

## Analysis of Promotion in the Development Strategy of Business, A Source of Livelihood in Sipolu Polu Village, Panyabungan District, Mandailing Natal Regency

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### ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the promotional strategies implemented by Sumber Rezeki Enterprises to develop its business, specifically in marketing its traditional regional food, kerupuk bola potong (bending crackers). This research employed a descriptive qualitative method with a case study approach. Data collection techniques included interviews, observations, and direct documentation with the owners, employees, and customers of Sumber Rezeki Enterprises. The study was conducted from March 2025 to July 2025. The results indicate that the promotional strategies employed are still traditional and do not utilize digital media optimally. Promotion is carried out passively through word of mouth without the support of visual promotional tools such as banners, brochures, catalogs, or social media. This results in limited market reach and the inability to reach new consumers outside the local area. A SWOT analysis revealed that Sumber Rezeki Enterprises' primary strengths lie in product quality and affordable prices, while its main weaknesses are the lack of specialized marketing personnel and limited digital marketing knowledge. Opportunities for development are wide open, given the increasing trend in local product consumption, access to e-commerce, and government support for MSME digitalization programs. The main threat faced is competition from similar businesses that have already implemented digital-based promotional strategies. Based on these findings, this study recommends various modern promotional strategies, such as digital marketing training, utilizing social media and e-commerce, improving packaging design, and collaborating with local influencers. Implementing these strategies is expected to increase brand awareness, expand market reach, and strengthen Usaha Sumber Rezeki's position in the increasingly competitive marketplace.

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### INTRODUCTION

Sumber Rezeki Enterprises is a Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprise (MSME) that produces traditional food, namely "bola potong" crackers. Located in Sipolu Polu Village, Panyabungan District, Mandailing Natal Regency, the business has been around for quite some time and is well-known among the local community for its quality products and affordable prices. Sales of these products still rely on traditional word-of-mouth

promotion. However, amidst increasingly fierce business competition, this strategy has not been sufficient to significantly expand the market.

As a popular traditional food product, "Bola Potong" crackers have significant market potential. However, challenges faced by Sumber Rezeki include competitors offering similar products, a lack of social media promotion, and a lack of employee training on how to use social media promotions. Therefore, promotional analysis within a business development strategy is crucial for identifying factors influencing promotional strategies and finding appropriate solutions to increase productivity and profitability (Asiva Noor Rachmayani, 2015).

Sumber Rezeki, located in Sipolu Polu Village, Panyabungan District, Mandailing Natal Regency, is a growing local business. However, amidst increasingly fierce competition, it is crucial for this business to implement an effective promotional strategy. This business development strategy aims not only to increase sales but also to ensure product distribution to consumers, thereby meeting customer needs and satisfaction.

As part of its efforts to expand production scale and increase operational efficiency, Sumber Rezeki now has an additional production branch located in Pagaran, an area within Mandailing Natal Regency. This branch is independently managed by the child of the main business owner, as a form of regeneration and family involvement in business management. The primary function of this branch is to produce crackers in raw form. Initial processes such as molding and drying are carried out at the Pagaran branch, then the production is sent to the main factory in Sipolu-Polu for further processing such as frying, packaging, and preparation for distribution to the market. With this system, Sumber Rezeki is able to manage its production workload more efficiently, structuredly divide processes between the two locations, and gradually increase production capacity.

Therefore, it is crucial for Sumber Rezeki to start investing in developing more modern promotional strategies and reaching digital consumers. Using social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and WhatsApp Business can be effective tools for introducing products, building customer engagement, and showcasing the production process for transparency and a unique selling point. Furthermore, creative promotions like product bundling, customer testimonials, and loyalty programs can also increase purchasing interest and maintain a sustainable relationship between producers and consumers. By strengthening this promotional aspect, Sumber Rezeki is expected to not only maintain its existence amidst competition but also continue to grow as a leading MSME from Mandailing Natal capable of competing in the digital era.

Based on sales data from the Sumber Rezeki cracker factory over the past year, there has been a fluctuation in monthly sales figures. For example, in February and May, sales decreased compared to other months, while months like January, April, August, and December showed higher sales figures. The main challenge for Sumber Rezeki is the availability of raw materials in Mandailing Natal. According to a statement from the owner of Sumber Rezeki, raw materials are shipped from outside the region, although not all, but some raw materials are shipped from outside Mandailing Natal. This presents a challenge for Sumber Rezeki in meeting consumer demand.

Based on an interview with Ms. Siswanti, the owner of Sumber Rezeki, the promotional strategy used is still conventional, namely through word-of-mouth promotion with a focus on customer satisfaction. However, intense competition and limited access to new customers are major challenges. Despite recognizing the potential of social media and digital platforms to expand market reach, Sumber Rezeki has not yet integrated these technologies into its marketing strategy. The business's primary target market is the lower-middle class, and good customer relationships remain a priority in maintaining consumer loyalty.

Many small-scale businesses still face challenges in implementing appropriate promotional strategies. Limited resources, a lack of marketing knowledge, and low technology adoption are key challenges to business development. Therefore, analyzing the promotional strategies implemented by Sumber Rezeki is crucial to understanding their effectiveness in driving business growth.

Promotion within a business development strategy is a crucial aspect of business management, especially for MSMEs, which often face limitations in the use of technology. A lack of a promotional strategy can reduce profit margins and hinder business growth. Therefore, it is crucial for Sumber Rezeki to conduct a promotional analysis within its business development strategy to increase sales.

Promotional strategy analysis is a crucial factor in the sustainability of small and medium enterprises (SMEs), including traditional culinary businesses like the production of "kerupuk bola potong" (sliced crackers). Kerupuk bola potongan, a popular traditional food, has broad market potential. However, marketing challenges often arise from a lack of promotional materials, such as clear price lists, attractive product photos, and word-of-mouth promotion. This can result in limited or incomplete information reaching customers (L. Hidayat & Halim, 2013).

Kerupuk bola potongan (sliced crackers) is a traditional Indonesian food made from a mixture of wheat flour and tapioca flour, mixed with spices and herbs, such as garlic, seasoning, and salt. The mixture is flavored with fish or shrimp, then shaped in a steamer before being dried in the sun. Kerupuk is often served as a snack or as a side dish for dishes such as soto (spiced peanuts), pecel (peanuts), or nasi ramas (rice cakes). Its savory

taste is enhanced by the distinctive aroma of the fish or shrimp used in the mixture. In an era of globalization and increasingly fierce business competition, promotional strategies are a key element in developing a trading business. Sumber Rezeki, located in Sipolu Polu Village, Panyabungan District, Mandailing Natal Regency, is one example of a business with potential for growth. However, to achieve sustainable growth, it is crucial for this business to implement an effective promotional strategy.

Sipolu Polu Village has unique demographic and economic characteristics, where the community relies heavily on the local trade sector. With its significant market potential, this business has the opportunity to attract more customers. However, the challenge is how to attract consumers amidst the multitude of available options. Therefore, proper promotional analysis is essential to increase the business's visibility and appeal.

Effective promotions not only serve to increase sales but also to build a positive brand image in the eyes of consumers. In this context, Sumber Rezeki needs to explore various promotional methods, both conventional and digital, to reach a wider audience. By utilizing social media, local advertising, and direct promotions, this business can increase brand awareness and attract more customers.

Furthermore, it's important to consider local factors that can influence promotional strategies, such as culture, consumer purchasing habits, and local economic conditions. By understanding local market characteristics, Sumber Rezeki can design promotional campaigns that are more relevant and appealing to consumers.

Sumber Rezeki, a cracker business, faces competition from other businesses. However, initial observations indicate that Sumber Rezeki is a long-established business. With this long history, Sumber Rezeki has undoubtedly experienced significant growth.

With an in-depth analysis of promotions within business development strategies, this research is expected to provide practical recommendations for Sumber Rezeki. These recommendations focus not only on promotional analysis but also on optimizing the entire business development strategy, from promotional models to the efficiency of the promotional process for business sustainability. This step will provide long-term benefits, such as increased profitability, business stability, and opportunities for business expansion into a wider market.

## METHOD

In this study, the researcher employed descriptive and qualitative research. Qualitative research is a research method that emphasizes in-depth understanding of a problem, from identifying the problem to generalizing the research (Sando Siyoto, 2018). This approach is based on a conceptual framework, expert opinion, and the researcher's understanding based on their experience. This is then translated into problems and solutions presented in a report to obtain truth (authority) in the form of official and supporting evidence.

The research and writing of this proposal were conducted in Panyabungan, Mandailing Natal Regency, and the company used for the research was Sumber Rezeki. The research and writing period was from February 2025 to July 2025.

## RESULTS

### A. Forms of Promotion that have been Implemented by Sumber Rezeki Business

Promotion, as a crucial part of the marketing mix, plays a strategic role in conveying product information, attracting potential customers, and persuading them to make a purchase. However, research conducted on Sumber Rezeki shows that the promotional methods used are still very simple, limited, and have not yet evolved to meet current demands. The primary form of promotion employed by Sumber Rezeki to date is traditional word-of-mouth.

However, in terms of coverage, this form of promotion is very limited and cannot be systematically controlled.

According to Mr. Suwoyo, the owner of Sumber Rezeki, "The promotional strategies implemented include discounts, purchase bonuses, word-of-mouth, and the use of social media such as WhatsApp and Facebook to disseminate product information and promotions. Although not yet formally implementing all elements of the 7P marketing mix, the business owner has implemented most aspects, particularly product, price, location, service, and people, with friendly service and a strategic location being the most effective factors. Target market determination is carried out by observing the shopping habits of local residents, particularly housewives and workers. The main challenge in marketing the product to new customers is building trust and the limitations of digital promotions, while existing customers play a crucial role in business growth as they are loyal consumers and an indirect promotional medium. Sumber Rezeki also has plans to expand its market reach through opening small branches and providing a delivery service, and has established promotional partnerships with local communities and MSMEs. Direct promotions coupled with good service

and strong social relationships are considered most appropriate for the market segment served by Sumber Rezeki." (Suwoyo, 2025).

An interview with Mr. Suwoyo, the owner of Sumber Rezeki, explained that Sumber Rezeki is a small-scale trading business that thrives on a spirit of independence and is focused on the needs of the surrounding community. The promotional strategies employed are still conventional, such as discounts, purchase bonuses, and word-of-mouth, but they are quite effective in attracting and retaining customers. Although the 7Ps marketing mix has not yet been fully implemented formally, most elements of the strategy have been implemented, particularly in product, price, location, and service. The business owner understands the importance of target markets and utilizes social media platforms such as WhatsApp to reach consumers, especially repeat customers. The main challenge in reaching new customers lies in building trust and the limitations of digital promotions. Repeat customers play a crucial role in business growth as they serve as indirect promoters and sources of feedback. There are plans to expand the market through opening branches or providing delivery services, as well as collaborating with local communities and other MSMEs for promotional activities. Overall, the most appropriate form of promotion for Sumber Rezeki's market segment is direct promotion accompanied by quality service and good customer relationships.

Another indirect form of promotion is providing good service and maintaining consistent product quality. Although not a form of media promotion or advertising, friendly service and consistent product quality are considered part of efforts to build a business's reputation. Customers like Mrs. Iloh, interviewed in this study, acknowledged that:

"I first learned about the "bola-potong" crackers at Sumber Rezeki from a friend from a religious study group who told me they had a special type of crackers that tasted delicious and different from ordinary crackers. I was curious at first, so I tried a pack and found that they were indeed savory and crunchy. What attracted me to shopping here was the unique product; not many people sell "bola" crackers in small pieces. Furthermore, the price is still affordable, making them perfect for a family snack or a treat for guests. I don't think there's much information about this business outside. If someone doesn't tell me or pass by the shop, people might not know. But word of mouth is quite helpful. Sumber Rezeki's advantages over other places are the friendly service, the variety of products, and the "bola" crackers that are always fresh, don't smell of oil, and aren't tough. I've recommended them several times to neighbors and relatives, especially at family gatherings, because these crackers make a great accompaniment to meals or snacks, and the packaging is neat. I think the promotion of this business could still be improved, especially through social media like WhatsApp or Facebook. I sometimes don't know about new flavors or... Promotions are not widely publicized. If this business starts actively promoting itself, I'd personally be most interested in buy-2-get-1-free promotions or bundles of crackers in various flavors. I also hope promotions can take the form of small samples distributed to customers, so people can try them before buying more. I feel that promotion is crucial for this business to gain recognition, especially now that so many new food businesses are popping up. Without promotion, it will lose out to the competition, even if the product is delicious. I hope that Sumber Rezeki's future promotions can be tailored to customer needs, such as a savings package for housewives or a mini cracker variant for children. This way, customers will feel cared for and encouraged to continue purchasing."

Interviews with several customers revealed that they obtained information about Sumber Rezeki's crackers from other customers, not from social media or other forms of digital promotion. Digital and social media promotions are necessary because they can reach a wider customer base, especially those located outside the region.

Furthermore, in certain circumstances, Sumber Rezeki offers bonuses with additional crackers when customers purchase large quantities. However, these promotions are not routine and are not designed as part of an ongoing promotional program. There is no record or plan for regular promotions such as seasonal discounts, bundled packages, or loyalty programs. Promotions are spontaneous and not based on market evaluation or communication strategies. In terms of product design and packaging, the business has not developed visual promotional elements such as brand labels, logos, product information, or marketing narratives. The packaging used is still plain and simple, consisting of clear plastic or plain sacks without any attractive graphic designs. Packaging is a direct promotional medium that can provide visual appeal and product identity to consumers.

## **B. Level of Business Actors' Understanding of Modern Promotion**

In the digital era and increasingly complex business competition, understanding modern promotion has become a basic requirement for business owners, including Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). Modern promotion is no longer limited to print media or direct relationships between producers and consumers, but has evolved through various digital platforms such as social media, marketplaces, search engines, and even content- and data-based promotional techniques. However, research on Sumber Rezeki shows that business owners' understanding of modern promotion concepts remains very limited.

Based on an interview with the business owner, Ms. Siswanti, it was discovered that she lacked adequate knowledge regarding digital promotion or modern promotion in general. She stated that she had previously only understood promotion as introducing products to customers through direct interaction or recommendations from existing customers. In her daily life, she focused more on the production and distribution processes, while the promotional aspect was considered a secondary activity that did not require special attention. This indicates that promotion was not yet viewed as an integral part of the business development strategy.

Furthermore, the business owner also admitted that she was unfamiliar with using social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook, or WhatsApp Business as promotional tools. Her knowledge of marketplaces like Tokopedia, Shopee, or Bukalapak was also very limited. This lack of knowledge stems not only from a lack of digital literacy but also from the lack of specialized training or mentoring from external parties, whether from local governments, educational institutions, or MSME empowerment institutions. Until now, business development has been based solely on experience, local customs, and market intuition.

Not only business owners, but also employees working in production demonstrated a very limited understanding of modern promotions. In interviews with several employees, including the first with Fauzan, he stated that:

"I started working at Sumber Rezeki in 2024. The promotional strategy I'm familiar with is usually offering bonuses for large purchases. I usually help deliver promotional information to customers directly during transactions. However, I think the promotional strategy could be improved by creating small brochures or digital banners to make it easier for customers to learn about the product. The challenge is that not all customers pay attention to the promotional information we provide, especially if they're in a hurry. Coordination with the owner is quite good, but sometimes they're not up-to-date on new promotions. Perhaps weekly briefings are needed to provide more up-to-date information. From my observations, many customers come through recommendations, not just because of the promotions. We still use WhatsApp for promotions, but it's not being utilized optimally. I think we need to be active on Instagram and Facebook as additional platforms. To improve our marketing strategy, I recommend creating a customer loyalty program, for example by awarding shopping points. Additionally, promotions can be combined with small giveaways or engaging content on social media to be more interactive and attract customers." (Fauzan, 2025)

To follow up on this interview, I also conducted interviews with other employees to gain a more comprehensive perspective. promotion and business development strategies at Sumber Rezeki business.

Fauzan emphasized the importance of more active use of social media platforms, such as Instagram and Facebook, and suggested the use of brochures, digital banners, and customer loyalty programs (shopping points or giveaways) to attract new customers. He also suggested regular briefings to ensure promotional information reaches all employees more quickly.

Meanwhile, Taufik, with more experience, suggested using banners or large signage at the business location as a direct way to attract attention. He also noted the challenge of customer distrust of promotions and the need for written promotional documentation to serve as a guide. Although less familiar with social media, he recognized the significant potential of digital platforms in reaching younger consumers and even suggested creating promotional videos showcasing the business's activities. Taufik also suggested collaborating with small shops or stalls to expand product distribution.

Overall, both interviews indicated that word-of-mouth remains Sumber Rezeki's primary strength, but employees strongly recognize the importance of developing a digital promotional strategy, improving internal coordination, and rewarding loyal customers as steps to expand the market and increase competitiveness.

Mar'i, one of Sumber Rezeki's employees, expressed a similar sentiment.

"I am the longest-serving employee at Sumber Rezeki. During my time there, I have never seen any promotions, be it brochures, banners, or even social media. All I know is that they use WhatsApp as a means of connecting with customers. I believe that promotions can be further enhanced by utilizing social media accounts, so that Sumber Rezeki can more quickly reach consumers, both local and international. The main challenge in implementing digital promotions is creating content that attracts customers, especially when using a simple device like a cell phone. Coordination with the shop owner has been good so far, but I hope to receive more in-depth training or guidance on digital content creation for optimal results. Based on my observations, most customers return because they are already familiar with the business and because of recommendations from other customers." (Mar'i, 2025)

The final interview was with Hasan, also one of Sumber Rezeki's longest-serving employees. Hasan stated that:

"I have been working at Sumber Rezeki for almost six years. During that time, I have noticed that promotions at this store are usually only available during large purchases. Although I am not directly involved in promotional planning, I do help by spreading the word about the business to my neighbors in my hometown. I believe the effectiveness of promotions could be improved by creating a regular promotional calendar so that

new customers can access them more quickly. One frequent obstacle is limited product stock, which often leads to customer disappointment. Coordination between employees has been quite good, but I feel the need for regular discussions so that all employees understand the promotional strategy being implemented. In my experience, most customers come not because of promotions, but because they are satisfied with the service and prices offered. The use of social media has actually been tried, but has not been actively managed. However, I believe social media is very important, especially for attracting younger buyers. Promotional strategies can also be enhanced through special offers for loyal customers or cross-product promotions. In addition, I suggest creating a "monthly customer" program that receives small gifts as a token of appreciation and an effort to increase customer engagement." (Hasan, (2025)

Both sources agreed that Sumber Rezeki's promotional strategy is still very limited and suboptimal, both in terms of media and content. Promotions currently implemented are conventional, such as offering bonuses for large purchases, without actively utilizing promotional tools like banners, brochures, or social media.

## DISCUSSION

Next, in the discussion section, the results of the analysis will be further discussed using a SWOT approach to formulate promotional strategies that Sumber Rezeki can adopt. By combining these factors, the researcher will examine in depth how strengths can be leveraged to capitalize on opportunities (SO strategies), how weaknesses can be minimized by capitalizing on opportunities (WO strategies), and other relevant strategies to address promotional challenges amidst increasingly fierce business competition. The discussion of this research is based on field data obtained through interviews, observations, and documentation of Sumber Rezeki in Sipolu-Polu Village, Panyabungan District, Mandailing Natal Regency.

The purpose of this discussion is to analyze how the promotional strategies implemented by Sumber Rezeki have influenced business development and to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the promotional strategies used to date. Based on interviews with the owner and direct observation, it was discovered that Sumber Rezeki's promotional methods have been very limited and traditional. The most dominant strategy is word of mouth, promoted by loyal customers. This form of promotion doesn't involve mass media, print, or digital media, so its reach is very limited to the immediate area surrounding the business. Furthermore, business owners lack a catalog system, official price lists, or visual promotional materials such as banners, brochures, or compelling product photos. This results in product information not being optimally communicated to potential customers outside their established customer network.

## CONCLUSION

Based on research conducted on promotional strategies for business development at Sumber Rezeki, it can be concluded that promotion plays a vital role in shaping and strengthening a business's existence, particularly in the Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME) sector. Promotion is not merely a tool for product introduction, but also a crucial tool for influencing purchasing interest, expanding the market, and enhancing business competitiveness. Sumber Rezeki, a traditional snack producer specializing in the production of "kerupuk bola potong" (round-cut crackers), has been in business for quite some time and has a loyal customer base. However, the promotional strategies implemented so far have been limited to conventional methods, such as word-of-mouth and direct sales to local consumers. While these strategies play a role in maintaining relationships with existing customers, they are insufficient to expand market reach or significantly increase brand penetration.

In practice, there has been no consistent effort to utilize more modern and digital promotional media. Social media, now a primary marketing channel, has not been utilized optimally. There is no official business account, visual promotional content, or structured digital marketing strategy. This indicates that the promotion is not aligned with current technological developments and market needs. Based on a SWOT analysis, the main weaknesses in Sumber Rezeki's promotional strategy lie in inadequate skills, human resources, and technological infrastructure. The business owner and employees lack the understanding and skills to implement effective digital promotions. Furthermore, the lack of attractive packaging design, clear product information, and supporting promotional materials (such as brochures, banners, or promotional videos) hinders attracting new customers. Unfocused promotions also impact fluctuating sales performance. Based on sales data over the past year, inconsistent sales figures are evident in certain months, which can be attributed to a weak promotional strategy and the absence of an active marketing campaign. This suggests that promotions are directly correlated with increases or decreases in market demand.

Nevertheless, the business has several strengths, including maintained product quality, affordable prices, and a good image among local customers. If this potential is combined with a well-planned, innovative, and adaptive promotional strategy to current marketing trends, Sumber Rezeki has a significant opportunity to grow into a business that not only survives but is also able to compete in a broader market, both at the local,

regional, and national levels. In general, promotion can be concluded as a crucial foundation in any business development strategy. Without effective promotion, even high-quality products will struggle to gain recognition in the market. Therefore, it is crucial for businesses like Sumber Rezeki to view promotion as a strategic investment that is not only intended for the short term, but also as part of a long-term vision for achieving sustainable growth.

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