

Can competitive strategy be used as a measure of sustainable development in foodservice?

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Abstract. This article aims to examine the context of the food service business, or popularly called the culinary business in Ngawi district, how it can play an important role as a benchmark for sustainable development when using competitive strategies. This topic was chosen due to the difficulty in finding previous research and the correct method in adopting the three variables, namely the SDGs. Competitive advantage strategy and culinary business services so that the approach of using qualitative descriptive methods with an inductive research approach using a basic literature review, which involves analysing and synthesizing previous research relevant to the topic of competitive strategy and then comparing the data presented by the subjectivity of the researcher. The use of SWOT analysis techniques is used as a benchmark in deciding on the use of competitive strategies. By focusing on the aspects of decent work and economic development in the context of SDG 8, competitive strategies can be obtained as a basis for achieving sustainable development goals in the food service business sector in Ngawi district.

1 Introduction

According to BPS data, there are approximately 84,000 MSMEs in Ngawi district, East Java, there are about 11,000 micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in Ngawi district that have obtained halal certification. With such a large number of MSMEs, it is expected that a lot of labour will be absorbed or new jobs will be created. However, it is necessary to know about the labour market, the development of employment from labour force to labour absorption is known as follows in Table 1.

From the data above, it can be seen that with a total of 84 (eighty-four) thousand MSMEs, some of them are food service industry groups. If you look at the data, there were 5,285 registered job seekers in 2013, this exceeded the capacity of job tamping that can be provided by MSMEs. And it is not in line with the 8th Sustainable Development goal, which is to

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ensure inclusive economic growth, decent work, and economic resilience for all. Therefore, a competitive strategy is needed for the food service industry.

Table 1. Trend of Labour Force 2009 – 2013.

Details Specification	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
1. Workforce	455.957	456.678	626.295	474.018	477.534
2. Accommodated Workforce	428.084	428.761	423.496	428.382	430.846
3. Job Search	27.873	27.917	-	-	-
4. Working Age Population	621.500	622.483	631.791	638.804	642.393
5. Non-Working Age Residents	203.439	203.761	185.970	188.190	189.256
6. Jobs	1.809	921	2.350	3.168	3.735
7. Registered Job Seekers	6.122	5.647	3.548	4.036	5.285
8. Workforce Placement	960	1.120	1.177	1.957	2.117

Source: Social, Labor and Transmigration Service of Ngawi district Ngawi in Figures 2014. Data processed 2024.

Why did we choose district of Ngawi as a pilot district to conduct research and be written as an article, this is because Ngawi fits the posture of the SDGs, namely Sustainable Development where according to BPS data, geographically Ngawi has an area of 1,298.58 km². Of which 506.6 km² or 40% is in the form of rice fields. So that it is in accordance with the goals of SDG's 2, namely Sustainable development that eliminates hunger, achieves food security and good nutrition and improves sustainable agriculture. This view opens up important horizons that are actually raised in this article, namely SDG's 8 which is decent work and economic growth, so it is a challenge to review, analyse, and find supporting reference sources related to SDG's 8 in Ngawi District. In addition, Ngawi appears to be a district with potential for sustainable development in many areas. This potential can be explored on an ongoing basis [1].

According to Evangelia Kougioumoutzi in her blog, it is said that the SDG's that are most relevant and have the highest potential impact on the retail and food manufacturing business are SDG's 15, SDG's 12, SDG's 2, SDG's 13, and SDG's 8 [2].

The food and beverage industry plays an important role in achieving the sustainable development goals. In the context of the SDGs, special linkages are expected on several aspects relevant to the industry, including:

- a. SDG 2 (End hunger): Achieve food security and good nutrition.
- b. SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production): Promote sustainable production and consumption.
- c. SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth): Increase worker productivity and income.

In relation to the competitive strategy for sustainable development in the food service industry, of the three SDGs, the competitive strategy of the food service industry will only discuss the relationship with the 8th goal of the SDGs, namely decent work and economic growth [3].

1.1 SDG 8 (8th Sustainable Development Goals)

On BAPPENAS' SDG's page on the 8th SDG's it is said about the goal to ensure inclusive economic growth, decent work, and economic resilience for all. In the context of the food service industry, SDG 8 has significant implications related to competitive strategies and sustainable development. Here's a further explanation [3]:

- a. Decent Work:
 - a.1. The emphasis of SDG 8 is the importance of creating decent jobs for everyone so that in the food service industry it can be interpreted as providing fair employment opportunities, adequate wages, and safe and healthy working conditions.
 - a.2 Competitive strategies in the food service industry must pay attention to the welfare of workers. Companies that prioritize employee well-being can gain a long-term competitive advantage.
- b. Inclusive economic growth:
 - b.1 SDG 8's emphasis is on inclusive economic growth so that the food service industry ensures that the growth of this sector not only benefits large companies, but also small and medium enterprises (SMEs).
 - b.2 Competitive strategies in inclusive economic growth must take into account the economic impact on the entire value chain. This includes building partnerships with local farmers, suppliers, and distributors. Sustainable growth must benefit all parties involved.

In line with the eight sustainable development goals of the SDG's, there has also been a socialisation of the SDG's in district of Ngawi. According to Indah Kusumawardhani, the SDG's are development that sustains the improvement of people's economic welfare, development that sustains the sustainability of people's social life, development that sustains the quality of the environment, and development that ensures justice and the implementation of governance that can sustain the improvement of the quality of life from one generation to the next [4].

1.2 The importance of competitive strategy in the Food service Industry

In this article, emphasizing the position of competitive strategies in the food service industry in the context of decent work and economic growth, it can be interpreted that workers in the food service industry must get a decent job, at least hire themselves properly according to the type of job and salary so that they can increase economic growth. An important role in achieving these Sustainable Development goals must be managed in such a way that decent work is to ensure the basic rights of workers, including decent wages and safe working conditions and social protection. To succeed, you need to develop competitive advantages and offer customers something they can't get from your competitors [5].

Therefore, it is expected that there will be an increase in production and income of a country/region in order to achieve positive economic growth. The two are closely related to the idea that decent work supported by adequate wages and worker welfare can boost productivity. Increased productivity, in turn, is expected to encourage economic growth. Otherwise, an important factor of competitive strategy in the foodservice industry, according to Joanna, is the high quality of food products, which is achieved mainly through innovative activities using technological novelties [6].

1.3 Strategies for realizing decent work and economic growth

Several strategies are designed to realize decent work and economic growth, including: Job formalization, training and education, labor protection policies, international cooperation, access to financing, and agile taxation. The strategy is expected to be integrated into sustainable business so that the focus is on decent work and economic growth so that the principles of the SDGs can be integrated in the company's operations [7].

In the strategy of realizing decent work and economic growth, of course, it is inseparable from the absorption of labor that has been provided by the data above. So that in facing

competition in the field of culinary services, organizations or companies must be able to survive to achieve success by using competitive strategies. According to Porter, there are two basic types of competitive advantage: cost advantage and differentiation [8].

Related to this, in Ngawi district itself, according to data at the UM Ngawi cooperative office in 2021, micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) have penetrated more than 84 thousand spread across the Ngawi district area. Of the 84,729 to be exact, 46 thousand are business actors. Thus, it is hoped that the competitive strategy can be applied to the culinary sector (food service business).

In addition to the above data, the background to this article is inspired by President Joko Widodo's desire to have a food security theme in Ngawi district, such as the post-harvest food processing industry and the downstreaming of raw materials to ready-to-sell and distribution. This follows the existence of Ngawi district as a national rice barn [9]. From this opinion, a competitive strategy is needed to measure sustainable development in the food industry.

2 Material and Methods

This research uses literature research by formulating research questions, journal searches, journal selection, journal analysis, synthesis of findings, and report writing accompanied by several comparisons of findings whether they ultimately support this research or confirm. For this reason, a synthesis of findings from various journals is carried out, identifying patterns, similarities, differences and contributions of each research to the understanding of the research topic, and in the form of summaries of previous research findings and will explain how the findings are relevant to the research question. And that literature reviews not only focus on positive studies, but also accommodate findings that are contradictory or have different points of view. This research was also conducted using the qualitative descriptive method. Qualitative research, however, is more holistic and often involves a rich collection of data from various sources to gain [10].

Related to the above there are some of the strategies that are widely discussed include differentiation, low cost, product and service innovation, and customer focus. Thus this is a challenge in this article to find a competitive strategy in the context of the 8th SGD efforts, namely economic growth and labor getting decent jobs, or providing decent jobs. Thus the qualitative method of literature study used for competitive strategies includes product/service differentiation, low product/service/labor costs, product/service/labor innovation/type of work and service in the context of continuous improvement so that humans can work properly and increase economic growth.

Therefore, qualitative descriptive is used with SWOT analysis as a technique to benchmark in one of the measurements to find answers to measure sustainable development in the food service sector [11]. In contrast, data analysis in qualitative research is more open-ended. It must be adapted to the data/information in the field. [12] Thus, in general, the analysis of data in qualitative research moves from the data / facts to a higher level of abstraction because of the thinking of the researcher.

2.1 Literature review framework

Organizing information contained in various concepts and previous research so that a relationship can be drawn from the theme that appears in accordance with the research theme. To achieve the study's first objective, various food-sector services were first identified by analyzing the content of the selected articles [13].

Table 2. Previous research.

No	Researcher Name (Year)	Heading	Method	Research Results
1	Andi Triyawan, Amin Fitria (2019)	Analysis of the business development strategy of MSMEs moeslem square Ngawi	Descriptive qualitative analysis of secondary data	Using the concept of honesty in buying and selling activities, offering products, and using the latest technology.
2	Setiyo Adi, et al (2019)	The application of sustainable competitive advantage as a culinary business strategy "Depot ayam gephok pak Giek" in Jember – East Java	Qualitative descriptive using SWOT analysis techniques	The result of the analysis is that the application of the Sustainable Competitive Advantage (SCA) concept is necessary and continues to be carried out by the "Depot Ayam Gephok Pak Giek" if they want to maintain their existence.
3	Vivi Marietha Panto (2023)	Increasing productivity in order to realize decent work and economic growth (goal 8 sustainable development goals)	Conceptual	It is highly recommended for business actors and the government to apply the principles of sustainable development. For business actors to use durable and energy-efficient goods so that the average cost decreases and profits increase. For the government, it is better to support economic actors with programs that support sustainable development such as equality, gender, health insurance, old-age security, etc.
4	Herminda, Abdullah Muksin (2021)	Competitive advantage strategies and culinary business success	Quantitative analysis with descriptive and explanatory analysis approaches	Competitive advantage has a positive and significant influence on the culinary business in Jakarta. The most dominant dimension of competitive strategy is cost leadership.
5	Andi Suranta Meliala, Nazaruddin Matondang, Rahmi M Sari (2014)	Kaizen-based strategies to increase the competitiveness of small and medium enterprises (SMEs)	Totality of concepts	The strategies carried out are in the form of empowering SME training and information centers, changing the employment system, leadership training with the concept of TWI (<i>training within industry</i>), improving the vision and mission of MSEs,
6	Andrew Victor K. Blay Jnr; Augustine Senanu K.K., et all.	Impact of competitive strategies on echieving the sustainable development goals:	Adopt deductive and quantitative research approaches in nature.	Overall, the study makes a unique contribution to Ghana's construction industry through a comparison of the most significant competitive

No	Researcher Name (Year)	Heading	Method	Research Results
		Context of Gahaian construction firms (2022).		strategies and how they can achieve the SDGs.
7	Malte.L.Peters & Stephan Zelewski	Competitive strategies their relevance for sustainable development in the food industry	By comparing literature strategic management	The research contribution provides guidance in choosing a competitive strategy that companies in the food industry that follow the idea of uncompromising sustainable development will often have difficulty successfully building a competitive strategy in terms of cost leadership
8	Feny Widyawati, et al	The effect of social capital and organizational health on competitive advantages of culinary and craft SMEs in Samarinda City	Survey method with quantitative approach, use of descriptive analysis techniques and factors using SEM	Social and organizational capital positively and significantly influences competitive advantage strategies, both simultaneously and partially.
9	Bayu Gumelar, et al	Strategy for the development of a small tempeh kripk industry in Karantengah Prandon village, Ngawi district	Qualitative descriptive using Interactive Model Analysis from Miles and Huberman (1992)	The supporting factors are strategic industrial locations and local government support. Inhibiting factors include less professional management, lack of business capital, weak role of the community, marketing facilities and infrastructure

In addition to the previous research table above, there are about competitive strategies that are often used, summarized by Andrew Victor.

Table 3. Summary of competitive strategies by Andrew Victor, et al.

Competitive strategies	References
Pricing products lower than rivals	Andreoni and Miola 2016
Packaging same product in different ways to target different markets	Shukila and Sharma 2016
Offering individual branding to differentiate from competitors	UNCTAD (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development) 2014
Employing company branding to differentiate from competitors	Tan et al. 2017
High retention through the continuation of service quality	El-Sayegh et al. 2020
Maintaining high innovation adoption	Sato et al. 2014
Setting up prices based on the segmentation of the customer	Lior et al. 2018
Introducing unique products	Gunaratne et al. 202 reviews
Constant improvement in service quality	El-Sayegh et al. 2020
Superior training of personnel	Tan et al. 2012
Faster project completion using innovative financing methods	Tan et al. 2017

Source: Andrew Victor, et al (2022)

Quoted from Porter about the three generic strategies: (1) about overall cost leadership, (2) differentiation, (3) focus [14].

2.1.1 Overall cost leadership

In this case, the low-cost leadership is chosen to continue to choose suppliers who are already subscribers (strong suppliers), in order to overcome other cost increases. In terms of leadership, the overall cost is low will hinder the profit potential of other strong companies.

2.1.2 Differentiation

Using low-cost leadership is not possible. Differentiation is creating uniqueness in terms of services or products in terms of design, brand, logo, taste, presentation, packaging, product image / company image / service image. However, differentiation requires loyal customer support and the materials must be of high quality.

2.1.3 Focus

This strategy focuses on a specific target, so building a product/service is intended for a specific market share or group of buyers which can be based on a narrow or strategic segment. This strategy is chosen for market shares that are highly less susceptible to replacement products/services, or are aimed at the weakest competitors.

3 Results and Discussion

3.1 Overview of Food Service Business Objects (Culinary) in Ngawi District

To get to know more about the food service business, in the form of numbers and characters, data on the number of culinary businesses in Ngawi district is presented in the form of a table as listed at Figure1.

Kecamatan	Jumlah Rumah Makan/Restoran Menurut Kecamatan di Kabupaten Ngawi		
	2021	2022	2023
010. Sine	4	10	-
020. Ngrambe	8	16	3
030. Jogorogo	5	15	3
040. Kendal	3	6	6
050. Geneng	8	16	9
051. Gerih	1	4	1
060. Kwadungan	1	5	-
070. Pangkur	2	4	-
080. Karangjati	5	6	1
090. Bringin	2	13	2
100. Padas	2	8	-
101. Kasreman	3	7	2
110. Ngawi	57	71	71
120. Paron	5	8	1
130. Kedunggalar	6	10	-
140. Pitu	5	8	-
150. Widodaren	8	15	-
160. Mantingan	2	10	-
170. Karanganyar	2	3	-
Kabupaten Ngawi	129	235	99

Fig. 1. Number of restaurants/restaurants in Ngawi district (2021-2023). Source: <https://ngawikab.bps.go.id/indikator/16/360/1/jumlah-rumah-makan-restoran-menurut-kecamatan-di-kabupaten-ngawi.html>. Data processed 2024.

From the formulation of several previous studies along with literature reviews and data in the field, then real data on culinary businesses that are suspected of using competitive strategies are then made a SWOT analysis.

From the analysis of the data, it is still not seen that culinary businesses in Ngawi district use competitive strategies in the framework of sustainable development goals. Actually, this should be a reference and continuous research. However, with limited cost and time, this article is limited to short-term research. If long-term research is possible, it will be very meaningful for the benefit of culinary businesses in Ngawi district which can be featured in terms of uniqueness and introduction to the international world. Therefore, in this study, it is hoped that there will be some brightness by reviewing it starting with the EFAS and IFAS matrices. EFAS and IFAS are analyses derived from the SWOT analysis theory, which is used to identify various internal and external factors in a business or organisation [15]. Where the business in question is a business which is an organised activity aimed at providing goods and/or services with a view to making a profit [16].

3.2 SWOT

3.2.1 Internal Factors Analysis Summary (IFAS) Matrix

Table 4. IFAS Strength and Weakness.

Strength	Strength	Weight	Rating	Score Score
	Serving	0.105263158	3.5	0.368421053
Flavor Innovation	0.157894737	4	0.631578947	
Raw material price	0.157894737	5	0.789473684	
Raw materials are easy to find	0.105263158	5	0.526315789	
Weakness	Weakness	Weight	Rating	Score value
	Product durability	0.105263158	1	0.105263158
	Marketing away from the big city	0.157894737	2.5	0.394736842
	Lack of knowledge of the production process	0.105263158	2	0.210526316
	Lack of capital	0.105263158	1	0.105263158
Total Strength and Weakness		19	1	3.131579

3.2.2 EFAS External Matrix

Table 5. EFAS Opportunity and Threat.

Opportuni	Opportunity	Weight	Rating	Score value
	High public interest	0.157895	4	0.631579
	Utilization of digital technology	0.108108	5	0.540541
	Marketing help from the community	0.108108	3.5	0.378378
	Lifestyle shift towards culinary	0.162162	3	0.486486
Threat	Threat	Weight	Rating	Score value
	Characteristics of people who are easily bored with one type of product	0.081081	2	0.162162
	Easy brand imitation.	0.162162	1.5	0.243243
	Changeable government regulations	0.108108	3	0.324324
	People thirst for variety of flavors and presentations	0.108108	2	0.216216
Number of Opportunities and Threats		0.995733	2.3	2.98293

Summarised from various sources according to the views of the EFAS IFAS SWOT analysis matrix SWOT analysis compares external factors of opportunities and threats with internal factors of strengths and weaknesses. The internal factors are entered into a matrix called the Internal Strategic Factor Matrix or IFAS (Internal Strategic Factor Analysis Summary). The external factors are entered into a matrix called the External Strategic Factor Matrix or EFAS (External Strategic Factor Analysis Summary) [17].

Once the internal and external strategic factor matrices have been completed, the results are entered into a quantitative model, the SWOT matrix, to formulate the company's competitive strategy.

3.2.3 SWOT Analysis

Table 6. Food Business SWOT Strategy.

<p>Internal and External Factors of the Food Service Business</p>	<p>Streight (S)</p> <p>Flavor and serving innovations Raw materials are easy to find Stable raw material prices Raw materials are easy to find</p>	<p>Weakness (W)</p> <p>Limited product durability Marketing away from the big city Lack of knowledge of hygienic production processes Lack of capital</p>
<p>Opportunities (O)</p> <p>High public interest Utilization of digital technology Marketing help from the community Lifestyle shift towards culinary</p>	<p>SO Strategy</p> <p>Increasing innovation to strengthen the use of technology. Improving the price and quality of raw materials in the context of marketing expansion and lifestyle changes</p>	<p>WO Strategy</p> <p>Minimizing low-durability products to increase public interest through the use of technology. Seeking capital and increasing knowledge for marketing expansion.</p>
<p>Threats (T)</p> <p>Characteristics of people who are easily bored with one type of product Easy brand imitation. Changeable government regulations People thirst for variety of flavors and presentations</p>	<p>ST Strategy</p> <p>Strengthening raw materials and innovation in overcoming boredom and brand imitation attacks. Increasing product prices to beautify the presentation and harmonize the changeable government rules.</p>	<p>WT Strategy</p> <p>Reduce the marketing of certain products outside the city to overcome customer boredom. Suppressing the variety of flavors and variety of servings so that capital can be satisfied.</p>

Source: Processed data.

From the data processed above, it was obtained:

SO STRATEGY:

1. Increasing innovation to strengthen the use of technology.
2. Improving the price and quality of raw materials in the context of marketing expansion and lifestyle changes

ST STRATEGY:

1. Strengthening raw materials and innovation in overcoming boredom and brand imitation attacks.
2. Increasing product prices to enhance presentation and harmonize changeable government regulations

WO STRATEGY:

1. Minimizing low-durability products to increase public interest through the use of technology.
2. Seeking capital and increasing knowledge for marketing expansion.

WT STRATEGY:

1. Reduce the marketing of certain products outside the city to overcome customer boredom.
2. Suppressing the variety of flavors and variety of servings so that capital can be satisfied.

Nevertheless, to use a competitive strategy, it is determined to choose a generic competitive strategy. Because the risks that occur in the culinary business world if implementing a cost advantage strategy cannot last long, so if the food and beverage business that cannot last for a long time uses a cost advantage strategy, it will be considered vulnerable to losses. Another disadvantage of using a generic competitive strategy is that it is easy for competitors to imitate the type and uniqueness of food and beverages. So this uniqueness can be superior in terms of recipes that use hidden recipes. If the culinary business uses a focus strategy, it may not attract consumers. More than that, if the focus is only on one product, consumers can be sure to feel bored. This happens to some culinary businesses that only last some time with the same product/service. Let's take a look at the following description in Figure 2.

Porter's Five Generic Strategies

Target Scope	Advantage	
	Low Cost	Product Uniqueness
Broad (Industry Wide)	Cost Leadership Strategy	Differentiation Strategy
Narrow (Market Segment)	Focus Strategy (low cost)	Focus Strategy (differentiation)

Fig. 2. Formulation of competitive strategies in the food business (F&B). Source: Kompasiana ([K9] "Porter's Five Generic Strategies" in the Food Business (F&B). (2023).

Further reviewed in the chart if the food service business uses a business competition strategy, it will be found [18]:

- a. Cost advantage: By offering a higher price if food products are limited, and can apply a low price if there are many products on the market. Of course, if a company implements a low-cost strategy, it must think about its production and operational costs.
- b. Differentiation: By maximizing the uniqueness of food or services. This uniqueness is differentiated from others for example with good customer service, maximized room interiors, technological features for ordering (with barcode scanning), the use of high-quality ingredients and a varied menu study.
- c. Focus. This food business can move towards high-quality products/services with a small volume. Food and beverage products/services are served with high quality service, special prices and limited quantities.
- d. Survive (a combination of strategies). It can be used by providing products with the best quality, good nutritional value, quality presentation but with a limited amount of price pressure.

4 Conclusion

Based on the comparison of the findings of previous and latest literature studies and the results of SWOT research, it can be concluded that generic competitive strategies with 4 (four) areas, namely cost advantage, differentiation, focus and survival, can be used as a benchmark for sustainable development in the food service industry. Actually, this study only wants to find out in a simple way what strategies should be used so that sustainable development in the food service business is in line with income feasibility, career feasibility and the local economy, but there must be implications for the study both theoretically, practically and methodologically, so a simple calculation of the EFAS and IFAS matrix is carried out that produces new ideas about what strategies should be used for the food service business.

It is worth noting that competitive strategy in the foodservice industry can play an important role or measure in achieving Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 8, which focuses on decent work and economic growth. Here are some ways in which competitive strategy can support this goal:

1. Increased productivity and efficiency through the use of technology such as food ordering and serving [19].
2. Creating decent jobs by encouraging entrepreneurship and supporting micro, small and medium enterprises in the food supply chain that can create more jobs.
3. Product and service innovation through the development of products and services.
4. Access to financial services (banking, cooperatives) by improving access to financial services for MSMEs in the food service sector in Ngawi District to support their growth and expansion.
5. By implementing these strategies, the foodservice industry can not only improve its competitiveness, but also contribute to the achievement of SDG 8 by creating decent jobs, supporting inclusive economic growth and encouraging sustainable business practices.

Otherwise that further findings were obtained, namely the generic competitive strategy that plays an important role in connecting sustainable economic growth in the food service sector should get positive input from the economic growth of the region,

In the Ngawi area, in particular, it can be seen in all the data tables above that the good performance of the food service business, supported by an effective competitive strategy and contributing to economic growth equally. A successful food service business will drive the creation of jobs, create demand, and make investment better. And also to our knowledge, this is the first comprehensive study to address all of the abovementioned issues using online reviews, which precisely shapes the uniqueness of this study. [20]

Furthermore competitive strategies in the form of focus, differentiation, centering on costs and survival can be said to increase productivity and worker income [21]. So that it can help create an environment that supports sustainable economic growth. This of course supports Porter's theory, namely the study of generic strategies is something that must be considered. In its collaboration with food service business people, it is aligned with the implications in the real world, namely in small and medium business products / services. The response is always positive.

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