



Product Creativity, Branding, and Marketing in the Tempe Business: A Case Study of the All Tempe Production House

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Abstract

The tempeh industry in Indonesia is undergoing a transformation from household-based production to medium-scale industries aimed at marketing products to modern retail markets. This study examines how creativity in product development and branding strategies are employed to enhance competitiveness at Sangat Tempe Factory in Medan, which focuses on large retail stores as its primary distribution channels. This research employs a descriptive qualitative approach with in-depth interview methods to analyze product development strategies, brand name selection, and strategies for entering the modern retail market. The findings indicate that product variations, appropriate brand name selection, packaging standardization, and understanding of modern retail market requirements are critical factors in successfully entering this market. This research highlights that the transition from traditional household production to modern retail-oriented operations requires strategic integration of product creativity and professional branding, demonstrating that medium-scale tempeh producers can effectively compete in modern retail environments through systematic approaches to product diversification, brand positioning, and market adaptation. The study also provides practical benefits for medium-scale tempeh industries in designing branding and marketing strategies to enter modern retail markets and underscores the importance of continuous innovation to enhance competitiveness.

Keywords: *Product Creativity; Branding ; Tempe Industry; Modern Retail; Marketing Strategy.*

Abstrak: Industri tempe Indonesia sedang mengalami transformasi dari produksi rumahan menjadi industri skala menengah yang bertujuan untuk memasarkan produknya ke pasar ritel modern. Studi ini mengkaji bagaimana kreativitas dalam pengembangan produk dan strategi branding digunakan untuk meningkatkan daya saing di Pabrik Tempe Semua Tempe di Medan, yang berfokus pada toko ritel besar sebagai saluran distribusi utamanya. Studi ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif dengan wawancara mendalam untuk menganalisis strategi pengembangan produk, pemilihan nama merek, dan strategi masuk pasar ritel modern. Temuan tersebut menunjukkan bahwa variasi produk tempe, pemilihan nama merek yang tepat, standarisasi kemasan, dan pemahaman tentang persyaratan pasar ritel modern merupakan faktor penting dalam keberhasilan memasuki pasar ini. Studi ini menyoroti bahwa transisi dari produksi rumahan tradisional ke operasi berorientasi ritel modern membutuhkan integrasi strategis kreativitas produk dan branding profesional, menunjukkan bahwa produsen tempe skala menengah dapat bersaing



secara efektif di lingkungan ritel modern melalui pendekatan sistematis untuk diversifikasi produk, pemosisian merek, dan adaptasi pasar. Studi ini juga memberikan manfaat praktis bagi industri tempe skala menengah dalam merancang strategi branding dan pemasaran untuk memasuki pasar ritel modern dan menggarisbawahi pentingnya inovasi berkelanjutan untuk meningkatkan daya saing.

Kata Kunci: *Kreativitas Produk; Merek; Industri Tempe; Ritel Modern; Strategi Pemasaran*

INTRODUCTION

Tempeh is a traditional Indonesian food that has become an integral part of Indonesian culture. As a cheap and nutritious source of vegetable protein, tempeh has significant potential to be developed into a high-value product. However, the tempeh industry still faces various challenges in its development, particularly in marketing and branding, which remain traditional and lack innovation.

In today's increasingly competitive market, tempeh producers must not only produce quality products but also differentiate themselves through innovation and creativity. Modern marketing requires a strong branding strategy to build product identity, increase competitiveness, and generate consumer interest. This is crucial because today's consumers are increasingly discerning and have diverse preferences when it comes to the foods they consume.

Tempe Segala Tempe Production House is one of the businesses attempting to develop innovations in the traditional tempeh industry. This business not only produces tempeh in its standard form but also implements various product variants and more creative marketing strategies. With a creative approach to its products and a well-planned branding strategy, Tempe Segala Tempe Production House strives to increase its product's added value and expand its market. (Sundari et al., 2025)

Product creativity in the tempeh business encompasses innovations in shape, flavor, and packaging, as well as the development of tempeh derivatives that are more appealing to modern consumers. Meanwhile, branding is a crucial factor in building a positive image, increasing brand awareness, and differentiating products from competitors. The combination of product creativity and an effective branding strategy is expected to be key to the success of tempeh businesses in facing today's market dynamics.

This is the background to this research, as there are still limited empirical studies that comprehensively analyze how product creativity and branding are applied in small- to medium-scale tempeh businesses. By conducting a case study on the Tempe Segala Tempe Production House, it is hoped that this will provide a concrete picture of innovative practices that can be adopted by other tempeh businesses to increase their competitiveness and survivability. (Akbar et al., 2023)

METHOD

This research adopts a qualitative approach with a case study method as the main framework to gain a deep and comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon of product creativity and branding strategies at the Tempe Segala Tempe Production House. The case study method was chosen because it allows researchers to thoroughly explore a specific context, including operational practices, decision-making, product innovation, and interactions with consumers and other stakeholders. This approach also allows for a richer analysis of the internal and external dynamics that influence product development and the business's marketing strategy.

In data collection, this study employed several complementary techniques to enhance the validity and reliability of the information. First, in-depth interviews were conducted with the management and key employees of the Tempe Segala Tempe Production House to understand the company's vision, strategy, and practical experience in managing product creativity and building brand image. Second, field observations were conducted directly at the production site to observe the tempeh-making process, interactions between employees, and how the product is prepared for consumers, ensuring that the data obtained is contextual and realistic.

In addition, the study utilized documentation in the form of operational records, promotional materials, sales reports, and product archives to supplement the information from interviews and observations. An additional technique used was focus group discussions (FGDs), in which small groups of consumers and relevant stakeholders were invited to discuss the findings to gain a broader perspective on the product and branding. This combination of methods enabled the researchers to triangulate data, comparing information from various sources and collection techniques, resulting in more accurate, valid, and scientifically sound conclusions.

This qualitative approach using a case study method provides a comprehensive understanding of the product creativity practices and branding strategies of Rumah Produksi Tempe Segala Tempe (Tempe Segala Tempe) and allows for the identification of factors that support and hinder business development. The research findings are expected to serve as a reference for similar MSMEs in optimizing product innovation and marketing strategies to increase competitiveness and business sustainability. (Kelun et al., 2025)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Segala Tempe Production House is located on Jl. Pendidikan IV, Marindal Dua, Patumbak District, Deli Serdang Regency, North Sumatra, with the postal code 20149. This production house has been established for almost five years, precisely since 2020, and is owned by Mrs. Juliana, who is familiarly

called Mrs. Nana. The initial establishment of this production house was related to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, where many workers experienced layoffs (PHK). Seeing this situation, Mrs. Nana was motivated to create a business opportunity that could be run flexibly from home while also creating jobs for the surrounding community.

In the early stages, this production house only produced one type of product: tempeh. Ms. Nana utilized the workshop space at her child's school to begin the production process and learn practical techniques for making tempeh. This approach not only streamlined the initial production process but also allowed Ms. Nana to directly monitor quality. Over time, Ms. Nana continued to improve her skills and knowledge of tempeh production. She began seeking additional information on more hygienic, safe, and efficient production methods, resulting in improved tempeh quality and meeting consumer hygiene standards.

Furthermore, this production house has developed a more systematic approach to business management. Ms. Nana has implemented more structured production techniques, from selecting quality soybeans and implementing a precise fermentation process to hygienic tempeh packaging. As a result, the Segala Tempe production house not only produces dense and thick tempeh, but also ensures it is safe to consume and has a high sales value. This development demonstrates Ms. Nana's commitment to improving product quality while maintaining the flexibility of a home-based business, while simultaneously contributing economically to the surrounding community. (Maskar et al., 2024)

Product creativity: Home production of all kinds of tempeh

Product creativity means the ability to create something new and different in product development. According to Kotler and Keller (2016), product creativity is the process of generating fresh ideas and then transforming them into innovative products that meet changing market needs. Creativity involves not only creating entirely new products but also improving or transforming existing products to make them more attractive and meet consumer expectations. (Nafisah & Shiratina, 2024)

In the business world, product creativity is defined as a company's ability to create unique solutions that not only differentiate themselves from competitors but also provide additional benefits to customers. This creativity involves thinking outside the box, where entrepreneurs aren't tied to outdated methods of product creation. For example, the All Tempeh production house doesn't just make ordinary tempeh, but also dares to experiment with shapes, flavors, and packaging designs, even transforming it into more modern and attractive products. (Maskar et al., 2024)

As we know, Mrs. Nana initially made tempeh by following the workshop method at her child's school, but she felt that the results of her production

were not enough, so she looked for other ways of making tempeh. Her production method includes product creativity, the method for making tempeh in the style of the All Tempeh production house, namely:

- a. Dry peeling, well most other tempeh production houses do wet peeling, while the soybeans are wet they are peeled, while all tempeh production houses do so while the soybeans are dry they peel the skin and the skin off. And the house production all tempeh peel it with machine .
- b. After that, sift the nuts to separate them from the ash. After sifting, soak them for a minimum of 20 hours and a maximum of 24 hours, but 24 hours is ideal. The goal is to For emit sour lactate .
- c. So after 24 hours of soaking water thrown away , at home production all tempeh There is room special For throw away the soaking water so that it doesn't There is waste that pollutes the room called room wet .
- d. Then, wash and boil it, taking about 45 minutes to cook it, as the beans will become mushy. The boiling process takes about 45 minutes. Then, drain it and dry it in the sun using a fan. Once dry, it's then added with yeast. This differs from other tempeh production plants, as they mostly use wet yeast, meaning the yeast is added while it's still wet.
- e. The yeast dosage is approximately 0.8 grams per 1 kg of nuts. After the yeast is added, the beans are molded and packaged using a press. The packaging uses plastic. After molding, the plastic is punctured and then placed in a fermentation chamber for 20 hours. After 20 hours, the plastic is punctured again to open the pores and ensure continued fermentation.
- f. After four days of fermentation and drying, the tempeh finally reaches optimal quality and is ready for marketing. At this stage, the tempeh has a dense texture, a distinctive, appetizing aroma, and a perfectly cooked taste, making it a ready-to-sell product that appeals to consumers. (Desa & Harapan, 2025)

Using this production method, this production house successfully produces tempeh that is dense, thick, and consistent in quality. The firm texture of the tempeh facilitates packaging and further processing, while the optimal thickness provides added value for consumers, both in terms of taste and satisfaction when consumed. (Irnawati et al., 2025)

However, over time, the Segala Tempe production house began to create creative products such as tempe chips, processed frozen foods such as tempe nuggets and also ready-to-eat tempe mendoan. This Segala Tempe production house has its own background in its product creativity, it initially created this new product as a solution when targets were not achieved, for example, like tempe chips "at that time the owner of the Segala Tempe production house almost suffered losses because many products were not sold out, and at that time the idea came to make tempe chips and sell them to close

relatives and unexpectedly the chips sold until finally making a distribution permit and entering tempe chips products into supermarkets in Medan ". And this is what drives the Segala Tempe production house to continue to be creative and innovative, in addition to avoiding losses, this creativity aims to increase their market and also show the value of tempe products. (Romli et al., 2022)

Use of branding as a business identity.

Branding is a crucial strategy for any business to create and establish a distinctive identity for its products, services, or companies, ensuring they are easily recognized and recognized by customers. The branding process extends beyond visual appearance to encompass the overall experience, message, and values conveyed to consumers. Key elements of branding include the name, logo, packaging design, slogan, vision, mission, and consistent communication across all marketing channels. The alignment of these elements aims to differentiate a product or business from competitors, making it easily recognized, remembered, and trusted by consumers. Effective branding not only makes customers aware of a product but also builds a positive image, trust, and long-term loyalty. With strong branding, businesses can build more personal relationships with customers, increase brand awareness, and strengthen their position in a competitive market. (Suwardi et al., 2022)

In the context of the Segala Tempe production house, branding is a strategic tool to highlight the business identity and increase product appeal. This production house created a special branding for its product with the tagline "HYGIENIC AND DELICIOUS." This branding was chosen with the aim of convincing the public that the tempeh produced is not only delicious but also produced with high hygiene standards, making it safe for consumption. This emphasis on hygiene and taste quality is a clear differentiator compared to other tempeh products on the market. The branding also reflects the production house's commitment to quality raw materials, clean production processes, and safe packaging, so that consumers get a consistent experience every time they buy the product. (Hartati et al., 2025)

The benefits of this branding are evident in the increase in tempeh sales since the company's identity was implemented. Consumers feel more confident and assured in the product's quality, resulting in increased loyalty and increased repeat purchases. Furthermore, this branding also helps the Segala Tempeh production house stand out amidst increasingly fierce competition, as very few tempeh production houses officially apply branding to their products. This presents a strategic opportunity for the business to position itself as a pioneer in quality and professionalism in the local tempeh industry.

Furthermore, branding is not just a marketing tool, but also a representation of a business's values and philosophy. In this case, the tagline

"HYGIENIC AND DELICIOUS" conveys the message that Segala Tempe prioritizes consumer health while maintaining authentic, traditional flavors. This message is consistently implemented across all communication channels, from product packaging and social media to direct promotions to customers. This consistency makes it easy for customers to recognize the product's identity and understand its value proposition, thus building an emotional bond between consumers and the brand.

Besides increasing sales, strong branding also makes it easier for production houses to expand their markets and reach new consumers. For example, with a clear identity and compelling messaging, tempeh products are more easily promoted on social media and online sales platforms, increasing business visibility and attracting potential customers. This demonstrates that branding is not simply a visual communication tool, but a comprehensive strategy that helps MSMEs survive, compete, and thrive in today's increasingly competitive marketplace. (Aulia et al., 2023)

Marketing Strategy to Increase Market

A marketing strategy is an organized plan designed to achieve business goals by effectively promoting products or services to the right consumers. This strategy encompasses several things, such as determining the target market, positioning the brand in consumers' minds, and determining how to set prices, distribute products, and conduct promotions to attract and retain customers. The main goal of a marketing strategy is to help companies understand consumer needs, differentiate their products from competitors, build strong customer relationships, and gain a competitive advantage. With the right marketing strategy, companies can optimally utilize resources, increase profits, and ensure the success of their products or services in the market. In short, a marketing strategy is a guide that helps carry out marketing activities to achieve desired business results. (Novie, 2024)

The All Tempe production house also has several marketing strategies to increase their turnover, we need to know that this All Tempe production house is targeting their market in the upper middle class, so even though the main product they sell is tempe, not everyone will be suited to the price, but with branding and also the marketing strategies they do can maintain their business and products until now. The strategies used by the All Tempe production house in marketing their products are:

a. Create advertisements on social media

As we know, technology is rapidly advancing and can help society. Tempeh production houses are also experiencing this impact. They market their products through advertisements on social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok. This strategy helps their products gain recognition and reach a wide range of people.

b. Introduce their products to relatives and the community

It's true that many businesses are currently implementing this strategy, but the All Tempe production house is different. They have their own way of introducing their products. For example, when they introduce their products to the public, they have a strategy of creating a package system, so this package system is a kind of merchandise that they give to the public. When people come to the All Tempe production house, they not only provide an experience but also a valuable memory. And this, of course, will instill a sense of public trust in the products from the All Tempe production house. (Afandi, 2021)

c. Increase rating on Google Maps

As we know, product ratings are currently trending, and this trend is highly sought after and trusted by the public, especially Gen Z. They believe that a high rating on a product guarantees its quality and taste. Therefore, the All Tempe production house continues to maintain and improve its rating on Google Maps to build public confidence that its products align with its branding. They increase their rating by soliciting reviews from their customers and posting them on social media. This is what sets the All Tempe production house apart from other production houses.

d. Accepting personal shopping orders

This tempeh production house is also open to orders for consignment services (jastip). Not all production houses accept consignment services because usually this jastip is risky for product quality, but this tempeh production house is not worried about this because they want to prove that their products are made with good quality and standards that comply with SOP, this of course makes their products better known and also increases demand for finished products.

e. Carrying out product bundling and promotions

This is their final marketing strategy. Product bundling is a marketing method that combines two or more items into one package, selling them together at a lower price than if purchased individually. The goal is to attract buyers by providing added value for both buyers and sellers. This strategy can increase sales, introduce new products, reduce unsold inventory, and create a more enjoyable shopping experience. Furthermore, bundling is often used to combine a primary product with complementary products, encouraging consumers to purchase a more comprehensive and beneficial package. In addition to product bundling, they also run low-price promotions, usually offered on their social media platforms. (Setiawan et al., 2023)

In addition, the production house of all tempe also has another marketing strategy plan, namely selling products on online sales platforms, yes, it is true that even though the production house of all tempe has advertised on social media and also through jastip, they currently do not have an online sales platform for their products, because there are several things they need to consider, especially in the delivery process and also the costs, because this is different from jastip, their jastip only needs to deliver their

products without thinking about delivery costs because the costs are borne by their customers, besides that jastip also has an agreement that contains that damage during delivery is not the responsibility of the production house of all tempe, this is certainly different from online sales platforms where they want good products even when they arrive at the customer the product is not damaged at all and if there is damage during delivery then they will complain and give a bad rating, and this can certainly affect customer confidence and also affect product demand, but after doing research and also there are no bad reviews from jastip regarding product delivery, making the production house consider selling products online through online sales platforms such as shopee and tiktok shop. (Humairoh et al., 2023)

The Relationship Between Product Creativity, Bundling and Marketing Strategy in the Case of the Segala Tempe Production House

Product creativity at the Segala Tempe Production House is key to creating new, unique products, such as tempeh chips, tempeh nuggets, and ready-to-eat tempeh mendoan. This creativity is not just innovation, but also a way to address unsold products and increase product appeal, expanding the market and benefiting consumers.

The use of product bundling here is an effective marketing strategy to attract buyers. By offering a package of various tempeh products at a lower price than buying them individually, bundling adds value to consumers, simplifying purchasing, and reducing remaining stock. This strategy also helps strengthen customer relationships by providing an engaging shopping experience and making consumers feel well-served. (Ridhwan et al., 2023)

The marketing strategies employed include utilizing social media as a promotional tool, introducing products to relatives and the local community, increasing Google Maps ratings as proof of quality, offering personal shopping services (jastip), and implementing bundled pricing and promotional offers across various online platforms. These strategies aim to reach the middle to upper-middle class and increase sales and customer loyalty.

Simultaneously, product creativity creates attractive variations, bundling adds value and simplifies the purchasing process, while marketing strategies maintain product popularity and competitiveness in the retail market. The combination of these three factors allows the Segala Tempe Production House to adapt to market dynamics and increasingly diverse consumer needs.

Thus, the relationship between these three components is crucial and complementary: creativity as innovation, bundling as a sales tactic, and marketing strategy as a means of product communication and distribution. All three combine to form a unified whole, contributing to the sustainable success of this tempeh business. (Ariviani et al., 2022)

CONCLUSIONS

Product creativity is crucial for increasing competitiveness, from innovations in the production process, such as the dry peeling system and the use of dry yeast, which produce high-quality tempeh, to product variations such as tempeh chips, tempeh nuggets, and ready-to-eat tempeh mendoan. This creativity not only helps reduce unsold products but also expands the market and increases product value.

The "Hygienic and Delicious" branding chosen by the Segala Tempe Production House has successfully created a strong identity, differentiated the product from competitors, and increased consumer confidence in the quality of the product. To market its products, the Segala Tempe Production House employs various strategies such as leveraging social media, product bundling, improving Google Maps rankings, offering personal shopping services (jastip), and bundling products and offering promotions.

This strategy allows them to reach the middle-to-upper market and maintain customer loyalty. The success of the Segala Tempe Production House demonstrates that mid-sized tempe producers can compete in the modern retail market with an organized approach, combining product innovation, clear brand positioning, and adaptation to changing market needs. It also demonstrates that product creativity, branding, and marketing strategy are mutually supportive and serve as essential foundations for the sustainability and growth of today's tempe businesses.

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