International Journal of Economics, Business and Innovation Research
https://e-journal.citakonsultindo.or.id/index.php/IJEBIR
E-ISSN : 2964-0865
IJEBIR

Niche Market Opportunities For Custom Diecast And Dioramas Scale 64 On DB DIECAST09 Enterprise Through Creative Entrepreneurship

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Abstract

The expansion of Indonesia's creative economy, together with the growth of the global toys and collectibles market, has contributed to the emergence of hobby-based niche markets. Even so, most diecast businesses continue to focus on selling standard products with minimal differentiation. DB DIECAST09, a micro-enterprise engaged in diecast customization and 1:64-scale diorama production, was selected as the subject of this study. This research is directed at: (1) identifying the characteristics and opportunities of the niche market within the custom diecast and 1:64-scale diorama segment; and (2) examining how creative entrepreneurship is applied as a strategic approach at DB DIECAST09. A qualitative descriptive method with a single case study design was adopted. Data were gathered through in-depth, semi-structured interviews with four purposively chosen informants, selected for their years of experience in the diecast field and their complementary perspectives, supported by participant observation and library research, then analyzed using the Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014) interactive model. The validity of the data was reinforced through source triangulation and member checking. The findings show that: (1) the custom diecast niche market consistently satisfies the criteria of differentiability and accessibility, characterized by personal-emotional motivation, community-based loyalty, and latent unmet needs; and (2) creative entrepreneurship at DB DIECAST09 is realized through passion-driven innovation, digital storytelling differentiation, and meaningful value co-creation, which together sustain an authentic competitive advantage.

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Keywords:niche market, custom diecast, 1:64 diorama, creative entrepreneurship, micro-enterprise, creative industry

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia's creative economy is currently growing quite rapidly. The sector's added value is recorded at IDR 1,414.77 trillion in 2023 and is capable of absorbing 24.92 million workers (Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, 2024). This trend aligns with the development of the global toy and collectibles market, which was valued at USD 118.6 billion in 2023 and is projected to grow at a CAGR of 4.5% through 2030, driven by the growing interest of adult collectors in products with high aesthetic value and rich nostalgia (Grand View Research, 2024).

The thriving diecast community in Indonesia is evident in the presence of the Indonesia Diecast Expo (IDE), the largest diecast and miniature exhibition held annually since 2014. The 10th edition in 2023 successfully attracted more than 14,000 visitors, including 50 international visitors with a transaction value exceeding IDR 15 billion, and involved 88 sellers, 34 brands, and 22 communities (Lembana in Motomobinews, 2023). Entering its 12th edition in 2025, IDE was even attended by 60 brands, 70 independent sellers, and more than 20 communities from various regions of Indonesia, including participants from Malaysia, Singapore, and Mexico (TangerangDaily, 2025). IDE organizers even dubbed this event as "diecaster Lebaran" in Indonesia, a term that confirms that this community has grown into a mature and international ecosystem.

Despite its significant potential, the majority of diecast businesses in Indonesia remain fixated on standard manufacturing models. Personal and emotional consumer needs, such as sentimental customization or identity-based dioramas, often go unaddressed. Palavesh (2021) refers to this as unmet needs in a niche market, while Albrecht, Green, and Hoffman (2023) suggest that such gaps can actually form the basis for effective concentrated marketing strategies.

DB DIECAST09, a micro-enterprise in Tanjung Priok, North Jakarta, that has been selling 1:64 scale diecast, customizing, and making dioramas since 2019, is considered a relevant case study due to its consistent operation in this niche market segment. Koch et al. (2023) found that the personal creativity of business founders in the creative industry has a long-term impact on the venture innovation process, while Gunawan (2024) demonstrated that entrepreneurial characteristics and competencies directly influence business performance in Indonesia's creative industry. To date, there has been no study specifically addressing niche market opportunities in the 1:64 scale custom diecast and

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diorama segments while also examining the creative entrepreneurship approach as a strategic framework. Based on this gap, this study aims to: (1) identify the characteristics and opportunities of niche markets in the 1:64 scale custom diecast and diorama segments; and (2) examine the application of creative entrepreneurship as a strategic approach for DB DIECAST09.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Niche Market

A niche market is a narrow, specifically defined market segment with distinct needs compared to the general market. Razak (2024) defines niche marketing as a strategy that focuses all resources and business activities on a single market segment, enabling businesses to build stronger influence and consumer loyalty than their mass-market competitors. The strength of this approach lies in the business owner's in-depth understanding of their segment's needs, enabling them to offer products that are more relevant, personalized, and difficult for larger players to imitate.

Albrecht, Green, and Hoffman (2023) formulated four criteria for segment eligibility, namely: (1) measurability, namely segments that can be identified and measured; (2) accessibility, namely segments that can be reached through available marketing efforts; (3) substantiality, namely segments that are large enough or profitable to serve; and (4) differentiability, namely segments that respond to the marketing mix differently from other segments. Palavesh (2021) emphasized that success in niche markets depends heavily on the ability to recognize unmet consumer needs and respond precisely through targeted offers. Hasan et al. (2026) added that loyalty in niche markets is formed through strategic storycrafting that builds long-term emotional bonds between businesses and their consumers, a dimension that is highly relevant for hobby- and identity-based segments.

Creative Entrepreneurship

Creative entrepreneurship is a form of entrepreneurship that utilizes creativity and aesthetic expression as the primary source of business value. Laverty and Littel (2020) explain that creativity in the entrepreneurial realm is not merely the ability to generate new ideas, but rather the ability to transform them into innovations that are economically valuable and relevant to market needs. Koch et al. (2023) found that founder-level factors, including creative orientation and business orientation, have a long-term influence on their venture practices and processes in the creative industry. Loots and van Bennekom (2022) emphasize that the growth of creative businesses is determined by their ability to both fit

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in and stand out, namely meeting industry standards while maintaining a distinctive and distinct identity.

In this study, creative entrepreneurship is operationalized into three dimensions. The first dimension is passion-based innovation, which is the process of transforming a business founder's deep love for their field into an authentic value proposition; Gohoungodji (2025) found that innovations born from personal aesthetic experiences tend to be the most sustainable in the creative industry. The second dimension is differentiation through storytelling, which is the ability to communicate the creative process narratively as a strategy to build trust before a transaction takes place; Hasan et al. (2026) demonstrated that authentic narratives about the product creation process can build trust even before a transaction occurs. The third dimension is the creation of meaningful exchange value, which is the ability to present transactions that go beyond mere economic exchange and touch the emotional dimensions and identity of consumers (Pinelli et al., 2022). These three dimensions, integrated, form the basis for analyzing DB DIECAST09's competitive strategy in responding to identified niche market opportunities.

RESEARCH METHODS

Research Approach and Strategy

This research applies a descriptive qualitative approach with a single case study strategy. Moleong (2019) explains that qualitative research produces descriptive data in the form of written and spoken words from observed sources, making it suitable for exploring the phenomenon of niche market opportunities for custom diecast in depth in its natural context. Emzir (2010) defines a case study as a research strategy that aims to explore the meaning and in-depth understanding of a particular individual, group, or situation. The single case study was chosen because DB DIECAST09's position as a critical case, namely a business that consistently operates in the custom diecast and 1:64 scale diorama segment in Indonesia with an operational track record since 2019, thus being able to produce a deep conceptual understanding of the phenomenon being studied (Yin, 2018). The subject of this research is DB DIECAST09, while the research object covers niche market opportunities and the application of creative entrepreneurship in the business.

Research Informants

Informants were selected through purposive sampling based on two main criteria: (1) direct involvement and years of experience in the diecast ecosystem from various

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perspectives; and (2) the ability to provide rich and in-depth information (information-rich) regarding the phenomenon under study (Sugiyono, 2019). The five informants were selected because each represented complementary perspectives from several segments, namely, similar business actors, communities, consumers, and distribution, so that collectively they could achieve thematic saturation. The profiles of the four informants are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Profile of Research Informants

Code	Background & Experience	Role in Research	Key Data Contributions
I1	Custom diecast business owner, active since 2017, producing 15–20 units/month at 1:64 and 1:18 scales; has hands-on experience managing orders, determining pricing, and interacting with the custom market segment.	DB DIECAST09's direct competitor in the custom diecast segment	Industry perspective: market dynamics, strategies, opportunities, and structural challenges from the perspective of similar players
I2	Member of the Retro Cars Indonesia community, diecast collector with over 5 years of experience; active in various car meets and automotive communities in Jakarta	Representation of community and potential market	Collector community behavior, perceptions of custom diecast, dynamics of relationships between community members
I3	Active JDM collector for over 3 years with over 30 units in his collection; has made 2–3 transactions with DB DIECAST09 repeatedly	Loyal customer of DB DIECAST09	Evaluation of satisfaction, product value perception, ordering process experience, and purchase motivation
I4	Standard diecast reseller business actor (Hot Wheels)	*Standard diecast reseller*	Distribution perspective: custom

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Code	Background & Experience	Role in Research	Key Data Contributions
	since 2019, has direct experience in the dynamics of the distribution market and the behavior of diecast buyers in various segments.		vs. standard segment differences, buyer characteristics, and market potential
I5	Sole owner and manager of DB DIECAST09, running the business since 2020 (more than six years) from Tanjung Priok, North Jakarta: directly handling production, customization, diorama creation, and digital content management	DB DIECAST09 business owner; primary source regarding internal business practices	Passion-based innovation process, digital storytelling strategy, co-creation process with consumers, and operational challenges from the business actor's perspective.

Data Collection and Analysis Techniques

Data collection was conducted through three complementary methods. First, semi-structured in-depth interviews with five informants, conducted face-to-face using open-ended questions centered on three themes: the characteristics and behavior of the custom diecast market, the opportunities and challenges of niche markets, and the creative entrepreneurial strategies of business actors. All interview sessions were recorded with the informants' consent and transcribed verbatim (Sugiyono, 2019). Second, participant observation of DB DIECAST09's operational activities, including production processes, customer interactions, and social media content management, accompanied by observations of the dynamics of the diecast community on Instagram and TikTok as supporting data. Third, a literature review was conducted, sourced from scientific journals, books, and reports related to niche marketing, creative entrepreneurship, and the Indonesian creative industry.

Data were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014) which consists of three stages, namely data reduction (sorting and focusing raw data from transcripts and observation notes), data presentation (organized in a systematic descriptive narrative accompanied by verbatim quotations coded I1–I5), and drawing and

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verifying conclusions. Data validity was strengthened through source triangulation by confirming the findings of one informant with other informants with different backgrounds, as well as member checking with all informants to ensure the accuracy of data representation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

DB DIECAST09 Profile

DB DIECAST09 is a micro-enterprise engaged in two main lines: 1:64 scale diecast sales and diecast customization services, and has recently expanded into diorama production. The business has been operating for six years from Tanjung Priok, North Jakarta, with the advantage of being located close to various shipping offices. The customization line includes services ranging from light services, such as rubber tire replacement and waterslide decal installation, to premium services such as full body repainting. Dioramas produced so far include 1:64 scale replicas of roads and parking areas. DB DIECAST09 actively utilizes Instagram (488 followers) and TikTok (434 followers) as promotional and educational channels for the diecast community. The business profile data was obtained through direct interviews with the owner of DB DIECAST09, supplemented by participant observation of operational activities, production documentation, and interactions with customers, allowing for triangulation between interview data and actual field practice.

I5's interest in diecast began during junior high school, as explained below:

"I've actually liked playing with cars since I was little, but I only really got into diecast when I was in junior high. At that time, a friend brought a premium Hot Wheels series to school, and I was immediately drawn to the details, which were so different from ordinary toys... What really got me into it was the first time I held a diecast car with detailed rims and a movable suspension."

(I5, owner of DB DIECAST09)

This personal interest then transformed into a business proposition through a series of independent experiments. I5 explains this turning point:

"When I posted the results on Instagram, the response was beyond expectations. Many people asked if I could order or not. From there I started to realize that there were other people who wanted to pay for my work."

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(I5, owner of DB DIECAST09)

This narrative of origins directly represents the concept of hobby-based entrepreneurship proposed by Farida et al. (2024), and also serves as a starting point for the analysis of the dimensions of passion-based innovation, which is discussed further in the section on the application of creative entrepreneurship.

Characteristics and Opportunities of the Custom Diecast Niche Market

Albrecht, Green, and Hoffman (2023) assessed the viability of a segment as a niche market based on four criteria: measurability, affordability, substantiality, and distinctiveness. A cross-informant analysis showed that the custom diecast and 1:64 scale diorama segment consistently met the criteria of distinctiveness and affordability, while its measurability and substantiality remained dynamic as the community grew. Three distinguishing characteristics were identified from the analysis.

First, consumer motivation is personal and emotional, far beyond mere hobby. I2 asserts that the drive behind diecast collecting is a highly distinctive psychological experience:

"When it comes to diecast, there's a feeling of wanting to hunt, curiosity, and wanting to own one."

(I2, member of the Retro Cars Indonesia community, experience >5 years)

I3 also confirmed from a customer perspective that custom products aren't merely aesthetically pleasing, but also carry personal value that aligns with the collector's taste and identity. I4 concretely reinforced this by reporting three buyers who spontaneously spent Rp27 million in a single meeting, clear evidence of impulsive buying based on emotional attachment within the community ecosystem. From a business owner perspective, I5 also confirmed a similar pattern within her own customer base:

"If you look for a common thread, most of them are the type of people who aren't satisfied with something generic. They want something with character, something they can say is their own."

(I5, owner of DB DIECAST09)

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Second, high consumer loyalty and strong community effects create a reputational dynamic that works in both directions. I1 asserts:

"If you disappoint a buyer once, you'll look bad in the eyes of many people because they're connected to the same community. But if you deliver good results once, the potential for referrals is also huge."
(I1, custom diecast business actor, active since 2022)

Hasan et al. (2026) interpret this phenomenon as a storycrafting effect that builds loyalty organically in a niche market, where every satisfied customer serves as a marketing asset within the community. I3 also confirmed from a customer perspective that he had recommended DB DIECAST09 to his colleagues because of its quality and concept, which he considered unique.

Third, the market is growing organically but still requires ongoing education. I1 assessed that consumer awareness of the value of custom diecast is still low, as most still view diecast as simply something to buy, keep, and then display. I4 added:

"There is a market share of its own, which truly has an artistic soul."
(I4, diecast reseller, experience since 2019)

Palavesh (2021) defines this condition as latent unmet needs, namely needs that actually exist but are not yet fully recognized by potential consumers, a condition that is the most strategic basis for developing a niche market.

Based on a cross-informant analysis using the Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014) model, three opportunity clusters were identified. The personal gift segment with high sentimental value was identified as the strongest empirical opportunity. I1 described it as a segment that has received little attention:

"Very underrated, consumers in this segment are willing to pay more because of the high sentimental value."
(I1, custom diecast business actor)

I3 confirmed that DB DIECAST09's custom products hold personal value beyond their aesthetic function, while I2 added that customizing diecast is a way to "bring out our character." Pinelli et al. (2022) assert that true entrepreneurial value grows from the ability

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to create meaningful exchanges, and this segment of personalized gifts has an emotional weight that goes beyond its transactional value.

The profession- and identity-based contextual diorama segment was the second opportunity confirmed across informants. I1 viewed it as a real niche that hadn't been seriously explored:

"What's potentially interesting but hasn't been widely explored, in my opinion, is contextual dioramas. This means not just customizing cars, but presenting them in a single scene complete with a background, accessories, and story. Like a workshop diorama, a racing diorama, or a city corner diorama. Furthermore, professional identity-based customizations are also interesting, such as ambulances for doctors, expedition trucks for logistics operators."

(I1, custom diecast business actor)

I2 reinforces this view by describing dioramas as a medium capable of presenting a complete world, and admits to having created several independently. Cinantya (2025) found that visual exploration through diecast and dioramas has a rich artistic dimension and has the potential to be exploited strategically. From a production perspective, I5 confirms this opportunity while acknowledging that its exploration in this segment is still in its early stages:

"In my opinion, thematic dioramas are still very open. The ones I've made so far have only been in the initial stages, simple roadsides, small parking lots. But I see that people's enthusiasm when they see them is quite big. If someone is serious about working on dioramas with a more mature concept and a strong narrative, it could become its own niche."

(I5, owner of DB DIECAST09)

Cinantya (2025) found that visual exploration through diecast and dioramas has a rich artistic dimension and has the potential to be utilized strategically.

The corporate and MSME segments represent a third, still promising opportunity. I1 sees potential in the form of companies ordering 1:64 scale replicas of operational vehicle fleets as displays or souvenirs, and culinary MSMEs ordering custom miniature food trucks for promotional content. This opportunity is categorized as prospective because it is supported by only one data source. Hariyanti et al. (2023) provide a

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theoretical basis that diversification into the business-to-business segment has the potential to improve MSME performance, although more in-depth market validation is still needed.

Application of Creative Entrepreneurship in DB DIECAST09

Laverty and Littel (2020) define creative entrepreneurship as the ability to transform personal creativity into innovation with economic value. In DB DIECAST09, these three operational dimensions are consistently realized and mutually reinforce each other.

The passion-based innovation of DB DIECAST09 started from dissatisfaction with the standard factory appearance, as I5 said:

"Starting from being bored with the standard factory appearance, I tried replacing plastic tires with rubber tires, adding small details like waterslide decals for license plates and logos, sometimes adding a roof box."
(I5, owner of DB DIECAST09)

The experiment then evolved into a business proposition. I1 confirmed the same pattern from a competitor's perspective:

"Initially, I didn't intend to sell, it was purely because I liked tinkering."
(I1, custom diecast business actor, active since 2022)

The similarity of findings from two different business actors indicates that passion-based innovation is a distinctive generative characteristic of this segment. Gohoungodji (2025) found that in the creative industry, the most enduring innovations are those that originate from the aesthetic experiences and authentic passions of their founders.

Differentiation through storytelling is implemented through Instagram as a portfolio and process documentation, and TikTok as a platform for educational and behind-the-scenes content. I5 explains the division of functions between the two channels:

"Instagram is more about portfolios and process documentation, so potential buyers can see the consistency of my quality over time. TikTok is more about light educational content and behind-the-scenes content... Instagram is still the most influential on conversions, but TikTok is effective for discovery."

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(I5, owner of DB DIECAST09)

I3, who discovered DB DIECAST09 through Instagram content, confirmed the effectiveness of the strategy:

"From Instagram, I was looking at diecast references on Reels and this content came up. I ended up buying it because of the detail, the unique concept, and how neat it looked."

(I3, loyal customer of DB DIECAST09, 3 years as a JDM collector)

Hasan et al. (2026) asserted that authentic narratives about the product creation process can build trust even before a transaction takes place, and this finding was empirically proven in this study. I1 also implemented a similar documentation strategy, indicating a convergence of best practices in this segment.

The creation of meaningful exchange value is realized through a co-creation process, where each custom order begins with an in-depth discussion:

"For specific custom orders, I start by discussing them with the client first, asking about color preferences, visual references, and any areas I want to highlight."

(I5, owner of DB DIECAST09)

I3 shared his impressions of the results from a consumer perspective:

"I'm so happy, it's better than I imagined. The product reflects the imagination he had in mind."

(I3, loyal customer of DB DIECAST09)

This process represents a concrete mechanism for meaningful exchange value, as defined by Pinelli et al. (2022), namely transactions that touch on consumer identity. These three dimensions of creative entrepreneurship synergize to form a competitive advantage that is difficult to imitate, in line with Gunawan's (2024) findings that entrepreneurial competence directly influences business performance in Indonesia's creative industry.

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Structural Challenges in Niche Markets*Custom Diecast*

Gustami et al. (2024) found that effective value communication is one of the main challenges for MSMEs in building competitiveness based on product innovation. This finding was also confirmed in the context of custom diecast, through four structural challenges identified across informants.

First, demand volatility: I1 reported order fluctuations of between 8–30 units per month due to a pre-order system that was not yet standardized, resulting in a reactive response to demand. I5 confirmed similar challenges from DB DIECAST09's operational experience:

"Order management is still manual... it was overwhelming because the recording wasn't neat, and some estimates were way off."
(I5, owner of DB DIECAST09)

Second, there is no industry pricing standard: I1 describes a price disparity of between Rp50,000 and Rp300,000 for visually similar jobs, making it difficult for consumers to objectively assess quality—a condition that directly hinders value communication.

Third, managing client expectations and the risk of burnout: I1 identified mid-concept changes as a major source of stress, while I3 emphasized that consistent progress communication was key to customer peace of mind throughout the ordering process. I5 added that the temptation to continually refine details beyond the initial agreement was also a source of stress:

"I'm often tempted to add this detail, fix that part, even though the initial agreement was enough... the margins are immediately thin."
(I5, owner of DB DIECAST09)

Fourth, limited market awareness: I2 emphasized that interest in custom diecast is personal and not evenly distributed across the automotive community—indicating that market education is not just a marketing strategy, but a long-term investment to expand the potential consumer base in this segment.

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E-ISSN : 2964-0865
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CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

This study yielded two key findings that address both research objectives. First, the niche market for custom diecast and 1:64 scale dioramas consistently meets the criteria of segment distinctiveness and affordability. Three distinguishing characteristics were identified: personal-emotional consumer motivation based on emotional attachment and identity expression; high loyalty with a community effect that strengthens organic referral mechanisms; and a market that grows organically but still requires ongoing education as a prerequisite for expansion. Furthermore, three opportunity clusters were identified, two of which have strong empirical support (the high-value personal gift segment and the profession-based contextual diorama segment), while the other is still prospective (the corporate and MSME segments).

Second, creative entrepreneurship in DB DIECAST09 is realized through three mutually reinforcing dimensions: passion-based innovation that creates authentic value propositions; differentiation through digital storytelling that builds trust before a transaction takes place; and the creation of meaningful exchange value through co-creation with consumers. These three dimensions are confirmed across data sources and consistently support a competitive advantage that is difficult for competitors in the mass market to imitate. The theoretical contribution of this research lies in offering an integrative analysis model between niche markets and creative entrepreneurship for the context of hobby-based micro creative industries in Indonesia.

This study has several limitations, including the use of a single case study, which limits the generalizability of the findings, the limited number of informants from four perspectives, and the specific context of one business in North Jakarta. Future research could employ a multi-case design by comparing several custom diecast businesses in different cities, or employ a mixed-methods approach to validate these qualitative findings more broadly.

Recommendation

1. Formalize pre-order systems and production flows through standardized customer brief forms and scheduled progress updates, to address identified order management challenges.
2. Developing educational content through Instagram Reels and TikTok as a market penetration strategy while expanding consumer awareness of the value of custom diecast.

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3. Conducting gradual penetration into the personal gift segment through special service packages (personal vehicle replicas, wedding souvenirs, birthday gifts) as a form of utilizing opportunities with the strongest empirical support.
4. Strengthening community networks through active involvement in events such as the Indonesia Diecast Expo and local community gatherings, in order to expand market reach based on organic referrals.

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