

Analysis of Transportation Service Marketing Strategies In Facing Competition (Case Study of PT. Sibuluan Indah Pratama in the City of Sibolga)

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the transportation service marketing strategy implemented by PT. Sibuluan Indah Pratama in facing competition in Sibolga City. Increasing competition among transportation service providers has prompted companies to formulate appropriate strategies to survive and grow. The research method used is descriptive qualitative with a case study approach. Data was collected using the SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) approach to identify internal company factors. The research results indicate that the company is in Quadrant I of the SWOT analysis, which is a favorable position supporting the implementation of aggressive growth strategies. The strategies employed include leveraging a large fleet and branch network to expand the market and collaborating with external parties such as the government and organizations. On the other hand, the company also faces several challenges, such as an outdated fleet, lack of technology utilization, and the need to improve driver services. Therefore, the company is advised to improve service quality, update its fleet, and use digital technology to enhance efficiency and competitiveness. This study is expected to contribute to the development of marketing strategies, particularly in the transportation services sector.

Keywords: Marketing, SWOT, Transportation Services, Competition

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INTRODUCTION

Currently, the transportation service industry in Indonesia is developing rapidly. There are many transportation operators in Indonesia, located in major cities across the country. There are many profitable means of transportation, such as all types of specialized vehicles. One type of common transportation is ground transportation that serves urban residents, such as buses, trains, travel services, and other types of ground transportation. In the transportation business sector, many competing entities view this sector as a business that offers promising profit potential (Yunus et al., 2024).

In terms of sales strategies for transportation services, competition in the business world is a common practice to gain a competitive edge in promoting products. However, in the business world, sales should be conducted in a lawful manner and free from unethical practices, as outlined in the Quran, Surah An-Nisa' verse 29 (Harahap, 2021).

With fierce competition, every company needs to implement the right methodology to attract as many consumers as possible. Without the right approach, companies will fail and see their revenues decline. Market competition continues to diversify and intensify, resulting in other significant developments

that can influence consumers in choosing and being attracted to the items or services offered. This requires the industry to provide guidance as effectively as possible, so that companies can be determined within a specific time frame. Many companies have completed their vision and imaginative development to overcome existing competition, especially those operating in similar fields (Sari, 2023). To date, there is a conventional transportation service industry in Indonesia, specifically in the city of Sibolga via land routes, namely:

Table 1. Transportation/Travel Businesses in Sibolga City

No.	Business Name	Address
1	CV. Harmonis Transport	Jl. A. Yani No. 45
2	CV. Simpati	Jl. Thamrin
3	PT. Eric Dirgantara	Jl. S. M. Raja No. 127
4	CV. Sibuluan Indah	Jl. S.M. Raja No. 137/ Jl. Diponegoro No. 62
5	CV. Flores Travel	Jl. P. Diponegoro
6	Sky Travel	Jl. M. Sitompul
7	CV. Bontas Travel	Jl. P. Diponegoro No. 54
8	CV. Pelangi Travel	Jl. P. Diponegoro No. 50
9	CV. Xian Sukses Abad	Jl. Ahmad Yani No. 43
10-	PO. Inda Taxi	Jl. Imam Bonjol No. 01
11	Tee Ara Tour And Travel	Jl. Sm.Raja No. 407 A. Aek Habil
12	Mr. Tour And Travel	Jl. Tarutung No. 06
13	PT. Antar Lintas Sumatera	Jl. Mesjid
14	CV. Makmur	Terminal Bus Sibolga
15	CV. Bintang Utara	Terminal Bus Sibolga

Source: Sibolga City Tourism, Youth, and Sports Agency

With the high level of competition in the moving services industry, especially in Sibolga City, the level of competition continues to be high. Therefore, PT. Sibuluan Bagus Pratama requires a sales strategy to navigate this competition and prevent a decline in industry revenue. Based on the research framework outlined above, the research problem identified is: PT. Sibuluan Bagus faces intense competition from other travel agencies in Sibolga City that offer similar services.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Marketing Strategy

Basically, sales (marketing) is a term used in the business world. In the business world, sales are a social and administrative means by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through invention, negotiation, and alteration. Marketing is a method of perceiving, understanding, motivating, and fulfilling the needs of a selected target market by utilizing an organization's resources to meet those needs (Zebua et al., 2022). Thus, marketing is a method of harmonizing an organization's resources with market needs. Sales provide industrial materials and services, customer desires and needs, and competitor activities (Wardana, 2021).

According to Johnson and Schools (2016: 29), strategy is the direction and scope of an organization in the long term that achieves profits for the organization through the form of energy in areas that are challenging to meet market demands and fulfill the dreams of managers. Siagian (2016: 29) also

reports that strategy is a series of decisions and key actions made by top management and implemented by all levels of the organization in order to achieve the organization's goals. Sales strategy is an effort to sell a product, whether goods or services, using specific concepts and tactics so that sales increase (Hasibuan, 2023).

There are also sales strategies for experts, including:

1. Kotler and Amstrong

Sales are social and managerial methods attempted by individuals or groups to obtain their desires and wishes, by creating and exchanging products and numbers with other parties. (Kotler, 2003).

2. Kurtz

Sales strategy is the totality of industrial programs in ensuring market targets and satisfying customers by creating a mix of marketing mix; products, distribution, advertising, and pricing (Musakkir, 2024).

3. Tjiptono and Diana

Sales strategy is a fundamental tool designed to achieve business objectives by enhancing sustainable competitive advantages to surpass the market being entered, along with sales programs used to serve that target market (Facruddin, 2023).

B. Service Sales

Services differ from goods because they cannot be observed with the naked eye and can give rise to various methods and activities to improve sales strategies (Tjiptono, 2022). Services are economic activities that have several intangible attributes (numbers and benefits) associated with them, which involve interactions with customers or with objects owned by them and do not create a change of ownership in situations that may arise, and the creation of a service may also not be related to physical products. Services are activities, benefits, or pleasures that are offered for sale (Spillane, 2021).

For Tjiptono and Chandra, a service is an activity, benefit, or pleasure offered for sale. Then, for Gronross in Tjiptono and Chandra, service is a method consisting of a series of intangible activities that generally (but not necessarily always) occur in interactions between clients and service employees or physical energy sources or objects or service facilitator systems, which are held as solutions to client problems. (Tjiptono, 2016).

RESEARCH METHOD

The type of research used in this study is qualitative descriptive research. The sources of information used to support this study are primary and secondary information. The research was conducted at PT. Sibuluan Bagus Pratama in Sibolga City, North Sumatra Province. The primary information in this study was obtained directly from interviews with informants who had been determined in advance. The primary information collected took the form of descriptions, opinions, thoughts, and experiences of informants related to sales strategies in the face of competition. Secondary information is research information obtained indirectly by the author through intermediaries (obtained and recorded by other parties). The methods used to collect information in this study were interviews and selection.

This research uses the SWOT analysis method. SWOT analysis is an analytical tool used to identify various aspects that are used to formulate industrial strategies. The factors that are determined are then formalized in the form of a SWOT matrix, which is applied as follows:

- A. How strengths can capitalize on opportunities.
- B. How weaknesses can prevent capitalizing on opportunities.
- C. How strengths can experience threats that exist.
- D. How to overcome weaknesses that can make threats apparent or create new threats.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

SWOT is a method of programming forms, importance, and development efforts used to assess strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in a blueprint or business idea. These four aspects form the acronym SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats). The SWOT approach involves determining the specific objectives of a business idea or blueprint and identifying the internal and external aspects that are and are not conducive to achieving those objectives.

To understand the marketing analysis, it is necessary to understand how the SWOT analysis will be presented based on the results of interviews, descriptions in the form of charts that distinguish between internal and external aspects:

Table 2. Internal and External Aspects of PT. Sibuluan Bagus Pratama's Industry

Internal Factors	External Factors
Strengths 1. Large fleet 2. Many agents spread across various cities 3. Affordable prices Weaknesses 1. Cars used are old models and there are no new ones yet 2. Minimal use of technology 3. Drivers drive very fast	Opportunities 1. Having connections and performing similar duties to the government 2. Performing similar duties to other agencies Threats 1. High level of competition among companies 2. Decline in demand due to economic changes

Source: Results of interviews conducted by the author, 2025.

To identify the extent to which factors influence PT. Sibuluan Bagus Pratama, we can use IFE and EFE matrix analysis. The Internal Factor Evaluation matrix relates to areas within a business by analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of a particular business field. The External Factor Evaluation (EFE) matrix is a strategic formulation tool used to assess the opportunities and threats of a business field.

Next is the IFE matrix analysis at PT. Sibuluan Bagus Pratama in Sibolga City:

Table 3. IFE Matrix Analysis

Dominant Internal Factors	Weight	Rating	Weight x Rating
STRENGTH <i>(strength)</i>			
Large fleet	0,21	4	0,84

Many branches spread across various cities	0,18	3	0,54
Affordable prices	0,15	3	0,45
Total			1,83
WEAKNESSES			
The vehicles used are outdated and there are no new ones.	0,20	4	0,80
Lack of utilization of technology.	0,15	3	0,45
The driver was driving too fast.	0,11	2	0,22
Total Overall			3,3

Source: Author's data processing results

The following is an EFE matrix analysis of PT. Sibuluan Indah Pratama in Sibolga City

Table 4. EFE Matrix Analysis

Dominant External Factors	Weight	Rating	Weight x Rating
OPPORTUNITIES			
Having connections and working with the government	0,32	4	1,23
Working with other organizations	0,28	3	0,85
Total			2,08
THREATS			
Intense competition among companies	0,27	3	0,81
Decline in demand due to economic changes	0,14	2	0,28
Total	1,00		1,09
TOTAL OVERALL			3,17

Source: Author's data processing results

Based on the IFE matrix and EFE matrix above, it can be seen that:

The total strength is 1.83, the total weakness is 1.47, the opportunities are 2.08, and the threats are 1.09.

Internal aspects: $1.83 + 1.47 = 3.3$

External aspect: $2.08 + 1.09 = 3.17$

Based on the above description, it can be seen that the industry is in quadrant 1, because both weighted numbers are positive, namely $x = 3.3$ and $y = 3.17$. Next is a visual representation of the SWOT quadrant of PT. Sibuluan Indah Pratama Kota Sibolga:

Table 5. SWOT Matrix

INTERNAL FACTORS EXTERNAL FACTORS	STRENGTHS (S) 1. Large fleet 2. Many agents spread across various cities 3. Affordable prices	WEAKNESS (W) 1. The cars used are old models and there are no new ones yet. 2. Minimal use of technology. 3. The drivers drive the cars very fast.
OPPORTUNITIES (O) 1. Having connections and performing similar duties to the government 2. Performing similar duties to other agencies	S-O Strategy 1. Utilize a large fleet to provide transportation services for government and agency activities at affordable prices. 2. Utilize a large network of agents to carry out similar activities with government and agencies at each agent location.	W-O Strategy 1. Propose similar activities to the authorities to obtain assistance in fleet renewal. 2. Use the proximity of partner agencies to provide training in technology and driver training to provide more reliable services.
THREATS (T) 1. High level of competition affecting the company 2. Decline in demand due to economic changes	S-T Strategy 1. Protecting market share by using agents and a large fleet amid fierce competition. 2. Offering affordable prices in abnormal economic situations as a survival strategy.	W-T Strategy 1. Renewing the fleet with the latest models to remain competitive. 2. Conducting driver training to improve service and customer satisfaction. 3. Utilizing technology to improve operational and management capabilities to reduce the impact of declining demand.

Based on research results using the IFE and EFE matrices, it is known that the industry's position at the (growth) point supports a rough development policy. The strategy used is the SO strategy, which is to use a large fleet to provide transportation services for government and agency activities at affordable prices and to use a large network of agents to carry out similar activities with government and agencies at each agen.

CONCLUSION

Based on research results and reviews, conclusions can be drawn from the analysis of internal and external aspects of the industry. If the industry is located in quadrant I because both weighted figures are positive, namely internal aspect 3.3 and external aspect 3.17. This situation is profitable for the industry, and the strategy that must be applied in this situation is to support a growth policy. Based on the industry's position at the growth point, it supports a growth policy. Therefore, the industry uses the SO strategy, which involves using a large fleet to provide transportation services for government and agency activities at affordable prices. It also utilizes a large network of agents to carry out similar activities with government and agencies at each agent location.

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