


Important Aspects of Food Home-Business Sales Based on Customer Review in Shopee

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ABSTRACT

Business opportunities are expanding on e-commerce platforms such as Lazada, Shopee, and e-Bay. However, the Shopee app has the highest user statistics in Malaysia, making it the most suitable platform for small traders like B40 (bottom 40% income) women in Malaysia. Many B40 women experience problems identifying suitable products for sale, as well as improving their product quality. A study of customer reviews to identify the most important attributes of online food products was conducted. A Shopee scraper tool was built to acquire a home-business product dataset. Fourteen attributes were analyzed, and the top five most influential attributes were identified for both positive and negative reviews. The results show that the attributes that have the highest overall impact on online home-business food sales are taste, price, appearance, and texture as well as package condition, delivery service, and free gifts. It is noted that daily snacks and side dishes to go with main meals are suitable for year-round sales, while seasonal cookies are usually in demand only during festive seasons.

KEYWORDS

food-product attributes, home-business product, product-review analysis

INTRODUCTION

The convenience of online purchases is increasingly becoming a social norm in Malaysia, where it is no longer foreign among urban or rural communities (Husin & Roslan, 2021) and has become an important trend (Kidane, 2016). This is because online purchases are an easy, fast, and comfortable way to meet the needs and wants of users (Hurriyati et al., 2020). As a result of the increasingly developing digital ecosystem, many industries are driven to conduct business online to increase their growth. From small startups to large enterprises, e-commerce businesses come in all sizes.

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Among the most commonly downloaded e-commerce platforms are Lazada, Amazon, Shopee, Taobao, eBay, and Carousell. The use of transparent, safe, and convenient transaction processes in these applications makes users feel confident about conducting transactions online (Huang et al., 2019; Normalini et al., 2019). The Shopee app has become the most preferred shopping app in Malaysia, followed by Lazada, Amazon, and GoShop (Afzainizam et al., 2021). After the world was hit by the COVID-19 pandemic, the use of the Shopee app increased due to the advantages of contactless payment and delivery. In addition, as the Malaysian government has intensified its entrepreneurial development program for B40 women, many of them have decided to start or grow their businesses by marketing their products on the Shopee app.

B40 refers to the group in the bottom 40% of household incomes. B40 women are encouraged to work from home by selling homemade products or becoming dropship agents. Homemade products consume less energy compared to mass production, are better quality, and are unique (Azad & Motlagh, 2014). Home-business products do not require expensive operating costs related to employee wages, property rent, transportation, utility financing, and advertising costs (Nabhan et al., 2021).

A home business is defined as a business whose primary office is within the home, regardless of the size of the office. There are a wide variety of home businesses, such as bakeries, crafts, online retail, soap making, skin care, beauty, and many more. In Malaysia, the most popular business is the production of foods such as biscuits, chips, cakes, cookies, and pastries. It is believed that food-based home businesses improve the well-being and living standards of the local community (Tyas et al., 2019).

Although homemade products are famous in the online business world for their good quality, whether products are really favored by customers depends on several factors. Not all customers have the same experience when purchasing the same type of item due to, for example, differences in the speed of the delivery service, the condition of the package, or the taste of the product.

In this study, data regarding homemade food products such as product name, product variation, price, stock, sales, shop location, product star rating, and product review were extracted from Shopee. The data were stored in a database and used to analyze multiple attributes of food-based homemade products to determine which attributes are most influential on customer satisfaction. The results of the analysis of the data are discussed in the Results and Discussion section.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Homemade Food Product Businesses

A homemade product is a product that is produced entirely by hand or with the help of tools, either manual or mechanical, as long as the majority of the final product is created by the maker's own efforts (Gaikwad & Shiware, 2013). Because they are not mass-produced, every homemade product has its own uniqueness, creativity, and attractiveness to customers (Hsu & Ngoc, 2016). However, starting a homemade-product business requires many preliminary processes and steps that require a large investment of time, effort, and money, especially in marketing costs. Therefore, starting a homemade-product business is likely to be difficult for those in the B40 community to achieve. However, technology has evolved to open more opportunities for people to do business online. Due to the creation of multiple e-commerce platforms such as Lazada, Shopee, Taobao, and Amazon, product marketing is now much easier and cheaper. Thus, homemade products can reach people across the country in a short time.

The economic trend toward homemade food businesses is growing in popularity, and most e-commerce platforms are now easy to use (Carpio & Lange, 2015). Today, anyone who likes to cook or bake has the opportunity to run a homemade-food business with minimal start-up capital and risk (Ibrahim & Mansor, 2022). However, running a cooking or baking business from home has its own challenges. Most home cooks and bakers have other responsibilities such as parenting,

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