

Development of a Marketing Strategy for Moke in the Digital Era (A Case Study in Tuapukan Village, Kupang Regency)

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Abstract

In Tuapukan Village, a portion of the community meets their livelihood needs by selling traditional alcoholic beverages (Moke). However, in the sales process, technology and social media have not been fully utilized to promote their products, resulting in limited consumer reach and, consequently, a lack of support for improving the welfare of those engaged in the Moke business. The purpose of this research is to develop effective marketing strategies through the use of technology and social media to increase sales volume. The research employed a qualitative method (case study), along with strategy development using the TOWS analysis technique Threats, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Strengths in order to generate various strategic options for advancing Moke marketing. The key informants in this study included the Village Head, Moke producers, and consumers. The findings indicate the necessity of transforming marketing strategies from conventional models to more modern and adaptive approaches, particularly by innovating Moke distillation equipment to achieve standardized taste quality.

Keywords

Innovation; Moke; TOWS Analysis; Tuapukan Village



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INTRODUCTION

Moke is the result of distilling sap from the tapping of palm trees (*Borassus flabellifer*), which has become an integral part of people's lives in East Nusa Tenggara (NTT). Recognized as a traditional regional drink, moke has an important role in various cultural and social activities, such as traditional ceremonies, parties, and thanksgiving. Moke consumption is not only a hereditary habit, but also contains high symbolic value as a symbol of brotherhood and a means of unifying in the social structure of the NTT community (Datta, 2016)

In addition to containing cultural values, moke also makes a significant economic contribution to the local community (Soa et al., 2023). In Tuapukan Village, Kupang Regency, most residents depend on the production and sale of moke for their livelihood (Scott, 2024). An average producer is able to produce five to eight liters of moke per day, which is marketed in various packaging sizes, ranging from 500 ml bottles for IDR 25,000–IDR 30,000 to 5 liter jerry cans that sell for above IDR 250,000. Daily income ranges from IDR 100,000 to IDR 150,000, a

figure that is sufficient to finance household needs, children's education, and the purchase of assets such as motorcycles and home construction (Scott, 2024); (Dentis, 2017).

However, the results of field observations show that the marketing system used is still very traditional (Scott, 2024); (H. Aslihatul Rahmawati, 2020). Sales are carried out conventionally, without the support of modern marketing strategies that adopt the development of science and technology (science and technology). This leads to limited market reach and stagnation of added value for moke products, even though the market demand for these products is quite high (Scott, 2024). In fact, in today's digital era, marketing strategy transformation is a must for sustainability and strengthening the competitiveness of local products.

A thorough evaluation of moke's business model and marketing strategy is an important step (H. Aslihatul Rahmawati, 2020). The evaluation is not only intended to assess business performance, but also to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats faced by local business actors (N. O. McCain, H. Herianto, 2023). An objective evaluation can be the basis for designing a more adaptive, effective, and sustainable marketing strategy (Yanti & Idayanti, 2022).

In this context, the TOWS analysis approach becomes a relevant instrument for mapping the internal and external conditions of the moke business. Internal conditions include aspects of production, business management, and marketing capabilities, while external factors include socio-economic dynamics, government policies, technological developments, and market preferences (M. Pauline, O. Alexandre, B. K. Andoseh, M. T. S. Abeline, 2017); (Supriyat, 2018). With this analysis, it is hoped that strategic steps can be identified in increasing the effectiveness of moke marketing as a superior product based on local wisdom.

Although there have been a number of studies on moke from social and cultural aspects, studies that specifically design moke marketing development strategies are still very limited. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by conducting a TOWS analysis of the moke marketing practices currently carried out by the people of Tuapukan Village. Through the TOWS analysis, this research is expected to provide concrete input for local business actors and the Village Government in developing innovative marketing strategies that are relevant to the demands of the times.

Practically, the results of this research can be a guide for the people of Tuapukan to develop the moke business in a sustainable and competitive manner. Furthermore, Tuapukan Village is expected to be able to establish itself as a moke sales center in Kupang Regency, as well as make moke a regional superior product that has high competitiveness in the local and national markets.

METHODS

Data obtained through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation were analyzed interactively using the model Miles, Huberman, and Saldana, which consists of four main stages: (Fadli, 2021); (Suwendra, 2018); (Scott, 2014).

The data collection process was carried out simultaneously from various primary and secondary sources in Tuapukan Village. The researcher recorded all findings regarding traditional production processes, post-pandemic community economic dynamics, and marketing obstacles faced by moke business actor (Scott, 2013). In this stage, the researcher carried out the process of selecting, simplifying, and transforming raw data from field records. Information that was not relevant to the digital marketing strategy was separated, while key data regarding strengths (own land, abundant raw materials) and weaknesses (simple tools, low digital literacy) were focused on further processing (Waruwu, 2023).

The condensed data is then presented in the form of a descriptive narrative and a TOWS Matrix. The use of these tables and matrices aims to visually map the relationship between internal and external factors, thereby facilitating the logical and systematic formulation of SO, WO, ST, and WT strategies. The final stage is to formulate conclusions from the results of the strategic analysis. The researcher conducts verification to ensure that the recommended strategies such as modernization of distillation tools and the use of social media are truly valid and applicable to the people of Tuapukan Village to improve their welfare.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The findings of this research are the results obtained by the researcher while conducting research in Tuapukan Village, Kupang Regency. The data obtained came from observations, interviews and documentation with related parties. The form of data is in the form of narrative descriptive. Based on research and analysis techniques, the researcher obtained the following research results:

The study found that moke distillation business in Tuapukan Village has experienced significant growth, especially since the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. The socio-economic impact of the pandemic has prompted almost all heads of families in the village to turn to becoming moke entrepreneurs, leaving their previous jobs as day laborers or private employees. This change is a form of community adaptation in maintaining the economic resilience of their households in the midst of a crisis situation (Tasrif, 2020).

The results of observations and interviews show that Moke Production done with a simple distillation technique (Scott, 2024). This process takes about four hours to produce five liters of moke from 20 liters of fermented tuak. Production is carried out in their own yard using traditional tools such as large pots, bamboo as a distillation channel, and firewood as the main fuel. The independence of the production site is one of the main strengths that sustainably supports this business (and Hasan Pura A., 2013).

Economically, **Moke makes a significant contribution** family income. Many residents have succeeded in building houses and financing their children's education up to university level from the proceeds of selling moke. The average selling price is in the range of Rp25,000 per 500 ml or around Rp180,000 per 5 liters, with a daily sales volume of between 10 to 15 liters. Demand increases rapidly during traditional moments and parties, considering that moke also has strong cultural value as a symbol of Timorese man's customs and identity (Soa et al., 2023); (Betty & Nusarasriya, 2020).

However, the results of the study also revealed a number of Problems in the Marketing Aspect. The majority of business actors still rely on conventional marketing strategies, namely direct or word-of-mouth sales (word of mouth marketing). This strategy is considered less effective because it limits market reach and makes business development stagnant. In addition, the absence of promotional efforts through digital media and the lack of product innovation are challenges in facing competition with similar products from other regions (Dinda Prameswari & Onny Fitriana Sitorus, 2024).

To analyze more deeply, this study uses the TOWS analysis. From the side Strengths, the moke distillery business in Tuapukan has several advantages: production is carried out on its own land, the availability of abundant palm tree raw materials, and strong social relations between residents that allow cooperation in meeting market demand. The identity of Tuapukan as a "moke village" is also a special attraction for consumers from outside the region (Scott, 2024); (Baihaqi et al., 2022).

Meanwhile, Weaknesses The main issues include the lack of standardization in the production process, the use of simple tools, and the low level of public education which has an impact on the lack of technological and marketing innovation. The knowledge of distillation techniques applied is mostly the result of informal learning from immigrants, not local cultural heritage. This has an impact on the quality of products that are inconsistent and difficult to compete with moke from other regions, such as Flores, which are known to have better quality (Soa et al., 2023).

On the other hand, threats the sustainability of the moke business is quite real. Regional competition in producing high-quality moke is getting tighter, and without taste innovation or quality improvement, Tuapukan moke products are at risk of being abandoned by consumers. In addition, moke as a liquor is often associated with criminal acts and potential prohibition from the government if it is not managed legally and hygienically. Another threat is the potential loss of interest among the younger generation in continuing this business because they have not seen promising long-term prospects (Scott, 2024).

However, opportunities; the development of the moke business is still wide open. The use of modern technology in the distillation process can improve production efficiency and product quality. Innovation in equipment, for example by utilizing gas-fired reactors can produce more uniform and hygienic products. In addition, flavor innovations, such as moke with the addition of fruit juice, can open up new market segments and increase consumer interest. In the context of marketing, the use of social media such as Instagram, TikTok, and

Facebook has great potential to expand market reach and build digital product branding (Scott, 2024); (Bading & Kwure, 2023); (Nathania Ariyani Paramesti Anindya & Ni Made Ida Pratiwi, 2023). For more details, you can see the following SWOT analysis table:

Table 1. SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
Production is carried out on own land (free of rent)	No standardization of tools and production processes
Abundant availability of raw materials (lontar)	Distillation technique knowledge is not culturally inherited
The social ties between residents are very strong	The distillation tool is still very simple and manual
The village's identity as "Moke village", becomes a promotional value in itself	Low education levels hinder innovation
High demand for traditional and ritual purposes	Not yet using social media as a means of promotion
Opportunities (Peluang)	Threats (Ancaman)
Modernization of refining equipment (using natural gas, reactor systems)	Competition for moke products from other regions of higher quality (Flores, for example)
Product innovation by adding fruit flavors or other variations	Moke has the potential to be negatively perceived as liquor (at risk of criminalization and banning)
Utilization of social media for digital marketing and market expansion	The absence of business legality and health standards can hinder business expansion
The younger generation can be directed to local potential-based education for innovation of marketing tools and strategies	Low interest of the younger generation in unstructured traditional businesses

Source: Data processed, 2025

The SWOT analysis that has been carried out previously is then further elaborated in the form of TOWS analysis (Threats, Opportunities, Weaknesses, Strengths). TOWS analysis is a strategic approach used to formulate alternative business development strategies in a more targeted manner. Through this analysis, internal factors (strengths and weaknesses) and external factors (opportunities and threats) are combined to produce an effective, realistic, and applicable strategy. Thus, moke businesses are expected to be able to increase competitiveness, especially when dealing with similar products from other regions.

This view is in line with that stated by Dita Liani, that the TOWS Matrix is used to strategize systematically by considering the relationship between strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. This matrix allows the consequences of internal and external factors to be formulated in the form of a more operational strategy, both for company development and the preparation of marketing strategies (Liani, 2019).

Based on the results of the analysis, there are four main groups of strategies that can be used to develop a moke business, namely: 1). SO (Strengths Opportunities) strategy, which is a strategy that focuses on utilizing internal strengths to achieve external opportunities. 2). WO (Weaknesses Opportunities) strategy, which is a strategy that aims to minimize weaknesses by taking advantage of available opportunities. 3). ST (Strengths Threats) strategy, which is a strategy that uses internal strength to face and reduce the impact of external threats. 4). WT (Weaknesses–Threats) strategy, which is a defensive strategy that is directed to minimize weaknesses while avoiding threats. To clarify the relationship between these internal and external factors, the following TOWS Matrix is shown in table 2.

Table 2. Matriks TOWS

TOWS	Internal	Strengths (Internal)	Weaknesses (Internal)
		- Production is carried out on own land (free of rent)	- No standardization of tools and production processes
		- Abundant availability of raw materials (lontar)	- Knowledge of distillation techniques is not culturally inherited
		- The social relationships/kinship between residents are very strong	- The distillation tool is still very simple and manual
	External	- The identity of the village as "Moke village", becomes its own promotional value	- Low levels of education hinder innovation
		- High demand for traditional and ritual needs	- Not yet using social media as a means of promotion
	Opportunities (External)	S/O Strategy (harnessing strengths to maximize opportunities)	Strategy: W/O (Taking advantage of opportunities to overcome weaknesses)
	- Modernization of refining equipment (using natural gas, reactor systems)	1. Cultivate Lontar trees to increase production capacity with modern technology.	1. Using or making modern technology to standardize taste quality.
	- Product innovation by adding fruit flavors or other variations	2. Forming a group of residents to innovate taste and make product packaging	2. Digital marketing training for moke business actors and youth in Tuapukan Village

- Utilization of social media for digital marketing and market expansion - The younger generation can be directed to local potential-based education for innovation of marketing tools and strategies	3. Optimize the name of the village as "Moke Village" and promote it through social media	3. Flavor innovation (moke mixed with fruit juice) for product appeal
Theats (External)	Strategy: S/T (Harnessing power to overcome threats)	Strategy: W/T (Minimize weaknesses and avoid threats)
- Competition for moke products from other regions of higher quality (Flores, for example) - Moke has the potential to be negatively perceived as liquor (at risk of criminalization and banning) - The absence of business legality and health standards can hinder business expansion - Low interest of the younger generation in unstructured traditional businesses	1. Use social relations to build collective quality standards to compete with moke from other regions. 2. Positive branding of "Moke Village" to reduce the negative stigma of liquor. 3. Strengthen business legality to avoid the risk of prohibition	1. Technical skills training to improve product quality so as not to lose competition. 2. Legal and hygiene education to avoid bans. 3. Business regeneration through local entrepreneurship programs so that the interest of the younger generation increases.

Source: Data processed, 2025

Based on the results of the TWOS matrix above, a good strategy can be formulated for the development of moke sales in Tuapukan Village.

1. S/O strategy (harnessing internal power to exploit external opportunities).
 - 1.1. Optimizing *the Branding* of "Moke Village" through creative content on social media to reach consumers outside the Kupang area.
 - 1.2. The use of citizens' social capital to form collective business groups to increase production capacity with modern technology.

2. W/O Strategy) (Efforts to minimize internal weaknesses by taking advantage of external opportunities)
 - 2.1. Implementing digital marketing training programs for village youth to cover the limitations of technology literacy in the older generation.
 - 2.2. The adoption of reactor refining technology to achieve quality consistency has been the main weakness of Tuapukan products.
3. S/T Strategy (Leveraging internal strengths to mitigate the impact of external threats)
 - 3.1. Build collective quality standards through consensus among producers to match the dominance of moke products outside the region.
 - 3.2. Doing a *Positive Branding narrative* to change the negative perception of liquor into a product of local wisdom that is legal and hygienic.
4. W/T Strategy (Strategy to minimize weaknesses and avoid threats through preventive measures)
 - 4.1. Implementation of legal education and health standardization to ensure business continuity from the risk of government bans.
 - 4.2. Formalization of a local potential-based entrepreneurship curriculum for the younger generation to ensure a more professional and structured business regeneration.

These findings confirm that the transformation of moke marketing in Tuapukan Village must be carried out holistically, combining aspects of Production Technology Innovation with Digital Marketing Literacy. Without the standardization of taste through tool modernization, digital marketing strategies will not have a sustainable impact due to inconsistency in product quality. Therefore, policy support from the Village Government in terms of legality and the provision of technological infrastructure is the main key to the independence of this industry based on local wisdom.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the analysis and discussion that has been carried out, the following are the conclusions of this study: This study concludes that the development of moke businesses in Tuapukan Village requires serious attention from the village government through the implementation of four main strategies formulated in the TOWS analysis; The strategy is directed to transform the moke business into a traditional beverage industry based on local wisdom that is competitive, sustainable, and able to significantly improve the welfare of the community; The main recommendation offered is the need to transition from conventional marketing models to a more modern and adaptive digital approach.

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