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Implementation of Marketing Strategy: A Case Study of an Online Upcycling Fashion Brand in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

The continuous growth of the fashion industry leaves tons of discarded clothing and garments. One way to address this issue is by upcycling or assembling worn or leftover garments into a new piece of clothing. With the growing sustainable awareness in Indonesia, consumers have started to look for clothing brands applying a sustainable practice. The research investigated the external and internal factors that could affect sales as well as brand awareness and identified the marketing strategy of a new upcycling clothing brand in Indonesia, Kawan. The research was conducted by understanding the external and internal factors using qualitative and quantitative methods. The internal data were from interviews with the owner of Kawan, customers and potential customers of Kawan. They were analyzed by the Valuable, Rare, Imperfectly Imitable, Organization (VRIO) and Marketing Mix (Product, Price, Place, and Promotion (4P)) framework. Meanwhile, the external factors were examined by the Political, Economic, Sociocultural, Technology, Ecological, Legal (PESTEL) framework and benchmarking. The data for PESTEL analysis were derived from news, reports, and an interview with the owner of Kawan. A survey was also conducted to women in Indonesia to formulate the marketing strategy using Marketing Mix framework. The results show the product characteristics for upcycling clothing brand and essential types of information for the promotion. They are essential in value creation and delivery for upcycling fashion brands. It is expected to contribute to the sales issue that Kawan has experienced and generate the marketing strategy for the issue.

Keywords: marketing strategy, online, upcycling, sustainable fashion, social media

INTRODUCTION

The global pandemic affects how people think about the environment. According to the survey by Boston Consulting Group to eight countries, including Indonesia, in the wake of the pandemic, people consider more about environmental issues. They are more committed to shifting their behavior to advance sustainability (Kachaner, Nielsen, Portafaix, & Rodzko, 2020). It is also palpable in the industry of fashion, where sustainability is an on-demand issue. The sustainable fashion trend also looks positive for the future with the expectation of more ethical and sustainable fashion industry practices (Gazzola, Pavione, Pezzetti, & Grechi, 2020).

Sustainable is often correlated with eco, eco-fashion, fair trade, green, ethical, organic, recycled, upcycling, environmental, and sustainability. However, no sole definition can cover sustainability as it is perceived differently for each person (Evans & Peirson-Smith, 2018). It goes the same with the term sustainable fashion. Nevertheless, it is often identified as products created using materials that will not harm the environment and produced in ethical environment for the people involved (Youn & Jung, 2021). Sustainable fashion minimizes the drawbacks of its disposal, consumption, and production of clothes to the society, economy, and environment altogether (Razzaq, Ansari, Razzaq, & Awan, 2018).

Similarly, fashion waste is a hot topic and a severe environmental issue amongst the fashion industry. Almost all materials used to produce

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garments are lost after the clothing is used, 73% of them go to landfills or incineration (Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2017). The waste includes the leftover fabrics and discarded clothes from the users. The culture of discarding clothes after several usages results from the fast-paced changing trends of fashion and mass production (Matušovičová, 2020).

Various methods are done to tackle this issue, one of which is upcycling. Upcycling is the process of refashioning useless materials into useful products (Wilson, 2016). According to Han et al. (2017), the upcycling method has been identified by academics and practitioners as an upward reprocessing of waste by reliving the intrinsic value of clothing with recycling, recutting, refashioning, and closing the loop of the manufacturing system. This method is crucial to reducing fashion waste and is already applied by fashion brands. Upcycled clothing normally produces one-of-a-kind products, meaning that one product is not exactly the same as another one. The fabric source comes from different materials that are assembled into one final piece of clothing. Hence, the color, texture, or pattern tend to differ for each garment.

Moreover, as quarantine is an obligatory means to suppress the growth of active cases of COVID-19 and protect people's well-being, time-spent at home rises. Therefore, shopping behavior also shifts from offline to online, with a surge in e-commerce and mobile shopping transactions (Sardjono, Selviyanti, Mukhlis, & Tohir, 2021). Based on those conditions, local brands benefit from more exposure to prospective customers, including fashion brands. Furthermore, online platforms ease the barrier for fashion brands to establish their shops, especially during the pandemic where offline events and social crowds are prohibited. Online platforms, such as social media, are many ways to look for entertainment. A survey also shows a surge of social media usage by 61% compared to the regular usage rate. The highest increase of social media usage is amongst users in the 18–34 age group. Instagram, Facebook and WhatsApp have experienced an increase of usage for more than 40% from users under 35 years old (Kantar, 2020).

Audiences use digital platforms to connect with their favorite brands. Therefore, social networks and digital communication are essential to new fashion brands (Scheide & Marques, 2018). Social media and fashion bloggers have high credibility amongst younger people (De Lenne & Vandenbosch, 2017). Instagram is one of the most popular platforms amongst millennials for fashion-seeking for trends or finding fashion inspiration based on a study in the US (Nelson, Moore, & Swanson, 2019). Moreover, fashion Instagram is a new sustainable cultural space to share daily life and lifestyle, which also applies to fashion brands as its promotional platform. Vast amounts of non-fashion expert influencers emerging on Instagram allow them to share their visual diary and connect with their followers (Suh, 2020).

Furthermore, Indonesian fashion consumers are more inclined to participate in electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWoM) or digital conversation of fashion brands through endorsing behaviors (Ananda, Hernández-García, Acquila-Natale, & Lamberti, 2019). It is also found that brand image, brand trust, and purchase intent are directly influenced by celebrity endorsement (Herjanto, Adiwijaya, Wijaya, & Semuel, 2020). As sustainable fashion is still a fresh trend, utilizing fashion trendsetters and influencers or opinion leaders is essential in a brand's communication (Dickenbrok & Martinez, 2018).

Indonesian millennials are not too familiar with the term 'upcycle'. However, they are considered ecologically conscious, influencing eco-product shopping preference (Parung, 2019). In addition, the understanding of sustainable fashion is somewhat subjective according to each person. Hence, it is essential for a brand or a company to emphasize the competitive advantage in their marketing communication, which will amplify the brand voice and image (Henninger, Alevizou, & Oates, 2016). According to Yu and Lee (2019), the green value, which explains how an upcycled brand contributes to the environment, and aesthetic value in design and marketing strongly influences purchase decisions in the US. Furthermore, there is a positive and significant relationship between interest in purchasing upcycled clothing with environmental concern and with fashion consciousness (Bhatt, Silverman, & Dickson, 2019).

Kawan, established in June 2020, is an Indonesian fashion brand that provides upcycled clothing for urban women aged 20–35. It has unique designs and a wide range of colors. Kawan is currently striving to gain brand awareness as it is launched amid a pandemic.

Table 1 depicts the Instagram insight that shows no significant impact resulting from Instagram Ads in engagement and sales. In the third and fifth week of October and the third week of November, Kawan used Instagram Ads. However, it had no impact on sales. Since the first product launch, Kawan secured sales of four products, but only from the owner's relatives. Kawan faced the common problem of a newly established brand raising its brand awareness.

Moreover, Kawan has not effectively communicated and explained the sustainable and upcycling story of the brand to its audiences. Hence, it does not provide sufficient information to build the audiences' understanding. This situation has been reflected in the absence of sales of Kawan in the last quarter of 2020.

According to Han et al. (2017), in UK upcycling brands, the patchwork cutting technique is one of the key techniques used in the upcycling product design. It maximizes the use of fabric. This characteristic of upcycled clothing is used to analyze Indonesian upcycling brands.

Moreover, the study towards Generations Y and Z in the Slovak Republic has concluded that price is considered a decisive factor in purchasing sustainable fashion products. Hence, consumers need to understand the reasons behind the pricing of sustainable fashion

Table 1 Kawan's Digital Insight in October to December 2020

Platform	Oct				Nov				Dec
	W2	W3*	W4	W5*	W1	W2	W3*	W4	W1
Instagram									
Accounts Reached	1.699	287	26	2,667	144	1.828	953	105	55
Content Interactions	58	34	0	423	5	291	0	10	0
Total Followers	184	189	192	196	195	196	202	202	201
Direct Message	0	0	3	3	2	0	0	0	0
WhatsApp									
Product inquiries	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sales	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Complaints	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tokopedia									
Followers	6	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
Sales	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

*Instagram Ads activates

products. Then, social media, websites, and influencers are marketing communication tools that fashion brands should tap into with an interactive communication approach to involve their audience. It also explains that the content or communication not only has to be entertaining but also informative and educative to deliver the understanding about sustainable issues (Kusá & Urmínová, 2020). However, the former research has not discussed the implementation of the strategy, including the promotional details specifically for upcycling fashion brands. Hence, the research focuses on breaking down the product, price, place, and promotion based on the framework of Marketing Mix in the case of Kawan.

The sustainable fashion interest also shows in the academic areas that studies on upcycling have been increasing in the past decade. It is found that papers published discussing the topic show positive trends by reviewing 52 papers (Paras & Curteza, 2018). Nevertheless, most studies published can be categorized in two areas: textile and clothing journals and operation and supply chain management. There is no study found that focuses on digital marketing so far, especially in the Asia region. Albeit it is essential to be sustainable, the industry also needs insight on the marketing perspective to guide the practice on the business side of this topic. Thus, the research aims to cover the gap by examining Indonesian fashion upcycling brands.

The research is conducted to provide the information of essential marketing strategies for upcycled clothing brands to contribute to the practical discussions regarding marketing management with the real-life case. The objective of the research is to fill in the gap, particularly in the scope of social media promotion for a new upcycling fashion brand, to dive deeper into the problem faced by a new upcycling brand, and to provide the solution in the scope of marketing. Therefore, the expected results are the analysis of external and internal factors that influence the sales of Kawan and the marketing strategy based on Marketing Mix (4P) that can be applied for a new upcycling fashion brand, Kawan.

METHODS

The research uses a mixed method by gathering qualitative and quantitative data. The first stage of the research examines the external and internal factors to investigate the problem that Kawan has faced. One way to examine the external factors from a macro-economic perspective that can impact the firm's condition is by analyzing Political, Economic, Sociocultural, Technology, Ecological, Legal (PESTEL) factors (Thompson & McLarney, 2017). By evaluating these factors, a company can conclude the threats and opportunities from the firm's external environments. For external factors, the research will apply PESTEL analysis and benchmark analysis of several upcycled fashion brands from Indonesia and internationally. The data used for PESTEL analysis are derived from news, reports, and an interview with the owner of Kawan. Then, the data are summarized into the PESTEL framework. For the benchmark analysis of the existing upcycling fashion brands, the data are obtained from the website and social media of the chosen subjects selected by a purposive method. The chosen brands are the ones that apply the upcycling technique with women as their primary target market. International brands are also selected because of the lack of availability of Indonesian upcycled clothing brands.

The internal factors use the VRIO framework and Marketing Mix (4P) to understand the company's

internal situation. To reach the brand goals, marketers often apply the Marketing Mix in formulating the strategy. It covers the core benefits of the product, pricing strategy, places, distribution, and communication channels (Wettstein & Suggs, 2016). Marketing Mix is also called 4P, which comprises product, price, place, and promotion (Lahtinen, Dietrich, & Rundle-Thiele, 2020).

The VRIO framework is a tool for a firm to evaluate the resources that contribute to the company's competitive advantage. According to El Shafeey and Trott (2014), four criteria are as follows. First, it is Valuable (V). A valuable resource enables a firm to implement a strategy to exploit environmental opportunities or neutralize threats. Second, it is Rare (R). Competitors in the industry do not possess the resource. Third, it is Imperfectly imitable (I). It is a resource that the potential rivals cannot directly duplicate. Last, it is Organized to capture value (O). The organizational process can exploit and transform the competitive potential of these three strategic (valuable, rare, and inimitable) resources and capabilities.

The data of internal factors are interviews with the owner of Kawan, two customers, and four potential customers who are interested in purchasing the product of Kawan. The interview is conducted in a conversation method. It is an informal approach in which the researchers engage a respondent in discussing the relevant subject matter (Zikmund, Babin, Carr, & Griffin, 2013).

The second stage is the survey to gain more data to generate the marketing strategy to solve the business problem. The researchers conduct a survey based on the Marketing Mix framework. The survey applies convenience and simple random sampling methods. It ensures that each element in the population will have an equal chance of being included in the sample (Zikmund et al., 2013). Respondents of the survey are all women who live in Indonesia. Then, the questionnaires are deployed online using Bahasa Indonesia with Google Form from June 19th to June 21st, 2021. Around 174 respondents are collected, including the preliminary test respondents. The preliminary test is conducted to test the reliability and validity of the questions on the survey by distributing the questionnaire to 30 respondents.

The third stage formulates the marketing strategy that addresses the issues and the problems identified in the first stage. The strategy formulated is based on the problem analyzed in the first stage and the obtained insight by the interviews and the survey. The output of the marketing strategy consists of Marketing Mix (4P).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The first stage examines the external and internal factors. The external factors are examined to understand deeper the environment of Kawan that can influence its sales and brand awareness by using the PESTEL framework and benchmarking analysis. The PESTEL analysis in Table 2 shows that the pandemic shifts consumers' priority of needs to essential items of primary goods, such as food. In addition, there are government's restrictions that prohibit outdoor activities, limiting the medium for people to wear clothes. People prefer to wear casual and comfortable outfits for working at home. Furthermore, the pandemic raises the sustainability consciousness.

Table 2 The External Factors Using PESTEL Analysis

Variable	Analysis
Political	• Pemberlakuan Pembatasan Kegiatan Masyarakat (PPKM) 'Community Activities Restrictions Enforcement' policy restricts outdoor events and regulations for shopping malls, restaurants, and public places. • The vaccination program eventually will enable more people to resume daily activities.
Economic	• The economic downturn affects household consumption to prioritize essential needs. • In the first quarter of 2021, the economy has shown in-demand recovery.
Sociocultural	• During COVID-19, 91% of Indonesian respondents prefer to use local brands compared to international brands. • The intent for spending on apparel decreases. • People prefer casual and comfortable wear for Work from Home (WFH). • Upcycling product is an attractive trend for consumers.
Technology	• The Internet and social media usage rise as more people work from home. • Various online platforms, such as Tokopedia, Shopee, Bukalapak, Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook, help customers to shop from home. • Marketers use Instagram Ads and shopping features to sell products. • There is easy access to 80 million Instagram users in Indonesia.
Ecological	• The fashion industry is one of the most significant contributors to the world's pollutants, emitting 10% of global carbon dioxide. • Most fashion waste goes to landfills or incineration.
Legal	• There is a weak copyright law in Indonesia.

The benchmarking is conducted towards five upcycled clothing brands and analyzed by the Marketing Mix framework. The Indonesian brands are Sassh, Sight From The Earth (SFTE), and Toko Didiyo, while the international brands are 3 Women and Selina Sanders. The first variable is the product. A pre-order system is one of the order methods applied by upcycling brands in this benchmark because this method minimizes overproduction. Based on this analysis, it can be concluded that there are three product characteristics of upcycled products, as shown in Figure 1. First, master designs or signature designs are replicated, even though the color or fabric pattern is different. Second, the product uses similar materials, fabrics, or garments. Third, the product is made out of patchwork. Patchwork is a method of assembling different fabrics to create a bigger piece. In this research context, the patchwork is applied to create clothing pieces. According to Han et al. (2017), the key design of upcycling fashion includes a patchwork technique utilizing the set quantities of fabric.

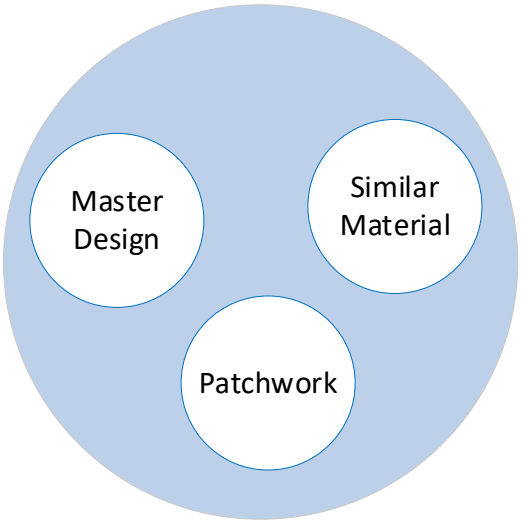


Figure 1 Upcycled Clothing Characteristics

The second variable is price. The price range of the Indonesian upcycling brands starts from Rp385.000,00 until Rp850.000,00. Meanwhile, the price range for the international brands starts from $165 to $585. All brands determine prices based on the difficulty of the design construction and the material or the fabric. The order method is divided into two types: ready-stock and made-to-order method. The made-to-order method is one way to prevent overproduction which creates unwanted inventories that will become waste.

The third variable is place. Although some brands have an offline showroom, all brands focus on selling online and communicate with customers and audiences through Instagram. The last variable is promotion. According to the benchmark analysis, several content types are continuously communicated to the audience. First, it highlights the visual of the product, which comes in the form of photos or videos with a model wearing the product or the product standalone. Second, the close-up shot of the product emphasizes and focuses on the details of the design. It zooms into the fabric and design elements attached to the product. Third, the story of the product shows and explains to the audience the history of the fabric and the production process. Fourth, there is the customer review or the photo of the customer wearing the product. Fifth, there is interactive content that is made to engage and communicate with the audience.

After the external factors are examined, the internal factors of Kawan are studied to identify the issue internally using VRIO and Marketing Mix. The data for the VRIO framework are obtained by interviewing the owner of Kawan. Kawan possesses several tangible and intangible resources that can construct the company's competitive advantage. Then, the resources are analyzed using the VRIO framework to determine which resource provides sustainable competitive advantage and resources that still need improvement. Table 3 illustrates the VRIO analysis of Kawan.

The first source is readiness for innovation. Surviving in the fashion industry is challenging without innovation since the market is already packed with many players. It is imperative for a clothing brand to continue innovating designs. Both founders of Kawan have knowledge of fashion design. Thus, the innovation of designs is created internally without the need to outsource.

Table 3 The Internal Factors Using VRIO Analysis

Resources	V	R	I	O	Result
Readiness for innovation	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Sustainable competitive advantage
Limited product design	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Sustainable competitive advantage
The network in the fashion industry	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Temporary competitive advantage
Human resource	Yes	No	No	No	Competitive parity
R&D skill	Yes	No	No	No	Competitive parity

Note: V= Valuable, R= Rare, I= Costly to Imitate, O= Organized to Capture Value

The second resource of Kawan is limited product design. All designs of the products are created internally by the founder. The design is non-basic clothing pieces that are assembled from rare leftover fabric in the market. Furthermore, the cuttings used are not simple, and the quantity sold is limited. Thus, it is hard to imitate. In addition, the founders of Kawan know fashion production to execute the designs.

The third resource is the network in the fashion industry. One of the founders works in the creative industry, which provides access to a network of stylists, photographers, and models. This network is valuable, rare, and costly to imitate. However, the human resource and capital of Kawan are still limited to exploit this resource.

The last resource is human resources and R&D skills. The human resource possessed by Kawan is still underdeveloped. However, it is valuable to capture opportunities. Founders know R&D in terms of product designing, sampling, and the materials to create products.

The Marketing Mix analysis is from interviews with the owner, customers, and potential customers. The products from Kawan are shirts and blouses for women. Six designs have different fabrics and colors. Compared to the benchmarking analysis, based on the interview with the owner, the product of Kawan does not follow the characteristics of upcycled clothing (master design, patchwork, and similar fabric), as illustrated in Figure 1. The patchwork technique is the key process in the design of upcycling products because it can maximize the use of the fabric sourced by the company as the fabrics may be asymmetrical or only available in limited quantities (Han et al., 2017). Patchwork clothes are complicated because they are made by assembling various garments into one final product. Hence, it is shown visually that the design is intricate.

The owner creates a new design based on the available fabric sourced, and there is no master design. The patchwork is already done but only for one product. This situation creates a bottleneck resulting in a longer production process by producing only small quantities when at the same time, higher quantities of products are important to support the promotion. Every design is different and only available for one quantity. Therefore, content production has many difficulties since there is no safety stock. Furthermore, one-of-a-kind product prompts Kawan to limit its endorsement activity. One interviewee, who is an influencer, stylist, and trend follower, has stated that Kawan needs to provide more quantity for the same design.

> *"If the followers from endorsed influencers are interested in the product, they will normally look for the product, and if they do not find the same available products, the potential customer may be disappointed."*

The price of Kawan ranges from Rp400.000,00 to Rp650.000,00 depending on the difficulty of the design and the quality of the material. Hence, the price is different for each design. Since upcycling products are produced one by one, and the cutting process tends to be different for each design, the cost of production is higher than non-upcycled clothes, as explained by the owner of Kawan. However, the interviewee shares that the product of Kawan has not shown enough craftsmanship to justify its pricing. The interviewee is an office worker who is a trend follower and interested in Kawan products.

> *"I think some prices are still too expensive for me. I will buy local products with higher prices if they manage to show their craftsmanship and execute it on their product."*

By the time of the research, Kawan's main communication channel is Instagram for product launching, catalogs, and communication with the audience. The transaction is done by Tokopedia and WhatsApp Business. Kawan operates online and does not have an offline store. Moreover, Kawan has done several promotions online for the last quarter of 2020. The activities focus on Instagram, including Instagram Ads, product barter with one influencer to promote Kawan products, year-end sales, and regular content posting on its Instagram. The communication key messages are varied and only subtly deliver its brand story (an upcycling brand). Therefore, the communication does not focus on its unique selling point of Kawan. According to the interview, Kawan lacks communication to introduce itself as an upcycling brand. One of the interviewees points out that she does not realize if Kawan is a clothing brand.

> *"I have thought it is not a brand which sells a product. For me, it is more like a women empowerment account."*

Another interviewee talks about how Kawan needs to tell and show its value more. Hence, people will understand its story. The interviewee is an entrepreneur and fashion enthusiast who looks for value in buying local products.

> *"I think instead of just showcasing the product, Kawan needs to talk more about the issue that they want to bring up. Kawan needs to explain more about the product and the story behind the brand, so people will understand the value that this brand is offering."*

Based on the external and internal factors analysis, it can be concluded that the pandemic affects the habit of shopping for clothes. It also creates new opportunities for the upcycling fashion industry with the rising sustainability awareness. In addition, the Marketing Mix (4P) of Kawan needs to be re-formulated to deliver the value that Kawan offers.

The second stage is a survey to gain more data to formulate the marketing strategy. There are four variables of the questionnaires derived from Marketing

Mix elements: product, price, place, and promotion, as explained in Table 4.

Table 4 Operational Variables

Variable	Indicator
Product	Design
	Purchase habit of local clothing brand
	Pre-order system
	Reusable packaging
Price	Frequency of shopping in a year for clothes
	Monthly shopping budget for clothing
	Perceived price for products of Kawan
Place	Platform to discover local clothing brands
	Frequent used online shopping platform
Promotion	Upcycling awareness
	Awareness of Kawan
	Platform to discover a local brand
	Type of content
	Process
	Education
	Influencer
	Interactivity

To test the validity, the researchers use Pearson Correlation. Variable of place and items that are not tested are non-subjective questions. The preliminary test is conducted on 30 respondents. A question item is valid if the correlation coefficient (r-value) is greater than r-critical (Simbolon, Handayani, & Nugraedy, 2020). R-critical with total sample of 30 is 0,3610 (based on the r-table with df = 28). The result shows that all of the questions for all variables are valid (See Table 5).

Meanwhile, the reliability is tested by Cronbach's alpha value that is considered reliable if the value is more than 0,6 (Yudiawan, Sunarso, Suharmoko, Sari, & Ahmadi, 2021). Table 6 shows that all variables score more than 0,6. Therefore, all variables are reliable, and the survey is distributed to more respondents.

The third stage is to formulate Marketing Mix (4P). The first variable is the product. The survey result shows that almost 45% (78 respondents) strongly agree and around 29% (51 respondents) agree that they like to buy local clothing online. Most respondents are consumers of local brand products. Based on the external and internal factors analysis, Kawan needs to improve its product by following the upcycling product characteristics (master design, similar fabric, and patchwork). Hence, respondents are asked to choose from eight design references. The top four designs are chosen as the references for a master design that the designer of Kawan will further develop. The designs are divided into two types based on the complexity of the design and production. It consists of simple design with fewer production difficulties and special design with more complexity and complicated production process.

Table 5 The Result of Validity Test

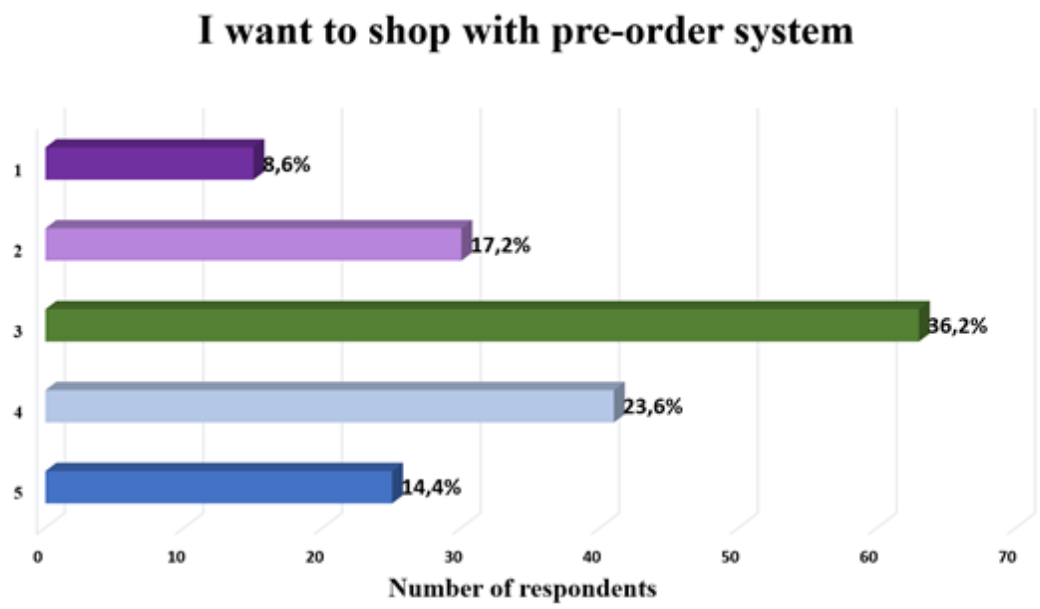
Variable	Indicator	Pearson Correlation	Result
Product	Purchase habit of local brand	0,875	Valid
	Pre-order system	0,693	Valid
	Reusable packaging	0,850	Valid
Price	Frequency of shopping in a year	0,785	Valid
	Monthly shopping budget for clothing	0,808	Valid
	Perceived price for products of Kawan	0,678	Valid
Promotion	Process	0,698	Valid
	Education	0,876	Valid
	Influencer	0,798	Valid
	Interactivity	0,823	Valid

Table 6 The Result of Reliability Test

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Result
Product	0,738	Reliable
Price	0,622	Reliable
Promotion	0,801	Reliable

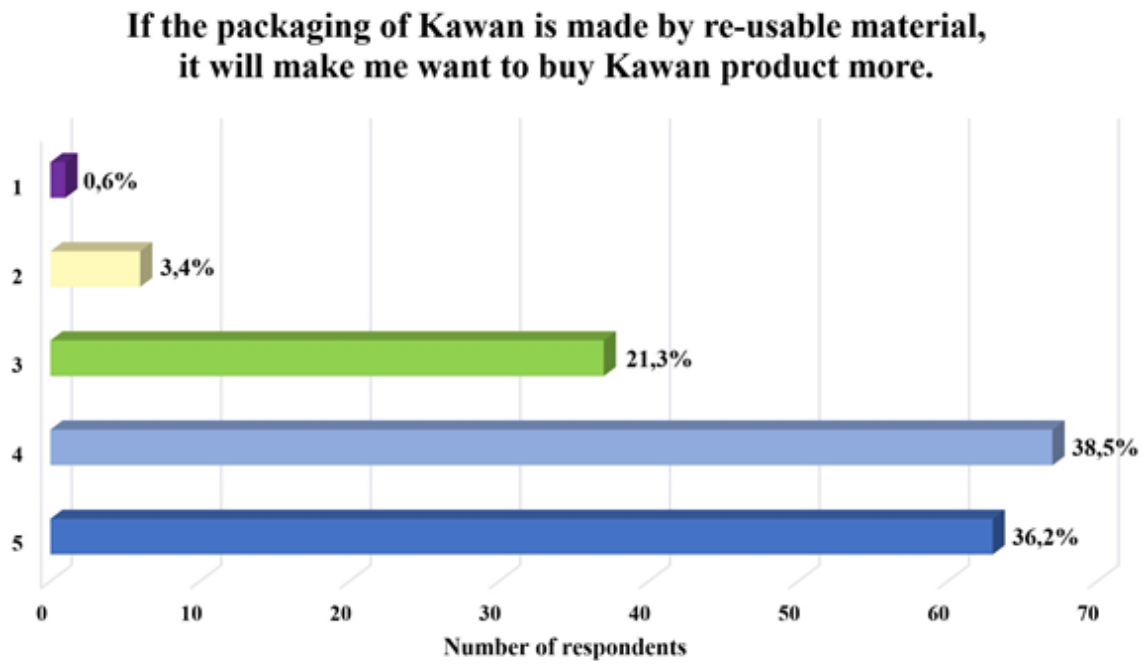
Next, the survey illustrates that the perception towards the pre-order method is neither entirely negative nor positive, with 36,2% (63 respondents) answering neutral, 17,2% (30 respondents) disagreeing, 8,6% (15 respondents) strongly disagreeing, 23,6% (41 respondents) agreeing, and 14,4% (25 respondents) strongly agreeing, as depicted in Figure 2. The results indicate that a pre-order system is an option for the order method, but it may not be the main order system. Hence, this method can be applied and tested to the market for the future development of Kawan.

Then, Figure 3 shows that 38,5% of respondents agree and 36,2% of respondents strongly agree that reusable packaging will increase the drive of buying products of Kawan. Around 21% of respondents are neutral. Then, a small percentage of respondents disagree and strongly disagree. It can be concluded that reusable packaging can be one aspect of product strategy.



Note: 1= Strongly disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4= Agree, 5= Strongly agree

Figure 2 Respondents' Perceptions towards Pre-Order System



Note: 1= Strongly disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4= Agree, 5= Strongly agree

Figure 3 Respondents' Perceptions about Reusable Packaging

According to the survey, there is the various frequency of shopping for clothes within the last one year. First, around 27,6% of respondents purchase clothes 3 to 4 times. Second, 26,4% of respondents have done it 5 to 7 times within the last one year. Third, around 14,9% shopped clothes online for about 1 to 2 times. Fourth, 13,8% of respondents shop 8 to 10 times. Fifth, 13,8% respondents have shopped more than 10 times. Lastly, around 3,4% did not shop online within the last one year.

For the monthly budget for clothing, the survey shows that almost half of the respondents (47,1%) have less than Rp500.000,00 for their monthly clothing budget. Meanwhile, 44,3% respondents have Rp500.001,00 until Rp1.500.000,00. Then 6,9% respondents choose Rp1.500.001,00 until Rp2.500.000,00 for their monthly budget for clothing. Comparing this to the price range of Kawan (Rp400.000,00–Rp650.000,00) indicates that the pricing of Kawan belongs to the premium. It can mean that Kawan is considered as the occasional fashion piece.

Price is still considered a decisive factor influencing purchase decisions for sustainable fashion goods based on the study of Gen Y and Gen Z in the Slovak Republic (Kusá & Urmínová, 2020). Inside the survey section, there is an explanation about Kawan and some photos showing Kawan products. After that, respondents are asked about the appropriate price range for Kawan products (See Figure 4). The result shows that 52% of respondents think that the appropriate prices of Kawan are between Rp150.000,00 to Rp300.000,00. Half of the respondent's price perception towards Kawan upcycled products is still low compared to Kawan price range (Rp400.000,00–Rp650.000,00) and the average price of Kawan (Rp520.000,00).

Hence, based on the survey, two pricing schemes can be developed. The first strategy is the simple design that caters to the lower price range (Rp300.000,00–Rp450.000,00). The second one is for a special design that caters to a higher price range (Rp450.000,00–Rp750.000,00).

Next, according to Kusá and Urmínová (2020), social media is still seen as the most effective communication tool for sustainable fashion. Based on the interview and survey with potential customers, Instagram is the top-of-mind platform on how respondents know a local clothing brand, as illustrated in Figure 5. The current main channel for the promotion of Kawan is Instagram, which is already in line with the research result. Then, TikTok is the fourth chosen channel even though the numbers are not as many as Instagram. Hence, TikTok can be explored further to build awareness.

The current product catalog and transaction channels for Kawan are Tokopedia and WhatsApp Business. However, based on the survey, the highest preferred platform for shopping clothes online is Shopee (81%). The result is in line with a survey by Snapcart that Shopee is the most preferred online e-commerce for women (77%). Furthermore, Shopee is the most chosen platform to shop within these age groups of 19–24 years old (72%), 25–30 years old (69%), and 31–35 years old (63%) for both women and men. Meanwhile, Tokopedia is more preferred by customers above 35 years old. (Husaini, 2020). Hence, Shopee will be the channel for product catalog and transaction, replacing Tokopedia, the current transaction channel of Kawan. Furthermore, according to the survey, official website is the second most preferred channel with 51,1% of respondents. The company website is crucial to communicate and explain the sustainable information that needs to be transferred to the audience for education (Kusá & Urmínová, 2020). Thus, it can be a plan for Kawan to develop an official website.

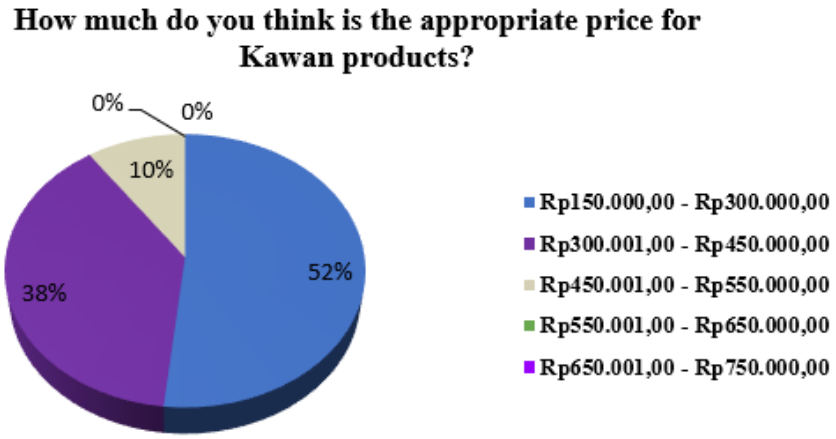


Figure 4 Respondents' Perceptions about Price Range of Kawan

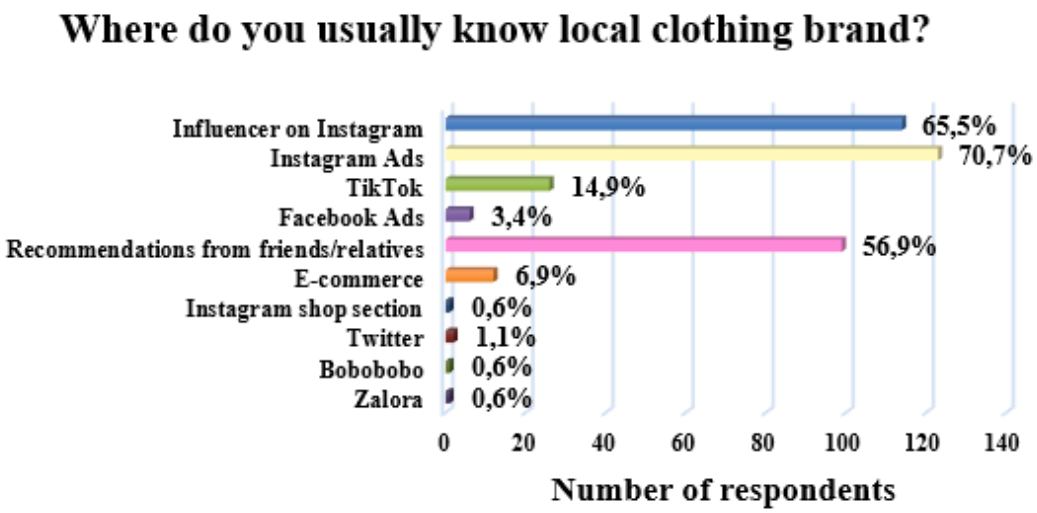


Figure 5 Respondents' Perceptions of Channels to Know a Local Clothing Brand

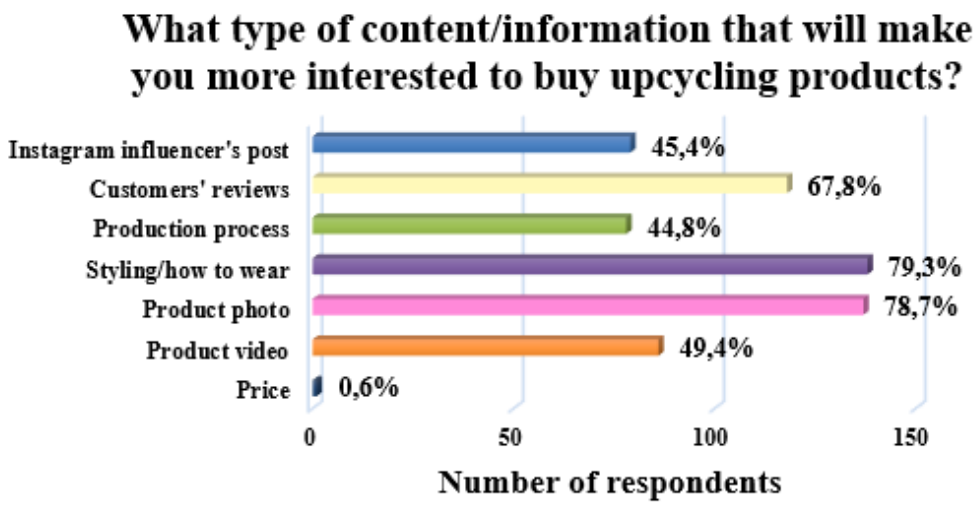


Figure 6 Respondents Perception Towards Types of Content or Information

Moreover, upcycling is a part of sustainable fashion that has become an uprising trend, as explained in the PESTEL analysis. The survey shows that 19% of respondents do not have the understanding of upcycling method. Meanwhile, 81% of respondents understand about upcycling method. Most respondents are unaware of Kawan, which amounts to 72,4% (126 respondents). Only 27,6% (48 respondents) are aware of Kawan. The result indicates the low brand awareness of Kawan. The result shows that Kawan has not effectively promoted to communicate its product story and gain presence to raise brand awareness.

Influencers and bloggers are considered impactful tools for the fashion industry because they affect the buying decision by their personal preferences and opinions that consumers admire based on the related field (Kusá & Urmínová, 2020). The survey shows that influencer is the second most chosen channel to know a local clothing brand, as depicted in Figure 5. Around 41% of respondents agree and 23,6% strongly agree that if they see Kawan products worn by influencers that they follow, it will interest them more in buying Kawan products. Hence, it is one of the essential promotional activities for Kawan.

The survey also asks several content types that can increase the respondents' interest in buying. The type of content is chosen based on the benchmark analysis and interview. Based on Figure 6, product styling and product photo are the highest preferred type of content that will lead customers to purchase, with 79,3% (138 respondents) and 78,7% (137 respondents). The third result is customers' reviews with 67,8% (118 respondents). Meanwhile, the fourth and the fifth are product video, amounting to 49,4% (86 respondents) and Instagram influencer's posts with 45,4% (79 respondents).

Sustainability needs to be continuously communicated, educated, and established in the marketing standards (Kusá & Urmínová, 2020). In respondents' perception of contents that explain the details or the production process, there are positive responses with 37,4% respondents who agree and 27,6% respondents who strongly agree. Meanwhile, 27,6% respondents are neutral, 6,9% respondents disagree, and 0,6% respondents strongly disagree. In addition, almost 80% of responses are positive towards more engaging and interactive communication to followers in social media, with 48,3% of respondents agreeing and 30,5% of respondents strongly agreeing with the statements.

Moreover, respondents show that content, such as Instagram Live, that discusses upcycling is favorable to attract them to buy Kawan products. Most respondents (43,1%) are neutral towards live educational content. Meanwhile, 28,2% of respondents agree, 16,7% of respondents strongly agree, 8% of respondents disagree, and 4% of respondents strongly disagree with the statement.

Sustainable providers should not act and communicate the product as mere sustainable goods. Communication should include the elements of education and entertainment (Kusá & Urmínová, 2020). Therefore, it is essential to determine the key messages that should be repeatedly delivered to the audience. Although there are numerous types of content, the research can capture the essential type of content or information for a new upcycling brand to reach an audience that can lead to purchasing, in the case of Kawan. From the survey, it can be concluded that styling tips, product highlights, education, interactive engagement, customers' reviews, and influencer promotions are the key content that should be repeatedly produced and communicated.

CONCLUSIONS

Upcycling is a new emerging market in Indonesia. Hence, the practice is not widely studied in the industry. Kawan, as a new player, faces the difficulty that hinders its production process and affects its monetary value from the point of view of its target market. The research aims to investigate the external and internal conditions that impact the brand awareness and sales of a new upcycled clothing brand. It also discusses the social media marketing strategy that will strengthen the brand awareness, which eventually leads to sales of Kawan, an Indonesian online upcycling fashion brand.

The result shows that Kawan needs to improve its Marketing Mix. It is also found that there are three product characteristics of upcycled fashion brands, namely patchwork, similar fabrics/material, and master design. These characteristics can guide a new upcycling player in the industry for product development.

Moreover, based on the survey, Kawan can utilize several social media and e-commerce. Instagram is the most preferred social media to receive information on local products. It is also the most chosen platform where respondents get to know Indonesian local clothing brands by Instagram Ads and influencers' posts. Then, Shopee is the most preferred platform for purchasing clothing online. Meanwhile, the website is the second most chosen.

Audience interaction is an important aspect that should be considered in online communication to increase sales. There are several essential types of content or information for upcycled clothing brands to communicate with audiences in delivering the value of the brand and products that can add interest for the audience to purchase. It consists of styling or how to wear the product, product photo and video, customers' reviews, paid promotion by influencer endorsement, and creation process of the product. These insights are useful to provide a guideline for marketers in the upcycling industry, especially for new establishments to focus on their promotional activities.

The research has several limitations. First, the research is done using the case of Kawan which focuses on its marketing online, with women as its target market. Second, the product characteristics of upcycled clothing identified in the research are based on the benchmark analysis done by assessing only five upcycled clothing brands. Therefore, further study is expected to expand the respondents to men and more upcycling brands to investigate more detailed content types and other messages in social media promotion, such as content for the Instagram story. Hence, the results can be generalized and useful to be adapted by upcycled clothing brands with different target markets. In addition, further study can also carry out to study the Marketing Mix for offline marketing strategy of upcycling fashion brands.

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