

ANALYSIS OF SERVICE BUSINESS GROWTH AND MARKETING STRATEGIES USED IN THE DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY ERA DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC (Case Study on PT. Sucofindo Medan)

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Abstract

In the current era of the COVID-19 pandemic, people are expected to be able to engage directly in the digital world. As done by PT. Sucofindo Medan. Continuous technological innovation is the company's obligation to be able to compete with competitors. Therefore, PT. Sucofindo Medan must update the marketing strategy used. The aim of this research is to analyze the growth of the service business and marketing strategies used in the digital era during the COVID-19 pandemic at PT. Sucofindo. The theory used is to look at the company's Value Proposition which is connected to the marketing mix indicator. Based on the research results, it is known that the application of Value Proposition becomes a company evaluation based on the Customer Profile indicator, namely Customer Jobs, pains, and gains, which explain the desires and obstacles felt by consumers. The company provides solutions for Product and Services indicators, Gain Creators and Pain Relievers. The combination of Value Proposition Marketing Mix on company promotion indicators can be improved by developing many applications that can help potential customers, one of which is KSO-SCISI, which is able to monitor orders, receive payments, and accommodate customer feedback so that service is more optimal.

Keywords: Business Growth, Marketing Mix, Marketing Strategies, Value Proposition

1. INTRODUCTION

The ever-evolving era encourages us to always innovate. Over time, the technology created by humans is growing. Former Japanese prime minister Shinzo Abe on the occasion of an international conference at the CeBIT (Centrum der Buroautomation Informations technologie und telekommunikation) technology exhibition in Hannover, Germany 2017 sparked the idea of society 5.0 in January 2019 through the World Economic Forum (WEF) Shinzo Abe again discussed changing the resolution 4.0 to 5.0. This concept allows us to use modern science-based (AI, Robot, IoT) for human needs with the aim that humans can live comfortably. Today progress through innovation in science and technology is extraordinary. This contributes to the business growth of a country.

The concept of Society 5.0 is a refinement of the previous concepts. Where as is known, Society 1.0 was when humans were still in the era of hunting and knowing writing, Society 2.0 was the era of agriculture where humans were familiar with farming, Society 3.0 had entered the industrial era, namely when humans started using machines to help with their daily activities. Today, Society 4.0, humans are familiar with computers to the internet and Society 5.0, an era where all technology is a part of humans themselves,

reported by Binus University (2021). Today the internet is not only used to share information but to live life. The difference between Society 4.0 and Society 5.0 is in its main components. It is known that in Society 4.0 technology is the main component such as (Robots, Big Data, and IA) while in Society 5.0 humans are the main component in order to be able to create new values through technological developments. It's the same with business growth. Currently, services and goods businesses are required to keep up with the times in order to be able to compete with the latest innovations from technology made by humans. Moreover, the world is currently experiencing the Covid-19 pandemic, which requires everyone to maintain a safe distance from one another.

The Covid-19 pandemic began to enter Indonesia in the 3rd week of 2020 in January, which resulted in many hampered activities and forced most people to work from home (Work from Home). It is important to do online marketing during this digital and pandemic era so that companies are not left behind in innovating. Online marketing is a firm step that must be taken by business actors (Suswanto & Setiawati, 2020). Thus optimizing in implementing strategies in this era is very important to gain consumer trust.

One of the service companies in Indonesia that is expected to be able to adapt to digitalization and the Covid-19 pandemic is PT. Superintending Company of Indonesia (PT. Sucofindo) which is a State-Owned Enterprise (BUMN) established between the Government of the Republic of Indonesia and SGS, the world's largest inspection company based in Geneva, Switzerland. Established on October 22, 1956, initially PT. Sucofindo only focuses on Inspection and Supervision services in the trade sector, especially agricultural commodities, as well as assisting the government in ensuring the smooth flow of goods and safeguarding the country's foreign exchange in export-import trade. PT. Sucofindo takes creative and innovative steps and offers other related services. Services offered by PT. Sucofindo is an inspection and audit, testing and analysis, certification, consulting and training in the fields of agriculture, forestry, mining (Oil and Non-Oil and Gas), Construction, Processing Industry, Marine, Fisheries, Government, Transportation, Information Systems and Renewable Energy. Through the Sucofindo Technology business unit, Sucofindo develops various IT-based solutions such as defense and cyber security, asset management, environmental monitoring, vessel tracking, fleet management, warehouse management, port management, IT Security, e-office, including the provision of IoT communication technology. In addition, Sucofindo Technology also provides consulting and training in IT areas such as Information Security Management Systems, IT governance, and IT Master Plans. The following is the revenue data of PT. Sucofindo Medan from before the Covid-19 pandemic.

PT. Sucofindo has several competitors, namely the Indonesian Classification Bureau, Indonesian Surveyors, and Tuv-Nord. An analysis that becomes one of the crucial factors for the continuity of the company is the competitor factor, this will also determine whether the company will continue to implement its strategy or whether it has to review the basics of the old strategy to face competition with competitors. PT competitors Sucofindo Medan, namely Surveyor Indonesia, also acknowledged that the company had built a professional management system in recent years, with the support of human resources present in all regions of Indonesia, as well as the integration of human resource capacities with modern technology that is capable of producing reliable service products.

Table 1. Productivity Performance based on Sales PT. PLN Medan Customer Service Implementation Unit

No	Year	Net profit
1.	2018	42,137 Billion
2.	2019	44,075 Billion
3.	2020	41,865 Billion
4.	2021	44,773 Billion

Source: PT. Sucofindo (2022)

Seen from Table 1 the income of PT. Sucofindo experienced a decrease of 2.21 billion in 2020 as a result of the policy change, from face-to-face activities to online. The right strategic management for the company will make its service business growth increase. In 2021 the revenue of PT. Sucofindo Medan increased by 2.9 billion, the company is slowly making optimal use of marketing strategies and support from the government. Researchers want to know what forms of adaptation are made by companies with services to be able to continue to develop and grow during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The service sector continues to contribute to the Indonesian economy during the Covid-19 pandemic (Widawati et al., 2022). A number of service producers are trying to adapt, either by converting services into digital form or by making digital platforms a means of selling products. Service sectors such as education and health, certification, consulting are currently changing the form of services to digital. Reporting from Ekonomi Binis (2021) shows that 37% of digital service consumers last year were new consumers, where 93% will continue to use digital services after the pandemic. According to Kotler as quoted by Fatihudin & Firmansyah (2019), Services are any actions or activities that can be offered by one party to another, which are basically intangible and do not result in any ownership, not linked to a physical product. PT. Sucofindo has also implemented the right marketing strategy so that the company can grow, even though during the Covid-19 pandemic the company experienced a decrease in revenue, but the following year the company's revenue slowly increased again. One way for a company to grow is by implementing the right marketing strategy.

Business and service companies must realize the importance of combining technology with digital marketing such as internet advertising, Email Marketing, Content Marketing, Search Engine Marketing, Social Media Marketing, etc. for their marketing strategy in the Society 5.0 era. The company's social media activities in communication, providing information, support for daily life, promotion and sales, and social response and activity in his study are the importance of company social media activities, compared to consumers and companies. It is important to keep up with the times and adapt to technology so that a business can grow. PT. Sucofindo issued many new applications and technologies to smoothen its business, but PT. According to researchers, Sucofindo Medan has not implemented the right marketing strategy. The marketing strategy used is the 7P marketing mix strategy which has not been fully digitized.

Based on the phenomena found, researchers are interested in analyzing how the marketing strategy carried out by PT. Sucofindo to be able to adapt to ever-evolving innovations. The author also conducted pre-research and interviewed the sales head of PT. Sucofindo Medan and found that there were obstacles in sales because the sales system was carried out only with the online Zoom Meeting media during the Covid-19 pandemic. Based on this, the researcher is interested in raising this object to be research.

Hence, this research aims to analyze the growth of the service business and marketing strategies used in the digital era during the COVID-19 pandemic at PT. Sucofindo.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a descriptive research method with a qualitative approach. According to Sugiyono (2018), Qualitative research methods are research methods based on philosophy, which are used to research on scientific conditions (experiments) where the instrument is the researcher, data collection techniques and qualitative analysis emphasizes more on meaning.

According to Lofland and Lofland cited by Moleong (2017), the main data sources in qualitative research are words and actions, with additional data such as documents and other data. Sources of data was obtained from documents, interview results, field notes and results from observations carried out at PT. Sucofindo.

The data used in this study were primary data and secondary data. In this research, the primary data was obtained from interviews. While secondary data was taken from documents, observations, photos, data and relevant previous research. As such, the data collection techniques was obtained by means of interviews, observation, and documentation.

The data analysis technique was adopted from the Miles and Huberman model. According to Miles and Huberman in the book Sugiyono (2018), “data analysis in qualitative research, carried out when data collection takes place, and after completion of data collection within a certain period”. Activities in qualitative data analysis were carried out interactively and continue continuously until finished so that the data is saturated.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. The Growth of the Service Business in the Technology Era During the Covid-19 Pandemic

The resulting data is the result of interviews with the head of sales. Researchers also obtained data from additional informants, namely 3 consumers from PT. Sucofindo Medan. The data obtained is about service growth indicators at PT. Sucofindo:

According to Kotler and Keller in Priansa (2017) “Intangibility is an explanation that services are intangible”, cannot be seen, heard, touched and smelled before the service has been received. PT. Sucofindo company. Medan produces certification, consulting, inspection and audit services, lab test analysis and training. The growth of the company's service business is experiencing problems during this pandemic because services are intangible, so consumers need proof to know the service products provided. To introduce the company's products, it holds seminars on Zoom and also joins other companies such as: PERUMNAS, PT. ADHI KARYA to promote service products and develop them. Digital marketing is very influential in terms of developing and promoting service products during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Kotler and Keller in Priansa (2017) highlight that in many types of service products offered and with non-standard properties. PT. Sucofindo Medan has standardized product quality. Based on the theory put forward, the variations here are who provides quality services, when, where and how these services are provided. Because of this, services can be called variations. PT. Sucofindo provides standardized service quality. The company has accurate data on the quality of waste generated periodically

and alternative ways of handling it, the choice of an effective and efficient production process, a healthy and safe working environment for workers and the surrounding environment. The company's image and credibility is enhanced thanks to its concern for the environment, which is also the company's standard.

Services cannot be separated from consumers. PT. Sucofindo Medan needs consumers for its products. In making service products the company provides according to what consumers ask for, in other words consumers place direct orders. During this pandemic, the company provides a place for ordering via telephone and from the web, including specified conditions. The company also innovates in this digitalization era by providing E-Certificate and E-Invoice. According to Priansa (2017), "unlike goods that can be stored and used repeatedly, services cannot be stored for a long time". If not used immediately, the service will pass by. Service providers will provide types of services according to market demand which can sometimes change. PT. Sucofindo determines the time for certification when the certification application is valid for 1 year from the date the application was submitted and is no longer valid at the end of the 1 year period. In this digital era, companies have not yet innovated regarding certificate application reminders, which only have a one-year time limit.

According to Asini & Gunalitake (2017), large companies if small companies have at least 20 employees and for medium companies 20-99 employees, and for large companies more than 99 employees. PT. Sucofindo where this pandemic continues to open employee recruitment every year. PT. Sucofindo also has 2.700 professionals throughout Indonesia. PT. In this digital era, Sucofindo also enforces standardization for its employees, in order to understand the published digital applications.

Company age is an important factor in determining business growth. PT. Sucofindo Medan has been around for 66 years. During this pandemic, the company continued to survive in various ways and strategies that were applied. PT. Sucofindo Medan focuses on Inspection and Supervision services in the trade sector, especially agricultural commodities, as well as assisting the government in ensuring the smooth flow of goods and safeguarding the country's foreign exchange in import-export trade, companies in the digital technology era have launched remote audits to monitor remotely without having to be there directly.

Technology is key to sustaining a business for the long term, by continuing to innovate over the long term. Companies in this digital era launched a new application technology for Cyber Security Consulting services, namely SUCOFINDO Omniguard at the Cyber Security Web Seminar (Webinar) and 3 modules in SUCOFINDO Omniguard, namely Account & Password Management, Access Control and Command Control. These launched applications help companies during a pandemic to be able to check, control and develop. The company also makes the SPARING application, this is a solution for a continuous wastewater quality monitoring system. Monitoring is carried out in the infrastructure network and information system developed by PT. Sucofindo Medan.

Support from the government can develop the company. During this pandemic, many companies were assisted by the government, the assistance provided was in the form of industrial certification policies. Every industry related to the government is directed to use certification at PT. Sucofindo Medan. Because the company has excellent digitalization, the government entrusts its services. The government ensures that planning, implementation and evaluation are in accordance with the stated objectives.

Network is defined as a strong relationship to the business, network capabilities such as businesses or chambers of commerce, this will be more up-to-date information. During this pandemic the company collaborated with many other companies such as PT. Adi Karya. (Persero) Tbk. – ADHI and PT Superintending Company of Indonesia signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to develop integrated solutions and waste management (Integrated Waste Management Solution).

PT. Sucofindo Medan needs adaptation during the Covid-19 pandemic, all systems built by a company based on various standards, regulations, criteria, frameworks, approaches and others are actually applied to the same business processes in the company, so that system integration can be interpreted as how a company can ensure that all business processes accommodate all criteria in an integrated, simple, practical and effective way. PT. Sucofindo continuously innovates. Some of the results are the SPARING service which is a solution for a continuous wastewater quality monitoring system by utilizing the IoT concept. This system has the ability to monitor the quality of wastewater with an integrated system and in accordance with the technical requirements of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry of the Republic of Indonesia (hereinafter referred to as KLHK). Several other things which are the result of innovative work of PT. Sucofindo is developing Testing/Calibration of Medical Devices (Alkes), as well as expanding Halal testing technology. Support from the government also has a big influence on the running of the service business.

3.2. Marketing Strategy in the Digital Technology Era During the Covid -19 Pandemic

The resulting data is the result of interviews with the head of sales as the main informant and 3 additional informants. Marketing Strategy using Marketing Mix 7P.

According to Kotler and Keller cited by Priansa (2017), “Product is something that can be offered to the market to get attention, so that the product being sold is bought, used or consumed that can fulfill a desire or need from consumers”. During the pandemic, companies did not issue new products but continued to modify and develop existing technology to remain competitive. The company enforces a remote audit where the audit can be carried out remotely without the need to be in direct location. According to the analysis using the company's Value Proposition using elements, Newness is related to the updates that the company needs to offer to its customers or consumers. In this case, innovations can make the company's products superior to those of its competitors. PT. Sucofindo applies the latest innovations, namely E-Invoice and E-certificate. This innovation was implemented to make it easier for consumers to get their invoices and also become one of the company's marketing strategies. This innovation is useful for saving paper and speeding up the company's sales process.

Price is a method used by company management to set a basic price for a product or service and to think of a strategy involving price discounts, payment of freight costs and various related variables to achieve profits. Companies during this pandemic are imposing price discounts for their consumers. The era of digital technology also affects the price set by the company. distribution operates trade channels that are used to distribute products or services and also to serve predetermined target markets, as well as developing a distribution system for physical delivery and sale of products if they are not service products. companies during a pandemic and in this digital technology era provide online methods such as E-Certificate and E-Invoice.

Promotion is a medium to provide information and invite potential customers to use it. Companies during a pandemic and in this digital era promote their services offline and online. The company has implemented many ways to avoid the spread of the Covid-19 virus, by using the Zoom meeting application for outreach, also marketing via WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook status. we use many applications such as SIM LAB, Instagram, Facebook, KSO Sucofindo-Surveyor Indonesia launched the MyKSO-SCISI application which can be used by customers to monitor orders. PT. Sucofindo applies the latest innovations, namely E-Invoice and E-certificate. This innovation was implemented to make it easier for consumers to get their invoices and also become one of the company's marketing strategies. This innovation is useful for saving paper and speeding up the company's sales process.

Priansa (2017) said that People in the service business are all executors who play an important role in providing services so as to adjust the buyer's perception. Companies during this pandemic provide standardization for their employees. The company implements *Akhklak* for the integrity of its company, *Akhklak* is Trustworthy, competent, harmonious, loyal, adaptive, collaborative. The company applies the concept of Trust to each of its employees, they must also be competent in completing work. Harmony between superiors and subordinates is also useful for aligning the vision and mission of the company. Employees must also be loyal to their jobs and be adaptive in dealing with all situations, such as during this pandemic all activities use digital and be willing to collaborate for the progress of the company. According to Fajrillah et al. (2020), an adjustment indicator, or every business must be able to adjust to conditions so they are not left behind and continue to innovate. This element relates to flexibility, in the sense that the product needs to readjust its features to better suit customer needs. Companies carry out customization (adjustments) by conducting research on the wishes and aspirations of their users such as renewing human resources who are more digitally savvy during this pandemic. Business growth and the right marketing strategy affect the survival of the company and employees who understand conditions and are also able to innovate can carry out business continuity in the midst of increasingly intense competition.

Processes are all the actual procedures, mechanisms, and flow of activities used to deliver services. Companies during this pandemic experienced changes in their sales process. Companies use many digital applications such as SIM-Lab, SIOS, E-invoice and E-Certificate. However, it has an effect on some human resources who are less literate in digitalization, so that consumers do not understand the flow of information. The company markets its services using the Zoom application, ordering by coming to the office directly or via online ordering/submitting orders, determining prices, issuing invoices, and sending them via E-Invoice and providing the results, according to orders received. The Company provides services based on confirmed Client requests. The ability to access is important to be a marketing strategy for a business. PT. Sucofindo launched various websites to make it easier to send invoices, test results to consumers called SIM-LAB. The company also has a facebook, twitter and website to optimize performance and achieve the vision and mission effectively and efficiently. The company also has a Digital TIC Company program, which is useful for cost efficiency, this transformation is also useful for preventing Covid-19, both for internal business processes and for customer service. The company also launched digital reporting to facilitate the marketing process.

The form of the role of PT. Sucofindo to renew its marketing is by focusing on 7P and while maintaining the quality of services provided, the company has a program to

monitor every plan until sales targets are achieved. These targets are supported by salespeople who have capacity in their fields. PT Sucofindo routinely conducts customer satisfaction surveys to measure the quality of services provided. The job desc being worked on is conducting and following up on customer satisfaction surveys, conducting analysis/feasibility studies on new services, and conducting competitor surveys. Conducting event management for exhibitions and outreach, conducting sponsorship partnerships, as well as designing and managing promotional materials for Sucofindo's business. In various ways above PT. Sucofindo markets its products.

3.3. Linkage of Previous Research with Research Results

Based on the results of research conducted regarding the analysis of service business growth and marketing strategies in the digital era and during the Covid-19 pandemic at PT. Sucofindo Medan, it was found that indicators of business growth supported by a marketing mix marketing strategy, namely 7P, had not implemented digital marketing strategies optimally, such as marketing products with advertisements or giving seminars creatively and in utilizing social media. The company is still not optimal in using ZOOM, Facebook, and does not yet have Instagram specifically for the Medan branch. Even though it's not maximal in using social media, PT. Sucofindo Medan gets a positive influence from satisfaction with the services provided to consumers. Even though during the pandemic the company's revenue fell, the company was quick to respond to problems and tried to take advantage of digital media, so that in the following year the company's revenue slowly increased. The link between the research made and previous research was the discovery of several similarities and differences in the implementation of the marketing mix marketing strategy as a strategy used in the digital era and during the Covid 19 pandemic.

The results of research by Halim et al. (2021), found similarities in the methods used for digital marketing, namely advertising through websites and social networks, search engine optimization (SEO), marketing that optimizes social media and telemarketing. While the difference lies in the object and also the results of the research that I found. Digital Marketing Strategy as a Communication Media in Umrah Package Marketing at PT Pandi Kencana Murni Makassar. This study aims to find the Digital Marketing Strategy used by PT Pandi Kencana Murni Makassar as a Communication Media in Umrah Package Marketing. The result of this research is PT. Pandi Kencana Murni Makassar carries out various strategies including advertising through websites and Social Networks, 81 Search Engine Optimization (SEO), Pay Per Click Advertising. Sales Promotion through voucher contributions, tempting discounts and special offers. Public relations and publicity through Onlines Press Release. Personal sales with a digital application-based affiliate marketing system. Direct marketing by optimizing social media and telemarketing. At PT. Sucofindo, has used advertising and sales promotion but is still not optimal in using social media.

According to Rosmadi (2021), the marketing strategy used in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic, namely by using social media, including Facebook, Instagram, Whatsapp, telegram. While the difference is in the results and the object. Implementation of Business Strategy during the Covid-19 Pandemic at Waroenk Ngemil, and the result is that Waroenk Ngemil strives to optimally market its food products. Haryanti et al. (2019) found similarities in the indicators used, namely the Marketing mix, this thesis conducts research that focuses on marketing strategies and increasing sales with the title Implementation of the 7P Marketing Mix Strategy in Increasing Sales. The difference

from this study is the strategy used by RM Sambel Layah Arcawinangun in increasing sales, namely carrying out its marketing activities in a healthy manner by improving products, promotions, places, prices, processes, human resources, and physical evidence.

During this pandemic PT. Sucofindo launched various websites to make it easier to send invoices, test results to 82 consumers called SIM-LAB. The company also has a facebook, twitter and website to optimize performance and achieve the vision and mission effectively and efficiently. The company also has a Digital TIC Company program, which is useful for cost efficiency, this transformation is also useful for preventing Covid-19, both for internal business processes and for customer service. The company also launched digital reporting to facilitate the marketing process.

4. CONCLUSION

Growth in the service business of PT. Sucofindo Medan is slowly increasing as seen from the increase in revenue in 2021 of 2.908 billion. Based on the analysis using 4 service characteristics and 5 service growth indicators PT. Sucofindo Medan is starting to revive and focus on its technology, such as: Account and Password Management, Access Control and Command Control. PT. Sucofindo Medan needs adaptation during the Covid-19 pandemic, all systems built by a company based on various standards, regulations, criteria, frameworks, approaches and others are actually applied to the same business processes in the company, so that system integration can be interpreted as how a company can ensure that all business processes accommodate all criteria in an integrated, simple, practical and effective way. PT. Sucofindo continuously innovates. Some of the results are the SPARING service which is a solution for a continuous wastewater quality monitoring system by utilizing the IoT concept. This system has the ability to monitor the quality of wastewater with an integrated system and in accordance with the technical requirements of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry of the Republic of Indonesia (KLHK). Several other things which are the result of innovative work of PT. Sucofindo Medan is developing the Testing/Calibration of Medical Devices (Alkes), as well as the expansion of Halal testing technology. Support from the government also has a big influence on the running of the company's service business.

From the results of the analysis of the marketing strategy used by PT. Sucofindo Medan is Value Propositions and elements of the 7P marketing mix, since 2022 the company has focused on 7P and does not use elements of physical evidence (physical facilities) because they are considered to have no effect. Elements of value propositions that are very influential in the era of technology and during the Covid-19 pandemic are elements of newness, PT. Sucofindo Medan applies the latest innovations, namely E-Invoice and E-certificate. This innovation was implemented to make it easier for consumers to get their bills and also become one of the company's marketing strategies. This novelty is useful for saving paper and also speeding up the company's sales process. Elements that are less influential are brand and status because the Sucofindo Medan Company is assisted by the government in its sales, such as standardization provisions that require certification, audits or inspections from PT. Sucofindo. This makes the status of the company increases, PT. Sucofindo does not really promote its own brand but is supported by the government. The most influential 7P indicator in the digital era during the Covid-19 pandemic was price, because discounts were still applied and became an attraction for companies. While the less influential indicator is promotion. The form of

the role of PT. Sucofindo to renew its marketing is by focusing on 7P and while maintaining the quality of services provided, the company has a program to monitor every plan until sales targets are achieved. These targets are supported by salespeople who have capacity in their fields. PT Sucofindo routinely conducts customer satisfaction surveys to measure the quality of services provided. The job desc being worked on is conducting and following up on customer satisfaction surveys, conducting analysis/feasibility studies on new services, and conducting competitor surveys. Conducting event management for exhibitions and outreach, conducting sponsorship partnerships, as well as designing and managing promotional materials for Sucofindo's business. In various ways above PT. Sucofindo markets its products.

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