

## Competitive Strategies of Maktour in Digital Competition and Strengthening the Ummah Economy

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### ARTICLE HISTORY

Submit:

9 May 2026

Accepted:

15 June 2026

Publish:

18 June 2026

Article Type:

Literature Review

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### ABSTRACT

**Introduction/Main Objectives:** The rapid development of digital platforms has transformed competition in the Hajj and Umrah travel industry by reshaping consumer behavior, marketing practices, and service delivery systems. This study aims to analyze the competitive strategies implemented by Maktour in responding to digital platform competition and to examine its contribution to strengthening the ummah economy. **Background Problems:** This topic is important because increasing digitalization has intensified competition among travel agencies, while studies integrating competitive strategy, digital competition, and the ummah economy remain limited. **Novelty:** The novelty of this research lies in the integration of strategic management and Islamic economics perspectives to explain how competitive advantage can support both business sustainability and socio-economic development. **Research Methods:** This study employs a qualitative descriptive-analytical approach using a literature review method. Data were collected from academic journals, company documents, official reports, and credible digital sources related to competitive advantage, digital transformation, and Islamic economics. **Findings/Results:** The findings reveal that Maktour adopts a multidimensional competitive strategy through service differentiation, digital marketing optimization, trust-based customer relationship development, and the integration of Islamic values into business practices. These strategies strengthen the company's competitive position by emphasizing premium services, spiritual guidance, and customer trust while adapting to technological changes. Furthermore, Maktour contributes to strengthening the ummah economy through employment generation, support for sharia-based business ecosystems, and multiplier effects in related sectors. **Conclusion:** The study concludes that sustainable competitive advantage in the Hajj and Umrah industry depends not only on technological adaptation and operational efficiency but also on spiritual values, service quality, and long-term customer trust.

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### KEYWORDS:

*Competitive advantage*

*Digital platform competition*

*Hajj and Umrah*

*Digital transformation*


*Ummah Economy*

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### ABSTRACT

**Pendahuluan/Tujuan Utama:** Perkembangan pesat platform digital telah mengubah dinamika persaingan dalam industri perjalanan haji dan umrah melalui perubahan perilaku konsumen, praktik pemasaran, dan sistem penyampaian layanan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis strategi kompetitif yang diterapkan Maktour dalam menghadapi persaingan platform digital serta mengkaji kontribusinya terhadap penguatan ekonomi umat. **Permasalahan Latar Belakang:** Topik ini penting karena digitalisasi telah meningkatkan intensitas persaingan antar biro perjalanan, sementara kajian yang mengintegrasikan strategi kompetitif, persaingan digital, dan ekonomi umat masih terbatas. **Kebaruan:** Kebaruan penelitian ini terletak pada integrasi perspektif manajemen strategis dan ekonomi Islam untuk menjelaskan bagaimana keunggulan kompetitif dapat mendukung keberlanjutan bisnis sekaligus pembangunan sosial-ekonomi. **Metode Penelitian:** Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain deskriptif-analitis melalui metode studi pustaka. Data diperoleh dari jurnal ilmiah, dokumen perusahaan, laporan resmi, dan sumber digital kredibel yang berkaitan dengan keunggulan kompetitif, transformasi digital, dan ekonomi Islam. **Temuan/Hasil:** Hasil penelitian

menunjukkan bahwa Maktour menerapkan strategi kompetitif multidimensional melalui diferensiasi layanan, optimalisasi pemasaran digital, pengembangan hubungan pelanggan berbasis kepercayaan, serta integrasi nilai-nilai Islam dalam praktik bisnis. Strategi tersebut memperkuat posisi kompetitif perusahaan melalui layanan premium, pembinaan spiritual, dan pembangunan kepercayaan pelanggan sambil beradaptasi terhadap perubahan teknologi. Selain itu, Maktour berkontribusi terhadap penguatan ekonomi umat melalui penciptaan lapangan kerja, pengembangan ekosistem bisnis berbasis syariah, serta efek pengganda ekonomi pada sektor terkait. **Kesimpulan:** Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa keunggulan kompetitif berkelanjutan dalam industri haji dan umrah tidak hanya ditentukan oleh adaptasi teknologi dan efisiensi operasional, tetapi juga oleh nilai spiritual, kualitas layanan, dan kepercayaan pelanggan jangka panjang.

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## 1. Introduction

The rapid growth of digital platforms has significantly transformed competition in the Hajj and Umrah travel industry, particularly in marketing, customer engagement, and service delivery systems. In this context, digitalization is no longer merely instrumental; it has become a key determinant in shaping organizational competitive advantage through the integration of technology, data, and user experience (Joppe, 2018). The competitive characteristics of the Hajj and Umrah travel industry indicate that this sector operates not only within a market-oriented economic framework, but also within a socio-religious sphere that emphasizes trust, moral legitimacy, and spiritual responsibility.

Competitive advantage in this industry is determined not only by cost efficiency or service differentiation, but also by the institutional capacity to build religious credibility, service integrity, and trust-based relationships with pilgrims as integral components of the spiritual experience provided (Battour & Ismail, 2016). Consequently, digital transformation in this industry produces a paradoxical condition: while increasing efficiency and transparency, it also has the potential to erode the traditional trust relationships that have historically been the main foundation of Hajj and Umrah travel agents.

As the world's most populous Muslim country, Indonesia plays a strategic role in the global Hajj and Umrah industry. Data from the Ministry of Religious Affairs shows that the number of Indonesian Umrah pilgrims has increased significantly. This shows that the number of Indonesian Umrah pilgrims has increased significantly over the past decade, surpassing one million pilgrims annually. (Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2026). In the post-pandemic period, the trend recovery indicates a return to growth driven by high public demand and increased accessibility of digital information systems. Furthermore, internet penetration in Indonesia, which has surpassed 70 percent of the population, has accelerated the adoption of digital platforms in the search, selection, and purchase of Umrah tour packages. This situation reinforces the shift in consumer behavior from relationship-based trust to technology-mediated system-based trust.

These developments have intensified competition between conventional Hajj and Umrah travel agents and various digital platforms and online travel aggregators offering greater pricing efficiency, information transparency, and service accessibility. The increased

level of competition in the Hajj and Umrah travel industry reflects emerging competitive pressures generated by technology-based companies and increased consumer bargaining power resulting from easier access to information and transparent digital services.

Such conditions require companies to develop adaptive strategies through service innovation, enhanced differentiation, and digital technology integration to maintain competitive advantage in an increasingly dynamic business ecosystem (Cennamo, 2021). However, the classical competitive advantage approach, which emphasizes cost leadership and differentiation, is becoming inadequate in explaining contemporary dynamics characterized by the dominance of digital platforms, network ecosystems, and the strategic role of data as a critical resource.

In this context, travel agencies like Maktour face a strategic challenge in integrating traditional advantages based on reputation and service quality with adaptive digital capabilities. Maktour is not only required to survive in market competition but also to articulate its role in strengthening the ummah economy. In this study, the concept of ummah economy is not understood narrowly as economic activities limited to the Muslim community; rather, it is conceptualized as an economic system oriented towards distributive justice, collective welfare, social sustainability, and the achievement of blessings through the integration of moral and spiritual values into economic activities (Anisa, 2024).

This perspective is in line with the principles of Islamic economics, which emphasize the balance between the material and spiritual dimensions, as stated in the Qur'an: "And seek, with what Allah has given you, a residence in the afterlife, and do not forget your share in this world..." (Al-Qur'an, Surah Al-Qasas [28]: 77).

This verse emphasizes that economic activity in Islam is not solely oriented toward maximizing profits, but also toward social benefits and moral responsibility. In the context of the Hajj and Umrah industry, this implies that the competitive strategies developed by travel agents aim not only to achieve market dominance but also to make substantive contributions to the economic empowerment of the Muslim community, including job creation, strengthening Sharia-compliant business networks, and a more inclusive distribution of economic value.

Previous studies have mostly focused on digital marketing and customer satisfaction in the tourism industry, while attention has been paid to how Hajj and Umrah travel agents integrate digital competitiveness with strengthening the Muslim economy. (Verhoef et al., 2021). Furthermore, studies specifically examining how Hajj and Umrah travel agents build competitive advantages amidst digital platform competition while contributing to the Muslim economy are still rare, especially in developing countries like Indonesia.

This literature gap highlights the need for a more integrative approach to understanding the dynamics of the Hajj and Umrah industry in the digital era. Therefore, this study seeks to address this gap by analyzing the competitive strategies implemented by Maktour in response to digital platform competition, while also exploring its contribution to strengthening the Muslim economy. By integrating perspectives from Strategic Management and Islamic economics, this study offers a more comprehensive analytical framework to explain the situation. How strategic for Hajj and Umrah travel agents in designing a business model that is not only adaptive to technological changes but also in line with Islamic economic principles and the evolving needs of contemporary Muslim society.

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to the development of competitive advantage literature by extending its application to the context of the digital-based religious services industry. Practically, this research offers strategic implications for Hajj and Umrah travel agents in designing evolving business models.

## 2. Review Library and Development Hypothesis

The study of Competitive Advantage places competitive advantage as the primary foundation for explaining an organization's superior performance in a competitive industry. The classical strategic management theory developed by Michael Porter argues that companies can achieve a superior position through three generic strategies: cost leadership, differentiation, and focus. Cost leadership emphasizes operational efficiency to generate competitive prices, while differentiation focuses on creating unique value that is difficult for competitors to imitate, and focus concentrates on serving specific market segments through a specialized approach. These strategies serve as instruments for building sustainable competitive advantage, namely the company's ability to maintain a superior position over the long term through a combination of resources, capabilities, and strategic positioning. However, the evolution of the digital economy has challenged this classical assumption by demonstrating that competitive advantage no longer resides solely within the company's internal boundaries, but is increasingly shaped through interactions within complex digital networks and ecosystems (Koch & Windsperger, 2017).

The transformation towards a digital economy has broadened the meaning of competitive advantage from mere internal efficiency to the capacity to adapt within a platform-based ecosystem. The concept of the platform economy emphasizes that value is no longer created linearly within traditional value chains, but rather through multi-actor collaboration within an interconnected digital ecosystem. Digital platforms function as intermediaries connecting producers, consumers, and complementary service providers, resulting in a dynamic mechanism for co-creating value (Hein et al., 2020). This dynamic has given rise to the phenomenon of digital disruption, which refers to structural transformations that shift conventional business models toward technology- and data-driven systems. Therefore, competition is no longer limited to products or services but extends to ecosystem dominance, network effects, and the platform's ability to regulate user interactions (Rietveld & Schilling, 2021).

A key characteristic of digital platform competition lies in the emergence of online service ecosystems that enable the integration of various services into interconnected systems. These ecosystems create interdependence among economic actors and generate competitive dynamics characterized by both collaboration and competition (Cozzolino et al., 2021). In this context, digital trust becomes a crucial factor in maintaining platform sustainability, as interactions are largely virtual and data-driven. Trust is built through transparency, transaction security, digital reputation, and a consistent user experience. Consequently, competitive advantage in the platform era is determined not only by internal organizational resources but also by a company's ability to manage relationships, data, and trust within the digital ecosystem.

The Islamic economic perspective introduces an additional dimension to understanding competitive strategy, particularly through the concept of strengthening the people's economy. The people's economy is oriented not only toward material growth but

also toward the distribution of prosperity, social justice, and the achievement of blessings in economic activities. Sharia business principles emphasize ethics, honesty, and social responsibility as fundamental foundations of business practices. This perspective expands the concept of competitive advantage from purely economic superiority to value-based excellence, where a company's success is measured not only by profitability but also by its contribution to the collective well-being of the Muslim community. Islamic-based economic empowerment includes strengthening the real sector, developing halal businesses, and establishing an inclusive and sustainable business ecosystem. Previous empirical studies have shown that research on the Hajj and Umrah travel industry is still dominated by analysis of service quality, pilgrim satisfaction, and digital marketing strategies. Some studies examine digital transformation in the tourism industry and its implications for consumer behavior, while others emphasize the role of digital platforms in creating market efficiency and increasing service accessibility (Grossmann et al., 2021). Research on digital ecosystems further demonstrates that a company's success in the digital era is heavily influenced by its ability to adapt to rapid and complex environmental changes (Subramaniam, 2020).

A summary of previous research can be concluded as follows:

<b>Project</b>	<b>Focus</b>	<b>Findings</b>	<b>Gap</b>
(Koch & Windsperger, 2017)	Competitive Advantage in the Digital Economy	Network and Ecosystem Based Advantages	Not Specific to the Religious Industry
(Hein et al., 2020)	<i>Platform ecosystem</i>	<i>Creating shared value in the digital ecosystem</i>	Limited integration with Islamic economics.
(Rietveld & Schilling, 2021)	<i>Platform competition</i>	<i>Network effects and platform dominance</i>	The Hajj and Umrah sector is still underexplored.
(Grossmann et al., 2021)	<i>Two-sided platform competition</i>	Dynamics of digital platform competition	The spiritual aspect has not been discussed enough.
(Subramaniam, 2020)	<i>Digital ecosystem strategy</i>	Data-driven and connectivity strategies	Limited connection with the concept of the ummah economy.
(Poniatowski et al., 2022)	<i>Multi-sided platform</i>	Platform as a complex ecosystem system	Limited focus on the religious services sector.
(Zahra et al., 2025)	<i>Porter's Strategy</i>	The relevance of generic strategies in the digital era	Competition between platforms is not yet well integrated.
(Verhoef et al., 2021)	<i>Digital transformation</i>	Changes in digital consumer behavior	Limited analysis of competitive advantage.

A major limitation in the existing literature lies in the lack of comprehensive integration between competitive advantage theory, digital platform dynamics, and the concept of the ummah economy in the context of the Hajj and Umrah industry. Most previous studies remain fragmented and have not sufficiently examined how competitive strategies can systematically contribute to strengthening the ummah economy. This gap creates an opportunity for the development of a conceptual model that links competitive strategy to business sustainability and its broader implications for community-based Muslim economic development.

This study's conceptual framework is based on a causal relationship between competitive strategy and strengthening the Islamic economy. Competitive strategy is positioned as a key variable influencing the formation of competitive advantage through service differentiation, operational efficiency, and digital adaptation. This competitive advantage then drives business sustainability, reflected in customer loyalty, organizational stability, and long-term growth. Business sustainability then contributes to strengthening the Islamic economy through job creation, distribution of economic value, and strengthening the Sharia-compliant business ecosystem. This model emphasizes that competitive strategy not only generates corporate profitability but also generates broader socio-economic implications within an Islamic economic framework.

### **3. Method**

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive-analytical research design to gain an in-depth understanding of the competitive strategies implemented by Maktour, a Hajj and Umrah travel agency, in responding to the dynamics of digital platform competition and its contribution to strengthening the Muslim economy. The qualitative approach was chosen because this study is not oriented towards statistical measurements, but rather on the interpretation of business phenomena and digital transformation in the context of a value-based religious services industry grounded in Islamic principles. This research was conducted to analyze Maktour's competitive strategy under real-world conditions. However, no informants, Maktour management, customers, or stakeholders were involved.

Data collection was conducted through documentation studies and a comprehensive literature review of various academic sources and institutional data related to the research object. This study did not use primary data, namely interviews, observations, and documentation field, on the other hand, this study focuses on review customer, report regulations, analysis competitors and resources. Supporting data was also obtained from international journals, scientific publications, and official reports to strengthen the theoretical and contextual analysis of this study.

Data analysis was conducted using descriptive qualitative analysis techniques through the stages of data reduction, categorization, data presentation, and interpretive conclusion drawing. The analytical process was directed at identifying competitive strategy patterns used by companies in building competitive advantage through service differentiation, digital transformation, strengthening customer trust, and integrating Islamic values into business practices. Empirical findings were then analyzed in relation to competitive advantage theory, platform ecosystem theory, and the concept of strengthening the people's economy from an Islamic economic perspective. To ensure the validity and credibility of the research, source triangulation was conducted by comparing various academic references, official documents,

and institutional sources to produce a more objective, consistent, and scientifically accountable interpretation.

#### 4. Results and Discussion

##### a. *Maktour overview*

Maktour is one of Indonesia's leading Hajj and Umrah travel agents with a strong reputation for providing quality and trustworthy pilgrimage services. Maktour moment This facing strategic challenges in integrating traditional advantages based on reputation and service quality with adaptive digital capabilities. Maktour is not only required to survive in market competition but also to articulate its role in strengthening the ummah economy. In this study, the concept of ummah economy is not understood narrowly as economic activities limited to the Muslim community; rather, it is conceptualized as an economic system oriented towards distributive justice, collective welfare, social sustainability, and the achievement of blessings through the integration of moral and spiritual values into economic activities.

Maktour's presence in the Hajj and Umrah industry reflects the company's ability to maintain a competitive position amid increasingly complex market dynamics, particularly driven by the expansion of digital platforms and shifting consumer behavior. Its business orientation, which focuses not only on profitability but also on providing optimal pilgrimage services, provides the company with strategic differentiation compared to other travel agencies.

The company profile shows that Maktour has developed a business model centered on premium service quality supported by competent human resources, particularly in the areas of religious guidance and Hajj pilgrimage assistance. The organizational structure is designed to support service effectiveness, from travel planning and administrative processes to the implementation of pilgrimage activities in the Holy Land (Travel Hajj & Umrah | Maktour Official & Trusted, 2026). The company's competitive advantage is further reflected in its ability to maintain its reputation through service consistency, regulatory compliance, and strengthening its trust-based brand image. In an industry highly susceptible to issues of credibility and service security, trust is a crucial factor strengthening Maktour's strategic position in market competition.

The company's vision is to become a superior, professional, and trusted Hajj and Umrah travel provider, committed to providing high-quality services to pilgrims. This orientation places service quality and customer satisfaction as top priorities in every business activity. The company's mission is formulated through a commitment to providing Hajj and Umrah services in accordance with Sharia principles, improving the quality of religious guidance, and building long-term relationships with pilgrims through integrity-based services (Travel Hajj & Umrah | Maktour Resmi & Terpercaya, 2026). The emphasis on Islamic values and business ethics demonstrates that the company's strategy focuses not only on economic aspects, but also on the spiritual and social dimensions that characterize the religious travel industry.

Maktour's services include a variety of customized Hajj and Umrah packages targeting various market segments. Service differentiation is evident through the provision of premium packages that emphasize comfort, quality accommodation, and intensive religious guidance provided by experienced professionals. Furthermore, the

company develops services tailored to the needs of pilgrims, including religious consultations, manasik assistance, and ongoing after-sales service programs. Digital service integration is gradually being adopted to improve communication efficiency and information accessibility for pilgrims, although a personalized approach is maintained as part of the strategy to build emotional closeness and customer trust (Travel Hajj & Umrah | Maktour Official & Trusted, 2026).

These service characteristics indicate that Maktour competes not primarily through pricing, but rather through a differentiation strategy based on service quality and value-added offerings. This approach is consistent with the concept of sustainable competitive advantage, which emphasizes the importance of creating unique value that is difficult for competitors to imitate. Consequently, the company's strategic position in the Hajj and Umrah industry is determined not only by operational capabilities but also by its success in integrating service quality, spiritual values, and pilgrims' beliefs as key sources of competitive advantage.

b. *Competitive Strategies Implemented by Maktour*

The competitive strategy implemented by Maktour demonstrates a strong orientation toward service differentiation as a primary source of competitive advantage. This approach is reflected in the quality of service that prioritizes the pilgrim's experience, from the preparation stage to the actual implementation of worship activities in the Holy Land. Service quality has been shown to significantly influence customer satisfaction and loyalty, while also being a crucial factor in building trust in both digital and offline service environments (Kim & Yum, 2024). The exclusivity of services offered through premium packages, comfortable accommodations, and personalized service reflect a differentiation strategy that is difficult for competitors to imitate. The role of professional and experienced religious guides is a strategic element in creating added spiritual value, transforming the service experience from merely technical to a process of spiritual transformation.

Digital marketing strategies have been developed in response to changing consumer behavior in the platform economy era. Utilizing social media, official websites, and various digital channels allows companies to build broader and more interactive communications with prospective Hajj pilgrims. Digital branding has become a crucial instrument in shaping perceptions of a company's quality and reputation in the digital space, particularly in the service industry, which relies heavily on trust. Digital transformation has been shown to strengthen companies' competitive advantage through platform optimization and technology integration into business strategies (Liao et al., 2024). Digital promotional strategies through websites, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, WhatsApp, and direct marketing have significantly increased public awareness and boosted sales of Sharia-compliant tourism services. This digital-based promotional approach strengthens interactions between companies and consumers while supporting the development of a trust-based image of religious services (Fadilah et al., 2025). This phenomenon demonstrates that competitive advantage is no longer solely determined by internal organizational resources, but also by a company's ability to manage visibility and engagement within the digital ecosystem.

A customer trust-based strategy is a key pillar in maintaining Maktour's business sustainability. The company's reputation, built through consistent service and positive

pilgrim experiences, is a highly valuable intangible asset in the religious travel industry. Legal compliance and adherence to government regulations further strengthen the company's legitimacy, especially amidst the prevalence of fraudulent Umrah travel agents in Indonesia. Service security aspects, including guaranteed departure times and a transparent pricing system, contribute significantly to building pilgrim trust. Existing literature shows that service quality has a direct relationship with trust, which in turn influences customer loyalty in both digital platforms and service-based industries (Syifa et al., 2023).

An Islamic values-based strategy represents a unique form of differentiation not widely available among competitors operating in digital platform-based industries. Services based on Sharia principles reflect the company's commitment to maintaining integrity and business ethics in accordance with Islamic values. This approach not only strengthens the trust of Hajj pilgrims but also creates a spiritual image that reinforces the company's identity as a trusted and reliable provider of religious travel services. The integration of spiritual values into business strategy expands the concept of competitive advantage beyond the economic dimension to achieving blessings and social sustainability. This perspective aligns with the development of resource-based and dynamic capability-based theories of competitive advantage, which emphasize the importance of value creation, innovation, and context-based differentiation (Digital Services and Competitive Advantage, 2022).

This competitive strategy demonstrates Maktour's adoption of a multidimensional approach that integrates service differentiation, digital transformation, trust-building mechanisms, and Islamic values into a cohesive strategic framework. This combination creates a competitive advantage that focuses not only on business performance but also on sustainability and contribution to the broader ummah economic ecosystem in an era of digital platform competition.

c. *Competitive Advantage Analysis*

Competitive advantage analysis shows that Maktour has the ability to build sustainable competitive advantage through a combination of service differentiation and strengthening trust-based values. Sustainable advantage is determined not only by operational efficiency, but also by the company's ability to create unique value that remains difficult for competitors to imitate in the long term. Michael Porter's perspective emphasizes that sustainable competitive advantage is achieved when a company is able to maintain a strategic position through consistent differentiation and superior customer value creation (Michael E. Porter, 1985). These characteristics are reflected in Maktour's services, which offer not only travel products but also structured pilgrimage experiences with substantial spiritual value.

Brand reputation is a key pillar in building a company's competitive advantage. Reputation, built through service consistency, credibility, and customer experience, serves as a quality signal in service industries characterized by high levels of uncertainty. Studies show that brand reputation significantly influences perceived quality and customer trust in the context of experience-based services (Marone et al., 2020). A strong reputation not only increases market attractiveness but also serves as a barrier to entry for new competitors, thus strengthening a company's long-term strategic position.

Customer loyalty is a direct consequence of a successful differentiation strategy and the process of building trust. Customer loyalty in the religious travel industry is based not only on functional satisfaction but also on the emotional and spiritual attachments developed throughout the pilgrimage experience. Previous studies have shown that service quality and trust are significantly related to customer loyalty in digital ecosystems (Kim & Yum, 2024). This loyalty becomes a source of competitive advantage because it generates repeat customers, positive word-of-mouth communication, and long-term marketing cost efficiency.

The premium services offered by Maktour are a concrete manifestation of a differentiation strategy within Porter's theoretical framework. Premium services include high-quality accommodations, exclusive amenities, and more intensive religious guidance than industry standards. This quality-based differentiation allows the company to set relatively higher prices without losing competitiveness, as the perceived value exceeds the costs. This approach is consistent with a differentiation strategy, which emphasizes unique value creation as the primary source of competitive advantage.

Therefore, Maktour's competitive advantage development aligns with Porter's theoretical framework, particularly regarding differentiation and focus strategies. The company targets specific market segments that prioritize service quality and spiritual pilgrimage experiences, while simultaneously developing differentiation through premium services and spiritual values. This combination results in a competitive advantage oriented not only toward profitability but also toward sustainability and legitimacy in the religious travel industry.

d. *Challenges of Digital Platform Competition*

The dynamics of competition in the digital era indicate that the Hajj and Umrah travel industry faces increasingly complex competitive pressures due to the emergence of digital platforms and online travel agents (OTAs). Price wars have become a major challenge, as platform-based companies tend to offer lower prices through digital efficiency and economies of scale. This strategy forces conventional travel agents to adjust their cost structures or strengthen service differentiation to remain competitive. Existing literature shows that price competition in the platform economy often leads to pressure on profit margins and transformations in market structure (Cozzolino et al., 2021).

The emergence of OTA travel platforms has broadened the competitive landscape by providing easier, more transparent, and integrated access to services within a single digital platform. Platform-based business models enable consumers to compare prices, amenities, and customer reviews in real time, thereby increasing their bargaining power. This requires companies like Maktour to compete not only on price but also to strengthen their value proposition through service quality and trust-building mechanisms. Studies on platform competition indicate that competitive advantage in the digital era is determined by a company's ability to adapt within the platform ecosystem and leverage network effects (Hein et al., 2020).

The phenomenon of digital disruption has accelerated structural change in industries by shifting traditional business models toward technology- and data-driven systems. This disruption not only impacts how companies operate but also how consumers access and evaluate services. Digital transformation has been shown to shift

the logic of competition from resource-based to platform-based competition, where competitive advantage is determined by the ability to integrate technology and service innovation (Monfort et al., 2025). Changes in consumer behavior are a direct consequence of the development of digital technology. Consumers are becoming increasingly rational and information-oriented, relying heavily on online reviews and digital reputations in their decision-making processes. Preferences for accessibility, information transparency, and speed of service are driving companies to continuously adapt their strategies. Research shows that digital transformation significantly impacts the customer journey and customer expectations across various industry sectors (Cennamo, 2021).

This competitive pressure demonstrates that a company's success in the Hajj and Umrah industry is no longer solely determined by internal organizational factors, but also by its ability to adapt to external dynamics within the digital ecosystem. Therefore, an effective competitive strategy must integrate service differentiation, leverage digital technology, and strengthen trust-based values as a strategic response to the challenges of evolving platform competition.

e. Contribution to Strengthening the People's Economy

Maktour's contribution to strengthening the Muslim economy can be analyzed through its role in creating jobs and stimulating economic activity in the religious services sector. The company's operational activities involve various workforce categories, including administrative staff, religious guides (muthawwif), marketing personnel, and external partners such as transportation and accommodation providers. Job creation occurs not only directly within the company but also indirectly through the involvement of various supporting sectors. Existing literature indicates that the tourism and travel sector contributes significantly to employment and local economic growth (Marone et al., 2020).

The company's contribution to the development of the Islamic economy is reflected in the integration of Islamic principles into all business activities. Business practices based on halal values, honesty, and justice create an economic ecosystem that is not only productive but also ethically oriented. This approach aligns with Islamic economic principles, which emphasize the balance between material gain and spiritual blessings (barakah). Studies show that the halal industry, including religious travel services, has become a strategic sector driving the growth of the global Islamic economy (Pham et al., 2020).

The contribution to the Muslim business ecosystem is clearly visible through the involvement of various Muslim entrepreneurs in the Hajj and Umrah service value chain. Maktour's business activities are interconnected with sectors such as hospitality, halal culinary services, transportation, and other supporting industries based within the Muslim community. Effective marketing strategies in the Hajj travel industry also contribute to increased pilgrim loyalty and long-term business sustainability, thereby strengthening economic growth in the religious travel sector and generating broader added value for the Muslim community (Tamirano & Zen, 2023). These interactions create an interconnected economic ecosystem that mutually reinforces the position of business actors within the Islamic economic network. The development of such an

ecosystem is crucial for strengthening the collective competitiveness of Muslims amidst the dominance of global platforms shaped by digital capitalism (Adamec et al., 2021).

The resulting economic impact can also be explained through the concept of the multiplier effect, where economic activity generated by the religious travel industry creates a ripple effect across various sectors. Pilgrims' spending during religious travel stimulates growth in the transportation, trade, services, and halal-based creative industries. This multiplier effect strengthens the contribution of the Hajj and Umrah industry to the national economy and the broader Muslim economy. Previous studies have shown that the multiplier effect in the tourism sector can increase community income and expand economic distribution (Verhoef et al., 2021).

f. Discussion and Theoretical Implications

The findings of this study indicate that the competitive strategy implemented by Maktour not only generates business excellence but also makes significant socio-economic contributions within the context of the Muslim economy. Interpretation of the findings suggests that service differentiation, trust-building mechanisms, and the integration of Islamic values are key factors in establishing a sustainable competitive advantage. These findings reinforce the argument that in a trust-based service industry, intangible dimensions such as reputation, spiritual values, and customer experience play a more dominant role than price alone. Interpretation from study This prove that This proves that the quality of spiritual services is far more valuable to consumers than price wars. This success is achieved through product differentiation, strong credibility, and the implementation of Islamic values, all of which simultaneously contribute to advancing the Muslim economy . The Hajj and Umrah service industry relies heavily on trust. Intangible factors *such* as reputation, quality of service, and guaranteed comfort are key attractions .

The relationship with Competitive Advantage theory shows that the classic framework proposed by Michael Porter remains relevant, although it requires extension in the context of the digital economy and the religious industry. The differentiation strategy emphasized in this study has proven effective in creating unique value that is difficult for competitors to imitate. The company's focus on specific market segments with distinct spiritual needs also reflects the implementation of Porter's focus strategy.

The development of competitive advantage theory in the context of digital religious journeys demonstrates that competitive advantage is no longer solely economic, but also encompasses spiritual and social dimensions. The integration of Islamic values with business strategy produces a new form of excellence that can be conceptualized as spiritual-based competitive advantage, a form of superiority built through trust, blessings, and religious legitimacy. This perspective expands the resource-based view by incorporating intangible religious-based values as a source of competitive advantage. The dynamics of digital platforms further demonstrate that competitive advantage in the Hajj and Umrah industry is inseparable from a company's ability to adapt within the digital ecosystem. The integration of differentiation strategies and technology utilization has become a crucial factor in maintaining organizational relevance amidst digital disruption. Previous studies have confirmed that digital transformation has shifted the competitive paradigm from resource-based competition to ecosystem-based competition (Jacobides et al., 2018).

The theoretical implications of this study demonstrate the need to develop a more contextual model of competitive advantage in industries based on religious values. Such a model must not only accommodate economic and technological dimensions but also integrate spiritual, social, and ethical dimensions as integral components of business strategy. This contribution is expected to enrich the literature on strategic management, particularly in the field of Islamic economics and the religious tourism industry in the digital era.

## 5. Conclusion

This study confirms that the competitive strategy implemented by Maktour in the Hajj and Umrah industry is not only oriented towards achieving business excellence, but also towards strengthening value and sustainability within the ummah's economic ecosystem. The findings indicate that a service differentiation strategy, realized through premium service quality, professional religious guidance, and systematically managed spiritual experiences, is a key source of sustainable competitive advantage. This approach is consistent with the Competitive Advantage framework, which emphasizes the importance of creating unique value as a basis for maintaining a strategic position in industry competition.

Recommendation strategy in study This that is company must Integrating digital marketing strategies, customer trust-building mechanisms, and Islamic values further strengthens the development of multidimensional competitive advantages. These advantages are reflected not only in customer loyalty and brand reputation, but also in the company's ability to adapt to the increasingly complex dynamics of digital platform competition. The findings suggest that differentiation based on quality and spiritual values is a more resilient strategy than a price-based approach in responding to competitive pressures on digital platforms.

The contribution of this study shows that The quality of spiritual services is far more valuable to consumers than price wars. This success is achieved through product differentiation, strong credibility, and the application of Islamic values, all of which simultaneously contribute to advancing the Muslim economy . The Hajj and Umrah service industry relies heavily on trust. Intangible factors *such* as reputation, quality of service, and guaranteed comfort are key attractions .

The theoretical implications of this study lead to an extension of the classical concept of competitive advantage into a more contextual approach appropriate for industries based on religious values. The integration of differentiation strategy, digital transformation, and spiritual values produces a new form of superiority that can be categorized as spiritual-based competitive advantage, a form of superiority built on trust, religious legitimacy, and blessings. This concept enriches the strategic management literature by incorporating non-economic dimensions as sources of competitive advantage in the digital era.

This study's limitations lie in its focus on a single company case study, thus limiting the generalizability of the findings. Furthermore, the qualitative approach employed relies heavily on the depth of available data and the researcher's interpretation. Therefore, future research is recommended to develop a comparative study among Hajj and Umrah travel agents, using a quantitative or mixed-methods approach, and further examine the role of digital technology in shaping competitive advantage in the religious travel industry.

Overall, this study emphasizes that the success of competitive strategies in the Hajj and Umrah industry is not only determined by economic and technological capabilities, but also by the integration of values, beliefs, and spiritual dimensions as the main foundation for achieving business sustainability and strengthening the ummah's economy in the era of digital competition.

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