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PRODUCT INNOVATION AND UTILIZATION OF DIGITAL MARKETING FOR  
BUSINESS CONTINUITY DURING A PANDEMIC IN CULINARY BUSINESS

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**Abstract:** The culinary business is growing every day because it is a very profitable business, but running a culinary business when the pandemic by COVID-19 is very difficult, even some business sectors are almost paralyzed, which ultimately affects the country's economy and causes a slowdown in global economic activity. This study aims to find action in the culinary business to maintaining business continuity during the pandemic. To survive the current situation, the owner of the roof sekarjambu must be brave in building a business, and product innovation include planning the marketing system, packaging, and brand. What will it be like, especially in today's digital world, making everything easier to market business products. The research is a qualitative method with primary data sources from interviews, observations and documentation, and secondary data sources. To achieve clear and focused research results, the authors choose informants who know, master the problem and are directly involved, including business owners, employees and consumers. The Roof Sekarjambu applies innovation and digital marketing to maintain the sustainability of the culinary industry during the current COVID-19

pandemic crisis, which has weakened the purchasing power of consumers and the economy in all sectors. One of them is in the culinary field.

Keywords: Culinary, Digital Marketing; Innovation; Pandemic.

## Introduction

Revolution Currently, almost all culinary business owners and managers suffer losses, and their business turnover had decreased significantly when this pandemic began to attack. In the current pandemic, culinary businesses run in Indonesia are challenging to develop. Those whose enterprises are almost paralyzed, significantly affecting the country's economy, and global economic activity slows down. The beginning of 2020 was the start of a pandemic that greatly impacted the country's economy, including the company's financial condition. In this case, MSMEs are very vulnerable to the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic compared to large companies due to limited resources (Saturwa et al., 2021).

From this incident, culinary business actors must think hard to maintain the company's existence so that it remains normal, without having to meet each other and worry about the transmission of Covid-19, especially since the Enforcement of Restrictions on Community Activities (PPKM) in Denpasar City. To solve these problems, business actors can implement various strategies to maintain business continuity amidst the threat of an economic recession due to COVID-19. For this reason, business people need to master the keys or tips to deal with the current pandemic. It is undeniable, and the culinary business is a business that always survives the storm of crisis as it is today. The biggest

reason is that the culinary industry does not depend on imported products and uses more local products ranging from raw materials, human resources, capital, or equipment. (Ekasari et al., 2019). One of them is in the culinary field. Local cuisine is a very fundamental component of the attributes of a destination plus the variety of food offered to a comfortable location and place (Diah Sastri Pitranatri, 2016).

During intense competition and the increasing number of restaurants in Denpasar, the critical thing must do is to innovate and make the best use of digital marketing. In general, innovation is a process and result of developing the use of a product/resource that has existed before so that it has a more meaningful value defined as a process from the discovery of ideas and ideas, the production process to the marketing process (Rofaida et al., 2020). This mindset must be carried out, especially when business competitors are so fierce. Therefore, a company must dare to innovate on the products being marketed to avoid losing competition (Wirapraja & Aribowo, 2018). Creativity in the culinary business, especially now, is essential for business actors to be more enthusiastic in creating innovations during a pandemic. Later, it is expecting to help economic growth to adapt and survive during the pandemic. During this pandemic period, business actors must adapt to the conditions to stay carrying out the business that is undertaking during a pandemic. Indeed, there are many innovations: product innovation, process, marketing, Organizational innovation, paradigm, etc. All of these types and others enable companies to realize competitive advantages and economic benefits. The study focuses on product innovation because the product (either goods or services) is the basis of the company's founding. Direct contact with consumers is considered the most crucial goal of the company. (Reguia, 2014). A product innovation provides new or rapidly improved products and services regarding

technical characteristics or other uses or functions. Improvement is achieved by knowledge or technology, by enhancing materials, components, or by integrated computing. To be innovated, a product must display different characteristics and performance from existing products in the company, including improvements in terms of service (Aguirre, 2019).

In addition to innovation, one of the things in business that we cannot avoid is the rapid development of technology. Nowadays, technological developments have shown significant progress without exception. Technology presence undoubtedly has a big impact, especially from various aspects and dimensions of human life (Febriyantoro & Arisandi, 2018). This increasingly rapid technological growth will certainly encourage business actors to take advantage of the existing conditions in marketing products coupled with the proliferation of applications to support information and sales transactions to marketing or commonly known as the concept of digital marketing (Nadya, 2016). With Digital Marketing, consumers can order the products they want with technology anywhere and anytime because technology provides convenience. It is indirectly prof that consumers use online technology that is easily accessible on various devices. (Susan & Novianti, 2019).

Advances in Digital Marketing technology in recent years have shown an increase in competition in the business world. In changing the business they are currently running, many companies that have used software, computers and the internet that previously competed locally are now daring to compete at the national and even international level. The response given by some companies is to automate their business processes and capture industry-related information and apply it to the benefit of the company (Nikoloski, 2014). Innovation is describing as introducing new or improved techniques, products or services based on new scientific or technological knowledge and

organizational knowledge (Ndesaulwa & Kikula, 2016). Therefore, business actors who are doing business during a pandemic situation like this must always be able to motivate themselves to continue to rise, always be creative in innovating, taking advantage of existing opportunities, maximizing opportunities in the use of technology. For this reason, this study aims to identify what culinary business actors do in maintaining their business continuity during the pandemic.

## Literature Review

### Culinary

Culinary is closely related to cooking and serving food which is an aspect of creativity, aesthetics, tradition or local wisdom as an essential component in adding to the taste and value of its products to attract consumers. The final result shows that the culinary subsector's scope in Indonesia is dividing into culinary services and culinary goods (Kuswanto & Maligan, 2020). According to Ayuni et al. (2019), What is meant by culinary services is providing food and beverage services outside the home, such as restaurants and catering. Then the food and beverage processing products, which are usually packaged products where the packaging has an attraction in the form of cultural values and local content, such as souvenirs from local food, is called culinary goods. Culinary tourism is a combination of hobbies that aim to eat and travel. However, in general, culinary terms often highlight food rather than tourism. The time culinary is adopt from the English word, which means "cooking business". Reports from the mass media and television make the term culinary increasingly widespread in Indonesia. From the statement above, for individuals who have a hobby of travelling and eating, of course, it is very fitting to do these activities. Because looking for something new is the same as

learning, culinary also has the meaning of a component of life closely related to food consumption because all humans need food, be it simple food or luxurious food. Simple food or luxury food requires quality and nutritious preparations. When viewed, culinary is including in the essence of gastronomy. While the word culinary itself is a dish or has the same meaning as cuisine. In theory, culinary is a commonly used word that refers to cooking or the culinary profession. Chefs, restaurant management, dietitians, nutritionists and others are some of the cooking professions or preparing food products commonly referred to as the culinary profession. Food products are the result of the process of processing raw materials into ready-to-eat food from cooking activities.

### Product Innovation

Something that the company offers to achieve the goal, which is done by meeting the needs and desires of consumers, is the understanding of the product. The opinion of (Kotler & Keller, 2016) explains if the product is all things that can be an offer to the market and meet the wishes and needs of consumers. Creativity is very needed in maintaining its products so that consumers continue to be interested, for example, by innovating the marketable products, the aim of which is to not switch to other products. One of the determining factors for a company's success so that the company survives and becomes a competitive company is innovation (Tjiptono, 2019) explains that innovation is the realization of an idea into a product or something new.

Innovation can be defined as an idea, product or component of technology developed and offered to consumers, which is seen as something new. Most of us mean the process of identifying, creating and providing value to new



products or so-called original products, product improvements, product modifications and new brands of companies that start from their own research and development steps that are applied (Armstrong & Kotler, 2015).

### Digital Marketing

One of the activities that determine the success of the realization of company goals is marketing. The company becomes a place of exchange or trade. Kotler & Keller (2016) statement explains that "Marketing is identifying and meeting human and social needs. One good and short definition of marketing are profitably meeting needs.

Technology and information significantly affect the development of the business world, especially in someone who holds the marketing department. There are many marketing functions shown by the internet, namely working to create demand, influencing consumers to buy, getting orders, and providing customer service. Then the internet also has the function of being a complete advertising medium. The internet is believed to be a better means of communication because it is very versatile and superior in bringing in customers.

According to Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick (2019), the definition of digital marketing is the use of technology in supporting marketing to increase consumer insight through adjustments to their needs. Meanwhile, according to Sawicki (2016), digital marketing exploits digital technology used in creating a network to reach potential recipients to realize the company's goals by meeting consumer needs more effectively. Thus, each company or marketing effort is considering essential to be one of the development steps.

### Research Method

Based on the problems in this research, where is the importance of Product Innovation and Utilization of Digital Marketing on Business Continuity during a pandemic in the Culinary Business at The Roof Sekar Jambu, Denpasar City. The reason for choosing the research location is that, during the current pandemic, the Culinary Business is one of the businesses greatly affected by the pandemic caused by the covid-19 virus. Hence, researchers are interested in finding out how business people can maintain their business continuity by implementing product innovations and improving the usefulness of digital marketing.

For this reason, the collection of relevant data needs as material for analysis. The analysis used is a qualitative approach with purposive sampling. According to Creswell & Poth (2018), this sampling technique is used to obtain data sources by determining respondents and research locations because they can clearly explain research problems and phenomena in their research. A further reason for using qualitative research methods is because researchers want to make observations and get information directly from in-depth interview data sources, observations and data documentation that has been done. According to (Miles & Huberman, 1994), data analysis uses the triangulation technique, which explains that analyzing qualitative data is carried out interactively and continues continuously until the information is saturated. The data analysis includes data reduction, data presentation, and concluding or verifying.

## Results and Discussion

### The Roof Sekarjambu Product Innovation

The roof sekarjambu itself, based on an interview with the owner, said that they continue to innovate the food products produced following the developments of

the era, which is where this done so that the roof sekarjambu can maintain its sustainability even during a covid situation like this. The owner thinks that creating new products will make the business more competitive. Some of the innovation steps that The Roof Sekarjambu has carried out during the pandemic are:

#### Creating New Markets in the Community

The Roof Sekarjambu is the first time presenting a culinary event by carrying the concept of senggol – senggolan, one of the innovations formed by The Roof Sekarjambu. This event lasts for more than a month. The roof sekarjambu itself brings dozens of delicious contemporary food menus that are currently a favourite, along with other MSME business actors in the culinary field who feel the effects of this pandemic.

Figure 1&2. The "Senggol" Food Event in creating new markets.

This event itself is held in the roof parking area of Sekarjambu with a variety of food, entertainment, music, tomb market games, various competitions and film festivals. The owner of the roof sekarjambu himself, is consistent to later hold events like this by giving a contemporary pop feel to attract young people and explore targets. To improve culinary variations, for the first time of the roof sekarjambu involved approximately 20% of young culinary entrepreneurs with an age limit of 25 -35 years in displaying their culinary variety.

This is also one of the efforts to support the development of SMEs in the city of Denpasar. Bringing the concept of a modern culinary festival while still presenting the excitement of the night market, many booth decorations use an Instagrammable white-dominant design. The chandelier decorations and comfortable seating areas will also make visitors spend more time at the event. This event is one of the most successful forms of roof innovation.

Figure 3. The Situation of the "Senggol" Food Event.

#### Improve Product Innovation

During the pandemic period, which causes business actors, especially in the culinary field, to be unable to operate, they have to rack their brains again on how to keep the business that they have been doing to survive. One of them is to make different product innovations. This is also what the owner of the roof does. Before the pandemic, the roof itself only served food in large portions and could be eaten in the form of dine-in and takeaway. However, during the pandemic period and the implementation of the PPKM system, the roof itself innovated to market its wares in the form of rice bowls. This concept is considered suitable for the pandemic where people still want to eat restaurant-style but by ordering online. In addition, the reason the owner of the roof himself chose the rice bowl is that ordinary Indonesian people like to consume rice as their daily heavy food intake. With a capital of only 2 million, the roof itself can produce 30 rice bowls every day. For variations of the rice bowl menu itself is very diverse. They are ranging from western-style to side dishes that are truly Indonesian. For the owner, the more choices, the more people will be interested in trying it according to their wishes. There are several pre-order systems for the roof rice bowl system, and there is a daily rice bowl production quota.

And sometimes, the roof prepares a menu that only appears on certain days. In times of a pandemic, the owner admits to the creation of the rice bowl. In times of a pandemic like this, the owner acknowledged that the innovation of this rice

bowl product is promising benefits during a pandemic. And these are some innovative products from the rice bowl created by the roof sekarjambu.

Figure 5&6. New menu and display innovation.

#### Fulfil Customer Needs

The roof sekarjambu must create innovation to fulfil customer needs to provide facilities outside of culinary terms, namely providing wedding venues, birthdays, music events, and other family gatherings, the owner of the roof sekarjambu is aware of the many needs that must be prepared for its customers, not I want to focus on the culinary field. The roof sekarjambu focuses on providing everything in an all in one form for those who wish to hold a wedding event the roof sekarjambu provides an outdoor concept place with food, beverage and wedding venue facilities, ample parking, with facilities for 1000 guests. The owner of the roof is very sure that taking the opportunity to go into the catering business plus providing a place is an up-and-coming business considering the roof itself is in the middle of downtown Denpasar.

#### Digital Marketing

The owner of the roof during the covid pandemic is very dependent on online marketing and digital marketing as a means of communication with consumers. In today's digital era, interacting with consumers is mainly done on social media. The Roof Sekarjambu uses at least three strategies in digital marketing to survive during the pandemic.

#### Social Media Optimizing

During the COVID-19 pandemic, The Roof Sekarjambu relied heavily on the Instagram social media platform in marketing their products. The owner feels

that Instagram is one of the most influential social media on sales, especially by utilizing social media in terms of marketing, it does not require the capital needed only to upload exciting photos, especially now that everyone knew that Instagram social media users are young people. Moreover, the Instagram stories feature makes it easier for the roof owner to share videos more attractively. Not infrequently for online orders, sometimes buyers are more interested in sending messages via direct message Instagram the roof because the Instagram platform is a social media that allows for more interaction and marketing of brands from different sides.

Social media itself is the most comprehensive word of mouth forum as one of the most powerful marketing media for any business, including SMEs, not only free, another reason the roof owner uses social media is that it can help build trust very effectively. It can see that consumers usually trust and decide to buy something after hearing reviews from their closest relatives or even influencers. Moreover, buyers can quickly leave reviews and recommend products and services to friends and family on social media.

#### Collaborations with Influencer

Influencers are individuals who have a high reputation and popularity to influence many people in the world of social media. And this is one of the effective ways that the roof sekarjambu uses so that its business can run smoothly. Because the effects of these influencers also benefit us in increasing public brand awareness of business actors and products and on social media can increase the reputation of page ranks.

The roof sekarjambu itself feels that by cooperating with influencers it can expand the market share of the roof itself, as well as gain followers after an endorsement, then with this increase in followers, it can increase trust in the

eyes of potential consumers on their social media accounts and expand market share.

### Cooperating With Other Platforms

The roof sekarjambu is currently collaborating with the gojek platform [bridestory.com](https://www.bridestory.com) in marketing products. Gojek's marketing strategy can reach all people, making transactions easier plus its advantages, namely delivering orders directly to buyers. One of the Go-Food features, a service to provide food to consumers who order through the application, is currently being carried out by many SME businesses, especially since the owner admits that it is straightforward when registering his business. The result is that the owner gets many benefits, even though the Gofood application user loves this business during a pandemic. The application makes it effortless for buyers to get their food by using Gojek or Gofood and can directly provide ratings and reviews about the taste, packaging from the Roof Sekarjambu itself. In addition to collaborating with the Gojek platform, The Roof itself also uses the [thebridestory.com](https://www.thebridestory.com) website to inform more about facilities provided by The Roof Sekarjambu such as wedding venues, capacity for guests, catering menu choices, wedding vendors, wedding organizers, prices offered, as well as online reservation. As well as other administrative information, this makes it very easy for customers who want to find the information directly without having to come to the place.

### Conclusion

The conclusion that can draw from the results of this study is to survive during a situation like this, the roof sekarjambu innovates and switches to digital marketing to increase production efficiency and offer even better products to

the consumer environment. The owner of the roof sekarjambu said that the beginning of this business was due to his hobby of cooking and thought to provide delicious food and facilitate the needs of other customers. To survive in the current situation, the owner of the roof sekarjambu must be brave in building a business. Product innovation includes planning the marketing system, packaging, what the brand will look like, and especially the digital world, it makes everything easier to market our business products. During this pandemic, people don't do a lot of activities outside the home, so it impacts the business ecosystem. However, the owner is still trying to make strategies to survive and thrive in the new normal. One of them is that we must be creative by promoting products on various social media platforms and forming an innovative team to show something interesting from the business products we make. In building a business, product innovation is essential for business continuity. The company becomes big and survives in the new normal and follows the trends of the times so that consumers do not get bored with the business products offered. In terms of product innovation, the roof itself made several innovations, including creating new markets, innovating, and meeting customer needs.

In building a business, product innovation is essential for business continuity, so that the company becomes big and survives in the new normal, as well as following the trends of the times so that consumers do not get bored with the business products offered. Of course, product innovation is highly treated, so that from day to day, it is getting better in terms of quality and quality. In the past, the food provided was only in large portions and dine-in, now the roof sekarjambu innovates by selling its products in the form of rice bowls and can be ordered online. In this case, it is evident that at the beginning of the pandemic, all business actors will think of going out of business, but according



to the owner of the roof sekarjambu it is wrong, what must be done is to find the best digital marketing strategy to maintain business continuity.

Based on the research that has been done, the researchers suggest that for business actors during a pandemic like this, it is the right time to be innovative to find new ways to reach consumers through technology. And start selling on online marketplaces or social media, or even trade-in bulk to increase turnover. Consider more promotions, and increase your digital marketing efforts through affordable but engaging strategies and content. This is important because if conditions return to normal or perhaps known as the new normal, the business managed can genuinely rebound. So we don't seem to be late or behind.

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