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CSSR 2021

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Business Development Strategy: A case study at the fastest food packaging converter printing company in Malaysia

Sukainah Hasanuddin, Siti Farhana Zakaria

College of Creative Arts, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam 40450, Selangor, Malaysia

> Esukainah95@gmail.com, farha981@salam.uitm.edu.my Tel: +60132740926

Abstract

However, to become a leading one-stop solution provider to support all packaging requirements from global clients, they must invest in new technology for business development strategy. This study focused on the challenges faced by a food packaging converter, Company A using the flexography technology from Koenig & Bauer as the first Asian country that invests with the technology to enable them to define new yardsticks in the packaging sector. This study also discussed strategies for material usage with the new printing technology. Now, the food packaging converter industry is thriving to the next level of business growth by partnering with an international packaging company subsidiary to sustain its business continuity as a global alliance of packaging printing companies.

Keywords: Printing technology investment; Print on demand; Business development; Strategy; food packaging material.

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DOI: https://doi.org/10.21834/ebpj.v7iSI8.3913

1.0 Introduction

Leading fast-food packaging converter manufacturers in the global region are facing rapid change with the diverse techniques in the printing manufacturing sector. Every industry has megatrends. Packaging also has a role in society, and it is diverse functions (White, 2012). Proliferating with each passing day is a necessity whose demand for the proper packaging for consumer goods (Marsh & Bugusu, 2007). Its demand is growing with the increase in more and more industries and the production of goods that require durable casing or covers to keep them preserved, no matter how they are handled or for the goods travel. In 2021, we came close to delivering a successful COVID19 vaccine with an air of hesitant hope. We are eager to place behind us the challenges we face this year – but we must not lose what we learned in 2020 since consumer behaviors have changed and are not returning to 'standards' before COVID. As a result, the pandemic has increased demand for the packaging industry. The manufacturing system was the leading factory before this happened. In the general strategy processes of the product life cycle management, businesses usually consider product development as the first stage in creating and commercializing new products. Product development is seen in today's world as a critical factor, primarily because of three reasons: firstly, increasing competition internationally; secondly, globalization and competitive markets; and thirdly, complex and rising technologies (Bigliardi, Bottani, Montanari, & Vignali, 2010). A particular path of innovation is pursued depending on the project, product, or process to produce.

Technological advancements in packaging make converters today more suitable for consumer goods that once were limited to hard and rigid materials. Malaysia's packaging industry has experienced rapid growth in recent years. For 2019 through 2024, an annual growth rate of

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DOI: https://doi.org/10.21834/ebpj.v7iSI8.3913

3.8 per cent is expected (Data, 2021). While COVID-19 is unlikely to halt this in the long run, there may be some impact on the speed of change in the short term with the packaging industry. However, packaging sectors worldwide benefit from the Coronavirus pandemic more significantly than other industries (Katie, 2020). The impact on packaging companies will be determined by their portfolios and exposures to various countries, packaging end uses, and substrates. The aim of package development is ultimately to satisfy marketing goals by distinguishing between the personality and function of a consumer product and the generation of a sale. Lower household disposable income and weakening corporate financial sheets at packaging sector clients may put significant pressure on the packaging industry to reduce selling prices and costs across the entire value chain, depending on the severity and duration of the crisis. Innovations must also be expected.

1.1 Problem Statement

Company A's market mostly comes from the big brand of a fast-food products. Company A has dominated food packaging printing activities in the Malaysian market since 2006. The fast-growing and total annual revenue they gain every year from each market has enabled them to grow their business in collaboration with the most significant foreign market companies since 2017. Today, Company A is thriving in providing a good quality product according to the international standard. Company A faces complex inconsistencies in product quality due to the technology they invest in. Since the customer food packaging has a high demand due to the stocking on each promotion and existing products that are needed on time. The packaging materials are chosen based on the particular food categories (Mahalik & Nambiar, 2010). As a result of the scenario, it is unclear if Company A will be able to maintain its commercial momentum in the production system.

2.0 Literature Review

To be preferred as a packaging printing service provider, Company A's 1` is to establish its business development strategy. The critical strategic decision is to ensure Company A's sustainability in the printing market. This strategy will provide the Company with a good improvement in product quality with their technology and services. Company A has various obstacles and hurdles in achieving the objective of being a preferred food packaging services supplier. Flexible packaging, a vital area of flexo printing, is the fastest expanding packaging category, with annual growth rates of 4-5 per cent. It is crucial to ensure that Company can secure its future growth if they do not maintain the product quality and volume because it will bring wastage for the company itself.

2.1 Printing Technology Investment

By producing a mass amount of packaging for each Asian fast food market, the investment in printing technology has been made to avoid any delay. Flexible packaging – a vital sector in flexo printing today – is the fastest growing packaging market, with annual growth rates of about five per cent (Writer, 2018). This was partly attributed to the need for the more excellent capability of investing in conventional technologies in production (SGIA, 2018). These findings also show that equipment manufacturers are ready to benefit from the R&D investments in their latest press model. Beyond package design, printing technologies are the essential issue driving packaging evolution (Liu, 2014).

The present rate of technological advancement is having a significant impact on how people live and work. It affects all disciplines, economies, and sectors, arguably none more than production and how, what, why, and where people make and distribute goods and services, refer to Table 1. From the origination of inputs, product design and manufacturing to distribution, customer/ consumer use, and elements of the circular economy/return/ reuse, production activities, defined as the entire chain to "source-make-deliver consumereintegrate" products and services, will be altered and extended in ways that are difficult to fully envision (A.T.Kearney, 2017). The packaging design and development method include selecting the most appropriate materials, technology, and manufacturing methods for the packaging system's safe, environmentally friendly, and cost-effective performance (Haseeb, Lis, Haouas, & Mihardjo, 2019).

Implementing Technologies Adoption Speed	 Start from scratch and develop expertise? Acquire and existing people? Partner with a technology producer? Create a dedicated group to implement with the company?
Organizational Structure	 Should they adapt as they learn? Should they realign? Should there be a shift in the structure?
Level of Integration	For development only For marketing and concept proof only For prototyping only Scaled production alongside traditional processes

Packaging machinery is designed to work with specific packaging material; even tiny modifications in the material might cause machine malfunctions. Including machine and material suppliers in the design process is critical and keeping line operators informed throughout the process (Coles, McDowell, & Kirwan, 2003). Packaging printers and converters must be constantly aware of how these

investments affect their operations and how their technical skills can meet these demands. It would be prudent for converters who has not invested in their printing equipment to review their current assets and, at the very least, consider technological enhancements?

2.2 Print on Demand

Today's demand for food packaging has become more than before due to the pandemic Covid-19. The worldwide packaging printing market is predicted to have a mild slowdown in 2020-2021, as demand for packaging and markets for chemicals, luxury goods, and construction, among other applications, will be significantly reduced due to global economic activities. During COVID-19, however, there will be a surge in demand for package printing solutions for food, beverage, and pharmaceutical applications (Market, 2021). Because most people are takeaway their foods and drinks cause high demand for food packaging, especially in a fast-food restaurant. The industry will expand with the rising demand for packaging printing for attractive food & drink goods worldwide. Besides, due to a growth in industrial production, the industry is experiencing demand. There is a rising demand for aesthetic appeal and in print techniques in the industry, led by such factors as the fast growth of the packaging field (Aashish Mehra, 2021). The packaging printing industry requires a lot of processes due to the variety of materials, structure, finishing and packaging. Packaging printers desire to use technology to grow beyond their usual capabilities and markets in an industry where convergence is developing rapidly, and printing businesses of all shades are investigating methods to add to their services. Flexible, resealable, eco-friendly, and sustainable packaging materials will likely gain traction in the forecast future (Clare, 2020).



Fig. 1: Fast Food Packaging (Source: McDonald's)

3.0 Methodology

3.1 Research Design

To construct this study, the researcher consulted (Creswell, 2017), who described research design as "the study plans and processes that move choices from broad assumptions through complete data collecting and analysis methodologies." According to (Creswell, 2017), the complexity of the study topic or subject being explored, the researcher's knowledge, and the research's target audience influence the choice of a research design. According to Creswell, J.W, the right research approach is vital to determine the success of the research (Ishtiag, 2019).

3.2 Research Instrumentation

In this report, the principal goal is to decide how Company A will remain critical to the changing market climate in the printing industry. The following questions to be answered to meet the research targets are:

- In Company A, what has changed in recent years?
- What obstacles does Company A face in the printing industry as a food packaging converter? How are you going to solve the issues?
- What are Company A's significant concerns about its competitiveness in the printing market?
- What is Company A's primary area of concern? Clear steps to fix the problem?
- Is Company A equipped to secure future business with the current equipment and technology?
- Who are the rivals of Company A in Malaysia, and how Company A positions itself in the printing market?
- In the next five years, what do you expect of the potential development of Company A?

4.0 Results and Discussion

This chapter presents this study's findings, obtained from various analyses. The initial data set has been analysed and interpreted based on the researcher's experience working in an office with a converter printing firm. Factors are the most significant in their continuing operations. These considerations include investment in technical innovation, a turnaround plan, a competitive repositioning of the target market and strong collaboration with customers.

4.1 Printing Technology Advancement

Malaysia's paper sector draws major businesses with innovative manufacturing techniques and high-tech automation devices, which expand supply chain prospects. The paper, printing and publishing sector is entering an exciting decade, as new technology enables many aspects of the industry to advance. From offset Figure 2 to flexo Figure 3 but still using paper-based material. Today's

advancements and technology in printing make production activity more effective and efficient. As shown in Figure 3 Company, A invested in the latest high technology which is EVO XD that equipped for high-quality on the most diverse materials with its eight press systems, with a new Dryers generation and a newly built coating unit. Inflexible packaging, the Evo XD is the all-around flexo press for the individual demands. Company A is compelled to invest in technology and adapt its operations, business models, and culture due to technological advancements; failing to do so would jeopardise the company's long-term prospects. Businesses engage in new technologies for various reasons, including getting goods to market faster, increasing efficiency and productivity, differentiating product offers, and, most importantly, developing better products. Because new technologies provide proven benefits, their adoption is unavoidable. The majority of large-scale producers have previously considered and tested technology through pilots. To produce, they will progressively go beyond "visioning" and experimenting to full-scale transformation and implementation of the digital and technological agenda.



Fig. 2: Offset Lithography Heidelberg CD102 6 Color Machine (Source: Researcher)



Fig. 3: Flexotecnica EVO XD Ten-Color Press (Source: Researcher)

Besides the investment bring benefit to the printing packaging converter because the Evo XD is a multi-purpose printing press that can handle plastic film, paper, and board in various print runs. With additional single flexo or gravure printing decks, extra inks or coatings may be printed on both sides of a substrate with maximum register accuracy. Integrating an inline laminating or punching machine for board processing is another possibility. The machine is designed to handle web widths of up to 1320 mm and cut-off lengths of up to 1000 mm. The press can produce at rates of up to 500 m/min, depending on the substrate used. The Evo XD allows for exceptionally customised customer and product settings. This is a critical aspect of your financial success. The advancement increased the production efficiency and quantity output of the product. The EVO XD the central-cylinder press may be configured with eight or ten printing decks, with the possibility of adding additional single flexo or gravure decks. Additional operations, including coating, varnishing, and lamination, may be completed in one press run (Bauer, 2021). Even in a world that is becoming increasingly paperless, printing is still an essential part of production and logistics. New print technology has the potential to dramatically transform the way you operate.

4.2 Strategy of Target Market

Company A has considered a strategic sector repositioning to rely more on future clients, the Asian Pacific region. Printing rivals can still draw consumers with the best services they will deliver. And the strongest will succeed of all these rivals. But the approach to concentrate company A on the right target demographic is the most relevant. Company A's approach relies on fast food packaging and the overseas market to enter the market in the printing industry. The market expansion can be achieved by using all the tools to satisfy the requirements of the consumers with quality, capacity and high production volumes. The majority of respondents prefer to keep a

hands-on approach in the operation of the business for fast growth while the firm is still struggling to achieve good sales. Most believed that establishing a business is more accessible than keeping it going. The market doesn't have to limit whom they sell to just because they have a target market. Growing a business may be a challenging endeavour at times. Company A, for example, covers a wide range of options. Having a target market allows them to narrow down their priorities, making it easier to decide where to focus their efforts. This improves the efficiency of their decision-making process as well as the implementation of their company plan. You'll be able to determine which elements of the business require immediate attention. They'll be able to modify the marketing plan to satisfy those specific objectives once they've identified the target market and its distinct wants. It simply assists them in focusing on the folks most likely to conduct business with them, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Business Target Market Why Print Business Needs a Target Market			
Without a Target Market	With a Target Market		
 Diluted resources 	 Concentrated resources 		
 Vastly different client needs 	 Similar client needs 		
 Commodification's 	 Differentiation 		
 Indifferent customers 	 Loyal customers 		
No control covers types of clients	Ability to choose client type		

(Source: Researcher)

As a result, potential buyers will have to do less "searching" to find what they want. They'll see that Company A has everything they require. They'll be able to sell printing services in methods that focus on giving value to that specific segment once they've identified a target market. Because no one else in that market delivers the same level of value, Company A may be able to charge a more excellent price for its products and services. Customers feel valued and cared for when a business plan is tailored to a particular set of individuals. The firm will become more than a corporation; it will become a brand. Customers will feel more connected to the company. They've developed a brand because they've invested more time and money in addressing their demands. They feel unique as if the firm was built specifically for them. As a result, they are more inclined to recommend others and become brand advocates.

Having a target market helps Company A concentrate its marketing efforts on the clients who will most assist the company expand. Customers may observe that specific customers put larger orders than others while placing orders. Company A may also observe that some consumers have many problems and need extra help. They can opt to advertise Company A to large spenders who don't take up a lot of your time and resources via target marketing. As a result, most of these businesses' decision-making was tightly controlled by the owners. They strongly emphasise personal relationships when determining who their target clients are and how their products may suit their demands. This conclusion is consistent with the findings of the respondent, who observed that in small businesses, the owners' personalities tend to dominate the culture, and strategic decisions are frequently made based on experience or intuition. However, the study found that when a company expands, the owner tends to transfer more operational responsibilities to managers and include them in decision-making. This is due to the owners' increased attention to developing personal networks to find business prospects and acquire information for planning. During this stage of expansion, the owners' primary responsibilities are to identify who their customers are and where they can be found, to monitor competitors to identify strengths and weaknesses, to determine how product lines can grow to meet customer needs, to arrive at reasonable prices, and to develop promotional material. As a result, the owner's involvement in understanding when to start delegating and employing methodical rather than intuitive thinking is critical for the firm's growth.

4.3 Strategic Partnership with International Company

Partner firms should, it seems clear, attempt to identify common ground from the outset, especially in substantial joint ventures where each side has a significant financial stake, or in partnerships where cultures, communications, and expectations are vastly differ ent. However, similar aims are sometimes ignored in the haste to close the agreement. This is especially common in industry strategic partnerships when everyone thinks that they're already on the same page just because they're in the same business. Companies who miss this phase raise the stress and tension in the collaboration, lowering their chances of success. For example, day-to-day operators may get ambiguous instructions or priorities from partner organisations. The only way to guarantee that everyone understands the partners' goals (whether their primary focus is on improving operations or launching a new strategy) and that everyone is using the exact measurements of success is to be transparent during discussions. Transparency also fosters trust and collaboration among partners, which is especially crucial given the number of executives from both firms who will likely move in and out of leadership roles over the partnership.

Company A was founded in 1991 as a magazine printing company, but in 2006 it was taken over by a new management team and shifted to creating fast-food packaging items. Today, it serves a portfolio of large worldwide brands as a leading provider of folding cartons, formed trays, clamshells, wrappers, and bags. The acquisition of a majority stake by International Packaging Company, Thailand's largest packaging converter, in January 2018 was critical to Company A's following ambitious investment programme. When the new facility in Klang was opened, it held a collection of cutting-edge technology from the world's leading printing and converting equipment manufacturers. To grow faster than other local companies, they have collaborated with the International company to become a leading one-stop solution provider to support all packaging requirements for its clients. They pool their resources and abilities to produce superior products and services. Furthermore, they collaborate to reach a larger audience. Firms form worldwide strategic

relationships to achieve synergy, which will result in improved economic advantages. Managing partnerships outside of established markets, for example, might be more difficult due to cultural differences, integration norms, and regulatory complexity. However, even in these emerging-market transactions, the concepts may be used to kick off talks about how to modify long standing habits and mindsets. Clarity, proactive management, accountability, and agility can help firms not only extend the life of current partnerships and joint ventures, but also build the potential to create more of them—and, in the process, create outsized value and productivity in their businesses.

5.0 Conclusions

The techniques of market growth, such as technical progress, consolidation, strategic repositioning and close collaboration with clients are necessary for Company A to guarantee its longevity in the printing business. In five years, the organisation predicts expanding rapidly with its focus on the western market. Company A's growth strategy would bring them to fulfil their vision of being Ma laysia's favourite supplier of print converters. As a result of this expansion, Malaysian package printers have invested in cutting-edge production technologies. As sales increase, the owner should focus on short-term operational to long-term strategic considerations. This is in line with earlier research, suggesting that establishing a formal strategic planner will lead to more formal operational management. For rapid growth or when the company is still fighting to meet its sales targets, most respondents pre fer to retain a hands-on approach in the organisation's running. Most of them stated that starting a business is more straightforward than maintaining it. Understanding each partner's reason for the trade is also crucial. This is a popular area of attention during early talks; it should also be considered part of day-to-day operations, especially if each partner has supplementary motivators, such as access to suppliers or the transfer of expertise. The non-operating partner in one energy-sector cooperation, for example, was eager to learn how its local personnel would be trained throughout the life of the relationship. This organisation sought to improve the abilities of the local workforce to increase the number of long-term job prospects in the area. The operational partner included training and skill evaluation data in the venture's guarterly reports, boosting communication between the two firms and emphasising the relevance of this point to its partner. As a result, the owners had tight control over most of these enterprises' decision-making. When establishing who their target clientele is and how their goods may meet their wants, they focus heavily on personal interactions.

Acknowledgements

I appreciate the respondent who provided the facilities and assistance during data collection. Special thanks to my colleagues and friends for helping me with this project. We thank the anonymous referees for their helpful comments and suggestions. We thank the anonymous referees for their helpful comments and suggestions. Last but not least, I want to express my gratitude and special thanks to my husband Ahmad Amirrudin Bin Ali Hasan. He has provided me with your knowledge, experience, guidance, financial and patience with me during this project. You help me stay focused throughout and cross that final hurdle.

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