

EXPLORING CUSTOMER INTERNAL MEANING IN MARKETING COMMUNICATION: A CASE STUDY OF PADMANING GARDEN

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ABSTRACT

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As one of the largest ornamental plant-producing countries, Indonesia benefits from its fertile soil and tropical climate, making the cultivation of ornamental plants relatively easy. The agriculture industry in Indonesia, particularly the ornamental plant and nursery sector, has seen significant growth. One of the key players in this sector is Padmaning Garden, which has been operating since 2020 and handles both export and import sales. Over the course of four years, Padmaning Garden has successfully established and maintained its nursery business by implementing effective marketing communication strategies.

This study examines the application of "Customer Internal Meaning" in marketing communications at Padmaning Garden, a company offering garden and landscape services. "Customer Internal Meaning" refers to a deep understanding of customers' perceptions, values, and motivations. The research aims to explore how customer perceptions influence the effectiveness of marketing communications and how their engagement can enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty.

This study contributes to the marketing communication literature by focusing on the agricultural sector, specifically ornamental plant businesses. It also identifies how understanding customer internal meaning can improve marketing strategies and deepen customer relationships. A qualitative approach is employed in this research, utilizing in-depth interviews with the owner, marketing manager, and customers of Padmaning Garden. Data is further supplemented by content analysis of the company's marketing communication materials, such as social media posts and online marketplace content. This research is expected to offer insights into how customer internal meaning can be utilized to enhance marketing communications in the agricultural industry.

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1. Introduction

The agricultural industry in Indonesia has experienced significant development across various sectors, one of which is the ornamental plant or nursery industry. This sector includes the cultivation, processing, and marketing of ornamental plants that have high economic value and play an important role in the national economy. Indonesia is one of the largest producers of ornamental plants. These plants fall under the field of horticulture, which originates from the Latin words *hortus*, meaning garden, and *cultura*, meaning cultivation. Ornamental plants encompass various types, including stem plants, foliage plants, flowers, roots, fruit-bearing plants, and aquatic ornamental plants, all of which have high aesthetic value for cultivation. As a tropical country, Indonesia possesses diverse plant species that are both cultivated and protected (Rahayu, Sasmito, and Bashit 2019). The cultivation of ornamental plants in Indonesia is relatively easy due to the country's fertile soil and favorable tropical climate (Abdurahman et al. 2022).

Table 1. BPS Ornamental Plant Data 2021

Province	Production Quantity
Jakarta	428,983
East Java	261,946,022
West Java	131,703,099
Central Java	184,943,588

Source: Processed by researchers

East Java Province has great potential for ornamental plant cultivation. According to data from the Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS) in 2021, East Java recorded one of the highest production values of ornamental plants in Indonesia, with a total production of 261,946,022 plants in that year. Compared to other regions in Indonesia, East Java had the highest production figures. This data is reflected in the following table. For many people, ornamental plants hold artistic value, making them highly popular. This has contributed to the increasing business opportunities for ornamental plant cultivation in East Java. In addition to enhancing aesthetics, ornamental plants are also used for various purposes such as condolences, congratulatory messages, ceremonies, and other events (Dwitanto and Utami 2023).

The cultivation and sale of ornamental plants include various species and names. One of the most popular plants that gained significant attention during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2019 was *Monstera*, which continues to be widely cultivated today (Khairunnisa 2023). Other widely recognized ornamental foliage plants include *Aglaonema* and *Philodendron*, among others. Their easy maintenance and aesthetically pleasing leaf shapes contribute to their artistic value and cultural significance for many people (Akbar 2019).

In Indonesia, *Aglaonema* is often referred to as "Sri Rejeki," as it is believed to bring fortune and prosperity. Another example is *Anthurium*, commonly known as the "Wave of Love" plant. These symbolic meanings contribute to the marketability of ornamental plants.

One of the well-established ornamental plant nurseries in East Java is Padmaning Garden, which has been in business since 2020. This nursery not only serves the domestic market but also exports ornamental plants to various regions across Asia. Moreover, Padmaning Garden has received a five-star rating on Google Reviews as a small and medium enterprise (SME) specializing in ornamental plants.

The nursery mainly sells ornamental plants that are highly sought after by consumers, including hybrid plants developed through cross-breeding. Over the past four years, Padmaning Garden has consistently exported its plants on a weekly basis. The export activities are conducted through the Sindo marketplace, facilitating transactions between sellers and buyers across Asia. Some customers perceive ornamental plants beyond their aesthetic appeal, attributing special meanings to them. This insight has led Padmaning Garden to incorporate the internal meaning of ornamental plants into its marketing strategy, enabling the business to sustain its operations in the nursery industry. The ability of Padmaning Garden to leverage customer internal meaning as part of its marketing strategy is a key factor in its success. According to (Kriyantono 2017) consumers assign meaning to products based on emotions, beliefs, and symbolism, a concept known as *customer internal meaning*. In an interview, Sutayogi, the owner of Padmaning Garden, stated that many customers purchase ornamental plants not only for their aesthetic value but also due to their symbolic significance.

Table 2. Customer's Purchasing Reason

Reason for Purchasing Ornamental Plants	Percentage
Customers who buy plants for their symbolic meaning (Meaning)	46%
Customers who buy plants for their unique appearance (Aesthetic)	31%
Customers who buy plants for their functional benefits (Functionality)	23%

Source: Processed by researchers

Recognizing this consumer behavior, Padmaning Garden has decided to integrate the symbolic meanings of ornamental plants into its marketing communication strategy. This approach is implemented through Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC). In this study, the researcher begins by reviewing previous research related to and aligned with the research to be conducted. Therefore, literature references, supporting studies, and comparative studies are included to provide an initial overview of the relevant subject matter. Based on the explanation in the previous chapter, the title of this research is *The Utilization of Internal Meaning in the Marketing Communication Process at Padmaning Garden*. In line with this title, the researcher conducted a preliminary study, specifically a review of similar prior research. Several previous studies have examined similar topics.

(Kriyantono 2019), in the journal *Application of Osgood's Theory for Evaluating Internal Meaning in Co-branding Marketing Communication Strategies*, employed Osgood's Theory and a semantic differential scale to evaluate co-branding as a marketing communication strategy. This study aimed to help companies understand the significance of internal meaning in the success of co-branding, which is often overlooked. Using qualitative methods through surveys and interviews, the analysis demonstrated that a positive internal meaning strengthens synergy and brand identity. This journal is relevant as a theoretical framework for the Padmaning Garden study, particularly in understanding how internal perceptions enhance the effectiveness of marketing communication strategies. Similarly, Teguh et al. (2020), in their study *IMC in Industrial Internet of Things – Machine Vision Businesses*, analyzed the application of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) in the IIoT industry, particularly in Machine Vision. The study sought to identify how IMC assists companies in delivering consistent marketing messages across various communication channels and influencing customer perceptions. It provided guidelines for IIoT companies to integrate communication strategies to improve brand awareness, strengthen consumer relationships, and attract new customers. The main challenge was coordinating consistent

messages amid product complexity and technological advancements. Using qualitative methods through expert interviews and user surveys, the study found that coordinated IMC enhances message clarity and brand image, offering a competitive advantage in the technology industry. This journal is relevant to Padmaning Garden, as the IMC approach used in co-branding can help ensure more consistent and integrated marketing messages, similar to how the IIoT industry successfully builds strong brand perceptions in the market.

Additionally, Teguh et al. (2021), in their research *Marketing Communication for the Elderly Market*, explored effective marketing communication strategies for the elderly market segment, using a case study of Hoe Sioe Shen dental technicians. The study aimed to understand how such services could cater to the needs and preferences of elderly consumers, who exhibit distinct behaviors and responses to marketing efforts. It provided insights for businesses offering products or services to elderly consumers on how to deliver relevant and engaging marketing messages. The main issue highlighted was the lack of understanding regarding how to communicate with the elderly market, which requires a more personal and emotional approach. Through case study methods involving observations and interviews, the findings revealed that communication based on empathy, security, and trust significantly influences purchasing decisions among elderly consumers, with easily understandable communication tools playing a crucial role. This journal serves as a reference for Padmaning Garden as it underscores the importance of understanding customers' internal meaning in marketing communication strategies, enabling more effective and relevant messaging, especially in co-branding, by aligning communication with customer perceptions and needs, as observed in the elderly market. Furthermore, Lukyandari (2014), in the journal *Osgood's Theory in Internal Meaning of Co-branding Products*, sought to understand the application of Osgood's theory in internal meaning within co-branding products, particularly how internal customers perceive the collaboration between two brands in a single product. The study emphasized how internal meaning influences the effectiveness of co-branding strategies and how companies can maximize brand value through more targeted communication. The issue examined was the varying interpretations of co-branded product value among customers, often leading to failures in delivering the intended message. Involving Arema football supporters who played a direct role in marketing co-branded products, the findings provided theoretical insights into the impact of internal meaning on overall marketing communication. This journal is relevant to Padmaning Garden in developing more effective marketing strategies by considering internal meaning as a key factor for success.

Internal meaning refers to the stage between an individual receiving a stimulus and producing a response. Osgood et al. (1957), describe external stimuli obtaining an explanation and internal meaning that subsequently generates a response. This concept includes connotative meanings, which are internal and specific responses to natural stimuli. According to Littlejohn & Foss (2017), internal meaning is divided into two processes: internal stimulus teguhprocessing and internal response processing.

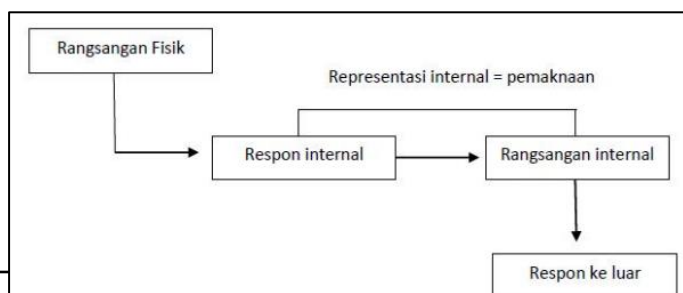


Figure 1. The flow of internal representation

Research on internal meaning employs factor analysis techniques to examine the fundamental dimensions of individual meaning-making, leading to the development of the semantic space theory, which consists of three primary dimensions: evaluation, activity, and potency. Individuals' responses are mediated by internal meaning in the human mind. Osgood's internal meaning theory explains that external stimuli undergo internal interpretation before generating an outward response. The semantic space theory outlines three key dimensions: evaluation, referring to how products are assessed in terms of clarity and uniqueness; activity, referring to how individuals derive meaning through self-expansion and satisfaction; and potency, referring to how individuals evaluate a product's potential in terms of transaction convenience, benefit convenience, and decision convenience (Vigneron and Johnson 2004)

The evaluation dimension includes *conspicuousness*, which represents attractiveness and influences how individuals perceive product improvement and assign appealing value (Gupta, Jain, and Shin 2023). The *uniqueness* dimension, as described by Gupta et al. (2023), plays a role in consumer behavior, where uniqueness contributes to enhancing a product's image through distinctive elements that attract buyers. Four uniqueness factors serve as indicators in evaluating products, as consumers expect high-quality products. The activity dimension includes *extended self*, in which social relationships shape responses to stimuli in personality development, influencing product selection based on impression and attraction (Gupta et al. 2023). Impression formation is part of self-expansion, making it a relevant indicator in measuring personal extension. Additionally, *satisfaction* serves as a measure of meaning derived from various aspects of an activity (Colwell 2008). Consumer satisfaction when purchasing a product is an applicable factor in internal meaning evaluation.

The potency dimension includes *benefit convenience*, which influences product alignment with consumer needs. According to Colwell (2008) benefits are derived from individual perceptions of a product and are used as an indicator of benefit convenience. *Decision convenience* refers to the speed with which consumers obtain information to make purchasing decisions, influenced by clear information, product usage instructions, and packaging design (Colwell 2008). Given that the research object involves ornamental plants, clarity of information is chosen as an indicator of decision-making. *Transaction convenience* refers to ease of product acquisition, including price, effort, and consumer access. Colwell (2008) states that ease of access is an essential factor influencing purchase decisions.

Internal meaning plays a crucial role in marketing communication, particularly in consumer perception formation. According to Mulyana (2015) communication rules involve understanding meaning and appropriate communication types in various situations. Individuals emphasize communication in creating meaning, which shapes different perspectives and decisions. Lukyandari (2014) explains that internal meaning mediates individual responses in the human mind, where customers interpret and assign meaning to products or services through internal stimulus and response stages. Consumer internal meaning influences brand loyalty, which is vital in marketing through branding, determining consumer attitudes toward products (Kriyantono 2019)

Marketing communication, as described by Kotler and Armstrong (2018), is a strategic component that businesses use to inform, attract, and remind customers about their products or brands. Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) plays a critical role in unifying marketing strategies and messaging consistency. Several key concepts are essential, including marketing mix, positioning, segmentation, and target audience identification (Teguh et al. 2020). IMC components include advertising, digital marketing, personal selling, sales promotion, public relations, direct marketing, and sponsorship (Kotler and Armstrong 2018). Advertising is a tool for promoting products without direct interpersonal interaction, providing essential product information to influence consumer perceptions. Digital marketing encompasses online promotional activities, leveraging platforms such as websites, social media, and online advertisements (Agusta 2019). Direct marketing involves organizations engaging directly with consumers without intermediaries, using channels like phone calls and emails (Bambang D. Prasetyo et al. 2018). Sales promotion employs short-term incentives to encourage purchases, while personal selling involves direct interaction between sales representatives and customers (Kotler and Armstrong 2018). Public relations fosters positive relationships with stakeholders, and sponsorship activities enhance brand awareness, sales, and corporate image (Chitty, Hughes, and D'Alessandro 2015).

2. Method

This study employs a quasi-qualitative approach, involving observations, interviews with relevant informants, and immersion in a specific social environment. This approach is based on the belief that different perspectives or opinions can influence changes in reality, supported by strong evidence (Bungin 2020). Therefore, this study analyzes data at multiple levels and categorizes it to aid in validity testing and the preparation of a scientific report. According to Winarni (2018) descriptive qualitative research is often used to explain events that occur either naturally or as a result of human actions. In this case, the case study method was chosen for its flexibility, allowing adjustments according to specific situations. Case studies aim to capture the complexity of one or more specific cases and differ from statistical research, which does not seek to produce generalizable results (Hyett, Kenny, and Dickson-Swift 2014).

The data sources in this study consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data is collected directly by the researcher through various data collection methods based on the research topic. The first primary data source is the owner of Padmaning Garden, who plays a role in designing marketing communication strategies and possesses in-depth knowledge of the ornamental plants sold. The next primary data source is the marketing manager, who is responsible for implementing marketing strategies and directly interacting with customers, thereby providing insights into customer responses to Padmaning Garden's marketing communication strategies. Additionally, primary data also includes consumers who have purchased ornamental plants from Padmaning Garden. These consumers serve as research informants because they have direct purchasing experiences and can provide perspectives on how they interpret customer internal meaning.

Secondary data in this study includes sales data from Padmaning Garden, which provides an overview of product performance in the market. Moreover, social media engagement is measured through user interactions such as comments, likes, shares, and follower counts to assess consumer engagement levels. Marketplace engagement data also

serves as a secondary source, including reviews, ratings, transaction numbers, and consumer interactions that reflect the level of customer engagement with the products on e-commerce platforms.

To collect data, this study utilizes semi-structured interviews, which fall under the category of in-depth interviews. Semi-structured interviews consist of open-ended questions while maintaining thematic boundaries and structured guidelines to regulate the interview flow, ensuring a deeper understanding of the research problem (Hadi, Asrori, and Rusman 2021). In addition to interviews, this study employs document analysis as a data collection method. Document analysis includes monthly sales reports from Padmaning Garden, containing information on marketing achievements and strategies implemented. Data from social media and marketplaces, such as Padmaning Garden's profile page, reviews on Tokopedia, Instagram engagement, and customer interactions on e-commerce platforms, are also used for documentation. The documentation process involves capturing photographs as evidence of the research process, which will be used to verify and interpret the research findings. Documentation data is obtained from Padmaning Garden's archives available through social media.

The data analysis in this study follows a qualitative approach. The analysis is based on the researcher's reasoning ability to interpret facts, data, and information obtained. This process is continuous from the initial data collection stage until the research is completed, aiming to uncover the meaning behind the collected data (Moleong 2021). The data analysis process begins with data collection through interviews and document analysis. During this process, the researcher records initial findings and adjusts the research focus if necessary. Once the data is collected, data reduction is carried out by selecting relevant information and categorizing it into specific themes for better organization. The reduced data is then presented in tables, diagrams, or structured narratives to facilitate further analysis.

Following data presentation, the next step is drawing conclusions based on emerging patterns or relationships within the data. These conclusions are tentative and may be revised during the analysis process. Therefore, verification is conducted to ensure that the drawn conclusions are valid and reliable. This verification involves re-examining the data and utilizing multiple sources or methods to confirm findings. Thus, the data analysis in this study follows a systematic process that includes data collection, reduction, presentation, conclusion drawing, and verification to produce accountable results.

The validity of the data in this study is ensured through source triangulation, which directs the researcher to collect data from various sources to enhance research accuracy and comprehensiveness (Sugiyono 2016). This technique helps strengthen findings by adding new perspectives from different viewpoints while using the same approach. Additionally, to ensure research reliability, an independent audit is conducted by the research supervisor, who oversees every stage of the study, from problem identification, data collection, and data analysis to validity testing (Sugiyono 2016). By implementing these procedures, this research aims to produce valid and reliable data, contributing to a better understanding of marketing communication in Padmaning Garden.

3. Results and Discussion

In the analysis of Padmaning Garden's marketing communication, it is evident that the primary strategy revolves around utilizing digital platforms to reach a broader market. The increasingly competitive ornamental plant industry drives Padmaning Garden to adopt an effective marketing communication approach to build customer trust, enhance product competitiveness, and create a positive impression in both domestic and international markets (Firmansyah 2020).

Based on interviews with the owner and marketing manager, the digital approach becomes a key aspect of their marketing strategy, particularly with the use of Facebook as the primary channel for transactions and promotion. The choice of Facebook as a marketing communication tool is not without reason. As stated by the owner of Padmaning Garden, the majority of transactions occur through this platform compared to other digital channels. Participation in international plant communities, such as Sansivera Market International, plays a crucial role in building a business network. This highlights that marketing communication is not solely based on one-way promotional activities but also involves active interaction with communities that share similar interests. Thus, Padmaning Garden utilizes social media not only as a marketing tool but also as a means to build relationships with potential customers.

In addition to Facebook, the use of marketplaces like Shopee and Tokopedia is maintained as a supporting channel to reach customers accustomed to shopping on e-commerce platforms. Although the owner mentioned that the Sindo app has not had a significant impact on business growth, Padmaning Garden's presence on various platforms remains a strategic move to ensure broader visibility. The decision to focus more on Facebook is based on the effectiveness of transactions and the lower additional costs compared to other marketplaces that charge higher commissions and taxes.



Figure 2. Padmaning Garden's Facebook

The marketing communication approach adopted by Padmaning Garden also reflects principles of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC). A key aspect of IMC is selecting relevant marketing tools, and Padmaning Garden adapts various communication channels according to customer preferences. In addition to relying on text and images as communication media, they have also started implementing video-based marketing strategies to enhance the appeal of promotional content. Videos showcasing landscaping services and

garden care have proven to be an effective tool for strengthening branding and educating customers. This strategy aligns with the growing trend in digital marketing that increasingly depends on visual content to capture the audience's attention.

Furthermore, the marketing strategy focuses not only on product promotion but also on building customer loyalty. One of the methods employed is bundling, where customers who make certain purchases receive free plants as a bonus. This approach is considered more appealing than simply offering discounts or cashback, particularly for collectors of rare plants who value additional products with exclusivity. Additionally, providing incentives to customers who make repeat purchases demonstrates that Padmaning Garden understands the importance of building long-term relationships with customers, which ultimately boosts loyalty and purchase frequency.

From the consumer's internal perspective, the marketing communication strategy implemented by Padmaning Garden provides a positive experience for customers. As one of the customers mentioned, the consistency between product photos and the actual items received is a crucial factor in building trust in the brand. Transparency in product presentation on social media and marketplaces gives customers a sense of security when making transactions, which in turn strengthens Padmaning Garden's image as a reliable business.

Overall, this analysis shows that the marketing communication employed by Padmaning Garden adopts an integrated, customer-oriented approach, based on the most effective digital platforms for reaching a wide audience. This strategy not only helps increase sales volume but also fosters closer relationships with customers through more personal and transparent interactions. By continuously developing adaptive communication strategies, Padmaning Garden has the potential to further expand its business reach, both locally and internationally. This approach, which prioritizes direct and personal communication, not only enhances customer trust but also strengthens Padmaning Garden's brand positioning in the ornamental plant market. Padmaning Garden implements a personal selling strategy by directly interacting with customers, both online and in person. The owner's honesty, friendliness, and trustworthiness are key factors that make customers feel comfortable in communication.

From the marketing manager's perspective, this personal selling strategy is applied more systematically to ensure its effectiveness in increasing sales and building brand image. The marketing manager is responsible for designing a communication approach that suits the characteristics of both new and existing customers. One implementation of this strategy is providing product recommendations that align with customer needs and addressing complaints or issues they may encounter with appropriate solutions. Additionally, the marketing manager ensures that communication strategies are not merely transactional but also foster long-term relationships with customers. This is achieved through a consultative approach, where customers are not only provided with product information but also given guidance on selecting plants that best suit their environment or preferences.

Beyond face-to-face communication, Padmaning Garden also optimizes personal selling strategies through online interactions, particularly via digital platforms such as WhatsApp and Facebook. The owner and marketing team actively respond to customer inquiries, provide suitable plant recommendations, and build more personal relationships through direct messaging. With the combined approach from both the owner and marketing manager, Padmaning Garden's personal selling strategy focuses not only on increasing sales

but also on establishing long-term customer relationships. This approach ensures that every interaction is not only commercially valuable but also creates a more personalized and meaningful shopping experience for customers. As a result, customers not only return for repeat purchases but also recommend Padmaning Garden to others, further strengthening the brand's position in the ornamental plant market.

In addition to Facebook and WhatsApp as the primary channels for customer interaction, Padmaning Garden also adopts a direct marketing strategy by leveraging its newly relocated offline store. With this new location, they reorganize the plant layout to make it easier for customers to find what they are looking for. Plants are grouped by type to simplify the search process and enhance the shopping experience. Overall, the combination of personal selling and direct marketing strategies implemented by Padmaning Garden proves effective in building long-term customer relationships and increasing trust in their products. By consistently updating customers on new products and maintaining personal relationships through direct messages, Padmaning Garden successfully fosters closer communication with its customers. This approach not only boosts customer engagement but also strengthens their loyalty to Padmaning Garden.

Consumer internalization in marketing communication refers to how customers process information, assign meaning to received messages, and ultimately form perceptions of a product or brand. In the context of Padmaning Garden, customers receive stimuli through marketing messages delivered via various communication channels such as WhatsApp, Facebook, and online marketplaces. These messages include product descriptions, guarantees, customer testimonials, and a personal approach to providing information about plant benefits and care. After receiving these stimuli, customers engage in internal interpretation, considering aesthetic aspects, functional value, and their previous purchasing experiences.

One of the key factors influencing consumer internalization is their direct experience with the product. Many customers express satisfaction as the plants they receive meet their expectations. This indicates that transparent and honest marketing communication can reinforce positive perceptions of the product. When evaluating the intrinsic value of plant ownership, Padmaning Garden customers perceive plants not just as decorations but as personally meaningful and distinctive items. To enhance customer trust, Padmaning Garden's owner also emphasizes the guarantee policy as an added value. This guarantee reassures customers when purchasing, especially since plants are fragile products that may be damaged during shipping. Furthermore, the digital marketing strategy ensures that product information is well-conveyed. The marketing manager of Padmaning Garden highlights the importance of transparency in online marketing by displaying high-quality photos and detailed descriptions.



Figure 3. *Sansiviera banana*

Padmaning Garden also provides catalogs and videos showcasing landscape and garden maintenance services, offering a more informative and engaging shopping experience for potential customers. In addition to emphasizing quality and transparency in marketing, uniqueness is also a crucial factor in attracting customers to Padmaning Garden's products. Customers tend to choose plants with distinctive characteristics that reflect their identity. To meet this demand, Padmaning Garden introduces uniqueness by applying special treatments to plants before selling them. Some edible plants are sold in bonsai form, while ornamental plants come in ceramic pots to enhance their aesthetic and exclusive value. Additionally, they use special planting media such as Bromo sand and pumice, which are rarely used by other sellers, to add to the product's aesthetic and exclusivity. Their marketing strategy also includes a personalized approach, where customers receive education about plants and are kept informed about the latest trends. Through this approach, Padmaning Garden not only attracts new customers but also retains their loyalty by providing a more exclusive and personal experience.

For Padmaning Garden customers, plants are not merely decorative elements but also represent lifestyle and personal identity. The beauty and tranquility offered by plants provide emotional satisfaction and enhance quality of life. Padmaning Garden understands that plants hold more than just aesthetic value and strives to offer products that align with trends and specific moments. For instance, during Valentine's Day, trailing plants like *Scindapsus* become customer favorites as they symbolize love. With this approach, Padmaning Garden does not just sell plants but also provides emotional and symbolic value, making its products more appealing to consumers. Beyond emotional value, Padmaning Garden ensures customer satisfaction by offering high-quality service tailored to customer needs. The owner of Padmaning Garden emphasizes that they provide a three-month warranty for plants priced above one million rupiahs, giving customers peace of mind if any issues arise with their purchases. Additionally, for customers purchasing in bulk for cultivation purposes, Padmaning Garden offers marketing assistance to help resell their cultivated plants. In terms of shipping, they ensure secure packaging, especially for exports, so that plants arrive in the best condition. They also conduct post-purchase follow-ups to check on plant conditions and provide solutions if any issues arise. If damage occurs during shipping, they even offer refunds or plant replacements. Through these efforts, Padmaning Garden successfully creates a positive and satisfying purchasing experience for customers, strengthening their loyalty to the brand.

In addition to the ease of obtaining quality plants, the clarity of information is also a crucial factor that makes customers feel comfortable when transacting with Padmaning Garden. Before making a purchase, customers are provided with detailed information about plant types, prices, and care instructions. The owner of Padmaning Garden even offers special explanations for beginner customers regarding the ideal soil composition. This transparency helps customers make more informed decisions before purchasing, increasing their trust in the store and the products offered. To ensure that customers receive clear information, Padmaning Garden also provides photos and videos that show the condition of the plants in detail before the transaction. This approach not only enhances customer convenience in shopping but also strengthens their confidence in the quality of the products offered. For

collectors or customers seeking rare plants, Padmaning Garden even facilitates in-depth discussions about the future price prospects of certain plants. By providing clear information, customers can make purchasing decisions with greater confidence and assurance about the quality of the plants they buy.

Overall, a combination of fair pricing, superior product quality, transparency of information, and ease of access to consultation services makes Padmaning Garden the top choice for customers seeking a more practical, trustworthy, and valuable plant shopping experience. The ease of making decisions when purchasing plants significantly impacts customer experience at Padmaning Garden. Many customers choose plants that match their lifestyle and are easy to maintain to minimize care efforts. To ensure that customers can properly care for their plants, Padmaning Garden provides clear guidelines on the ideal soil composition. The owner of Padmaning Garden specifically explains the appropriate soil mixture ratios for both beginner and experienced customers. For experienced customers looking to accelerate plant growth, Padmaning Garden also offers soil media with high microbial content to enhance plant development. Additionally, they educate customers on the benefits of plants, such as *Sansevieria*, which is known for its ability to absorb air pollution and its significance in Feng Shui for certain customers. Through this education, Padmaning Garden helps customers select plants that align with their needs and lifestyle while ensuring that maintenance is easy and optimal.

Aside from the ease of plant care, product packaging is also a key factor in customers' purchasing decisions. Customers have noted that the packaging used by Padmaning Garden is sufficient to ensure plants arrive in healthy condition, although there are occasional challenges related to shipping duration. To maintain plant safety during delivery, especially for exports, Padmaning Garden does not use soil as a planting medium but instead replaces it with fermented moss enriched with vitamins to keep the plants moist during transit. For domestic shipments, they use Bromo sand or pumice as an additional element to keep the plants stable and visually appealing. Through this packaging strategy, Padmaning Garden ensures that plant quality remains intact and that they arrive in the best condition possible. While challenges regarding shipping time persist, they remain committed to maintaining plant quality through optimal packaging methods to ensure hydration and protection during transit.



Figure 4. Packaging Process

Overall, the combination of ease in selecting and maintaining plants and secure packaging makes the shopping experience at Padmaning Garden increasingly comfortable for

customers. With clear information, supportive soil media for optimal growth, and secure packaging, customers can feel more confident in purchasing and maintaining the plants they choose. From a transaction convenience perspective, customers feel comfortable with the purchasing process at Padmaning Garden, whether in person or through plant sales applications. Flexible payment options and good communication with the seller make the shopping experience easier and more enjoyable. Padmaning Garden offers various transaction conveniences for both domestic and international customers. Customers who trust the store's reputation make payments via direct transfer, while those who seek additional security are provided with the option of using PayPal as a third-party intermediary. The transparency of information regarding the store profile, address, and clear bank account details further enhances customers' sense of security when making transactions. In addition to flexible payment methods, Padmaning Garden also accommodates special orders based on customers' desired plant lists. This ensures that every purchase proceeds smoothly and aligns with the buyer's needs. Through this approach, customers not only acquire the plants they desire but also feel more connected to the service provided.

Padmaning Garden employs a marketing communication strategy based on transparency and responsive customer service. The information provided to customers before purchase, including plant conditions and care methods, helps them build realistic expectations. Furthermore, a flexible warranty policy provides peace of mind and increases customer trust in the brand. This trust plays a crucial role in building loyalty. When customers feel assured that they will receive quality products and excellent after-sales support, they are more likely to make repeat purchases. The utilization of marketing communication is an essential factor in shaping customers' internal perception of the brand. Padmaning Garden uses WhatsApp, Facebook, and online marketplaces to reach customers, provide product information, and build more personal interactions.

Based on the analyzed data, the internal perception of customers is integrated into Padmaning Garden's marketing communication process. The marketing strategy encompasses evaluation, activity, and potential. In the evaluation stage, customers assess a product or service before making a purchase decision. Brand clarity and product presence in the market are influenced by marketing communication strategies such as advertising, digital marketing, public relations, and sales promotions. Product uniqueness is emphasized through direct marketing, personal selling, and brand differentiation. In the activity stage, customers begin interacting with the brand through various engagements that shape their experiences. The products or services customers use become part of their identity. To support this aspect, customer relationship management (CRM), direct marketing, and experiential marketing strategies are used to create a more personalized experience.

Customer satisfaction is a crucial factor in building brand loyalty. Strategies employed include CRM, service marketing, and direct marketing. With responsive customer service, after-sales consultation, and direct interactions through private messages, the company ensures that customers feel valued and satisfied with the products or services they receive (Maylina et al. n.d.). In the potential stage, the company seeks to simplify the decision-making and transaction process for customers. Benefit convenience relates to how easily customers can understand a product's advantages. Decision convenience involves clear information, product usability, and packaging. Transaction convenience focuses on how the company can facilitate customer transactions. Through an integrated approach across various marketing strategies, Padmaning Garden can build stronger relationships with customers, enhance their

satisfaction, and create a more comfortable and enjoyable transaction experience. This approach not only helps increase brand awareness and sales but also plays a crucial role in fostering long-term customer loyalty (Triwahyuni and Zuhroh 2020).

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis conducted, the internal meaning that consumers associate with Padmaning Garden is shaped through various aspects that reflect the interaction between customers and the brand. Factors such as effective communication, clarity in delivering marketing information, consistent product quality, and responsive after-sales service play a significant role in building a positive customer experience. Customers do not only view ornamental plants as physical products but also as part of an emotional journey and attachment to the brand.

Through a marketing communication strategy focused on deeply understanding customer needs and expectations, Padmaning Garden has been able to create a strong perception in the minds of consumers. This contributes to building long-term relationships based on trust, enhancing customer loyalty, and strengthening the brand image of Padmaning Garden as a highly credible ornamental plant seller.

Understanding the internal meaning of consumers is a fundamental aspect in designing more relevant and personalized communication strategies. By understanding how customers perceive the products and services offered, Padmaning Garden can design marketing messages that align more closely with the values and preferences of its customers. Moreover, this approach allows Padmaning Garden to maintain a competitive edge in the increasingly competitive ornamental plant industry and ensure the sustainability of long-term relationships with customers.

To reach a broader audience, the use of digital platforms such as Instagram and TikTok could be further enhanced. Short video content about plant care, decoration tips, and plant trends could attract attention and increase customer engagement. Additionally, offering membership or loyalty programs could be an effective strategy. Loyal customers can be given special discounts, early access to rare plant collections, or free consultations as a form of appreciation. Optimizing paid ads on social media and Google Ads could be a powerful marketing strategy to expand reach and attract more potential customers.

Future research could focus more on in-depth customer satisfaction analysis. Additional surveys could help understand the key factors influencing purchasing decisions and identify areas for improvement based on customer feedback. Moreover, exploring market trends and preferences is also essential. Studies on popular ornamental plants in both local and international markets can help the business stay relevant. Research could also examine customer preferences related to plant types, sizes, colors, and the functional benefits they seek.

From a marketing perspective, studying the effectiveness of digital strategies could provide insights into how online marketing influences sales and customer

loyalty. Analyzing various digital platforms can also help determine which ones are most effective in attracting and retaining customers.

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