

Lucky Plants As A Change in Business Models in The Ornamental Plant Market in Kopeng, Salatiga City

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Abstract

Most market vendors in Kopeng, Salatiga, are already familiar with plants that bring good luck, meaning they bring good fortune and protection from supernatural attacks (*tolak balak*). However, they don't use this knowledge to share with visitors who intend to bring home souvenirs from the Kopeng Tourism Park. One persuasive way to direct buyers to the market is to convey the benefits of these lucky plants by providing information using standing banners in the kiosks, encouraging visitors to decide which type of ornamental plant to purchase. This is part of a marketing strategy that encourages people to green and beautify their homes, even though in this modern era, this practice is considered superstition. The standing banner method is an output of the Marketing Mix concept implemented by the Community Service Team. This assumption should not be a barrier to environmental beauty and sustainability, but rather conveys a moral message that even a small number of existing plants can have a helpful function, which is important for the community.

Keywords: Lucky Plants, Marketing Strategies, Modern Times, Superstition, Moral Messages.

INTRODUCTION

Traditional markets can be likened to a battlefield for producers and traders, requiring effective marketing tactics and strategies to win. While many competitors are encountered in the marketplace, these competitors cannot be eliminated, as they would be in a military war. Each market seeks to dominate and strengthen its position. Therefore, traditional markets also require a marketing strategy, which requires establishing a grand strategy and a core strategy. If this grand strategy is sound, the company's marketing activities are expected to be directed toward achieving the objectives set out in the marketing plan. Overcoming these challenges requires a change in business model that is up-to-date.

Related to this, ornamental plant markets are also a type of traditional market. It's common to find ornamental plant markets and fruit and vegetable markets in tourist areas, especially in mountainous areas. Although these markets are usually well-organized, there are no informational texts that provide guidance or instructions for their wares. When vendors sell directly to visitors through outreach, the sales response is often suboptimal. Visitors often ignore them and feel uncomfortable being constantly "sticked up" to buy. Vendors who engage in aggressive promotions like this are considered a "haphazard" marketing model. This can damage the reputation of the tourist destination by discouraging visitors from returning. Therefore, ways to attract customers must be continually sought to ensure business survival and growth, leading to a more professional and ethical approach.

The sales strategy that serves as a marketing concept as a change in the business model that the Community Service Team offers and implements is a holistic marketing concept based on the development, design, and Community Service of marketing programs, processes, and activities that recognize the broad and interdependent nature of marketing. Holistic marketing consists of four integrated activities: internal marketing, integrated marketing, performance marketing, and relationship marketing.

We also offer the marketing mix concept. The marketing mix is the relationship

between the elements/components of the marketing tool used to influence consumers. These elements are commonly referred to as the 6Ps: Product, Price, Promotion, Place, People, and Prayer.

Kopeng Tourism Park (TWK), located on the intercity route from Salatiga to Magelang, also features a traditional market and a supporting area for souvenirs. This marketing model also operates here. While at first glance it may seem crowded, these are actually vendors passing by. Based on field justification by the Community Service Team, TWK, a long-standing tourist destination dating back to the Dutch colonial era, has not seen significant progress over time. The local Regional Government (Pemda) and City Government (Pemkot) have not empowered TWK to meet the demands of the times. Fortunately, since 2018, a private sector has taken over management of TWK in an effort to provide a more beautiful and beautiful tourist spot. Naturally, under this private sector's management, the situation and conditions at TWK are now more beautiful and conducive.

On the other hand, there are several ornamental plant vendors within the TWK area, which is indeed an agro-tourism destination. Meanwhile, in another area, the fruit and vegetable market across from TWK still maintains its old layout. This market still lacks order and permanence. However, since January 2021, after our campus, STIE Semarang, was entrusted as a partner in the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) program of the Central Java Provincial Regional-Owned Enterprise (BUMD), the Sarana Patra Hulu Cepu Limited Company (PT SPHC), the market has been renovated and reorganized to facilitate professional management. Ornamental plant farmers are also given the opportunity to sell their produce directly in neatly organized and permanent kiosks. Therefore, we complement the existing infrastructure with various informative texts that guide visitors to a satisfying travel experience. Specifically, the Community Service Team provided a solution to increase sales by using standing banners in the ornamental plant market area about the availability of lucky plants available at the market. This was done to convince buyers that there are hidden benefits if they care for these plants.

By using standing banner is an eye-catching spotify banner, capable of providing comprehensive information with text placement that helps consumers make informed choices. This standing banner is the outcome of our PKM title, which is believed to be easy and effective in attracting visitors to buy, and traders are increasingly confident because their kiosks look vibrant and modern. Standing banners are an Community Service of the Marketing Mix Concept, a solution to increase the turnover of ornamental plant market traders in Kopeng, Salatiga.

COMMUNITY SERVICE METHOD PROBLEM SOLVING REALIZATION

Kopeng Tourism Park (TWK) in Salatiga has a competitive advantage that continues to attract domestic and international tourists. This is due to TWK's location on a mountainous path, offering beautiful views. The cool air makes it easy to find agricultural and plantation product vendors. Within the TWK area, there are well-managed gardens where farmers grow fruit, ornamental plants, and vegetables. Across the street, there is a fruit, vegetable, and ornamental plant market. The structure and construction of these markets are spacious, comfortable, neat, orderly, and clean.

According to field justification by the Community Service Team, vendors in this market still feel they are not maximizing their sales revenue, even though TWK is quite popular due to its location on the intercity connecting route between Salatiga and Magelang and has become a potential tourist destination. They have used direct selling and direct (verbal) offers to visitors, but these efforts have been unsuccessful. This prompted us to provide a different approach as an effective and efficient marketing strategy. We conveyed during the outreach

event that the most comprehensive information to attract visitors is by providing standing banners in strategic, eye-catching locations. We believe that having informative standing banners can attract visitors to stop by and purchase our wares. The reasoning behind this marketing strategy is that it will guide vendors in marketing their products in the right direction. Therefore, the Community Service Team proposed implementing a change in the business model to be more effective and efficient in an effort to increase revenue.

The following are some of the objectives of marketing strategies, including: (1) Accelerating company growth; (2) Building reputation; (3) Increasing brand awareness; (4) Targeting the right market share, and (5) Ensuring that entrepreneurs maximize the resources they have.

TARGET AUDIENCE

The target for implementing the Marketing Mix method with the result (output) in the form of a standing banner as an effort to increase turnover is the ornamental plant market traders in Kopeng, Salatiga City. The Standing Banner contains information about examples of lucky plants, namely those that bring good fortune or are called hoki and anti-black magic/witchcraft/fortune/magic related to supernatural things or what is called *tolak balak*.

In this regard, the Community Service Team believes that the role of Standing Banners is to increase revenue and become a new, more effective and efficient marketing method than previous ones. This was demonstrated when the Community Service Team provided field assistance, where TWK visitors immediately approached and made purchases after receiving guidance and information about ornamental plants that are considered to bring good luck and ward off disaster.

ACTIVITY METHOD

Seeing the above obstacles, the Community Service Team tried to find various techniques and strategies to increase turnover because the way to market agricultural and plantation commodities in Kopeng still uses the 'jemput bola' method so that it is felt to be less comfortable for TWK visitors. Then based on the justification in the field, the Community Service Team took the initiative to provide counseling on the function of banners which in this case prioritizes standing banners that can facilitate marketing without having to struggle to 'force' visitors and rather create a conducive climate so that visitors will not be deterred and want to return because the conditions at TWK are more orderly and controlled now.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

EVALUATION RESULTS

The Marketing Mix method with the Community Service of standing banners as its output was presented to ornamental plant market traders on Wednesday, March 3, 2021, at the Kopeng Village Hall, Getasan District, Salatiga. This community was selected based on field justification regarding the ornamental plant market which is still not permanently organized. Following the CSR role of PT SPHC, which partners with our home base, STIE Semarang, in organizing the ornamental plant market there, we refined the needs of traders to optimize existing potential by implementing a PKM program on marketing strategies so that traders are more confident in facing consumers because they have received solutions to the marketing problems they face. In addition, this community was selected because of some readiness from them and further curiosity about its effectiveness so that the Community Service Team can then monitor progress results (outputs).

DISCUSSION

In accordance with the demands of achieving this PKM Program which aims to increase

turnover, there are strategies/tips/strategies applied for that. Its Community Service to the problems faced by ornamental plant traders is the application of the standing banner method to attract buyers by including informative writing and images about lucky plants, namely plants that bring fortune (Hoki) and repel disaster (anti-black magic/witchcraft/tenung/sorcery).

Standing banner was chosen because it is considered to be the appropriate outcome (output) of the Marketing Mix Concept as a solution to the problems faced by traders in order to effectively and efficiently market their products. This is based on field justification from the Community Service Team regarding the still conventional marketing method where traders approach TWK visitors directly to market their wares. In this case, the Community Service Team took the initiative to use standing banners placed on the left and right sides of the ornamental plant market gate in Kopeng. In addition to standing banners, there are also other functions of MMT media that we also recommend creating directions with plan signs is also a new and more practical marketing strategy.

In practice, the function of placing standing banners really determines the increase in turnover of traders. They feel more confident because the condition of the stalls in the ornamental plant market is more lively and looks more modern. There are several reasons for including information by stating the variety of plants that have the meaning of bringing good luck in two versions, namely those that bring fortune (Hoki) and safety from supernatural attacks, namely *Tolak Balak*. In writing, several experts in the science of fortune from China, namely Feng Shui - which was reported from several website pages - do include the function of several plants that have the meaning of bringing fortune (Hoki) with characteristics including: (1) types of plants that require little water, meaning they do not compete for life sources with their caretakers; (2) have thick, stiff leaves that are wide and/or long; (3) have striking colors, and (4) do not creep.

Furthermore, a visualization of the description above is presented to capture a comprehensive picture of the example of plants that bring good luck and ward off disaster in the following image:



Figure 1 Standing Banner Used

The Community Service Team emphasized the importance of information boards that can encourage visitors to explore further, feeling satisfied with completing their activities while at a location. The latest information board model was represented by a new object, the MMT. All participants were already familiar with MMT, a technique for printing text and images using a machine on special plastic sheets that can be engineered from the actual size of the photo or design. They are able to differentiate between banners and MMT products called banners. We add that banners are a smaller and more simplified information and promotional medium than billboards.

The marketing strategy, using the Marketing Mix concept and the standing banner method, is intended to facilitate marketing efforts by finding new solutions, enabling vendors to secure a permanent and adequate sales space. Traditional, conventional marketing practices are deemed irrelevant in light of changing times. In this context, the Community Service team proposed a new approach to implementing a business model change, making it more effective and efficient.

Standing banner is what the Community Service Team attempted at the outset of the activity to quickly resolve the issue. Several extension participants responded that they were fed up with chasing visitors who were pressured to buy their ornamental plants. This was because many of their kiosks were located far apart and in less strategic locations, forcing them to sell directly to visitors. They felt that visitors often ignored their offers, which clearly affected their income. The energy drain was not commensurate with the profits earned. They felt that sales results were not optimal, and visitors also felt dissatisfied with this situation while enjoying their visit to TWK.

Thus, the Community Service Team has determined that the information displayed and listed on the existing banners can enable passersby on the shortcut between the cities of Salatiga and Magelang to be able to know about the existence of the ornamental plant market at TWK, which has been relocated in an orderly and permanent manner, located next to the fruit and vegetable market across the street from the TWK location. This will help passersby stop and take a break where they might otherwise miss the way to search online for information about the location of nearby tourist attractions.

CONCLUSION

Using an updated marketing strategy, the participants of the training, namely ornamental plant traders in Kopeng, Salatiga, responded that Standing Banners have become one way to help realize pleasant communication skills with visitors without the need for "picking up the ball" again. Thus, a more conducive atmosphere is created in the TWK area. Standing banners, which are the result (output) of the Marketing Mix Concept, will remain in the minds of visitors and are also easily seen. In fact, there is a new discourse to be able to attract visitors to the ornamental plant market in Kopeng, Salatiga. Automatically, visitors are interested in buying ornamental plants after seeing and reading the contents of the existing banners because they feel trusting the traders' verbal communication to them. The traders only need to add a little supplement to their knowledge of the information listed so that their performance becomes more practical, effective and efficient.

AUTHOR'S STATEMENT

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