

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Title of The Study

The Implementation of Soft and Hard Selling Strategies on Instagram Reels:
A Case Study of @namiyah_gifts.

1.2 Background of The Study

In an increasingly competitive business environment, marketing strategy is one of the key factors in creating a strong relationship between the company and customers. The rise of digital marketing, especially through social media platforms, has transformed how businesses engage with their audience. Among these platforms, Instagram has become one of the most popular and effective tools for businesses to connect with customers, promote their products, and strengthen brand presence.

Based on the study by Pandjaitan (2024), Instagram is one of the most widely used social media platforms in Indonesia, with 85.3% of internet users aged 16–64 actively using the platform. Among its various features, Instagram Reels has become an effective marketing medium because it allows businesses to distribute short-form videos with wider reach and greater visibility. As a result, many businesses utilize Instagram Reels not only to promote products but also to build relationships with their audiences through engaging visual content.

The effectiveness of Instagram Reels as a marketing medium is supported by its ability to enhance content visibility and audience reach, Oruc & Aydin (2022). Compared with other content formats, Reels provide businesses with greater opportunities to communicate promotional messages and attract potential customers. These characteristics make Instagram Reels a suitable platform for implementing various marketing communication strategies.

Beyond selecting the appropriate content format, businesses must also determine how promotional messages are communicated to their audiences. Among

the most widely used approaches in social media marketing are soft selling and hard selling, each employing a different communication style. According to Kenton (2022), soft selling refers to a subtle and non-aggressive approach that emphasizes building trust and long-term relationships with customers. In contrast, Thiyagaraj (2024) defines hard selling as a direct and persuasive strategy designed to encourage immediate purchasing decisions by highlighting product features and benefits.

With the rapid growth of digital marketing, soft selling and hard selling strategies are increasingly adopted across various industries, including the florist business. Florist businesses offer not only products but also emotional and aesthetic value, making effective marketing communication essential for attracting and maintaining customer interest. Consequently, many florist businesses have begun utilizing Instagram Reels to implement these communication strategies in promoting their products.

One of the florist businesses that actively utilizes Instagram Reels as a promotional medium is Namiyah Gift, a florist business located in Bengkalis. Through its Instagram account, @namiyah_gifts, the business consistently publishes promotional content using various communication styles. These characteristics make Namiyah Gift a relevant case for examining the implementation of soft selling and hard selling strategies.

The promotional content published by Namiyah Gift through Instagram Reels demonstrates different communication styles. Some Reels emphasize emotional storytelling, educational information, and product value, while others focus on direct promotional messages, including pricing information and persuasive calls to action. These variations indicate the implementation of both soft selling and hard selling strategies. However, limited research has examined how both strategies are implemented simultaneously within a florist business and how they differ in generating audience engagement. Therefore, this phenomenon provides a relevant context for the present study.

Several previous studies have investigated the implementation of soft selling and hard selling strategies on social media. These studies provide important insights into how different communication approaches influence consumer

responses across various business contexts. The first relevant study was conducted by Sabittah (2024) "Hard Selling Marketing Communication Strategy on Instagram (Case Study on Mika Hijab Store in Solo Raya in 2022)". This qualitative research analyzed how a fashion business optimizes hard selling techniques to drive sales. The findings revealed that Mika Hijab Store successfully implemented hard selling by utilizing a mix of sales promotions, such as flash sales, discounts, and giveaways, alongside aggressive content marketing. However, that study primarily focused on a single strategy, leaving a gap in understanding how it compares to more subtle approaches.

In contrast, Patricia (2025) conducted a study titled "The Influence of Soft Selling Content Exposure on Instagram @Telkomselsumatera toward Product Purchase Intention". The research of Patricia specifically investigated how consistent exposure to informative, entertaining, and non-aggressive content affects the audience. The findings revealed that soft selling strategies on Instagram play a vital role in building long-term brand visual appeal and strengthening consumer trust without creating a sense of being pressured to buy. While the work of Patricia highlights the strength of subtle messaging in a large telecommunications company, it does not compare that strategy directly with hard selling within a small business context.

Previous studies have mainly examined soft selling and hard selling strategies separately or in different business contexts. Although these studies provide valuable insights, limited research has explored how both strategies are implemented simultaneously through Instagram Reels in a florist business. In addition, few studies have compared the audience engagement generated by each strategy. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by examining the implementation of soft selling and hard selling on the Instagram account @namiyah_gifts and comparing the audience engagement generated by each strategy.

The urgency of this research lies in the limited understanding of how soft selling and hard selling strategies are implemented simultaneously through Instagram Reels, particularly in the context of florist businesses. Although Instagram Reels has become an effective promotional platform, studies comparing

the implementation of both strategies and their audience engagement within the same business remain limited. Therefore, this study is expected to provide a clearer understanding of how different promotional approaches are implemented in practice and to contribute to the development of digital marketing strategies, especially for small and medium-sized enterprises in the creative industry.

Based on the discussion above, Instagram Reels has become an important platform for implementing promotional strategies in the digital era, particularly for small businesses. Although previous studies have examined soft selling and hard selling strategies, limited research has explored their simultaneous implementation through Instagram Reels within the context of a florist business. Therefore, this study is conducted to examine the implementation of soft selling and hard selling strategies on the Instagram account of @namiyah_gifts and to compare the audience engagement generated by each strategy. It is expected that the findings of this study will contribute to the development of digital marketing knowledge and provide practical insights for businesses in designing more effective promotional content through Instagram Reels.

1.3 Formulation of The Problem

Based on the background stated above, the problems that arise in this study are as follows:

1. How are soft selling and hard selling strategies implemented through Instagram Reels on the Instagram account of @namiyah_gifts?
2. What are the key differences in audience engagement between soft selling and hard selling strategies implemented through Instagram Reels on the Instagram account of @namiyah_gifts?

1.4 Limitation of The Problem

This study focuses on the implementation of soft selling and hard selling strategies through Instagram Reels on the Instagram account of @namiyah_gifts. The analysis is limited to Instagram Reels published from January to December 2025. The study examines the implementation of soft selling and hard selling

strategies based on the selected indicators and compares audience engagement generated by each strategy. Therefore, other Instagram features, such as Feed posts, Stories, Live, Carousel posts, and Direct Messages, are excluded from the scope of this research.

1.5 Objective of The Study

Based on the formulated research problem, the research objectives are as follows:

1. To describe the implementation of soft selling and hard selling strategies through Instagram Reels on the Instagram account of @namiyah_gifts.
2. To analyze the differences in audience engagement generated by the implementation of soft selling and hard selling strategies through Instagram Reels on the Instagram account of @namiyah_gifts.

1.6 Significance of The Study

The significance of this study can be outlined as follows:

1. Theoretical Significance

The findings of this study are expected to enrich the existing literature on soft selling and hard selling strategies, particularly their implementation through Instagram Reels in the creative industry. This research contributes to a better understanding of how digital platforms like Instagram are utilized to manage brand presence through diverse messaging styles.

2. Practical Significance

In a practical sense, this study provides detailed documentation for Namiyah Gift to evaluate and improve its current marketing communication activities on social media. Furthermore, this research serves as a valuable reference and comparison for other students or researchers who intend to conduct similar studies within the florist industry. Finally, the insights gathered from this study offer a practical guide for small-scale entrepreneurs to understand the implementation of different selling techniques to engage more effectively with their audience on digital platforms.