



**BRANDING ANALYSIS OF CULINARY BUSINESS IN THE DIGITAL ERA
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Abstract

The digital transformation has fundamentally changed the landscape of culinary business branding. However, the evolving practices often overlook Islamic ethical principles, such as dishonesty in promotions, review manipulation, and psychological exploitation of consumers. This research aims to analyze culinary business branding in the digital era from the perspective of Sharia Economic Law. The research method used is a literature review with a qualitative approach, drawing from books, international and national scientific journal articles, as well as research reports published between 2020 and 2025. The research findings show that digital branding has transformed into a collaborative process between brands and consumers through various digital platforms, where reputations are built participatively. Sharia Economic Law principles such as justice, honesty, transparency, and prohibitions on gharar, maysir, riba, and tadbis should form the ethical foundation for all digital branding practices. Analysis of endorsement strategies, reviews, social media advertising, flash sales, and viral marketing reveals that many practices potentially involve elements of dishonesty and lack of transparency prohibited by Sharia. The implementation of Sharia branding faces multidimensional



challenges, including limited understanding among business practitioners, technological disparities, high compliance costs, and competitive pressures. This research concludes that Sharia branding is a holistic commitment to integrating spiritual values into brand management to realize benefits and blessings. Implementation of the research findings includes credible halal certification, the application of honesty and transparency in digital marketing, responsible management of consumer interactions, and collaboration with stakeholders to build a culinary digital branding ecosystem compliant with Sharia principles.

Keywords: Digital Branding, Culinary Business, Sharia Economic Law, Islamic Business Ethics, Halal Marketing

INTRODUCTION

The digital transformation has infiltrated every aspect of global society, creating a new landscape in social interactions, consumption patterns, and business dynamics like never before. The escalating development of information and communication technology has altered how humans communicate, transact, and build relationships, including within the culinary business sector, which has become one of the most dynamic in responding to the changing times. Ambak et al. (2025) explain that the halal economy is undergoing rapid digital transformation, where Muslim consumer loyalty is now shaped not only by product attributes alone but also by dynamic interactions between institutional trust, perceived values, and digital engagement. This paradigm shift demands a new understanding of how culinary brands are constructed and communicated in the interconnected digital age.

The phenomenon of branding in the culinary business context has undergone a fundamental evolution, no longer merely about naming, logos, or attractive packaging, but has evolved into a complex process of shaping perceptions, experiences, and ongoing emotional relationships between brands and consumers through various digital channels. A report from the State of the Global Islamic Economy using Statista data (2021) reveals that 68 percent of Muslims aged 18 to 34 use social media every day, making this demographic a key audience for businesses and influencers targeting halal-conscious consumers (ICHalal, 2025). This data underscores that the young Muslim generation, the largest potential consumers of culinary products, spends the



majority of their time in digital spaces, making a brand's presence on digital platforms an undeniable necessity.

Social media has become a transformative force in shaping the global halal consumption culture, where platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok play a crucial role in defining what it means to lead a halal lifestyle. ICHalal (2025) identifies that trends in halal food, modest fashion, and religious practices are now widely promoted and shaped by influencers and online communities that have a significant influence on the preferences and decisions of Muslim consumers worldwide. This phenomenon indicates that the branding of culinary businesses cannot be separated from the dynamics of social media, where brand reputations are collaboratively built between business owners, influencers, and consumer communities that share experiences and recommendations.

The economic potential of the halal sector, including culinary businesses, shows very promising figures and continues to experience significant growth year on year. Data from the State of the Global Islamic Economy Report 2022 shows that the global halal economy is estimated to reach 3.2 trillion US dollars in 2024, driven by sectors such as food, fashion, pharmaceuticals, and tourism (ICHalal, 2025). This staggering figure reflects the vast market that culinary entrepreneurs can leverage, especially if they can build a branding that is not only visually appealing but also in line with the values and principles held by Muslim consumers.

The global halal food market's growth indicates an increasingly positive trend in line with the rising consumer awareness of the importance of halal aspects in the products they consume. A strategic collaboration between the Department of Business Development Thailand, Central Islamic Council of Thailand, and LINE MAN Wongnai in September 2025 revealed that in 2024, the global Muslim population had exceeded 1.907 billion people or 23.5 percent of the world's population, and is estimated to surpass 2.761 billion by 2050 (CICOT, 2025). The global halal food market is projected to grow steadily, surpassing 2 trillion U.S. dollars in 2025 and reaching 3 trillion U.S. dollars in the coming years, reflecting that the halal business is a burgeoning industry that should be leveraged by entrepreneurs.

An intriguing phenomenon in culinary branding development in the digital age is the increasing importance of visual power and storytelling in establishing emotional connections with consumers. The Public Broadcasting Institution RRI (2025) observed that contemporary consumers, especially



millennials and Gen Z, not only pay attention to taste but also to how food is packaged, presented, and narrated. Culinary branding is now heavily influenced by visual strength, where visual identities such as logos, colors, packaging designs, and social media account appearances need to be consistently and attractively designed to create a strong first impression and differentiate products from competitors. Honest, touching, or even humorous brand stories can forge emotional closeness between the brand and customers, as people nowadays enjoy purchasing from brands that have a soul and values relevant to their lives.

Innovation in technology is enriching the ways culinary entrepreneurs build branding and introduce their products to the wider community. Recently, the Community Service Team of Sriwijaya University launched an interactive digital catalog based on Augmented Reality (AR) to strengthen the identity of traditional culinary MSMEs in Palembang, designed to enhance brand recall, brand recognition, and brand awareness of local products (RRI South Sumatra, 2025). Innovations like this demonstrate that branding in the digital age is not only about social media content but also about leveraging cutting-edge technology to create interactive experiences that make products more easily recognizable and memorable, both at the local and national levels.

Digital platforms such as social media, marketplaces, and food delivery apps have become the primary arena for culinary businesses to build and communicate their brands to a broader audience. Indonesia Computer University (2025), through its INBISKOM program, illustrates how traditional culinary businesses like Mie Bakso Solo Mas Galing, which have been established for over three decades but managed in a traditional manner, and hence less adaptive to technological advancements, are driven to learn digital marketing and branding. This includes partnerships with platforms like GoFood, ShopeeFood, and GrabFood to expand their market reach. This case reflects the challenges faced by many traditional culinary businesses in transitioning to the digital era, where digital branding and marketing are essential components to remain relevant and competitive.

In the midst of the rapid adoption of digital branding strategies by culinary businesses, various ethical issues have emerged that are concerning and require serious attention from various parties. Azuha (2025), in her research on the implementation of Sharia compliance in digital marketing for MSMEs in Sidoarjo, revealed that the increasing use of digital marketing by MSMEs indicates a positive adaptation to technological advancements. However, behind this progress, there have been ethical issues that necessitate the application of



Sharia Compliant Marketing principles. These ethical issues include practices such as dishonesty in promotions, manipulation of product information, psychological exploitation of consumers, and transactional ambiguity conflicting with Islamic values.

Endorsement practices and collaborations with influencers, commonly utilized in digital culinary branding, also entail potential ethical issues that need to be evaluated from a Sharia perspective. Fauziah (2025), in her analysis of the digital marketing innovation of Mangathat products from an Islamic marketing perspective, asserts that digital marketing strategies should be based on principles of honesty, transparency, and fairness. Promotions on social media platforms should avoid *tadlis* or deception, while marketplace transactions should adhere to valid contracts and be free from usury. These principles become even more crucial when influencers recommend products to millions of their followers, as the impact of such recommendations on consumer purchasing decisions is significant.

Islamic Economic Law as the normative basis for economic activities of Muslims encompasses a set of fundamental principles aimed at achieving welfare and preventing harm in all aspects of economic life, including in digital branding practices. According to Azis et al. (2025), in their research on optimizing digital marketing strategies to enhance the competitiveness of MSMEs in Lampung in accordance with Islamic economic law, it was found that the optimization of digital marketing strategies within the context of Sharia involves not only selecting channels and promotion techniques that are lawful and good, but also requires a profound understanding of the values held by the target Muslim market. This entails clarity in delivering information about products that are lawful, transparent, and trustworthy, which in turn can enhance the trust of Muslim consumers and strengthen business competitiveness.

The urgency of research on culinary business branding in the digital era from the perspective of Islamic Economic Law is growing in line with the increasing awareness of Muslim consumers regarding the importance of halal aspects and ethics in the products they consume. The National Seminar MUFEST 2025 organized by the Faculty of Sharia and Law, UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya, with the theme "Dialectics of Branding, Career, and Sharia Business in the Digital Transformation Era" emphasizes that the digital world demands the younger generation, especially students, to have a strong identity and be able to compete healthily in the workforce and business world while adhering to the



perspective of Islamic economic law (UINSA, 2025). The gap between the rapidly growing practices of digital branding and the principles of Sharia business ethics poses an academic and practical issue that requires serious attention. Many culinary business operators may not comprehensively understand how to build digital branding that is not only commercially effective but also compliant with Sharia requirements. Azuha (2025) emphasizes that implementing spiritual values in business activities, honesty in communication, trustworthiness, and efforts to avoid usurious and speculative practices in transactions not only strengthen business ethics and consumer trust but also contribute to the spiritual well-being of business operators characterized by increased serenity, closeness to Allah SWT, and blessings in business.

This research is important to fill the literature gap on how the principles of Sharia Economics Law can be concretely implemented in digital branding strategies for culinary businesses. Ambak et al. (2025) acknowledged that while previous studies have examined factors such as trust and values separately, few have provided an integrated framework explaining how these factors collectively influence loyalty in the online halal market. This study aims to bridge this gap by comprehensively analyzing the concepts of digital branding, principles of Sharia Economics Law, and the alignment between commonly practiced digital branding strategies and Sharia business ethics, thus providing both theoretical contributions and practical guidelines for culinary business practitioners.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The widespread digital transformation that has taken place in the past decade has brought fundamental changes to branding and marketing practices, including in the culinary industry, which is one of the most dynamic sectors in adopting digital technology. Febriani et al. (2024), in their study on strengthening branding strategies in the Cheese N Cheese cake business, explain that the development of culinary SMEs in Indonesia indicates a growing landscape characterized by resilience and innovation. The culinary sector, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises, has experienced significant growth despite global pandemic challenges, with a growing emphasis on digitization and e-commerce platforms enabling SMEs to quickly adapt to meet the evolving consumer demands. The concept of digital branding in the culinary industry cannot be separated from efforts to build consumer trust, which forms the primary foundation for brand loyalty in the digital era. Octaviani et al. (2025), in their article on quality content publication as a tool to reinforce



consumer trust, affirm that digital platforms and content creators play a vital role in the success of growing businesses, especially in the culinary sector. The utilization of social media allows small businesses to strengthen branding and build consumer trust through quality and relevant content.

"The dynamic of digital branding involving two-way interaction between brands and consumers through social media has created a new ecosystem where brand reputation is collaboratively and participatively built. Alif et al. (2024) in their community engagement report on digital branding training for catering SMEs in Ngampel Sari Village revealed that SME practitioners still using conventional marketing approaches face various challenges, highlighting the need for training and mentoring on the importance of brand awareness and brand identity to enhance the quality of their products. The advancement of digital technology has also given rise to innovative marketing strategies such as live streaming, enabling real-time interaction between sellers and buyers, yet on the other hand, ethical issues emerging from a Sharia perspective need to be evaluated. Farma and Umuri (2025) in their conceptual analysis of marketing strategies through live streaming on social media from the perspective of Islamic business ethics identified that while live streaming is effective in enhancing consumer engagement and sales conversion, this practice often raises ethical concerns such as overclaiming, non-transparent endorsements, and emotional manipulation conflicting with Sharia principles such as *sidq* (honesty), *'adl* (justice), and *amanah* (responsibility).

Compliance with Sharia principles in digital branding practices is becoming increasingly crucial as Muslim consumers' awareness of the importance of halal aspects and ethics in the products they consume grows. Fadila and Maretta (2025) assert in their research on online trading and digital marketing based on Islamic principles that online trading in Islam is deemed valid if it fulfills conditions such as the clarity of goods, offer and acceptance, and does not contain prohibited elements such as usury and ambiguity. Digital marketing provides significant opportunities for Sharia business development due to its wide reach, cost efficiency, and increased consumer trust. Ambak et al. (2025), in their conceptual article on the drivers of Muslim consumer loyalty in the digital era, propose a theoretical model explaining that the halal economy is undergoing rapid digital transformation, where Muslim consumer loyalty is shaped not only by product attributes but also by dynamic interactions between institutional trust, perceived values, and digital engagement. The framework developed based on the Commitment-Trust Theory of Relationship Marketing



highlights that trust rooted in halal certification, brand credibility, and online transparency, along with perceived values encompassing functional, emotional, social, and religious dimensions, serve as key drivers of loyalty, with digital marketing strategies acting as moderation factors that strengthen these relationships through personalized content, engagement of trusted influencers, and e-WOM mechanisms.

Rahmanda (2025) in his study on the legal perspective of Shariah economics on business ethics in online transactions on the TikTok application revealed a gap between the idealism of Shariah economics with promotional practices that show phenomena of price opacity and hyperbolic claims such as "everything for Rp2,000" and "clearance sale", which have the potential to violate the principles of honesty (shiddiq), justice ('adl), and transparency in salam contract agreements. Supriyaningsih et al. (2025) in their research on digital marketing strategies to enhance sales and empower MSMEs from the perspective of Shariah economics found that digital marketing strategies integrating Islamic economic principles such as justice, transparency, and halal certification can increase sales and empower MSMEs. Strategic actions like improving product quality to meet SNI standards, attractive packaging, utilizing marketplaces and social media, developing digital brands, and implementing halal labels have proven to be effective.

Zulkifli et al. (2025) in their comparative analysis on harmonizing Shariah principles and e-commerce regulations in Indonesia and ASEAN countries revealed that regulatory fragmentation among member states, coupled with limited supervision, impedes the effective enforcement of key Shariah prohibitions such as usury (riba), uncertainty (gharar), and opaque transactions in digital trade. This study examining policies in Indonesia, Malaysia, Brunei, and Singapore indicates that Malaysia and Brunei have developed more mature regulatory frameworks by explicitly incorporating Shariah norms, while Indonesia and Singapore face structural and technical barriers in similar integration, thus recommending the establishment of a higher ASEAN coordination body to align e-commerce regulations in accordance with Shariah.

Asih et al. (2024) in their study on Shariah-compliant digital marketing strategies to enhance the sales revenue of MSMEs in Parepare City found that prior to adopting digital marketing strategies, MSMEs experienced stagnation, decline, or inconsistent turnover due to reliance on traditional marketing methods. However, after utilizing social media for product promotion, a majority of MSMEs reported revenue increases ranging from 20 to 80 percent. From an Islamic perspective, this research highlights that MSME practitioners



conduct their businesses in line with the principle of *falah* (well-being in this world and the hereafter), emphasizing transparency, justice, and ethical practices in their marketing efforts. Thus, the adoption of Shariah-compliant digital marketing strategies not only improves sales performance but also supports sustainable and ethical business operations.

This comprehensive literature review indicates that the study of culinary business branding in the digital era from the perspective of Shariah economic law requires integration between an understanding of digital branding dynamics, Islamic business ethics principles, and critical analysis of evolving marketing practices. Febriani et al. (2024) emphasize the importance of strengthening brand identity and digital footprint, Octaviani et al. (2025) highlight the role of quality content in building trust, Alif et al. (2024) demonstrate the effectiveness of digital branding mentoring, while Farma and Umuri (2025), Fadila and Maretta (2025), Ambak et al. (2025), Rahmanda (2025), Supriyaningsih et al. (2025), Zulkifli et al. (2025), and Asih et al. (2024) consistently assert that adherence to Shariah principles such as honesty, justice, transparency, and avoidance of *riba*, *gharar*, and *tadlis* should form the basis of every digital branding practice to create a business ecosystem that is not only commercially beneficial but also brings blessings and benefits to all stakeholders.

RESEARCH METHOD

The study employed a qualitative approach using library research methodology, which is a research method that utilizes sources available in libraries, such as books, journals, articles, and other documents, to gather necessary data and information for a study. Jaya et al. (2023) explained that library research is a research method that leverages sources found in libraries to collect required data and information for a study. Typically conducted as an initial step in research, library research can be used to establish background, comprehend context, and generate ideas for further investigation. This approach was chosen due to the nature of the researched issues originating from theories and concepts developed by experts, rather than directly empirical field data, making it the most suitable method for an in-depth exploration of digital branding concepts and principles of Islamic Economic Law.

The data sources in this study consist of two main categories, namely primary data and secondary data, all of which are derived from relevant literature materials related to the research topic. In their reference book on



research methodology, Pettalongi et al. (2025) explain that a comprehensive understanding of research approaches, research design, as well as data collection and analysis techniques is a crucial foundation for the systematic, rational, and empirically testable development of knowledge. Primary data in this study comprises key literature directly addressing the concepts of digital branding in the culinary business context and the principles of Islamic Economic Law that serve as the analytical framework, including textbooks, international and national academic journal articles, as well as relevant research reports. Secondary data sources in this study encompass supporting literature that enriches analysis and provides a broader context to the issues under investigation, such as policy documents related to Islamic economics, industry publications on digital branding trends, and literature on Muslim consumer behavior in the digital era.

The data collection technique in this literature research was conducted through a documentation method, which involves tracing, gathering, and identifying relevant literature from various library sources, both in print and digital formats. Abrar (2024), in his book on qualitative research data collection techniques, explains that specifically, the book contains explanations about data collection techniques in qualitative research, accompanied by explanations related to the fundamental concepts of qualitative research, including history, definitions, advantages, and disadvantages. The data collection process was carried out systematically while considering the quality and credibility of the sources obtained, systematic meaning that all components were considered by taking into account the role of each component (Azmi et al., 2022). Jaya et al. identified key strategies and components in using literature research with tips that can help in conducting effective and efficient literature research, namely, firstly, identifying research problems and objectives clearly; secondly, seeking relevant and reliable resources such as books, journals, articles, and so on; and thirdly, analyzing, evaluating, and selecting the resources found to determine their validity and suitability (Jaya et al., 2023).

The data analysis technique employed in this study utilizes a content analysis approach, which is a systematic method of analyzing texts to identify patterns, themes, and meanings within them. Connaway and Radford (2021) emphasize that in library and information science research, data analysis encompasses principles, data collection techniques, and quantitative and qualitative analysis methods, providing instructions not only for conducting research but also guidance on critically reading and evaluating research publications, proposals, and reports. The content analysis in this study involves



carefully reading all collected literature, identifying key concepts regarding digital branding and principles of Islamic economic law, categorizing findings into specific themes, and interpreting them to build a comprehensive understanding. The analysis in this study begins with data reduction, selecting and focusing on the literature most relevant to the research topic; then it continues with presenting the data in a systematic narrative description; and it concludes with drawing conclusions and verifying findings.

In qualitative research, testing the validity of data, including literature research, is conducted to ensure that research findings can be scientifically accounted for. Jaya et al. (2023) explain that in literature research, analysis, evaluation, and selection of identified resources need to be performed to determine their validity and suitability as data sources. In this context, data validity is examined through several criteria, namely credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Data credibility is maintained by using authoritative and recognized sources in the field, such as books from leading academic publishers and journal articles from reputable databases. Transferability, or the transfer of findings to other contexts, is sought by providing rich and in-depth descriptions of the research context, enabling readers to assess the extent to which findings can be applied in other situations. Mahat et al. (2025) emphasize the importance of ensuring data quality by focusing on crucial aspects such as ensuring data accuracy, minimizing bias, validating data, and addressing common challenges encountered in the field.

Dependability, or the consistency of research findings, is maintained by systematically documenting the entire research process, from literature review and source selection to analysis and drawing conclusions. Connaway and Radford (2021) stress that in library and information science research, experts provide advice, tips, and strategies for completing research projects, dissertations, and theses; grant writing; overcoming writing barriers; collaborating with colleagues; and working with external consultants. This careful documentation enables other researchers to audit the research process and assess the consistency of the findings produced. Confirmability, or the objectivity of findings, is ensured by ensuring that the conclusions drawn are truly based on the collected data, not on the researcher's subjectivity or bias. Pettalongi et al. (2025) explain that scientific research forms the foundation of systematic, rational, and empirically testable knowledge development, demanding the ability to conduct research accurately and responsibly.



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Concept of Culinary Business Branding in the Digital Era: Between Identity and Reputation

In the context of the culinary business, branding has undergone a fundamental transformation alongside the deepening penetration of digital technology into all aspects of people's lives. The concept of branding is no longer simply understood as naming or placing a logo on a product, but has evolved into a complex process involving the formation of perception, experience, and emotional connections between consumers and a brand through various digital channels. Hussain et al. (2025) explain that the latest innovations in culinary marketing indicate a paradigm shift from the traditional product-focused approach towards a digital approach that places consumer experience at the center of all branding strategies, with technology serving as the primary mediator in the interaction between the brand and consumers.

Elements of branding such as name, logo, and packaging still play crucial roles, but their functions have broadened to serve as gateways for consumers to enter the digital ecosystem built by a culinary brand. Kirana (2022) asserts that in the digital age, a brand is no longer solely about the visual or verbal elements created by a company, but more about the perception held by consumers when they hear or think about a company's name, services, or specific products, with this perception being shaped through ongoing interactions across various digital platforms. Digital media enhances the interconnectedness between brand, people, and things, turning digital platforms into the primary instruments in effectively building a brand in the contemporary era.

The brand story has become an increasingly critical element in the digital branding of culinary businesses, as through authentic and engaging narratives, a brand can differentiate itself from competitors offering similar products. Maulana et al. (2023) revealed that strengthening branding strategies for micro and small culinary businesses through online media requires an approach that focuses not only on product promotion but also on building a brand narrative that resonates emotionally and culturally with consumers. Digital platforms like social media, websites, and food delivery apps serve as spaces where brand stories are communicated, tested, and continuously negotiated with audiences.

The use of social media in culinary branding has created a new dynamic where brand reputation is collaboratively built between business owners and consumers. Saifudin et al. (2025) stated that in the context of modern marketing communication, social media functions as a public sphere where brand identities are not only displayed but also shaped through interactions, reviews,



and the sharing of experiences among users. This phenomenon renders brand reputation fluid and ever-changing, responsive to every digital interaction that occurs, whether originating from brand owner initiatives or organic conversations among consumers.

Other digital platforms such as review sites, culinary forums, and location-based apps also play a significant role in shaping consumer perceptions of a culinary brand. Indiharwati (2025a) emphasized that the digitalization of halal product management has had broad implications on how consumers evaluate and select culinary brands, where information about products, production processes, and the values upheld by brands can be transparently accessed through various digital channels. This condition demands culinary business operators to focus not only on product quality but also on the consistency of delivering brand values across all digital touchpoints with consumers.

The brand identity in the digital era is no longer solely controlled by the business owner but is the result of continuous negotiation between what the brand communicates and how consumers perceive and discuss the brand in the digital space. Ismail (2024) explains that in the halal culinary creative industry, forming a brand identity requires a strategy that considers not only the creativity aspects of the business but also ethical and spiritual values because consumers are increasingly critical in evaluating the alignment between brand claims and the realities they experience. Digitization accelerates this evaluation process and makes the consequences of brand inconsistency more quickly apparent.

Reputation, as the culmination of consumer perceptions regarding a brand's consistency in fulfilling its promises, is a highly valuable asset yet also vulnerable in the digital era. Melinda and Salsabilah (2025) posit that in the digital financial ecosystem, including those serving the real sector such as culinary, public trust is the primary foundation that must be built through transparency and consistency. The culinary brand reputation in the digital age is constructed through thousands of small interactions that occur every day, ranging from responses to customer reviews to the documented and shared product quality consistency on social media.

Viral marketing is a distinctive characteristic of digital branding that can exponentially build reputation in a short time but also carries the risk of reputation destruction just as quickly. Nurani (2024) observes that in the culinary business context, especially targeting the millennial generation, brand



aesthetics and innovation in presentation are key attraction factors, but the sustainability of success heavily depends on the consistency between visual appeal and product substance. Brands with visually appealing elements unsupported by adequate product quality tend to experience short-term success followed by reputation decline and ultimately business failure.

The increasing interconnectedness between brands and consumers in the digital era has transformed the way brand values are communicated and internalized. Indiharwati (2025b) emphasizes that in the digital market, the establishment of a strong brand identity requires a profound understanding of the ethics and values held by consumers, as the transparency facilitated by digital technology enables consumers to easily verify brand claims. In the context of the culinary industry, a brand identity built on authentic and consistent values foundation will be more resilient in the rapidly changing digital market dynamics.

The evolution of branding in the digital era is also characterized by the blurring boundaries between producers and consumers in the brand meaning formation process. Melinda and Salsabilah (2025) add that active consumer participation in the digital ecosystem through various interactive features allows for the co-creation of brand values. Reviews, product photo uploads, recommendations, and even criticisms shared by consumers in the digital space influence public perceptions of a culinary brand, prompting business owners to view consumers as partners in reputation building rather than mere marketing targets.

Thus, the concept of branding in the culinary business in the digital era is a synthesis of traditional elements that shape brand identity with the dynamics of digital interactions that collaboratively create reputations. Hussain et al. (2025) conclude that culinary marketing in the digital era is characterized by current trends and innovations that place technology as the primary facilitator in building more personal, interactive, and sustainable relationships between brands and consumers. Success in branding in the digital era is no longer solely measured by brand recognition but also by the quality of relationships established and the level of trust built with consumer communities.

Principles of Islamic Economic Law in Business Practices and Digital Marketing

Hukum Ekonomi Syariah serves as the normative foundation for economic activities conducted by Muslims, encompassing a set of fundamental principles derived from the Qur'an, Sunnah, and the scholars' ijtihad. The



objective is to promote well-being and prevent harm in all economic aspects. Saifudin et al. (2025) explain that the concept of Islamic branding is built upon Sharia principles, fundamentally distinguishing it from conventional branding by integrating spiritual values and ethics into marketing strategies as integral components, rather than mere additions to attract Muslim consumers. These principles not only regulate transactional aspects but also extend to broader dimensions, including how a brand is communicated and perceived by society.

The principle of justice, or al-'adl, holds a central position in Sharia Economic Law, mandating that every business entity act justly in all its operations, including in digital marketing practices. Indiharwati (2025b) elaborates that in the digital market, the implementation of Islamic business ethics demands justice in every transaction, reflected in clear contracts, accuracy in measurement and standards, and equal treatment of all consumers without discrimination. Justice in digital marketing also entails providing comprehensive and accurate information about products, enabling consumers to make decisions based on a correct understanding of what they will receive.

The principle of honesty, or ash-shidq, stands as a vital cornerstone in every Sharia-compliant business activity, as honesty is viewed as a reflection of a Muslim's faith and integrity in transactions. Ismail (2024) asserts that developing the halal culinary creative industry within the framework of Maqashid Sharia requires a commitment to honesty throughout the production and marketing chain, starting from transparency in the raw materials used to processing procedures, and to the claims conveyed to consumers. Honesty in digital marketing is increasingly crucial as inaccurate information can spread rapidly and lead to widespread losses.

Transparency or al-bayan has become an increasingly relevant principle in the digital era, considering the characteristics of digital media that enable the rapid and widespread dissemination of information but also open up space for manipulation and ambiguity. Melinda and Salsabilah (2025) argued that Sharia fintech, as part of the digital ecosystem, is built on a foundation of transparency that allows all parties involved in transactions to access the same and clear information about their rights and obligations. In the context of digital marketing, transparency means openly disclosing all material information about products, including their strengths and weaknesses, so that consumers can make objective evaluations.

The prohibition of gharar or ambiguity and uncertainty in transactions is one of the most fundamental principles in Islamic Economic Law with wide



implications for digital marketing practices. Hussain et al. (2025) identified that innovations in digital food marketing must consider the aspect of information clarity as gharar can manifest in various forms, such as unclear product specifications, manipulation of product photos, or uncertainty in delivery time and method. Digital marketing that employs techniques creating false perceptions or unrealistic expectations in consumers can be categorized as prohibited gharar.

The prohibition of maysir or gambling and speculation also holds relevance for digital marketing practices, particularly in the context of promotions using elements of uncertainty and chance. Indiharwati (2025b) explains that Islamic business ethics forbid practices containing excessive speculation or relying solely on luck without being based on effort and transaction clarity. In digital marketing, promotions utilizing mechanisms such as unclear prize draws or contests with non-transparent rules can border on the forbidden territory of maysir.

The prohibition of usury or interest in all its forms has become a distinctive principle that sharply differentiates the Shariah economic system from the conventional system, with implications for digital marketing practices, especially those involving payment and credit schemes. Nurani (2024) observes that the awareness of the millennial generation regarding halal products extends not only to the material and production processes but also encompasses financial and transactional aspects, including reluctance towards practices involving usury. Digital marketing offering payment schemes with interest or cumulative late fees needs to be evaluated from a Shariah perspective.

The prohibition of tadbis or deception and quality misrepresentation emerges as a highly relevant principle in digital marketing practices, given the characteristics of digital media that allow sophisticated information manipulation. Saifudin et al. (2025) emphasize that Islamic branding demands total honesty in conveying product information, including details of raw materials, production processes, and offered quality. Tadbis in digital marketing can manifest in various forms, ranging from excessively edited product photos, unsubstantiated quality claims, to concealing vital product information.

The principle of maslahah or public interest serves as the ultimate goal of all Shariah Economic Law provisions, aiming for economic activities to benefit not only business entities but also the wider community. Ismail (2024) explains that the development of halal culinary industries from the Maqasid Shariah perspective aims to realize public interest, encompassing the protection of religion, life, intellect, lineage, and wealth. Shariah-compliant digital marketing



should contribute to this public interest, such as promoting healthy consumption patterns, avoiding consumer psychological exploitation, and supporting environmental sustainability.

The principle of responsibility or *al-mas'uliyah* demands that every business actor be accountable not only legally but also morally for the impacts of their business activities. Melinda and Salsabilah (2025) assert that in the digital ecosystem, the responsibility of business actors extends to consumer data protection, transaction security, and the social impacts of the marketing content they produce. This responsibility also encompasses environmental aspects, such as eco-friendly product packaging and responsible waste management.

The principle of responsible transactional freedom or *hurriyyah at-ta'aqud* provides space for innovation and creativity in business as long as it does not violate Sharia provisions. Hussain et al. (2025) note that innovation in digital culinary marketing can thrive rapidly within the Sharia framework as long as it does not violate fundamental principles such as justice, honesty, and clarity. This freedom offers flexibility for culinary business actors to develop creative branding strategies while remaining within the ethical boundaries of Islam.

The principle of mutual assistance in goodness or *at-ta'awun 'ala al-birr wa at-taqwa* requires that business activities are not only profit-oriented but also focused on making a positive contribution to society. Indiharwati (2025a) explains that halal product management from a Sharia perspective should not only focus on formal compliance but also on contributing to the general welfare of society. In digital marketing, this principle can be realized through campaigns that support positive values, empower local communities, and engage in sustainable business practices.

The principle of halal in all aspects of business serves as the key differentiator between the Islamic economic system and others, demanding not only halal products but also the manner in which they are obtained and marketed. Saifudin et al. (2025) assert that Islamic branding entails a commitment to halal throughout the value chain, ranging from sourcing raw materials, production processes, distribution, to promotion and sales. Halal in digital marketing implies employing Sharia-compliant methods to attract consumer attention, such as avoiding exploitation of sensuality, dishonesty, or psychological manipulation.

The principle of universality or *syumuliyah* makes Islamic Economic Law a comprehensive system that encompasses all aspects of economic life, not



limited to mere ritual or ceremonial transactions. Kirana (2022) observes that branding through digital media in the contemporary era requires a holistic approach that considers all aspects of brand-consumer interactions. Within the framework of Sharia, this universality means that Islamic ethical principles must be consistently applied at every digital touchpoint between the brand and consumers.

Analysis of the Suitability of Digital Culinary Branding Strategy with Sharia Business Ethics

Various and continuously evolving digital branding strategies are being implemented by culinary businesses in the digital era, in line with technological innovations and changes in consumer behavior. However, not all of these strategies automatically align with the principles of Sharia business ethics. Hussain et al. (2025) identified that innovative trends in food marketing and consumption encompass diverse digital techniques such as social media marketing, collaboration with influencers, the use of blockchain technology for verification, and the utilization of artificial intelligence in understanding consumer behavior. Analyzing these strategies from the perspective of Sharia Economic Law is crucial to ensure that digital branding practices are not only commercially effective but also ethically religiously sound.

Endorsement strategies and collaborations with influencers have become one of the most popular digital branding techniques among culinary businesses, given their ability to reach audiences in a more personal and trustworthy manner. Indiharwati (2025b) explained that from the perspective of Islamic business ethics, endorsement practices must meet criteria of honesty and transparency, where influencers are required to recommend only products they have genuinely used and believe in the quality of. Issues arise when endorsements are based solely on financial rewards without honest assessments, or when influencers fail to transparently disclose that their content is paid.

The practice of reviews, whether conducted by regular consumers or professional reviewers, also requires critical evaluation from a Sharia perspective, particularly regarding the potential for manipulation and dishonesty. Saifudin et al. (2025) asserted that Islamic branding necessitates honesty in all marketing communications, including product reviews. Practices such as creating fake reviews, paying individuals to provide positive reviews, or systematically burying negative reviews go against the principles of honesty and transparency in Islam, as they create false perceptions in society about the quality of a product.



Challenges arise in social media advertising as the most commonly used digital branding strategy, particularly concerning content and delivery methods from a Sharia perspective. Melinda and Salsabilah (2025) emphasize that within the Sharia digital ecosystem, advertisements must meet criteria not only in terms of the halal nature of the promoted products but also in the halal ways they are advertised. The use of elements conflicting with Islamic values, such as sensualization, exploitation of women, or excessive promotion of consumerist lifestyles, cannot be justified even if the goal is to capture consumer attention. Advertisements must also steer clear of unsupported exaggerated claims, as these fall under the category of gharar.

Integrating influencers into culinary digital branding strategies has become more intricate with the emergence of various influencer categories based on audience size and levels of influence. Ismail (2024) explains that within the halal culinary creative industry, collaborations with influencers should consider not only audience reach but also the alignment of influencer values with Sharia principles. Influencers with reputations or lifestyles conflicting with Islamic values can negatively affect brand perception among Muslim consumers who prioritize religious aspects, even if they have the technical capability to reach a broad audience.

Strategies like flash sales and limited-time offers commonly used in digital culinary marketing also require thorough analysis from a Sharia perspective, especially concerning the potential creation of false urgency and irrational consumer decisions. Indiharwati (2025a) observes that digitization in halal product management presents opportunities for various marketing innovations but these innovations must remain within ethical boundaries. Flash sales that induce time pressure to prompt quick decision-making without careful consideration can verge on unfair practices, particularly if product information is not fully disclosed due to artificially created time constraints.

Viral marketing as a strategy that relies on the exponential spread of content through social networks also carries potential ethical issues from the perspective of Sharia. Nurani (2024) notes that in the culinary business context, viral content often relies on elements of surprise, sensation, or controversy that may contradict the values of politeness and Islamic ethics. Content that goes viral because it exploits sensitive issues, uses inappropriate humor, or displays behaviors that are not in line with Islamic teachings, although effective in attracting attention, cannot be justified within the framework of Sharia business ethics that uphold human dignity.



Marketing practices that use psychological techniques to influence consumer decisions also need to be critically evaluated, especially those that exploit consumers' psychological weaknesses or ignorance. Indiharwati (2025b) explains that Islamic business ethics prohibit exploitation of consumers in any form, including psychological exploitation. The use of algorithms designed to exploit addictive tendencies, the presentation of information intended to confuse consumers, or other manipulative techniques in digital marketing are contrary to the principles of justice and honesty that form the foundation of Sharia business ethics.

Transparency in digital marketing communication becomes a crucial issue in analyzing compliance with Sharia ethics, given the characteristics of digital media that allow information to be concealed more easily. Hussain et al. (2025) highlight the importance of verification and transparency in digital food marketing, including in terms of health claims, halal claims, and the origin of raw materials. Practices like greenwashing or halal-washing, where products claim to have certain attributes without sufficient evidence, constitute a form of deception prohibited in Islam because they create false perceptions in society and harm consumers who make decisions based on such claims. Utilizing consumer data for marketing personalization has become increasingly common in the digital era, but it poses significant ethical implications from an Islamic perspective. Saifudin et al. (2025) emphasize that Islamic branding should not only focus on product aspects but also on customer relationships, including safeguarding privacy and personal data. Collecting and using consumer data without clear consent, or for unknown purposes to consumers, contradicts the principles of trust and responsibility in Islam. Consumers have the right to know what data is being collected, how it is being used, for what purpose, and the right to refuse the collection of such data.

Marketing strategies that employ a community approach and foster brand loyalty through fan groups also need to be evaluated from a Shariah perspective, especially concerning the potential to cultivate blind fanaticism towards a brand. Melinda and Salsabilah (2025) argue that from an Islamic economic standpoint, consumer loyalty should be based on rationality and alignment with values, rather than on irrational fanaticism that can cloud objective judgment. Building a healthy and ethical brand community entails fostering constructive discussions, accepting criticism, and being open to improvement, rather than creating a culture that rejects all forms of negative feedback.



Marketing practices that use religious elements or Islamic symbols to attract Muslim consumers also require caution to avoid falling into unethical commercialization of religion. Ismail (2024) explains that developing the halal culinary industry within the framework of Maqasid Shariah requires Islamic values not only to serve as marketing tools but to be substantively integrated into all aspects of the business. The use of Islamic symbols without being accompanied by a substantive commitment to Shariah values may be viewed as a form of exploiting religion that goes against the spiritual essence of Islam. The brand differentiation strategy that relies on halal claims as a competitive advantage must be supported by credible evidence and certification, not just empty claims. Indiharwati (2025a) emphasizes that in halal product management, certification and standardization play a crucial role in providing assurance to consumers that the products truly meet Sharia standards. Halal claims without clear certification not only harm consumers but also damage the overall credibility of the halal industry by creating uncertainty and doubt in society.

An analysis of digital culinary branding strategies from a Sharia perspective thus requires a holistic approach that takes into account not only the marketed products but also how they are marketed, the content used, psychological impacts on consumers, and broader social consequences. Saifudin et al. (2025) conclude that Islamic branding essentially aims to integrate Islamic spiritual values and ethics into all aspects of brand management, so that branding becomes not only a tool for achieving commercial gain but also a means to realize benefit and blessings.

Legal Implications and Challenges of Implementing Sharia Branding for Culinary Businesses in the Digital Era

Applying Sharia principles in the digital branding of culinary businesses has significant legal implications, both for business owners choosing to adopt them and for those disregarding them in daily business practices. Hussain et al. (2025) identified that innovation in digital food marketing not only creates opportunities but also poses new regulatory challenges, especially concerning consumer protection, claim verification, and business accountability. These legal implications encompass the positive legal dimensions applicable in a country as well as the Sharia legal dimensions that serve as moral and spiritual foundations for Muslim consumers.

The legal consequences for culinary business owners failing to implement Sharia principles in their digital branding can be twofold, involving sanctions



based on positive law and sanctions based on Sharia law, affecting spiritual aspects and reputation. Indiharwati (2025b) explained that in the digital market, violations of Islamic business ethics can lead to legal claims from affected consumers, particularly if the violations involve information clarity, claim honesty, or personal data protection. Furthermore, in the context of Indonesia, where the majority of the population is Muslim, the reputation of a business entity disregarding Sharia principles can have negative impacts on business sustainability.

Halal certification serves as one of the most critical legal instruments in Sharia branding, acting as a formal guarantee that products and business processes adhere to Sharia standards. Nurani (2024) observed that the obligation of halal certification is the state's effort to provide security assurances for its citizens in consuming food, where halal product certification and labeling are based on values of protection, justice, legal certainty, responsibility, transparency, effectiveness, efficiency, and competency. Halal certification is not merely a logo attached to packaging but a representation of commitment to the entire value chain in accordance with Sharia, from raw materials to marketing practices.

Legal Implications in Digital Platforms

Another legal implication concerning the validity of contracts or agreements made through digital platforms, which from a Sharia perspective must meet certain requirements and conditions for a transaction to be considered valid. Melinda and Salsabilah (2025) posit that in Sharia-compliant fintech, every transaction must be based on a clear contract and in line with the principles of Islamic business ethics. In the realm of digital branding, claims made in promotional materials may be deemed as part of the contract if consumers make decisions based on such claims, thus any discrepancies between claims and reality can serve as grounds for contract cancellation or claims for damages.

Consumer data protection has emerged as a prominent legal issue in the digital age, with Sharia principles providing a strong ethical foundation for this protection based on the principles of trust and responsibility. Saifudin et al. (2025) affirm that in Islamic branding, the relationship between a brand and consumers is built on a foundation of trust that requires businesses to safeguard the confidentiality and security of consumers' personal data. Violations of this principle not only entail legal sanctions but also carry religious repercussions for breaching the trust bestowed by consumers.

Practical challenges in implementing Sharia branding in the digital age are highly complex and multidimensional, encompassing aspects of knowledge,



resources, technology, and market competition. Ismail (2024) identifies that the development of the halal culinary creative industry faces challenges in balancing business creativity with ethical and spiritual values, where pressures to innovate and compete often compel businesses to take shortcuts at the expense of Sharia principles. These challenges are particularly daunting for small and microenterprises that have limited resources to fully understand and implement Sharia standards comprehensively.

Limited understanding of the principles of Sharia and how to apply them in the digital context poses a major challenge for many culinary business operators. Indiharwati (2025a) explains that managing halal products from regulation to digitalization requires a profound understanding not only of the technical aspects of certification but also of the underlying philosophy and ethics. Without adequate understanding, business operators tend to view Sharia compliance as merely an administrative burden, rather than as an added value that can differentiate their brands in the market.

Technological challenges are also significant, considering that effective digital branding requires mastery of various rapidly evolving digital platforms and tools. Kirana (2022) observes that building visual identity and brand through digital media requires technical skills that are not always possessed by small business operators, especially in the traditional culinary sector that may be more focused on production rather than digital marketing. This technology gap can hinder efforts to build Sharia-compliant branding because business operators may lack access or the ability to effectively communicate Sharia values through digital channels.

Intense competition in the digital market often drives aggressive marketing practices that overlook ethical considerations, including in the Sharia context. Maulana et al. (2023) note that in the effort to strengthen branding through online media, micro and small businesses often get caught in unethical practices due to the pressure to quickly attract consumer attention amidst digital information overload. This challenge requires collective awareness and ecosystem support to enable ethical business practices to remain competitive in the market. Challenges in upholding Sharia compliance, encompassing the costs of halal certification and ensuring the entire supply chain meets Sharia standards, pose a distinct obstacle, especially for small businesses. Indiharwati (2025b) outlines that implementing Islamic business ethics in the digital market necessitates investments not solely in financial forms but also in time and human resources to ensure adherence to Sharia standards. For small culinary



enterprises, these costs can prove a significant burden, particularly when competing against businesses that do not adhere to Sharia standards and can offer lower prices.

The challenge of establishing credible Sharia branding is also intertwined with increasingly high and complex consumer expectations regarding halal products. Saifudin et al. (2025) explain that modern Muslim consumers not only demand product halalness but also halalness in the production process, environmentally friendly packaging, fair business practices towards employees, and positive contributions to society. Consistently meeting all these expectations within the framework of digital branding poses a significant challenge that requires long-term commitment and the integration of Sharia values into the company's DNA.

Harmonizing national and international Sharia standards also presents a challenge in global branding, given variations in interpretation and practices across different countries. Hussain et al. (2025) highlight the importance of global food governance that considers diverse perspectives, including religious perspectives, in building a sustainable food system. Culinary enterprises aiming to establish Sharia branding in the global market must navigate differences in standards and expectations across various countries without compromising the core Sharia principles they uphold. Challenges in distinguishing substantive syariah branding from merely ceremonial branding have become an important issue, considering the number of businesses that use the syariah or Islamic label as a marketing strategy without a deep commitment to syariah values. Nurani (2024) observed that the millennial generation is increasingly critical in evaluating brands and is able to differentiate between brands that truly uphold Islamic values and those that only use Islamic symbols to attract consumers. Credible syariah branding requires consistency between claims and reality, which can only be achieved through substantive commitment to syariah principles.

The emergence of new technologies such as artificial intelligence and blockchain presents challenges as well as opportunities for implementing syariah branding. Melinda and Salsabilah (2025) suggested that technologies like blockchain can be used to enhance transparency in the halal supply chain, enabling consumers to trace the origin of raw materials and verify halal claims independently. On the other hand, the use of artificial intelligence in personalized marketing poses new ethical challenges related to privacy and the potential for manipulation that need to be addressed with an adaptive syariah framework.



The importance of education and literacy on syariah branding for culinary businesses cannot be overstated, given the complexity of challenges faced. Ismail (2024) emphasizes that literacy on halal product certification and labeling based on values of protection, justice, legal certainty, responsibility, transparency, effectiveness, efficiency, and competence has implications for public comfort in consuming food. Enhancing this literacy requires collaboration between the government, certification bodies, academics, and industry associations to develop effective and easily accessible education programs for businesses of various scales. Ecosystem support enabling the healthy growth of Shariah branding emerges as a key factor in addressing various existing challenges. Indiharwati (2025a) explains that the development of halal product management requires support from various stakeholders, including regulators, certifying bodies, technology providers, Islamic financial institutions, and consumer communities. A supportive ecosystem will create incentives for businesses to adopt Shariah branding while also providing social sanctions and market repercussions for those who neglect it.

Challenges in integrating Shariah values with digital innovation necessitate a contemporary *ijtihad* approach capable of responding to technological advancements without losing the essence of Islamic teachings. Saifudin et al. (2025) conclude that Islamic branding in the digital era demands creative and innovative thinking grounded in fundamental Shariah principles. This approach acknowledges that technology is ethically neutral but its use must be guided by Shariah values to realize benefits and prevent harm.

The prospects for developing Shariah branding in the culinary business in the digital age remain very promising despite facing various challenges, given the increasing awareness of Muslim consumers regarding the importance of halal aspects and ethics in the products they consume. Melinda and Salsabilah (2025) suggest that Shariah fintech and other digital financial innovations offer new opportunities for Shariah-compliant business development, including in the culinary sector. With the right approach, Shariah branding not only signifies adherence to religious teachings but also a competitive advantage that distinguishes brands in the increasingly crowded digital market.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the branding of culinary businesses in the digital era has transformed into a collaborative process between brands and



consumers on various digital platforms, where reputation is built participatively and brand identity is a result of negotiation between producer claims and consumer perceptions. Principles of Sharia Economic Law such as justice, honesty, transparency, and prohibitions on ambiguity, gambling, usury, and deceit should serve as ethical foundations in all digital branding practices, ensuring not only that the products are halal but also that their marketing aligns with Islamic values. Analysis of digital branding strategies like endorsements, reviews, social media advertising, flash sales, and viral marketing reveals many practices that potentially contain dishonesty, manipulation, and non-transparency prohibited by Sharia. The implementation of Sharia branding faces challenges such as limited understanding, technological gaps, high compliance costs, and competitive pressures, yet it brings legal implications for consumer protection and spiritual implications in terms of blessings and public trust. Sharia branding is not just a marketing strategy but a holistic commitment to integrating spiritual values into brand management to realize benefit and blessings.

The implementation of this research is realized through integrated steps in managing digital culinary businesses. Entrepreneurs must establish a foundation of Sharia branding through credible halal certification and authentic brand narratives without shallow commercialization of religion. In digital marketing, honesty and transparency must be ensured by making sure promotional content on social media, advertisements, and influencer collaborations reflect the product reality without visual manipulation or excessive claims that include ambiguity. Managing interactions with consumers must be responsible through constructive responses to reviews, avoiding review manipulation, and safeguarding the confidentiality of personal data in accordance with the principle of trustworthiness. Flash sale and viral marketing strategies need to consider justice and avoid false urgency or sensational exploitation. Collaboration with influencers should consider the compatibility of values with Sharia and transparency in the paid content status. Brand communities should be built based on rationality and openness to criticism, not blind fanaticism. Active participation in Sharia branding education programs and the use of blockchain technology for halal supply chain transparency are needed to overcome understanding and technological limitations. Governments and regulators need to provide incentives, law enforcement, and harmonization of national-international Sharia standards. Islamic financial institutions can provide financing for small businesses. Academics need to develop theoretical frameworks responsive to technological developments. Improving consumer



literacy will create positive market pressure for business entities. Consistent and sustainable implementation will create a competitive commercial branding ecosystem for digital culinary products and spiritual blessings in accordance with Sharia maqasid.

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