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Health and Beauty Retail Marketing Management Strategy: Guardian Case Study

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Abstract. This study aims to comprehensively analyze and describe the Retail Marketing Management Strategy implemented by Guardian in facing the fierce competition in the Indonesian health and beauty industry, especially amidst digital disruption. Using a qualitative approach with a Case Study method, this study focuses on an in-depth analysis of three key aspects. The results show that Guardian's strategy is based on adaptive management of the Marketing Mix (4P), seen from the expansion of exclusive and local products supported by an aggressive promotional price strategy. In addition, Guardian strives to maintain differentiation by optimizing Customer Experience (CX) in physical stores through an attractive *store atmosphere and quality staff consultation, which cannot be offered by e-commerce platforms*. A crucial point of Guardian's strategy is Omnichannel integration, where physical and digital channels (apps, e-commerce) are synergized through services such as *Click and Collect* to provide a seamless and consistent shopping experience. Overall, the study concludes that Guardian's competitive advantage lies in their ability to balance the strengths of physical stores (CX) with digital capabilities (Omnichannel) as a strategic response to the dynamics of the modern retail market.

Keywords: Retail Marketing Strategy, Health and Beauty, Guardian, *Customer Experience* , *Omnichannel*.

INTRODUCTION

The health and beauty retail industry in Indonesia is one of the fastest-growing and most dynamic sectors. Rising public awareness of *self-care* and *wellness has driven a significant increase in demand for skincare, cosmetics, and health products* . Data shows that the national cosmetics industry market continues to show rapid growth, projected to reach USD 9.7 billion by 2025 and predicted to grow by 4.33 percent annually until 2030 (Statista in the Ministry of Industry, 2025). This expansive market condition has led to very fierce competition, not only from increasingly strong local brands but also from other major retail players.

However, this growth creates a complex competitive landscape, especially for brick-and-mortar retailers like Guardian. The central issue faced is the massive shift in consumer behavior to *e-commerce* , where research shows that beauty products are one of the most purchased categories online , even consumers are willing to spend up to 2.6 times more when shopping *online* than in physical stores (Kantar Worldpanel in Marketeers, 2025). This condition raises strategic questions, Guardian as a *brick-and-mortar retailer* , formulates and implements an effective Marketing Mix

Strategy (4P) to overcome the price and convenience threats offered by *e-commerce* , Amidst the trend where local brands increasingly dominate the *online market* with a percentage of up to 74% in certain categories (Compas Market Insight, 2024), how does Guardian manage its product portfolio and optimize the Customer Experience *in physical stores* to create differentiated value (for example through consulting services or *store atmosphere*), thereby encouraging consumer loyalty Lastly. And Given that channel integration (*omnichannel*) is the new standard in the retail industry, how does Guardian design and execute an *Omnichannel Strategy* that successfully integrates its physical and digital assets, such as *Click and Collect services* , to provide a seamless and consistent experience, and strengthen overall competitiveness (Verhoef, Kannan, & Inman, 2015).

Amid this promising market, Guardian, as a major player and leading *drugstore* in Indonesia, faces a dual challenge: intense competition in the *brick-and-mortar space* and a shift in consumer behavior toward the digital realm. The presence of *e-commerce* and *marketplaces* has fundamentally changed the retail business paradigm, forcing brick-and-mortar stores to innovate and improve service quality to remain relevant (Gunawan Santoso, 2023).

Research purposes

The primary objective of this case study is to comprehensively analyze and describe the retail marketing management strategies implemented by Guardian, a major player in the Indonesian health and beauty industry. Specifically, this research aims to:

- a. Identify and analyze in depth the implementation of Guardian's marketing mix (4P) in the aspects of product, price, distribution channels, and promotional programs to maintain competitiveness in the midst of an expansive market.
- b. Evaluating Guardian's efforts in managing and optimizing customer experience *in physical stores* as a differentiation effort in the face of *e-commerce dominance* .
- c. Analyze Guardian's digital marketing and *omnichannel channel integration strategy* to create consistent shopping experiences across various *touch points* and increase competitive advantage.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Research on modern retail marketing management strategies relies heavily on several conceptual pillars. Fundamentally, Retail Marketing Management focuses on the planning and execution of the retail mix *to attract and satisfy target consumers* (Assauri, 2013). In the context of health and beauty retail, the Marketing Mix (4Ps), especially *the Product and Promotion aspects* , becomes crucial. Product strategies in this sector prioritize innovation and the ability to meet rapidly changing trends, while pricing and promotion strategies, including loyalty programs, serve as key drivers of sales and customer retention (Yi & Jeon, 2003; Zietek, 2016). In addition to the marketing mix, the physical store environment, or *Store Atmosphere* , plays a significant role in triggering impulse purchases and shaping perceptions of service quality, making it a vital component of physical retail differentiation (Brachtalia, 2016).

Customer Experience (CX). CX is defined as the sum of all interactions and *touchpoints* a consumer has with a brand, resulting in emotional, sensory, and cognitive responses (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016). In the beauty industry, CX is highly emphasized due to the hedonic and emotional nature of products, demanding personalized content, virtual *try-ons* , and high-quality staff interactions to build long-term trust and loyalty (Pei et al., 2020; Zietek, 2016). Finally, the biggest challenge for modern retail is integrating the *online* and *offline worlds* through an omnichannel strategy. An *omnichannel approach* is not simply about having multiple channels (*multichannel*), but ensuring that all channels (physical stores, mobile apps, *e-commerce*) are seamlessly integrated to provide a consistent brand experience to consumers at every stage of the shopping

journey (Verhoef, Kannan, & Inman, 2015). This literature suggests that Guardian's marketing strategy should be evaluated based on its ability to integrate these concepts to achieve competitive advantage.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research will use a qualitative approach with a Case Study type (Stake, 1995/2005). This approach was chosen because it aims to understand in-depth and holistically the complex and contextual Retail Marketing Management Strategy on a single subject, namely Guardian. The research location is Guardian stores and related management offices in the DKI Jakarta area, which were selected based on considerations of operational centers and the highest level of retail competition. The main data sources include primary data and secondary data. Primary data were collected through in-depth interviews with several key informants (marketing managers, *store managers*, and retail staff responsible for *visual merchandising* and *omnichannel*) and participant observation at Guardian stores to observe the implementation of the marketing mix and customer experience. Meanwhile, secondary data were obtained from company reports (where available), academic literature, and health and beauty retail industry data. Data analysis will be carried out using thematic analysis techniques or qualitative analysis models of Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014), which include the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions, to build patterns and themes that describe Guardian's marketing strategy in detail.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Marketing Mix Implementation (4P)

The results of the study indicate that Guardian's Retail Marketing Management Strategy is based on adaptive management of the Marketing Mix (4P), adjusted to changing health and beauty trends. In the Product aspect, Guardian consistently expands their portfolio by prioritizing exclusive brands (*own brands*) and emerging local brands (*local champions*), this strategy is in line with the finding that retail must be adaptive to market trends and needs (Ni'matunnisa, 2020). Guardian's Pricing Strategy tends to apply competitive prices with an emphasis on 'Buy 1 Get 1' promotions or seasonal discounts, which effectively attract price-sensitive consumers in the retail sector (Yi & Jeon, 2003). Meanwhile, the Place aspect is supported by the strategic location of physical stores in busy centers and very intensive promotions through social media (Instagram, TikTok) and digital catalogs, confirming a significant shift in promotional focus to the digital realm (Zietek, 2016).

Optimizing Customer Experience (CX) in Physical Stores

Despite intense digital competition, this study found that Guardian strives to maintain differentiation through Customer Experience in physical stores. CX optimization is carried out through three main components: (1) Store Atmosphere which is designed to be bright and clean, aimed at creating comfort and sensory stimulation that influences shopping decisions (Brachtalja, 2016); (2) Attractive Visual Merchandising, especially for skincare and cosmetic products, serves as a strong *touch point*; and (3) Staff Service Quality, where staff are trained to provide product consultations, confirming that personal interaction remains a determining factor for satisfaction in the retail sector (Pei et al., 2020). These efforts demonstrate Guardian's awareness that the hedonic value of the physical shopping experience cannot be completely replaced by *online platforms*.

Omnichannel and Digital Marketing Integration

Another key finding is Guardian's efforts to implement an Omnichannel strategy, which is a direct response to the challenges of *e-commerce*. Guardian seeks to integrate physical stores with mobile apps and *e-commerce platforms* through services such as 'Click and Collect' and *online*

stock availability integrated with nearby stores. This implementation aligns with the theoretical framework that states that *omnichannel* should provide a seamless and consistent experience across channels (Verhoef, Kannan, & Inman, 2015). The challenge is achieving consistency in pricing and product availability between physical and *online channels*—an operational hurdle often faced by retailers in the transition from *multichannel* to *omnichannel*—but Guardian's commitment to this strategy demonstrates a serious effort to maintain a competitive edge in the digital age.

CONCLUSION

The case study research on Guardian's Health and Beauty Retail Marketing Management Strategy concluded that Guardian's success in maintaining a competitive position amidst market dynamics heavily influenced by digital trends and disruptions was driven by the implementation of adaptive and integrated strategies. The core strategies found included effective adjustments to the Marketing Mix (4Ps), where Guardian intelligently balanced product line expansion (particularly local and *own brands*) with aggressive pricing strategies through massive promotions. Furthermore, as a retailer with a strong physical base, Guardian successfully leveraged its in-store Customer Experience (CX) through attractive layouts, up -to-date visual merchandising , and quality staff consultation to create value differentiation that cannot be replicated by *e-commerce* . The pinnacle of this strategy is Guardian's commitment to Omnichannel Integration, as seen through its *Click and Collect* service and digital-physical synergy, confirming that maintaining excellence in the modern retail sector requires a seamless blend of a strong physical presence and responsive digital capabilities.

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