

Marketing Strategies for MSMEs: A Case Study of Mama Zita Bakery

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Abstract—The number of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) continues to grow, reaching 66 million in 2023. One such enterprise is Mama Zita Bakery, which operates in the bakery industry. Amidst increasing business competition, it is essential for Mama Zita Bakery to implement effective marketing strategies, particularly by applying a SWOT analysis to maximize potential and increase sales. This study aims to identify the marketing strategies employed by Mama Zita Bakery to boost sales and to examine the challenges faced by the shop in achieving this objective. This research utilizes a qualitative approach with a descriptive research design. The findings indicate that, in general, Mama Zita Bakery's marketing strategy is well-executed. The bakery maintains high product quality and a strong reputation, while effectively leveraging digital opportunities through social media and online ordering systems. However, there is a critical weakness regarding limited staffing that requires immediate attention. Furthermore, price competition poses a significant threat that could lead to customer churn in favor of competitors. The obstacles faced by Mama Zita Bakery in increasing sales include inconsistent service quality, employee burnout due to excessive workload, price competition, and negative feedback that potentially compromises the bakery's reputation.

Keywords: Marketing Strategy; MSMEs; Mama Zita Bakery

1. INTRODUCTION

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises, commonly known as MSMEs, are a form of community-based small business established through individual initiative. MSMEs represent the largest group of economic actors, providing a significant contribution to the national economy and serving as a proven pillar of support for the community's economic stability (Pratama et al., 2024). MSMEs provide a substantial contribution to Indonesia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), accounting for more than 60.5%, or approximately IDR 8,573 trillion annually. This data serves as evidence that the presence of MSMEs is highly beneficial for the Indonesian people (Dekrita et al., 2024). The number of MSME actors continues to grow daily as these enterprises become more widely adopted and spread across various regions (Sahdina et al., 2023). According to a report from the Ministry of Cooperatives and SMEs of the Republic of Indonesia, the following picture illustrates the number of MSME actors in Indonesia for the 2018–2023 period:

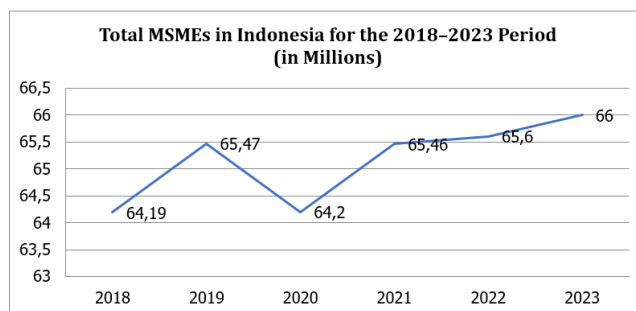


Figure 1. Total MSMEs in Indonesia for the 2018–2023 Period

Based on Figure 1 the number of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) demonstrates a positive and upward trajectory, expanding continuously to reach 66 million enterprises by 2023. Although a temporary contraction occurred in 2020 due to the global COVID-19 pandemic that severely impacted Indonesia, subsequent years witnessed a steady recovery and expansion. This growing proliferation of MSMEs is strategically expected to stimulate and sustain macroeconomic growth, thereby improving the economic welfare of the Indonesian society. One of the active MSME actors operating within this sector is Mama Zita Bakery, a business enterprise specializing in the bakery and confectionery industry. Mama Zita Bakery produces and distributes an array of both traditional and modern pastries to its consumer base. Administratively, this enterprise is located in the Medan Tembung District, Medan City, North Sumatra Province.

Amidst the contemporary dynamic business landscape, Mama Zita Bakery is compelled to navigate intense market competition, particularly given the rising number of MSME competitors operating within the same bakery sector across the Medan area. To maintain a competitive edge, Mama Zita Bakery must cultivate a profound

understanding of consumer behavior and design a highly effective marketing strategy. Implementing a robust marketing framework provides a strategic pathway for the business to identify market opportunities, mitigate operational risks, and drive sustainable corporate growth. A marketing strategy is a structured plan utilized by business actors to achieve specific marketing objectives. One strategic approach that can be applied to assess market potential is the SWOT analysis, which evaluates Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (Sari et al., 2024).

The emergence of numerous new competitors, as well as existing competitors who are continuously enhancing their products and services, poses a serious threat to Mama Zita Bakery. This competition could potentially reduce sales and attract existing customers away from the business. Consequently, Mama Zita Bakery must address these challenges to ensure business continuity and maintain competitiveness within the industry. By employing a SWOT analysis, it is expected that the business can maximize its inherent potential to boost sales, ultimately leading to improved turnover and better profitability than in previous periods.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

The research approach employed in this study is a qualitative approach with a descriptive research design. According to Sugiyono (2021), the qualitative descriptive method is a research approach rooted in the philosophy of post-positivism, utilized to investigate objects in their natural settings. This design was selected to facilitate a comprehensive analysis of the marketing strategies implemented by Mama Zita Bakery. The research informants consist of the owner, employees, and consumers of Mama Zita Bakery. Data sources include both primary and secondary data (Artika & Shara, 2021), while the data collection techniques utilized are observation, interviews, and documentation. The data analysis technique comprises three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Marketing Strategies of Mama Zita Bakery in Increasing Sales

A marketing strategy represents the systematic measures taken by business actors to ensure operational viability and profitability. Mama Zita Bakery is a business in the bakery industry that offers a variety of traditional and modern products. In its operations, the bakery implements specific marketing strategies to drive sales growth. Based on the research findings, the following is an analysis of Mama Zita Bakery's marketing strategy through the SWOT framework:

- a. Strengths. The following internal advantages enable Mama Zita Bakery to enhance its sales performance:
 1. Product Excellence (Taste and Quality): Mama Zita Bakery holds a significant competitive advantage through its product quality. Their core competence lies in the ability to preserve the authentic flavor of traditional cakes. The business effectively communicates to consumers that its products are not merely commodities but a well-preserved culinary heritage. By blending traditional recipes with modern concepts, they appeal to a broader demographic. This distinctive value proposition differentiates them from competitors who focus solely on low pricing or short-term trends.
 2. Service Excellence: Friendly, communicative, and high-quality customer service serves as a cornerstone for Mama Zita Bakery. Employees are trained directly by the owner to deliver optimal service, thereby creating a pleasant shopping experience. When customers feel valued, they develop an emotional connection with the brand rather than just satisfaction with the product. This emotional bond enhances customer retention and drives organic word-of-mouth (WOM) marketing, which helps the business remain resilient amidst intense price competition.
 3. Technological Integration (Digital Marketing): Mama Zita Bakery demonstrates high adaptability and digital literacy in utilizing technology for marketing. Leveraging social media platforms such as Instagram and TikTok allows them to expand their market reach. Through engaging visual content, they cultivate a modern and credible brand image. Furthermore, the integration of WhatsApp for ordering reflects a proactive initiative to enhance consumer convenience, accelerate transactions, and accommodate the demand for digital flexibility.
 4. Reputation and Customer Trust: Mama Zita Bakery has successfully built a solid brand reputation within its local market. This strength is established through consistency in maintaining product quality and service standards. This high level of trust serves as valuable social capital that triggers enthusiastic word-of-mouth recommendations from loyal customers. Consequently, this creates a positive feedback loop where superior quality fosters a strong reputation, which in turn attracts new customers and solidifies their market positioning.
- b. Weaknesses. The following internal limitations hinder the optimal implementation of the marketing strategy:
 1. Inconsistency in Service Quality: Despite the owner's directives regarding friendly service, a standardisation gap exists between corporate policy and its field execution. Customer complaints regarding indifferent and

- unfriendly staff indicate that service standards have not been consistently adopted by all employees. This weakness poses a critical risk as it can jeopardize the reputation built upon product quality; consumers may appreciate the taste of the pastries but refrain from repeating purchases due to negative staff interactions
2. **Excessive Employee Workload:** Internal analysis reveals a high workload among staff, a condition acknowledged by the owner who identified the urgent need for recruitment. An excessive workload acts as a root cause for broader operational issues. Overworked and fatigued employees are less likely to deliver optimal service, directly correlating with the customer complaints received. This condition also threatens product quality if items are prepared under time stress.
 3. **Vulnerability to Public Criticism:** While the owner maintains a positive mindset toward constructive feedback, managing irrational or intentionally malicious complaints aimed at defaming the business remains a major challenge. Such complaints, particularly when amplified on social media, act as a "time bomb" for the brand. Without a swift, strategic, and professional public relations response, negative narratives can proliferate rapidly and damage the brand equity
 4. **Human Resource Constraints:** Limited personnel serves as a structural bottleneck for business growth, especially during demand surges. This shortage leads to prolonged waiting times, slower service delivery, and potential compromises in quality control. If unmanaged, this limitation will significantly hinder Mama Zita Bakery from competing effectively in an increasingly saturated market.
- c. **Opportunities.** External factors that Mama Zita Bakery can leverage to improve its market position include:
1. **Optimizing Digital Content:** The owner's strong commitment to mobilizing staff for social media marketing (Instagram and TikTok) presents a substantial opportunity to capture market segments beyond their current geographical boundaries. Optimizing content creation such as publishing short videos showing hygienic production processes or running targeted promotional campaigns can significantly scale up transaction volumes..
 2. **Expanding Technology-Based Services:** The utilization of WhatsApp for order placement indicates a viable pathway for broader digital service transformation. Mama Zita Bakery can upgrade its online ordering infrastructure into a more integrated and automated system, including the introduction of dedicated delivery services to reach distant consumers, thereby reinforcing its image as a modern and responsive business
 3. **Experience-Based Innovation:** While some consumers perceive product innovation as relatively stagnant, an opportunity exists to innovate within the realm of "customer experience." The bakery's conceptual blend of traditional and modern nuances can be further leveraged. They can enhance experiential value by hosting small-scale events, such as traditional pastry-making demonstrations, or developing highly aesthetic, premium packaging to attract experiential consumers who seek value beyond the physical product.
- d. **Threats.** External challenges that may jeopardize the bakery's marketing effectiveness are as follows:
1. **Competitive Pricing:** The most prominent threat recognized by both management and staff is the presence of competitors offering highly similar products at significantly lower price points. Although Mama Zita Bakery prioritizes premium taste, lower prices remain a powerful driver for price-sensitive consumer segments, threatening to erode the bakery's market share if not counterbalanced by a clear, communicated value surplus.
 2. **Perceptions of Inconsistent Taste:** There is a fragmentation in consumer perception regarding product flavor. While a large base of loyal customers highly praises the bakery's taste superiority, a segment of consumers perceives competitor products as superior in taste and more cost-effective. This divergent perception constitutes a threat; even if held by a minority, negative subjective reviews can diffuse across consumer networks, weaken customer loyalty, and cause switching behavior toward competitors

Based on the aforementioned explanation, the SWOT analysis figure for Mama Zita Bakery is presented as follows:

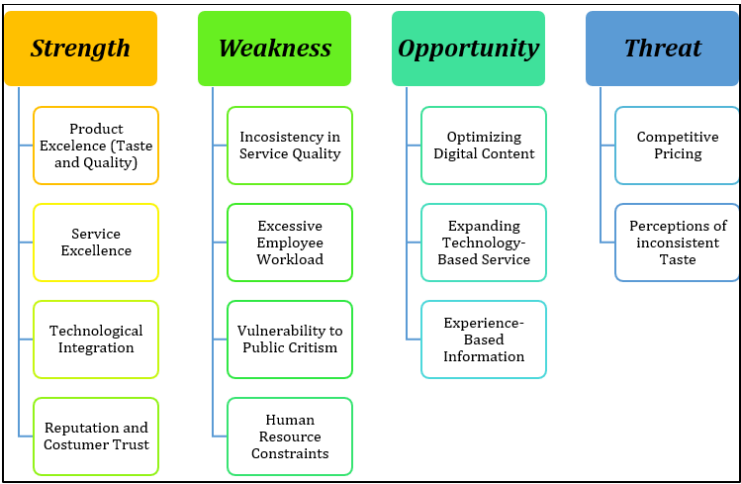


Figure 2. SWOT Analysis of Mama Zita Bakery

Based on the explanations and the data presented in Figure 42, it can be concluded that the overall marketing strategy implemented by Mama Zita Bakery to increase sales is well-executed. The bakery's primary advantage lies in its product offerings; the high quality and authentic taste of the products have significantly enhanced Mama Zita Bakery's reputation and built strong consumer trust. This demonstrates that the product quality provided and sold by Mama Zita Bakery is excellent, thereby creating a distinct added value. This aligns with Ciamas et al. (2024), who state that product quality represents an understanding that the products offered possess a unique selling proposition (USP) not shared by competitors, making it a critical element to maintain and a core strength for Mama Zita Bakery.

Furthermore, Mama Zita Bakery has successfully capitalized on opportunities, particularly within the rapidly evolving digital era. The bakery leverages social media platforms for product marketing and utilizes WhatsApp to facilitate online ordering. This digital adoption serves as a positive driver for Mama Zita Bakery, particularly in scaling up its sales performance. Nevertheless, Mama Zita Bakery faces internal weaknesses that require immediate intervention, specifically regarding human resource constraints, where the current number of employees is insufficient. The growing customer base and the continuous increase in order volumes have inevitably led to an increased workload, which can jeopardize employee performance and service quality. If left unaddressed, a decline in service quality will result in customer dissatisfaction, causing disappointment among patrons and ultimately leading to a reduction in Mama Zita Bakery's sales revenue.

In addition to internal weaknesses, Mama Zita Bakery must also confront external threats, most notably aggressive price competition from competitors. This represents the most significant threat, as competitors offering similar pastry products at lower prices could potentially cause Mama Zita Bakery to lose market share to price-sensitive consumers. As stated by Kotler in Irawati and Musahidah (2025), a marketing strategy must focus on the specific marketing methods to be utilized by business operators. Accordingly, the strategy implemented by Mama Zita Bakery effectively concentrates on optimal marketing methods, particularly by leveraging its strengths and opportunities to sustain business operations and stimulate sales growth. Moreover, according to Darsana et al. (2023), one of the fundamental functions of a marketing strategy is to provide strategic direction for business actors. This is precisely what Mama Zita Bakery has achieved; the implemented marketing strategy serves as a benchmark to evaluate the business's success in increasing sales.

A SWOT analysis within a marketing strategy is highly essential for driving sales growth and developing a business. Through a SWOT framework, Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) can implement appropriate strategies to ensure business sustainability. The application of a SWOT analysis requires MSMEs to actively exploit existing product advantages to capture market opportunities, optimize well-defined market segments, and strengthen their positioning as the largest and most affordable producers (Arwin & Yuliana, 2026). Amidst current technological advancements, Mama Zita Bakery must fully optimize digital tools, particularly by implementing digital marketing via social media. Utilizing social media in digital marketing can help identify strengths for instance, the business can create high-quality content showcasing their pastries by utilizing advanced social media features and filters to attract consumer attention and enhance Mama Zita Bakery's brand equity online. Furthermore, digital marketing aids in identifying weaknesses by allowing the business to assess shortcomings through customer comments, given that consumers are generally more candid when delivering criticisms indirectly online.

This conforms to Yonata and Nugroho (2025), who define digital marketing as an effort to promote a product using digital media to reach consumers in a timely, personalized, relevant, and massive manner. The advantage of digital marketing lies in its ability to rapidly deliver product information to prospective consumers in a practical, fast, and cost-effective manner, offering maximum efficiency to producers. Along with technological evolution, digital marketing is no longer restricted to websites or paid advertisements but can be organically executed through the producer's own social media channels. Additionally, executing a SWOT analysis within digital marketing helps uncover opportunities. Mama Zita Bakery should utilize interactive social media features to capture customer attention, making promotional activities more engaging and widening the market reach for their pastries. Conversely, social media-based digital marketing also exposes external threats. Through these platforms, Mama Zita Bakery can observe competitors executing broader and more appealing marketing campaigns. Moreover, negative comments from consumers or malicious actions by competitors pose a risk of damaging Mama Zita Bakery's brand reputation. This risk is amplified because social media platforms are universally accessible and can easily be exploited as tools to defame a business.

As argued by Daud et al. (2025), integrating a SWOT analysis with social media in digital marketing can significantly increase sales and operational efficiency, offering substantial benefits to business management. A SWOT analysis functions effectively to map out the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats faced by a business. Ultimately, digital marketing enables business operators to align their strategies with shifting consumer behavior, allowing them to precisely identify and fulfill consumer demands and preferences.

3.2 Obstacles Faced by Mama Zita Bakery in Increasing Sales

Constraints represent operational obstacles faced by any entity in conducting its activities. Business operators, such as Mama Zita Bakery, are no exception; they encounter various challenges that can adversely affect sales performance and potentially trigger financial losses. The following are the key constraints faced by Mama Zita Bakery in its efforts to increase sales:

- a. Inconsistent Service Quality. Despite clear guidelines and directives from the owner, the quality of customer service delivered by employees remains uneven. Customer complaints regarding indifferent and unfriendly staff highlight a significant service delivery gap between the standards established by management and their implementation in the field. This constraint is critical, as a negative interaction with frontline staff can erode customer trust, regardless of high product quality. Dissatisfied customers are highly unlikely to make repeat purchases and may propagate negative word-of-mouth reviews, which ultimately hinders sales growth.
- b. Excessive Employee Workload. The urgent demand for additional recruitment indicates that the current workload exceeds optimal staff capacity. This high workload creates a severe internal constraint that directly undermines service quality. Employees experiencing burnout or high operational pressure are less capable of delivering friendly, attentive, and communicative service to patrons. Consequently, this excessive workload acts as a root cause that diminishes overall staff productivity and compromises customer satisfaction.
- c. Intense Price Competition. The presence of competitors offering highly similar products at lower price points poses a tangible marketplace challenge for Mama Zita Bakery. For price-sensitive consumer segments, cost remains the primary determinant in purchasing decisions; hence, they may switch to competitors even if they acknowledge the superior taste of Mama Zita Bakery's products. As a result, Mama Zita Bakery must implement strategic efforts to convince consumers that its unique value proposition (premium taste and quality) justifies its pricing strategy amidst aggressive low-price alternatives.
- d. Reputational Risks from Negative Feedback While constructive feedback is generally embraced as an instrument for continuous improvement, management acknowledges the challenge of handling irrational or malicious complaints aimed at defaming the business. In the current digital landscape, this operational risk is highly dangerous; negative criticism uploaded to social media platforms can diffuse rapidly and cultivate a negative brand perception among the public. Overcoming such obstacles requires a mature public relations and reputation risk management strategy to preserve brand equity and prevent disruption to the bakery's sales pipeline.

4. CONCLUSION

The conclusions of this study indicate that Mama Zita Bakery's marketing strategy to increase sales is generally well-executed, as evidenced by the consistent annual growth in sales volume. The bakery effectively leverages its core strengths, specifically its high product quality and established brand reputation, while successfully adapting to technological advancements through social media marketing and online ordering systems. However, the business faces significant internal weaknesses, particularly regarding limited staffing, which can trigger customer dissatisfaction and potentially reduce sales. Furthermore, intense price competition from competitors remains a critical threat that could lead to customer churn. The primary obstacles encountered by Mama Zita Bakery in boosting its sales performance include inconsistent service quality, excessive employee workloads, and the risk of negative feedback, all of which pose potential threats to the bakery's long-term reputation and sustainability. It is recommended that the owner of Mama Zita Bakery proactively address the identified internal weaknesses and external threats. By effectively managing and mitigating these challenges, the business can achieve a significant positive impact, particularly in optimizing sales performance and ensuring long-term competitive advantage.

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