



## Effective Marketing Strategy in Facing Tight Competition

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
<b>Corresponding Author:</b> Suharto E-mail: <a href="mailto:suharto@unkris.ac.id">suharto@unkris.ac.id</a>	<p>Increasingly fierce competition requires a planned and adaptive marketing approach to maintain and increase market share. This research aims to identify and analyze effective marketing strategies for companies in facing intense competition in the market. This research uses a qualitative approach with descriptive methods. The results of this research conclude that an effective marketing strategy in facing intense competition involves recognizing competitors, understanding the target market, continuous innovation, building a strong brand image, expanding market reach, collaborating with business partners, and superior customer service. Through this holistic approach, companies can build a solid foundation to survive and grow in a competitive market. Implementing this strategy provides opportunities to increase market share, increase customer loyalty, and create sustainable competitive advantages in an ever-changing business era.</p> <p><b>Keywords:</b> Marketing Strategy, Effective, Competition</p>

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### INTRODUCTION

Rapid developments in science and technology have significantly changed the business landscape in various sectors, especially in the field of trade. Rapidly increasing globalization is the main driver of increasingly fierce competition, not only at the domestic level but also in the global market. Business actors are faced with pressure to continue to adapt and innovate in order to survive and develop in this dynamic environment.

Intense competition forces business actors to consider appropriate strategies in order to overcome challenges and take advantage of emerging opportunities. Not just surviving, but also developing competitive advantages is essential. Companies must be able to integrate technological innovation into marketing, production and distribution strategies in order to meet changing market demands. In addition, the courage to invest in research and development is key in understanding market trends and creating innovative solutions.

In the realm of trade, marketing plays a central role as one of the most important aspects in managing a business. Marketing, as defined by Agustina Shinta (2011), is not just the activity of selling goods or services with added value, but involves a series of managerial activities involving companies from the process of creating, delivering, developing, to exchanging products or services from producers to consumers. Marketing is not just a buying and selling transaction, but rather a holistic approach that includes

strategies for creating added value, effective communication, attractive product offerings, and optimal exchange processes.

The importance of marketing is not only limited to the trade sector, but also includes the provision of services. Business actors, whether operating in the trade or service sectors, realize that marketing is a mandatory activity that must be carried out carefully. The marketing process not only impacts how products or services are sold, but also how companies interact directly with consumers. With a deeper understanding of marketing and hard work, it is hoped that business actors will be able to determine marketing strategies.

According to Kotler and Armstrong (2008), marketing strategy is an in-depth marketing knowledge in which a business seeks to create value and gain profits through its relationship with consumers. The efficiency of marketing strategies greatly influences the success of a business. This is because marketing strategies not only have a positive impact on the company's financial profits, but also form a brand image and strong relationships with consumers. The marketing process does not only involve sales activities, but also includes in-depth competitive analysis to increase the company's economic value.

Marketing strategy has a crucial role in business management, playing a role as a driver of growth and sustainability. Marketing planning or marketing plan is the main foundation in marketing strategy management, aimed at achieving predetermined marketing goals. A good and strategic plan will become a strong foundation for the company in carrying out its activities. In this context, companies can design a marketing mix that focuses on product, price, location and promotion. Comprehensive market analysis involving these aspects allows companies to understand the market response to the products being marketed. Thus, the results of this analysis can be the basis for formulating appropriate strategies to achieve competitive advantage in a dynamic market.

In research conducted by Poluan et al. (2019), the 4P marketing mix strategy, which includes product, price, place and promotion, has been proven to work smoothly. The research results show that the variables in this marketing mix strategy support and complement each other, playing their respective roles effectively in product marketing. These four elements are recognized as having a significant influence on product purchasing decisions, illustrating the importance of designing a holistic strategy to ensure an optimal balance between these aspects.

Widiyanto and Sugandha (2019) added another important dimension related to marketing mix strategy, namely the development of advanced strategies to achieve customer loyalty. Customer loyalty is considered the key to remaining competitive and even winning the competition in a competitive business environment. By focusing on developing strategies that can increase customer loyalty levels, companies can create sustainable relationships with consumers. In this context, marketing mix strategy not only plays a role in driving sales but also becomes the basis for building long-term relationships that are profitable for both parties. Thus, a deep understanding of the dynamics of marketing mix strategies can be an effective tool in designing more complex and sustainable marketing steps.

In the face of increasingly fierce competition, determining the target market is a crucial strategic step for the success of a company. Sarjita (2016) highlights the importance of efforts made by companies to win the competition, and one of the keys to this success is a deep understanding of the target market. Knowing the right target market allows

companies to design marketing strategies that are more focused and relevant to consumer needs and preferences.

The process of identifying target markets is not only limited to developing products or services that suit market needs, but also includes determining effective marketing communications. Successful marketing communications require a deep understanding of the target customer profile. By clearly determining the target market, companies can be more efficient in crafting marketing messages that can attract attention and meet the expectations of potential consumers. Therefore, an integrated marketing communications strategy with mature knowledge of the target market can be a driver of success in facing dynamic business competition.

This research aims to identify and analyze effective marketing strategies in facing intense competition. By exploring the marketing strategies successfully implemented by successful companies in fierce competition, this research seeks to provide in-depth insights to marketing practitioners and company managers. The benefit lies in providing strategic guidance that can assist companies in designing and implementing adaptive and competitive marketing approaches, enabling them to remain relevant and thrive amidst ever-changing market dynamics.

## METHOD

This research adopts a qualitative approach, which aims to achieve a deeper understanding of human perception of the reality they face. Qualitative approaches are flexible in their form, with a primary focus on preserving the full context of the data throughout the analysis process. In line with this approach, descriptive analysis, as explained by Sugiyono (2011), is applied as a research technique to produce significant conclusions from the data obtained. Observation, documentation and technical interview methods were used in data collection, while data reduction and triangulation techniques assisted researchers in processing, compiling and verifying the collected data.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the business world, the existence of competitors is something that is common, regardless of the type of business or industry. Currently, everyone has access to do business through various platforms such as shops, marketplaces, websites and social media, thereby increasing the number of competitors and making competition even fiercer. While competition can be a driver for continued innovation and growth, it can sometimes be intimidating, especially if the competitor is a larger business. As a businessman, the important key is being able to maintain your position and outperform your competitors. Therefore, an effective business strategy is needed to surpass competitors. Here are several ways to develop an effective business strategy to compete with competitors in order to surpass competitors

### **1. Get to Know Competitors**

To successfully compete with competitors and even surpass them, a very important first step is to properly identify the competitors in the market. A deep understanding of competitors' strengths, weaknesses, marketing strategies and market segmentation is a key foundation in designing an effective business strategy. A SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis of competitors can provide a comprehensive picture of your

company's relative position in the market, as well as identify opportunities that can be exploited and threats that must be overcome.

After identifying competitors, the next step is to develop a responsive and adaptive business strategy. This may involve adjustments in the products or services offered, competitive pricing, or innovation in marketing strategies. By understanding competitors in depth, companies can establish clear differentiation and build unique competitive advantages. Therefore, in-depth knowledge of competitors is not only the foundation, but also the catalyst for smarter and more effective strategic planning.

## **2. Get to Know Consumers**

After identifying competitors, the next step which is no less important is to know consumers well. Understanding consumer preferences, needs and behavior is the main foundation for developing a successful business strategy. In-depth market analysis, including consumer surveys, interviews, and market observations, helps companies understand consumer purchasing trends and patterns.

By knowing consumers in depth, companies can adapt their products or services according to the wants and needs of the market. This can involve developing new products, adjusting features or prices, as well as selecting appropriate distribution channels. Additionally, a strong understanding of consumer demographics, psychographics and purchasing behavior allows companies to design more targeted and effective marketing strategies. By focusing on satisfying consumers and their needs, companies can build strong and sustainable relationships with the market, which in turn will help them compete more effectively amidst increasingly fierce competition.

## **3. Show differentiation**

The third essential step in developing a business strategy to compete with competitors is to demonstrate clear differentiation. Differentiation involves developing advantages that differentiate a company's products or services from those offered by competitors. This could involve product innovation, superior customer service, better user experience, or even competitive pricing advantages.

In implementing differentiation, companies need to understand market needs and desires that have not been met or are not being met by competitors. This allows companies to stand out and offer significant added value to consumers. Differentiation can also be realized through creative marketing strategies and effective communication, so that consumers feel connected to the company's brand and products emotionally.

By demonstrating strong differentiation, companies can build a unique brand image and position themselves as players that not only compete in terms of product quality, but also provide a special experience to consumers. That way, companies can create a strong foundation to achieve and maintain market share, even in the midst of intense industry competition.

## **4. Continue to innovate**

The fourth step which is no less important is to continue to innovate. Innovation is the key to remaining relevant and competitive in an ever-changing business world. Companies need to have a culture of innovation that encourages employees to think creatively, create new solutions, and continuously develop products or services that can meet or even exceed consumer expectations. Innovating is not only limited to developing new products, but also involves changes in business processes, business models, and the way companies interact with consumers. Companies can leverage the latest technology, industry trends, and

customer feedback to identify innovation opportunities. By embracing change and maintaining openness to new ideas, companies can gain a sustainable competitive advantage.

Continuing to innovate also gives consumers the impression that the company is always trying to provide the best. This can improve brand image and strengthen relationships with customers. By adopting a proactive attitude towards innovation, companies can maintain their competitiveness in the market and anticipate changes that may occur. As a result, they have been able to remain a major player in the industry, even amidst increasing competition.

### **5. Strengthen brand image**

The fifth crucial step in developing a business strategy to compete with competitors is strengthening the brand image. Brand image is not only about how the company wants to be seen by consumers, but also about how consumers actually see and feel about the brand. Building a strong brand image requires consistency, clarity of values, and consumer trust in the brand. To strengthen their brand image, companies need to have a consistent message throughout their marketing and communications strategies. This consistency includes the logo design, colors, style, and language used. In addition, companies must focus on customer experience, providing superior service, and creating positive interactions with consumers.

Effective marketing strategies, including a strong branding campaign, can help create a positive perception of the brand in the eyes of consumers. Through creative promotions, participation in charitable activities, or involvement in social issues, a company can strengthen its brand image as a caring and committed entity. By having a strong brand image, companies can build consumer loyalty, increase brand appeal, and even create a loyal following, providing a significant competitive advantage in a crowded and competitive marketplace.

### **6. Strengthen presence in the online market**

The sixth step in developing a business strategy is to strengthen your presence in the online market. A strong presence in the online realm is very important in facing increasingly digital and global business competition. To achieve this, companies need to build effective marketing strategies to expand their reach and increase their visibility on online platforms. First of all, companies must have a website that is responsive and easy to access so that consumers can quickly find information about the products or services offered. In addition, an active presence on social media platforms is key in interacting with customers, building online communities and expanding potential networks.

Online marketing strategies also involve search engine optimization (SEO) to improve the ranking of a company's website in Google search results, making it easier for potential consumers to find. Digital advertising campaigns such as Google Ads or social media ads can be used to increase exposure and drive traffic to a company's website. By strengthening their online presence, companies can reach new customers, build a positive reputation, and increase sales. This strategy also opens up opportunities to participate in the global market and increase the company's competitiveness in the ever-growing digital era.

### **7. Expanding market reach**

The seventh step in developing a business strategy is expanding market reach. Expanding market reach means looking for opportunities to reach new market segments or

develop market share in unexplored areas. To achieve this, companies need to identify and explore potential new customers and market locations that have not yet been fully exploited. First of all, companies must conduct market research to identify potential market segments that are still not accessed or served optimally. This may involve demographic, geographic, or psychographic analysis to understand the needs and preferences of potential new consumers. In addition, companies can also evaluate global markets to look for international expansion opportunities.

The next step is to adapt the company's products or services to suit the characteristics and needs of the new identified market segments. These adjustments may include aspects such as product features, pricing, or even marketing strategies that better suit new market trends. In implementing the strategy to expand market reach, technology and innovation play an important role. The use of online platforms, expansion through e-commerce, or collaboration with local business partners in new regions are some of the methods that can be used to achieve this goal. By expanding market reach, companies can access new market shares, increase sales volume, and seize greater growth opportunities. It also helps in creating a diversified business portfolio, which can be an effective defense strategy in the face of market fluctuations.

#### **8. Looking for partners**

The eighth step in developing a business strategy is to look for partners who can strengthen the company's position and support growth. Looking for partners is a strategic approach to utilize resources and expertise that the company may not have on its own. Business partners can be suppliers, distributors, or even strategic partners who help the company achieve its business goals. The business partner search process begins with evaluating the company's needs and shortcomings. Partner selection must be in line with the company's strategic objectives, and collaboration must provide significant added value. The right business partner can provide access to new markets, innovative technology, or more efficient distribution channels.

Apart from that, looking for partners can also involve industry networks or business associations. Involvement in the business community can open the door to potential collaboration and building sustainable relationships. By choosing partners who are in line with the company's vision and mission, collaboration can provide mutual benefits and increase competitiveness. The key to a partner search strategy is effective and transparent communication. Companies need to form relationships that are mutually beneficial and based on trust. By searching for the right partners, companies can expand their footprint, take advantage of opportunities they might not be able to access on their own, and strengthen the foundation for long-term growth.

#### **9. Provide the best service**

The ninth step in developing a business strategy is to provide the best service to customers. Superior customer service not only creates customer satisfaction, but also builds loyalty, enhances brand reputation, and creates positive experiences. The best service involves various aspects, starting from product availability, responsiveness to customer questions, to managing complaints quickly and efficiently. Companies need to understand customer needs and expectations and design strategies to meet or even exceed these expectations. Providing friendly, fast and personal service can create close relationships with customers. The use of technology such as chatbots or online customer support platforms can also improve accessibility and responsiveness.

The importance of providing the best service can also be seen from a marketing perspective. Satisfied customers have a higher likelihood of providing positive recommendations to others, which can contribute to customer growth and brand popularity. Apart from that, best service also helps in retaining customers, reducing churn rates, and increasing customer lifetime value. In the competitive business world, providing the best service is not only a necessity, but also a strong differentiation. Companies that consistently provide the best service can build a positive brand image and win the hearts of customers, which is the key to long-term success in the face of intense competition.

## CONCLUSION

In developing an effective business strategy to face intense competition, companies need to carry out a series of planned and integrated steps. First, recognizing competitors and in-depth understanding of the target market is the main foundation for designing relevant strategies. Furthermore, companies must continue to innovate to remain competitive and maintain a competitive advantage. Building and strengthening a unique brand image is also an important step, providing a foundation for creating positive relationships with customers. Expanding market reach, both geographically and through penetrating new markets, allows companies to access more opportunities and diversify business portfolios. Collaboration with business partners can be a smart strategy to utilize additional resources, while providing the best service to customers is the final but crucial step. Superior service not only creates customer satisfaction, but also builds loyalty and a strong brand reputation. Developing a holistic and adaptive business strategy, including aspects of marketing, innovation, brand image and customer service, is the key to facing complex and dynamic competition in today's business market. Companies that are able to implement these steps well will be better prepared to achieve and maintain sustainability and growth in an increasingly competitive market.

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