

STRATEGIES FOR OPTIMIZING THE DISTRIBUTION CHANNELS OF RISOL MAYO MICRO, SMALL, AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES (MSMEs) IN MEDAN

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Abstract: *This study aims to analyze the channel optimization strategy of Risol Mayo MSMEs in Medan to expand market reach and improve consumer accessibility. The research method uses a descriptive qualitative approach through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. The results show that channel optimization can be achieved through the integration of online and offline channels, the use of digital platforms such as WhatsApp Business, Instagram, and marketplaces, and the organization of a region-based distribution system. Strengthening partnerships with local resellers has also proven effective in expanding marketing reach. In addition, service quality, response speed, and product information availability are important factors in improving consumer accessibility. This strategy has an impact on increasing product visibility, ease of ordering, and market expansion, thereby strengthening business competitiveness and sustainability.*

Keywords: *channel optimization, product accessibility, marketing strategy.*

Introduction

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) play an important role in the regional economy, including in the city of Medan, which is known as one of the centers of growth for the culinary sector. The development of culinary MSMEs is driven by changes in consumption patterns, with people increasingly favoring practical and easily accessible food products. One product that has seen an increase in demand is risol mayo, which is affordable and has a taste that suits the preferences of local consumers. However, amid increasingly fierce business competition and shifting consumer behavior toward digital platforms, risol mayo MSMEs are not only required to maintain product quality but must also be able to manage and optimize marketing and distribution channels to reach consumers more broadly and efficiently, as stated by (Wicaksono et al., 2024)

Previous studies have shown that marketing channel optimization strategies have a significant impact on the performance of MSMEs. (Nadia & Silvi, 2024) explains that integrating online and offline channels can increase market reach and strengthen customer relationships. Research (Fasrian & Elsyah, 2024) also found that the use of social media and marketplaces had a positive impact on increasing the visibility and sales of culinary MSMEs. In

addition, (U. Sudjana, 2019) emphasizing that cooperation with local resellers plays an important role in expanding product distribution, especially for micro-scale food MSMEs.

However, most of these studies are still general in nature and have not specifically examined risol mayo MSMEs in the local context of Medan City. (Wendy, 2023) emphasizes that consumer characteristics and regional conditions greatly influence the effectiveness of MSME marketing channels. In addition, the use of the Business Model Canvas approach in analyzing culinary MSME channel strategies is still relatively limited, especially for snack products. This indicates a research gap that needs to be further explored in a contextual and specific manner.

The novelty of this research lies in the analysis of the optimization strategy for the risol mayo MSME channel in Medan City by integrating online and offline channels based on the Business Model Canvas framework, as suggested by (Nur & Hety, 2020). This study not only identifies the types of channels used, but also evaluates the effectiveness of their management in improving product accessibility, business visibility, and the sustainability of local culinary MSMEs.

This study focuses on analyzing the optimization strategies of marketing and distribution channels for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) selling risol mayo in Medan City. The objectives of this study are to identify the channels used, analyze the optimization strategies applied, and assess their impact on product accessibility and business competitiveness. The research questions focus on how SMEs selling risol mayo manage and optimize their marketing and distribution channels. The method used is a descriptive qualitative approach through interviews, observation, and documentation, as recommended by (Sugiyono, 2013).

Literature Review

Marketing and distribution channel optimization strategies have become a major focus in the development of MSMEs, particularly in the culinary sector. According to (Andeka et al., 2025), Marketing channels not only serve as a means of product distribution, but also as a means of creating value and relationships with customers. In the context of food MSMEs, the effectiveness of channels is largely determined by the ability of business actors to adapt channels to consumer characteristics and local market conditions. (Maya & Putri, 2024) emphasizes that proper channel management can improve product accessibility while strengthening the competitiveness of MSMEs amid increasingly fierce competition.

A number of studies show that the integration of online and offline channels (omnichannel) has a positive impact on the performance of culinary MSMEs. (Leni, 2021) found that the use of social media and digital platforms combined with direct sales can expand market reach and increase product visibility. (Zafar et al., 2025) also stated that the use of marketplaces and delivery services makes it easier for consumers to access MSME products. Nevertheless, (U. Sudjana, 2019) emphasizing that offline channels such as local resellers and direct sales continue to play an important role in building trust and closeness with customers, especially in local markets.

The Business Model Canvas (BMC) approach is widely used in MSME research to analyze the alignment between channels, customer segments, and value propositions. (Nur & Hety, 2020) explains that the channels element in BMC helps MSMEs identify the most effective and efficient channels for reaching consumers. (Restiana et al., 2025) adding that channel optimization supported by service quality and information responsiveness can increase customer

satisfaction and loyalty. However, studies that specifically link channel optimization with risol mayo MSMEs in Medan City are still limited, so this study attempts to fill that gap.

Method

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study design, as recommended by (Degdo et al., 2024) to examine the phenomenon in depth in a real-world context. Case studies were chosen because this research focuses on analyzing the channel optimization strategies implemented by small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) selling risol mayo in Medan, which has specific market and consumer characteristics. The qualitative approach allows researchers to gain a comprehensive understanding of the marketing and distribution channel management practices carried out by SMEs.

Data collection techniques were conducted through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation, as stated by (Maulida et al., 2024). Semi-structured interviews were conducted with risol mayo MSME players to gather information related to the types of channels used, optimization strategies applied, and the benefits and obstacles in channel management. Observations were made to directly observe marketing and distribution activities, both through offline channels such as direct sales and resellers, as well as online channels through social media and delivery service platforms. Documentation was used as supporting data in the form of digital promotional archives, photos of business activities, and notes related to product distribution.

Data analysis was performed using qualitative descriptive analysis through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing, as explained by (B.Miles et al., 2014). The data obtained was analyzed systematically to identify channel optimization strategy patterns and their effectiveness levels. Furthermore, the analysis results were interpreted by linking empirical findings to channel optimization concepts and the Business Model Canvas framework, particularly in the elements of channels, customer segments, and customer relationships, thereby providing a comprehensive understanding of the channel optimization strategy of risol mayo MSMEs in Medan City.

Result and Discussion

The results of the study show that risol mayo MSMEs in Medan City have implemented channel optimization strategies through the integrated use of offline and online channels. Offline channels include direct sales through stands, kiosks, and cooperation with local resellers in schools, campuses, and office areas. Meanwhile, online channels are optimized through social media such as Instagram and WhatsApp Business as well as delivery service platforms. This pattern is in line with the findings (Leni, 2021) which states that online-offline channel integration can expand the market reach of MSMEs and increase product exposure amid local culinary competition.

In terms of management effectiveness, the channel optimization strategy implemented has proven to increase the accessibility of risol mayo products for consumers. Consumers have the flexibility to choose how they want to make their purchases, either in person or online, with relatively fast response times. Social media plays a role not only as a promotional tool, but also as an interactive communication medium for conveying product information and promotions, as well as receiving customer feedback. These findings reinforce the results of the study (Restiana et al., 2025) which emphasizes that response speed and clarity of product information are

important factors in increasing the satisfaction and loyalty of consumers of digital-based MSMEs.

Channel optimization strategies also provide significant benefits for the sustainability of risol mayo MSMEs. The integration of various channels allows businesses to reach a wider customer segment, increase brand visibility, and drive sales volume growth. In addition, the presence of local resellers helps shorten the distribution chain and bring products closer to consumers. This is in line with (Nisha Ayla Meilani et al., 2025) which states that local distribution partnerships contribute positively to channel efficiency and strengthen the competitiveness of MSMEs.



Picture 1. Risol Mayo Medan products



Picture 2. Risol Mayo Medan products

However, this study also identified a number of challenges in managing channel optimization strategies. The main challenges include limited human resources to consistently manage digital channels, fluctuations in service costs on messaging platforms, and the need to maintain product quality consistency as distribution expands. (Farida et al., 2025) emphasizes that the digitization of MSME channels must be balanced with operational readiness and efficient cost management so that channel optimization strategies can be implemented sustainably. Therefore, strengthening the capacity of MSME players in channel management and selecting the right distribution strategies is key to long-term success.

Conclusion

This study concludes that channel optimization strategies play an important role in improving product accessibility and the competitiveness of risol mayo MSMEs in Medan City. The integration of offline and online channels allows MSME players to reach a wider range of consumers and tailor their services to the needs of a dynamic market. These findings show that proper channel management not only has an impact on increasing sales, but also on the sustainability of culinary MSMEs.

The results of the study show that the use of offline channels such as direct sales and cooperation with local resellers remains the main foundation for the distribution of risol mayo products. These channels play a role in building consumer trust and maintaining proximity to the local market. On the other hand, online channels through social media and delivery service platforms serve as strategic supporters that increase product visibility and ease of access for consumers, especially from the student, university student, and worker segments.

From an effectiveness perspective, the channel optimization strategy implemented has proven to improve service speed, order flexibility, and the quality of communication with consumers. The

use of social media as a means of promotion and interaction allows MSME players to respond more quickly to customer needs and feedback. This strengthens customer relationships and encourages loyalty, which are important factors in the culinary MSME competition in Medan. However, this study also found a number of challenges in implementing channel optimization strategies. Limited human resources, suboptimal digital management capabilities, and operational costs on online platforms are obstacles faced by MSME players. These challenges indicate that channel optimization requires managerial capacity support and careful cost planning so that the strategies implemented can be sustainable. However, this study also found a number of challenges in implementing channel optimization strategies. Limited human resources, suboptimal digital management capabilities, and operational costs on online platforms are obstacles faced by MSME players. These challenges show that channel optimization requires managerial capacity support and careful cost planning so that the strategies implemented can be sustainable.

Overall, this study confirms that a planned and integrated channel optimization strategy is key to strengthening the business model of risol mayo MSMEs in Medan. The practical implications of this study are the need to improve the digital literacy of MSME players and select channels that are most suitable for the characteristics of the target market. Further research is expected to develop a quantitative approach or expand the object of study to other culinary MSMEs to enrich the findings and generalization of the research results.

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