

Application of the Storytelling Method in a Service Company to Provide Client Satisfaction: A Study on Sibambo Studio House Architecture Bureau

Muhammad Yanuar Abdulloh, Kartika Anggraeni Sudiono Putri

State Islamic University Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang

Gajayana Street No.50, Dinoyo, Lowokwaru District, Malang City, East Java, Indonesia 65144

*Correspondence: 19510213@student.uin-malang.ac.id

ABSTRACT

This research aims to analyze the application of the storytelling method in service companies in providing satisfaction to clients, a case study at the House Architecture Bureau with the brand name Sibambo Studio. A descriptive qualitative method with a case study approach is used in this research to describe in detail how storytelling can be used as an effective communication tool between service companies and clients. This research involved interviews with employees and clients of Sibambo Studio's House Architecture Bureau, observation, and documentation analysis to obtain data and information related to the application of the storytelling method which was then explained by research informants including the marketing team (chief marketing officer and sales marketing), architect team (architect in charge and interior architect) and service user clients. The data analysis process was carried out through data reduction, data presentation, and summarizing the results. The research findings show that the application of the storytelling method has a positive impact on client satisfaction. In this context, storytelling is used as a tool to communicate values in the design by adjusting the needs and expectations of the client. Stories that are translated into appropriate designs and detailed explanations help describe the experience desired by the client. Through stories, clients can feel more involved in their home design process and feel heard by the company. This affects how high the client's level of satisfaction, trust, and emotional bond with the company is.

Keywords: *Client Satisfaction; Service Company; Storytelling Method*

INTRODUCTION

Service companies need to realize the importance of paying attention to client satisfaction as one of the key factors in maintaining and increasing the success of their business. Services marketing has different characteristics from product marketing. In service marketing, it is important to understand that services are intangible and cannot be stored, thus requiring a different approach to presentation and packaging. In addition, factors such as service quality, the interaction between clients or service users and employees, and client experience play a key role in service marketing. Therefore, in service marketing, it is necessary to pay attention to aspects such as service quality, service, trust, and effective communication (Kotler et al., 2022). Zeithaml dan Bitner (2018) define that service can be interpreted as a series of actions arising from interactions between clients or service users and provider companies during the process of purchasing or using services. This definition highlights the importance of every interaction that occurs between the client and the company in influencing the overall service experience. In this context, service involves all aspects that occur throughout the process, from the beginning of interaction with the company to the final of using the service. Then according to Tjiptono (2017), service quality reflects the achievement of expected excellence and directs efforts to fulfill the client's wishes or expectations of the service provider. By implementing an appropriate service marketing strategy, service companies can increase the level of client satisfaction (Lubis & Rukmini, 2022).

Therefore, paying attention to the quality of the product or service and the quality of client service, in addition to creating satisfaction, will also increase client confidence in the company (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Conversely, client dissatisfaction can occur if the product or service received does not meet their needs and expectations. Client dissatisfaction can hurt their attitude towards the brand and company, including the possibility of filing a complaint or switching to a competitor. In the service industry, where *intangibles* and client experience play a significant role, effective communication between the company and the client is crucial. One method that has emerged as an effective communication tool is *storytelling*. *Storytelling* is an art form of communication that has

existed since ancient times and still has relevance today. By using stories, humans can more effectively express their experiences, emotions, ideas, and feelings. One of the main purposes of *storytelling* is to build an emotional connection between the service provider and the listener or client who uses the service so that a strong bond can be formed between the two parties (McKee & Gerace, 2017).

According to Aaker (2019) from Stanford University said "Stories are remembered up to 22 times more than facts alone". This indicates that stories have a much stronger memory than just facts. Through storytelling, listeners can be taken on a journey, experience a shift in perspective, and become a persuasive tool that encourages them to take action. In implementing storytelling, companies need to have a deep understanding of their audience, including their values, aspirations, and needs. This is important so that the stories told can be tailored to the intended audience. Several empirical studies related to the application of storytelling methods in marketing aspects, in a study conducted by Kim (2020) entitled "Storytelling Marketing Strategy based on Utopian Value" states the results of the study that the value of fantasy and consumption in a product has given a certain meaning to individual identities such as taste or value can be revealed. In research conducted by Mora, et al. (2019) entitled "Contribution of storytelling for the creation of emotional marketing in a company of purified water of bahia de Caraquez, Ecuador 2019". Stating that the result of this research is that marketing strategies carried out emotionally based on stories can move consumers so that they can double the sales of suppliers who use storytelling techniques in their marketing. The research conducted by Kasproicz (2016) entitled "Storytelling As Modern Architecture Of Narration In Marketing Communication". Stating that in communicating products sold to clients using narrative techniques can create excitement and generate client demand.

Sibambo Studio is a professional consulting company that specializes in designing houses according to the client's needs, desires, character, and budget. With the tagline "Every Single Home Has a Single Story", Sibambo Studio positions itself as a close partner and fully understands each client's unique story in realizing their dream home, intending to achieve optimal results. (<https://Sibambostudio.Com/>, 2023). Service is the main focus for service companies such as Sibambo Studio, which offers professional house consulting services. The quality of service provided will be a determining factor considered by prospective service users because this will determine satisfaction and the choice to use the services offered.

METHODS

The type of research method used in this research is descriptive qualitative with a case study approach. This descriptive research aims to explain the aspects that are relevant to the observed phenomenon and tries to describe the matter under study by using the facts found in the field as the basis of research. According to Moleong (2018), qualitative research is a research method that focuses on efforts to build a detailed view of research informants, using words, a holistic and complex picture. The stages of this research began with data collection through interviews, observation, and documentation analysis, then explained by research informants, including the marketing team (chief marketing officer and sales marketing), architect team (architect in charge and interior architect), and service user clients. This research was conducted at Sibambo Studio's office in Semarang City, Central Java Province. The data analysis process is carried out through data reduction, data presentation, and concluding results related to the application of the storytelling method in providing satisfaction to clients.

RESULTS

Personalization

Personalization in marketing is an activity to customize experiences or communications based on data and information that has been learned about the client. By doing personalization, marketers can gain insight into and interests of clients and can offer relevant experiences according to their needs (Azkiya, 2022). The results of the researcher's interview with the architectural team and observations made. In this aspect, Sibambo Studio makes adjustments to each house design made by digging deeply related to the information of clients who order services including what are the client's tastes and each family member who will live in the house, what kind of comfort they want to create,

what features they want to present in the house, the life journey they have gone through, and other things related to the client will be harmonized in the design of the house to realize the ideal home for them, this is certainly exclusive because every house designed by Sibambo Studio describes its owner so that it has a very strong philosophy.

Emotions

The use of emotions in marketing can greatly affect the emotional side of the audience and can foster empathy in clients. This can have an impact on the purchase decision that the client will make. However, to be able to use this technique effectively, marketers need to first identify the emotional side of their clients to touch them emotionally, marketers need to understand their clients well. Marketers must recognize what emotional needs their products can fulfill, whether it is the need for adventure, belonging, comfort, or admiration (Azkiya, 2022). Based on interviews with the architectural team and marketing team, Sibambo Studio tries to get to know the client more closely to understand what their needs and desires are, then maintain good communication with the client whether the project is still ongoing or has been completed. The deepening of information becomes the fulcrum in designing the client's house so that the house that is made suits the client. The company also continues to maintain the emotional bonds of each division related to the client to keep going well and not break. Because if one division is damaged, it can have an impact on other divisions and that will result in less satisfied clients.

Supporting Data

Adding accurate and relevant supporting data is essential in creating a compelling story. This data can strengthen the message to be conveyed in the story and provide a clearer understanding of the client who is the focus of the story. Marketers can dig for information to produce valuable facts derived from client experiences or the results of surveys conducted. By using this data, the story can become more convincing and can help form a better picture of the client. Supporting data should be used wisely and not crudely incorporated into the story. Instead, the data should be tailored to the needs of the story and how it fits with the client that the story focuses on. Therefore, it is very important to understand who the client is who is the focus of the story, and how the data can be used to support the message to be conveyed (Azkiya, 2022). Based on interviews with the architect and marketing team. Supporting data related to the client is very important for Sibambo Studio because it will be used as material in creating an ideal home design for clients and can meet their needs and expectations, such as covering the background of the client, reference to the design style that wants to be realized, the funds allocated, geographical conditions, etc.

In the marketing world, storytelling is used to differentiate brands from competitors and strengthen the emotional bond between brands and consumers (McKee & Gerace, 2017). In marketing, storytelling has become one of the effective strategies to build closer relationships with audiences or users. This is in line with the observation of Kotler, et al. (2017) which states that stories or storytelling can help companies to build emotional bonds with audiences through narratives that are made creatively and convincingly. Then when doing a storytelling strategy, companies need to understand their audience well. They must understand the values, aspirations, and needs of their audience. This is important so that the story created can suit the intended audience and can trigger a strong emotional response. Sibambo Studio understands that every individual is different and has their own story to tell, and the company's value that "Every Single Home Has a Single Story" is the cornerstone in serving every client who comes to Sibambo to create a home design that represents the needs, desires, and character of the owner. The company does not limit the type of design offered to clients, so the company can follow the design style desired by the client itself. Each client has different desires regarding the design of the house they want to build, and the company will provide a design that suits the client's wishes.

Storytelling is an effective way to build a connection with the audience and can increase the value of a brand in any industry. Compelling stories can make the intended audience feel connected to the brand and feel that they are part of the community. When storytelling motivates and inspires, it adds value to the audience and makes them feel valued and respected, which is a good way to show that the brand understands the needs and wants, and puts the interests of the audience first (Stein,

2020). According to Kotler & Keller (2016), customer satisfaction can be defined as a sense of pleasure or disappointment felt by someone who uses a particular product or service, resulting from a comparison between the performance of the product or service provided and the expectations or expectations they have. If the performance of the product or service provided does not meet customer expectations, then they will feel disappointed. Sibambo Studio has a flow from start to finish through several divisions, and each division will supervise its respective duties to ensure the project they are working on is following what the client needs and wants. The Sibambo Studio team will ask the client if there are things that are not understood or not appropriate to then be followed up until everything is complete. Then after the project is completed, feedback will also be given to clients to see their responses to the services provided by Sibambo Studio. Priansa (2017) states that there are five important elements related to satisfaction, including the following:

Hope

Before making a purchase, consumers have formed expectations of the product or service to be purchased. When making a purchase, consumers expect the product or service received to match their expectations or desires, and beliefs. When the product or service received matches consumer expectations, it will make consumers feel satisfied. Therefore, producers or service providers need to understand consumer expectations and adapt their products or services to these expectations, to provide a satisfying consumption experience for consumers. This will have a positive impact on producers or service providers because satisfied consumers will be more likely to return to buy the same product or service, and even recommend it to others. Based on interviews conducted with Mr. Dedi who has a new house design project and Mrs. Isye who has an old house renovation design project, they as clients of Sibambo Studio are satisfied and their expectations have been met. From what they said, it was concluded that the deepening of information carried out by the Sibambo Studio team was very detailed so that what was their need and desire could be realized properly. They also consciously recommend Sibambo Studio's services to friends and relatives who want to design a house.

Performance

Consumer experience of the actual performance of a good or service refers to the experience gained when they use a product or service without considering prior expectations or expectations. In this case, consumers provide an assessment of the actual performance of the product or service they use, and if this performance can meet their level of satisfaction, then consumers will feel satisfied. Therefore, it is important for businesses to continuously improve the quality of their products or services to meet consumer needs and satisfaction levels. Mr. Dedi's recognition as a client, he feels so close to Sibambo Studio because they explain in such detail and always confirm whether everything is good or there is still something missing from the client. This is reinforced by the statement of Mrs. Isye who also has a home renovation design project with Sibambo Studio, she stated that her family felt very satisfied and extraordinary with Sibambo Studio's performance which was packaged in such a way, even her friends who came to her house also gave appreciation. Then she also plans to make another project with Sibambo Studio.

Comparison

Consumers make comparisons after evaluating their satisfaction by comparing their initial expectations of the performance of goods or services before buying with the perception of actual performance after using the product or service. If the actual performance of the product or service meets or even exceeds consumers' initial expectations, then they will feel satisfied. In other words, consumer satisfaction occurs when their experience of using a product or service can match or exceed their expectations before buying. Based on interviews conducted by researchers with clients who use Sibambo Studio services, they said that what they needed and expected was realized by Sibambo Studio and their expectations were able to be met.

Experience

The experience of using brands of different goods or services can affect consumer expectations of a product. These expectations are formed from personal experience and can vary from one person to another. In this case, consumer expectations are influenced by subjective factors that are personal and cannot be generalized in general. Based on interviews conducted by researchers with clients who use Sibambo Studio's services, clients feel that they have a memorable experience with the company, through the design of the houses they make because they can represent the residents of their homes. With a story that is so deep and full of philosophy, Sibambo Studio is different from the others and will always give a positive impression to clients and their families.

Confirmation and Disconfirmation

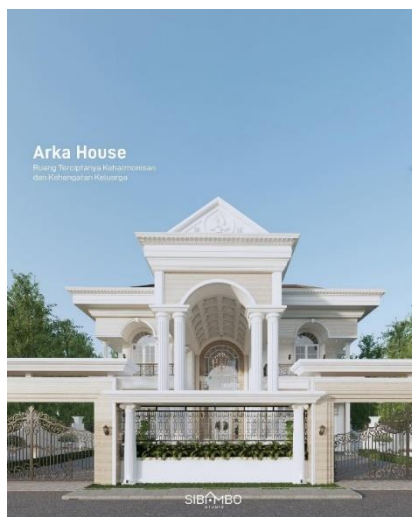
Confirmed is when consumer expectations of product performance match the actual performance of the product. Conversely, Not Confirmed occurs when consumer expectations are higher or lower than the actual performance of the product. Consumers will feel satisfied if confirmation occurs, depending on the extent to which their expectations are met. In other words, consumer satisfaction is influenced by the extent to which the product or service meets their expectations. In this case, based on researcher interviews with clients who use Sibambo Studio services. They confirm that the company has been able to meet expectations and even in some cases exceed the expectations of the client, they also feel very close to Sibambo Studio. The following are some examples of home design products made by Sibambo Studio as a home consulting service company, where each design is tailored to the needs and desires of each client through various models or styles and different meanings:



Source: <https://www.instagram.com/sibambostudio/> (2023)

Figure 1
Neo Modern Style House Design

The house is named Blacksmith House, the owner of the house expressed that the house is a comfortable part of his life, therefore it must follow his character and also his family. The character that is present is expected to give a deep impression so that it can be the desire of its residents. With the Neo Modern style applied and the design layout presented, it gives an elegant and charming impression. The open plan concept in the center of the house can maximize the existing features and will also give a special impression to the owner and his family.



Source: <https://www.instagram.com/sibambostudio/> (2023)

Figure 2
Classic Modern Style House Design

The house is named Arka House, the owner of the house believes that the house can be a place to foster love and warmth between his family so that they are reborn. The name Arka House itself means light or sun, from the name, there is hope and prayer from the owner. The owner hopes that the presence of this house can create harmony and warmth in his family later. The classic model in terms of architecture is the owner's preference because he wants the house resulting from the struggle with his partner to have a magnificent and charming visual. With the dominance of a fairly large building mass, this house comes like a monument to togetherness.



Source: <https://www.instagram.com/sibambostudio/> (2023)

Figure 3
Modern Tropical Style House Design

The house is named Karis House, is presented as the most beautiful gift for the owner's parents. The meaning of name of the house itself has the meaning and philosophy of filial piety, so it is expected to be a symbol or sign of the owner's devotion to his parents. The owner's work is mostly done at home, making him happy to spend time with his family, especially his children. Therefore, in addition to parents, the presence of this house is also expected to be friendly to the growth and development of children, it is solely for the sake of getting a sense of comfort for their families because according to the owner what is the meaning of a house if you cannot spend time with children

and family. From several examples of home design products created by Sibambo Studio with stories that describe each client, able to create an extraordinary story and experience. This is an important point for clients because they will feel heard and directly involved in their home design process it will create a deep emotional bond because their needs and expectations can be realized properly.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research results obtained, shows that the application of the storytelling method in service companies such as Sibambo Studio has a positive impact on providing satisfaction to clients. Through the storytelling method, the company can interestingly explain the home design process, maintain effective communication with clients, and ensure that client's needs and expectations are maximally met. The company's ability to understand and translate the client's story into the right design, as well as provide high-quality services, can influence how high the client's level of satisfaction, trust, and emotional bond is. The storytelling method allows the firm to connect the client's emotions, values, and aspirations with the home design. Thus, Sibambo Studio can position itself as a partner who understands and is close to the client and is committed to realizing their dream home.

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