

The Role of Promotion in Increasing the Competitiveness of Aquaculture Businesses Biofloc Tilapia F16_AQUACULTURE

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Abstract

This study aims to describe the role of promotion in increasing the competitiveness of biofloc tilapia fish farming business at F16_AQUACULTURE located in Makassar City. The approach used in this study is descriptive qualitative, with data collection methods through in-depth interviews and direct observation of business managers and employees. The results of the study indicate that the strategies implemented so far have focused more on product optimization and pricing, but there has been no planned and systematic promotion implementation. This has limited market reach and the absence of partnerships for large-scale product distribution. In today's digital era, promotion through social media and other digital platforms provides a huge opportunity to reach a wider consumer base. Promotional strategies such as collaboration with influencers, providing seasonal discounts, loyalty programs, and creating attractive promotional content are considered to be able to increase brand awareness and drive sales. Therefore, the implementation of a more adaptive and innovative promotional strategy is needed to strengthen the competitiveness and expand the F16_AQUACULTURE market amidst increasingly fierce competition.

Keywords: Promotion, Competitiveness, Tilapia Farming, Biofloc, Marketing Strategy.



INTRODUCTION

The aquaculture sector in Indonesia continues to experience positive growth, in line with the increasing demand for animal protein from fish, especially tilapia which is one of the leading national commodities. Tilapia (*Oreochromis niloticus*) is one of the fishery commodities that is widely cultivated because it has advantages in the form of fast harvest times, easy cultivation requirements, good resistance to diseases, and high tolerance to environmental conditions and salinity levels (Kusumanti et al., 2023). The application of biofloc technology as an environmentally friendly and efficient cultivation method in water use has opened up new opportunities for cultivators to increase their productivity. In the midst of fierce market competition, the success of tilapia farming business is not only determined by the technical aspects of production, but also by the implementation of effective marketing strategies, especially in terms of promotion.

By using the biofloc system, people not only gain knowledge of the basic techniques of tilapia cultivation, but they also learn how to use water and feed resources more efficiently. This allows fish to be intensively cultivated on limited land (Pebriana et al., 2024). F16_AQUACULTURE uses the biofloc system to raise tilapia and implement various innovations in cultivation techniques. However, as time goes by, businesses face the main challenge of increasing their competitiveness amid the multitude of competitors and constant market changes. To introduce products, increase brand awareness, and increase market share, a proper promotional strategy is essential.

The problem faced by one of the fish farming business sectors in Makassar City is F16_AQUACULTURE that it is difficult to find a place to supply fish on a large scale. Fish farming is one of the main sources in providing fish for the community. The rapid growth of this sector in various countries allows the fulfillment of animal protein needs from fish meat in a more sustainable manner (Atmaja et al., 2022). The reason why it is difficult for business actors to get a place to supply fish on a large scale is because they have not cooperated with several business actors such as restaurants, and also still supply to fish sellers such as in small markets, the lack of marketing media such as promotion also affects the fish farming business sector.

In today's digital era, the role of marketing has become increasingly crucial along with changes in consumer behavior who tend to look for information online before making a purchase. The presence of various digital channels, such as e-commerce, social media, and other digital platforms, opens up opportunities as well as challenges for tilapia farming business actors in marketing their products. To increase competitiveness, especially in the midst of rapid technological developments, Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) need to understand



effective promotional strategies through the internet, such as the application of digital marketing and the use of websites as a promotional medium as well as a means of transaction (Solaiman et al., 2025).

According to Apriliana et al (2021) Promotion is an important component of the marketing mix that a company must do to market its products effectively. In addition to serving as a communication tool between companies and customers, promotions also play a role in building customer confidence to buy or use products that are considered to be able to meet their needs and desires.

The role of promotion is very important in strengthening the competitiveness of a business, because the goal is to introduce, convince, and remind consumers about certain products or services. Promotion plays a role in increasing brand awareness and sales and strengthening a company's market position by utilizing various methods such as advertising, direct selling, sales promotion, and public relations. In the midst of increasingly fierce competition, an effective promotional strategy helps companies to attract more consumers, build customer loyalty, and create uniqueness that sets them apart from competitors. With the right promotional strategy, companies can expand their market reach, improve their position in the industry, and ensure the sustainability of their business (Kusumanti et al., 2023).

In the digital era, promotion plays an important role in encouraging the growth of the business sector. Technological advancements and changing consumption patterns demand effective promotional strategies to make businesses more known, attract more customers, and increase revenue. Promotion itself is one of the elements in the marketing mix that aims to convey information about a product, convince potential customers, and remind the product of its existence. Businesses that utilize digital marketing are able to increase sales by up to 2.8 times compared to traditional methods. This fact confirms that promotion is not just a marketing tool, but the main strategy that supports the sustainability of a business (Dwijayanti et al., 2022).

In the midst of fierce business competition, companies need to present innovations in order to survive and grow. One of the innovations in marketing is to take advantage of opportunities from social media users as an effective means of promotion. The increasing number of social media that can be used as a promotional medium can provide an extraordinary opportunity for aquaculture businesses to reach more consumers. Through platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok, businesses can promote their products to a wider audience, engage with customers, and increase brand awareness. Additionally, features such as paid advertising, engaging visual content, and customer testimonials can help increase trust in the



products offered. With the right promotional strategy through social media, business actors can expand the market, increase sales, increase business competitiveness, and strengthen their position in the midst of product competition (Umbara, 2021).

This study aims to describe the role of promotion in increasing the business power of F16_AQUACULTURE biofloc tilapia cultivation by identifying effective promotional strategies, analyzing their impact on business performance, and formulating recommendations for more optimal strategies. The urgency of this research is based on the growth of the tilapia market that continues to increase, both for domestic consumption and export, while without the right promotion strategy, this large market potential is difficult to utilize to the fullest. It is hoped that this research will result in a broad understanding of promotional strategies that are useful for improving the competitiveness of businesses. In addition, this research will provide guidance for business actors to develop promotional strategies in accordance with market changes and consumer preferences.

COMPETITIVENESS IN THE FISHING BUSINESS

Michael E (1990), a business strategist, explained that competitiveness is the ability of a region or company to create and maintain added value in the midst of competition. He differentiated competitiveness into two types, namely cost-based competitiveness and differentiation-based competitiveness. According to the famous economist Paul Krugman (2008), the ability of a country to produce competitive goods and services in the international market is known as competitiveness. This level of competitiveness is determined by the relative productivity of the country in producing products. Based on the opinions of Michael E and Paul Krugman, competitiveness can be concluded as the ability of an entity, both a company, a region, or a country, to create and maintain excellence in the midst of competition (Septiani et al., 2023).

Competitiveness is one of the main factors in assessing a country's success in increasing income and driving economic growth. The level of productivity, which can be measured by comparing the amount of output produced with the number of inputs used, is strongly linked to this competitiveness. Competitiveness in the fisheries sector refers to the ability of fisheries business actors, both in aquaculture and capture fisheries, to produce a quality, efficient, and value-added product to compete in the domestic and international markets (Suryana et al., 2021).

TILAPIA CULTIVATION WITH BIOFLOC SYSTEM

Aquaculture breakthroughs, biofloc systems are proven to improve water quality and



increase tilapia production efficiency. This method also contributes to increasing tilapia growth and health, while reducing feed conversion ratios, making aquaculture more efficient and sustainable (Munaeni, Aris & Darsan, et al., 2022). According to Mandula et al (2020, in Munaeni et al., 2022) cultivation with a biofloc system can be applied on an intensive scale without the need for water change, making it more efficient and sustainable.

According to Ekasari (2009, in Kurniaji et al., 2021) the biofloc system is very effective in controlling ammonia levels in aquaculture cultivation. Several studies have shown that the application of this system can improve water quality and aquaculture productivity. The use of heterotrophic bacteria in biofloc systems has been shown to be more effective in decomposing ammonia and nitrites in waters, as well as resulting in higher cell production than nitrified bacteria. The growth of biofloc in aquaculture is influenced by various water quality factors. Biofloc technology has been applied in the cultivation of various types of fish with varying levels of density. In tilapia cultivation using a biofloc system, the purpose of this study is to assess the impact of different density levels on fish growth. This study will also evaluate the efficiency of feed utilization, survival rate, water quality parameters, and floc concentration.

To ensure the smooth process of decomposition, nitrification, denitrification, and utilization of floc by cultivated organisms and maintain the stability of water quality, the balance of the biofloc system needs to be maintained. If this balance is disturbed, water quality parameters can change and potentially reach levels that are harmful to aquaculture organisms. The biofloc system uses a plastic-coated iron tank with a diameter of four meters and a depth of one meter. Before use, the tank is inspected to ensure that the plastic coating does not leak. After inspection, the plastic layer is cleaned and sterilized to prevent contamination. The tank is then allowed to dry for two days before being filled with 10 m³ of water as a tilapia cultivation medium (Safsafubun et al., 2023).

THE ROLE OF PROMOTION IN FISH FARMING

According to Philip Kotler (2012, in Riki et al., 2023) Promotion is one of the marketing strategies that functions as a means of communication between companies and the market through elements in the marketing mix. A marketing mix is a set of marketing tools that can be managed by a company to generate the desired response from the target market. Philip Kotler stated that the marketing mix consists of four elements known as the 4P. First, Product, which is goods or services offered to meet the needs or desires of consumers. Second, Price, which refers to the amount of money that customers have to pay to acquire a product. Third,



Place/Distribution, which is a channel used to distribute products to consumers. Fourth, Promotion, which includes activities to communicate the benefits of the product and persuade customers to buy the product. Meanwhile, according to Louis E. Boone & David L. Kurtz, promotion is an attempt to convince, provide information and influence consumer purchasing decisions. Based on the opinion of experts, promotion can be interpreted as one of the marketing strategies that plays an important role in building communication with the market. Promotions not only serve to introduce products, but also to convince consumers, provide relevant information, and influence purchase decisions. With effective promotional strategies, business actors can increase competitiveness, expand market reach, and build customer loyalty to the products offered.

Promotion acts as a communication strategy that allows cultivators to convey their products appropriately to potential consumers, so that they can attract more parties to the products marketed. In addition, promotion also has an important role in increasing the competitiveness and sustainability of fish farming businesses. By implementing effective promotional strategies, farmers can expand market reach, increase consumer awareness, and build a positive image of the fishery products produced. Through the utilization of various promotional channels, such as digital marketing, social media, trade shows, and product certifications, cultivators can attract more buyers, both in local and international markets (Zettira et al., 2022).

Promotions have two main objectives, namely to introduce products to potential customers and convince them to make a purchase. Promotion can be done in various ways, either directly or indirectly, such as by installing banners at business locations. Along with the development of technology, promotion is now easier to do through the internet and social media, which allows business actors to reach the market anytime and anywhere. In fish farming, promotion has an important role to increase competitiveness and expand market reach. With digital promotion strategies, farmers can promote their products more widely, build a positive image, and attract consumer attention to the fishery products produced (Faradilla & Hutasuht, 2022).

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses qualitative research that aims to understand and explain the role of promotion in increasing the competitiveness of the F16_AQUACULTURE biofloc tilapia cultivation business. According to Waruwu (2024), qualitative research is an activity that involves observation



and efforts to understand a phenomenon in its original state. This research aims to gain a deep understanding by interpreting, giving meaning, describing, and analyzing phenomena contextually. In addition, qualitative research also focuses on the process of code breaking and translating information to understand an event more comprehensively.

This research was carried out at F16_AQUACULTURE, a business that uses biofloc technology in tilapia cultivation. To determine informants, this study uses a purposive sampling technique, which is a sampling method deliberately chosen by the researcher based on certain considerations relevant to the research objectives (Fikri et al., 2021). The object of this research involves business managers and several employees who play a role in operations and marketing. Business managers are the main source of information regarding the promotional strategies implemented, while employees provide insight into the implementation of the strategy in daily activities as well as challenges faced in marketing.

The data collection methods applied include interviews and observations. In-depth interviews were conducted with owners and employees to find out information about the promotional strategies implemented, their effectiveness in attracting customers, and the obstacles faced. In addition, observation is carried out by directly observing promotional activities, both through digital marketing and direct interaction with customers. The data was analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model, which consisted of three stages: data reduction (filtering and selecting important information), data presentation (organizing results in a descriptive form), and drawing conclusions (identifying the relationship between promotional strategies and business competitiveness) (Qomaruddin & Sa'diyah, 2024). Through this approach, the research is expected to provide deeper insights into the effectiveness of the promotional strategies implemented and provide recommendations for the development of more optimal marketing strategies.

RESULT

The emergence of information technology has changed the marketing paradigm from traditional to digital, thus opening up opportunities for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) to reach consumers more widely through online platforms. However, in the midst of the current era of globalization, MSMEs are also faced with increasingly complex challenges in maintaining their competitiveness in an ever-growing market.

Strategy is one of the key factors in achieving business goals, especially for MSMEs that need to adapt to market and technological changes. With careful strategic planning, business actors can determine the direction of business development, maximize the use of existing



resources, and increase competitiveness in the midst of increasingly fierce competition.

One of the MSME businesses in the tilapia cultivation sector, has a problem where there is still a lack of place to supply tilapia on a large scale. As said by the business manager of Nandar, this business is still new because it was established in November 2024, which only sells online offered through Whatsaap to acquaintances in the traditional market, as well as friends and relatives. He also said that the strategy he uses is to use strategies, first, product and service optimization, where cultivators ensure quality and relevant products according to customer needs, second, price strategies are by providing product prices that are different from the prices of products from other cultivation places in Makassar. He said that the business manager at his cultivation place has not carried out a promotional strategy for the sale of his products, he also said that he does not have a partner to cooperate to supply fish.

From what was conveyed by the business manager, namely Nandar, the strategy used in the tilapia cultivation business in F16_AQUAKULTURE namely the product optimization strategy and also the price strategy are not fully optimal to increase sales in the business, therefore a suitable strategy is needed to be able to increase sales and attract consumers to want to buy fish from F16_AQUAKULTURE farm. The implementation of the strategy is something that is carried out in accordance with the strategy that has been designed. This process involves implementing pre-arranged steps to achieve the desired goal. In this stage, all resources owned, both human, financial, and operational, must be directed effectively and efficiently so that the strategy can run optimally.

In the tilapia cultivation business F16_AQUAKULTURE the implementation of the strategy carried out is in accordance with the strategy designed as said by the employees who work there, Putra and Hasan said their opinion, about the strategy carried out, namely the product optimization strategy and the price strategy have been carried out in accordance with the direction ordered by the superiors, but they also said that this strategy has not been able to increase sales and obtain a place to sell or supply fish in bulk.

So the implementation of the strategy carried out F16_AQUAKULTURE even though it is good and in accordance with the designed strategy, it is still not able to increase sales and get a place to supply fish in bulk. It can be concluded from the opinion that F16_AQUAKULTURE need a new strategy to increase sales and places to supply fish in large quantities, and also be able to increase business competitiveness.



DISCUSSION

The tilapia cultivation business has F16_AQUAKULTURE tried to adapt to the times by utilizing information technology as a marketing medium. Sales are made through WhatsApp to personal relationships such as friends and relatives. Although this shows the initial efforts of digitalization, the market scope is still narrow and not optimal. According to Masrukhan and Isnaini (2025) "the use of digital technology in marketing allows MSME actors to reach a wider range of consumers, but a consistent and measurable strategy is needed to produce a significant impact"

The main strategies used F16_AQUAKULTURE include product optimization by maintaining the quality of tilapia, as well as price strategies by setting competitive prices. This is in accordance with the basic principles of the MSME strategy, which is to differentiate themselves through product value and price flexibility. However, as Tarigan and Bangun (2024) "price and product strategies alone are not enough without being supported by a broad and integrated marketing and distribution system". This means that even though the strategy used is conceptually correct, it has not had a big impact due to limited market access.

Another major obstacle faced is the lack of an active promotional strategy and business partners to support large-scale distribution. Promotion plays an important role in building brand awareness and attracting new customers. As explained by Zenia Rabbil et al (2023) "MSMEs that do not actively promote will find it difficult to compete in an increasingly competitive and dynamic market". Without promotions and partnerships, the opportunities to grow on a larger scale will continue to be limited.

The implementation of the strategy that has been designed in F16_AQUAKULTURE has been carried out by employees as directed by the manager. However, the results are still not as expected. Putra and Hasan, employees of the business, stated that even though the strategy has been implemented, sales have not increased and there is no fixed supply line. This emphasizes that the implementation of the strategy must be accompanied by periodic evaluations and adjustments. In accordance with the statement of Firmansyah et al (2025) "business strategies must be adaptive and not static, as markets and consumer needs continue to change over time". The implementation of the strategy is a crucial step in strategic management, because at this stage the plan that has been prepared is tested for effectiveness in real practice. In F16_AQUAKULTURE, product optimization and pricing strategies have been executed according to the direction of the leadership. This strategy is focused on providing quality tilapia products and adjusting prices to be able to compete in the local market. These efforts demonstrate a basic understanding of the



importance of quality and price in attracting consumers. However, as stated by Silviah and Ramadhika (2024), the implementation of an effective marketing strategy does not only depend on product quality and price, but also on targeted promotion and distribution.

Although the strategy has been implemented, the results obtained have not shown a significant increase in sales or expansion of the distribution market. One of the inhibiting factors found is the absence of an adequate promotional strategy and the lack of distribution partners for large-scale fish distribution. This is in line with the findings of Muslimin et al (2022) who stated that effective promotion and distribution are important components of MSME marketing strategies to increase sales.

With these conditions, the implementation of the strategy in F16_AQUAKULTURE can be said to be still not optimal in terms of results, even though the implementation has been in accordance with the initial direction. The absence of promotional strategies and weak distribution networks are the main obstacles in expanding the market and increasing sales volume. According to Wahyuni et al (2021), "strategy performance is not only seen from the suitability of its implementation, but also from the achievement of measurable targets, such as increasing sales, expanding markets, and successfully building strategic partnerships". Therefore, F16_AQUAKULTURE need to conduct an in-depth evaluation of the implementation of its strategy and immediately develop a new approach that is more adaptive to the current market dynamics.

Taking these constraints into account, F16_AQUAKULTURE recommended to develop a new strategy that is more adaptive to current market conditions. These strategies can include digital promotion through social media, collaboration with other business actors, and the development of partnerships with traditional markets or supermarkets for wider product distribution. As stated by Jatmiko (2022), the implementation of digital marketing strategies can help MSMEs reach a wider market and increase sales significantly.

CONCLUSION

The strategy implemented by F16_AQUACULTURE in managing the biofloc tilapia cultivation business is still not able to have a significant impact on increasing competitiveness and sales volume. Although the product optimization and pricing strategy has been executed as planned, the reality is that the business still faces various challenges, especially in terms of marketing and distribution. Sales that are still limited to the circle of friends and the absence of a structured promotional strategy are the main obstacles in reaching a wider market. The absence of business partners for large-scale distribution also further narrows business expansion



opportunities.

In the context of today's digital age, promotion has a very important role to introduce products, build brand awareness, and attract consumer interest. The lack of promotional efforts makes it difficult for F16_AQUACULTURE to compete with other business actors who have made the most of digital media. Therefore, it is necessary to plan and implement more adaptive promotional strategies, such as the use of social media, cooperation with other business actors, and the development of distribution networks. Thus, this tilapia cultivation business can increase product visibility, expand market share, and build a sustainable competitive advantage.

SUGGESTION

To increase the competitiveness of the tilapia cultivation business F16_AQUAKULTURE, the most appropriate and relevant step is to implement an effective and adaptive promotion strategy to the times. In today's digital era, businesses have many media options to promote, ranging from e-commerce platforms to various social media such as Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and TikTok. The use of social media is very potential because the number of users continues to increase, providing a great opportunity to reach consumers more widely and efficiently (Ritonga & Dewi, 2025). Through this platform, F16_AQUAKULTURE can create interesting and educational content about the cultivation process, product quality, and customer testimonials to build consumer trust.

With the implementation of these promotional strategies, F16_AQUAKULTURE is not only able to increase competitiveness and sales volume, but also build a strong brand image in the market. These steps will greatly help businesses in building long-term relationships with consumers, expanding the market, and making tilapia farming more sustainable in the midst of increasingly fierce competition.

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