

Analysis of Competitive Advantage Strategy at QU Laundry in Tuah Madani District, Pekanbaru City

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the competitive advantage strategy of QU Laundry in Tuah Madani District, Pekanbaru City. The increasing competition in the laundry business requires entrepreneurs to apply the right strategies to survive and grow. This research uses a descriptive method with a qualitative approach. Data were collected through interviews, observation, and documentation. Data analysis employed the SWOT matrix to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, followed by the IFE and EFE matrices to determine the company's strategic position. The results show that the total IFE score is 3.28 and the EFE score is 3.06, placing QU Laundry in the Grow and Build strategy position. Recommended strategies include improving promotion, utilizing digital technology in services, and developing innovations to strengthen competitiveness and expand market share in Pekanbaru City.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Business competition intensifies in the laundry service sector, which is rapidly developing in many regions, particularly in Pekanbaru City. The dynamic and practical lifestyle changes have increased the demand for laundry services. People now prefer laundry services because they are considered more efficient in saving time and effort. This forces laundry business actors to create appropriate strategies to survive, grow, and excel amid increasingly competitive rivalry.

One laundry business developing in Pekanbaru City is QU Laundry, located on Suka Karya in Tuah Madani District. Established since 2017, this business continues

to operate to this day. QU Laundry offers various services such as laundry by the kilogram with ironing, express services, and laundry pick-up and delivery. Additionally, it also caters to washing various items such as blankets, shoes, dolls, and mattresses. With its strategic location and friendly service, QU Laundry attracts customers from a variety of groups including students, office workers, and patients from nearby hospitals. However, increasing competitors in the same area pose a challenge for QU Laundry to retain customers and improve its competitive advantage.

According to Rangkuti (2018), SWOT analysis is an effective method to formulate

business strategies through identifying internal and external factors. This analysis involves strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, which can be used to develop strategic actions to face the dynamics of business competition. Meanwhile, Porter (2020) suggests that competitive advantage can be achieved if a company can create added value for customers through product differentiation, cost efficiency, and service innovation.

Based on this, it is important for QU Laundry to conduct a competitive advantage strategy analysis to understand its business position and determine appropriate strategies to implement. Through SWOT analysis complemented by IFE and EFE matrices, this study aims to analyze internal and external factors influencing QU Laundry and competitiveness in the laundry industry in Pekanbaru City.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Strategic Management

The definition of strategic management according to David and David (2016) is the art and science of formulating, implementing, and evaluating cross-functional decisions that enable an organization to achieve its goals. This definition reveals that strategic management focuses on integrating management, marketing, finance and accounting, production and operations, research and development, and information systems to achieve business success.

According to Suherman (2022), strategic management is a series of fundamental decisions and actions made by top management and applied by all members of an organization to realize the organization's objectives. Strategic management discusses the big picture, the core of strategic management is identifying the organization's goals, its resources, and how existing resources can be effectively used to meet strategic objectives. Discussing the concept of strategic management means addressing the relationship between the organization/company and its environment, both internal and external.

The importance of strategic

management in a company is to differentiate the level of organizational performance, as organizations employing strategic management tend to have higher performance levels. It requires managers to examine and adapt to changes in the business environment. Managers in organizations or companies of all types and sizes face changing situations. To achieve the aspirations or goals desired by an organization or company, the application of strategic management is highly needed so that the shared objectives can be optimally achieved. When implemented in an organization, strategic management ensures that every unit or section within the organization can perform its duties and responsibilities as well as possible (Suherman, 2022).

2.2 Strategy

According to David and David (2016), strategy is defined as a long-term approach or plan adopted by a company to achieve sustainable competitive advantage. Strategy encompasses decisions regarding resource allocation, opportunity identification, and actions taken to enable the company to face competition and achieve established business objectives. Strategy involves coordinated actions to adapt to the external environment and optimize the company's internal strengths. This definition emphasizes that strategy is not just a plan, but rather includes concrete steps that must be taken to address market uncertainty and achieve a better competitive position.

2.3 Business competition

Business competition refers to the rivalry between independent business entities seeking to attract customers by offering competitive prices and high-quality goods or services (Fauziah et al., 2019).

This competition can manifest across various industries, involving both large and small enterprises. By fostering innovation and operational efficiency, business competition enables companies to differentiate themselves and capture market attention. Furthermore, it promotes a healthy market dynamic, providing consumers with increased choices

and more competitive pricing.

2.4 Competitive advantage

Competitive advantage refers to a firm's capability to deliver superior value to customers compared to its rivals, either by offering products or services at a lower price or by providing additional benefits that justify a premium (Gustina et al., 2021). This concept underscores the significance of creating unique value propositions that set a company apart from its competitors in the marketplace.

2.5 Excellent Service

Excellent Service According to Hidayatullah (2024), excellent service refers to the highest level of service delivered by a company to fulfill customer expectations and needs, encompassing both internal and external customers. Essentially, excellent service represents a superior approach to meeting customer demands and exceeding their expectations. It is characterized by adherence to quality standards, ensuring that services provided align with customer expectations and satisfaction levels.

2.6 Corporate Environmental Analysis

Corporate Environmental Analysis Conducting a corporate environmental analysis is a vital component of strategic management, enabling organizations to develop effective strategies. As noted by David and David (2016), this analysis entails identifying external and internal factors that can influence a company's performance. The external environment comprises macro-environmental and industry-specific factors beyond the company's control. The macro environment includes broad economic, technological, sociocultural, political, and legal factors that can present opportunities or threats. The industry environment, however, focuses on the competitive dynamics within a particular industry, including competitor, customer, and supplier analysis. Conversely, the internal environment encompasses organizational factors such as resources and capabilities that drive company performance.

2.7 IFE and EFE Matrices

IFE and EFE Matrices The Internal Factor Evaluation (IFE) Matrix is a strategic tool used to assess a company's internal strengths and weaknesses. This matrix involves identifying key internal factors, assigning weights based on their relative importance, and rating each factor to evaluate the company's performance. The weighted scores are then calculated to determine the company's overall internal position. A total score above 2.5 indicates a strong internal position, while a score below 2.5 suggests internal weaknesses (David & David, 2016).

Conversely, the External Factor Evaluation (EFE) Matrix is utilized to evaluate external opportunities and threats that may impact the company. Similar to the IFE Matrix, the EFE Matrix involves identifying key external factors, assigning weights based on their potential impact, and rating the company's response to these factors. The total score provides insight into the company's ability to capitalize on opportunities and mitigate threats (David & David, 2016). Both matrices are commonly used in conjunction with SWOT analysis to inform strategic decision-making based on a comprehensive understanding of internal and external factors.

2.8 Internal-External (IE) Matrix

Internal-External (IE) Matrix The Internal- External (IE) Matrix is a strategic management tool designed to assess a company's position by considering both internal and external factors that influence its performance. Building on the General Electric model, the IE Matrix enables organizations to develop effective strategies by analyzing their internal strengths and weaknesses in relation to external opportunities and threats.

2.9 SWOT Matrix

The SWOT Matrix, as described by David and David (2016), is a strategic management tool designed to assess an organization's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. By analyzing these four key elements, the SWOT Matrix enables companies to develop effective

strategies that capitalize on their strengths, address their weaknesses, seize opportunities, and mitigate threats.

3. METHODS

This study was conducted at Suka Karya Street, Tuah Madani District, Pekanbaru City, a location where QU Laundry and several other laundry businesses operate in a highly competitive environment. The choice of this location was deliberate, aiming to investigate the factors contributing to competitive advantage in a dynamic and competitive setting. The questionnaire method is a data collection technique used to gather information from respondents by administering a set of questions or statements that respondents answer based on their opinions or circumstances. This study's sample comprises four distinct groups: business owners, employees, customers, and management lecturers from the Faculty of Economics and Business at Riau University. The technique consists of 3 stages:

Input Stage: Gathering basic information for the SWOT and IE matrices, namely the Internal Factor Evaluation (IFE) Matrix and External Factor Evaluation (EFE) Matrix.

Matching Stage: Matching external opportunities and threats with internal strengths and weaknesses using the SWOT Matrix and Internal-External (IE) Matrix.

Decision Stage: Generating alternative strategies based on the SWOT analysis.

This stage utilizes information from the input stage to align external opportunities and threats with internal strengths and weaknesses.

1. SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) Matrix
2. Internal- External (IE) Matrix
3. Decision Stage: In this stage, alternative strategies are generated based on the SWOT analysis, providing a foundation for strategic decision-making.

SWOT Matrix, The SWOT matrix is a crucial matching tool that enables managers to develop four strategic alternatives: SO (Strengths-Opportunities), WO (Weaknesses-Opportunities), ST (Strengths-Threats), and WT (Weaknesses-Threats). The most challenging aspect of constructing a SWOT matrix lies in effectively matching key external and internal factors, which demands sound judgment and expertise, as there is no one-size-fits-all approach (David, 2016).

Descriptive research method is a research approach that aims to systematically describe the characteristics of a population or phenomenon being studied. This method focuses on collecting and presenting data without conducting in-depth analysis of the causes of the phenomenon.

In descriptive research, the researcher provides a detailed description of the research object, enabling a clear understanding of the event or phenomenon being studied. This type of research typically involves data collection through surveys, questionnaires, or direct observation.

According to David and David (2016), the descriptive method provides clear and detailed information about the research object without testing hypotheses.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION RESULT

Table IFE Matrix Qu Laundry Pekanbaru

No	Internal Factor	Weight	Rating	Weighted Score
1	Strategic Location	0,11	4	0,44
2	Good Service Quality	0,11	4	0,44
3	Pickup and Delivery Service	0,11	4	0,44
4	Complete Equipment	0,08	3	0,25
5	Loyal Customers	0,11	4	0,44
6	Customers Clean and Comfortable Place	0,11	4	0,44
7	Competitive Pricing	0,08	3	0,25

No	Weakness	Weight	Rating	Weighted Score
1	Limited Promotion	0,06	2	0,11
2	Outdated Recording System	0,06	2	0,11
3	Limited Number of Employees	0,06	2	0,11
4	Limited Capital for Business Development	0,06	2	0,11
5	No Online Payment System	0,06	2	0,11
TOTAL		1		3,28

Source: Processed Research Data, 2025

Based on the internal strategic factor identification at Qu Laundry, the strengths and weaknesses influencing marketing were determined. Subsequently, weighting and rating were applied to each internal factor. The following presents the calculation of the Internal Factor Evaluation (IFE) Matrix. Table

presents the internal strategic factors that constitute the key strengths and weaknesses for Qu Laundry. The IFE matrix indicates that Qu Laundry's overall strategic position is above average in leveraging its strengths and mitigating its weaknesses.

Table EFE Matrix Qu Laundry Pekanbaru

No	EKSTERNAL FACTOR Opportunities	Weight	Rating	Weighted Score
1	Positive Economic Growth of Pekanbaru City	0,13	4	0,50
2	Digital Technology Advancements	0,09	3	0,28
3	Strategic Business Location	0,09	3	0,28
4	Changes in Urban Lifestyle	0,09	3	0,28
5	Government Support for SMEs	0,09	3	0,28
6	Opportunities for New Service Development	0,13	4	0,50
No	Threat	Weight	Rating	Weighted Score
1	Increasing Business Competition	0,06	2	0,13
2	Rising Operational Costs	0,06	2	0,13
3	Changes in Customer Behavior	0,06	2	0,13
4	Dependence on Weather	0,09	3	0,28
5	Limited Capital for Technological Development	0,09	3	0,28
TOTAL		1	32	3,06

Source: Processed Research Data, 2025

Table shows the external strategic factors that are opportunities and threats for Qu Laundry. The EFE matrix of Qu Laundry yields a value of 3.06. As seen in the table, the greatest opportunities for Qu Laundry are Positive Economic Growth of Pekanbaru City and Opportunities for New Service Development, with a weight of 0.13 and a rating of 4. Meanwhile, the main threats to Qu Laundry are Increasing Business Competition, Rising Operational Costs, and Changes in Customer Behavior, with a weight of 0.06 and a rating of 2. The EFE matrix result of 3.06 indicates that the laundry business is above average in its efforts to implement

strategies that capitalize on opportunities and avoid threats.

After obtaining the total weighted scores from the IFE (3.28) and EFE (3.06) matrices, the results can be utilized to determine the company's position via the Internal-External (IE) Matrix. The IE matrix analysis positions Qu Laundry in Quadrant I, indicating a "Grow and Build" strategy. This suggests that Qu Laundry should focus on expanding its business and enhancing its competitive advantage. With a strong position and significant opportunities, Qu Laundry is well-positioned for substantial growth, and its primary focus should be on driving growth, innovating services, and digitalizing operational and marketing systems.

The SWOT matrix is developed based on the identification of internal and external factors, encompassing the company's strengths and weaknesses, as well as opportunities and threats. By integrating these factors, the SWOT matrix yields four potential strategic alternatives: S-O, S-T, W-O, and W-T strategies. Based on the internal and external factor analysis, Qu Laundry has a strong strategic position in the midst of the laundry business competition in Pekanbaru. The identification results show that the company has various strengths that can serve as the main capital to develop its business. Some of these strengths include a strategic business location, good service quality, availability of pickup and delivery services, use of complete and modern equipment, and a loyal and growing customer base. Additionally, a clean and comfortable business environment and competitive pricing are also attractive to customers.

The SWOT matrix analysis indicates that Qu Laundry is in a strong position, namely "Grow and Build." With this condition, Qu Laundry has the potential to continue growing and developing its business through intensive growth strategies. However, Qu Laundry also has some weaknesses that need serious attention, such as limited promotional activities, outdated recording systems, limited number of employees, and limited capital for business development. From an external perspective, the analysis shows that Qu Laundry has several opportunities that can be leveraged to develop its business, including the positive economic growth of Pekanbaru, digital technology development, and changes in urban lifestyle. Nevertheless, Qu Laundry also faces several threats, such as increasing business competition, rising operational costs, and changes in customer behavior.

Based on the SWOT matrix results, there are four main strategic groups that can be applied by Qu Laundry: 1. S-O (Strength-Opportunity) strategy: Utilize internal strengths to capture external opportunities. 2. W-O (Weakness-Opportunity) strategy: Improve internal weaknesses to take advantage of opportunities. 3. S-T (Strength-

Threat) strategy: Maintain competitive advantages in the face of external threats. 4. W-T (Weakness-Threat) strategy: Minimize weaknesses to avoid threats.

Overall, the SWOT analysis results show that Qu Laundry is in a strong position to continue growing in the laundry industry in Pekanbaru. With the right strategy, particularly in leveraging digital technology and expanding its customer network, Qu Laundry has great potential to increase its competitiveness, expand its market, and maintain its existence as a leading laundry service provider in the area.

DISCUSSION

Based on the analysis of internal and external factors through the IFE and EFE matrices, as well as the integration of both in the IE and SWOT matrices, a suitable competitive strategy for Qu Laundry can be determined. The IFE matrix results show a total score of 3.28, while the EFE matrix shows a score of 3.06. This indicates that Qu Laundry's position is in Quadrant I (Growth and Build) of the IE matrix, reflecting the company's strong internal position and ability to respond well to external opportunities. Therefore, the most suitable strategy for Qu Laundry is a growth strategy focused on development and business expansion.

Based on the SWOT analysis and the company's position in the IE matrix, the competitive strategies that can be applied by Qu Laundry include differentiation, market development, and service innovation. A differentiation strategy can be implemented by highlighting Qu Laundry's unique services, such as maintaining consistency in cleanliness and timeliness of service, offering additional services like express service and membership cards, and optimizing pickup and delivery services with a simple chat or app-based ordering system.

Additionally, Qu Laundry can also apply a market development strategy by expanding its market reach through promotion and collaboration. Some possible approaches include promoting Qu Laundry through social media, partnering with boarding houses and residential areas in the

surrounding area, and offering subscription services for regular customers at special prices.

Finally, a service innovation strategy can also be applied by Qu Laundry by leveraging digitalization opportunities to enhance efficiency and competitiveness. Qu Laundry can develop a modern computer-based or simple application-based recording system, implement cashless payment systems through e-wallets, and add new services such as self-service laundry or coin-operated machines. By implementing these strategies, Qu Laundry can strengthen its brand position, expand its customer network, and improve its competitiveness and operational efficiency.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis that has been done on Qu Laundry's business services, several conclusions and suggestions can be drawn, namely:

Business Conditions and Performance of Qu Laundry:

1. Based on the research that has been done, it can be concluded that Qu Laundry is one of the laundry services businesses that is able to survive and thrive in the midst of increasingly fierce laundry business competition in Pekanbaru City. This business has a stable financial condition and is supported by an increase in the number of customers from year to year. The strategic location of the business in a densely populated area, close to office areas, hospitals, and university environments, is an important factor that drives the increase in demand for laundry services. In addition, fast, friendly service, and clean washing results are the main factors that make customers remain loyal to using Qu Laundry's services. This shows that the company has succeeded in maintaining customer trust and maintaining a good reputation in the eyes of the surrounding community.
2. Results of Internal and External Factor Analysis: Based on the analysis of internal factors (IFE) and external factors (EFE), a total score of 3.28 and 3.06 was obtained, respectively. These results indicate that Qu Laundry has a relatively high internal strength and is able to utilize external opportunities effectively. The company's main strengths include good service quality, competitive prices, availability of pick-up and delivery services, a clean and comfortable place, and loyal customers. However, there are also some weaknesses that need attention, such as limited promotion, lack of modern recording systems, limited business capital, and the absence of non-cash payment systems. From an external perspective, the biggest opportunity for Qu Laundry comes from Pekanbaru's positive economic growth, government support for UMKM, and digital technology developments that can be utilized for promotional and operational activities. Meanwhile, the threats faced include increasingly fierce business competition, rising operational costs, and changes in customer behavior that are increasingly selective towards service quality and price.
3. Appropriate Strategy to Improve Competitiveness: Based on the results of integrating IFE and EFE values into the IE Matrix, it is known that Qu Laundry is in Quadrant I (Grow and Build), which indicates that the company is in a strong position and has great opportunities to continue to grow and develop. The most appropriate strategy to be applied is a growth strategy with a focus on business development, service quality improvement, and innovation in the use of technology. Through the results of the SWOT analysis, strategies that can be implemented include the S-O strategy by utilizing strengths to capture opportunities such as expanding digital promotion

and developing new services; the W-O strategy by minimizing weaknesses through the use of modern technology; and the S-T strategy by maintaining customer loyalty and operational efficiency to face competition. With the consistent application of these strategies, Qu Laundry is expected to continue to maintain its existence, improve its competitive advantage, and become one of the superior and trusted laundry businesses in Pekanbaru City. And the suggestions that can be given to Qu Laundry's business services are:

- a. Increase Business Promotion: Qu Laundry should expand the reach of promotions through social media such as Instagram, TikTok, and WhatsApp Business so that it is better known to the public. In addition, it can also work with local influencers or provide special promotions to new customers. This effort is expected to attract new customers and retain old customers to remain loyal.
- b. Develop a Recording and Digital Payment System: To make operations more efficient, QU Laundry is advised to use a recording system based on applications or cashier software

that is integrated with digital payment methods. That way, administrative processes, transaction recording, and customer tracking will be easier and more accurate, and increase business professionalism.

- c. Add and Train Employees: To overcome the limitations of labor, QU Laundry needs to add the number of employees and provide training related to customer service and the use of modern equipment. With competent human resources, service quality will increase and customer satisfaction can be better maintained.
- d. Academic Suggestions: For further research, it is suggested that researchers can expand the focus of the study by examining the level of customer satisfaction and loyalty to laundry businesses using the Importance Performance Analysis (IPA) and Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI) methods. IPA analysis can help determine the extent to which laundry service performance is in line with customer expectations, while CSI analysis can quantitatively measure the level of customer satisfaction with the services provided.

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