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Digital Marketing Strategies for Yo Bento (SME) to Strengthen Competitive Advantage

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ABSTRACT

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This study aims to analyze the application of culinary product marketing strategies at Yo Bento in increasing consumer buying interest and business competitiveness using SWOT analysis. The research method used was qualitative descriptive with data collection through observation, interviews, and literature studies. The results of the study show that the marketing strategies implemented include product development, affordable pricing, promotion through social media, and strategic location selection. In addition, the quality of service and menu innovation are also important factors in attracting and retaining customers. The implementation of this marketing strategy is considered to be able to increase sales and strengthen the business image in the midst of growing competition in the culinary business. Thus, the right marketing strategy can help culinary businesses in achieving business goals and increasing consumer satisfaction.

I. INTRODUCTION

The development of the culinary business in Indonesia continues to increase in line with the high demand of the public for food that is practical, economical, and has an attractive taste. This condition causes competition between culinary business actors to be more aggressive so that every business is required to implement an effective marketing strategy aimed at maintaining and increasing consumer interest. One of the culinary businesses in the SME sector that is growing in the midst of this competition is Yo Bento, a micro, small, and medium enterprise (SME) engaged in the culinary industry, especially in Japanese-style food products. As an SME, Yo Bento plays an important role in supporting local economic growth, creating job opportunities, and encouraging the development of creative culinary businesses in Indonesia. In addition, SMEs are considered to have flexibility in adapting to market trend and consumer preferences, especially among young people who are increasingly interested in modern and foreign-themed food products.

Yo Bento is a culinary business founded by Mr. Kellan in November 2019 and is located in Karet Kuningan, Setiabudi, South Jakarta. Fajerin et al. (2025) stated that some Indonesians are starting to like everything that smells or has a Japanese theme, namely bento. This business provides various types of bento with a favorite menu, namely bento chicken katsu. The location of Yo Bento is in the campus and office area which is a great opportunity because it is crowded with students and workers. In addition, campus activities and events also have a positive influence on increasing the number of buyers.

In the process of selling, Yo Bento faced several obstacles. One of them is the decrease in sales turnover on Saturdays and Sundays because lecture and office activities are on holiday, so the number of consumers has decreased. This condition caused Yo Bento not to accept purchases on Sundays and only opened business from Monday to Saturday to avoid financial losses. In addition, other obstacles, sales through the ShopeeFood and GoFood platforms have also decreased compared to the early days of the platform's existence. Various large promos provided by the platform are able to increase the number of online purchase transactions.

Seeing these conditions, the right marketing strategy is needed so that Yo Bento can maintain its business continuity and increase competitiveness in the culinary industry. Therefore, this study uses SWOT analysis to find out the application of culinary product marketing strategies to Yo Bento in facing business competition and increasing sales.

II. METHODS

This study uses a qualitative descriptive method. The research was conducted on Yo Bento, a culinary business located in Setiabudi, South Jakarta. This location was chosen because it is located in a campus and office area that can increase sales appropriately.

This research was conducted through an in-depth interview with Mr. Kallen as the founder of the Yo bento business. This interview provides a more detailed overview of the Yo bento business journey faced in the field. The information obtained from this interview became the basis for the preparation of marketing strategy research on Yo bento to analyze the advantages, weaknesses, opportunities, and obstacles to the business.



Figure 1. Interview on Yo Bento

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Analysis Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats

1. Strengths

Strengths are positive internal factors, competitive advantages, or distinctive resources that an organization or individual has that sets them apart from competitors and helps achieve goals. Wahidah et al. (2024) explained that strength can lie in several main aspects, namely guaranteed product quality, such as distinctive and delicious taste, and fresh raw materials. In addition, a strategic location can be a strength in itself, as it makes it easy for customers to access.

In the business, Yo bento has quality products, from juicy chicken, fresh vegetables, and rice that is always warm. The menu served by Yo Bento is also very varied, namely bento chicken katsu, bento chicken with teriyaki sauce, blackpepper, spicy, and others. This quality is what makes it a strength for culinary businesses to attract customers. The location of Yo Bento's business is also very strategic to attract customers to buy. The distance from the campus and the office is very close and easy to visit makes Yo Bento the right choice. In addition, the service provided to customers is friendly and fast, so customers feel satisfied when making a purchase.



Figure 2. Menu Yo Bento

Furthermore, the strength that Yo Bento has is that it is a very affordable price for students and workers. With affordable prices and quality products, Yo Bento is able to compete with culinary businesses around it. Therefore, quality products, strategic location, good service, and affordable prices are important aspects in maintaining customers' buying interest in Yo Bento.

2. Weaknesses

The weakness of Yo Bento as a culinary business that only focuses on chicken bento lies in the low threat of newcomers, so newcomers can easily imitate similar concepts and products at more competitive prices. This condition makes market competition very tight and requires businesses to continue to maintain the uniqueness and quality of their products. On the other hand, Yo Bento also has challenges in managing fresh raw materials, vegetables and side salads that are easily wilted. If the management of raw materials is not carried out properly, the risk of wasting raw materials and deteriorating food quality will increase and can have a direct impact on customer satisfaction and business image.

As an MSME-scale business, Yo Bento also faces limitations in production growth and taste standardization. The quality of food often depends on the ability of the individual who cooks because there are no truly structured SOPs, so the consistency of taste and service is not completely stable. In addition, marketing activities still tend to be limited to local areas and organic promotion due to the lack of digital marketing budget. Limited resources for creative content management also cause the promotional reach to be underdeveloped, making it difficult to compete with large culinary brands that have stronger visibility on online platforms and food delivery apps.

On the other hand, reliance on third-party food delivery platforms is also a challenge because high commission fees can reduce profit margins. As a result, the ability of businesses to expand their business, improve operational technology, and develop new menu innovations has become more limited.

3. Opportunities

Opportunities are external factors that can be used by a business to develop a business and increase competitiveness. According to Philip Kotler and Kevin Lane Keller (2016) stated that business opportunities can arise from changes in the business environment, technological developments, and increasing consumer needs and interest in a product. In the culinary business, opportunities can come from strategic locations, product innovation, and the use of digital marketing to reach a wider range of consumers.

Based on the results of observations and interviews with Mr. Kellan as the founder of Yo Bento, there are several opportunities that can be used to increase sales and strengthen business competitiveness. One of the main opportunities is business locations that are near campus and office areas. The location provides an advantage because it is crowded with students and office workers who need practical, fast food, and affordable prices. This condition makes Yo Bento have a clear and potential target market.

In addition, the many campus activities such as seminars, organizational meetings, competitions, and community events are also a great opportunity for Yo Bento to increase sales through the pre-order system and event consumption packages. The bestseller menu in the form of chicken katsu is also the main attraction because it is in great demand by consumers and can be used as a superior product in marketing promotions.

Other opportunities can be seen from new menu innovations carried out by Yo Bento, such as the launch of *the Chicken Egg Roll Special Bento* menu at affordable prices. The product innovation shows that Yo Bento continues to try to follow consumer tastes and create menu variations so that customers don't feel bored. According to research conducted by Sari and Nugroho (2022), product innovation in the culinary business can increase consumer buying interest and strengthen customer loyalty because consumers tend to be interested in trying new unique and interesting menus.



Figure 3. Yo Bento's New Menu

In addition to product innovation, the development of digital marketing and food delivery platforms such as GoFood and ShopeeFood is also a great opportunity for Yo Bento. Although online sales are currently declining, at the beginning of using the platform, Yo Bento sales increased due to massive promos from the application. This shows that digital marketing still has great potential if it is used optimally through social media such as Instagram and TikTok, providing attractive promos, and collaborating with local influencers to increase brand awareness.

The change in people's lifestyles that prefer practical and fast food is also an important opportunity for the development of Yo Bento. With good product quality, affordable prices, menu innovation, and strategic location, Yo Bento has a great opportunity to maintain customer loyalty while attracting new consumers amid growing culinary business competition.

4. Threats

Threats are external factors that come from outside the control of the business and have the potential to hinder business sustainability. Ramadhan et al. (2023) stated that threats in the culinary business generally stem from increasing competition from similar business competition, changes in consumer behavior, and instability in raw material prices that can affect the overall business operational continuity.

Based on the results of field observations, there are several culinary businesses operating around the Perbanas Institute area and targeting the same consumer segment as Yo Bento, namely students and office workers. These businesses include Warteg Tita Jaya and Kantin Tita Jaya which offers a variety of home side dishes with rice package prices starting from Rp10,000, Rumah Makan Padang Bintang Saudara which serves Minang cuisine with a price range of Rp10,000 to Rp30,000 per serving, and Kebab Monster Perbanas which is located right on Jl. Perbanas No. 26 with a menu price range ranging from Rp15,000 to Rp57,000. The four competitors not only offer competitive prices, But also a menu that is already very familiar on the tongue of everyday consumers. Ramadhan et al. (2023) explained that in order for culinary businesses to survive and compete with other similar businesses, business actors need to

carefully analyze external environmental factors to determine the most appropriate strategy in maintaining their customers' buying interest.

In addition to direct competition, another threat that is no less serious is the fluctuation in the price of raw materials. Ramadhan et al. (2023) also revealed that instability in raw material prices is often an external threat that suppresses the operations of culinary MSMEs, especially for businesses that rely heavily on fresh ingredients such as chicken, vegetables, and rice. If the selling price is forced to be increased to cover the increase in production costs, price-sensitive consumers such as students have the potential to switch to other more affordable dining options around them.

The latest threat comes from the weakening effectiveness of online messaging platforms. Based on the results of an interview with Mr. Kallen as the founder of Yo Bento, sales through GoFood and ShopeeFood decreased after the platform's massive promo program ended. Pedang (2020) stated that although *delivery* platforms such as GoFood have a positive impact on increasing the market reach of culinary businesses, excessive dependence on these platforms actually risks weakening business resilience when promotional incentives are no longer available, so business actors need to build a more independent marketing strategy.

3.2 Marketing Strategy Recommendations

Yo Bento can implement a marketing strategy by utilizing social media such as instagram and tiktok as promotional platforms. Through social media, Yo Bento can upload photos, videos, and interesting content about bento and teriyaki menus to make the products more widely known, especially among students and young people. The use of social media can also help increase brand awareness and make it easier for consumers to obtain information about products and promotions.



Figure 4. Instagram Yo Bento

In addition, Yo Bento can offer attractive promotions such as student discounts, special price discounts on certain days, or buy 1 get 1 programs to attract consumers and increase sales. These promotional strategies can encourage customers to try the products and motivate them to make repeat purchases.

Another strategy is to provide bundling packages consisting of food and drinks at a more affordable

price compared to purchasing them separately. Bundling packages can benefit consumers because they are more practical and economical, which can increase product attractiveness and help improve Yo Bento's sales.

IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research, it can be concluded that the marketing strategy implemented by Yo Bento has an important role in increasing business competitiveness in the midst of increasingly fierce competition in the culinary business. Good product quality, affordable prices, strategic business location, and fast and friendly service are the main factors that are able to attract consumer interest, especially students and office workers. In addition, the menu innovations that continue to be carried out also help Yo Bento maintain customer loyalty and create consumer interest in the products offered.

On the other hand, Yo Bento still faces several obstacles such as limited digital promotion, dependence on food delivery platforms, and competition with similar culinary businesses around the business location. The increase in raw material prices is also a challenge that can affect operational stability and business profitability. Therefore, a more optimal marketing strategy is needed, especially through the use of social media, providing attractive promos, and developing bundling packages to be able to expand market reach and increase sales.

Overall, the implementation of the right and sustainable marketing strategy can help Yo Bento maintain its business existence, increase customer satisfaction, and strengthen its business position in the midst of the increasingly competitive development of the culinary industry.

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LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

The participants involved in this research and article preparation process consist of Ani Triagustin, Fazhila Meisati, Titi Isnaini, Febi Laura, Dinda Zaskia, and Cindy Febrina as the research team members from Perbanas Institute. In addition, this research also involved Mr. Kellan as the owner of Yo Bento, who provided information and insights regarding the business conditions, operational activities, and marketing strategies implemented by Yo Bento through direct interviews. Furthermore, Pak Patria Laksamana, S.E., MBA., Ph.D. participated as the supervising lecturer who provided guidance, direction, and support throughout the preparation of this article.

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