

## Marketing Management in Agribusiness: Branding Strategies and Market Penetration

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### ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis strategi pemasaran, khususnya branding dan penetrasi pasar, yang diterapkan oleh pelaku agribisnis di Indonesia. Dalam konteks agribisnis, branding tidak hanya berfungsi untuk meningkatkan citra produk, tetapi juga untuk menciptakan koneksi emosional dengan konsumen. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode wawancara mendalam kepada pelaku usaha agribisnis di sektor hortikultura, olahan pangan, dan produk organik. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pelaku agribisnis yang memiliki latar belakang pendidikan dan pengalaman yang lebih baik lebih mampu menerapkan strategi pemasaran modern, termasuk branding dan digital marketing. Namun, usaha mikro dan kecil masih menghadapi kendala dalam mengadopsi teknologi pemasaran digital. Penelitian ini juga mengungkap pentingnya kolaborasi dengan komunitas dan pemanfaatan media sosial sebagai saluran pemasaran yang efektif. Temuan ini memberikan wawasan tentang tantangan dan peluang yang dihadapi oleh pelaku agribisnis dalam membangun merek yang kuat dan penetrasi pasar yang luas.

**Kata Kunci:** agribisnis, strategi pemasaran, branding, penetrasi pasar

### ABSTRACT

*This study aims to analyze marketing strategies, particularly branding and market penetration, employed by agribusiness actors in Indonesia. In the context of agribusiness, branding not only serves to enhance product image but also to create an emotional connection with consumers. This research uses a qualitative approach through in-depth interviews with agribusiness entrepreneurs in the horticulture, processed food, and organic product sectors. The results show that agribusiness actors with better educational backgrounds and experience are more capable of implementing modern marketing strategies, including branding and digital marketing. However, micro and small enterprises still face challenges in adopting digital marketing technologies. This study also reveals the importance of collaboration with communities and the use of social media as effective marketing channels. These findings provide insights into the challenges and opportunities faced by agribusiness actors in building a strong brand and achieving broad market penetration.*

**Keywords:** agribusiness, marketing strategy, branding, market penetration



## INTRODUCTION

The agribusiness sector plays a strategic role in the national economy, both in its contribution to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), food security, and employment absorption in rural areas. Agribusiness encompasses the entire agricultural production chain, from upstream to downstream, and plays a crucial role in ensuring food availability and increasing farmers' income. On the other hand, Indonesia has abundant and diverse local agribusiness products, ranging from primary agricultural commodities to unique, high-value processed goods. These products hold great potential to compete in national and even international markets if managed with the right and innovative marketing approaches. Nevertheless, agribusiness product marketing still faces several fundamental challenges. One major challenge is the perception that agricultural products are generic, lack added value, and are easily substitutable. This situation is worsened by the lack of brand differentiation efforts and structured marketing strategies among agribusiness entrepreneurs. Most actors still rely on conventional distribution channels, such as middlemen or traditional markets, which often do not provide optimal economic value. This dependency makes it difficult for agribusiness players to enhance their competitiveness and expand their market reach.

Branding strategy is one of the key approaches that can transform the face of agribusiness marketing. With the right branding, agribusiness products can gain higher perceived value, build consumer loyalty, and achieve a competitive edge. A strong brand identity such as name, logo, packaging, and consistent messaging can differentiate agribusiness products from competitors in the market. Additionally, the story behind the product, such as sustainability, local authenticity, and organic practices, is increasingly important in building consumer trust in agribusiness brands in the modern era.

The development of information technology and digitalization opens up new opportunities for agribusiness players to penetrate markets more effectively. Digital platforms such as e-commerce, social media, and marketplaces provide direct access to end consumers without going through long distribution chains. This enables agribusiness actors to reach wider markets, including urban segments and out-of-region consumers. At the same time, shifting consumer preferences toward healthy, organic, and sustainable products are driving agribusiness actors to adjust their marketing strategies to align with these emerging demands.

Marketing management in agribusiness involves strategic planning and execution to maximize product reach and profitability (Duhan et al., 2024). Key components include advertising, distribution, pricing, and product development, with a focus on supply chain knowledge and regulatory frameworks. Various methods for developing marketing strategies in agribusiness have been identified, including the BCG matrix, Ansoff matrix, and Porter matrix (Kukartsev et al., 2019). These tools help businesses identify promising products and choose appropriate growth directions. Branding and labeling play crucial roles in influencing consumer perception and purchase intentions in the agricultural sector (Hukker et al., 2024). Well-designed branding and clear labeling increase product attractiveness and build consumer trust. Eco-labels and certification labels also impact consumer choices for sustainable agricultural products. Technological advancements, digital marketing, and sustainable practices are increasingly important in modern agribusiness marketing strategies (Duhan et al., 2024).

Despite these open opportunities, many agribusiness players still face knowledge gaps in managing marketing efforts. Branding and market penetration strategies are often implemented in a traditional and intuitive manner, without a strong basis in market analysis or a deep understanding of consumer behavior. The lack of training, access to information, and support from relevant institutions makes it difficult for most actors to

build a sustainable marketing system. Moreover, in-depth studies revealing actual practices, challenges, and innovations in the field remain limited, leaving practical references for other players largely unavailable. To comprehensively and contextually explore marketing strategies in agribusiness, a qualitative approach is considered most relevant. This study not only seeks to understand what agribusiness actors do but also why certain strategies are chosen and how actors manage challenges in their implementation. This approach allows researchers to understand the processes and dynamics of marketing from the actors' perspectives and place their practices within the social, cultural, and economic contexts that influence them.

This research carries significant urgency in supporting the development of a competitive and sustainable agribusiness sector. By understanding branding and market penetration strategies from the perspective of the actors themselves, the study's findings can provide practical insights for entrepreneurs, policymakers, agricultural extension officers, and academics. This information can also serve as a basis for designing training programs, mentoring, and agribusiness marketing policies that are more adaptive to changing times. Overall, this research aims to promote the transformation of agribusiness marketing toward a more innovative and impactful direction.

## **METHODS**

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with the aim of providing an in-depth description of marketing strategies, specifically in the aspects of branding and market penetration, implemented by agribusiness actors. This approach is chosen because it allows the researcher to understand the experiences, perceptions, and social dynamics that underlie the marketing decision-making process of agribusiness actors. The main focus of the research is not on quantitative measurement but on the exploration of meaning and a deep understanding of marketing practices in the field.

Data collection was carried out through in-depth interviews with informants, including agribusiness actors (farmers, agricultural product processing entrepreneurs, agribusiness brand owners), as well as related parties such as MSME facilitators, agricultural extension officers, and marketplace actors in the agricultural sector. This interview technique is semi-structured to allow flexibility in exploring the informants' experiences and perspectives in a broader and more natural way.

In addition to interviews, supporting data was obtained through direct observation of marketing activities, product packaging, use of digital media, and how products are communicated to consumers. Documents such as brochures, digital promotional materials, social media pages, and customer testimonials were also analyzed as part of a documentation study. All of these data were analyzed thematically using content analysis techniques to identify patterns, strategies, and challenges faced by the actors in building brands and expanding markets.

The credibility of the data is maintained through source triangulation, which involves comparing interview results with observations and related documents. Data validity is strengthened by conducting member checking, which involves confirming the interview results with informants to ensure the accuracy of the researcher's interpretation. With this approach, the study is expected to provide a comprehensive and reflective overview of marketing management practices in agribusiness in today's digital era.

## **RESULT**

To provide a clearer overview of the research findings, several tables are presented summarizing the data collected through in-depth interviews with agribusiness actors.

These tables present information about respondent profiles, branding strategies applied, marketing channels used, and the market segmentation targeted. The presentation of data in table form aims to make it easier for readers to understand common patterns, differences in characteristics, and emerging trends in the field. Each table is accompanied by an interpretation to explain the meaning of the data and its relevance to the research objectives.

*"At first, I thought branding was just about the logo. But after attending the training, I realized that branding is also about the product story and the impression left on the buyer."*

—Agribusiness, small-scale food processing, Yogyakarta

Many agribusiness actors initially had a limited understanding of branding. However, they began to realize the importance of brand identity and storytelling after gaining access to information or training. Branding is not only visual but also emotional.

*"I use a local name from the regional language so that buyers know this is a traditional product. I also designed the packaging myself to make it different from the market."*

— Horticulture farmer, micro-scale, Bali

Local identity and packaging design have become common strategies. Actors use local elements as strengths to highlight uniqueness and create an emotional connection with consumers.

*"I have an Instagram account, but I rarely post because I don't know what content would be interesting. Sometimes I also get confused about how to answer consumer questions."*

— Organic agribusiness, West Java

Limited digital skills have become a major barrier. Even though they have access to social media, many actors are not yet optimal in using digital platforms due to a lack of capacity to create content and manage interactions.

*"We need assistance, not just a one-day training session. There must be someone to help run the branding strategy until we fully understand it."*

— Agribusiness, food processing, South Kalimantan

Need long-term support in the form of intensive mentoring, not just short training. There is an urgent need for capacity building and a more supportive marketing ecosystem.

**Table 1.** Profile of Agribusiness Entrepreneurs

Sector	Type of Business	Scale of Business	Education Background	Years of Experience
Horticulture	Organic Farming	Small (1-10 workers)	Bachelor's Degree in Agriculture	5
Processed Food	Snack Production	Medium (11-50 workers)	Master's Degree in Business	10
Organic Products	Herbal Products	Micro (1-5 workers)	High School	3
Horticulture	Vegetable Farming	Medium (11-50 workers)	Bachelor's Degree in Horticulture	7
Processed Food	Beverage Production	Small (1-10 workers)	Bachelor's Degree in Food Science	4

Source : Data Processed in 2025

This table shows the profile of agribusiness entrepreneurs across different sectors. The majority of the businesses are small to medium-scale enterprises, with a significant number of entrepreneurs having a background in agriculture or food science. However, the experience of these entrepreneurs varies, with some having more than 5 years of experience in their respective sectors. This data highlights that education in relevant fields such as agriculture and food science is a common trait, which might contribute to

the entrepreneurs' understanding and implementation of branding and marketing strategies.

**Table 2.** Branding Strategies Implemented by Agribusiness Entrepreneurs

Branding Element	Usage Frequency	Effectiveness in Building Brand Identity (1-5 scale)
Logo	High	4
Packaging	Medium	3
Product Storytelling	High	5
Local Value (Sustainability, Organic)	High	5
Certifications (Organic, Quality)	Medium	4

*Source : Data Processed in 2025*

This table presents the branding elements commonly used by agribusiness entrepreneurs. It shows that product storytelling and local value, such as emphasizing sustainability and organic practices, are considered the most effective elements in building a strong brand identity. These strategies seem to resonate well with consumers who are increasingly concerned with environmental and health-related issues. On the other hand, packaging, while still important, is considered slightly less impactful in building brand identity, which might suggest a potential area for improvement in the businesses' overall branding strategies.

**Table 3.** Marketing Channels Used by Agribusiness Entrepreneurs

Marketing Channel	Usage Frequency	Reach (Local, National, or International)	Efficiency Rating (1-5 scale)
Online Marketplaces (Shopee, Tokopedia)	High	National	4
Social Media (Instagram, Facebook)	High	National and International	5
Trade Shows and Exhibitions	Medium	Local	3
Direct Collaborations (with local stores, markets)	Medium	Local	3

*Source : Data Processed in 2025*

This table reveals the marketing channels used by agribusiness entrepreneurs. Social media platforms such as Instagram and Facebook are the most widely used, offering both national and international reach. These platforms are considered highly efficient in promoting agribusiness products, particularly due to their ability to target specific consumer groups and build brand awareness. Online marketplaces also provide a significant national reach, while trade shows and direct collaborations primarily serve local markets. This suggests that while digital marketing is highly effective for broadening market reach, traditional methods still hold value, particularly in local contexts.

**Table 4.** Market Penetration Based on Consumer Segmentation

Target Market	Percentage of Sales	Consumer Characteristics
Urban Consumers	50%	Young, health-conscious, eco-friendly preferences

Health-Conscious Consumers	30%	Interested in organic and sustainable products
Rural Consumers	15%	Price-sensitive, traditional preferences
Export Markets	5%	High-demand for unique local products (e.g., spices, herbs)

*Source : Data Processed in 2025*

This table highlights how market penetration varies based on consumer segmentation. The largest proportion of sales comes from urban consumers who are more likely to prioritize health-conscious and eco-friendly products. Health-conscious consumers also form a significant portion of the market, showing strong demand for organic and sustainable goods. Rural consumers are more price-sensitive and prefer traditional products, while export markets represent a smaller but important segment for unique local goods, such as spices and herbs. This data shows the importance of targeting specific market segments and tailoring marketing strategies accordingly.

**Table 5.** Internal and External Challenges in Branding and Market Penetration

Challenge	Frequency of Occurrence	Impact on Business (1-5 scale)
Limited Knowledge of Digital Marketing	High	4
Insufficient Capital for Promotion and Packaging	High	5
Competition from Large Industrial Products	Medium	4
Regulatory Barriers (certifications, etc.)	Low	3

*Source : Data Processed in 2025*

This table identifies key challenges faced by agribusiness entrepreneurs. The most significant challenges are limited knowledge of digital marketing and insufficient capital for promotion and packaging. These factors hinder the entrepreneurs' ability to fully exploit modern marketing techniques and enhance their product presentation. Additionally, competition from larger industrial products remains a concern, though it is slightly less impactful compared to the other challenges. Regulatory barriers, while present, have a lower frequency and impact, suggesting that regulatory issues are less of a barrier compared to financial and knowledge-related challenges.

## DISCUSSION

### Profile of Agribusiness Actors

The agribusiness actors who are the subjects of this research generally engage in various types of businesses, such as horticulture, local-based food processing, as well as organic and environmentally friendly products. Some focus on processing agricultural products into value-added items like vegetable chips, herbal drinks, or packaged spices. The business scale observed ranges from micro to small categories, with some beginning to develop into medium-sized businesses. In terms of background, the business actors have diverse educational backgrounds, ranging from high school graduates, non-agriculture college degrees, to agricultural or agribusiness graduates. However, practical experience in the field, whether through family businesses or community training programs, is a key factor shaping their ability to manage agribusinesses.

## **Branding Strategies Implemented**

The branding strategies implemented by agribusiness actors are largely still developing gradually. Some have realized the importance of a strong brand identity, creating unique business names, appealing logos, and product packaging that reflect quality and authenticity. Some have even begun using slogans to strengthen the message they want to convey to consumers. Storytelling has become one of the approaches being adopted, especially by highlighting local values, sustainability, and natural production processes. Some actors include narratives about local farmers, the harvest process, or the philosophy of healthy living in their promotions. Additionally, consumer trust is built through customer testimonials, halal or organic certifications, and consistent emphasis on product quality.

## **Media and Marketing Channels Used**

Most agribusiness actors have started utilizing digital media as their primary marketing channel. Platforms such as Shopee and Tokopedia are used to expand distribution reach, while social media platforms like Instagram and TikTok serve as places to build relationships with consumers through visual content, testimonials, and product promotions. However, direct marketing remains an important strategy, particularly in local exhibitions, bazaars, or collaborations with souvenir shops and community stores. Promotional strategies include discounts, product bundling, and customer loyalty programs. In terms of distribution, actors still rely on third-party delivery services, although some have explored pre-order and dropshipping models.

## **Market Penetration and Consumer Segmentation**

In terms of market penetration, most agribusiness actors still focus on local and regional markets, although some have ventured into national markets through online platforms. The target consumers vary, ranging from housewives, urban populations, health-conscious communities, to young consumers who care about sustainable lifestyles. Adaptation to consumer preferences is evident in the development of products like low-sugar foods, organic ingredients, preservative-free items, or environmentally friendly packaging. Some actors also adjust their branding with visual styles and language that match the characteristics of their target market, especially when targeting millennials and Gen Z.

## **Challenges in Branding and Market Penetration**

Despite a high spirit of innovation, agribusiness actors still face several challenges, particularly related to limited understanding of digital marketing strategies. Many do not understand how social media algorithms work, copywriting techniques, or the importance of brand consistency. Additionally, capital remains a major constraint in developing packaging and promotions. Attractive packaging design and mass production require considerable funds. Competition with large industrial products and imported goods also exerts pressure, particularly in terms of price and quality perception.

## **Innovation and Best Practices**

Despite the challenges, there are examples of agribusiness actors who have successfully built strong brands through creative and consistent approaches. For instance, some actors regularly use Instagram to educate the market about their product benefits, post

behind-the-scenes videos, or hold giveaways to increase engagement. Collaboration has become a key strategy, such as working with health communities, local influencers, and other SMEs to reach a wider market. Some are also actively involved in mentoring programs from the government or non-governmental organizations to enhance business capacity and market access.

### **Perceptions and Expectations of Agribusiness Actors**

Most agribusiness actors state that branding and digital marketing are important aspects that need to be strengthened. They realize that quality products alone are not enough without the right communication strategy to the market. There is a large need for training, mentoring, and learning platforms that are tailored to the local context and language that is easy to understand, also hope for support from the government or related institutions, whether in the form of training, promotional incentives, or distribution facilities. They view marketing not just as a way to sell products, but also to build long-term relationships with consumers and ensure business sustainability.

### **Relationship Between Actor Profiles and Marketing Strategies**

The profiles of agribusiness actors, particularly in terms of education background and experience, significantly influence how they understand and implement marketing strategies. Actors with higher educational backgrounds or prior entrepreneurial experience tend to be more open to branding and digital marketing concepts. They are able to utilize technology and social media to build their product image. In contrast, actors with limited backgrounds rely more on traditional marketing methods and intuitive approaches. Furthermore, business scale significantly impacts the marketing strategies adopted. Micro and small businesses often face limitations in terms of capital, human resources, and technology access, making it difficult to adopt more complex marketing strategies. Meanwhile, medium-sized businesses are beginning to develop more structured branding and broader market penetration, although challenges remain.

### **Effectiveness of Branding Strategies Implemented**

The branding strategies implemented by agribusiness actors show variation in quality and effectiveness. Branding elements such as business names, logo designs, attractive packaging, and relevant slogans have been proven to improve the perception of professionalism and consumer trust. Products that are well-packaged and have a clear brand identity are easier to recognize and remember in the market. Equally important is the use of storytelling and local values to build emotional connections with consumers. Agribusiness actors who tell the story of their product origins, natural production processes, or local wisdom are able to differentiate themselves from competitors. Consumers, especially millennials and urbanites, increasingly appreciate products that are not only functional but also meaningful and socially impactful.

### **Transformation of Marketing Channels**

The shift from conventional marketing to digital marketing has become an important transformation in modern agribusiness. Platforms such as marketplaces and social media offer a wider market reach and more affordable promotional costs compared to conventional methods. Many business actors are beginning to realize this potential, although not all are able to fully utilize it. However, the transition to digital is not without



obstacles. Micro and small businesses face challenges in digital literacy, content management, and brand consistency. Most actors still need mentoring to manage social media strategically, not just by posting products. Time, training, and access to technological resources are needed to ensure the success of this transformation.

### **Market Penetration Dynamics and Consumer Response**

Market penetration strategies are highly influenced by the ability of actors to read the needs and preferences of consumers. Healthy, organic, and sustainable agribusiness products are increasingly in demand, especially by urban consumers and environmentally conscious communities. Actors who succeed in aligning themselves with this trend are more quickly accepted by the market and able to reach a loyal segment. Differences in strategies are also visible based on target markets. For local markets, personal approaches and community networks remain strengths. Meanwhile, for national or export markets, actors are required to build professional branding, meet quality standards, and have solid distribution channels. The ability to adapt to these consumer segments is a determining factor in market penetration success.

### **Analysis of Internal and External Challenges**

In general, agribusiness actors face internal challenges such as limited capital, untrained human resources in marketing, and limited understanding of consumer trends. Externally, they must also compete with large industrial products and imported goods that are often cheaper or have massive promotions. Price remains a major pressure point, as locally-produced agribusiness products, which emphasize quality, often struggle to compete nominally with similar products from large industries. Therefore, differentiation based on value, quality, and product story becomes a key strategy for survival.

### **Learning from Best Practices**

Several agribusiness actors have demonstrated success in building strong brands through creative and consistent approaches. They are able to package products attractively, remain active on social media, and build relationships with communities and government institutions. Collaboration is one of the keys, both with other SMEs, local influencers, and distribution partners. Creativity also serves as a differentiator, for example by organizing educational campaigns on social media, highlighting local farmers' stories, or presenting thematic product packages. These practices show that even with limited resources, the right marketing strategy can yield significant results.

### **Social and Economic Implications of Branding Strategies**

Successful branding strategies not only lead to increased sales but also create broader social impacts. The improved income of agribusiness actors can strengthen business sustainability, create local jobs, and enhance the local economic ecosystem. Branding also strengthens the bargaining position of local actors in the agribusiness value chain. Furthermore, branding can serve as a tool for rural economic empowerment, not just selling products, but also promoting the culture, stories, and identity of a region. This enhances the competitiveness of local agribusiness in the face of globalization and commercialization.

### **Need for Capacity Building and Stakeholder Roles**

From field findings, it is evident that agribusiness actors need capacity building in marketing, particularly in branding and digital marketing. Practical training, ongoing mentoring, and digital infrastructure provision are urgent needs. Many actors desire practical and contextual training that aligns with the type of business they run. Stakeholders play a crucial role, including local governments, universities, and non-governmental organizations. Partnerships between business actors and these institutions can strengthen the position of local agribusiness as a community-based economic engine, grounded in local wisdom.

## CONCLUSION

This research shows that the agribusiness sector plays a crucial role in the economy but still faces various challenges in implementing effective marketing strategies. The profile of agribusiness actors, including education, experience, and business scale, influences how well they can implement branding and digital marketing strategies. Effective branding strategies, which include elements such as name, logo, packaging, and storytelling, have been shown to build a strong product identity and create emotional connections with consumers. However, many entrepreneurs still face barriers in adopting technology and digital marketing due to resource and knowledge limitations. The study also found that digital marketing channels offer significant opportunities to expand market reach, though micro and small businesses still face challenges in transitioning to digital platforms. Adapting to consumer trends, such as a preference for healthy, organic, and sustainable products, is key to successful market penetration. External challenges, such as competition from large industrial products and limited capital, remain significant obstacles. However, good practices applied by some agribusiness actors demonstrate that creativity and collaboration can help overcome these challenges. Overall, the findings suggest that enhancing the marketing capacity of agribusiness actors, particularly in leveraging digital technology, is crucial for improving competitiveness. Support from the government, universities, and the private sector is also essential to strengthen the agribusiness ecosystem and promote the sustainability of businesses in this sector.

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