

# How to improve the marketing of the halal brand?

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## Abstract

The aim of this paper is to review on the literature associated with the halal brand and to make recommendations about how the halal brand image can be improved. A qualitative methodology was followed to address the aims of this research. Relevant literature associated with the halal brand was reviewed. The review found that advertising of the halal brand, quality of the halal products, religion and religiosity, mental norm, accessibility of halal, customer trust, credibility of the halal certification, and purity are associated with the halal brand. Additionally, the review indicated that the marketing of halal has traditionally been restricted to halal food. However, there is a huge untapped market for marketing other kinds of halal products and services. For example, pharmaceutical products, cosmetics, entertainment, tourism services, airlines, tours and hotels. The marketers is halal can highlight or promote the religiosity of the halal products, and the credibility of the halal certification to attract more Muslim customers. The non-religious factors associated with the halal brand, for example, the better quality of halal foods, and the hygiene status of halal foods can be used to attract more non-Muslim customers. Other halal products and services should also be promoted to improve the halal brand.

**Keywords:** Halal Brand, Determinants, Improve Halal Marketing

## Introduction

Halal is defined as something that is lawful or permitted to Muslims according to Islamic law. Halal in generally used in the context of food even though the term halal is a general term which can be applied a lot of other concepts. There is a lot of literature which refers to halal as a brand (Borzooei & Asgari, 2013). Like most brands, the halal brand has potentially lot of positive and negative perceptions associated with it. The positive perceptions of halal are favourable to the stakeholders in the halal business (e.g., restaurant owners, meat distributors), and on the other end of the spectrum the negative perceptions of halal are not good for the stakeholders in this business. This is because it hurts the brand and translates to lesser revenue and customer satisfaction.

The purpose of this paper is firstly, to review the literature associated with the halal brand, and identify the various perceptions of the brand. Secondly, the purpose is to look closely at the negative perceptions of the brand, and make recommendations about how the brand image could be improved.

This is a 'review' paper and is structured as follows. The next section, 'methodology', describes how the relevant literature was searched and shortlisted. The 'results' section describes the results obtained from the review of the shortlisted literature. Finally, the 'discussion and conclusions' section discusses the findings from the review and makes recommendations about how halal brand could be improved.

The findings from this research should be useful to the various stakeholders associated with halal, for example, halal meat producers, distributors, halal restaurant owners, and halal marketers. The findings can inform the stakeholders about how they can optimise the marketing

of the halal brand. The optimised marketing can translate to a more positive brand image of halal leading to greater revenue and customer satisfaction.

## Methodology

The database that has been used to search for the relevant literature is Google Scholar. Recent literature associated with the keywords 'halal brand', 'halal marketing', 'halal perceptions', and 'halal image' was searched. The search yielded 243 papers. 10 papers were shortlisted for this review based on their relevance to the aims of this research. The subsequent section of the paper reports a summary of what was found through the review.

## Results

Kordnaeij, Askaripoor, and Bakhshizadeh (2013) conducted a study on the factors affecting customers' attitude towards products with the halal brand. The study utilised a quantitative survey of 384 people from Malaysia. The study found that advertising of the halal brand, quality of the halal products, religion, and mental norm were some of the positive factors associated with a positive halal brand image. Some of the negative factors associated with the halal brand image what identified to be consumption barriers, and attitudes towards other products.

Cheng and Low (2008) stressed the importance of a positive halal brand image. They claimed that Islamic marketing is very important in today's times the population of Muslims is increasing around the world, and this presents a great opportunity for capitalising on the halal brand. Their review found that some of the positive factors associated with the halal brand are accessibility of halal meat, quality of halal meat, customer trust, and credibility of the halal certification.

Ahmad (2015) researched the brand personality of halal in Malaysia. The objective of the research was to gain insights into the various dimensions of the halal brand personality. The author used a mixed-methodology to develop a theoretical framework for the halal brand personality. The author identified the main dimensions associated with the halal brand personality to be purity, excitement, safety, sophistication and righteousness.

Borzooei and Asgari (2014) studied the effect of religious commitment on the halal brand and halal purchase intention. The author found that religious commitment is a strong predictor of halal purchase intention. Furthermore, the authors stressed that it is important for halal marketers know the religiosity of the customer to be able to capitalise on the halal brand.

Aziz and Chok (2013) conducted a study on the relationship between halal awareness, halal certification and marketing components in determining halal purchase intentions. The authors used a quantitative methodology and surveyed a sample of non-Muslim customers from Malaysia. The study found that halal awareness, halal certification, marketing promotion, and the halal brand were positively related to halal purchase intention. Food quality was found to be negatively associated with the halal purchase intention.

Abdul-Talib and Abd-Razak (2013) researched halal brand marketing in a global context. Specifically, they were interested in the export market oriented behaviour. They conducted a systematic review of relevant literature. The authors identified the halal market to be complex, and the need for an industrial innovation to form a halal economy.

Izberk-Bilgin and Nakata (2016) conducted a study on faith based marketing which includes halal. The authors suggested that the fastest growing faith based market segment is the Muslims.

The authors suggested that the fastest faith based market segment were the Muslims. The authors found that broadening the appeal of halal to mainstream customers can be a lucrative market.

Islam and Chandrasekaran (2013) discussed halal marketing in the context of India which they claimed hosts the third largest population of Muslims after Indonesia and Pakistan. The authors suggested that the halal brand has been traditionally associated with food, however, there is a potential to extend association of the brand with a range of other products. These include pharmaceutical products, cosmetics, entertainment and tourism services. The authors suggested that tapping into these other sectors with halal marketing can be very lucrative proposition for the stakeholders in the halal business.

Akyol and Kilinc (2014) studied halal tourism marketing. Halal tourism involves staying in halal hotels, using Islamic finance for the trips, using halal airlines, and halal food. They suggested that halal tourism has gained popularity among Muslim customers due to its Islamic lifestyle, hygiene and security. The authors found that there is lot of untapped potential in marketing halal tourism across the world.

Daud, Baharudin, and Shamsudin (2012) studied the determinant attributes of halal cosmetics product that influence its positioning strategy in Malaysian market. The study found that the determinants of purchase intention of halal cosmetic products were similar to that of halal foods. The determinants included religiosity, trust, and quality.

## **Discussion and Conclusions**

The aim of this paper is to review on the literature associated with the halal brand and to make recommendations about how the halal brand image can be improved.

A total of 10 relevant papers were reviewed to address the aims of this research. The review found that advertising of the halal brand, quality of the halal products, religion and religiosity, mental norm, accessibility of halal, customer trust, credibility of the halal certification, and purity are associated with the halal brand. A positive perception or higher levels of these determinants translate to a positive perception about the halal brand. On the flip side, a negative perception or lower levels of these determinants translate to a negative perception about the halal brand.

Additionally, the review indicated that the marketing of halal has traditionally been restricted to halal food. However, there is a huge untapped market for marketing other kinds of halal products and services. For example, pharmaceutical products, cosmetics, entertainment, tourism services, airlines, tours and hotels. The factors which are associated with the halal food brand also apply to the other kind of halal products and services.

The findings from this review can inform other halal brand can be improved. The stakeholders in the halal business (e.g., producers, distributors) can focus on the factors which are significant to the halal brand. For example, the marketers is halal can highlight or promote the religiosity of the halal products, and the credibility of the halal certification to attract more Muslim customers. The non-religious factors associated with the halal brand, for example, the better quality of halal foods, and the hygiene status of halal foods can be used to attract more non-Muslim customers. The halal brand is bound to improve if the number of users of halal increase.

Furthermore, the halal brand image can be improved why also focusing on the non- halal food sector. At the moment, a large majority of people associate halal with food. Marketing initiative

can be designed so that gradually over time people start to associate halal other products and services like halal tourism, halal airlines, halal cosmetics and halal pharmaceuticals. As mentioned previously, as the halal customer base will grow, the perception of the halal brand will improve.

This study has been useful in identifying the factors which are currently associated with the halal brand and has also recommended some ways through which the halal brand can be improved. It is recommended that the stakeholder of halal pay close attention to these recommendations as this can help them optimise the marketing of the halal brand.

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