers, topic, tools, talking part, and tracking. Each element is analyzed and connected to interview data gathered from informants at Golden Dimsum and is further supported by relevant literature and similar studies to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the role of WOM strategy in the context of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) such as Golden Dimsum.

According to the 5T theory, talkers are individuals who actively and voluntarily share information about a product or service because they have had a positive experience. The findings of this study indicate that the primary talkers in the case of Golden Dim Sum are the owner’s close friends and family. These individuals not only became the first customers but also played a key role in naturally spreading information through their social networks. Recommendations from these people carry significant influence because they are based on emotional connections and established trust. This highlights that effective word-of-mouth marketing, especially during the early stages of small business development, greatly relies on the strength of personal relationships. In line with the findings of (Rahmawati et al., 2024), the close bond between business owners and their inner circle serves as a trustworthy and sustainable source of WOM, helping to strengthen brand positioning in consumers’ minds from the outset. In the context of Golden Dimsum, the involvement of talkers from the owner’s close environment makes the messages they share more convincing. Information from trusted individuals is more readily accepted than formal messages, making the role of talkers crucial in shaping opinions and influencing purchasing decisions.

Meanwhile, the topic of conversation plays a vital role in a WOM strategy, as it determines the direction and appeal of the message shared among consumers. Grace explains that relevant, engaging, and honestly communicated topics are more likely to spread and have a stronger impact. In the case of Golden Dimsum, consumers spontaneously talk about things such as delicious food taste, affordable prices, and warm service from the staff. These topics arise from the customers’ genuine experiences, rather than being engineered or directly promoted by the company. This indicates that the WOM occurring is natural and driven by real customer satisfaction. Research by (Hesti et al., 2023) also supports this finding, stating that meaningful topics directly related to consumer experience can drive purchase intention. Topics emerging from personal experience help create a positive impression of the brand and reinforce its image in the minds of consumers. Golden Dim Sum successfully harnesses this strength by consistently maintaining the aspects that customers frequently talk about. By providing enjoyable and satisfying experiences repeatedly, the company creates organic conversations that continue to spread by word of mouth. In the long run, this strategy fosters customer loyalty while also attracting new consumers through trusted recommendations. This kind of everyday conversation-driven WOM becomes an effective promotional tool that requires little cost. Furthermore, because the messages originate from real experiences, they tend to be more trustworthy than formal advertisements. As a result, Golden Dimsum indirectly builds a customer community that voluntarily becomes brand ambassadors.

The next element in the WOM strategy is tools, which refer to the communication channels used to spread messages quickly and widely. According to Grace, tools such as social media, review

platforms, and messaging apps play an important role in accelerating the flow of information. In practice, Golden Dimsum utilizes various digital channels such as Instagram, TikTok, WhatsApp, and Google Maps as its primary media to deliver information and build interaction with customers. These platform choices are tailored to the digital habits of their target consumers, most of whom are active on social media. This strategy not only supports product promotion but also helps amplify customer testimonials and creates direct communication with audiences. This approach aligns with that of Dira Park Balung (Habibi & Zulianto, 2024) which also leverages social media to strengthen relationships with its visitors. By using the right communication tools, WOM dissemination becomes more dynamic, faster, and reaches a broader audience. Furthermore, digital tools offer customers the opportunity to be directly involved in sharing information and becoming part of the brand's story. Social media functions as more than just a one-way promotional tool it becomes a two-way communication platform that enhances the closeness between the company and its customers. Quick responses and active engagement on social media also create the impression that the company truly cares about the customer experience.

The next talking part refers to the company's active role in initiating and maintaining communication with its customers. Grace emphasizes that a quick and friendly response to consumers who are talking about a product or service is crucial. Golden Dimsum consistently implements this principle by involving both its admin and owner directly in responding to comments, private messages, and reviews from customers. Such behavior reflects a warm and personal approach, which not only fosters emotional connections but also boosts customer loyalty. Additionally, Golden Dimsum shows appreciation to customers who voluntarily leave positive reviews, for example, by offering discounts or small gifts, which encourages active participation from other consumers. This strategy aligns with participatory communication models such as the one used in the Emina Girl Gang Ambassador program, where two-way engagement is key to strengthening the brand consumer relationship (Dewi & Wahyuni, 2020). For MSMEs, such an approach is highly effective as it can build strong bonds without the need for large promotional budgets. Through talking part, companies can directly understand customer expectations and perceptions while also demonstrating care and responsiveness. This kind of active communication helps build trust and reinforces a positive company image in the eyes of customers. In other words, the talking part serves as an important bridge between customer voices and the company's relevant and meaningful responses.

As the final component of the 5T model, tracking is the process of monitoring and analyzing what consumers are saying and doing in relation to a product. Grace explains that effective tracking helps companies understand how consumers perceive their products, allowing strategies to be adjusted to better meet market needs. Golden Dimsum conducts this tracking through various digital media such as Instagram, TikTok, Google Maps, and WhatsApp, as well as directly through customer interactions at the store. The information gathered is used to assess service quality, improve products, and develop more effective communication strategies in the future. This method is similar to what PT Talaga Mulya Indah has done in a study (Putri et al., 2024). where tracking is used to measure the impact of WOM on business growth. In other words, tracking is not just about monitoring comments or reviews it also serves as a foundation for making key business decisions. This activity strengthens the brand's position in the eyes of consumers and enhances customer trust. Golden Dimsum demonstrates that thorough tracking can improve the effectiveness of WOM strategies and ensure their relevance in a changing market. Moreover, tracking helps the company respond quickly to criticism or feedback.

4. Conclusion

The word of mouth (WOM) strategy implemented by Golden Dimsum demonstrates alignment with the concepts presented in the theory. In the aspect of talkers, the theory states that the best talkers are those with close social ties and frequent product usage, such as friends, neighbors, and family (Sernovitz in Haque fawzi et al., 2022). The findings from Golden Dim Sum reinforce this, where friends and relatives from within the company served as the initial group to actively spread recommendations, which later evolved into loyal customers who continued to share information. In

the topic aspect, the theory emphasizes the importance of appealing and honest topics related to product quality, price, and benefits. This is consistent with the practice at Golden Dimsum, where customers spontaneously discuss taste quality, affordability, and service indicating that these topics arise naturally and are relevant to consumers. Regarding tools, the theory suggests using instruments such as email, blogs, and websites to support WOM communication. Golden Dimsum has adapted this approach by utilizing modern social media platforms like TikTok, Instagram, and Google Maps. Although different from the traditional tools mentioned in the theory, these platforms have proven effective in today's digital era.

In the talking part element, the theory stresses the importance of active company participation in responding to consumers. Golden Dimsum implements this by replying to chats and comments, as well as showing appreciation to active customers actions that align well with the principle of engagement outlined in the theory. Finally, in terms of tracking, the theory states that companies must be able to monitor consumer perceptions and feedback through reviews and online discussions. Golden Dimsum fulfills this by observing comments and complaints via digital platforms to gain real time insights into the progression of WOM. In conclusion, Golden Dimsum's word of mouth strategy is highly consistent with the established theoretical framework, although in practice, it has been adapted to fit the developments of modern technology and digital media, making it more contextual to current needs. This approach not only reflects a solid understanding of the theory but also demonstrates the ability to apply it effectively in real world situations.

5. Acknowledgement

In the acknowledgment section, the author can state the source of research funding and more specifically to the contract number. Make sure the statement complies with the guidelines provided by the funding agency. The author can also express his thanks to reviewers and proofreaders, or technicians who help prepare equipment set-ups or students who assist in surveys.

6. References

- Achmad, R., Sudirman, K., Handayani, H., & Anastasya, L. (2023). Analisis Perilaku Konsumen terhadap Minat Beli Produk Viral pada E-Commerce Shopee di Kota Makassar. *Journal of Economics, Bussiness and Management Issues*, 2(3), 245–255. <https://doi.org/10.47134/jebmi.v2i3.394https://economics.pubmedia.id/index.php/jebmi>
- Burhanuddin, et al. (2022). Komunikasi pemasaran. In *Jakarta: Erlangga* (Issue 45). [http://repository.unisba.ac.id/bitstream/handle/123456789/12109/06bab2_Abdallah_10090312206_skr_2016.pdf?sequence=6&isAllowed=y#:~:text=Menurut Kotler dan Keller \(2012, dan merek yang mereka jual](http://repository.unisba.ac.id/bitstream/handle/123456789/12109/06bab2_Abdallah_10090312206_skr_2016.pdf?sequence=6&isAllowed=y#:~:text=Menurut Kotler dan Keller (2012, dan merek yang mereka jual)
- Dewi, S., & Wahyuni, I. I. (2020). Strategi Word of Mouth Pada Program Emina Girl Gang Ambassador. *Jurnal LINIMASA*, 3(1), 57–80.
- Dr Fifian Permata sari. (2023). *Strategi Pengembangan Pemasaran UMKM* (pertama). PT. Sonpedia Publishing Indonesia.
- Habibi, Y. N. Z., & Zulianto, M. (2024). Word Of Mouth Marketing Communication Strategy Japan Tourism Dira Park Balung Jember. *Inflasi: Jurnal Ekonomi ...*, 1, 29–35. <https://ejurnal.faaslibsmidia.com/index.php/inflasi/article/view/21>
- Haque fawzi, M. G., Iskandar, ahmad syarief, Erlangga, H., Nurjaya, Sumarsi, D., & I. (2022). STRATEGI PEMASARAN Konsep, Teori dan Implementasi. In *Pascal Books*. <http://repository.ibs.ac.id/id/eprint/4973>
- Hesti, S., Benediktus, E., & Jaya, P. (2023). Determinan Word Of Mouth Dalam Bisnis Kuliner. *Maneggio: Jurnal Ilmiah Magister Manajemen*, 6(1), 15–21. <https://doi.org/10.30596/maneggio.v6i1.13878>
- Juariyah. (2023). *Komunikasi Pemasaran Batik Tie Die Jember dalam meningkatkan produk lokal*

-
- (ke-1). UM Jember Press.
- Kadin, S. (2024). *Data dan Statistik UMKM*. KADIN INDONESIA. <https://kadin.id/data-dan-statistik/umkm-indonesia/>
- Putri, M. A., Wardiana, S., & Satrio, S. (2024). *Proses Strategi Komunikasi Pemasaran Word of Mouth dan Media Promosi pada PT. Talaga Mulya Indah*. 1(2).
- Rahmawati, D. A., Heryani, E., & Selasi, D. (2024). Word of Mouth Marketing as an Effective Strategy Tool on The Satriya Pandu Batik Craftsmen in Trusmi, Cirebon. *Journal of Islamic Finance and Economics*, 1(02), 282–288.
- Ridwan, P. P. (2023). *Street Food dan Kedai Kaki Lima Jadi Pilihan Favorit Masyarakat Saat Makan di Luar*. Goodstats. <https://goodstats.id/article/street-food-dan-kedai-kaki-lima-jadi-pilihan-favorit-masyarakat-saat-makan-di-luar-K4yrH>
- Sahir, S. H. (2022). *Metodologi Penelitian* (pertama). Penerbit KBM Indonesia.
- Sugiyono. (2018). *Metode Penelitian Evaluasi* (Cetakan ke). Penerbit Alfabeta Bandung.
- Wijayanti, A. (2022). Strategi Pengembangan Wisata Malam Bwebasis Perkotaan Di Kota Yogyakarta. *Journal of Innovation Research and Knowledge*, 1(2). <https://doi.org/10.24235/jetour.v1i2.24>
-