



Business Strategy Analysis in Increasing Sales of Dates in Bandar Lampung

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to analyze the impact of business strategies on increasing date sales in the city of Bandar Lampung. The study uses a quantitative method with a descriptive approach to identify the strategies implemented by date sellers and their influence on consumer purchasing decisions. Data was collected through direct observation, interviews with date shop owners, and sales data from date shops in Bandar Lampung over a specific period. The results show that date sales significantly increased during the month of Ramadan compared to other months. However, other factors such as pricing, promotions, and marketing strategies also play a crucial role in influencing consumer purchasing decisions. This research provides recommendations for business owners to focus more on product diversification and marketing innovations to boost sales throughout the year, not just during Ramadan.

INTRODUCTION

Business activities are fundamental pursuits aimed at achieving specific objectives, particularly in the realms of production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services to fulfill human needs and desires. These activities can be undertaken by individuals or groups and may manifest in various forms, such as corporations, organizations, or other business entities. Economically, businesses are often characterized as ventures that necessitate the investment of capital and labor to yield profits. Such enterprises encompass a wide range of activities, including trade, manufacturing, and services, and play a crucial role in the economy by generating employment opportunities, enhancing the production and distribution of goods and services, and fostering economic growth. According to Atraub and Attner, as cited in Nawawi (2022), a business can be defined as an organization engaged in the production and sale of goods and services aimed at generating profit for consumers. Goods, in this context, refer to tangible products that can be perceived by the senses, while services are actions that deliver value to consumers or business operators (Yusanto & Widjayakusuma, 2002).

In today's globalized environment, the emergence of numerous new businesses has intensified competition across various sectors. Entrepreneurs are compelled to act swiftly and decisively to ensure their businesses thrive amid such competitive pressures. An understanding of customer preferences is critical, as this knowledge informs the development of effective marketing strategies that enable companies to satisfy consumer demands and remain competitive within the marketplace. Marketing has emerged as a pivotal component of business success, significantly influencing both progress and potential failures. To attract and retain consumers, businesses must focus on delivering exceptional service and high-quality products that meet customer expectations, as consumer satisfaction serves as a benchmark for a company's success (Rusmadi,





2016). Effective marketing strategies not only aim to promote products but also to foster customer satisfaction and loyalty, thereby ensuring the sustainability and growth of the business.

The survival and growth of a business can be measured by its sales performance, characterized by consistent and increasing sales over time. Sales, which are integral to any business, result from strategic efforts designed to fulfill consumer needs and desires, ultimately generating profits (Marwan, 1991). A marketing mix strategy—including product, price, promotion, and place—can enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty, ensuring long-term viability in the marketplace (Pawitra, 1993). In Indonesia, a burgeoning market offers substantial business opportunities, motivating the development of enterprises across various sectors (Hasoloan, A., 2018). A comparative analysis of consumer perceptions regarding the health benefits of date consumption reveals differing viewpoints between Indonesian and international audiences. Research conducted through Google searches with the keyword "Should we eat dates every day?" indicates a more skeptical attitude among Indonesian consumers compared to their international counterparts. For instance, an article from Cnbcindonesia (2022) cautions against overconsumption of dates, while Healthline (2022) highlights their numerous health benefits.

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) identifies India as the world's leading date importer, with Indonesia ranked fifth. In 2023, Indonesia's date imports reached 56.74 thousand tons, primarily sourced from Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates. Notably, the consumption of dates experiences a pronounced spike during Ramadan, a trend observed in Bandar Lampung, where sales increase dramatically during this holy month. However, sales generally decline post-Ramadan, prompting researchers to investigate the underlying factors influencing these fluctuations. The research seeks to analyze the business strategies employed to enhance date sales in Bandar Lampung and assess their impact on sales growth, consumer decisions, and overall business development. It aims to bridge existing knowledge gaps while providing valuable insights for businesses navigating this unique market landscape.

LITERATURE RESEARCH

A. Business Strategy

Business strategy encompasses long-term plans and policies aimed at achieving company goals through effective production and marketing activities. Defined by various scholars, including Allan in Suwarso (2018) and Joewono (2012), it involves creating competitive advantages in specific markets. Business strategies typically include cost leadership, differentiation, and focus strategies (Opan, 2021). Strategic management integrates decisions across various functions to exploit opportunities and achieve organizational success (David in Opan, 2021). Key performance indicators, as outlined by djkn.kemenkeu.go.id (2017), include revenue, profit, sales growth, market share, and customer satisfaction, essential for evaluating business performance (Sofjan Assauri, 2013).

B. Sales

Sales is defined as the process of exchanging goods or services from a company, primarily involving the marketing and finance departments. This exchange generates revenue, which is the price charged to buyers (Soemarso, 1999). Types of sales include trade selling, missionary selling, technical selling, new business selling, and responsive selling (Basu Swastha, 1998). Sales involve several stages: preparation, identifying potential buyers, preliminary approach, making sales, and after-sales service, including warranties and customer support (Basu Swastha, 2019). Sales methods can be categorized into direct (store and out-of-store) and indirect (mail, telephone, and automated sales) (Basu Swastha, 2019).

C. Previous Research

The reviewed studies focus on using both online and offline marketing strategies to boost sales in the fruit business. Many, like Syahira et al. (2023) and Sari & Susilo (2023), emphasize social media and e-commerce platforms such as Instagram, WhatsApp, Shopee, and Tokopedia. Other studies highlight the importance of improving product quality and partnerships to enhance distribution, as seen in the work of Nasiron et al. (2022). Additionally, strategies such as price reductions and promotions, as discussed by Glanz & Yaroch (2004), play a role in increasing consumer interest.





My research on date sales in Bandar Lampung aligns with these findings, especially in the use of digital marketing. However, my study places a greater focus on the impact of online platforms, particularly during peak seasons like Ramadan. While previous studies discuss general fruit businesses, my research looks deeper into the specific challenges and opportunities faced by date sellers, using SWOT and IFE/EFE analysis to understand how internal and external factors drive sales growth.

METHOD

A. Methods and Types of Research

This study adopts a qualitative descriptive research approach, as defined by Bogdan and Taylor (as cited in Moleong, 2000). Qualitative research generates descriptive data through written or spoken words derived from observed behaviors. Descriptive research seeks to accurately depict various phenomena (Moleong, 2000). Its purpose is to systematically outline findings in alignment with actual field conditions. This research investigates the role of business strategies in enhancing date sales in Bandar Lampung, emphasizing the natural characteristics of data sources (Sukmadinata, 2010).

B. Types and Sources of Data

In this research, qualitative data is utilized, which is characterized by non-numeric information that conveys the complexity of phenomena (Kuncoro, 2021). Such data, collected via interviews, observations, and open-ended surveys, enables an in-depth understanding of human behaviors and interactions. The study incorporates both primary and secondary data sources. Primary data, obtained directly from field research through interviews and questionnaires, includes insights from shop owners, while secondary data complements this by utilizing existing literature and documents related to SWOT analysis and the shops involved (Nazir, 2019; Sugiyono, 2019).

C. Data Analysis Techniques

The theoretical framework of this study establishes a basis for examining the business strategies aimed at enhancing date sales in Bandar Lampung. This framework encompasses key theories and concepts necessary for a thorough analysis of the research problem, visually represented in Figure 3.5, which outlines the core components and their interrelations. Data analysis techniques involve a systematic approach to organizing and interpreting data gathered from interviews, field notes, and documentation. This process includes categorizing data, synthesizing it into coherent patterns, and identifying significant elements for further study, ultimately leading to understandable conclusions. The researchers employed qualitative analysis to interpret the data, focusing on SWOT analysis and the operational contexts of Bahagia Kurma Shop, Kurma Jakarta Trading Shop, and Kurma Morotai Shop. The inductive reasoning method used in this study enables a progression from specific observations to broader theoretical insights regarding these shops.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Data and information from research sources

The data collection for this research was conducted through direct observation and in-depth interviews with shop owners between July 11 and July 24, 2024. Participants included a 61-year-old high school graduate from CV. Jakarta Trading, interviewed on July 11; a 54-year-old with a bachelor's degree from PT. Kurma Bahagia, interviewed on July 18; and a 27-year-old bachelor's degree holder from Kurma Morotai, interviewed on July 24. This methodology allowed for the gathering of qualitative insights directly from key stakeholders in the date retail sector.

B. Jakarta Trading Date Shop

The following section provides a comprehensive overview of the Jakarta Trading Date Shop, based on in-depth interviews conducted with the owner. Established in 2004 in Bandar Lampung, this shop is well-regarded by the local community around North Betung Bay. The owner, at 61 years of age, emphasizes transparency and competitive pricing in his business strategy, which includes collaborations with local Hajj and Umrah travel agents. Notably, his son operates a branch in Jakarta with cold storage facilities, facilitating bulk





purchases and price negotiations. The SWOT analysis reveals critical insights into the shop's internal and external environments. The Internal Factor Evaluation (IFE) shows strengths, such as product quality and strategic partnerships, resulting in a total score of 2.90 for opportunities. Conversely, weaknesses, including a limited product range and reliance on word-of-mouth marketing, scored 2.00. The External Factor Evaluation (EFE) indicates opportunities for growth through e-commerce expansion, scoring 2.65, while threats from digital competition and economic fluctuations received a score of 2.00. This analysis underscores Jakarta Trading's potential to leverage its strengths and opportunities while addressing its weaknesses and external threats to enhance its market position effectively.

C. Bahagia Date Shop

The following section presents a detailed overview of Bahagia Dates Shop, based on insights gathered from interviews with the owner, Ayin Purnamasari. Established in 1945, Bahagia Dates Shop is one of Indonesia's oldest date distributors, originally founded by an ethnic Chinese family. Currently managed by Ayin, 54, along with her youngest child, Nova, a graduate from a prominent private university in Jakarta, the shop has earned a solid reputation for providing high-quality dates at competitive prices. Committed to selling dates of adequate quality and quantity, Bahagia operates as a key distributor for various date sellers throughout Indonesia. Although the shop is somewhat reserved in discussing sales and income, it has navigated various market trends over the years and is now beginning to expand its sales through WhatsApp to enhance customer reach, all while prioritizing customer satisfaction and business integrity.

The Internal Factor Evaluation (IFE) indicates strengths, such as product quality and competitive pricing, yielding an IFE score of 3.20 for opportunities, while weaknesses, including limited product range and high employee turnover, score 1.80. The External Factor Evaluation (EFE) reveals opportunities for e-commerce expansion and regional promotions, with a score of 2.53, and threats from digital competition and economic fluctuations scoring 2.00. These findings suggest that Bahagia Dates possesses substantial strengths to capitalize on available opportunities but must also address and manage its weaknesses and external threats to enhance overall performance.

D. Morotai Date Shop

The following section provides an overview of Morotai Date Shop, based on insights gathered from interviews with the owner, Umar Syarief. Established in 2020, Morotai Date Shop operates exclusively online and is managed by Umar, who, despite being relatively new to the market, has successfully attracted a diverse customer base from across Indonesia, including regions as distant as Aceh and West Nusa Tenggara. The shop focuses on various online sales platforms, including Tokopedia, Shopee, Tiktoshop, and Instagram, with a commitment to delivering high-quality dates and exceptional customer service. Morotai distinguishes itself through effective branding, utilizing safe packaging and psychological pricing strategies to make products appear more affordable to customers.

The Internal Factor Evaluation (IFE) shows strengths in product quality, competitive pricing, and effective social media promotion, yielding an IFE score of 3.70 for opportunities, while weaknesses, such as limited product range and high employee turnover, score 1.80. The External Factor Evaluation (EFE) reveals opportunities for e-commerce expansion and increased customer satisfaction with a score of 3.40, while threats from digital competition and economic fluctuations score 2.00. Overall, Morotai Date Shop possesses significant strengths and opportunities, though it must also address its weaknesses and threats to optimize its market position.

E. SWOT Analysis

Bahagia Date Shop

The SWOT analysis for Bahagia Date Shop highlights its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Key strengths include high product and packaging quality, competitive pricing, and extensive long-standing relationships, enabling the shop to capitalize on opportunities such as e-commerce platform expansion and regional promotions. The shop's SO strategy focuses on leveraging these strengths to increase market share and make prices more affordable. However, weaknesses like a limited product range and high





employee turnover present challenges. The WO strategy aims to address these by enhancing product variety and innovating offerings, alongside seeking bank credit for better cost efficiency.

External threats, particularly competition in the digital space and fluctuating imported product quality, necessitate a robust ST strategy, including enhancing competitiveness and improving customer service. The WT strategy emphasizes selecting reliable transportation services and prioritizing customer comfort to mitigate risks. Overall, the analysis suggests Bahagia Date Shop can strengthen its market position by leveraging its strengths while addressing weaknesses and threats strategically.

Jakarta Trading Dates

The SWOT analysis for Jakarta Trading Date Shop outlines its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Key strengths include good product quality, effective packaging, competitive pricing, and partnerships with Hajj and Umrah travel businesses. These advantages enable the shop to capitalize on opportunities such as expanding e-commerce platforms and regional promotions. The SO strategy focuses on utilizing these strengths to increase market share and enhance product variety.

However, the shop faces weaknesses like a limited product range and high employee turnover, which the WO strategy aims to address by improving product innovation and applying for bank credit to boost cost efficiency. Additionally, external threats such as fierce digital competition and fluctuating imported product quality necessitate a strong ST strategy focused on enhancing competitiveness and customer service. The WT strategy emphasizes improving transportation services and employee quality to enhance customer comfort and mitigate risks. Overall, Jakarta Trading Date Shop is well-positioned but must strategically navigate its challenges.

Morotai Date Shop

The SWOT analysis for Morotai Date Shop reveals key insights into its operational strengths and challenges. The shop boasts high-quality products, effective branding, competitive pricing, and flexible e-commerce strategies. These strengths position Morotai well to leverage opportunities such as expanding e-commerce platforms and engaging in field promotions, thereby enhancing market reach and customer satisfaction. However, weaknesses such as a limited product range and high employee turnover present challenges. The WO strategy aims to address these by increasing product variety and applying for credit to foster innovation. Additionally, Morotai faces external threats from fierce competition in the digital landscape and potential inconsistencies in imported product quality. The ST strategy focuses on enhancing competitiveness and customer service to mitigate these risks. The WT strategy emphasizes selecting reliable transportation services and improving employee quality to ensure customer satisfaction and operational efficiency. Overall, Morotai Date Shop has a solid foundation but must navigate these challenges strategically to sustain growth.

F. SWOT Based Dates Business Development Strategy

The SWOT analysis of Toko Kurma Jakarta Trading, Toko Kurma Bahagia, and Toko Palm Morotai indicates significant opportunities for growth within the date industry. To enhance their competitiveness, these shops should focus on several strategic initiatives. First, increasing digital presence through enhanced social media marketing and optimized e-commerce platforms is essential for reaching broader audiences. Additionally, product diversification, including organic and premium dates, can attract a wider customer base, particularly during peak seasons such as Ramadan.





Table 1. SWOT Matrix Image

<p>IFE</p> <p style="text-align: right;">EFE</p>	Strength (S)	Weakness (W)
	a. High quality of products and packaging	a. Limited product range
	b. Competitive price	b. High employee turnover rate
	c. Effective promotional and branding strategies	c. Variability in promotional effectiveness
	d. Efficient stock management and customer service	
	e. Flexibility in e-commerce platforms	
	f. Partnership with Hajj and Umrah travel	
	g. Extensive and long-standing relationships	
Chance (O)	SO Strategy	WO Strategy
a. E-commerce platform expansion	a. Increase the variety of products offered.	a. Increasing cost efficiency through credit applications.
b. Field campaigns and regional promotions	b. Expanding market share.	b. Creating better product innovation.
c. Increased customer ratings and satisfaction	c. Make prices more affordable.	c. Apply for credit to the bank to increase business capital.
d. Price flexibility	d. Make prices more affordable.	d. Apply for credit to the bank to increase business capital.
Threat (T)	ST Strategy	WT Strategy
a. Competition in the digital world	a. Develop competitiveness.	a. Select the transportation service used.
b. Imported product quality	b. Improve service to customers.	b. Attention to customer comfort.
c. Economic decline	c. Provide special discounts.	c. Selection of employee quality to improve service.

Moreover, supply chain optimization is crucial; by developing relationships with local suppliers, shops can reduce import costs and ensure a consistent product supply. Strengthening customer relationships through loyalty programs and feedback mechanisms will enhance customer retention and service quality. Finally, adjusting price strategies to maintain competitiveness during economic fluctuations is vital. Offering special promotions during high-demand periods will not only boost sales but also enhance customer satisfaction. By implementing these strategies, date shops in Bandar Lampung can solidify their market position and significantly increase their sales potential.

G. IE Business Strategy Matrix

To create the combined IE matrix, we plot the total Internal Factor Evaluation (IFE) and External Factor Evaluation (EFE) scores on a graph. In this case, the total IFE score is 3.18, while the total EFE score is 2.85. These values determine the placement of the date shop within the IE matrix, specifically indicating a position categorized as "Growth."



**Table 2. IE Matrix**

	High (3-4)	Medium (2-2.99)	Low (1-1.99)
High (3-4)	Growth	Growth	Growth
Medium (2-2.99)	Stability	Stability	Stability
Low (1-1.99)	Retrenchment	Retrenchment	Retrenchment

A growth strategy involves plans aimed at increasing a company's scale through various avenues such as market expansion, product innovation, diversification, acquisitions, or strategic partnerships. The primary objective of this strategy is to boost revenue and enhance market share, enabling the business to thrive in a competitive landscape. In the context of the date-selling industry, implementing a growth strategy may include leveraging the heightened demand during seasonal events like Ramadan, broadening distribution channels via e-commerce, introducing new varieties of dates, and forming alliances with the food sector. These initiatives aim to ensure sustainable growth by increasing sales, exploring new geographical markets, and fostering product innovation to meet diverse customer needs.

CONCLUSION

The analysis conducted on three date shops in Bandar Lampung—Jakarta Trading Dates Shop, Bahagia Dates Shop, and Morotai Dates Shop—yields several critical insights regarding internal and external factors, as well as a SWOT analysis for each establishment. The strategies employed to enhance date sales integrate both traditional and modern methodologies. Key initiatives include seasonal promotions during religious periods like Ramadan, leveraging e-commerce platforms such as Shopee and Tokopedia, and implementing competitive pricing strategies. Furthermore, enhancements in product packaging, customer service, and the cultivation of relationships with repeat buyers foster customer loyalty.

The strategies have a significant influence on sales performance, consumer decision-making, and overall business development. The integration of digital marketing and e-commerce has transformed buyer behavior, facilitating easier price and quality comparisons that lead to more informed purchasing decisions. Marketing strategies, psychological pricing, and trust-building through customer reviews have attracted more clientele. Each shop's SWOT analysis highlights distinct strengths and weaknesses, revealing areas for improvement such as digital presence and product diversification. Consequently, a growth strategy is recommended for all three shops to concentrate on market expansion, operational efficiency, and product diversification, ensuring competitive sustainability in an evolving marketplace. Enhanced digital marketing efforts and the introduction of premium product lines are essential for future success.

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