

## Digital Marketing Strategy Analysis of Hidden Farm Café as a Hidden Gem in Bandung

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### ABSTRACT

Indonesia's culinary industry has grown significantly, especially among ventures that adopt unique concepts to attract consumers. One emerging trend is the "hidden gem" approach, where remote locations are embraced as part of a brand's charm. In Bandung, a city known for its creative energy, the Dago Pakar area offers a perfect setting for such businesses. Hidden Farm Café exemplifies this trend, combining a secluded location with organic homemade meals and a cozy atmosphere that appeals to the growing demand for "healing" experiences. The Café leverages social media, particularly TikTok and Instagram, to reach wider audiences and promote its unique appeal. It has successfully attracted communities such as cyclists and young urbanites seeking authentic culinary destinations. However, this study finds that Hidden Farm Café's digital marketing remains underutilized due to inconsistent content and weak social media strategy, limiting its outreach and growth potential. Despite these challenges, Hidden Farm Café showcases how culinary businesses can thrive off the beaten path through strong brand identity and targeted digital promotion. With improved digital marketing execution, the hidden gem model can offer a sustainable path for creative culinary ventures in Bandung and beyond.

**Keywords:** Digital Marketing; Hidden Gem; STP Analysis; 4A Marketing; Culinary Business

### INTRODUCTION

Indonesia's culinary business industry has seen significant growth in recent years, with a rising number of food ventures offering unique concepts to attract consumer interest. One popular approach is the hidden gem concept, where culinary businesses located in secluded or unconventional areas are not viewed as disadvantaged, but instead as having a distinct appeal. This strategy aims to provide customers with exclusive and differentiated experiences, thereby increasing visitation and engagement (Wahyudi et al., 2024).

Indonesia's culinary business thrives through integrating gastronomy and branding. Highlighting authentic, diverse local foods, the country can attract global tourists. Involving communities and preserving traditional practices strengthen culinary identity. With strategic branding inspired by global examples, Indonesia holds strong potential to become a leading, sustainable culinary destination worldwide (Dalem, 2021; Lesmana, 2023; Untari & Satria, 2025), and Bandung is one of the cities in Indonesia that successfully integrating this element.

Culinary spot in Bandung thrives with urban migration and tourism, offering humble experiences that fulfill leisure needs and position street vending as a valuable part of the city's tourism landscape. They navigate urban marginalization by building social infrastructure

through personal relationships, informal economic exchanges, and technology use. These subtle strategies allow them to resist displacement, challenge negative perceptions, and demonstrate that everyday street vending practices are complex, adaptive, and politically significant beyond formal-informal dichotomies in urban discourse (Malasan, 2017; Malasan, 2019).

In recent year, Bandung as one of Indonesia's renowned creative cities, serves as an ideal stage for the hidden gem concept to flourish. Known for its natural beauty, creative community, and cool climate, the city is a favorite tourist destination. The hidden gem concept adds an extra layer of appeal by aligning with Bandung's authentic and distinctive atmosphere. Creative innovations by Bandung's culinary entrepreneurs, such as modern packaging of traditional foods have successfully attracted both domestic and international tourists (Rukma & Narulita, 2018; Wahab et al., 2024).

In the Dago Pakar area, an uphill area in northern Bandung, many culinary businesses leverage the surrounding natural beauty as part of the overall customer experience. Situated on elevated terrain with cool air and easy access to both the city center and Bandung's main tourist hubs, Dago Pakar holds a unique advantage. The fresh air, panoramic views of Bandung, and tranquil ambiance make this area a magnet for culinary ventures. Food businesses located in Dago Pakar are well-positioned to offer a multi-sensory experience, allowing visitors not only to enjoy food and beverages but also to immerse themselves in a peaceful natural setting. This uniqueness presents a valuable opportunity for business owners to create memorable and emotionally resonant customer experiences.

Furthermore, the use of social media as a promotional tool plays a crucial role in the success of hidden gem culinary businesses (Setyanti, 2017). Labeling a place as a hidden gem is an effective digital marketing strategy, particularly in creating a buzz effect that promotes destinations through social media (Hayati, 2023). This approach boosts consumer interest in lesser-known spots that offer appealing locations or unique products. Many culinary businesses in the Dago Pakar area have adopted this very concept.

Hidden Farm Café is one such example of a culinary business in Bandung that applies the hidden gem strategy. Located in Dago Pakar, this café is tucked away in a relatively hidden spot, yet has managed to attract the attention of various customer segments from community groups to young people. The growing interest is largely driven by mentions of Hidden Farm Café on social media platforms promoting culinary tourism in Bandung, often highlighting it as one of the hidden gems in the Dago Pakar area.

However, it is important to ensure that the hidden gem label truly reflects an authentic added value. The term is sometimes misused to market ordinary places or products as if they were extraordinary. Therefore, business owners need to implement this concept carefully and meaningfully, ensuring it provides sustainable value to customers (Megawati et al., 2024). In this context, analyzing the business strategy of culinary ventures adopting the hidden gem concept, such as Hidden Farm Café in Bandung, is necessary to understand how digital marketing can be applied effectively. This study aims to provide insights for other culinary entrepreneurs who employ a similar approach, helping them to develop more accurate and impactful hidden gem-driven digital marketing strategies.

### **The Hidden Gem Concept in Culinary Business**

The concept of a hidden gem in the culinary business is rooted in the principle of creating unique and distinct experiences for consumers. The term refers to places or businesses that are not widely known but offer exceptional quality or experiences. As a branding strategy, hidden gem has proven effective in attracting younger generations who seek novel and authentic dining experiences.

In the Indonesian context, this concept has become increasingly relevant in line with the growing public preference for unique and memorable culinary experiences. Several dining establishments with a hidden gem theme benefit from an aura of exclusivity, which enhances their appeal and, over time, can even foster customer loyalty (Hayati, 2023). Supporting atmospheric elements, such as a secluded location or unconventional interior design, can be critical success factors in applying this concept within the culinary industry (Upward & Jones, 2016; Teece, 2014).

### **Segmenting, Targeting, and Positioning (STP)**

Segmenting, Targeting, and Positioning (STP) is a fundamental framework in marketing strategy. Segmenting refers to identifying groups of consumers that align with the unique selling proposition (USP) of a particular product or service. Targeting is the process of selecting the most appropriate segment(s) to serve, based on compatibility with the product offered. Finally, Positioning ensures that the product or service occupies a distinct place in the consumer's mind and offers a unique perspective or advantage compared to competitors (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

The STP framework is especially relevant in today's fragmented and competitive markets, where personalized and value-driven communication is crucial. Businesses that apply STP effectively can tailor their offerings and marketing mix to meet the specific needs of their chosen segments, leading to higher customer satisfaction and brand loyalty. In particular, for micro-enterprises or social ventures, STP allows for resource-efficient strategies by narrowing focus on key audiences that are most likely to convert or benefit. By combining data-driven segmentation with strategic targeting and clear positioning, organizations can improve their market relevance and long-term sustainability (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004).

### **The 4A Marketing Model (Acceptability, Affordability, Accessibility, and Awareness)**

The 4A Marketing framework was first introduced by Sheth and Sisodia (2012) as an alternative to the traditional 4Ps model. This model offers a more holistic and stakeholder-oriented approach to value creation by emphasizing four core elements: acceptability, affordability, accessibility, and awareness. Unlike the product-centric perspective of the 4Ps, the 4A model centers on consumer needs, purchasing behavior, and societal alignment, making it especially relevant in contemporary markets where impact and user experience are key competitive factors.

The 4A model comprises four key components that are essential in understanding consumer behavior and evaluating the effectiveness of a product or service offering. The first component, acceptability, refers to the degree to which consumers accept a product or service, both in terms of its functional performance and its ability to meet emotional or psychological needs. Second, affordability considers how accessible the offering is in financial terms, based on the

target market's purchasing power and the perceived value relative to its cost (Sisca et al., 2022).

The third component, accessibility, focuses on how easily consumers can obtain or experience the product or service, whether through physical presence (e.g., location, distribution) or digital platforms. Lastly, awareness pertains to the level of consumer knowledge and familiarity with the product's value proposition, which is shaped by marketing communication, brand visibility, and word-of-mouth exposure. Together, these four dimensions offer a holistic framework for assessing market readiness and the alignment between product offerings and consumer expectations.

## METHOD

This study employs a qualitative research approach, which emphasizes the interpretation of meaning, reasoning, and definition of specific situations (Rukin, 2019; Creswell & Poth, 2018). Methodology in research refers to a structured framework of thinking to address a particular research problem. Data for this study were collected through both primary and secondary sources. Primary data were obtained through interviews with selected informants. The criteria for informants were individuals actively engaged in micro, small, and medium-sized culinary businesses (MSMEs). Secondary data were gathered from statistical reports, previous research, and other relevant literature related to business operations and competitive advantage.

The main subject of this research is Hidden Farm Café, a culinary business located in Dago Pakar, Bandung. Hidden Farm Café possesses unique value due to its location at the foothills, offering scenic views and cool air, yet remaining accessible from the city centre of Bandung. Since 2018, Dago Pakar has become a hotspot for cafés and restaurants, attracting visitors in search of authentic Bandung experiences, including cyclists and runners. Additionally, Hidden Farm Café focuses on offering healthy food options and local Bandung snacks, aligning with evolving consumer preferences for wellness and local identity. The author gathers data from direct observation and interview with two informants. The two informants are Dian Chairunissa who is mainly the founder of Hidden Farm Café, and Tika Rostika, as the Operational and Event Enabler of Hidden Farm Café.

## RESULT

Hidden Farm Café is a culinary business located in Dago Pakar, Bandung, established in August 2021. The name "Hidden Farm" reflects two key aspects: the secluded location (hidden) and the business's original concept as a "farm" selling plants. Over time, circumstances and market demands led to a transformation of its function into a café.

Initially, Hidden Farm Café was designed to serve the cycling community, as Dago Pakar is a well-known route for cyclists in Bandung, stretching from Lower Dago Pakar to Tebing Keraton. Consequently, the Café initially operated only on weekends, from 08:00 to 11:00. However, within just two months, public interest exceeded expectations, expanding beyond the cyclist segment to include young adults from Bandung and surrounding areas such as Cimahi and Padalarang. In response, by November 2021, Hidden Farm Café extended its

operating hours from 07:30 to 22:00. The Café gained significant attention for its signature offerings: fresh juices and smoothie bowls.

Hidden Farm Café is built upon three core values that form the foundation of its business model. First is the real food concept, where all meals are home-cooked without the use of processed ingredients. This approach ensures that the taste and quality of food are aligned with the café's vision of offering healthy menu options. Second is its strategic location and overall atmosphere, which together create a distinctive ambiance. Third, Hidden Farm Café promotes a warm and welcoming environment that evokes a sense of home, fostering emotional attachment and customer loyalty.

An interview with one of the Café's regular customers revealed several unique aspects that set Hidden Farm Café apart from other culinary establishments in Dago Pakar. The customer described the venue as a raw, unpolished, yet authentically charming place, quiet, cozy, and away from the city's hustle. These characteristics contrast sharply with other cafés in the area that often adopt modern architecture to attract out-of-town tourists.

Products such as fresh juices, smoothie bowls, and the serene atmosphere together form an appealing combination. Hidden Farm Café's marketing strategy relies heavily on the use of social media, particularly TikTok and Instagram. The owner actively uses both the official TikTok account and their personal account to engage customers through relatable content formats such as "a day in my life." Interestingly, personal content proved more effective in building emotional connection with the audience than the official brand content. Meanwhile, the official Instagram account functions primarily as an informational platform, providing operational details about the Café.

### **Segmentation Analysis**

The market segmentation of Hidden Farm Café is quite diverse. Initially, the café targeted cycling communities as its primary customers, but later expanded to younger and young adult generations seeking a quiet space for "healing" and enjoying healthy food. Additionally, Hidden Farm Café has attracted visitors in search of a unique and aesthetically pleasing atmosphere to meet their social media needs. Here are the key customer segments of Hidden Farm Café:

#### **Cycling Communities**

As the initial target segment identified by Hidden Farm Café, cycling communities remain a relevant and ongoing segment at the time of this study. The age range within this segment is broad, spanning from 20 to 65 years old, as the segmentation is based on communities rather than demographics. The average social status is upper-middle class, with purchasing habits showing that individuals often order 3 to 4 menu items at once. From behavioural and psychographic perspective, this segment is not particularly concerned with "healing" atmospheres or Instagram-able spaces, but rather values healthy, low-sugar meals suitable for sharing with their community.

#### **Youth in Bandung and Surrounding Areas**

This segment emerged after Hidden Farm Café observed trends in visitors during the first two months of operation. Typically aged between 18 to 30 years, they come from lower-middle to middle-class backgrounds. Behaviourally, they are very price-sensitive and expect good value

for money; affordable yet tasty offerings. From psychographic perspective, this group chooses Hidden Farm Café over others because they seek a tranquil place with a mountain-like ambiance, even though it is located near the city of Bandung.

### **Domestic Tourists**

This segment includes domestic tourists from areas outside greater Bandung such as Jakarta, Semarang, Yogyakarta, and Lampung. While the age range is broad, most visitors fall within the 18-30 years' bracket, similar to the local youth segment, but with a slightly higher social status, ranging from middle to upper-middle class. This is the smallest segment of the three, as their behaviour is driven by a desire to find places that are authentically "Bandung" and visually appealing for social media. From psychographic perspective, these customers want to demonstrate they are trend-savvy and different from the crowd; prioritizing trends over taste, location, or ambiance.

### **Targeting Analysis**

Among the three customer segments, the café's Chief Operating Officer (COO) and founder, Dian Chairunissa, identified the youth segment in Bandung and surrounding areas as the primary target. While the cycling community is relatively easy to engage with various marketing strategies, it is a highly fragmented segment with inconsistent behaviours and psychographics. In contrast, the Bandung youth segment is more receptive and easier to target through digital marketing, and they tend to respond positively to such campaigns.

### **Positioning Analysis**

Hidden Farm Café offers several key value propositions: healthy meals made from organic ingredients, a serene and comfortable mountain-like ambiance, home-cooked flavours, a unique setting, and an authentic experience. Based on these strengths, Hidden Farm Café faces both direct and indirect competition. The direct competitors of Hidden Farm Café are cafés that offer a similar value proposition: healthy, home-style meals served in a cozy and comforting environment. Greens and Beans is one such competitor, known for its wholesome food and homely atmosphere that attracts health-conscious consumers. Likewise, Serasa Salad Bar focuses on a variety of salad-based and nutritious dishes presented in a relaxed, intimate setting that appeals to customers seeking both health and comfort. Fit Fuel targets the same segment by offering diet-friendly meals with a homemade touch, emphasizing flavour without compromising nutritional value.

Kumari (Bake and Brew) also falls within this competitive landscape, combining healthy food offerings with artisanal coffee in a warm and inviting space. Meanwhile, Sejiwa Coffee differentiates itself through a trendy ambiance while maintaining a strong emphasis on quality coffee and balanced, health-oriented menu selections. Collectively, these cafés represent strong competition within the niche of wellness-driven culinary businesses, highlighting the need for consistent brand positioning and effective digital marketing to stand out in a growing market.

In addition to direct competitors, Hidden Farm Café also faces competition from Cafés that offer a similarly cozy atmosphere but do not specifically focus on healthy or home-style meals. These indirect competitors appeal to the same demographic segments such as young adults, professionals, and social Café-goers who value ambiance and experience over specific dietary offerings. One example is Noughts And Crosses Coffee, which is popular for group gatherings

and a warm setting, even though it does not position itself around health-conscious food. Similarly, Arah Coffee is widely recognized for its aesthetic interior and overall ambiance, but its menu lacks emphasis on nutrition or healthy eating.

Other Cafés in this category include Two Cents, which offers a comfortable and relaxed environment alongside a diverse menu, although health is not a central aspect of its culinary identity. Sawo Coffee & Roastery caters to coffee enthusiasts in a cozy setting, but serves a general menu with limited focus on health. Likewise, Kurokoffee embraces a modern and stylish ambiance that attracts urban consumers, yet its offerings are not curated with wellness or dietary considerations in mind. While these cafés do not directly compete in terms of menu, their ability to draw similar customer segments through ambiance and branding makes them relevant considerations in the competitive landscape.

Another group of indirect competitors includes Cafés or eateries that focus on healthy, home-style meals but do not offer a relaxing or aesthetically appealing ambiance. While these businesses appeal to health-conscious consumers, their limited attention to interior design, atmosphere, or overall customer experience sets them apart from Hidden Farm Café's more holistic approach. One example is 'Kehidupan Tidak Pernah Berakhir', a well-known vegetarian eatery that offers affordable, homemade dishes, but with a very basic and utilitarian setting. Similarly, LOS Tropis emphasizes fresh juices and fruit-based offerings within a minimalist concept, yet lacks a cozy or comfortable dining experience.

Other establishments in this category include Green Café, which delivers nutritious food but is perceived as less inviting due to its plain environment. Healthy Bites is praised for its healthy menu options, yet the overall atmosphere is often seen as less conducive to relaxation or social interaction. Lastly, Veggie House serves vegetarian home-style meals, though it does not distinguish itself through ambiance or visual identity. These venues highlight the market gap that Hidden Farm Café aims to fill, by combining health-oriented culinary offerings with a tranquil, thoughtfully designed space that enhances the dining experience. Therefore, the winning zone of Hidden Farm Café are shown on the table below, in which we can conclude that healthy meals, and a peaceful and cozy ambiance, are the two key elements that stands out.

**Table 1. Positioning Analysis of Hidden Farm Café**

No.	Zone	Competitive Advantage
1.	Winning Zone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Offering food made from organic ingredients, crafted into delicious and healthy meals</li> <li>Providing a peaceful and cozy ambiance that feels like being in the mountains, while still close to the city</li> </ul>
2.	Risky Zone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Serving dishes with a homemade taste that brings comfort and familiarity</li> <li>Presenting a uniquely designed space that appeals to those seeking aesthetic and authentic experience</li> </ul>
3.	Losing Zone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Authentic place</li> </ul>
4.	Who Cares Zone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>N/A</li> </ul>

Source: Data Processed by Author (2025)



#### 4A Marketing Analysis

Hidden Farm Café demonstrates a solid level of acceptability through its two core strengths: healthy food and a calm, relaxing atmosphere. Menu items such as smoothie bowls and fresh juices are made from organic ingredients and prepared in a homemade style, aligning with the needs of health-conscious consumers. The unique and tranquil setting also provides a holistic experience for visitors, particularly for young people in Bandung seeking a healing space and local tourists wanting to enjoy Bandung's signature ambience.

Moreover, the acceptability of Hidden Farm Café is reinforced by the increasing trend of conscious consumption among Gen Z and Millennials. This demographic values not only taste and presentation but also ethical sourcing and environmental impact. Hidden Farm Café, by utilizing organic and locally sourced ingredients, taps into this value system. The Café's natural aesthetics, wooden furnishings, and open-air seating also contribute to a multisensory dining experience that resonates with lifestyle-driven consumers who seek emotional and sensory gratification through food and space.

In terms of affordability, Hidden Farm Café strikes a balance between price and value. The young Bandung demographic seeks products that are both affordable and high in quality. Hidden Farm Café meets this expectation by offering healthy food at reasonable prices, especially when compared to similar cafés in the Dago Pakar area. In addition, cycling communities benefit from the competitive pricing, considering their habit of ordering multiple items (3-4 dishes per person).

While the café's location tucked away in the Dago Pakar area presents some accessibility challenges, Hidden Farm Café turns this into a unique selling point by embracing its identity as a hidden gem. For local tourists, the secluded location actually enhances its appeal as an off-the-beaten-path destination in Bandung. Hidden Farm Café has successfully capitalized on its "hidden gem" concept as a unique attraction in the Dago Pakar area of Bandung. The café embraces three core values: healthy food made from organic, homemade ingredients; a comfortable and serene atmosphere that supports relaxation; and a homely experience that makes customers feel right at home.

However, in terms of awareness, Hidden Farm Café has yet to fully leverage its social media presence to strengthen its brand identity as one of Bandung's most noteworthy hidden gems. Although word-of-mouth and community-based promotions have helped build an initial loyal customer base, there remains untapped potential in digital storytelling. The café could benefit significantly from investing in content creation, such as behind-the-scenes videos of food preparation, customer testimonials, or wellness tips, shared across platforms like Instagram, TikTok, or even YouTube. Collaborations with local influencers or cycling communities could also amplify reach and reinforce the brand's identity as a destination for both health and serenity. In a city saturated with F&B outlets, building a strong digital narrative could be the differentiator that solidifies Hidden Farm Café's position in the minds of its target audience.

However, despite its competitive advantages in healthy cuisine and a relaxing ambience, challenges remain, particularly in terms of accessibility and awareness. While the secluded location, once a weakness, has been turned into a distinctive charm, this must be supported by a more consistent digital marketing strategy to effectively reach its target segments. Hidden Farm Café still needs to manage its official social media accounts, especially TikTok which



more consistently and strategically to strengthen its branding and attract a broader audience. In addition, collaborative promotions with local influencers or travel platforms could help the café reach the local tourist segment more effectively. Incorporating innovative menu elements or experiences, such as morning yoga sessions or community events that align with the café's natural, peaceful setting in Dago Pakar, would further enhance Hidden Farm Café's appeal as a healing destination in Bandung.

Furthermore, enhancing service personalization could improve customer retention and build long-term loyalty. By leveraging simple technologies such as digital reservation systems, customer feedback forms, or loyalty programs, the café could collect valuable consumer data to better tailor future promotions and experiences. This would align with the growing expectation of personalized service among urban, experience-seeking consumers.

Lastly, tapping into sustainability practices, such as reducing plastic use, composting organic waste, or partnering with local farmers, could reinforce Hidden Farm Café's value proposition. These actions not only resonate with the environmentally-conscious audience but also differentiate the café in an increasingly eco-aware F&B landscape. This narrative, when properly communicated, could become an integral part of the brand story that connects emotionally with its target market.

## DISCUSSION

This study provides several relevant practical and theoretical implications, from a practical perspective, the findings indicate that combining healthy food offerings with a unique ambiance can be an effective strategy to create added value in a highly competitive culinary market. The use of social media as a primary marketing tool can be effective in building strong emotional connections with consumers. This is especially true in the context of small businesses like Hidden Farm Café.

However, Hidden Farm Café unfortunately has yet to fully maximize the advantage of its unique positioning, when the café is located in a prime spot with the real potential to become one of the best hidden gems in the Dago Pakar Utara area. With a more integrated execution especially by emphasizing its winning zone such as offering organic and healthy meals and highlighting the ambience and serenity of its location, which are both hard to replicate by competitors, Hidden Farm Café could position itself as one of the most promising culinary destinations on Bandung's culinary map.

From a theoretical standpoint, the author hopes this research can contribute to the growing literature on hidden gem-based marketing strategies within Indonesia's culinary industry. The application of the 4A Marketing approach in the context of Hidden Farm Cafe demonstrates that this framework can be effectively implemented in small and medium-sized enterprises. This is highlighted particularly in the food and beverage sector.

Furthermore, this case highlights the importance of aligning brand identity with customer values and lifestyle aspirations. Hidden Farm Café's positioning as a wellness-oriented space resonates well with current consumer trends, particularly among millennials and Gen Z

seeking meaningful, health-conscious experiences. This insight reinforces the strategic value of integrating emotional and lifestyle branding in SME marketing practices.

## CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATION

Future research could further explore the use of advanced technologies such as big data analytics or artificial intelligence (AI). This is beneficial, especially to enhance the effectiveness of Hidden Farm Café's marketing strategies. In addition, comparative studies between Hidden Farm Cafe and other cafés in the Dago Pakar area could provide deeper insights into competitive advantages and applicable strategies.

The research focus could also be directed towards the influence of environmental factors on customer loyalty. How elements like ambiance, aesthetics, and location affect consumer preferences are the particular concerns. Furthermore, future studies could evaluate the effectiveness of different social media platforms, such as TikTok versus Instagram, in improving brand awareness and engagement for small and medium-sized culinary businesses.

The findings from this research are expected to offer strategic guidance for culinary entrepreneurs in Indonesia who aim to leverage the hidden gem concept as a key market attraction. There is potential for future research to assess how collaborations with wellness-oriented communities. It ranges on the topics such as yoga groups or sustainable living advocates, which can amplify customer retention and brand loyalty, particularly for niche cafés like Hidden Farm that promote holistic experiences.

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