



MARKETING STRATEGY OF TOFU PRODUCTION BUSINESS IN IMPROVING SALES PERFORMANCE IN PERCUT SEI TUAN DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to analyze the marketing strategies of tofu production businesses in improving sales performance in Percut Sei Tuan District, Deli Serdang Regency. The study employed a qualitative method with a case study approach involving five tofu factories: Wak Fendy, JW, Ega, Wak Ir, and Eza. Data were collected through interviews, observations, documentation, and questionnaires distributed to owners, employees, and customers. The data analysis utilized the SWOT framework to identify internal factors (strengths and weaknesses) and external factors (opportunities and threats), summarized into IFAS and EFAS matrices. The results revealed that the total IFAS score was 6.20 and EFAS score was 8.56, indicating that the tofu factories possess strong internal conditions and are capable of effectively leveraging external opportunities. The SWOT analysis places the business position in Quadrant I, suggesting an aggressive growth strategy. Recommended strategies include maintaining product quality, offering competitive pricing, expanding distribution networks, optimizing digital marketing, and strengthening customer relations. This study is expected to serve as a valuable reference for tofu entrepreneurs and local governments in formulating policies to support the development of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the food sector.

Keywords: Marketing Strategy, SWOT, IFAS, EFAS, Tofu Business

INTRODUCTION

Marketing activities undertaken by businesses, whether small, medium, or large, are a key factor in enhancing business sustainability and growth. Marketing plays a crucial role in introducing products, building relationships with consumers, and increasing sales volume. According to Kotler and Armstrong (2022), marketing focuses not only on the sales process but also encompasses efforts to understand consumer needs and create added value that can deliver customer satisfaction. In an era of increasingly fierce business competition, implementing the right marketing strategy is key to a business's success, ensuring its survival and sustainable growth.

One business sector that makes a significant contribution to the local economy is the soybean processing industry, particularly tofu production. Tofu is a popular staple food due to its high protein content, ease of processing, and affordability. In Percut Sei Tuan District, Deli Serdang Regency, the tofu industry serves as a primary source of income for the local community. According to data from the Deli Serdang Cooperatives and MSMEs Office (2023), there are approximately 25 small-scale tofu factories operating with an average production capacity of 100–500 kg per day.

Despite this significant market potential, most tofu businesses in the region still face various challenges in marketing their products. Based on preliminary observations by researchers (2025), there has been a 20–30% decline in revenue over the past year. Furthermore, only around 10% of tofu factories utilize digital media for promotion

and sales, while the majority still rely on conventional marketing methods such as direct sales to traditional markets or through agents. Increasingly fierce competition from packaged tofu products from large companies also adds to the challenges for small businesses in maintaining their market share.

Tjiptono (2023) defines marketing strategy as a comprehensive and integrated marketing plan that provides guidance on the activities necessary to achieve company goals. In the context of small businesses, implementing an appropriate marketing strategy is not only related to increasing sales but also to the business owner's ability to adapt to changes in the business environment, technology, and consumer behavior. One relevant method for analyzing and determining marketing strategy is a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis. This analysis helps businesses understand the internal strengths and weaknesses, as well as the external opportunities and threats facing the company in the competitive environment.

This research is urgently needed in three key areas. First, the social aspect, as approximately 500 workers are directly involved in the tofu industry's production activities in the Percut Sei Tuan area. Second, according to Bank Indonesia data (2023), MSMEs in the food sector contributed 5.7% of North Sumatra's GRDP. Therefore, marketing plays a crucial role in developing strategies. The core of marketing activities focuses on product quality, pricing, promotion, and distribution. From this explanation, it can be concluded that an effective marketing strategy is essential for tofu entrepreneurs in the Percut Sei Tuan District to increase sales and maintain business sustainability. Without the right strategy, small businesses will struggle to compete in a dynamic market and risk declining productivity and revenue. Therefore, this study focuses on how marketing strategies and SWOT analysis can be applied to optimize sales performance in tofu production businesses in the region. Based on the background of the problem that has been described, the author is interested in conducting research with the title "Tofu Production Business Marketing Strategy In Increasing Sales Results In Percut Sei Tuan District".

RESEARCH METHOD

The research used was qualitative research. According to Sugiyono (2021), qualitative methods are used to examine the natural conditions of an object. The researcher acts as the key instrument, data collection techniques are triangulated (combined), data analysis is inductive, and the research results emphasize meaning rather than generalization. This type of research is field research. According to Moleong (2021), field research aims to directly observe a phenomenon in its natural state and record in-depth field findings for further analysis using qualitative data analysis techniques.

The approach used was a case study, as this research specifically focuses on one object of study: the marketing strategy of a tofu production business in Percut Sei Tuan District, Deli Serdang Regency. This approach allows the researcher to explore in-depth the internal and external factors influencing the marketing strategy using a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis, thus gaining a comprehensive understanding of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats faced by the tofu factory.

Data collection techniques were conducted through observation, interviews, documentation, and questionnaires. Primary data were obtained from direct interviews with tofu factory owners and employees, while secondary data were obtained from supporting documents, literature, and related agency data. The scale used was a Likert scale technique designed to test respondents' level of agreement with a statement or question. The level of agreement generally has a gradation statement from very positive

to very negative and is divided into assessment scores, namely Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Less Agree (3), Agree (4) and Strongly Agree (5). Respondents were asked to circle the multiple choice number or make a check mark in the table provided for their assessment.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of the research conducted, which began with a general overview of tofu factories in Percut Sei Tuan District, including their conditions and locations, the strategies used, and the results achieved. Furthermore, interviews with several sources, including factory owners, employees, and regular customers, were conducted to identify internal and external factors within tofu factories in Percut Sei Tuan District. The following are some of the identified internal and external factors.

Description of Respondent Identity Based on Gender

This study involved 25 respondents, consisting of factory owners, employees, and several customers of tofu factories in Percut Sei Tuan District.

Table 1. Respondents by Gender

No.	Categori	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1.	Male	19	76
2.	Female	6	24
Total		25	100

Internal Factor Analysis Summary

The research results show that the tofu factory in Percut Sei Tuan District has several key strengths that support its business sustainability. 1) Consistent product quality is a key advantage because the entire production process is well-maintained, from raw material selection to the printing stage. 2) Affordable product prices make local tofu competitive in the market and attract customers from various backgrounds. 3) The business's strategic location, close to commercial and residential centers, facilitates distribution and operational efficiency. 4) The availability of skilled workers who understand the production process plays a crucial role in maintaining product quality stability. 5) Good customer relationships through responsive communication strengthen consumer loyalty and ensure business sustainability.

In addition to its strengths, the tofu factory in Percut Sei Tuan District also has several weaknesses that need to be addressed, such as: 1) Promotion has not been implemented optimally, as marketing still relies on repeat customers without a planned promotional strategy. 2) Product packaging is still simple and lacks a compelling brand identity, reducing consumer appeal and the potential for market expansion. 3) Lack of product innovation limits the variety of tofu offered and makes it less able to meet dynamic market tastes. 4) Social media has not been optimally utilized as a means of promotion and communication with consumers in the digital age. 5) Production volume remains limited due to insufficient labor, equipment, and operational time to meet large-scale demand.

Table 2. Internal Factors Analysis Summary

IFAS	Weight	RATING	Value
<i>Strenghts</i>			
1. The quality of the tofu produced is very good and	1,10	4,9	5,36

consistent.			
2. Tofu prices are competitive compared to competitors	0,86	3,84	3,34
3. The factory location is easily accessible to consumers and distributors	0,94	3,8	4,34
4. The factory has experienced and skilled employees.	1,06	4,72	5
5. Have a good relationship with regular customers	1,04	4,52	4,83
	1,00		4,37
<i>Weaknesses</i>			
1. Product promotion is still not being done enough	1,05	2	1,37
2. The product packaging is still simple and not very attractive.	1,10	2,08	2,24
3. Lack of variety of tofu products offered	0,97	1,84	1,79
4. Not yet utilizing social media optimally	0,95	1,8	1,74
5. The product distribution system is still limited	0,93	1,76	1,65
	1,00		1,83
Total	1,00		6,2

The table shows the total IFAS matrix score for the tofu factory in Percut Sei Tuan District, which is 6.2. This score indicates that the company's overall internal strengths in the related areas of finance, organization, and marketing are above average in the strategies used to run the business.

External Factors Analysis Summary

The research results indicate that tofu factories in Percut Sei Tuan District have several opportunities that can be utilized to develop their businesses, such as: 1) Increasing public awareness of healthy lifestyles has led to a continued increase in demand for tofu products. 2) Tofu is a source of protein that is easy to process and popular among various groups, thus providing opportunities for businesses to expand their market reach beyond the region. 3) The development of digital technology such as social media, marketplaces, and delivery apps opens up broader promotional opportunities and facilitates interaction with consumers. 4) Government support through training, capital assistance, equipment provision, and ease of licensing is a positive impetus for the growth of MSMEs, including tofu factories in Percut Sei Tuan District. 5) Opportunities to collaborate with local restaurants, eateries, and food stalls also provide a strategic opportunity to expand distribution networks and increase sales sustainably.

Furthermore, the research results also indicate that tofu factories in Percut Sei Tuan District face several threats that must be addressed to prevent business continuity. These include: 1) Fierce competition from both local and out-of-town producers requires factories to maintain product quality and prices to remain competitive. 2) The frequent fluctuations in the price of soybeans, the primary raw material, cause instability in production costs and can reduce profit margins. 3) The entry of tofu products from outside the region with more aggressive marketing strategies and more attractive

packaging has the potential to displace local products in the market. 4) Health issues related to food safety, such as the use of preservatives or unhygienic production processes, can erode consumer confidence if not properly addressed. 5) Changes in government regulations in the food sector, including safety standards and licensing, also pose a threat because they can increase operational costs and create administrative obstacles for small businesses.

Table 3. Eksternal Factors Analysis Summary

EFAS	Weight	RATING	Value
<i>Opportunities</i>			
1. Public demand for tofu continues to increase	1,07	4,52	5,04
2. The opportunity to sell tofu outside the region is still wide open.	1,05	4,44	4,67
3. Can utilize social media to expand the market.	0,99	4,2	4,16
4. Government support for MSMEs is quite good.	0,83	3,52	7,31
5. Can collaborate with local stalls or restaurants.	1,06	4,48	4,21
	1,00		5,08
<i>Threats</i>			
1. Competition with other tofu factories is quite tight.	0,88	2,94	2,9
2. The price of raw materials (soybeans) is often unstable.	1,41	4,6	6,62
3. Tofu products from outside the region are starting to enter the local market.	1,09	3,56	3,91
4. There are health issues regarding food products that can affect business.	0,86	2,84	2,50
5. Government regulations regarding food often change.	0,74	2,5	1,93
	1,00		3,57
Total	1,00		8,56

In the EFAS table above, the EFAS matrix of the tofu factory in Percut Sei Tuan District can be seen that the total EFAS matrix value owned by the tofu factory is 8.5. This indicates that the implemented strategy effectively describes existing external opportunities and avoids the negative impact of threats. Then, calculations will be carried out on the table above to determine the most appropriate strategy for the tofu factory in Percut Sei Tuan District. Based on this difference, the coordinate points for the tofu factory will be determined as seen in the image below.

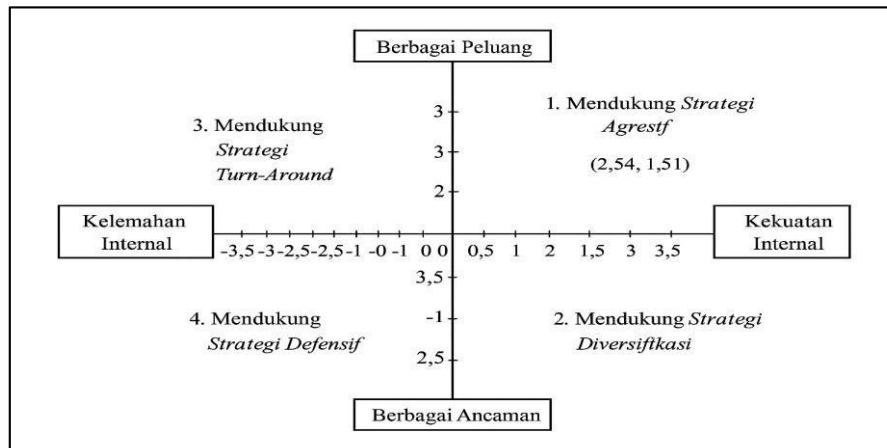


Figure 1. SWOT Analysis Diagram of Tofu Factory in Percut Sei Tuan District

The figure above shows that the score for the strengths factor is 4.37 and the score for the weaknesses factor is 1.83, resulting in a difference of 2.54. Meanwhile, the score for the opportunities factor is 5.08 and the score for the threats factor is 3.57, resulting in a difference of 1.51. The resulting values form a coordinate point, (2.54:1.51).

Thus, the analysis shows that the factory is in quadrant 1, representing a highly favorable situation. In this position, the company possesses internal strengths that can be utilized to seize and optimize various opportunities available in the external environment. Therefore, the appropriate strategy for the tofu factory in Percut Sei Tuan District is to support an aggressive growth policy (Growth-Oriented Strategy).

SWOT Matriks (*Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats*)

The SWOT matrix is used to formulate marketing strategies by aligning internal strengths and weaknesses with external opportunities and threats. This analysis yields four primary strategic alternatives that serve as the basis for management's considerations in facing business competition. The SWOT matrix in this study can be seen in the following table:

Table 4. SWOT Matrix of Tofu Factory in Percut Sei Tuan District

Internal Factors	Strengths (S)	Weaknesses (W)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good and consistent quality • Competitive prices • Strategic location • Good employee skills • Good customer relations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of promotion • Simple packaging • Lack of product variety • Not yet utilizing social media for marketing
External Factors	Opportunities (O)	Threats (T)
	(S-O)	(W-O)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing market demand • High potential for tofu exports • Can maintain partnerships with local restaurants and food stalls • Digital marketing • Government support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain product quality to meet growing market demand. • Offer competitive prices to attract markets outside the region. • Expand distribution networks with nearby food stalls and restaurants to increase sales. • Train employees in digital marketing technology. • Maintain active communication with customers to demonstrate credibility in government programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leverage social media to expand promotions and market reach. • Improve packaging design to make it more attractive and ready for markets outside the region. • Develop product variations to enhance product diversity. • Use social media to strengthen promotions and build relationships with local business partners, such as restaurants and food stalls. • Apply for government funding to increase production.
<p>Threats (T)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fierce competition • Fluctuating raw material prices • Foreign products entering the local market • Health issues • Frequent government regulations regarding food 	<p>(S-T)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain and improve product quality in order to retain customers amidst competition. • Continue to maintain competitive prices, so that it remains the first choice for consumers. • Utilizing strategic locations for efficient supply of raw materials through local suppliers. • Provide training to employees so they can adapt to changes in production standard rules. • Maintain customer trust through open communication about quality product. 	<p>(W-T)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct regular promotions to remain competitive. • Create more attractive packaging designs to attract customers. • Develop tofu product variations to remain competitive with foreign products. • Use social media to educate consumers about product quality. • Optimize production processes in accordance with the latest regulatory standards.

The SWOT matrix in the table above yields four main strategic alternatives that a tofu factory in Percut Sei Tuan District can implement to face increasingly fierce competition. These strategies include:

Strengths-Opportunities (S-O) Strategy

This strategy leverages internal strengths to seize external opportunities to gain a competitive advantage. Possible efforts include: 1) Maintaining consistent product

quality to meet increasing market demand through efficient production processes without compromising quality. 2) Offering competitive prices with efficient production cost management to attract consumers from outside the region. 3) Expanding the distribution network by collaborating with local food stalls and restaurants to increase sales and strengthen market position. 4) Training employees in the use of digital marketing technology to adapt to modern social media-based promotions. 5) Maintaining active communication with customers to strengthen long-term relationships and enhance the company's positive image.

Weaknesses-Opportunities (W-O) Strategy

This strategy focuses on exploiting existing opportunities to address the factory's internal weaknesses. Steps to be taken include: 1) Utilizing social media as an effective promotional tool to expand market reach and increase sales. 2) Improving product design to make it more attractive and ready to compete in markets outside the region. 3) Developing product variations to meet diverse consumer needs and expand market segments. 4) Strengthening promotions and establishing communication with local business partners, such as food stalls and restaurants, through digital platforms. 5) Applying for government financing to increase production and business competitiveness.

Strengths-Threats (S-T) Strategy

This strategy is implemented by leveraging the company's internal strengths to address external threats that could potentially hinder business performance. These steps include: 1) Maintaining and consistently improving product quality to retain customer loyalty amidst increasingly fierce competition. 2) Maintaining competitive prices through efficient production costs without compromising product quality, thereby remaining a top choice for consumers. 3) Utilizing strategic locations to increase raw material distribution efficiency through collaboration with local suppliers. 4) Providing employee training to enable them to adapt to changing production standards and government regulations. 5) Maintaining customer trust through open and transparent communication regarding product quality, thereby maintaining a positive and trustworthy company image..

Weaknesses-Threats (WT) Strategy

This strategy focuses on minimizing internal weaknesses while avoiding external threats to ensure the factory remains viable amidst increasingly fierce competition. These steps include: 1) Conducting regular promotions to strengthen market position and maintain product competitiveness. 2) Improving packaging design to make it more attractive and have a higher selling value. 3) Developing tofu product variations to increase appeal and expand market segments. 4) Utilizing social media as a means of consumer education regarding product quality and safety, thereby fostering customer trust. 5) Optimizing production processes in accordance with the latest regulations to ensure quality, legal compliance, and business credibility in the eyes of consumers.

CONCLUSION

After conducting research on a tofu factory in Percut Sei Tuan District, the researchers were able to draw the following conclusions. The weighted score for the Internal Factors Analysis (IFAS) matrix was 6.2, indicating that the factory has very strong internal conditions. Meanwhile, the weighted score for the External Factors Analysis (EFAS) matrix was 8.56, indicating that the factory has sufficient capacity to cope with external environmental dynamics, thus categorizing the factory as relatively strong. The tofu factory in Percut Sei Tuan District is located in quadrant I, indicating that the factory is in a very favorable position.

This indicates that the factory possesses internal strengths that it can leverage to seize various opportunities, enabling it to continue expanding, increasing growth, and achieving optimal progress. The tofu factory in Percut Sei Tuan District strives to improve

its competitive strategy by providing quality tofu products at prices that remain affordable for all segments of society. Furthermore, the company is focusing on improving distribution efficiency and ensuring guaranteed delivery services, as well as optimizing promotional activities through the use of digital technology. These efforts are made to maintain the company's positive image in the eyes of consumers and strengthen its position in local and international markets.

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