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## A Qualitative Research on the Sustainable Fashion Business of Local Brands in Indonesia

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### Abstrak

Industri fashion saat ini mengalami peningkatan seiring dengan bertumbuhnya merek fashion lokal yang menarik minat generasi Z. Terdapat banyak merek pakaian lokal di Indonesia yang menawarkan harga relatif terjangkau dengan kualitas yang baik, sesuai dengan daya beli konsumen. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengukur bagaimana perspektif generasi Z di Indonesia terkait dengan bisnis fashion, merancang strategi bisnis berkelanjutan yang relevan untuk beberapa tahun ke depan, serta bagaimana merek fashion lokal di Indonesia menghadapi dan mengantisipasi tantangan berdasarkan perspektif generasi Z mengenai bisnis fashion dan produk lokal, terkait dengan perilaku konsumen dan niat pembelian. Data penelitian kualitatif diperoleh melalui wawancara mendalam dan diskusi kelompok fokus dengan 10 informan generasi Z, 5 pemilik merek lokal, dan 6 informan dari generasi lainnya. Metode pengolahan data kualitatif menggunakan anotasi data, buku koda, deskripsi mendalam, dan kategorisasi dari hasil wawancara mendalam dan diskusi kelompok fokus yang mengaitkan indikator dengan alat strategi bisnis yang terdiri dari beberapa tahap. Analisis data dilakukan melalui 3 tahap, yaitu tahap input, tahap pemadanan, dan tahap keputusan. Temuan penelitian ini merekomendasikan bahwa perspektif generasi Z terhadap bisnis fashion mempengaruhi keberlanjutan merek lokal produk fashion di Indonesia dalam menghadapi era digital yang semakin berkembang, serta pentingnya strategi pemasaran untuk merek lokal agar dapat memperoleh nilai dan profit yang lebih besar dalam menjalankan bisnis di tahun-tahun mendatang.

**Kata kunci:** *Penelitian Kualitatif, Berkelanjutan, Bisnis Mode, Merek Lokal.*

### Abstract

*The fashion industry is currently experiencing an increase due to an increase in local fashion brands which are of interest to generation Z. There are many local clothing brands in Indonesia with relatively cheap prices with good quality which are the purchasing power of consumers, This study aims to measure how the perspective of generation Z in Indonesia relate to fashion business, design sustainable business strategies that are relevant for the next few years and how the local fashion brands in Indonesia face and anticipate challenges according to the perspective of generation Z in Indonesia regarding fashion business and local products related to customer behavior and purchase intention. Qualitative research data were obtained through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with 10 generation Z informants, 5 local brand owner informants and 6 other generations of informants. Qualitative data processing methods use data annotations, coda books, thick descriptions and categorization from in-depth interview and focus group discussion results of indicators linked to business strategy tools consists of several stages. Data analysis was obtained through 3 stages, namely the input stage, matching stage and decision stage.. The findings of this study recommend that generation Z's perspective on fashion business influence the sustainability of local brands of fashion products in Indonesia in facing an increasingly digital era in marketing products for local brands to gain more value and profit in doing business in the next few years.*

**Keywords:** *Qualitative Research, Sustainable, Fashion Business, Local Brands.*

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## INTRODUCTION

The fashion industry is currently experiencing an increase due to an increase in local fashion brands which are of interest to generation Z. Generation Z in Indonesia amounts to 23.44% of the total population of Indonesia in 2022 (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2023). Generation Z tends to choose local brand fashion products with product quality that is the same as luxury brands, which is the competitiveness and confidence to use them as a benchmark for Generation Z to buy local brand products (Syah et al., 2022).

The millennials are an important cohort in luxury market, because of their buying power and the power of social media interaction and factors underlying their attitudes toward luxury fashion brands and online purchase intentions (Burnasheva et al., 2019). Generation Z and Millennials have gained significant influence over older generations, set new trends across all industries and market and concentrated in their hands considerable purchasing power (Topalova & Todorova, 2021). Generation Z and Millennials can compare product quality not only based on a product's brand image but also based on the uniqueness and centrality of a fashion product (Mayasari et al., 2023).

Social media and eWOM have a significant impact on Generation Z's trust and loyalty toward coffee brands. This influence may vary depending on how companies utilize technology and digital platforms to communicate with their customers (Salmiah et al., 2024). Local brand owners should develop good communication especially with Generation Z, such as TikTok and Instagram have increased and are widely used by Generation Z. Instagram is the media that shows a large difference among the usage groups and highly effective in appealing to visual information, and is said to be suitable for marketing cosmetics and clothing (Mishima & Asahi, 2022).

Perceived quality is the relationship between products and services, or services provided to consumers can meet consumer expectations and satisfaction (Budiono et al., 2022). Perceived quality has both a direct and indirect impact via the variables of brand attitude and perceived value and has a positive impact on consumer purchase intention toward fashion goods (Soh et al., 2017).

Generation Z's buying power for local brand fashion products is based on how the marketing strategy carried out by business owners can become a benchmark for Generation Z to make purchases. Social media usage activities provide the audience with relevant information and increase interest in the users for marketing strategy (Chen et al., 2020). Customer Behavior reflects to attitudes, preferences, intentions and decisions in the marketplace (Kobia & Liu, 2016). This is related to the customer behavior of Generation Z in their interest in local fashion products in Indonesia and its important for the future market and the purchase intention for the next generation especially Gen Z, they will have their perspective about the product, brand value, quality and how they trust to local brand in Indonesia.

Pre-purchase and post-purchase customer behavior engagement and interactions among users in communities on the Internet are essential factors to be understood in this ecosystem (Saura et al., 2020). The local brand can also prioritize local sourcing to support fair trade practices, promote ethical labor conditions, and engage consumers by educating them about sustainable choices, digitalization and innovation help improve efficiency and transparency, while collaboration with local communities (Karan & Kateryna, 2018). The centrality of a fashion brand influences customer behavior and purchase intention (Sarkar & Sarkar, 2017).

Purchase intention and customer loyalty are fundamental ingredients in the recipe for creating a resilient brand (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Purchase Intention Generation Z will be felt to be influential by customer behavior to give a sense of trust to local fashion

products in Indonesia. It is important for producers, retailers and brand owners to build networks and encourage innovation to face sustainable challenges (Mukendi et al., 2020), to create and sustain a competitive advantage by choosing the right strategies (David & David, 2022).

Business owners are particularly interested in understanding what their customers and the public are saying about their business related to purchase intention (Tuten, 2023). A company's ability to outperform its competitors in terms of superior performance, whether through lower costs, better products or services, or differentiation that is difficult for competitors to replicate and achieved through product innovation, efficient resource management, effective marketing strategies, and the development of unique capabilities that are hard for competitors to imitate (Thompson et al., 2019).

This research is more specific in providing statements on data processing related to qualitative data processing, this research takes data through in-depth interviews with Gen Z customers, local fashion business owners and other generations related to the fashion business. These factors support the writer to further analyze the perspective about local fashion brands in Indonesia with the perspectives of Generation Z, local brand owner and other generations in Indonesia. This study continues previous research related to fashion business. In line with the development of the Indonesian fashion market, purpose of this study aims to measure how the perspective of generation Z in Indonesia relate to fashion business, design sustainable business strategies that are relevant for the next few years and how the local fashion brands in Indonesia face and anticipate challenges according to the perspective of generation Z in Indonesia regarding fashion business and local products related to customer behavior and purchase intention.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

Qualitative research focuses on understanding people's experiences and social phenomena through flexible, emergent designs, using techniques (Hennink et al., 2020). Gaining an in-depth understanding of social phenomena in their natural context, with the researcher serving as the primary instrument involved in data collection and analysis, using techniques such as in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and document analysis (Sugiyono, 2021). Qualitative research data were obtained through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with 10 generation Z informants, 5 local brand owner informants and 6 other generations of informants. To develop a business strategy using focus group discussion results and analysis through previous research and the fashion industry to compare local brands and luxury brands. Qualitative data processing methods use data annotations, coda books, thick descriptions and categorization from in-depth interview and focus group discussion results of indicators linked to business strategy tools consists of several stages. Data analysis was obtained through 3 stages, namely the input stage, matching stage and decision stage according to the qualitative analysis method for this study. There are EFE Matrix, IFE Matrix, Competitive Profile Matrix (CPM), Internal-External Matrix (IE Matrix), SWOT Matrix and Grand Strategy Matrix.

**Table 1. Research Framework**

<b>Stage 1: Input Stage</b>		
<b>External Factor Evaluation Matrix (EFE Matrix)</b>	Internal Factor Evaluation Matrix (IFE Matrix)	Competitive Profile Matrix (CPM)
<b>Stage 2: Matching Stage</b>		
<b>Internal-External Matrix (IE Matrix)</b>	Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats Matrix (SWOT Matrix)	Grand Strategy Matrix
<b>Stage 3: Decision Stage</b>		
<b>Quantitative Strategic Planning Matrix (QSPM)</b>		

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The contents of the manuscript are arranged systematically and sequentially. Results and discussion are not separate. For research results, the article format consists of an introduction (background and theoretical studies can be written together in the introduction if any), methods, results and discussion ending with conclusions, suggestions can also be written. While the results of the literature review in the format of the manuscript consist of an introduction (urgency of the study or background), methods, results of the study and discussion, and conclusions.

Qualitative research data were obtained through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with 10 generation Z informants, 5 local brand owner informants and 6 other generations of informants. To develop a business strategy using focus group discussion results and analysis through previous research and the fashion industry to compare local brands and luxury brands. Qualitative data processing methods use data annotations, coda books, thick descriptions and categorization from in-depth interview and focus group discussion results of indicators linked to business strategy tools consists of several stages. Data analysis was obtained through 3 stages, namely the input stage, matching stage and decision stage according to the qualitative analysis method for this study. There are EFE Matrix, IFE Matrix, Competitive Profile Matrix (CPM), Internal-External Matrix (IE Matrix), SWOT Matrix and Grand Strategy Matrix

### Stage 1: Input Stage

#### External Factor Evaluation Matrix (EFE Matrix)

**Table 11. EFE Matrix Analysis**

EFE Matrix				
External Factors	Significant Value	Weight	Rating	Weight
<b>Opportunities</b>				
The use of social media for local product promotion activities is an opportunity for local fashion brand owners with many Indonesians spending their time using the internet.	8	0.13	4	0.50
Product quality that does not implement "fast fashion" so that local products are currently driving sustainable fashion that is in line with ethical fashion.	9	0.14	4	0.56

<b>EFE Matrix</b>				
<b>External Factors</b>	<b>Significant Value</b>	<b>Weight</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Weight</b>
Local products prioritize custom products adapted to customer wishes or current market trends so that local products have their own uniqueness.	9	0.14	3	0.42
With the existence of local fashion products, the Indonesian people are more responsive to loving local products created by the creativity of the Indonesian people who are included in small and medium enterprises (SMEs).	8	0.13	3	0.38
<b>Threats</b>				
Competition with foreign brands or luxury brands entering the Indonesian market.	8	0.13	2	0.25
Thrifting sales of luxury brand products that are sold cheaper.	8	0.13	2	0.25
The circulation of fashion products that are easy to imitate.	7	0.11	1	0.11
Fashion trends change very quickly and many of them cannot be adjusted to suit the tastes of each customer.	7	0.11	1	0.11
<b>Total</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>2.58</b>

The EFE matrix is used to measure the external factors of local fashion brands. The total weight value in this matrix is the result of the significant value which is the sum of the total weight multiplication and ranking of each local fashion brand external factor. The resulting EFE matrix value is 2.58.

**Internal Factor Evaluation Matrix (IFE Matrix)**

**Table 12. IFE Matrix Analysis**

<b>IFE MATRIX</b>				
<b>Internal Factors</b>	<b>Significant Value</b>	<b>Weight</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Weight</b>
<b>Strengths</b>				
Local products offer products that adapt to the needs, tastes and market perspective of customers in Indonesia.	8	0.12	3	0.37
Affordable prices with authentic quality and design from casual to formal which creates branding and product differentiation.	9	0.14	4	0.55
Attractive promotional patterns such as flash sales and discounts attract consumer behavior.	9	0.14	4	0.55
Producing your own clothes according to local demand so you get a higher profit margin.	9	0.14	4	0.55
<b>Weaknesses</b>				
Intense competition between local brands and luxury brands has an effect on brand image.	8	0.12	2	0.25
New brand credibility and attract customers who are already loyal to other brands.	8	0.12	2	0.25

IFE MATRIX				
Internal Factors	Significant Value	Weight	Rating	Weight
Fashion trends change quickly and local products have their own unique selling products (UPS).	7	0.11	1	0.11
It's rare for customers to provide references or recommendations for local products.	7	0.11	1	0.11
<b>Total</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>2.74</b>

The IFE matrix is used to measure the influence of internal factors from local fashion brands. The score results in this matrix are the sum of the total multiplication of the weights and ratings of each local fashion brand internal factor. The IFE matrix score result is 2.74.

### Stage 2: Matching Stage

#### Internal-External Matrix (IE Matrix)

Table 13. IE Matrix Analysis

	Total IFE		
	Strong (3 to 4)	Average (2 to 2,99)	Weak (1 to 1,99)
Total EFE High (3 to 4) Medium (2 to 2,99) Low (1 to 1,99)	I	II	III
	IV	V	VI
	VII	VIII	IX

Based on the results of the IFE and EFE matrix analysis in this study, the IFE matrix score for local brand fashion internal factors was 2.58 and the EFE matrix score for local brand fashion external factors was 2.74. This score shows that internal and external factors at local fashion brands are in an average position. The average position is in quadrant V. Quadrant V provides an assessment that local fashion brands are in a hold and hold position or it can be said that the company has established a stability strategy which means the company can carry out market penetration and product development.

Based on the analysis results from the IE matrix, local fashion brands can maximize their market penetration strategy by expanding the scope of the market share of fashion products owned by local brands as fashionpreneurs in offering locally made products with different uniqueness compared to luxury brands and providing understanding to the people of Indonesia or the world that local Indonesian fashion products have good quality, authentic designs at affordable prices. Efforts to take advantage of product development

opportunities and strategies can be carried out both internally and externally. This can be done by maintaining the quality of local products by developing sustainable fashion in accordance with ethical fashion (Mukendi et al., 2020).

In accordance with government directions, fashionpreneurs must implement sustainable fashion as a product development strategy to reduce garment waste, the entry of foreign products that use "fast fashion" and used products from luxury brands. In addition, in the local brand marketing strategy in the current digital era where the majority of people today, namely Generation Z, use electronic devices and spend more time using them and playing the internet and initiates that Generation Z is more dominant in online shopping due to several supporting factors, namely easy access to choose products, payment system, time efficiency.

Content marketing to market fashion products can also be done through social media, where access is free and can cover all generations of customers, such as making product review videos, doing live selling on social media such as Tik Tok, Instagram or e-commerce platforms that are sufficient for doing live selling. Trend adjustments also need to be made because the fashion industry is an industry that never stops providing product innovation from Indonesian designers.

To anticipate the existence of counterfeit products, local fashion brand owners can register each product design to have copyright if the product is limited edition, but do not deny that mass-produced products also register copyright, depending on the business owner's decision to maintain the uniqueness of their product. In addition, in a financial strategy, with the production of their own clothes by local brands that have an impact on financial business, they can increase profits and minimize production costs. To anticipate financial problems in production, business owners can offer custom products to customers to suit their tastes and needs, another thing that can be done is to conduct a survey first with customers or adapt to fashion trends that are in accordance with the fashion industry in Indonesia.

**Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats Matrix (SWOT Matrix)**

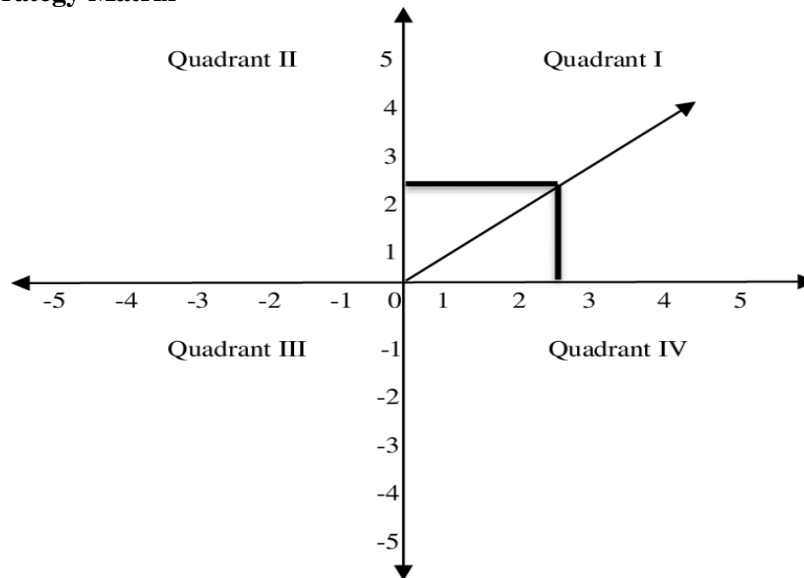
**Table 14. SWOT Matrix**

<b>Strategy-SO</b>	<b>Strategy-WO</b>
Branding and differentiation in local fashion brand products by offering fashion products at affordable prices with sustainable product quality.	The brand image of local fashion brands is still considered not equivalent to that of luxury brands, but this can be overcome with the "loving local products" movement. In this way it is hoped that it can increase people's awareness of being interested in local fashion products.
Attractive consumer behavior regarding discounts, product reviews, live selling by using social media to become an interactive platform for local brands and customers as marketing tools efficiently through an online approach.	Building trust in new brands or local brands to attract customers can be done through a digital marketing approach with product introductions via social media where people are active and interactive on online platforms.
<b>Strategy-ST</b> Minimizing the existence of imitation products by producing their own clothes according to market trends can minimize production costs that affect pricing. Fashion trends that change rapidly and continue to innovate maximize the efforts of local fashion brands to continue to carry out product	<b>Strategy-WT</b> Tight competition between local brands and luxury brands is a weakness and challenge for local brands to survive and evaluate their business models intensively or periodically. Local brand fashion products that have been adapted to trends do not deny that this industry is very quick to update products so that local products that already have a USP feel threatened and become a weakness,

development with an approach through product testing, trend analysis of customer wishes, usage needs.

this can be a reference for local fashion brands to anticipate and remain confident that their products will get the opportunity to increase its credibility.

**Grand Strategy Matrix**



**Figure 5. Grand Strategy Matrix**

Based on the results of the Grand Strategy Matrix, local fashion brands are in Quadrant 1 because they have a strong competitive position along with increasing market share and product development. So local brand fashion is in a strategic position because it is in an industry that has strong and fast competition and local brand fashion is a player in the fashion industry that makes local products so that they can be seen by the world community and prioritizes the value of loving local brand products to the Indonesian people. Local fashion brands are in quadrant 1 position, so that the company remains in that position, local fashion brands can concentrate on the current market, namely market penetration and product development strategies are the right strategies for companies in offering products with the best quality, unique designs, affordable prices according to local demands, trends and market attractiveness.

**Stage 3: Decision Stage**

**Quantitative Strategic Planning Matrix (QSPM)**

**Table 15. QSPM Analysis**

Alternative Strategies	Weight	Market Penetration		Product Development	
		AS	TAS	AS	TAS
Local products offer products that adapt to the needs, tastes and market perspective of customers in Indonesia.	0.12	3	0.37	4	0.49
Affordable prices with authentic quality and design from casual to formal which creates branding and product differentiation.	0.14	3	0.42	4	0.55
Attractive promotional patterns such as flash sales and discounts attract consumer behavior.	0.14	4	0.55	3	0.42
Producing your own clothes according to local demand so you get a higher profit margin.	0.14	3	0.42	4	0.55



Alternative Strategies	Weight	Market Penetration		Product Development	
		AS	TAS	AS	TAS
<b>Strengths</b>					
<b>Weaknesses</b>					
Intense competition between local brands and luxury brands has an effect on brand image.	0.12	4	0.49	3	0.37
New brand credibility and attract customers who are already loyal to other brands.	0.12	4	0.49	3	0.37
Fashion trends change quickly and local products have their own unique selling products (UPS).	0.11	4	0.43	4	0.43
It's rare for customers to provide references or recommendations for local products.	0.11	3	0.32	3	0.32
<b>TOTAL IFE</b>	<b>1</b>				
<b>Opportunities</b>					
The use of social media for local product promotion activities is an opportunity for local fashion brand owners with many Indonesians spending their time using the internet.	0.13	4	0.50	3	0.38
Product quality that does not implement "fast fashion" so that local products are currently driving sustainable fashion that is in line with ethical fashion.	0.14	3	0.42	4	0.56
Local products prioritize custom products adapted to customer wishes or current market trends so that local products have their own uniqueness.	0.14	3	0.42	4	0.56
With the existence of local fashion products, the Indonesian people are more responsive to loving local products created by the creativity of the Indonesian people who are included in small and medium enterprises (SMEs).	0.13	4	0.50	3	0.38
<b>Threats</b>					
Competition with foreign brands or luxury brands entering the Indonesian market.	0.13	4	0.50	3	0.38
Thrifting sales of luxury brand products that are sold cheaper.	0.13	4	0.50	3	0.38
The circulation of fashion products that are easy to imitate.	0.11	3	0.33	4	0.44
Fashion trends change very quickly and many of them cannot be adjusted to suit the tastes of each customer.	0.11	3	0.33	3	0.33
<b>TOTAL EFE</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>6.99</b>		<b>6.90</b>

Based on the results of the QSPM analysis conducted through in-depth interviews with Focus Group Discussions with 10 generation Z resource persons, 5 local fashion brand business owner resource persons and 6 other generation resource persons, it is known that the market penetration strategy obtained a total score of 6.99 while the product development strategy obtained a total score from 6.90. This shows that the market penetration strategy is a more attractive alternative strategy compared to the product development strategy for local fashion brands as a fashionpreneur.

With the results of the QSPM analysis, market penetration strategies are more precise, because they describe the strategies used by local fashion brands. The company is more focused on market penetration strategies considering the increasing level of competition for fashion brands in Indonesia. This can be achieved with a combination of competitive pricing strategies, promotion through social media, collaboration with other

industries or other fashion brands. Thus, the market penetration strategy was chosen precisely to gain market share that had never been reached by local fashion brands before.

## CONCLUSION

The purchasing behavior of Generation Z regarding local fashion brand products is influenced by several factors, including the search for information about the brand's history, the brand itself, and product segmentation prior to making a purchase. This approach is taken to minimize feelings of dissatisfaction with the products. Generation Z anticipates this by conducting reviews and analyses beforehand; the quality of local fashion brand products and product convenience serve as benchmarks for Generation Z's purchasing decisions. Their intention to repurchase will arise if they feel comfortable with the fashion products offered by local brands. Additionally, the uniqueness of product designs and promotions on social media also capture Generation Z's attention in making purchasing decisions. Moreover, consumer behavior significantly influences the purchasing intentions of Generation Z, who increasingly seek and buy local brand products through online platforms. This presents an opportunity for business owners to extensively develop their online market by leveraging available e-commerce platforms.

Based on qualitative analysis using business strategy tools—including the EFE Matrix, IFE Matrix, Competitive Profile Matrix (CPM), Internal-External Matrix (IE Matrix), SWOT Matrix, and Grand Strategy Matrix—local fashion brands can maximize their market penetration strategies by expanding the market share of their fashion products. As fashionpreneurs, they can offer locally made products with distinct uniqueness compared to luxury brands, thereby educating both the Indonesian public and the global audience that local Indonesian fashion products possess good quality, authentic designs, and affordable prices. Implementing sustainable fashion as a product development strategy aims to reduce garment waste and address the influx of foreign products utilizing "fast fashion" and second-hand items from luxury brands. Additionally, in the current digital era, the marketing strategy for local brands can achieve efficiency through digital marketing via social media, reaching all customer generations. Local fashion brand owners can register each product design for copyright protection, especially for limited edition items. However, mass-produced products can also be registered for copyright, depending on the business owner's decision to maintain product uniqueness. Business owners can offer custom products tailored to customers' tastes and needs. Another strategy is to conduct surveys with customers or adapt to fashion trends that align with the fashion industry in Indonesia.

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