

Designing Marketing Communication Strategy in the New Normal Era at Cafe Apung Rowo Klampok in Senggreng Village Sumberpucung District Malang Regency

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ABSTRACT

Cafe Apung Rowo Klampok is a floating-themed cafe located in the village of Senggreng, Sumberpucung District, Malang Regency. The establishment of cafes, coffee shops, and similar ventures has become one of the developments in the creative economy by capitalizing on existing opportunities. Meanwhile, the shift in lifestyle within society has transformed cafes into places of entertainment and an integral part of daily life, attracting entrepreneurs to explore cafe businesses. Consequently, numerous cafes have emerged in various regions, including in Senggreng. During the Covid-19 pandemic, Cafe Apung Rowo Klampok did not possess a marketing communication strategy to compete with its competitors. Marketing communication strategy is a crucial aspect for the successful operation of any business. This study aims to design a marketing communication strategy suitable for Cafe Apung Rowo Klampok in the New Normal Era using the SWOT analysis. This descriptive qualitative study adopted a constructivist paradigm and the SWOT analysis. The café's factors were rated using the IFAS and EFAS matrices. The weighted scores were then used to ascertain the café's position, which, in this case, places the café in Quadrant I, implying the need to apply an aggressive growth policy. The café is recommended to focus on utilizing its strengths and capitalizing on available opportunities as marketing strategies. The alternative strategies applicable to this cafe in the New Normal Era involve developing and enhancing both offline and online promotional efforts across various social media platforms, and leveraging technological advancements for marketing purposes, such as providing online delivery services.

Keywords: Internal and External Identification, Marketing Communication Strategy, SWOT, Covid-19.

INTRODUCTION

The current business landscape has become increasingly competitive and demanding, requiring companies to thoroughly understand their customers. This endeavor is crucial as customers are the primary focus of any company, and comprehending their needs and preferences would aid the company in competing effectively with its competitors. Additionally, the success of a company is intrinsically linked to its marketing communication strategy. In the realm of marketing communication, the communication strategy acts as a stimulus for eliciting responses from customers (Kriyantono, 2020). However, in the process of executing marketing communication activities, companies often encounter challenges stemming from external factors (Maulana et al., 2021). The Covid-19 pandemic in early 2020 is responsible for economic downturns across various sectors. In response to this situation, the government has implemented various initiatives, such as social distancing measures, the enforcement of Large-Scale Social Restrictions (PSBB), and the implementation of Community Activity Restrictions (PPKM) to curtail the spread of the Covid-19 virus (Aini & Noor, 2022). In this context, Cafe Apung Rowo Klampok is one of the businesses that has been adversely affected by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Situated in the village of Senggreng, Sumberpucung District, Malang Regency, Cafe Apung Rowo Klampok is not the only cafe in the area. There are several other cafes nearby, such as Kafe Miemiel, Kafe Cuaan Senggreng, Januari Kopi Hari Ke 1, Kafe Ketan Midle, Kopital, and others. However, Cafe Apung Rowo Klampok distinguishes itself from its competitors through its unique features. Notably, the cafe's distinctiveness lies in its ability to float and sway on the water, as it is located at the center of Rowo Klampok Lake. The cafe boasts a beautiful design with semi-indoor and outdoor areas, offering breathtaking views of the natural surroundings. Moreover, it serves delicious traditional rural dishes and beverages at affordable prices, making it even more appealing. Additionally, the cafe provides various amenities, including restrooms, CCTV surveillance, a playground, fishing spots, and other family-friendly recreational facilities.

Unfortunately, due to the Covid-19 virus, numerous businesses, including Cafe Apung Rowo Klampok, were forced to temporarily close their operations for approximately two months. The cafe had to comply with government regulations related to Large-Scale Social Restrictions (PSBB) and minimize the spread of the virus. Eddy Susanto, the Chairman of the Indonesian Cafe and Restaurant Entrepreneurs Association (APKRINDO), has stated that the restaurant industry has experienced a significant decline of more than 50% since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic (Mayasari, 2020). The culinary business is focused on fulfilling fundamental human needs (Sukma in Faizah, 2022). Moreover, it significantly contributes to the economic growth of Indonesia.

In the current era of the new normal, the Indonesian government and society are required to adapt their activities amidst the pandemic (Adrinoviarini et al., 2022). The government has eased some regulations but still mandates adherence to health protocols. In this situation, Cafe Apung Rowo Klampok must comply with these protocols, which entails implementing strict health measures within the cafe, providing necessary health-related amenities, and adjusting its operational hours to between 10:00 AM to 7:00 PM, among other measures. During the pandemic, Cafe Apung Rowo Klampok has experienced a stable flow of visitors, with approximately 40% of the usual daily visitors. Various marketing communication strategies have been employed, such as promotions on Instagram, WhatsApp, collaborations with local

influencers, and more. However, these efforts have not yet met Cafe Apung Rowo Klampok's expectations in terms of increasing the number of visitors, boosting product sales, and enhancing overall revenue. Therefore, marketing strategy serves as both the objective and target of marketing efforts, combining various policies into a unified plan (Irmayani in Adrinoviarini et al., 2022). To achieve the desired outcomes for Cafe Apung Rowo Klampok, a diligent effort is required to assess its position using the SWOT analysis.

SWOT analysis involves systematically identifying various factors to formulate company strategies (Rangkuti, 2016, p. 19). This analysis maximizes strengths, addresses weaknesses, capitalizes on opportunities, and mitigates threats. The process of strategic decision-making is always linked to the development of company objectives, mission, policies, and strategies. The aim of this research is to analyze and design a marketing communication strategy suitable for Cafe Apung Rowo Klampok, utilizing the SWOT analysis method. Given that Cafe Apung Rowo Klampok is one of the cafes impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, the research results can serve as a reference for the owners or managers in determining their business strategies in the new normal era and beyond

LITERATURE REVIEW

Marketing Communication Strategy

According to Prisgunanto, marketing communication is a component of the marketing mix that involves communication between an organization or company and its target audience in various forms aimed at achieving marketing performance (Mulitawati & Retnasary, 2020). Furthermore, Mulitawati & Retnasary (2020) explained that there are several marketing communication strategies, including advertising, sales promotion, public relations and publicity, personal selling, and direct marketing.

Marketing Communication

Marketing communication serves as a means to promote what a company or individual offers and achieve both financial and non-financial goals (Shimp, 2003, p. 4).

According to Philip Kotler, marketing involves the buying and selling of goods or services based on the desire to buy and sell (Wijayanthi & Dyah Savitri, 2021). Meanwhile, the marketing mix is a marketing tool used by companies to achieve marketing objectives, consisting of 7P's: product, price, place, promotion, people, process, and physical evidence (Budiman & Christine, 2017)

SWOT Matrix

The SWOT matrix is a matching tool used to assist managers in developing four types of strategies, namely, Strength-Opportunity (SO) strategy, Weakness-Opportunity (WO) strategy, Strength-Threat (S-T) strategy, and Weakness-Threat (W-T) strategy (Prasetyo et al., 2018, p. 81).

Research Method

This descriptive qualitative study applied a constructivist/ interpretive approach. Kriyantono (2020, p. 51) Views communication phenomena as meanings constructed by individuals involved in the communication process. It aims to explore and understand the meanings that occurred in interactions and communication relationships in a natural setting. Informants were

recruited using a purposive sampling technique based on Criteria set following the research purpose (Kriyantono, 2020, p. 317).

Data Collecting Technique

The data collection technique aims to delve into social, cultural, economic, and psychological contexts in more detailed manner Silverman, as cited in Kriyantono (2020, p. 289). In this study, data were collected through in-depth interview, observation, and documentation.

Interviews:

In-depth interview was conducted by meeting the informant face-to-face to gain deeper and more comprehensive data (Kriyantono, 2012, p. 102). We interviewed the owner, who also acted as the manager of Cafe Apung Rowo Klampok and considered the most knowledgeable about the cafe's condition, and could provide accurate and essential information for the study.

Observation:

Observations were carried out to understand the location and environment of Cafe Apung Rowo Klampok (Kriyantono, 2020, p. 300). This method allowed the researcher to gain insights into the cafe's setting.

Documentation:

Documentation involved gathering data from various sources, such as public and private documents (Kriyantono, 2012, h. 120). This method was used to obtain data in the form of documents, archives, financial reports, images, and other relevant information that supported the research (Sugiyono, 2018, p. 476).

Company Overview

Cafe Apung Rowo Klampok is one of the cafes located in the village of Senggreng, Sumberpucung District, Malang Regency. What sets this cafe apart is its unique floating concept, where it can sway and float on the water. To access the cafe, visitors need to cross to the middle of Rowo Klampok Lake using a raft piloted by cafe employees. Furthermore, the cafe boasts an attractive and charming interior design, with a blend of semi-indoor and outdoor spaces. As a result, customers can enjoy their meals while appreciating the beautiful natural scenery, listening to live music, and experiencing the gentle swaying of the cafe.

Cafe Apung Rowo Klampok offers a menu featuring rural specialties at affordable prices, ensuring that the taste, quality, and deliciousness are not compromised. The cafe is also equipped with various amenities to enhance the customer experience, such as restrooms, CCTV surveillance, a children's playground, fishing spots, and other family-friendly recreational activities. These facilities create a delightful ambiance, allowing customers to relax, work on tasks, meet with friends or colleagues comfortably, safely, and enjoyably.

Location

This study was conducted in Cafe Apung Rowo Klampok, located at Jl. K.H. Agus Salim Danau Rowo Klampok, Senggreng Village, Sumberpucung District, Malang Regency, East Java.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

IFAS Matrix

Before constructing the IFAS (Internal Factor Analysis Summary) table, we identified the strategic internal factors of the company. Subsequently, the IFAS was formulated to frame these strategic internal factors into the strengths and weaknesses of Cafe Apung Rowo Klampok (Rangkuti, 2016, p. 26). All internal factors were identified in this process, encompassing both strengths and weaknesses of the company. The factors were then weighted on IFAS matrix.

Table 1: IFAS matrix of Cafe Apung Rowo Klampok

Internal Factor	Loading	Rating	Score
Strengths			
1. Unique building concept and theme	0.115	5	0.575
2. Employees' good understanding of their tasks	0.122	5	0.61
3. Partnerships with local influencers	0.085	5	0.425
4. Creative marketing team	0.045	4	0.18
5. Diverse, hygienic, high-quality menu at affordable prices	0.061	5	0.305
6. Open and transparent communication	0.100	5	0.5
7. Mastery of social media	0.083	5	0.415
Total Score	0.611		3.01
Weaknesses			
1. Less strategic location of the cafe and inadequate facilities	0.125	5	0.625
2. Insufficient expertise in the marketing team	0.089	5	0.445
3. Lack of understanding of changing customer needs	0.175	5	0.875
Total Score	0.389		1.945
Total Weighted Score			4.955

In the IFAS (Internal Factor Analysis Summary) table, it is evident that Cafe Apung Rowo Klampok has five strength factors and seven threat factors. The identified strength factors included unique building concept and theme (0.575), cafe employees' good understanding of their tasks (0.61), partnerships with local influencers (0.425), creative marketing team (0.18), diverse, hygienic, high-quality menu at affordable prices (0.305), open and transparent communication (0.5), and mastery of social media (0.415). The total weighted score for the strength factors is 3.01. On the other hand, the identified weakness factors included less strategic location of the cafe and inadequate facilities (0.625), Insufficient expertise in the marketing team (0.445), lack of understanding of changing customer needs (0.875). The total weighted score for the weakness factors is 1.945.

EFAS Matrix

In strategic planning, it is essential to analyze the external environment to identify various potential opportunities and threats (Rangkuti, 2016, p. 25). External factors encompass both opportunities and threats for Cafe Apung Rowo Klampok. All external factors were identified, and then weight scores were assigned to the EFAS matrix.

Table 2: EFAS matrix of Cafe Apung Rowo Klampok

External Factor	Loading	Rating	Score
Opportunities			
1. Changes in consumer behavior	0.225	5	1.125
2. Technology and innovation	0.085	5	0.425
3. Industry competition	0.077	5	0.385
4. Government regulations	0.098	5	0.49
5. Public sentiment	0.095	5	0.475
Total Score	0.58		2.9
Threats			
1. Decline in consumer purchasing power	0.054	5	0.27
2. Health and safety uncertainties	0.121	5	0.605
3. Uncertainty in the global economy	0.092	5	0.46
4. Long-term changes in consumer behavior	0.088	5	0.44
5. Business competition	0.065	5	0.325
Total Score	0.42		2.1
Total Weighted Score			5

As shown in Table 2, Cafe Apung Rowo Klampok has five opportunity factors and five threat factors. The identified opportunity factors included changes in consumer behavior (1.125), technology and innovation (0.425), industry competition (0.385), Government regulations (0.49), public sentiment (0.475). The total weighted score for the opportunity factors is 2.9. On the other hand, the identified threat factors included the decline in consumer purchasing power (0.27), health and safety uncertainties (0.605), uncertainty in the global economy (0.46), Long-term changes in consumer behavior (0.44), business competition (0.325). The total weighted score for the threat factors is 2.1

SWOT Matrix

According to Rangkuti, as cited in Prasetyo et al (2018, p. 80), SWOT analysis reveals that a company's performance can be determined by the combination of internal and external factors. The SWOT analysis compares the external factors, i.e., opportunities and threats, to the internal factors, i.e., strengths and weaknesses (Rangkuti, 2016, p. 20). In this research, the determination of the coordinates in the SWOT matrix is calculated based on the difference in total scores obtained from the analysis of internal and external indicators. The results of this study indicate that the coordinate of Cafe Apung Rowo Klampok in the SWOT matrix is located in quadrant 1, as shown in the following figure:

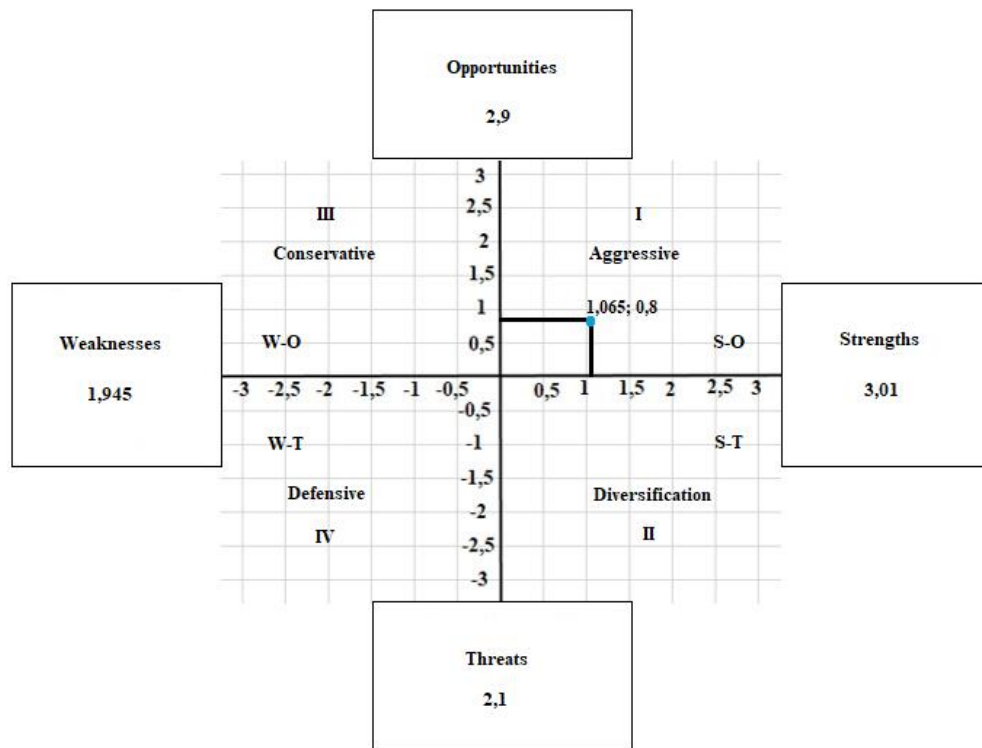


Figure 1: SWOT Matrix

The total score of the internal indicators: Strengths - Weaknesses = X ($3.01 - 1.945 = 1.065$)

The total score of the external indicators: Opportunities - Threats = Y ($2.9 - 2.1 = 0.8$)

The findings of this research indicate that Cafe Apung Rowo Klampok is positioned in quadrant I, signifying a very favorable situation. The appropriate strategy to be applied in this condition is to support an aggressive growth policy.

In an aggressive strategy, the focus is on promotion, brand awareness enhancement, discounts, partnerships, customer testimonials, content marketing, and other related initiatives.

Marketing Strategy of Cafe Apung Rowo Klampok

Based on the matrix calculations of IFAS and EFAS, Cafe Apung Rowo Klampok is positioned in quadrant I. This indicates that Cafe Apung Rowo Klampok is in a highly favorable situation. Moreover, the cafe possesses both opportunities and strengths, enabling it to capitalize on the existing opportunities.

The appropriate strategy to be applied in this situation is to support an aggressive growth policy. In determining the suitable marketing strategy, Cafe Apung Rowo Klampok should focus on the SO (Strengths-Opportunities) strategy to make the most of the available opportunities.

Table 3. Marketing Strategy of Cafe Apung Rowo Klampok

Internal External	Strength 1. Unique building concept and theme 2. Employees' good understanding of their tasks 3. Partnerships with local influencers 4. Creative marketing team 5. Diverse, hygienic, high-quality menu at affordable prices 6. Open and transparent communication 7. Mastery of social media	Weaknesses 1. Less strategic location of the cafe and inadequate facilities 2. Insufficient expertise in the marketing team 3. Lack of understanding of changing customer needs
Opportunity 1. Changes in consumer behavior 2. Technology and innovation 3. Industry competition 4. Government regulations 5. Public sentiment	S-O Strategy 1. Maintaining the uniqueness of the cafe and communicating strict safety protocols at their physical location, such as implementing social distancing measures, mask-wearing, and other safety measures (S1, S3, S4, S5, S6, S7, O4) 2. Demonstrating empathy through campaigns that share stories of how the cafe's staff successfully dealt with the pandemic (S2, S4, S6, S7, O2, O3, O4, O5). 3. Building consumer trust by hosting virtual events with chefs or culinary experts (S3, O3). 4. Promoting innovation, such as offering a user-friendly ordering application and QR code-accessible menus (S5, S3, O5).	W-O Strategy 1. Offering special discounts and communicating strict safety protocols at their physical location (W1, O1). 2. Providing delivery services (W1, W3, O4)
Threat 1. Decline in consumer purchasing power 2. Health and safety uncertainties 3. Uncertainty in the global economy 4. Long-term changes in consumer behavior 5. Business competition	S- T Strategy 1. Providing special promotional offers, discounts, and attractive value packages (S4, S6, S7, T1, T5). 2. Being responsive to the fluctuating economic situation by adjusting prices and offering loyalty programs (S5, S6, T3, T4, T5).	W- T Strategy 1. Highlighting the exceptional quality and unique flavors of their food through videos, images, and other forms of media (W2, W3, T1, T4, T5). 2. Participating in business or MSME training to enhance knowledge and skills (W2, W3, T1, T5).

Based on Table 3, the strategy that Cafe Apung Rowo Klampok is recommended to implement the S-O (Strengths-Opportunities) strategy as follows:

- Maintaining the uniqueness of the cafe and communicating strict safety protocols at their physical location, such as implementing social distancing, providing body temperature checks, offering hand sanitizers, enforcing mask-wearing, and other measures. Increasing their visibility through online food ordering platforms such as ShopeeFood, GoFood, GrabFood, and offering special promotions like free delivery and exclusive discounts.
- Empathizing with their customers through marketing campaigns that highlight their concern for the health and well-being of the community, sharing stories of how their cafe employees have overcome the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic, or supporting charitable activities to help those affected by the pandemic.
- Launching a customer loyalty program to reward frequent buyers or food orders. In addition, the cafe could organize special events, such as virtual sessions with culinary experts or chefs, to attract the interest of consumers and highlight the uniqueness of their food offerings. This can help build trust and confidence among existing as well as potential new customers.
- The cafe can also promote their innovative products by providing a user-friendly ordering application, offering digital menus accessible through QR codes, and conducting virtual training sessions on various topics, such as tutorials on creating specific dishes, snacks, and beverages. Implementing social media and online video platforms can assist the cafe in effectively conveying messages about Cafe Apung Rowo Klampok's technology and innovations to a wider audience

CONCLUSION

Cafe Apung Rowo Klampok is one of the culinary businesses that managed to survive amidst the Covid-19 pandemic. The various government policies such as PPKM, PSBB, social distancing, and others have compelled the business to implement appropriate and clear communication strategies. This research utilized the SWOT analysis to analyze and design a suitable and clear marketing communication strategy for Cafe Apung Rowo Klampok to sustain its business during the Covid-19 pandemic. The SWOT analysis results showed a total score of 3.01 for strengths and 1.945 for weaknesses in the IFAS, and a total score of 2.9 for opportunities and 2.1 for threats in the EFAS. Based on the coordinates from the IFAS and EFAS matrices, Cafe Apung Rowo Klampok is positioned in quadrant I (SO Strategy), which supports an aggressive growth policy. The recommended SO strategy to be implemented in the company includes maintaining the uniqueness of the cafe, communicating strict safety protocols at the physical location, empathizing with customers through campaigns, sharing success stories of cafe employees in overcoming the pandemic, building customer trust, organizing virtual sessions with chefs or culinary experts, and promoting innovations like user-friendly ordering applications and QR code-accessible menus to strengthen the branding of Cafe Apung Rowo Klampok.

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