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# Driving Organic Customer Acquisitions through Community Marketing in Digital Banking Application

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ABSTRACT: The objective of this research is to identify and analyze the key factors that influence customers on the reluctance of being loyal or become the advocator of J Bank and to propose the organic customer acquisitions strategies to be applied to J Bank through community engagement in J Bank. The era of Industry 4.0 has transformed production by integrating digital and internet technologies with traditional industries, enhancing efficiency and effectiveness in transactions. In Indonesia, the number of digitally active banking consumers has increased significantly, making up 32% of the banked population since 2014. This growth underscores the value of digital consumers to banks. The sector has become highly competitive, with fintech companies disrupting traditional banks by offering innovative solutions like e-wallets, loans, and digital payments. Established banks are investing in digital banking to keep pace with new startups. J Bank, Indonesia's first digital banking application, offers comprehensive services such as account creation, transactions, and financial management via smartphone. Targeting tech-savvy individuals with middle to upper economic status, J Bank provides features like Send It for transactions, QRIS for touchless payments, and various saving and loan options. Its innovative approach has attracted millennials, Gen Z, and even seniors, positioning it as a leading digital banking solution. However, J Bank experienced a significant drop in organic acquisitions from 2020 to 2022, partly due to issues like fraud and cybercrime, which led to negative sentiment and user attrition. Using qualitative approach with 6 survey respondents that consist of existing user of J Bank and existing Co.Create member, and also former J Bank users and former Co.Create members. This research using thematic analysis with internal and external analysis to explore the potential solutions. For internal analysis, the author is using Marketing Mix analysis. Meanwhile for external analysis, the author is using Porter Five Forces analysis, Competitor analysis, and SWOT analysis. Based on the analysis, this research proposed several organic customer acquisitions activity to be implemented in J Bank through community marketing approach.

J Bank offers a wide range of services, including account creation, transactions, and financial management via smartphone, targeting tech-savvy individuals from middle to upper economic backgrounds. Despite its initial success, attracting millennials, Gen Z, and even seniors, J Bank faced a decline in organic acquisitions from 2020 to 2022 due to issues like fraud and cybercrime, which led to negative sentiments and user attrition.

The research utilized a qualitative approach, involving surveys of six respondents, including current and former users of J Bank and members of its Co.Create community. Thematic analysis was conducted, incorporating internal analysis with the Marketing Mix and external analysis with Porter's Five Forces, competitor analysis, and SWOT analysis. The findings suggest that increasing community engagement and addressing security concerns are crucial for improving J Bank's customer retention and acquisition. Based on these insights, several community marketing strategies are recommended to enhance organic customer acquisition.

**KEYWORDS:** Brand Advocate, Community Marketing, Customer Decision Making, Digital Banking, Organic Customer Acquisition.

### INTRODUCTION

The industrial revolution 4.0 has revolutionized production through digital and internet technology, enhancing transaction efficiency and scope. Financial technology (fintech) has become a significant area of study, facilitating real-time interactions between companies and consumers and making digital channels crucial for product communication and knowledge enhancement.

In Indonesia, the rise of digitally active banking consumers has led to the adoption of digital services like payment channels, digital banking, online insurance, peer-to-peer lending, and crowdfunding. J Bank, launched by Bank B in 2016, has been a pioneer in this transformation with its user-friendly interface and innovative features, setting a standard for other banks and fintech companies.

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The digital banking sector in Indonesia is highly competitive, with fintech companies offering innovative solutions that challenge traditional banks. Established banks are investing in digital banking to remain competitive. J Bank, Indonesia's first digital banking application, targets middle to upper economic status individuals, allowing them to manage finances via mobile transactions.

J Bank's user-centered design, exemplified by the Co.Create platform, incorporates customer feedback and engages users through privileges and collaborative activities. Despite facing challenges from 2020 to 2022 due to fraud and cybercrime and poor customer service experience, J Bank's community engagement has helped it recover in organic acquisitions.

Customer acquisition at J Bank is divided into offline, online, and organic models, with organic acquisitions being the most beneficial but challenging to maintain. Key factors for organic customer acquisition include recommendations, visibility, and community adoption. Although organic acquisitions declined due to fraud and cybercrime issues, J Bank's active community engagement has led to a positive trend in user growth and community activity.

The researcher has formulated two research questions: what factors influence the decrease in organic customer acquisitions at J Bank, and is there a correlation between community active ratio and organic acquisition growth at J Bank? The research objectives are to identify and analyze factors influencing customer reluctance to stay loyal or advocate for J Bank and to propose strategies for organic customer acquisitions through community engagement at J Bank.

### LITERATURE REVIEW

To operate a business, it is important to understand how consumers make decisions. For J Bank which is implementing customer centricity in its innovation process, this understanding helps create more effective strategies, improve customer satisfaction, increase customer advocacy and ultimately drive growth and profitability (Solomon 2020). There are three types of consumer decision-making according to Solomon (2020):

- · Cognitive Decision Making: Customers approach the making of choices on the basis of reason.
- · Habitual Decision Making: Purchasing with little or no deliberate thought processes like regular shopping.
- · Affective Decision Making: Decisions are made based on emotions and feelings rather than logical reasoning alone.

Consumer Decision-Making Process Theory: According to this theory, there are six stages that customers go through when making purchasing decisions as follows; Recognition of needs, Search for information, Evaluation of alternatives, Purchase, Consumption, Evaluation after purchase.

Customer Acquisition: Influencing customers to use digital banking products is a big challenge for J Bank that makes customer acquisition very important. Levitt (1986) posits that customers have to be acquired first before they can be managed for profit because they represent assets. Sargeant and West (2001) suggest a seven-step process for developing a customer acquisition campaign which runs from setting campaign objectives to response analysis. However, many companies still miss their targets in terms of capturing acquisitions as explained by Blattberg et al., (2001).

Brand Advocacy: Brand advocacy occurs when customers who are highly associated with the brand recommend it positively (Fullerton 2005). By engaging with brands on social media platforms, people get to know more about what the brand offers thus enhancing brand satisfaction and loyalty leading to advocacy. The importance of advocacy as the final stage in building strong customer loyalty is highlighted by Kotler's five A's theory being aware appealing asking acting advocating (2019).

Community Marketing: Marketing involves creating value for customers and accurately communicating that value. For J Bank, its community, Co.Create is responsible for value creation that starts with the customers even before the bank is launched and continues through diverse activities as well as innovations.

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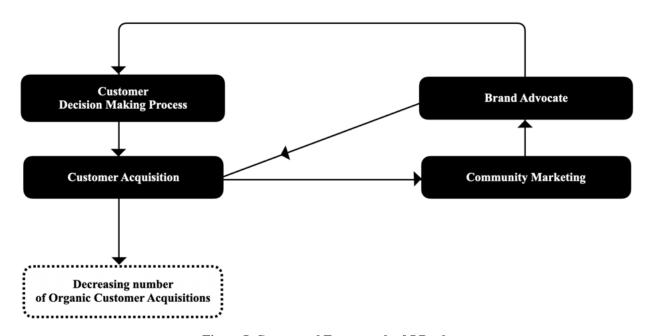


Figure I. Conceptual Framework of J Bank

The relationship between customer organic acquisitions and community marketing shows that they are interdependent. Starting from customer decision-making process, they go to acquisition after which they are prompted to join J Bank's Co.Create community. The membership of this platform helps in building brand advocacy among community members through exclusive activities and development opportunities hence sharing positive experiences leading to organic customer acquisition.

Reduced number of organic customer acquisitions in J Bank over the years is identified by the researcher. From root cause analysis it becomes evident that the attraction of new digital banks offering interesting engagement programs makes customers recommend J Bank less often (Fullerton 2005). Therefore, such methods as attractive promotions as well as engagement programs should be used by J Bank to compete with new digital banks, rejuvenate its presence and create a stickiness among clients according to this research.

There is a hypothesis on this research:

H1: The declining number of organic customer acquisitions in J Bank can be solved through community marketing efforts in Co.Create

Henceforth, this study will be aimed at comprehending business issue in question which suggests that J Bank needs to rejuvenate its presence and offer attractive engagement programs to effectively compete with other digital banking players.

### **METHODOLOGY**

This study uses qualitative research methods to understand important aspects of J Bank's products and services with the objective of generating sociological explanations. Research that is qualitative is one way in which theory, practice, policy and action are advanced (Satori and Komariah, 2011).

The study employs the approach of a Qualitative Descriptive Case Study to explain comprehensively some features about a particular group, organization or social situation. Intrinsic case study means investigating something for its own sake without any expectation of generalizing from the findings (Creswell, 1998).

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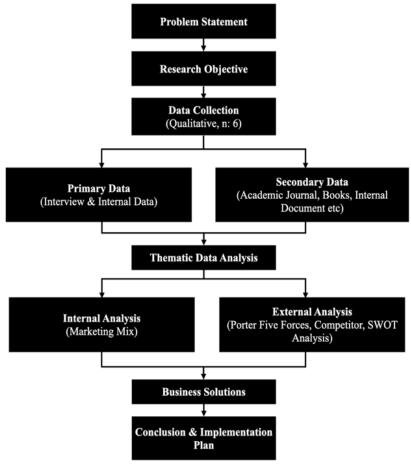


Figure II. Research Design of J Bank

Practicing open questions for deepening phenomena exploration. Interviews entail a guided free interview method in order to get detailed responses (Notoatmodjo, 2010). Observation as well as documentation assists interviews data by ensuring that non-participant observation is utilized (Moleong, 2012). The first-hand data was gathered from internal datasets of J Bank; former and existing customers; Co.Create group. Meanwhile secondary sources were documents and other supporting materials.

An analysis done internally on Marketing Mix (product, price, place, promotion, people, physical environment, process) helps assess company market performance and find room for improvement (Kotler & Keller, 2016; Todorova, 2015). External Analysis using Porter's Five Forces Model will be examined Competitor Analysis SWOT analysis so as to take advantage of opportunities or address challenges faced in business operation efficiency (Porter,2008). Thematic Data Analysis method identifies patterns in the data through summary reporting so as to improve the understanding gained from the study. Analyzing involves organizing observed data in themes through coding to identify those which are important (Rosala, 2019). Tool used in collecting information is semi-structural interviewing designed for extensive coverage where researchers can obtain accurate and detailed information directly from informants (Sugiyono dalam Prastowo, 2011; Taylor and Bogdan, 1998; Sarosa, 2017). For validation of interview findings, observations are used as additional data making sure that phenomena being studied are systematically and accurately represented (Moleong, 2012). The study covers internal as well as external factors influencing J Bank's business performance. Internal analysis concentrates on identifying business-related problems for resolution and recommending strategies to enhance organic customer acquisition. External analysis seeks suggestions from external sources to improve business performance and anticipate future threats. Hence analyzing the qualitative research methodologies and comprehensive data analysis techniques utilized in this study would thus enable it closely understand J Bank's business problems and offer recommendations towards improvement.

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### RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

After qualitative research interviews, both external and internal analyses are involved to analyze the collected data. Internal analysis covers innermost strategies by which the company operates while external analysis examines all the external factors that affect business entities. It is aimed at curbing a downward trend in organic customer acquisition. This thematic data analysis encompasses both past and current J Bank users as well as Co.Create members and gives an insight about their experiences and thoughts.

Table I. Thematic Data Analysis - The Existing J Bank Users & Co.Create Member

	The Existing J Bank Users & Co.Create Member									
No	Theory	Analysis								
1	Customer Decision Making Process (Solomon, 2020)	• In the beginning, the customers were curious about the phenomenal digital banking, the J Bank. They were started to try to register and feel comfortable in using the J Bank application.								
2	Customer Acquisition (Sargeant and West, 2001)	<ul> <li>J Bank as a reliable digital banking for them. This reason that made them reluctant to move to other banks (conventional or new digital banking).</li> <li>The features and innovation in J Bank that make them stay using J Bank until today.</li> <li>The debit and credit cards are the mandatory items to bring when they are going to travel overseas.</li> </ul>								
3	Community Marketing (Kotler & Keller, 2007)	Co.Create is often making offline and online events, exclusively for the member. This is the reason that they felt being engaged with the activities and interaction during the events.								
4	Brand Advocate (Kotler 2017)	<ul> <li>The respondents are willing to invite their friends and family to use J Bank for easy usage in one ecosystem.</li> <li>They also willing to invite their friends to join Co.Create to get more knowledge, not only J Bank information but also specific knowledge.</li> </ul>								

Table II. Thematic Data Analysis - The Former J Bank Users & Co.Create Member

The F	The Former J Bank Users & Co.Create Member									
No	Theory	Analysis								
1	Customer Decision Making Process (Solomon, 2020)	They know and willing to register J Bank from their friends. The past experiences and testimonial from their friend in using J Bank was the main reason they were finally using J Bank.								
2	Customer Acquisition (Sargeant and West, 2001)	<ul> <li>The new credit card from J Bank was intrigue them to explore and use the application and the credit card itself.</li> <li>The respondents also mentioned that they are willing to be back in using J Bank if the service is getting better.</li> </ul>								
3	Community Marketing (Kotler & Keller, 2007)	<ul> <li>Thematic events (financial management, credit card hacks) were their interest during their time join Co.Create.</li> <li>Co.Create was able to make them know more about J Bank.</li> </ul>								

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		The new digital banking community-based marketing was one of the	
			reasons they change to the other platform.
	Brand Advocate	•	Their disappointment toward J Bank also being shared on their friends
١.,	(Kotler 2017)		and social media.
4		•	They like the Co.Create concept, but disappointed with how J Bank
			manage the service. So they are being passive member in Co.Create.

For Internal Analysis approach, Marketing Mix is used by researcher. The study employs this analysis technique in order to ascertain how successful or ineffective J Bank's marketing efforts have been in terms of product strategy; pricing; place; people; promotion process as well as physical evidence.

Table III. Marketing Mix Analysis J Bank

No	Items	Analysis on J Bank	Analysis on Co.Create					
1	Product	Main products: Banking	Main product: Community Engagement					
		• Saving	Financial Class					
		Transaction	Product Iteration					
		• Lending	Website					
		• Investment	Forum					
		Priority Banking	WhatsApp groups					
		Account Management	Online events					
2	Place	Online	Offline events					
		Offline	Online events					
			Website & forum					
			WhatsApp groups					
3	Price	• Rp10.000 per month for general services fee	Free of charge					
		Rp500.000 per year for credit card fee						
4	People	Quarterly employee e-training	Thematic report					
		Thematic socialization	Regular customer service to each WhatsApp group					
		Half year performance measurement						
		Monthly performance and sentiment						
		report						
5	Promotion	Digital Marketing (ads, social media,	Digital Marketing (ads, social media, electronic					
3	Tromotion	electronic direct message, push	direct message, push notification, whatsapp					
		notification, whatsapp business,	business, website)					
		website)	Public Relations (press release, media package)					
		Merchants (online, offline, national)	Personal Selling (offline sales, service point staffs)					
		Public Relations (press release, media	Community Marketing (friend get friends program,					
		package)	special promo for Co.Create members)					
		<ul> <li>Personal Selling (offline sales, service</li> </ul>	Promo for Concrete Memoria)					
		point staffs)						
		• Direct Marketing (business to						
		business offer)						

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6	Physical Evidence	<ul><li>Offline booths</li><li>Debit Cards (m-Card &amp; x-Card)</li><li>Credit Card</li></ul>	•	Co.Create t-shirt
7	Process	<ul> <li>Operational expense efficiency</li> <li>Quality control for any product &amp; innovation</li> <li>Regular customer listening to existing, potential, and past users</li> </ul>	•	Occasional quality control to any event Community feedback Yearly customer listening to existing Co.Create members

External Analysis on the other hand uses Porter's Five Forces, Competitor analysis, SWOT analysis. Porters Five forces evaluates competitive forces affecting J bank including new entrants bargaining power of buyers and suppliers, substitutes and rivalry among competitors. Competitor analysis identifies the strengths and weaknesses of competition to improve J Bank's position in the market. Porter's Five Forces Model of Competitive Analysis, as discussed by Hill & Jones (2007), exemplifies how these forces elucidate the challenges of low profitability and potential market entry in an industry. These forces encompass competition among existing firms, the threat of new entrants, bargaining power of buyers and suppliers, availability of substitutes, and competitive rivalry. A thorough understanding of each force, both individually and collectively, is crucial for strategic decisions regarding market entry and enhancing competitive advantage. The intensity of these forces significantly influences the anticipated profitability levels within an industry (McGahan, 1997).

For the Threat of New Entrants, digital banking sector features lower entry barriers in contrast to traditional banking. Fintech startups can introduce digital banking services with minimal initial investment and infrastructure needs. Although regulatory compliance presents challenges, many newcomers are addressing these hurdles by securing requisite licenses and employing technology to ensure compliance. The growing consumer preference for digital banking services is stimulating market entry by new competitors, thereby heightening competitive pressures. J Bank itself has marked the unique selling preposition by introducing Co.Create to develop loyal customers.

For Bargaining Power of Suppliers, J Bank depends extensively on technology providers for software, payment processing, and cybersecurity. The bargaining power of these suppliers can be considerable, particularly when customers offer unique or indispensable services. Limited availability of alternative suppliers for essential technology solutions further enhances their bargaining power, potentially affecting costs and service standards for J Bank.

To mitigate risks and enhance capabilities, J Bank frequently engages in strategic partnerships with technology firms. This approach aims to enrich service offerings and reduce reliance on any single supplier.

For Bargaining Power of Buyers, customers of J Bank have elevated standards for service excellence, user experience, and pricing. This grants them considerable leverage since customers can readily shift to competitors that provide superior services or lower fees. The seamless transition between digital banking platforms implies that customer loyalty can be delicate, thereby amplifying their negotiating power. There is a growing demand among customers for personalized banking experiences, compelling J Bank to adjust its offerings to meet these evolving expectations.

For the Threat of Substitute Products or Services, the rise of alternate financial services like P2P loans, crypto-currency platforms and mobile money transfers puts traditional digital banking operations under pressure. Consequently, J Banks has to ponder over their business models and approaches towards customers from different angles. Consumers may on the other hand prefer competitors that deliver technologically advanced or inexpensive alternatives therefore making them vulnerable to potential substitutes.

For the Competitive Rivalry among Competitors, digital banks and fintech companies that have existed for some time are in a fiercely competitive environment. This is because each of them wants to outdo the other by providing distinct attributes, excellent customer service and groundbreaking solutions to their clientele. Consequently, competition among digital banks will become more intense as the market changes over time; requiring J Bank to be creative on a continuous basis. Moreover, while brand loyalty may play a role in this industry, the need for building trust and loyalty among customers is even more paramount in case of digital banks because customers' perception can easily be swayed by service quality or user experience.

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Competitor analysis is a structured method for assessing the strengths and weaknesses of existing and potential market rivals. It aids businesses in comprehending their competitive environment, identifying opportunities, and crafting strategies to improve their market standing.

J Bank encounters a competitive landscape populated by both traditional banks and innovative fintech companies. To sustain its market position, J Bank must prioritize enhancing customer experience, leveraging technology, and continually adapting to evolving market demands.

Table IV. Competitor Canvas of J Bank

Brand	Market Position	Product	Technology	Customer Experience	Customer Sentiment	USPs		
J Bank	Strong	Digital banking, saving, loans, investment	Advanced	User friendly interface	Positive	Seamless integration		
BJ	Emerging	Life centered banking	Innovative	Room to improve	Mixed	Lifestyle banking		
SB	Growing	Low-cost banking	Integrated	Digital savvy	Very Positive	Global reach		
Traditional Bank	Established	Comprehensive banking	Legacy system	Less agile Mixed		Trust and reputation		

Table V. Competitor Canvas of Community in Digital Banking Industry

Competitor Canvas of Community in Digital Banking Industry											
Brand	Market Position	<b>Customer Experience</b>	Customer Sentiment	USPs							
J Bank	Strong	Established community based	Positive	Traveling							
BJ	New entrant	Not regular engagement activities	Mixed	Lifestyle finance							
NBC	New entrant	Gimmick activities	Mixed	Focus on financial							

The company uses SWOT Analysis to consider its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

The researcher discovered some findings through SWOT analysis. The Strengths include a user-friendly app with unique features as well as strong community engagement through Co.Create that can fosters brand loyalty and advocacy. On the other hand Weaknesses are lack of physical branches as well as customer service issues; data knowledge & reporting process should be improved at Co.Create. Among others Opportunities entail growing digital banking adoption among younger consumers, potential collaborations with fintech companies such as e-commerce platforms.

J Bank operates in the fast-growing digital banking space of Indonesia where demand for these kind of banking tools is rising. This market consists of a combination of traditional banks improving their online services and new fintech players. J Bank's main targets are the millennial generation who like technology and would rather do their financial management on mobile apps that offer convenience, customization, advanced and other such features. In addition to this, J Bank should not ignore Gen Z, an emerging market because remaining relevant and aligned with present trends calls for agility as well as youthfulness.

What distinguishes J Bank from other competitors is its friendly user interface, creative properties as well as incorporating it into lifestyle. With this in mind, J Bank aims to create strong customer loyalty by providing an easy flow of bank services that relate easily with customers' day-to-day lives. It applies some digital marketing approaches such as social media engagements, influencer partnerships and targeted online advertising among others so that they can effectively communicate to the market and show what it offers differently.

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The Co.Create platform further differentiates J Bank from conventional and digital banking competitors by fostering community marketing. This platform can enhance customer loyalty amongst current users and possibly reactivate former users. Being strategically positioned in respect to digital banking industry landscape, J Bank leverages on its strengths while addressing its weaknesses to grab opportunities for growth. To sustain relevance in the changing financial services industry however, J Banks needs to focus more on innovation; customer experiences; and strategic alliances. All the same competitive pressures plus regulatory challenges must also be guarded against if growth is going to be sustained by it.

Finally, Threats include intense competition from new entrants into digital banking space, regulatory changes and potential cybersecurity threats.

Table VI. Implementation Plan of J Bank

No	Customer Stage	Activities	2025			2026				2027				
NU		Activities	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
1	Customer Decision Making	Co.Create based testimonial content for promotional channel  Developing referral code to invite new customers												
2	Customer Acquisition	Developing touch points for seamless organic acquisition  Increase customer service system  Track and monitor the organic acquisition source												
3	Community Marketing	Developing exclusive programs for Co.Create members  Offline & online events for community engagement  KPI & monitoring system for internal team												
4	Brand Advocation	Developing referral code to invite new customers  Enhance the Credit Card feature (Yay Points earnings & merchant												
		acquistion)  Activate customer listening to track the customer advocate												

To stop the declining number of organic customer acquisitions in business this study provides strategies based on four stages of customers: Enhance marketing to highlight ease of use and innovative features. Improve service quality and introduce attractive

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financial products. Expand Co.Create's engagement through diverse thematic events and collaborations with new communities for more creative production ideas (Kotler & Keller, 2007). Strengthen customer support and leverage positive testimonials to build a stronger brand reputation (Kotler, 2017).

J Bank can enhance its competitive edge by focusing on innovation, customer experience, strategic partnerships so that it is able to sustain growth within an evolving digital banking environment (Solomon, 2020).

### CONCLUSION

The key factor that influence customers are the recommendations from customers friends and family. Customers weigh up word of mouth experiences from the persons who have ever used J Bank among them. When they begin using J Bank regularly, becoming a member of Co.Create serves as a means to create brand loyalty among them.

In the other hand, the organic customer acquisitions number was decreasing in J Bank due to discontentment of customers with regards to its performance and how it responds to customer service issues. It makes users of J Bank and Co.Create not willing to refer others to the platform and this in turn decreases organics. However, the concept of Co.Create is valued by customers for its knowledge enrichment side and community benefits.

A strategic examination on how active community ratio correlates with organic acquisition growth at J Bank is done through internal and external analysis.

Internal analysis indicates that users of J Bank regard it as a reliable and secure platform for managing personal finance because they were part of developing it from inception onwards. The Co.Create program helps build customer loyalty making some users become brand advocates. Meanwhile external analysis reveals that J Bank has user friendly interface, innovative functionalities, and it fits into customers' everyday life aimed at building strong loyalty. It employs digital marketing techniques such as social media, influencer partnerships, online ads etc., are used for reaching out target audience. The Co.Create platform enhances customer loyalty while also helping bring back past users. Being well positioned in the digital banking market enables J Bank to play its strengths towards seizing opportunities for growth while addressing weaknesses through an emphasis on innovation, customer experience as well as strategic partnerships.

Based on the research findings, there are some recommendations to J Bank to provide business solution to increase organic customer acquisitions through community marketing effort as follows.

The first part in the customer decision making process, this research recommends J Bank could utilize storytelling from Co.Create members to share their stories and testimonials about using J Bank for promotional content. At the same time, J Bank can regularly track and monitor the organic acquisitions process for another business decisions in the future.

During the customer acquisitions, this research recommends to develop the more seamless customer acquisition touchpoints for new customers. In the same time, the customer service experience should be fixed and can be used for the new customers from the beginning to create better customer experience. Monitoring and tracking also needed to discover findings and insight during the process.

In Community Marketing, the research recommend to develop exclusive program for Co.Create members to provide them with privileges for being part of the community. At the same time, the the online and offline events with Co.Create members should be more frequent since the customers feel being engaged by joining the session. This session also invite and engage the local and international Co.Create members. The clear KPI for internal Co.Create team should be set to manage the service standard.

The last part, the Band Advocate, this research recommends to develop referral code to help the customers promoting J Bank to other users. Create customers closeness through customer listening and addressing their pain points and provide them back with solutions. And as additional findings, the Credit Card feature should be more emphasize since this feature is one of the most appealing product from J Bank. The customers need more exciting merchants and interesting Yay Points earning and spending mechanism.

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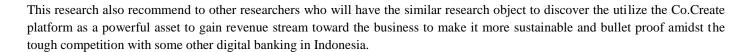
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