



The Strategy of Sustainable Competitive Advantage Creation by Make-Up Artists (A Study of Male Make-Up Artists in Greater Malang)

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Abstract

Make-up artist is a profession that has long been identified as woman's job. Now this job also taken by males, who even can survive the competition. The objective of this study is to analyse the strategy of male make-up artists in creating their sustainable competitive advantage. By phenomenological approach the results of this study are male make-up artists in Greater Malang build their sustainable competitive advantage by (1) maintaining the quality of their work, the development of products that suit market's demand also provide service with better make-up result, (2) keeping the excellence of their service, flexibility in service venue, furthermore their behavior that easy-going and friendlier, (3) making innovations and branding through attractive portfolio with "before-after" into look differentiation by developing a team of other make-up artists under one name with different specialty.

Keywords: *Strategic Management; Sustainable Competitive Advantage; Make-Up Artist*

Introduction

The desire of women to beautify themselves with make-up is quite strong, but not all women can make themselves flawlessly and well. Women, therefore, require a squeeze to modify their looks during specific events. As a make-up artist, commercial prospects in Indonesia have grown. A make-up artist is one of the professions that is involved in the art of make-up. In addition, the increasingly open market share of make-up artists has become a new trend that is quite tempting (Desfrida, 2020). Getting an attractive appearance is one of them. It is by using make-up, often known as make-up. Several factors support the use of make-up, one of which is social media. Oktavia (2015) said that social media facilitates the spread of make-up usage trends to serve as a liaison between make-up services and consumers indirectly. It affects the improvement of lifestyles that women today will always follow the progress of the times so as not to be considered ancient. It is also supported by technology that is also growing to disseminate information, especially in make-up quickly.

Being a make-up artist is not an easy job. In addition, not everyone can do it professionally. Another uniqueness, the perseverance and thoroughness of male make-up artists, tends to be better and more creative than female make-up artists and provides innovations. TOP 10 MUA in Indonesian StarNgage version is dominated by men, although women themselves are identical to the make-up.

In the current development, makeup artists are better known as make-up artists. Many interpretive make-up artists are the work of makeup artists or unique makeup for artists. At the same time, the word "artist" here is taken from English, which means art or artist. In Indonesia, the pronunciation of "artist" is similar and gives rise to miss meaning. A make-up artist has the importance of a profession as a makeup artist. But make-up artists can make up weddings, graduations, models and so on (Wikipedia, 2020).

Along with the development of the times, especially in Indonesia, this type of work no longer looks like a gender. Gender equality is also expanding for a wide variety of jobs today, including make-up artists. The profession of a make-up artist is identical to woman, but in this day and age, many men are chosen as a profession. Related to gender equality, at this time, men can also do the same as women as make-up artists.

As an educational city with the existence of various well-known universities, Malang is an excellent opportunity for businesses in the field of make-up artists. So, they can get regular income from activities that are routinely carried out, such as graduation graduations that require make-up services, such as Brawijaya University that conducts graduation every month. With a variety of tourist destinations, Malang is also often used for photoshoots and prewedding sessions that require a make-up artist. In addition, there are also some make-up activities in Malang, such as exhibitions in the mall or make-up workshop activities that are in demand. From this phenomenon, of course, business opportunities as a make-up artist attract people to pursue a field initially dominated by women but turned out in response by men. Because in this day and age, male and female make-up artists are the same in the public's eyes (Rahmawati, 2020). These conditions generate competition and require a business strategy so that it can be sustainable.

High business opportunities as a make-up artist in Indonesia, especially in Malang, mean the make-up artist must maintain his business to face competition. Consumers have a lot of considerations when choosing and buying a product or service. Therefore, makeup artists are required to have a variety of factors that can attract consumers' attention to make purchases or use the services offered by the make-up artist. Therefore, this research aims to dissect the phenomenon of male make-up artists and develop strategies to survive and build their business to create a sustainable competitive advantage.

Method

Research Types

This research used the qualitative research method. The qualitative research method is called the naturalistic research method because the research is conducted in natural conditions where researchers use a key instrument, data collection techniques are triangulated (combined), data analysis is inductive. Qualitative research results emphasize the meaning of generalization (Sugiyono, 2008). This research aimed to identify the marketing mix of make-up artists in Malang and analysed the role of the marketing mix from the side of make-up artists and customers to achieve sustainability with a phenomenological approach.

Researchers chose the phenomenological approach to understand the meaning of an event and its interconnectedness in more depth. Qualitative research is used to uncover and understand something behind a phenomenon that is still very little known and tries to detail complex research that is difficult to reveal by quantitative methods. In addition, qualitative research is interpreted as a research method that seeks to understand more deeply a phenomenon related to research subjects reflected in behaviour, perception, motivation, and action (Moleong, 2011).

Informant Analysis and Determination Unit

Based on the arguments in the previous chapter as well as paying attention to the purpose of this study, the analysis unit in this study was to identify the marketing mix of make-up artists in Malang and analyze the role of the marketing mix from the side of make-up artists and customers to achieve sustainability. Therefore, the research approach was phenomenological, which was used as a reference from the point of view of the event itself. Then the way of researchers' thinking was to use inductive thinking. The key informant consisted of a male make-up artist in Malang Raya who had been running a business for more than three years, had more than 5000 Instagram followers and had more than 500 photo posts. Supporting informants came from the family, co-workers and customers of the key informant concerned.

Data Collection Techniques

Data collection was done by emphasizing the process and not the results. In this research, data collection was done in several ways, namely in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. Moleong & Edisi (2004) say that interviews are conversations with specific intent. Two parties conducted the discussion, namely interviewers who ask questions and interviewees who answer the questions. The purpose of conducting an interview, as affirmed by Lincoln and Guba (Moleong, 2004), includes: Instructing people, events, organizations, feelings, motivations, guidance, concerns, and another unanimity; reconstructing unanimity to be experienced in the past; projecting roundness as expected to be experienced in the future; verifying, modifying, and expanding information obtained from others, whether human or not; expanding the construction developed by researchers as a member check. In this study, researchers used free interview techniques to make the interview more targeted. This interview method obtained data related to motives and strategies to achieve sustainable competitive advantage. The informant was chosen using purposive snowballing techniques.

Observations were carried out unstructured because the focus of the research was not yet clear—the focus of observation developed during the observation activities. Unstructured observations are observations that are not systematically resolved about what to observe. Because the object of this study was anomalous and informal, the use of unstructured observation was considered necessary to maintain the naturality of the answers of informants to be interviewed.

In addition, researchers carried out the documentation to obtain documents related to the activities of male make-up artists, which could take the form of digital footprints (Instagram used as a marketing medium, service testimonials, price lists, and so on). Lastly, field notes were used as an essential tool in qualitative research. There were two field notes, the first part of which contains the background of observations and the results of interviews with informants. The second part was a reflective section with the framework of the researcher's thinking and opinions, ideas, and concerns.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis is the process of systematically finding and compiling data obtained from interviews, field notes, and documentation by organizing data into categories, describing them into units, conducting synthesis, arranging them into patterns, choosing which are essential and to be studied, and making conclusions so that it is easy to understand by yourself and others (Gunawan, 2013).

Using qualitative research, the data that had been obtained was then clarified into tables. To be analysed using the process of reasoning naturally, explanation, interpretation, comparison, and then the depiction of phenomena that occur as they are, to draw conclusions and give suggestions by deciphering with words. Data analysis in this study has several processes, namely:

1. Reading and Coding

Reading, learning and writing down ideas in the data obtained, either through interviews, observations or documentation.

2. Data Reduction

The process of selecting, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming rough data recorded in the field. It was expected to produce appropriate and clarified data that was clearly appropriate and organized by reducing data. This data reduction took place during the study.

3. Data Displaying

The collected and clarified data was then presented in tables and sentences. The data set could then become well-organized information, thus enabling conclusion drawing and action taking.

4. Conclusion Drawing and Interpreting (Verification)

Data that had been obtained in the field was analyzed using several ways to achieve validity and accuracy, and concluded the results of data analysis conducted by researchers during the study time.

Data Validity Testing Techniques

Data validity testing techniques using triangulation techniques. Triangulation was used in this study to check the truth and compare it with data obtained from other sources. Triangulation of research was three ways to adapt to the data and theory in the research.

1. Triangulation with sources

Checking the data used by researchers by comparing and checking the validity using patton method (1987):

- a. Comparing observation data with interview results.
- b. Comparing the informant's words when in front of others and in private space.
- c. Comparing the situation with the perception of others by accepting the opinions of others.
- d. Comparing interview results with appropriate documents.

2. Triangulation by method

This research was conducted by two ways of checking trust by using data collection techniques, checking data sources with the same method.

3. Triangulation with theory

Connecting the explanations that appear with the explanation of the match was inductively done by looking at the possibilities logically and supported by data. While in this study, triangulation was used triangulation of sources and techniques, namely by checking data obtained from several sources and checking the data for the same source with different techniques. Data checking could be done by different data collection methods (interviews and observations) or by using supporting informants.

4. Member check

Namely the process of checking data obtained by researchers to the data giver. The goal is to find out how far the data has been obtained in accordance with what is provided by the data provider (Gunawan, 2013).

Result

Male Make Up Artist in Malang Raya

The world of makeup that is synonymous with beauty is not only in demand by women, as is evident from the number of male makeup artists (MUA) in great demand in the market. Some famous make-up artists with the most expensive service rates are men, such as Bubah Alfian, Ryan Ogilvy, Bennu Sorumba, and Irwan Riady. This shows that makeup artists' work is not limited to a certain gender. Men who work in the makeup world have their own way of interpreting and maintaining their masculinity while providing the best service for their clients (Dewintasari, 2018). In Malang city itself, some professional male makeup artists have long worked in this field and have had many clients. This can be seen from the number of followers and the number of photos from the MUA Instagram account. For example, Gandhi Hidayatullah, Dany Barca MUA, D_Makeover, and Galyh Tico.

Gandhi Maulana (Joegandoz)

Gandhi Maulana is a make-up artist from Belimbing, Malang. Gandhi's brand introduction and makeup services are done through social media, especially through an Instagram account under the name @Joegandoz., He also has a makeup artist management under the name Joegandoz Management. As of 2021, the followers of his Instagram account have reached 22 thousand followers, with 3,178 photos and videos posted. The Instagram account became a medium to introduce the brand widely to the followers to be better known.

Rulif Dany Barca

Dany Barca is now 26 years old and has been a make-up artist for seven years since 2014. The number of Instagram followers with the name Danybarcamua is more than 22,000 followers and 1,519 portfolio photos on his Instagram account. Dany Barca is a male makeup artist from Bululawang, Malang Regency. On Dany Barca's Instagram biography written by an International Makeup Artist. In addition to his work that has reached neighbouring countries such as Malaysia and Singapore, Dany Barca's motivation is to be global. Dany Barca has been working diligently as a make-up artist since 2014, making him trusted by many celebrities to apply make-up, as he shows on his Instagram account. Previously, Dany worked at a hotel. He decided to resign because of the issue of salary payments. Then he began to be interested in make-up, studying self-taught through YouTube. Early in his career as a make-up artist, when he helped his partner become a photographer and make up his portfolio, Dany had been a photographer and stylist before focusing on the make-up artist.

Galyh Tico

Galyh Tico is a make-up artist in Malang who is 24 years old and started as a make-up artist in 2017. Galyh Tico's current Instagram (galyhtyco_makeup) following number is 7,227, with 962 portfolio photos on her account homepage. In 2016, when Galyh Tico's company went bankrupt, Galyh Tico finally decided to develop the talent he had in terms of makeup, and it became his primary job to date. However, it got a negative stigma from neighbors and others because of his profession as a make-up artist. The reason is that the work of the make-up artist is considered unpromising and only suitable for women. It did not discourage Galyh Tico, but he was increasingly eager to develop his career in the world

of beauty. From 2017 until now, Galyh Tico has been known in Malang as a male makeup artist who already has many clients, especially wedding makeup and party makeup.

Make Up Artist Strategy in Creating Sustainable Competitive Advantage

The MUA strategy in Malang Raya to reach a broad market and increase customer loyalty is done with some pretty diverse things. The negative stigma on male makeup artists is almost non-existent, so male and female makeup artists have the same opportunities to be chosen by potential customers. Furthermore, increasing customer loyalty and attracting new potential customers have become the determinant of competition. Suwarno et al. (2014) stated that makeup artists needed attractive branding to win the match and accentuated their characteristics. In addition, it is necessary to prioritize service to consumers and product quality to provide strategic excellence in a sustainable manner (Javadein et al., 2011). The study's findings showed several important points for makeup artists in Malang Raya to maintain their competitive advantage sustainably.

Quality; Is Quality an Ego Make-up Artist or Is Ego a Customer?

An attractive appearance is a priority for most people, not only for women but also for men. Everyone wants the best performance on every occasion, especially for important events, so making an appearance is an important part of daily activities. One of the efforts made is to put make-up on the face, but not everyone can do this, so the services of make-up artists are increasingly needed today (Rahmawati 2020).

The competition for make-up artists is getting tighter with various attractive offers to increase the selling value. Based on the research results, all informants stated that the quality of make-up is the key to continuing to survive in this field of business. For example, Dany Barca explained the following.

"The key to being able to survive is the result of makeup, I think. So how resistant the powder does not to stretch for a long time, the durability of makeup because of the oil on the face and environmental conditions. And that can make customers beautiful. "

Added by Galyh about how to maintain the quality of his make-up results is as follows.

"And I always like to learn about the products used. I mean, looking for references is like looking at make-up artists in Jakarta. They also often do "live". I joined their "live" so that the results of my make-up would get better."

"That's right because not everyone likes natural make-up, does not like bold make-up, so we already have our market. We've defended it first because later, the client will be easy to get."

For Galyh, the results of makeup that consumers like are the main ones. Although there is a demand from customers for certain makeup styles, Galyh still retains a touch of his class characteristics. It makes Galyh and customers achieve the same satisfaction. Galyh, by not eliminating its characteristics, and customers get the desired results.

As for Dani Makeover, the quality of his makeup is a magnet for prospective consumers and his way of keeping his consumers from using his services again.

"The important thing is the quality of the makeup. Although the price is affordable, as much as possible, we try to give the best. Because there are certain tricks, for example, the selection of makeup continues to match the client's skin type. That way, I try to make the client satisfied

enough to ask me again later. Then also, the results of her makeup I can upload on Instagram for other my portfolio, for promotion and for those I have never made up. "

Gandhi also had the same opinion as other informants in his following statement.

"I think the results are the main ones. Keep going, and maybe because I showed up first, finally, my brand is strong. "

There is no denying that the quality of make-up results is an important aspect of maintaining a sustainable competitive advantage for make-up artists in Malang Raya. The quality of make-up in the form of the durability of the application of make-up, the suitability of the make-up results for the shape of the face, skin type, and the purpose of the event. It is in line with several studies showing that the quality of make-up services affects customer satisfaction and loyalty (Aveshina and Basuki, 2018; Rahmawati, 2020). Sweis et al. (2018) the quality of services, such as responsiveness and empathy towards consumers, affects the sustainable competitive advantage of the services provided by the company. So, it is no wonder if the MUA is competing in the race to provide the best service for consumers, not only when dealing directly with consumers, but the quality of makeup has become an aspect of competition for MUA in Malang Raya.

The quality of make-up results is also a priority for informant support teams such as Ganes and Dianartika and make-up artists who are members of Joegandoz Management.

Ganes:

"Well, during my work at Joegandoz Management, it should be up to the same standards. Because Mas Gandhi, who has management, is well known. So if we do make-up the client badly, it will affect the management. As a make-up artist who works under the management, I must also work following the standards, both in terms of quality of results and service to clients. "

Dianartika:

"We bring the name Joegandoz, so it must be able to give good results so that the client is also satisfied. So, the management provides us with the task because they believe we can do it, so in addition to keeping the client's trust, I also keep the trust of the management. So, it has to be up to standard, the results are promising, and then the client is happy. "

Based on the discussion above, Researchers can conclude that male make-up artists in Malang have strategies to build their sustainable competitive advantage. Make-up style and the decision to maintain the characteristic or follow the customer's wishes become considerations following the target market and competitive advantage owned.

Services; Make-up Services More Than Just Make-up

Sustainable Competitive Advantage requires elements that can support business activities (Abdelhadi, 2012). Abdelhadi further mentioned that integrity, team performance, and harmonization are the keys to the sustainable competitive advantage of business activity. Including make-up artists, they must provide the best service and results for their customers. The findings of this study show that the four informants always try to provide the best service for their customers. Not only that, Gandhi has offered home service for the convenience of his customers, as his statement follows.

"I can give home service that hmmm (mutter), fanatic clients finally use my services."

Gandhi's other services to retain his customers are supported by the makeup artist management that he manages so that some customer preferences that are not following Gandhi as the owner can be covered by his team.

"Well now, for example, the price may have gone up. So, the clients go back to Nanja, Dian, Ganes like that if the price list is unsuitable. "

"Those people who are in this field of service, if it's suitable, will be fanatics. And then the third one, maybe from my service, is also okay according to them. "

Like Gandhi, Dany Barca and Dani Makeover also stated the same thing, that one of the reasons for the satisfaction of their customers is the quality of service provided by them, one of which can offer make-up styles on demand by not leaving their characteristics. The results of this study are in line with Rahmatul, 2019 and Cinthya et al. (2020) that the quality of service has a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction. So that, in addition to the quality of make-up, the MUA needs to continue to maintain services and offers to the services they provide to build a sustainable competitive advantage. Here's the story of Dany Barca's experience of creating a satisfactory service for his customers.

"I used to be a stylist and photographer, so usually if there is a client makeup photoshoot, I always input the stylist. I give bonuses only, all help, then they are happy and back again."

"If for artists, let alone those who want to show that we cannot be ordinary, sometimes we must do makeup while standing, sometimes just given a retouch time of 10 minutes is the same change of clothes, we must be responsive and fast, and backstage that makes us have to be intuitive and fast."

In addition, as a Makeup Artist, it is required to maintain credibility and be able to maintain the trust of clients, such as the delivery of the following Galyh,

"The first booking that must be in service the first time, because we have to keep our credibility."

Excellent service is not only a major concern for the make-up artist itself, but for Pipit (38) who was once an assistant make-up artist for Gandhi and Galyh Tico, said the same thing. Although Pipit is only an assistant, her role in the unity of the makeup artist team is also a determinant of customer satisfaction. Here's what Pipit said during her time as a makeup artist assistant.

"I once helped Mas Gandhi with Mas Galyh Tico. At that time, the assistant was with the wardrobe team. But they always emphasize that we must be friendly and also fast, because the clients are different, so it is best if we can give our best. "

Pipit's statement that has long been part of the Gandhi and Galyh make-up artist team, in line with Cole Ehmke (2008), one of the things that must be considered to achieve sustainable competitive advantage is to maintain commitment, be loyal, fair and respectful to the team members and partners to increase productivity. The value instilled in the team is indeed able to maintain the sustainability of a business. Because, based on the description of the informant above, achieving customer satisfaction is very important for maintaining good team cohesion and coordination.

Innovation; Survive from "Before-After" to "Look Differentiation"

Innovation is an absolute thing for companies to exist and win the market. According to Moghli et al. (2012), innovation directly impacts the company. Galyh Tico now utilises the high use

of online media in the digital age to build his makeup brand. Galyh Tico should always provide creative content to attract potential customers in the virtual world, as presented below.

"So, I have to create makeup content so that my name is stable on top, so people are easier to find."

Another effort by Galyh Tico to win the competition is to take frequent photoshoots and update her portfolio on Instagram. Marliya and Wahyono research (2016) proves that the higher the application of social media, the more it can increase consumer loyalty. The adoption of technology in marketing and branding activities of a product at the same time can increase engagement and build positive communication with consumers. This strategy is also used by Dani Makeover, who thoughtfully utilizes online media to display his work for more people to see.

"I diligently update the portfolio, make up the model, try the trending looks, not bad for the capital, but all I see is the opportunity people will like or not."

Unlike Galyh and Dani and being active in online media, Gandhi chose to innovate by providing home service and make-up artist management. He has maintained his existence as a make-up artist for more than ten years and is a pioneer. These innovations can expand the market and build a brand and increase consumer confidence in Joegandoz, as Gandhi's statement follows.

"When talking about impact, it is very impactful. After I made the management, it affected because finally people's trust in the service from Joegandoz was increased."

Furthermore, Gandhi strives to accommodate customer needs by creating management that has its look specialists.

"The goal is so that later the market is diverse. So, every make-up artist in our management has their style and market. Our market is diverse, so, for example, if Nanja is a natural make-up specialist, the order to Nanja is "natural looks".

"If, for example, Ganes is more towards bold, so finally people who like bold orders Ganes. Well, if Dian people want to make-up look like Joe Gandos make-up. The wider the market, automatically means the strength of our brand is getting stronger, because of the many variations in the market, I think that. "

The make-up artist who managed to attract public attention through the innovation of making make-up transformation videos on social media Instagram is Rulif Dany Barca. In the video, Dany shows women with acne-prone faces who transform into more beautiful with a touch of make-up from him. The video posted by Dany Barca got a lot of appreciation from netizens, even from the CEO, make-up artist and models from abroad, as he said on the coil as follows.

"So, I don't know at all if it turns out that my video went viral, and I didn't expect it to get a lot of responses overseas."

"So, after the viral, I was followed by the CEO of Gee Cosmetics in America, a model, and a make-up artist from America. I was shocked at who I was in Indonesia until it was like that".

He started from his habit of uploading photos and videos on his Instagram account until the results of the makeup transformation went viral and increasingly made his name as a makeup artist known in foreign countries. Rachmawati and Nurhajati (2019) stated that online media effectively promotes branding as an introductory medium and builds engagement with the broader community. Fadyly and Sutarna (2020) confirmed with the results of their research that branding could be done

effectively through online media, especially in the digital era and in pandemic conditions like today. The use of online media allows communication between service sellers and consumers to be more accessible, asking for various services that exist and displaying product knowledge.

In addition to utilizing online media to strengthen the make-up artist's brand, one of Gandhi's informants chose to create make-up artist management to enhance the brand and expand the market. Gandhi is also very confident in this business because he is a pioneer make-up artist in Malang Raya. Even though his team is in charge, they can still provide satisfaction for consumers, as Risma statement as follows.

"Yes, at that time, I had my sister because she did not want a male MUA, so I recommended her to the Gandhi team. The price is lower, but the result is okay. She chooses the Ganes team because she likes the look of her make-up. She has to have bold eye make-up, so that's it. And the result is okay. She said she is satisfied with the result. "

The strategy used by Gandhi to expand the market was fascinating because he built a brand for himself and more than that for the more extensive Joegandoz Management. Furthermore, with the management of make-up artists, this becomes a place for customers to choose to look according to customers' needs and tastes.

Conclusion

The results of this study are male make-up artists in Greater Malang build their sustainable competitive advantage by (1) maintaining the quality of their work, the development of products that suit market's demand also provide service with better make-up result, (2) keeping the excellence of their service, flexibility in service venue, furthermore their behavior that easy-going and friendlier, (3) making innovations and branding through attractive portfolio with "before-after" into look differentiation by developing a team of other make-up artists under one name with different speciality.

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