

The Halal Industry in the Digital Age: An Analysis of Challenges and Strategies for Developing the International Halal Market

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ABSTRACT

Keywords:

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The halal industry is experiencing rapid growth in line with rising global demand for products and services that comply with Sharia principles. Advances in digital technology are driving the transformation of the halal industry through the use of e-commerce, social media, blockchain, and digital certification systems. However, alongside these opportunities, the halal industry also faces a range of complex challenges, such as difficulties in monitoring halal products, differences in certification standards across countries, limitations in technology and digital literacy among business operators, counterfeiting of halal labels, and declining consumer confidence in product safety on digital platforms. This study aims to analyse the challenges facing the halal industry in the digital era, as well as strategies for strengthening the halal ecosystem based on technology and Sharia principles. The method used in this study is a qualitative approach employing library research through the analysis of various literature, scientific journals, regulations, and academic sources related to the digital halal industry. The research findings indicate that digitalisation presents significant opportunities for the expansion of the international halal market; however, this requires adaptive regulatory support, the harmonisation of global halal certification standards, the strengthening of cybersecurity, and the enhancement of digital literacy among businesses and consumers. Furthermore, the implementation of technologies such as QR codes and blockchain is considered capable of enhancing transparency. Therefore, collaboration is required between the government, certification bodies, academics, business operators and the public in building a modern, safe and globally competitive halal industry ecosystem.

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INTRODUCTION

The halal industry is part of an Islamic values-based economic system that governs the entire process of production and distribution of goods and services to ensure compliance with Sharia principles. The concept of halal encompasses not only the halal status of a product's ingredients but also emphasizes ethical considerations at every operational stage, from raw material selection and production processes to marketing and customer service.[1] Its primary objective is to ensure products are free from elements contrary to Islamic teachings, such as usury, uncertainty, fraud, and exploitation.[2]

Over the past two decades, the halal industry has experienced rapid growth alongside the increasing global Muslim population and public awareness of healthy, safe, and ethical products.[3] Halal products are no longer limited to food and beverages but also encompass the cosmetics, pharmaceutical, fashion, tourism, technology, and Islamic finance sectors.[4] This trend indicates that the halal industry has become an integral part of the global economy.[5] The halal industry ecosystem involves various stakeholders, such as manufacturers, raw material suppliers, halal logistics providers, certification bodies, Sharia auditors, and halal e-commerce operators. All business processes must be conducted in accordance with Sharia principles, both substantively and administratively. Furthermore, the application of halal principles also encompasses the concept of *thayyib* which refers to the cleanliness, safety, and quality of products making it relevant to global sustainability and health issues.

Indonesia as the country with the largest Muslim population in the world, has significant potential in the development of the global halal industry. Through Law Number 33 of 2014 concerning Halal Product Assurance, the government requires halal certification for products circulating in the market.[6] The support of institutions such as BPJPH, MUI, and LPPOM has further strengthened the national halal infrastructure. However, the development of the halal industry in the digital era also faces various new challenges. Digital transformation has changed consumer behavior through marketplaces, social media, and application-based services.[2] Technologies such as blockchain and big data are increasingly being applied in production and distribution processes. Digitalization opens opportunities for expanding the halal market globally, especially for MSMEs, but it also creates challenges such as counterfeit halal labels, misuse of certifications, and the circulation of products whose halal status has not been properly verified.[7]

Furthermore, differences in halal certification standards among countries have become obstacles in international trade, as producers are required to undergo repeated certification processes that consume additional time and costs.[8] Product safety and consumer trust are also major concerns, particularly in digital transactions where there is limited direct interaction between producers and consumers.[9] In addition, the low level of digital literacy among halal MSME actors hinders the optimal use of technology in business development. Therefore, adaptive regulations and technological innovations based on Sharia principles are urgently needed. The use of blockchain technology for tracing halal raw materials and smart contracts in production processes can serve as solutions to improve transparency and consumer trust.

Thus, collaboration among governments, scholars, academics, and business actors is essential to build a modern, adaptive, and highly competitive halal industry ecosystem in the digital era.

Challenges in Controlling and Ensuring Halal Products

The halal industry in the digital era faces increasingly complex challenges in ensuring that every product circulating in the market truly complies with Islamic law. Halal certification is not merely a label attached to packaging, but represents a comprehensive process covering the selection of raw materials, manufacturing procedures, storage, distribution, and marketing activities in accordance with Sharia principles.[10] In practice, however, monitoring these processes has become more difficult due to the expansion of global supply chains and the rapid growth of digital commerce. Many stages of production and distribution now operate through automated systems and online platforms, making direct supervision more limited. As a result, ensuring consistent halal compliance throughout the entire process has become a significant challenge for both regulators and industry players.

From the consumer perspective, there are also limitations in verifying the halal status of products independently. Most consumers do not possess sufficient information regarding production methods, ingredients used, or the tools and facilities involved in manufacturing. Consequently, consumers generally rely on trust in producers and the halal labels displayed on products.[11] Halal labels therefore function not only as commercial symbols, but also as guarantees that products have undergone proper examination and certification by competent halal authorities. These labels provide assurance that products comply with Islamic principles, including standards of hygiene, safety, and cleanliness.

However, in the digital era, the credibility of halal labels faces serious threats. Technological developments have made it easier for irresponsible parties to counterfeit or misuse halal labels for commercial gain. Fake certifications and unauthorized labels can spread rapidly through e-commerce platforms and online marketplaces, creating confusion among consumers and weakening public trust in the halal industry. When consumers begin to doubt the authenticity of halal labels, the reputation and sustainability of the entire halal ecosystem may be negatively affected.

One important aspect in ensuring halal compliance is the slaughtering process for animal-based products. In Islamic law, slaughter must be performed according to specific religious requirements, such as being conducted by a Muslim, mentioning the name of Allah, and ensuring that blood is fully drained from the animal's body. This process is not only related to religious obligations, but also contributes to hygiene and food safety standards because remaining blood may become a medium for harmful bacteria.[12] Therefore, halal principles are closely connected with health, safety, and product quality standards, demonstrating that halal certification provides both spiritual and practical benefits for consumers.

Another major challenge in the digital halal industry is the technological gap between large corporations and micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs). Large companies generally have greater access to advanced technologies such as blockchain systems, QR-code tracing, and digital auditing mechanisms that improve transparency and efficiency in halal verification. In contrast, many MSMEs still lack digital literacy, technological skills, and financial resources to implement such systems effectively. This condition risks creating inequality within the halal market, where only technologically advanced businesses can compete globally.

Digital technologies actually offer significant opportunities to strengthen halal assurance systems. For example, QR-code technology enables consumers to instantly access detailed information about a product's halal certification, including the certificate number, issuing institution, validity period, and manufacturer identity. Likewise, blockchain technology can improve transparency by recording every stage of the supply chain in a secure and traceable manner. Through these technologies, consumers can verify

halal information more easily, while producers can strengthen accountability and trust. Nevertheless, the implementation of such technologies still requires adequate infrastructure, financial support, and clear regulatory frameworks.

The role of digital trading platforms and e-commerce providers is also becoming increasingly important in the halal industry. Online marketplaces should implement strict verification systems for products claiming halal status before allowing them to be marketed to consumers. Without adequate supervision, products with counterfeit halal labels or unclear certification can spread widely in digital markets and mislead Muslim consumers. Therefore, cooperation between governments, halal certification bodies, businesses, and digital platform providers is essential to ensure the integrity of halal products in online transactions. In addition, the legal framework governing halal products must continue to adapt to the rapid development of digital technology. Law enforcement against halal label forgery, certification misuse, and fraudulent marketing practices should be carried out firmly and transparently. Administrative sanctions, fines, and criminal penalties are necessary not only to punish violations but also to create deterrent effects and strengthen public confidence in halal regulations. A responsive legal system demonstrates the state's commitment to protecting Muslim consumers and maintaining the credibility of the halal industry. Consumer education and halal literacy are equally important in addressing these challenges. In the digital era, consumers need to understand how to verify halal certifications, identify trusted authorities, and recognize the significance of halal production processes. Well-informed consumers can play an active role in monitoring and reporting suspicious practices within the halal market. Public awareness therefore becomes an essential component in strengthening the overall halal ecosystem.

Cross-Border Halal Standards and Certification

The growing trend toward a halal lifestyle has led to the introduction of various regulations, including mandatory halal certification for a range of products such as food, beverages, medicines, and cosmetics. On the other hand, the rapid growth of the global halal industry has created a demand for a halal certification system that is universally accepted. In the era of information globalisation, the importance of halal certification in influencing the behaviour of Muslim consumers is growing. Halal certification serves as a form of assurance to consumers that producers have complied with Islamic Sharia standards, and significantly shapes consumers' perceptions of the level of trust or credibility of the products on offer. Halal certification is now not merely a differentiator in the market, but also plays a major role in shaping the perceptions and purchasing decisions of increasingly cautious consumers. Consumers tend to place greater trust in products that hold official halal certification from a reputable body, as this is seen as providing certainty and clarity regarding their halal status. Consumers' considerations when purchasing a product now depend not only on price and quality, but also on religious and ethical values. In this context, halal certification serves as a symbol of trust that can strengthen consumer loyalty to a brand or product.

However, to date, no agreement has been reached on a single international halal standard. Each country still uses its own certification bodies and mechanisms, tailored to national policies and differing fiqh perspectives. This situation poses a challenge to the smooth flow of halal product exports between countries, particularly for businesses seeking to expand their markets into various regions. Differences in halal certification standards between countries are largely influenced by differences in schools of thought and methods of legal deduction (*istinbath*) employed by halal authorities in each country. For instance, the Shafi'i school tends to be stricter regarding the use of additives such as enzymes and alcohol, compared to the Hanafi school, which is more flexible regarding the quantities and functions of such ingredients.

In this regard, the approach of *ijtihad jama'i* (collective *ijtihad*) adopted by international forums of scholars such as the *Majma' al-Fiqh al-Islami* (Organisation of Islamic Cooperation/OIC) is of great importance. This forum has previously agreed that the use of alcohol in very small quantities that do not cause intoxication and are used solely as a solvent may be excused (*ma'fu 'anhu*), provided the nature of

the substance remains unchanged. This forms the basis for several countries, such as Malaysia and Turkey, in setting tolerance limits for alcohol in food and cosmetic products. The approach of *mabadi' al-khulaf* (respecting differences among scholars) and the principle "*al-hukmu yadûru ma'a 'illatihi wujûdan wa 'adaman*" (the ruling follows its legal rationale, whether it exists or not) can serve as a guide in harmonising international halal standards. It is therefore important to prioritise the concept of *al-ta'yn al-musharaka* (joint determination) in formulating standards that can be recognised across different schools of thought and nations.

These differences in standards cover a range of aspects, from methods of animal slaughter, the composition of additives, processing procedures, to halal audit procedures. For example, mechanical slaughter methods accepted in some may not be recognised in Southeast Asian countries. A similar situation applies to the use of enzymes or alcohol in food additives, the assessment of which can vary significantly depending on the school of thought or the policies of a country's halal authority. In Indonesia, following the transfer of certification authority from the MUI to the BPJPH, the government has become increasingly active in encouraging businesses to register their products to obtain a halal label, which, in addition to serving as a guarantee of halal status for consumers, also enhances competitiveness and adds value in terms of health and economic benefits. 25 Halal certification also plays a role in expanding the market for halal products, which ultimately drives the growth of businesses, both Muslim and non-Muslim, within the halal industry.[13] However, challenges arise when Indonesian halal products are to be exported to other countries such as Malaysia (JAKIM), Thailand (CICOT), or the United Arab Emirates (ESMA), as differences in certification systems mean producers must undergo recertification. This process is time-consuming and adds to production costs, particularly for MSME operators with limited budgets; therefore, a solution for harmonising halal standards across nations is needed to support the global competitiveness of Indonesia's halal industry.[14]

This situation highlights the urgent need for harmonisation or, at the very least, mutual recognition among global halal certification bodies. Without such mechanisms, efforts to establish halal products as a global commodity that is easily marketed will always be hampered by complex and varied certification procedures. Meanwhile, global consumers increasingly desire products that are not only halal but also readily accessible and trustworthy in terms of their halal status. The lack of harmonised standards also causes confusion at the consumer level. A halal label from one country is not necessarily trusted by consumers in another country due to differences in authorities and audit systems. This situation damages the image of the global halal industry as it reduces the level of trust and confidence in halal products in the eyes of the international market. In the digital age, when cross-border trade in products is so rapid, this poses a serious challenge.

Harmonisation efforts have in fact been undertaken by a number of organisations, such as the SMIIC (Standards and Metrology Institute for Islamic Countries) under the OIC. However, implementation on the ground remains limited as each country continues to retain authority and sovereignty over its national halal certification system. Several bilateral initiatives have also been implemented, such as agreements on the mutual recognition of between Indonesia and several partner countries, but their scope is not yet extensive and has not reached a global scale. One innovation that could bridge these differences is the use of digital technology, such as blockchain, for tracking raw materials and halal production processes.[15] Blockchain technology is used to guarantee the authenticity and traceability of the entire halal production process chain. Blockchain is a digital recording system that cannot be altered unilaterally, as every transaction or new process must be validated by the network of users. In the context of the halal industry, every stage from the selection of raw materials, through manufacturing and distribution, to Sharia audits can be recorded within the blockchain system.

Consequently, the halal status of products is not merely based on manufacturers' claims, but can be verified digitally and permanently by all parties within the halal industry ecosystem. Collaboration

between the government and the private sector in establishing a national halal blockchain will be a crucial step towards a certification system that is more transparent, efficient, and compliant with Sharia principles. With a transparent and digitally verified system, the halal certification process can be more easily recognised and accepted across borders. However, the main challenge in implementing this technology is the readiness of digital infrastructure and technological literacy among players in the halal industry, particularly in developing countries.

On the other hand, there are also fiqh-related challenges in harmonising halal standards across countries. Differences between schools of thought such as the Shafi'i, Hanafi, Hanbali, and Maliki hold differing views on certain halal practices. Without collective ijihad or an internationally accepted fatwa, the harmonisation of halal standards will still face significant theological obstacles. Therefore, collaboration between scholars, industry experts, and regulators is essential. For the global halal industry to continue to grow and compete in the digital age, a collaborative and inclusive approach is needed to create a more integrated certification system. Governments, international organisations, and certification bodies must open dialogue and build mutual trust. The harmonisation of halal standards is not merely a technical issue, but also a key strategy in strengthening the position of halal products in an increasingly competitive global market.

Technological Limitations and the Digital Literacy Gap in the Halal Industry

Information technology opens up opportunities for market expansion and operational efficiency.[16] On the other hand, technological limitations and the digital literacy gap remain significant barriers, particularly for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) which dominate the halal ecosystem in Indonesia. This gap stems from disparities in access to infrastructure, the cost of technology adoption, and the capacity of human resources to understand and utilise digital platforms effectively. Telecommunications infrastructure issues remain prevalent across various regions. High-speed internet access is not yet widespread, making it difficult for many halal SMEs in remote areas to manage online shops, monitor supply chains in real time, or participate in online training. As connectivity is a key prerequisite for e-commerce transactions, network disparities directly impact the competitiveness of local halal products in the global market. The initial investment costs for production technology, inventory management, and cloud-based traceability systems are relatively high for SMEs.[17] Halal-certified automation machines, IoT devices for hygiene monitoring, and blockchain applications for digital certification require significant capital. Without accessible Sharia-compliant financing schemes, businesses will continue to rely on manual processes that are prone to errors and inconsistencies.

Digital literacy among halal industry players remains low, particularly among the generation of business founders who are accustomed to conventional methods. Many of them do not yet understand marketplace algorithm optimisation, content marketing techniques, and consumer data analytics. Consequently, the potential for halal products to gain visibility in international markets has not yet been fully realised, despite rising global demand. The lack of professionals who possess expertise in both technology and halal fiqh adds to the complexity. App developers, product auditors, and digital marketing specialists rarely possess dual expertise in both IT and Sharia. Consequently, the implementation of new technologies is often hindered by concerns regarding Sharia compliance or miscommunication between IT teams and halal compliance teams. Digital training and mentoring programmes for halal SMEs remain concentrated in major urban areas. Meanwhile, halal industry hubs, such as the food sector in East Java or the Muslim fashion sector in West Java, are spread out to the district level. Without inclusive and sustainable training models, the knowledge gap is widening between business operators in cities and those in rural areas.

Cybersecurity issues are beginning to undermine the reputation of halal brands. Some businesses attempting to enter the online market have experienced customer data breaches and the forgery of digital

halal labels. A lack of understanding of basic cybersecurity practices, such as two-factor authentication and website encryption, increases the risk of financial and reputational damage. The adoption of new technologies is often hindered by regulations that have not yet adapted. For example, the use of digital signatures on halal certification documents still requires procedural adjustments within the relevant authorities. Regulatory uncertainty makes industry players reluctant to invest in technology for fear that it will not be legally recognised. The younger generation is actually enthusiastic about developing digital-based halal start-ups, but still struggles to secure funding and mentors who understand the nature of the halal industry.[18] Without a dedicated incubation ecosystem, innovative ideas, such as halal travel apps or blockchain-based halal raw material marketplaces, often stall at the prototype stage.

Limited cross-sector collaboration is widening the literacy gap. Universities, the government and technology companies have not yet fully collaborated to develop an integrated curriculum combining Islamic economics, entrepreneurship and digital skills. Consequently, the number of university graduates ready to enter the digital halal industry remains relatively small compared to market demand. To bridge this gap, a comprehensive strategy is required; the government must expand internet infrastructure to halal industrial zones, provide fiscal incentives and sharia financing schemes for technology investment, and adapt regulations to be conducive to digital innovation. On the other hand, educational institutions and the business community need to strengthen integrated, practice-based digital literacy training, whilst halal associations can serve as bridges for knowledge transfer and mentors for SMEs. Through coordinated efforts, technological limitations and the digital literacy gap within the halal industry can be narrowed, paving the way for Indonesian halal products to compete on the global stage.

Falsification of Halal Labels and Misuse of Certification on Digital Platforms

The phenomenon of counterfeit halal labelling in the digital age is becoming increasingly prevalent as demand for halal products in the global market rises. By exploiting loopholes in the still-weak monitoring systems in the digital sphere, many unscrupulous individuals are irresponsibly affixing fake halal labels in order to boost the appeal of their products. These labels are often not based on official certification from authoritative bodies, but merely feature the "halal" symbol without a valid verification process. Digital platforms such as marketplaces and social media open up vast opportunities for producers to market products directly to consumers. However, on the other hand, this ease of access also creates scope for abuse. Many businesses make halal claims without any basis or valid certification.[19] Uninformed consumers, unable to verify the authenticity of these labels, ultimately fall victim to misinformation. It is not uncommon to find online shops selling imported products with halal labels from other countries, which are not actually recognised by the halal certification bodies in the consumers' home countries. Without an integrated validation system, consumers can only rely on the visual appearance of the halal label on the product packaging or the seller's description. This is highly risky, as not all countries have the same halal standards or standards that are internationally recognised.

The misuse of halal certification not only harms consumers, but also tarnishes the image of the halal industry itself. Public trust in halal products is eroding, particularly when serious violations occur, such as the discovery of non-halal ingredients in products previously claimed to be halal. Such incidents can cause panic and damage the reputation of brands, including the certification bodies listed on the label. The issue becomes even more complex when businesses exploit image-editing technology or AI to digitally manipulate halal labels. They can easily create fake halal stickers, misappropriate the names of authoritative bodies, or even produce fictitious halal certificates that appear convincing. Without a digital verification system accessible to the public, consumers lack the means to check the authenticity of products quickly and accurately. Furthermore, many consumers still lack digital literacy and halal literacy.[20] They are not accustomed to verifying claims on the official BPJPH website or those of other halal certification bodies, or may not even be aware that halal claims can be checked online. This is where the importance of continuous

public education lies, so that the public is not easily deceived by products that merely display a halal logo without any legal basis.

A number of digital platforms also lack clear policies regarding the verification of product halal status. For example, major marketplaces such as Shopee, Tokopedia, or Lazada generally do not require sellers to upload proof of an official halal certificate when listing products as halal. As a result, many products are freely available with claims of halal status that cannot be verified. Clear regulations and active oversight are essential to address this issue. To address this challenge, innovation is needed in technology-based halal labelling systems. For instance, the development of a halal QR code directly linked to the database of official certification bodies could be a solution. By scanning the code, consumers can immediately view the certificate number, validity period, and type of certified product. This can enhance transparency and limit the scope for counterfeiters.

The government's role is also vital in taking action against legal violations relating to the counterfeiting of halal labels. Strict sanctions must be imposed on businesses that deliberately display fake halal labels or misuse certificates. This needs to be supported by cross-agency cooperation, covering trade supervision, food safety and information technology. Furthermore, synergy between halal certification bodies, e-commerce platforms, and technology start-ups is essential to create a safe and trustworthy digital halal ecosystem. Through user-friendly reporting systems, certificate validation features, and ongoing educational collaboration, the protection of Muslim consumers can be strengthened. Strengthening this ecosystem is not solely the government's task, but a shared responsibility of all stakeholders in the halal industry.

Product Safety and Consumer Confidence

The halal industry in the digital age faces a striking paradox. On the one hand, product safety in the halal industry is a fundamental element that determines consumer trust. Without safety guarantees, a product's halal status becomes merely a symbolic claim that loses its substantive meaning. Consumers, particularly those who strictly adhere to Sharia principles, require assurance that every product they consume is not only halal in terms of its ingredients, but also safe in terms of its production process and distribution. When the origin of the raw materials used is unclear, consumers begin to doubt the integrity of the product, even regarding well-known brands. This demands that manufacturers be able to provide full transparency regarding the source of materials, from raw materials and production equipment right through to final distribution. A lack of transparency can have a detrimental impact on reputation and business sustainability.

In practice, the halal audit system implemented needs to be multi-layered and not merely a one-off process during certification. Regular inspections and random sampling form an important part of continuous monitoring. This process will minimize the potential for violations or irregularities in the production and distribution of halal products. Technology plays a highly strategic role in ensuring product safety and traceability.[21] With the use of blockchain technology, for example, every stage in the supply chain can be recorded in real-time and cannot be manipulated. This enables both regulatory authorities and consumers to trace the authenticity of products from source to end-user.

On the other hand, consumer education also plays a vital role. When consumers are equipped with the ability to verify the halal status of products independently, for example via QR codes or official apps, their participation becomes part of the collective monitoring system. The public's inability to understand symbols and certification codes can give rise to unnecessary concerns or even lead to unfounded mistrust. A crisis of confidence in a product often arises not because of a breach, but due to poor crisis communication from the manufacturer. When incidents such as labelling discrepancies or contamination issues occur, the speed and honesty in providing clarification are crucial in determining whether consumers

will remain loyal or turn away. A good communication strategy involves acknowledging the problem and explaining concrete steps towards rectification.

The existence of independent and professional halal certification bodies forms the foundation of the product safety system. If such bodies are found to be influenced by commercial pressures, the entire halal certification system will lose its legitimacy in the eyes of the public. Therefore, safeguarding the integrity of certification bodies is a long-term endeavour that must be supported by transparent and accountable public policies. Consumers are also increasingly demanding access to laboratory test results or ingredient testing reports. When such data is easily accessible to the public, trust will grow, as consumers feel they are being treated as informed partners, rather than mere marketing targets. This is becoming the new standard in the modern halal industry, which is more open and inclusive.[22]

In the long term, halal literacy must be incorporated into the educational curriculum and community outreach. A public that understands halal procedures will be more selective in their purchasing and less likely to be deceived by fake labels. This literacy movement will foster collective awareness to safeguard the integrity of halal products from the consumer's perspective. Transparency encompasses not only a company's successes but also the acknowledgement of past mistakes. Producers who are willing to be open about failures and the corrective measures taken will actually find a place in the hearts of consumers. This culture of acknowledgement and improvement reflects a trustworthy attitude that aligns with Islamic values.

Halal product safety must also be accompanied by data security.[23] In an increasingly digital world, many industry players store certification data, recipes, and quality control systems on online platforms. Without a robust cybersecurity system, this information could be manipulated or stolen by irresponsible parties, thereby undermining consumer confidence. Building and maintaining consumer trust in halal products requires strong cooperation between the government, academia, industry players, and the public. Safety standards must be continuously updated in line with the changing times. In this way, the halal industry will continue to grow, not only in terms of volume, but also in terms of integrity and blessings.

Digital Marketing Strategies for Expanding the International Halal Market.

As global demand for halal products continues to rise, conventional marketing approaches are no longer sufficient to reach an increasingly broad and diverse market. The digital age demands that players in the halal industry adapt to more flexible, innovative and technology-driven promotional strategies. Changes in consumer behaviour, with consumers now increasingly conducting transactions and searching for products via digital platforms, present both significant opportunities and new challenges. In this context, digital marketing strategies are key to unlocking access to the international halal market and building global consumer trust in products originating from Muslim-majority countries, including Indonesia.[24] Marketing strategy is essentially part of a business strategy that focuses on efforts to create and transform value for stakeholders, as well as offering products or services based on the principles of muamalah syariah (Islamic business), which aims to protect consumers from practices that are detrimental or criminal in nature.[25]

Digital marketing strategies do not focus solely on selling products online, but also encompass efforts to strengthen brand identity, educate consumers, convey Sharia-compliant messages in innovative ways, and manage communications in a professional and responsive manner. Success in establishing a competitive, healthy, and sustainable digital halal marketing ecosystem is highly dependent on solid collaboration between government policy, certification bodies, and business operators.[26] In building a secure digital halal ecosystem, the government plays a central role as regulator, facilitator, and supervisor. This role is not limited to establishing technical regulations regarding halal certification, but also to developing digital infrastructure that supports transparency and accountability within the halal supply chain. The government, through bodies such as the BPJPH and the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology, can provide a national digital-based halal certification platform that is integrated with logistics,

trade, and consumer service systems. This is important to ensure that all parties involved in the halal industry—whether business operators, auditors, distributors, or consumers—operate within a system that is open, trustworthy, and efficient.

By utilising various digital channels, players in the halal industry can expand their promotional reach beyond geographical boundaries, whilst building consumer loyalty based on transparency and excellent service. It is therefore important to understand several key strategies that can be implemented to expand the halal market internationally through digital media, including the following:

1. Optimising Social Media as a Global Branding Tool

Social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, Facebook and YouTube have become key tools in building a halal brand image in the international market.[27] Through engaging visual content and storytelling, producers can showcase halal production processes, ethical values and the benefits of their products. This strategy enables audiences from various countries to understand and feel an emotional connection with the brand, even though they come from different cultural backgrounds. Educational and inspirational content has proven to be more effective in building global consumer loyalty than rigid, direct promotion.

2. Utilising Halal E-commerce and International Marketplaces

E-commerce platforms provide direct access to consumers across borders. By listing products on major marketplaces such as Amazon, Alibaba or Etsy, halal producers can efficiently expand their market reach. Some countries have even developed e-commerce platforms specifically for halal products. The use of “halal certified” tags and informative product descriptions in multiple languages strengthens buyer confidence overseas. The availability of integrated payment systems and cross-border delivery services completes this strategy.

3. Implementation of Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) and Digital Advertising

To reach international markets, SEO and SEM (Search Engine Marketing) strategies are crucial. By targeting keywords such as “halal cosmetics”, “halal food Indonesia”, or “Sharia-compliant products”, manufacturers can ensure their products appear in global search results.[28] Furthermore, the use of Google Ads and Facebook Ads with precise demographic and geographic targeting enables products to reach potential consumers in target export countries more effectively and measurably.

4. Collaboration with Global Muslim Influencers

Influencer marketing has a significant impact on shaping consumer perceptions. Partnering with Muslim influencers in various countries such as the UK, Malaysia, the US, or the Middle East can boost a product’s visibility and credibility. These influencers can provide reviews, testimonials, or demonstrations of product usage in their local languages, which makes consumers feel more confident and interested in trying halal products from abroad.

5. Digital Certification and Transparent Verification

International consumer trust in halal products is heavily influenced by the clarity of certification information.[29] Therefore, marketing strategies must also include digital information regarding the product’s halal status. The use of QR codes linking to official halal certificates, videos of the production process, and information on the certification bodies used, will enhance transparency and strengthen halal branding. The more transparent the information provided, the greater the market’s trust.

6. Cultural and Linguistic Adaptation in Marketing

Every country has distinct cultural characteristics and preferences. Therefore, marketing materials must be adapted to local languages and values. The use of Arabic for the Middle Eastern market, or English and messaging that emphasizes quality and sustainability for European and American markets, can enhance the appeal of halal products. This approach demonstrates that the brand respects consumer diversity and is serious about adapting to market needs.

CONCLUSION

The halal industry has grown rapidly and become a strategic sector in the global economy. Demand for halal products and services now extends beyond Muslim-majority countries, driven by increasing awareness of ethical, safe, and high-quality consumption. However, the digital era presents several challenges, including the lack of globally integrated halal standards, limited digital literacy among SMEs, the risk of halal label misuse, and declining consumer trust in online products. At the same time, digital transformation offers major opportunities through social media marketing, halal e-commerce, SEO optimisation, influencer collaboration, and technology-based halal certification systems. Therefore, collaboration among governments, certification bodies, businesses, academics, and society is essential to strengthen a modern and trustworthy halal ecosystem. By improving digital literacy, harmonising halal standards, and strengthening Sharia-based regulations and technology, Indonesia has strong potential to become a leader in the sustainable global halal industry.

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