

Marketing Strategy for Processed Nira Products in Timbuseng Village, Gowa Regency

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Abstrak

The Marketing Strategy Training for Processed Palm Sugar Products aims to enhance partners' knowledge and strengthen the capacity of business actors in marketing their products effectively and competitively. Processed palm sugar products, such as palm sugar, syrup, and fermented beverages, have significant market potential due to their natural composition and high nutritional value. However, many business actors face challenges, including a lack of understanding of modern marketing strategies, limited product innovation, and restricted market access. This training covers essential topics such as marketing fundamentals, branding strategies, digital marketing, product and packaging innovation, and distribution management. Participants learn how to build a strong brand, leverage social media and online marketplaces for promotion, and develop a structured marketing plan. Through an interactive approach, participants engage in simulations and group discussions to apply the knowledge they have acquired. The training results indicate an improvement in participants' understanding of marketing principles, their ability to innovate products, and their skills in utilizing digital technology to expand market reach. This initiative is expected to help business actors enhance the competitiveness of processed palm sugar products, broaden their marketing networks, and contribute to local economic growth.

Keyword: Marketing Strategy; Nira Products

1. Introduction

Processed palm sugar products, such as palm sugar, ant sugar, and palm syrup, have great potential to be developed as superior commodities in various regions. These products not only have high economic value but are also part of the local cultural heritage that needs to be preserved. However, despite their promising potential, entrepreneurs in the palm sugar processing industry often face significant challenges, particularly in marketing their products effectively. Many business actors in this sector struggle with various obstacles in expanding their businesses, especially in marketing. One of the most common issues is the lack of knowledge about modern marketing strategies. Many small and medium enterprises (SMEs) still rely on traditional marketing methods, such as selling directly to consumers or through small local retailers. This approach limits their ability to compete in an increasingly competitive market, where alternative products with more attractive packaging and branding are becoming more prevalent.

One of the critical problems found among palm sap processors in Timbuseng village is their limited understanding of branding and digital marketing. Many business actors do not fully grasp the importance of creating a strong brand identity or utilizing digital platforms to promote their products. In today's digital era, branding and digital marketing are essential tools for reaching a wider consumer base, both locally and internationally. Digital marketing, which includes social media advertising and online marketplaces, offers a cost-effective alternative to traditional advertising channels like billboards, radio, and television, which are often expensive (Lesmanah et al., 2023). Several studies have shown that digital marketing significantly influences the sales prospects of a product (Aurora Lubis et al., 2022). By leveraging online platforms, entrepreneurs can increase brand awareness, engage with potential customers, and enhance customer loyalty.

However, without adequate knowledge and training, many palm sugar producers struggle to utilize these digital tools effectively. This lack of digital literacy hampers their ability to expand their market reach and grow their businesses sustainably.

In addition to digital marketing challenges, business actors also face limitations in market access. Many processed palm sugar products are only sold within the immediate production area, making it difficult to reach consumers beyond their local markets. Limited distribution channels and a lack of partnerships with retailers or e-commerce platforms further restrict the growth potential of these businesses. Without access to broader markets, producers cannot scale their businesses effectively or compete with similar products from other regions. Another major issue is the low level of innovation in packaging and product diversification. Attractive packaging and innovative product variations play a crucial role in increasing sales and attracting consumer interest. Packaging serves as the first point of interaction between the product and the consumer, influencing purchasing decisions (Hendrawan et al., 2022). However, many palm sugar producers lack the resources or expertise to improve their packaging designs or develop new product variations, making their products less competitive in the marketplace.

Recognizing the potential of processed palm sugar products and the challenges faced by business actors, marketing strategy training becomes an urgent necessity. This training aims to equip participants with practical knowledge and strategies to market their products effectively, build strong brands, and leverage digital technology for business growth. By addressing these challenges, entrepreneurs can enhance their competitiveness and increase their chances of success in the industry. The training program covers various aspects, including fundamental marketing principles, branding strategies, digital marketing techniques, product and packaging innovation, and distribution management. Participants learn how to develop a structured marketing plan, utilize social media for promotion, and create compelling product packaging. Additionally, interactive sessions such as simulations and group discussions help reinforce their learning and provide hands-on experience in applying marketing strategies.

The results of the training indicate a significant improvement in participants' understanding of marketing concepts, their ability to innovate products, and their skills in using digital technology to expand market reach. Many participants report increased confidence in promoting their products and developing more attractive packaging. Some have also started using social media and e-commerce platforms to reach a broader audience, leading to higher sales and better brand recognition. Ultimately, this training initiative is expected to help business actors enhance the competitiveness of processed palm sugar products, expand their marketing networks, and contribute to local economic growth. By equipping entrepreneurs with the necessary knowledge and skills, this program not only supports individual business success but also fosters economic development in rural communities. Strengthening the marketing capabilities of local producers will ensure the sustainability and continued growth of the palm sugar industry, benefiting both entrepreneurs and consumers alike.

2. Research Methods

The implementation of the Community Partnership Program (PKM) follows a systematic approach to ensure the effectiveness and achievement of program objectives. The main stages include socialization, training, as well as mentoring and evaluation. Each stage is designed to provide partners with a comprehensive understanding of effective marketing strategies for processed palm sugar products through a participatory and practical approach. The first stage is **socialization**, where the PKM team introduces the program to business partners, explains the objectives and procedures, and highlights the expected benefits. This stage is crucial for establishing strong communication between the PKM team and participants. Open discussions are conducted to assess the initial understanding of business actors regarding the challenges they face in marketing their products. Additionally, the PKM team formally introduces itself to ensure effective collaboration throughout the program.

The second stage is **training**, which forms the core of the PKM activities. The training is conducted using a combination of theoretical presentations and hands-on practical sessions. The theoretical sessions utilize PowerPoint presentations to deliver key concepts on product innovation, branding strategies, and digital marketing. Following this, participants engage in hands-on activities to directly apply the knowledge gained. A major focus of this training is the innovation of mini brown sugar and uniquely shaped palm sugar, making the products more attractive to modern consumers. Moreover, participants are equipped with fundamental knowledge on leveraging social media and digital platforms to expand their market reach.

The third stage is **mentoring and evaluation**, aimed at ensuring the sustainability of the knowledge and skills acquired during the training. The mentoring process involves the use of the **Focus Group Discussion (FGD)** method, allowing participants to engage in direct discussions with the PKM team regarding the challenges they encounter in implementing marketing strategies. Through FGD, partners have the opportunity to ask questions, share experiences, and receive tailored solutions for their specific issues. The PKM team provides intensive guidance in developing marketing strategies that align with the needs of the participants. Additionally, an evaluation is conducted to assess participants' understanding, the degree to which strategies are being implemented, and the initial impact on improving their marketing performance.

With this systematic and participatory implementation method, business partners are expected to enhance the competitiveness of their processed palm sugar products. This program not only aims to provide insights into modern marketing strategies but also encourages product innovation and strengthens digital marketing skills, enabling business actors to reach a broader market effectively.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Implementation of Marketing Strategy Training for Processed Palm Sap Products

The marketing strategy training for processed palm sap products was designed to enhance the knowledge and skills of business actors in effectively marketing their products. The training was conducted using a combination of **presentations (PPT)** and **Focus Group Discussions (FGD)** to facilitate interactive learning. The training materials covered various aspects of marketing, branding, and digital promotion to help participants improve their business strategies. The following materials were presented during the activity:

1. Introduction to Processed Palm Sap Products

At the beginning of the training, participants were introduced to the different types of processed palm sap products and their market potential. The key topics discussed included:

- **Definition and Types of Processed Palm Sap Products:** This included palm sugar, palm sap syrup, fermented drinks, and other derivative products.
- **Market Potential:** Participants learned about the opportunities for selling processed palm sap products at the local, national, and international levels.
- **Competitive Advantages:** The training emphasized the uniqueness of palm sap products, such as their organic and natural properties, high nutritional value, and health benefits compared to alternative products.

2. Fundamentals of Marketing

Understanding basic marketing principles is essential for business success. In this session, participants were trained on:

- **Marketing Concepts:** Recognizing consumer needs and wants as the foundation of a successful business.
- **The 4Ps in Marketing:** The importance of **Product, Price, Place, and Promotion** in developing an effective marketing strategy.

3. Branding and Packaging Strategy

Strong branding and attractive packaging are crucial in influencing consumer purchasing decisions. The training covered:

- **Brand Identity Development:** Participants were guided on how to create a brand identity, including designing a **logo, slogan, and visual elements** that reflect their product values.
- **Packaging Innovation:** The significance of using **safe, eco-friendly, and visually appealing packaging** was highlighted to increase product appeal and differentiate it from competitors.

4. Digital Marketing Techniques

With the growing influence of digital platforms in marketing, this session focused on equipping participants with essential digital marketing skills, including:

- **Utilization of Social Media:** Strategies to effectively promote products on platforms such as **Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok** through engaging content.
- **Content Creation:** Participants learned how to produce high-quality **product photos, short promotional videos, and storytelling techniques** to attract consumers.
- **Selling in Marketplaces:** Practical guidance was provided on listing products on **Shopee, Tokopedia, and Bukalapak**, optimizing product descriptions, and handling online customer interactions.

5. Promotion and Sales Strategy

In this session, participants explored various promotional methods to increase product sales and expand their consumer base. Key aspects covered were:

- **Building Customer Relationships:** The importance of good communication in fostering customer loyalty.
- **Direct Marketing Strategies:** Business actors were encouraged to participate in **exhibitions, bazaars, and culinary festivals** as effective promotional avenues.

3.2 Results of the Training

The implementation of this marketing strategy training program successfully enhanced the skills and knowledge of participants in several key areas:

1. Improved Understanding of Marketing Strategies

Participants gained a deeper understanding of various **traditional and digital marketing strategies**, enabling them to analyze the market, segment consumers effectively, and create structured marketing plans.

2. Branding Development Capabilities

Through practical exercises, participants were able to **design their brand identity**, including logos, slogans, and other visual elements. The training reinforced the role of branding in increasing consumer interest and marketability.

3. Digital Marketing Adoption

Participants were introduced to **digital marketing tools** and applied them in practice by creating promotional content, running advertisements, and engaging with consumers through social media platforms and e-commerce marketplaces.

4. Product and Packaging Innovation

Business actors were encouraged to **innovate their products** by diversifying flavors, shapes, and packaging designs. Attractive and functional packaging was emphasized as a way to enhance product value and consumer appeal.



Figure 1 Marketing Strategy Training for Processed Palm Oil Products

4. Conclusion

Conclusion

The marketing strategy training for processed palm sap product entrepreneurs has successfully enhanced participants' understanding and skills in various aspects of marketing, branding, and digital promotion. The training provided practical insights into **market potential, branding strategies, digital marketing, and product innovation**, equipping participants with the necessary tools to improve their business performance.

The results of this training show that:

1. Participants have gained a **better understanding of marketing strategies**, including the importance of consumer needs, market segmentation, and promotional techniques.
2. Business actors have developed skills in **creating and strengthening brand identity**, which is crucial for market differentiation and product recognition.
3. The adoption of **digital marketing strategies** has enabled participants to reach a wider audience and optimize online sales platforms such as social media and marketplaces.
4. Increased awareness of **product and packaging innovation** has encouraged business actors to improve product quality and attractiveness, enhancing their competitiveness in the market.

By implementing these strategies, processed palm sap product entrepreneurs can **increase sales, expand their consumer base, and contribute to local economic development**.

Recommendations

To ensure the sustainability and long-term impact of this training, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Continuous Mentoring and Assistance

- Regular follow-up sessions should be conducted to help participants apply the marketing strategies they have learned.
- Business actors should be encouraged to join networking groups or mentoring programs to exchange experiences and best practices.

2. Advanced Digital Marketing Training

- Additional training on **SEO (Search Engine Optimization), paid advertising, and data analytics** should be provided to further enhance participants' digital marketing skills.
- Entrepreneurs should be encouraged to utilize **e-commerce platforms** more effectively to boost sales.

3. Access to Funding and Capital Support

- Business actors should be connected with financial institutions or government programs that provide funding support for product development and business expansion.
- Training on **financial management and business planning** should be included in future programs to help participants manage their finances effectively.

4. Encouragement of Product Diversification and Innovation

- Entrepreneurs should continue to innovate by exploring new flavors, packaging designs, and product variations to attract more consumers.
- Collaboration with **research institutions and product development experts** can help improve the quality and uniqueness of processed palm sap products.

5. Participation in Marketing Events and Expos

- Processed palm sap product entrepreneurs should be encouraged to participate in **local and international exhibitions, bazaars, and trade fairs** to increase product visibility and market reach.
- Government and industry associations should provide platforms to showcase and promote these products.

By implementing these recommendations, it is expected that business actors in the processed palm sap industry can **increase their competitiveness, strengthen their market presence, and achieve sustainable business growth.**

Acknowledgments

We sincerely express our deepest gratitude to all parties who have contributed to the success of the **Marketing Strategy for Nira Processed Products in Timbuseng Village, Gowa District** program. First and foremost, we extend our appreciation to the **business actors and participants** in Timbuseng Village who have actively participated in this training. Your enthusiasm and dedication to improving your marketing knowledge and business strategies are truly commendable. We also

express our gratitude to the **PKM (Community Service) team, trainers, and facilitators** who have worked tirelessly in preparing and delivering valuable materials. Your guidance and support have been instrumental in equipping participants with essential skills in branding, digital marketing, and product innovation.

Special thanks to **local authorities, stakeholders, and supporting institutions** who have provided invaluable support, both in terms of facilities and resources, to ensure the smooth execution of this program. Your involvement has significantly contributed to empowering local entrepreneurs and strengthening the economic potential of Nira processed products. Lastly, we appreciate all individuals and organizations who have played a role, directly or indirectly, in the realization of this initiative. We hope that the knowledge and skills gained from this training will bring long-term benefits, enhance business competitiveness, and expand market opportunities for Nira processed products in Timbuseng Village.

Thank you, and we look forward to future collaborations in advancing local industries and community empowerment.

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