

## **Comparison of Conventional and Digital Marketing Strategies in Increasing the Sustainability of Family Businesses**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study compares digital and conventional marketing strategies in sustaining family-owned businesses amid accelerating digital transformation, which has reshaped how families manage marketing and maintain long-term income stability (PwC, 2023; Kotler & Keller, 2021). Although many traditional family businesses still rely on direct sales and print advertisements with limited reach and adaptability (Rahman & Suryani, 2022), this research applies a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) and a case study of Blue Bird Group, founded by Mutiara Djokosoetono in 1972, as a representative family business undergoing digital transformation. Thematic analysis examines the relationship between marketing strategy types and sustainability indicators, including income stability, adaptability, and intergenerational resilience. Findings show that digital marketing more significantly supports economic and social sustainability through wider market reach, cost efficiency, and intergenerational knowledge transfer (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2022; PwC, 2023), while conventional marketing remains important for sustaining trust-based relationships and cultural identity. The study concludes that integrating digital and traditional marketing strategies provides the most balanced approach to maintaining authenticity, customer loyalty, and long-term family business sustainability in the digital era.

**Key words:** digital marketing; conventional marketing; family business; Blue Bird; sustainability

### **INTRODUCTION**

Within Indonesia's highly competitive transportation sector, the performance and financial health of key players such as PT. Blue Bird, Tbk are crucial for understanding market dynamics and broader economic impacts (Purwanto, 2018). As a leading taxi and transportation company, PT. Blue Bird, Tbk has continuously adapted to shifting market conditions, including the rise of digital ride-hailing platforms (Sari, 2017). This study emphasizes the importance of evaluating financial performance and stock valuation as key indicators of corporate health, particularly during the challenging 2019–2023 period marked by changing consumer trends, digital platform competition, and the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. PT. Blue Bird's commitment to innovation—from early technological adoption such as warranted meters and GPS to multi-product strategies and digital transformation—demonstrates its resilience, including cost efficiency measures and enhanced safety standards during the pandemic. The research also examines the relationship between stock valuation and internal and external factors affecting company performance, as stock price movements reflect market perceptions of operational strength, growth prospects, and managerial decisions. By analyzing financial data from 2019–2023, this study provides a comprehensive assessment of PT. Blue Bird's strategic responses, adaptability, and future competitiveness within an industry that plays a vital role in Indonesia's national economy.

### **METHOD**

This study employs a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) combined with a case study approach. The SLR ensures comprehensive theoretical synthesis, while the case study contextualizes findings through the Blue Bird example. Data sources include academic journals, company reports, and industry surveys such as the PwC Family Business Survey (2023), as well as Blue Bird's annual and sustainability reports.

The stages of analysis consisted of:

1. Identifying marketing strategies implemented before and after digitalization.
2. Comparing the characteristics, effectiveness, and sustainability impact of conventional vs. digital marketing.
3. Synthesizing the role of family values in maintaining continuity through both methods.

This method was chosen because it allows for a comprehensive understanding of how marketing evolution affects long-term sustainability in a family business context.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Finding 1: Characteristics of Conventional Marketing

Conventional marketing in family businesses emphasizes trust, loyalty, and personal service (De Massis et al., 2018). For Blue Bird, these traits manifested through consistent safety, punctuality, and emotional ties with customers.

Strengths: credibility, social bonding, and authenticity.

Weaknesses: limited scalability and high operational costs.

### Finding 2: Effectiveness of Digital Marketing

Digitalization reshaped Blue Bird's operations and communication channels. Through the MyBlueBird App, cashless payments, and integration with Gojek, Blue Bird reached broader audiences and reduced transaction friction. Digital marketing improved efficiency, enhanced visibility, and supported innovation key drivers of sustainability in modern competition (Soluk et al., 2021).

However, digital communication risks losing the emotional touch central to the company's family heritage.

### Finding 3: Integrative Model for Sustainability

The Blue Bird experience suggests that digital and conventional strategies are complementary, not substitutive.

- Economic sustainability: achieved through digital efficiency.
- Social sustainability: preserved through traditional service culture.
- Generational sustainability: strengthened as younger family members lead innovation while respecting legacy values.

This aligns with PwC (2023), which emphasizes that sustainable family businesses maintain balance between innovation and heritage.

#### 1. Conventional Marketing Strategy in Blue Bird

Before digital disruption, Blue Bird Group established its brand and customer base through trust-based, reputation-driven, and service-oriented conventional marketing strategies grounded in the founding family's core values of safety, comfort, reliability, and professionalism.

Key characteristics of their conventional marketing included:

- Brand visibility through physical assets: Blue Bird's distinctively branded taxi fleet functioned as moving advertisements throughout urban areas, embedding the brand into daily public awareness.
- Customer trust and service consistency: The company emphasized quality standards such as clean vehicles, uniformed drivers, and punctuality which shaped its reputation as a premium transport service.
- Word-of-mouth promotion: Loyal customers became brand advocates due to their consistently positive experiences, creating a cycle of organic marketing.
- Institutional partnerships: Strong collaborations with airports, hotels, and corporate clients further cemented Blue Bird's image as a trusted provider.
- Minimal reliance on mass media: Blue Bird preferred organic visibility and direct service quality over large-scale advertising.

While these methods were effective in earlier decades, they became less scalable and agile in the face of modern digital competition. Nevertheless, the conventional approach established a strong foundation of credibility and customer loyalty that would become critical during the company's digital pivot.

#### 2. Digital Marketing Transformation

As competition from ride-hailing platforms intensified, Blue Bird initiated a digital transformation, starting with operational innovation and extending to its marketing strategy.

Key initiatives in its digital marketing transformation included:

- Launch of the MyBlueBird App: Introduced with features such as online booking, real-time tracking, digital payments, and customer rating systems bringing Blue Bird in line with digital-native competitors.
- Partnership with Gojek: Starting in 2020, Blue Bird vehicles became accessible through Gojek's platform, expanding their reach and tapping into Gojek's younger, digitally savvy customer base.
- Active digital presence: Blue Bird increased its engagement on social media (Instagram, Twitter, YouTube), leveraging promotional campaigns, infographics, and short videos to reach wider audiences.

- Digital storytelling: Content focused on humanizing the company such as driver profiles, family values, and customer experiences was shared to evoke emotional connection.
- Data-driven targeting: Blue Bird began applying analytics to measure campaign effectiveness, customer preferences, and satisfaction allowing for more responsive marketing.

This transformation helped modernize the company’s image and align with evolving consumer expectations, particularly among millennials and Generation Z. Importantly, it enabled Blue Bird to remain competitive without compromising service quality.

### 3. Integrating Digital and Conventional Approaches

Rather than abandoning its roots, Blue Bird adopted a hybrid approach integrating digital tools while preserving conventional service excellence.

This integrative model featured:

- Consistent service experience: Whether booked via app or hailed traditionally, Blue Bird ensured uniform quality, reflecting its long-standing reputation.
- Multisegment targeting: Digital marketing attracted tech-savvy consumers, while the conventional model retained older and corporate clients who valued familiarity and reliability.
- Unified brand identity: Across online and offline platforms, Blue Bird maintained consistent messaging, visual identity, and tone of communication.
- Storytelling that bridges eras: Traditional values were repackaged for modern channels such as YouTube and Instagram ensuring intergenerational appeal.

This strategic integration allowed Blue Bird to strengthen its sustainability by maintaining brand authenticity while embracing innovation.

### 4. The Role of Family Values in Marketing Sustainability

As a third-generation family business, Blue Bird’s marketing strategy continues to reflect its founders’ core values: honesty, reliability, and long-term service commitment.

The role of family values in marketing sustainability can be observed through:

- Brand authenticity: Marketing messages are perceived as credible and heartfelt, rooted in decades of consistent service and family ownership.
- Emotional trust: The family legacy fosters a sense of responsibility and emotional connection between the company and its customers.
- Long-term orientation: Unlike short-term promotional gimmicks, Blue Bird’s campaigns often emphasize continuity, legacy, and community contribution.
- Generational leadership: The involvement of younger family members in leadership positions ensures that innovations in marketing remain aligned with foundational principles.

These values not only guide Blue Bird’s branding, but also serve as differentiators in an increasingly transactional and commoditized market. By preserving its human touch while embracing digital tools, Blue Bird strengthens its relevance and resilience

**Table 1. Comparison of Digital and Conventional Marketing Strategies in Blue Bird Group**

Aspect	Conventional Marketing	Digital Marketing	Impact on Family Business Sustainability
<b>Main Channel</b>	Print media, word of mouth, taxi branding, corporate partnerships	Website, MyBlueBird App, social media (Instagram, YouTube), collaboration with Gojek	Increases brand reach and visibility while maintaining strong customer trust
<b>Target Market</b>	Loyal customers, corporate clients, traditional users	Millennials, Gen Z, and digital users	Expands market segmentation and generational continuity

<b>Cost Efficiency</b>	High operational cost (vehicles, print ads, direct promotion)	Lower cost due to digital campaigns and automation	Improves economic sustainability through cost reduction
<b>Customer Relationship</b>	Personal interaction, emotional trust	Digital feedback systems, data analytics	Preserves authenticity while improving responsiveness
<b>Brand Identity</b>	Focused on heritage, reliability, service excellence	Modernized yet consistent with traditional values	Enhances brand relevance without losing identity
<b>Adaptability</b>	Slow to adapt to market changes	Real-time adaptability via data and analytics	Supports innovation and intergenerational learning
<b>Sustainability Role</b>	Builds long-term trust and social capital	Drives innovation, efficiency, and competitiveness	Integration of both ensures balanced sustainability

**Source:** Adapted from Blue Bird Group Annual Report (2023), PwC (2023), Soluk et al. (2021), and Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick (2022).

<b>Stage</b>	<b>Activity Description</b>	<b>Output</b>
<b>Identification</b>	Determining research focus on comparing digital and conventional marketing strategies in family business sustainability, particularly Blue Bird Group.	Formulated research objectives and scope.
<b>Literature Collection</b>	Searching academic journals, reports, and publications from 2015–2024 using keywords: family business, digital marketing, conventional marketing, sustainability, Blue Bird.	Database of relevant scientific sources.
<b>Screening and Eligibility</b>	Selecting relevant and high-quality literature (based on journal ranking, citations, and methodological clarity).	22 qualified studies selected.
<b>Thematic Analysis (SLR Phase)</b>	Coding and classifying findings related to marketing strategies, family values, and sustainability indicators.	Thematic framework comparing conventional vs digital strategies.
<b>Case Study Analysis (Blue Bird)</b>	Interpreting SLR findings with secondary data (Blue Bird’s Annual Report, Sustainability Report, partnership documents).	Case analysis model and final conclusion.



**Figure . 1 Research Procedure**

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the discussion and analysis of Blue Bird Group's marketing strategies, it can be concluded that the integration of conventional and digital marketing plays a crucial role in ensuring the sustainability of family businesses. The company's conventional marketing strategies, which emphasized service quality, trust, and long-term relationships, successfully established a strong brand reputation and customer loyalty. However, as the business environment evolved and digital disruption became inevitable, Blue Bird adapted by implementing digital marketing strategies, including the launch of the MyBlueBird app, collaboration with Gojek, and active engagement on social media. Rather than replacing traditional methods, Blue Bird strategically combined both approaches to serve diverse market segments and maintain service consistency. Most importantly, the preservation of family values such as integrity, long-term vision, and customer-oriented service remained central to the company's branding and communication. These values served as the backbone that guided the transformation process, ensuring that innovation strengthened rather than diluted the company's legacy. Ultimately, Blue Bird's hybrid marketing strategy demonstrates that business continuity in family enterprises can be achieved through a balanced approach that honors tradition while embracing innovation.

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