

COMPLETION REPORT

E-commerce as a marketing channel for Cool Japan in Indonesia

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It is a “Cool Japan”, the world phenomenon. The Japanese pop culture and related creative products such as J-pop music, manga, anime, street fashion, film, cuisine, and characters have been popular overseas, including Indonesia. Indonesia is currently the 5th biggest internet users in the world, in which young people are the dominant group. Online store, as one of e-commerce business model, is becoming popular shopping channel for young people in Indonesia. Therefore, e-commerce is likely to be a good channel to promote and sell Japanese cultural and creative products in Indonesia. This study is aimed to investigate how the characteristics and condition of e-commerce selling Cool Japan goods in Indonesia. Research methods applied in this research are web content analysis, online survey, and in-depth interview. To find additional information, some visits are conducted to the Centre of Japanese Culture in Surabaya, Japan Creative Centre in Singapore, Kinokuniya bookstore in Singapore, Anime Japan 2017 in Tokyo, and some other pop culture related spots.

First, web content analysis was conducted to small online stores selling Japanese pop products. The results indicate that products sold could be categorized into fashion, beauty-health, DVD-CD movie/drama/music, and characters. Some online stores are hosted on social media sites. The customer could make an order through various channels not only shopping cart. Online stores provide alternatives payment methods especially money transfer to various banks. Customers could communicate one-to-one to the seller through a smart phone with various social media applications. Additionally, the majority of online stores have Facebook to engage customers and to inform product updates.

Second, online survey to small online retailers finds that the majority were established within 4 years, have only 2 persons to run the business, and have an understanding about Cool Japan. The range of products sold confirms the findings of web content analysis and the majority of products are supplied from Indonesia and Japan. High demand and easy supply are perceived as the top reasons for selling Japanese products. This survey reveals that WhatsApp (an instant messaging service for smartphones) is the top channel for customers to place an order, and bank transfer is the top payment method. Most respondents are satisfied with their profit growth performance.

Third, interviews were conducted in Indonesia with key persons in Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) Jakarta office and in Japan with key persons in JETRO, Member of the House of Representatives, Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia, and practitioner. Overall, this study indicates that there is no specific policy to support e-commerce for Cool Japan in Indonesia, as well as other countries. The role of Cool Japan Fund Inc. in supporting and promoting the development of demand overseas for Cool Japan products and services is emphasized. The interviews reveal the success of the Indonesian idol group JKT48, as the AKB48 sister group.

Finally, this study academically has generated knowledge about Cool Japan in the e-commerce aspect. Through this research grant, the researcher acquires more understanding about Japanese culture and more links to Japanese persons and institutions.

Publication of the Results of Research Project:

Verbal Presentation (Date, Venue, Name of Conference, Title of Presentation, Presenter, etc.)

Planned conference paper title: “E-commerce for Japanese and Korean pop culture products in Indonesia”

Thesis (Name of Journal and its Date, Title and Author of Thesis, etc.)

Planned paper title: “Cool Japan through E-commerce: a case of Indonesian online stores”

Book (Publisher and Date of the Book, Title and Author of the Book, etc.)

Instead of book, the finding will be used to enrich some undergraduate courses.

1. The finding about e-commerce will be used as a teaching material for the session B2C E-commerce Business Model of the course E-business.
2. The finding about Cool Japan policy will be used as a teaching material for the session Macro Economic Policy of the course Introduction to Economics