



Volume 6 Issue 1, June 2023, pages: 97-106

## ANALYSIS MARKETING STRATEGY OF PHENOM EVENT INDONESIA DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

**Deddy Kurniawan Halim<sup>1\*</sup>, Dinar Sukma Pramesti<sup>2</sup>, Heidy Ratnasari<sup>3</sup>**

Pengelolaan Konvensi dan Peristiwa, Politeknik Internasional Bali<sup>1\*3</sup>

dinar.pramesti@pib.ac.id

Manajemen Perhotelan, Politeknik Internasional Bali<sup>2</sup>

Received: 24/05/2023

Revised: 29/05/2023

Accepted: 05/06/2023

### Abstract

The MICE industry is one of the tourism industries affected by covid-19 pandemic. Phenom Event Indonesia (PEI) is one of the EOs engaged in the field of MICE organizing services which have also been affected by the co-19 pandemic. It's just that, they have implemented the right marketing strategy so that the impact of the pandemic does not make PEI go out of business. This study aims to analyze the marketing strategy used by PEI to maintain its company during a pandemic. The research method uses qualitative research methods. Data obtained through interviews, literature studies and internet studies. The theory used is marketing theory which consists of product, price, place, and promotion. The results of the study reveal that the marketing strategy used by PEI to survive in the midst of the covid-19 pandemic, namely by: 1) Products, namely by offering new virtual hybrid studio products and equipping themselves with CHSE certificates, 2) The pricing strategy used by PEI is to adjust the scale events and budgets provided from clients with a negotiation process, 3) Location Strategy by utilizing PEI's strategic offices to become restaurants, bars and pubs that can be used for small-scale event venues, 4) Judging from PEI's promotion using digital marketing with a YouTube account and sales calls to all repeater clients as well as changing the target market and always providing feedback in the form of souvenirs or gifts to clients. It is hoped that the results of the research can be used as reference material for EO's marketing strategy when facing pandemics in the future.

**Keywords:** Event Organizer, Pandemic Covid-19, Marketing Strategy

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Bali is one of the popular tourist destinations among foreign tourists so it has been awarded the title of The Best Destination in The World and The Best Spa Destination of The World (Nggini, 2019). The popularity of Bali as a tourist destination certainly attracts the attention of event organizers, both national and international. When compared to other regions in Indonesia, Bali is ranked at the top for the number of major events held in Indonesia. This makes Bali the epicenter of events in Indonesia.

In 2019, the Covid-19 (coronavirus disease-19) pandemic hit all countries in the world and claimed more than 270,000 lives. The impact of the pandemic is not only on the world of health, but also has an impact on all aspects of life (Wijaya, B.K., Mariani,

2021). One that has been impacted is the MICE (Meeting, Incentive, Convention & Exhibition) tourism industry. The Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy revealed that there had been as many as 84.8% cancellations of MICE activities which were planned to be held in several regions in Indonesia during 2020 (Erfinda & Falah, 2021).

Event Organizer (EO) is a management services business in the entertainment world. The EO consists of a team whose job is to record every detail of the event process, starting from selecting the event, packaging the event, paying, arranging permits, ensuring the safety of the event, recording market demand, preparing technology and marketing, and preparing accountability reports or activity evaluations (Hafidz, 2017).

There are many policies implemented to break the chain of transmission of Covid-19. One of them is the social distancing policy or what is known as Large-Scale Social Restrictions (PSBB) to (PPKM) Enforcement of Restrictions on Community Activities in various parts of Indonesia. The government also does not hesitate to take firm action if there is a violation of this policy, for example by disbanding activities. The EO business is a business that involves many people, so the existence of this policy has caused many EOs to have to be postponed or canceled, even to the point where EO actors suffer huge losses. This situation made EO's financial condition decline drastically and even caused him to go out of business.

Of the many EOs in Bali, Phenom Event Indonesia (PEI) is one of the EOs engaged in the service of MICE organizers who often participate in tenders to get national and international events (Widiantara et al., 2022). Total events held by PEI in 2017 were 88 events, in 2018 there were 93 events, then in 2019 there were 95 events. In 2020 the number of events realized has decreased drastically due to Covid-19 totaling 48 events. Then in 2021 there will be an increase of 97 events (Suryawati & Citrawati, 2022). The pandemic has made PEI experience a decline in the first months, but PEI is still able to maintain its company by improving its marketing strategy during the pandemic. PEI as one of the largest professional conference organizers (PCO) in Bali can still exist and survive during the pandemic. This research tries to analyze the marketing strategy used by PEI to maintain its company during a pandemic. The results of the research are expected to become reference material for EO's marketing strategy when facing pandemics such as Covid-19 and other pandemics in the future.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

Salsabila & Rossieta (2023) revealed that the covid-19 pandemic has caused companies to experience a decrease in sales levels from 2019, where conditions were still normal before the pandemic occurred, towards 2020 and 2021. The strategy that companies need to implement must have the aim of increasing profitability so that losses experienced did not have a big impact. From the customer perspective, the company experienced a change in buyer preferences which experienced a decrease in purchasing power. So, the strategy that must be carried out is to adjust the preferences of customers to maintain business continuity. From the perspective of internal business processes, companies are faced with conditions where employees and suppliers are encouraged to carry out activities from home due to large-scale restrictions. This has resulted in supply chain delays and also the availability of employees due to employees being sick and having to self-isolate. So, the right strategy to overcome this is health mitigation so that employees do not get sick and build a new supply chain system to comply with government regulations. Finally, from a learning and development perspective, companies are faced with conditions where companies must be more flexible and adapt

to market conditions, so that the company's strategy tends to seek to find new technologies, products or marketing strategies in order to adapt to market conditions and preferences.

The marketing strategy according to Kotler & Keller (2012) consists of product, price, place, and promotion or known as the 4Ps, which are as follows:

- a. Product marketing strategy, namely producing and selling quality products and being liked by consumers. Therefore, it is necessary to examine what products will be marketed, what are consumer tastes, product variations, product packaging, innovations, and brands to attract consumer interest.
- b. Marketing strategy Price is a value or quality exchanged by consumers for a product or service to obtain benefits equal to the sacrifices incurred. Therefore, pricing in a company is intended with various objectives to be achieved.
- c. Marketing strategy Place is not only about the location of a company, but also includes transportation, location, warehousing, to provide a product, and to target customers.
- d. Marketing strategy with Promotion is an activity or activities carried out to persuade and explain the benefits of a product so that consumers are interested in buying.

There have been various studies related to the marketing strategies used by several EO companies in Indonesia during the pandemic. Funny & Susyanti (2022) in their research reveals that the Covid-19 pandemic has forced EOs to innovate in order to continue running their business without causing large crowds. The use of digital technology must be maximized because the pandemic has caused people to avoid crowds and switch to virtual or online. Social media as online media is considered efficient, inexpensive, and right on target as a strategy for promoting events.

Erviana's research (2021) reveals the strategies used by EOs to be able to survive during the pandemic, namely by using telemarketing, sales calls, social media and using virtual event products that are sold such as webinars, mini virtual events, 3D stage virtual events, hybrid events and virtual expos. Another study, namely Sabtawan & Leasfita (2022), revealed that one of the EO strategies during a pandemic was adapting to online events using live streaming on YouTube social media and carrying out online event management processes consisting of research, design, planning, coordination. and evaluation.

Research related to PEI's strategies for surviving the Covid-19 pandemic has been studied (Widiantara et al., 2022). As for the research, it was revealed that during the Covid-19 pandemic, PEI survived by making MAGTV products, which are programs that utilize Virtual Studio as supporting digital media. This product was made because the Covid-19 pandemic has changed public interaction relationships to be more adaptive using digital technology. The marketing strategy, unlike that disclosed by Kotler & Keller (2012), does not only cover the product. Therefore, other research is needed to see PEI's strategies for surviving the Covid era which include product strategy, price strategy, place strategy and promotion strategy.

### **3. METHODS**

This study used qualitative research methods. Qualitative research method is a research method used to examine the condition of natural objects. The researcher is the key instrument. Data analysis is inductive, and research results emphasize meaning (Sugiyono, 2013). The data collection technique was carried out using interview techniques, literature studies and internet studies through websites and social media. Interviews were conducted with PEI owners and staff. Data analysis techniques used

include interview transcripts, data reduction, analysis, data interpretation and triangulation. From the results of data analysis then conclusions are drawn.

#### **4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

PEI was established at the end of 2006 which was initiated by Tommy Sujana. PEI is a professional event organizer providing entertainment services and MICE consultants in Bali. PEI has many divisions including sales & marketing division, accounting division, human resources division, creative division and graphic design. The company has around 150 human resources (HR). PEI has a vision of build events, build people. With this vision, PEI hopes to build and further develop MICE events by building good relationships with clients, vendors and event venue providers so that a close and mutually beneficial relationship will arise for both parties. The services provided by PEI are Event Management, Entertainment and Event Equipment. The Covid-19 pandemic has forced PEI to think about creative and innovative marketing strategies that are in line with the circumstances and needs of the pandemic. The following is Yuni's statement as PEI's human resources:

*"PEI's COVID-19 pandemic experienced a drastic decline in sales profit so that in the first month of the COVID-19 pandemic PEI had no profit at all, even minus hundreds of millions of rupiah. However, management continues to think about how PEI can maintain the company as PEI also has to pay for the rights of its employees" (Yuni, interview, 4 August 2022).*

Referring to Kotler & Keller's (2012) marketing mix which consists of product, price, place, and promotion, or what is known as the 4Ps, the marketing efforts undertaken by PEI during the pandemic are as follows:

##### **4.1 Product**

Formulation of product strategy is carried out by offering new products and creating creative innovations. PEI's intelligence, competence, motivation, hard work and experience to be innovative and creative are attached to every employee by providing maximum satisfaction to clients. Due to government policies to anticipate the spread of Covid-19, many people have switched to holding events online rather than offline. The high level of public interest in holding online events has prompted PEI to innovate in its product development strategy, namely creating a virtual hybrid studio (VHS) to organize events such as webinars, workshops, virtual concerts, social events and so on. The following is Yuni's statement as PEI's human resources:

*"We have to think hard about what products we want to sell during this pandemic, so our owner gave us the idea to make VHS by continuing to hold only online events which are marketed through digital marketing." (Yuni interview on August 4, 2022).*

VHS is a studio created using a green screen to hold online events with zoom. The word hybrid here is only holding events online, not hybrid in the concept of combining online meetings and offline meetings. This new product idea or idea was given directly from the PEI owner to reduce the holding of crowd events (offline) during a pandemic. This new product was created to sustain the company and reduce the holding of offline events marketed through digital marketing. According to Yuni as PEI human resources said:

*“PEI is innovating with new products such as virtual hybrid studio (VHS). this product was made because we know ourselves that during this pandemic the government issued community restrictions such as PPKM, so we have to think hard about what products we want to sell during this pandemic, so our owner gave us the idea to make VHS while still holding online events only marketed through digital marketing.” (Yuni interview on 4 August 2022).*



**Figure 1.** Product Sold by PEI

Source: <https://www.instagram.com/phenomevent/?hl=id>

PEI's strategy by switching to prefer holding online events compared to offline and creating a new product in the form of VHS is in line with what was disclosed by Salsabila & Rossieta (2023), namely during a pandemic, companies must be more flexible and adapt to market conditions and try to find technology. new products according to market preferences. Funny & Susyanti (2022) added that the use of digital technology, namely by making online or virtual products, is one of the things that must be maximized during a pandemic

In addition to making new products, products must also be of high quality and liked by consumers. Responding to the pandemic, when everyone did not want to take the risk of being exposed to the Covid-19 virus, PEI guarantees a sense of security and comfort with a CHSE (Cleanliness, Health, Safety, Environment Sustainability) certificate. This certification is able to guarantee tourists and the public that PEI products and services provided are in accordance with CHSE protocol standards, namely guaranteed in terms of cleanliness, health, safety, and also to maintain environmental sustainability. According to Yuni as PEI human resources said:

*"Because the COVID-19 pandemic is ongoing and the government has issued a new policy, it is permissible to organize events but it is necessary to comply with health protocols and one of them must obtain a CHSE certificate, so we are taking care of obtaining the CHSE" (Yuni interview, 4 August 2022).*

#### **4.2 Price**

The pricing strategy used by PEI is pricing with the aim of survival and to increase sales so that profits can be increased. Salsabila & Rossieta (2023) in their research revealed the same thing, according to them the Covid-19 pandemic has caused people's purchasing power to decrease so that the strategy that companies need to do is to increase profitability so that the losses experienced do not have a large impact through adjusting customer preferences.

PEI's strategy in terms of price is that PEI does not set a price, but organizes an event according to the scale of the event being held and the budget provided by the client with a negotiation process. Clients can also determine proper budget and cost control

down to detailed event planning and other special requests according to client's needs and requirements. Then from the planning requested by the client, PEI will make an appropriate package offer. This was disclosed by Yuni as PEI's human resources as follows:

*"As for the price, we have never determined how much according to each client's budget and the scale of the event to be held, so during the pandemic we accepted all kinds of events and with any budget, but what we received were only online events., so our job is to just organize and plan events in detail according to special requests according to the needs and requests of the client" (Yuni interview, 4 August 2022).*

#### 4.3 Place

The location or place of business where PEI clients meet is located in the middle of the city which is located at Jalan Teuku Umar Barat, Denpasar City. This location is very strategic because it is located in an urban area, close to shopping centers, Ngurah Rai Airport and star hotels. The following is Yuni's statement as PEI's human resources:

*"As for the location or place of business, for now we have never had any complaints from clients or consumers who want to make transactions or meet, because our office is a very strategic place to be in the middle of the city so everywhere is close and clients will be collaborating with us, it's also not difficult to find our office because it's right on the edge of the main road." (Yuni interview on 4 August 2022).*



**Figure 2.** PEI's Office

Source: <https://www.instagram.com/phenomevent/?hl=id>

The location strategy disclosed by Kotler & Keller (2012) outlines the location not only for the right business but also includes transportation, location, warehousing, to provide a product, and to target customers. The pandemic situation has prompted PEI to take advantage of an office that has a strategic location by creating a restaurant, bar and pub called The Magendra. The Magendra has a meeting room that can be used for small scale event venues because it provides a meeting room with city views. This place also provides gym and swimming pool facilities. This location strategy is a new product for PEI. Initially, PEI was only an EO, but during Covid-19 it developed into a restaurant.



**Figure 3.** PEI's Office  
Source: <https://themagendra.com/>

#### 4.4 Promotion

During the Covid-19 period, PEI tried to promote all of its EO service products, both directly and indirectly. Without promotion, clients cannot get to know the products or services offered. The forms of promotion used by PEI are advertising and sales promotion. Before the pandemic, PEI carried out advertising activities in the form of placing banners in the form of advertisements. The installation of this banner was carried out at crossroads in the Denpasar area, so that it could only reach some clients. Advertising activities by placing this banner had been carried out 12 years ago, when PEI was pioneered. During the pandemic, PEI no longer carried out advertising activities because PEI already had clients who were repeaters (loyal customers). During the pandemic, PEI started using digital marketing so that anyone could easily access and get product information easily. In this day and age digital technology can be accessed anywhere and anytime. The rapid development of this technology is an opportunity for PEI to market its products through a digital strategy that can be accessed anywhere and anytime by the public.

Erviana (2021) revealed that a strategy that can be carried out by companies during the Covid period is a digital strategy



**Figure 4.** Advertising Before and During The Covid 19 Pandemic  
Source: <https://www.instagram.com/phenomevent/?hl=id>

Erviana (2021) revealed that a strategy that could be carried out by companies during the covid era was the digital strategy Sabtawan & Leasfita (2022), also revealed that one of the strategies that EO carried out data during a pandemic was adapting to online events using live streaming on YouTube social media. PEI also uses digital marketing strategies to be known by the wider community. One of the main objectives of PEI's digital marketing is to reach target customers more efficiently and effectively through existing digital media such as YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, and websites. PEI has a YouTube account called MAGTV which was first introduced on 03 June 2020. This YouTube account is the result of innovation and creativity to increase promotion during the Covid-19 pandemic. MAGTV launched 11 programs covering audience segments ranging from children to adults.

Apart from digital marketing, PEI also carries out sales promotion activities by making sales calls (sales visit activities to prospective customers or customers). Before the pandemic, sales calls were made to several hotels. However, during a pandemic, sales call activities were carried out by PEI by contacting all repeater clients and asking if there would be an event to be held. PEI also shifted its marketing strategy and market share. PEI initially focused only on market share from outside the city, but during the pandemic PEI changed the target market from only visitors from outside the city plus the local Balinese market as well. PEI also always provides feedback in the form of souvenirs or gifts to clients to maintain relationships with clients.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The marketing strategy used by PEI to survive in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic, namely by using the Kotler & Keller (2012) marketing strategy consists of product, price, place, and promotion. Products, namely by offering innovative new products that are creative and in accordance with the interests of the community, namely by creating a virtual hybrid studio (VHS), and equipping oneself with a CHSE certificate to guarantee tourists and the public that PEI products and services provided comply with CHSE protocol standards. The pricing strategy used by PEI is to organize an event according to the scale of the event being held and the budget provided by the client with a negotiation process.

Location strategy by utilizing PEI's strategic offices into restaurants, bars and pubs that can be used for small-scale event venues. Judging from the promotion, PEI started using digital marketing. PEI has a YouTube account for digital marketing. Sales promotion with sales calls is also done by contacting all repeater clients. PEI has also changed the target market from what was previously only out-of-town visitors plus the local Balinese market as well. PEI also always provides feedback in the form of souvenirs or gifts to clients to maintain relationships with clients. Based on these conclusions, several recommendations can be put forward, namely that companies, including EOs, need a strategy to carry out innovative, creative marketing differentiation, such as that done by PEI in determining new target markets and adjusting to the situation so that they can survive in the face of a pandemic.

## REFERENCES

- Erfinda, Y., & Falah, N. Z. (2021). Tingkat Kesiapan Venue MICE Di Era New Normal COVID-19 (Studi Kasus DKI Jakarta). *Journal of Event, Travel and Tour Management*, 1(1), 7–17. <https://doi.org/10.34013/jett.v1i1.589>
- Erviana, I. (2021). Strategi Pemasaran Produk Virtual Event Perusahaan Jasa Bening



- Mata Communication Selama Pandemi Covid-19. Laporan tugas akhir. Surakarta: UNS diunduh tanggal 10 Juli 2022 dari <https://digilib.uns.ac.id/dokumen/detail/88234/Strategi-Pemasaran-Produk-Virtual-Event-Perusahaan-Jasa-Bening-Mata-Communication-Selama-Pandemi-Covid-19>
- Funny, D. T., & Susyanti, D. W. (2022). *Pelaksanaan Pemasaran Event Kopdarwil Psi Melalui Media Instagram Oleh Groovy Event Organizer*. 11(1), 98–103.
- Kotler, P., & Keller, K. L. (2012). *Manajemen Pemasaran*. Erlangga.
- Nggini, Y. H. (2019). Analisis Swot ( Strength, Weaknes, Opportunity, Threats) Terhadap Kebijakan Pengembangan Pariwisata Provinsi Bali. *Jurnal Ilmiah Dinamika Sosial*, 3(1), 141. <https://doi.org/10.38043/jids.v3i1.1739>
- Sabtawan, T., & Leasfita, A. (2022). Adaptasi Online Event Dalam Menarik Perhatian Khayalak Pada Masa Pandemi Covid-19. *Stikom Prosia*, 4(1), 1–10.
- Salsabila, A. R., & Rossieta, H. (2023). Strategi Keberlangsungan Bisnis Dalam Menghadapi Pandemi Covid-19. *Owner: Riset & Jurnal Akuntansi*, 7(2 April), 1124–1136.
- Sugiyono. (2013). Metode Penelitian Pendidikan Pendekatan Kuantitaif, Kualitatif, dan R&DSugiyono. 2013. “Metode Penelitian Pendidikan Pendekatan Kuantitaif, Kualitatif, dan R&D.” Metode Penelitian Pendidikan Pendekatan Kuantitaif, Kualitatif, dan R&D. <https://doi.org/10.1>. *Metode Penelitian Pendidikan Pendekatan Kuantitaif, Kualitatif, Dan R&D*.
- Suryawati, N. N. A., & Citrawati, L. P. (2022). Strategi Pengembangan Produk Event Untuk Menarik Minat Pelanggan di Phenom Event Indonesia pada Masa Pandemi COVID-19. *Journal of Event and Convention Management*, 1(2 November), 26–37. <https://doi.org/10.52352/jecom.v1i2.945>
- Widiantara, I., Puriartha, I. K., & ... (2022). Penerapan Teknik Live on Tape Dalam Produksi Event Virtual “Magstar” Pada Live Streaming Youtube Channel Magtv. *Jurnal Calaccitra*, 2(2 September), 45–56. <https://jurnal2.isi-dps.ac.id/index.php/calaccitra/article/download/1801/620>
- Wijaya, B.K., Mariani, W. E. (2021). Dampak Pandemi Covid-19 Pada Sektor Perhotelan Di Bali Bagus. *Warmadewa Management and Business Journal*, 3(Februari 2021), 49–59. <https://ejournal.warmadewa.ac.id/index.php/wmbj>

