

## ANALYSIS OF THE MARKETING STRATEGY OF UMKM QUKYTA SHOES IN INCREASING SALES POST-PANDEMIC

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### ABSTRACT

This qualitative case study examines the marketing strategies implemented by UMKM Qukyta Shoes to recover sales in the post-pandemic era. The research identifies several key approaches, including product diversification, pricing adjustments, digital marketing optimization, and distribution network expansion. The study highlights how product diversification aims to attract new market segments and meet changing consumer preferences, while strategic pricing seeks to maintain competitive advantage and customer loyalty. The use of digital platforms for marketing activities, such as social media and online marketplaces, has played a crucial role in increasing brand visibility and reaching a wider audience. Additionally, expanding distribution channels has allowed the business to enhance product accessibility. However, challenges such as product plagiarism, limited human resources, and financial constraints have been identified as obstacles to achieving sustainable growth. The study emphasizes the importance of innovative marketing and adaptive strategies in overcoming these challenges to ensure continued development and competitiveness in the footwear industry.

**Keywords:** Marketing Strategy, UMKM, Post-Pandemic Recovery, Product Diversification, Digital Marketing

### INTRODUCTION

The business world or business is a sector that includes various production, distribution, and consumption activities of goods and services, both those carried out by individuals and organizations. This sector plays an important role in driving the global and national economy, creating employment opportunities, and driving economic growth. economic growth. One of the main pillars in the Indonesian economy is Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), which have been proven to contribute significantly to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and national employment. Based on data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), the number of

MSMEs in Indonesia continues to grow from year to year. In 2010, the number of MSMEs was recorded at around 53.8 million business units and increased to 65.4 million business units in 2019. The contribution of MSMEs to GDP reached 61% with a value of around Rp9,580 trillion, and absorbed 97% of the total national workforce. However, despite their important role, MSMEs face various challenges, especially in the face of economic uncertainty due to changes in global and national conditions.

The Covid-19 pandemic that hit in early 2020 had a significant impact on the business world, including the MSME sector. Social restrictions and changes in people's consumption patterns have caused many MSMEs to experience a drastic decrease in turnover. The Chairperson of the Indonesian MSME Association noted that the non-culinary sector experienced a decrease in turnover of up to 30-35%, due to limited direct interaction between sellers and buyers and a decrease in people's purchasing power for non-essential products.

Qukyta Shoes, an MSME in the fashion sector based in Bandung, is one of the businesses affected by the pandemic. Before the pandemic, Qukyta Shoes managed to achieve an average revenue of IDR 20,000,000 to IDR 40,000,000 per month, with sales of more than 100 pairs of shoes each month. However, due to the pandemic, there has been a 90% drop in sales, with only around six to eight pairs of shoes sold per month. This condition caused Qukyta Shoes to close their offline store in Balubur Town Square due to high operational costs that were not proportional to revenue.

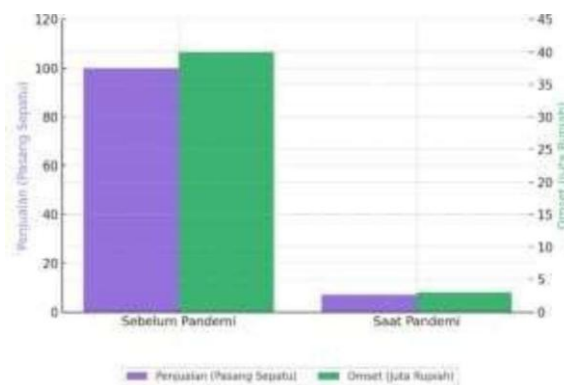


FIGURE 1

### Perbandingan Penjualan Sebelum dan Setelah Pandemi

Apart from causing a decline in sales, the pandemic has also changed people's consumption patterns. Consumers have become more selective in shopping and tend to prioritize basic needs over fashion products. This change in behavior requires MSMEs like Qukyta Shoes to adapt their marketing strategies in order to increase sales and recover their business post-pandemic. Marketing strategy is a crucial aspect in supporting business sustainability amid market changes. Marketing includes not only promotion, but also product development, pricing, distribution, and communication strategies that are in line with consumer trends and preferences. Therefore, this study

aims to analyze the marketing strategies implemented by Qukyta Shoes in an effort to increase sales again post-pandemic. This research is expected to provide insights for MSME players in formulating more adaptive and effective strategies in the post-pandemic era.

## **METHOD**

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study method to understand the marketing strategies of Qukyta Shoes MSMEs in increasing sales after the pandemic. The research subjects were the owners and employees, while the object was the implemented marketing strategy. Informants were selected using purposive sampling, namely the owner and employees of the production and marketing departments.

Data was collected through triangulation, which includes: 1) Direct observation of product, price, promotion, and distribution strategies as well as challenges faced; 2) Semi-structured interviews with owners and employees to obtain in-depth information; and 3) Documentation, which collected business profiles, products, prices, promotions, distribution, and sales data.

## **RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION**

Qukyta Shoes is an MSME that was established in 2016 in Bandung City, with a focus on the production and marketing of high quality women's shoes. Qukyta Shoes products are in high demand by teenage girls who prioritize young, dynamic, and elegant styles. The designs of the shoes produced follow the market trends and include fashionable models. Qukyta Shoes has also obtained legal protection for its brand through HAKI, which signifies its seriousness and professionalism in running the business.

Based on interviews with owners and employees, UMKM Qukyta Shoes implements several marketing strategies in an effort to increase sales after the pandemic, including:

### **1. Product**

Qukyta Shoes has a diversity of products that include boots, slip-ons, and sandals Korean mountains, with a wide variety within each category. After the pandemic, this micro-enterprise expanded the market by introducing unisex products to attract male consumers. To maintain quality, Qukyta Shoes applies strict standards in the production process. Shoes that are sloppy or have production defects will not be marketed. New products are tested first before being mass-produced to ensure their comfort and durability.

In terms of design, Qukyta Shoes tailors fabric motifs to consumers' preferences, such as floral motifs for women and neutral motifs for men. Their products are also equipped with excellent features, such as insole cushion for extra comfort and waterproof lining so that shoes can be used in various weather conditions. The brand name "Qukyta" is taken from Sundanese for "sama kita," reflecting the philosophy of togetherness in business. The shoes are packed with plastic and placed in a box. For long distance shipping, it is equipped with bubble wrap to protect the product. Shoe sizes produced range from sizes 35 to 41 for women, and 39 to 44 for men, with additional production based on customer demand.

As a form of commitment to customer satisfaction, Qukyta Shoes provides after-sales service for consumers who experience problems with their products. The guarantee is given for one month after purchase with a clear claim procedure.



Figure 2  
Qukyta Shoes Products

## 2. Price

In terms of pricing, Qukyta Shoes experienced post-pandemic price adjustments in response to the decline in consumer purchasing power. Previously, the price of slip-ons started from IDR300,000 and boots from IDR450,000. However, during the pandemic, prices were reduced to Rp210,000 for slip-ons and Rp300,000 for boots, with the aim of keeping the products sellable despite the difficult economic conditions.

To attract consumers, Qukyta Shoes provides discounts as part of its pricing strategy, especially to resellers, loyal customers, and consumers who make repeat purchases or buy more than one product. Discounts offered range from 20% to 25%, and in some events, discounts can be given greater than 25%. Although it does not have a price reduction program or member program, this discount strategy is quite effective in maintaining relationships with customers. In terms of payment, Qukyta Shoes offers various payment methods such as bank transfers, Gopay, QRIS, and through marketplaces like Shopee. However, this micro business does not provide credit facilities, so all transactions are made directly.

## 3. Promotion

Promotion of Qukyta Shoes is mainly done through social media, including WhatsApp Business, Instagram, and Facebook. Although there is no specific budget allocated for promotion, this simple effort is quite successful in attracting customers, especially when releasing new motifs. Qukyta Shoes does not use paid advertisements such as Google Ads or Facebook Ads, but has received free promotion through radio interviews.

Qukyta Shoes does not implement formal Public Relations (PR) activities to build brand image, but maintains good relationships with customers through social media and exhibitions. Direct promotion through exhibitions and fairs remains an important part of their promotional strategy, with participation in local, national, and international fairs in countries such as Brunei, Australia, and Belgium.



Figure 3  
Media Promosi Qukyta Shoes

#### 4. Distribution (Place)

In terms of distribution, Qukyta Shoes uses two main channels: direct distribution through WhatsApp Business and marketplaces such as Shopee, and indirect distribution through resellers in various regions. These distribution channels make it possible to reach consumers more widely, both domestically and abroad.

After participating in international exhibitions, Qukyta Shoes products are now recognized in countries such as Brunei, Malaysia, and Singapore. Despite having closed its offline store in Balubur Town Square due to the pandemic, Qukyta Shoes continues to serve customers from a private home that serves as a warehouse. The inventory system at Qukyta Shoes uses the first-in- first-out (FIFO) method. first-in-first-out (FIFO) method to manage stock, where stock is produced based on demand forecast and previous sales data. Product deliveries are made through available logistics services, both for in-city deliveries using local couriers and out-of-city and overseas deliveries using other expedition services. Shipping costs are charged to consumers, but there are often free shipping promos on marketplaces.

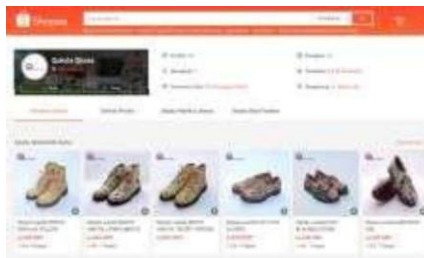


Figure 4  
Distribution Channels of Qukyta Shoes

In implementing marketing strategies to increase sales in the post-pandemic period, Qukyta Shoes faces various obstacles and challenges from both internal and external sources. In the product strategy, the main challenge faced is the existence of product plagiarism by competitors, which has the potential to threaten the uniqueness and credibility of the brand. However, the difference in sewing techniques applied by Qukyta Shoes is a differentiating factor that can increase competitive advantage over products made by competitors. In the context of pricing strategies, Qukyta Shoes has

difficulty determining competitive prices. This is due to the decline in prices during the pandemic, which has resulted in a reduction in resellers' profit margins. On the other hand, attempts to adjust prices to a higher level could potentially pose a risk of decreasing consumer interest.

Limited human resources and budget allocations are fundamental constraints in the implementation of promotional strategies. Promotional activities carried out are currently limited to the use of personal social media without the support of a special budget, which has an impact on limiting audience reach and overall promotional effectiveness. In addition, in the distribution strategy, Qukyta Shoes experiences obstacles in optimizing the management of marketplaces such as Shopee due to limited human resource expertise, so that the potential for sales through online channels has not been maximized. Although Qukyta Shoes MSMEs still face various obstacles and challenges in implementing marketing strategies, post-pandemic sales data shows quite positive results. The marketing strategy implemented has succeeded in significantly increasing sales, although it has not fully returned to pre-pandemic conditions. This can be seen from the steady growth in turnover every month. The contribution of. The largest contribution to the post-pandemic sales increase came from direct marketing activities, particularly through participation in exhibitions and fairs. This activity is one of the most effective strategies for Qukyta Shoes MSMEs, with a turnover that can reach 20 million rupiah in one exhibition.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the results of research and discussion regarding "Marketing Strategy Analysis of Qukyta Shoes MSMEs in Increasing Post-Pandemic Sales" it is found that Qukyta Shoes MSMEs have implemented several key strategies. These strategies include adding product variations, adjusting competitive prices, and discount programs to attract customers. Promotion is actively carried out through social media, while distribution is expanded through marketplaces, exhibitions, and cooperation with resellers.

Nevertheless, Qukyta Shoes faces various obstacles, such as product plagiarism by competitors, difficulties in determining competitive prices, and limited human resources and promotion budgets. In addition, sales through the marketplace have not been optimized. However, despite the challenges, this marketing strategy has succeeded in steadily increasing sales every month post-pandemic, especially thanks to participation in exhibitions and fairs which contributed significantly to the increase in sales.

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