

## **Business Strategy for Longgar Outfit as a New Fashion Brand**

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### **Abstract**

Longgar Outfit is a local fashion brand from Bandung that focuses on plus size women. Longgar Outfit has the vision to become the leading plus size fashion brand in Bandung. Unfortunately, since the appearance of Longgar Outfit on the market in early January 2019, Longgar Outfit has faced problems in penetrating the market. The problem currently being faced by Longgar Outfit is unstable sales. The purpose of the research is to find out a suitable business strategy in order to stable Longgar Outfit sales. This research is conducted to summarize the business strategy for Longgar Outfit using internal and external business environment analysis, customer analysis, and SWOT analysis to determine the root cause. Use a qualitative approach as a research method for understanding a social phenomenon. This approach will find the current business situation, planning business strategies, and proposed new business strategies. Data collection techniques using observation and in-depth interviews as primary data, while secondary data with literature studies using books and journals related to principles of marketing, strategic marketing, and other topics. This research has limitations to the object being observed as many as two competitors who have a similar business model and interviewed 15 potential customers to explore their needs and desires regarding plus size clothing. The results of this research get findings on alternative business solutions for Longgar Outfit. The proposed business strategy for Longgar Outfit consists of a new STP strategy, create value proposition canvas, create a point of difference and point of parity, develop new marketing (4Ps) strategy, and organizational structure plan.

**Keywords:** *business strategy; unstable sales; STP strategy; Marketing Mix (4Ps) strategy.*



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## **INTRODUCTION**

Business opportunities in the fashion industry, especially clothing, are still in demand. This is because fashion trends continue to revolve quickly, both in terms of design and clothing models. The business opportunities are wide open, but that also means competition. As businessmen, it requires us to be keen to find business opportunities that are unique and different. One of them is plus size clothing business. This business is targeting a niche market, which is a necessity for minorities. Especially for women, this is a problem because they cannot easily become fashionable like skinny women. Skinny women can easily access their clothing sizes and many choices. In contrast to plus size, women will be difficult to find their size, few stores that sell plus size, and do not have many choices related to clothing trends, colors, patterns, and fabric quality. This phenomenon must be utilized as an opportunity for businessmen. Since plus size women have the same spending power as skinny women to look fashionable. Growing numbers of businessmen who focus on plus size clothing will make plus size women feel cared to fulfill their clothing needs. This

is the reason for Longgar Outfit to presence as a new brand that specializes in the needs of plus size women's clothing.

Longgar Outfit is a local fashion brand from Bandung that focuses on plus size women. Longgar Outfit has the vision to become the leading plus size fashion brand in Bandung. Unfortunately, since the appearance of Longgar Outfit on the market in early January 2019, Longgar Outfit has faced problems in penetrating the market. The problem currently being faced by Longgar Outfit is unstable sales. Unstable sales have an impact on a low revenue. A sustainable business is a business that is able to generate revenue or profit. At the beginning of its appearance, Longgar Outfit followed the local bazaar to introduce the product. Longgar Outfit uses Instagram Ads feature on social media to reach a wider market. In addition, Longgar Outfit holds a bundling promo to attract consumers. Longgar Outfit efforts to increase sales through various marketing; however, sales or sold products do not meet our target of existing inventory or stocks. Longgar Outfit's inventory turnover for six months (January to June 2019) is 1.69 times. Longgar Outfit inventory turnover shows very low numbers, meaning the goods do not sell quickly. This results in capital being held back because inventory turnover is very low, as well as causing many unsold goods to pile up in the owner's house.

This research formulates a research question to solve the Longgar Outfit problem. The first question is, what causes Longgar Outfit unstable sales. The second question is, what the suitable business strategy for stable Longgar Outfit sales.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The objectives of this research are to analyze the root cause problem that causes Longgar Outfit unstable sales according to an internal and external business environment and also to find out the suitable business strategy for stable Longgar Outfit sales.

### **Internal Analysis**

The first analysis is an internal analysis that comes from within the scope of the Longgar Outfit business. Internal analysis is using STP (Segmenting, Targeting, and Positioning). STP is useful for strategic planning to be more focused on achieving company goals. The STP process begins by segmenting the market into smaller parts with different needs, characteristics, or behaviors, then targeting as the process of evaluating and choosing one or more the attractiveness of each market segment and enter the appeal of each market segment, and the last is positioning process as a way for consumers to define products in minds based on important characteristics compared to competing products (Kotler & Armstrong, 2012: 190-207). The second internal analysis method is the marketing mix analysis. The marketing mix was defined in the book *Principles of Marketing* Chapter 2 as a tactical marketing tool that the companies combine to produce the desired response in the target market (Kotler & Armstrong 2012: 51). Marketing mix combines product, price, place, and promotion that are useful for planning and deciding product strategies to consumers. According to Kotler & Armstrong, the product is the combination of goods and services that the company provides to the target market. Price is the amount of money that the customers have to pay to receive a product. The place contains company activities that make the product accessible to the target market. Promotion refers to activities that convey the essence of the product and persuade the target customers to buy the product (2012: 51-52). The last method

is the value chain analysis. The value chain is a series of activities carried out by a company to produce a product or service. Analyze the company's internal activities that add value to the product and analyze to reduce costs or increase differentiation. The value chain, according to Porter (1985), aims to see the competitive advantages of the fellowship. Internal activities of the company should add value to the product and increase differentiation from competitors.

#### External Analysis

External analysis using PESTLE, Porter's five forces, and competitor analysis. According to Rastogi & Trivedi (2016), PESTLE is a strategic planning tool used to assess the impact of political, economic, social, technological, environmental, and legal factors on a project. PESTLE is a strategic work scheme to recognize the external impacts of a business or project. External factors are factors outside of organization control that can directly affect operational processes. An organization needs to understand in order to create advantage strategies of opportunities and avoid threats from the business environment. While Porter's five forces are the framework theory published by Michael E. Porter as an analytical tool to find out the business competition. Porter's framework consists of five forces, including the threat of new entrants, bargaining power of suppliers, bargaining power of buyers, the threat of substitute products, and rivalry among existing competitors. There are rules in assessing competition among competitors, if the five forces are strong, the lower the profit potential of the industry. While the weaker the five forces are, the higher the profit potential of the industry (Rothaermel, 2017: 73). According to Porter (2008), in *Harvard Business Review* Porter's five forces concept comprises five forces, that is the threat of new entrants, bargaining power of suppliers, bargaining power of buyers, the threat of substitutes, and rivalry among existing competitors. The last is competitor analysis. Competitors themselves are companies that produce the same or similar products or services that we offer. Analyzing competitors according to Kotler & Armstrong is a key competitor's identification process by evaluating their objectives, strategies, strengths and weaknesses, response patterns, and choose which competitors will be attacked or evaded (2012: 528). To design effective marketing strategies, it is necessary to analyze existing competitors. Compare marketing strategies STP (Segmentation, Targeting, and Positioning) and Marketing Mix (Product, Price, Place, and Promotion) carried out by the competitors.

#### Customer Analysis

Customer analysis conducts interviews with current customers and potential customers. Current customers will target the respondents who have already purchased Longgar Outfit products, both through online and offline purchases. The discussion will be related to customer satisfaction, including complaints, feedback, and suggestions related to the product they have bought and used. Besides, asking about their shopping experience and intention to buy again. A potential customer will target the respondents who are female, aged range 18 – 34 years, wearing M/L/XL/XXL/etc. Sizes, have bought a plus size or oversize clothes by online or offline, and have problems or difficulties in finding plus size or oversize clothing. The questions related to perception, attractiveness, experience, expectations, and intention to buy on plus size clothing.

#### SWOT Analysis

SWOT is usually used to manage marketing functions by analyzing competition against company situations. The company's situation must be analyzed by evaluating the overall strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of the company. According to Kotler & Armstrong, SWOT analysis is related to strengths that consist of internal capabilities, resources, and positive factors that help companies serve their customers and their goals. Weakness comprises internal restrictions and negative factors that can hinder the company's performance. Opportunities are beneficial factors or trends from the external environment that the company can utilize to its advantage. Threats are undesirable external factors or trends that can create performance challenges (2012: 53-54). SWOT analysis will be useful for developing strategies to achieve the company's goals.

### RESEARCH METHOD

In this research, the researcher used a qualitative method approach. This approach will find the current business situation, planning business strategies, and proposed new business strategies. Data collection techniques using observation and in-depth interviews as primary data, while secondary data with literature studies using books and journals related to principles of marketing, strategic marketing, and other topics related to this research.

Observation in this research is used to observe the business conditions of Longgar Outfit and its competitors. Observation of two competitors who have a similar business model and marketing channel. While in-depth interviews are conducted with current customers and potential customers, the numbers of respondents in current customers are six people, while in potential customers are 15 people. Small samples that are generally chosen and systematically for relationship consistency give more assurance that the findings represent sufficient members of the average population of the population more than samples of the same size, which are sufficient (Maxwell, 1996: 71).

<b>Current Customer's Profile</b>	
Number of Respondents	Six people
Criteria	Have already bought Longgar Outfit product (online or offline)
Findings	Customer Satisfaction Customer Shopping Experience Customer Intention to Buy Again
<b>Potential Customer's Profile</b>	
Number of Respondents	15 people
Criteria	Female Aged 18 to 34 years Using clothes sizes M/L/XL/XXL/XXXL Ever buy plus size / oversize clothing by online or offline Have difficulty in finding suitable or appropriate clothing sizes

Findings	Customer Perception Product Attractiveness Customer Shopping Experience Customer Expectation Customer Intention to Buy
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**Table 1. Criteria of Customer Analysis Respondents**

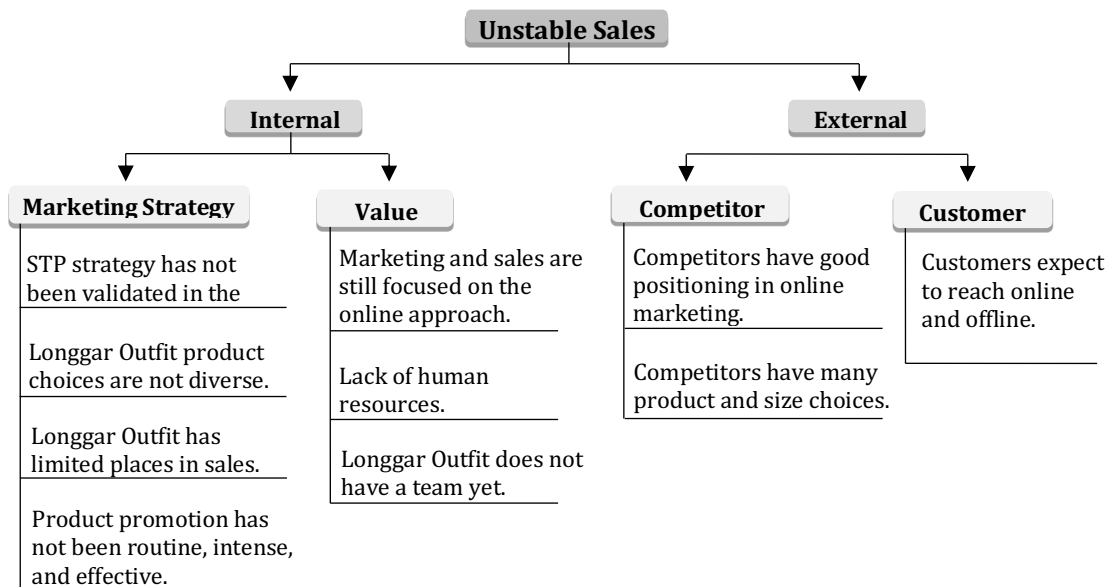
**FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

The results of internal analysis related to STP, Marketing Mix (4Ps), and value chain analysis are made as a temporary conclusion in the strengths or weaknesses category. Longgar Outfit strengths are Longgar Outfit product prices are able to compete with competitors, abundant raw material suppliers on the market, double quality control to make sure quality is following standards, friendly and fast customer service, product returns service, and utilizing technological developments to facilitate business. Longgar Outfit weakness are STP strategy has not been validated in the market, Longgar Outfit product choices are not diverse, Longgar Outfit has limited places of sales, product promotion has not been routine, intense, and effective, Longgar Outfit adapts production capacity to tailor vendors, and their performance cannot be controlled by Longgar Outfit, marketing and sales are still focused on online approach, lack of human resources and Longgar Outfit does not have a team yet.

The results of external analysis related to PESTLE, Porter's Five Forces, and competitor analysis are made as a temporary conclusion in the opportunities and threats category. Longgar Outfit opportunities are reducing the final income tax rate will ease the burden on Longgar Outfit, People Business Credit (KUR) program helps Longgar Outfit in accessing finance, UMKM Go Online program is an opportunity for Longgar Outfit to compete in global market, Indonesia's economic growth will have an impact on increasing consumption and purchasing power also SMEs will get a positive impact, trend of online shopping make society tend to be consumptive also SMEs will get a positive impact, internet-based technology facilitates the production, marketing, and builds communication effectively, Longgar Outfit does not depend on one supplier because many other suppliers are available, Longgar Outfit adjusted its target market by the concept of product differentiation, Longgar Outfit product prices are still affordable than competitors, competitors and Longgar Outfit have similar product promotion, Longgar Outfit product price is affordable in accordance with product quality, customers are satisfied with Longgar Outfit services, satisfying shopping experience because the products and service provided are good, looking for opportunities that are not owned yet by competitors which are affordable prices, and most of the potential customers have attractiveness with current clothing fashion trends and follow the trends and Longgar Outfit strives to keep up with current clothing trends. Longgar Outfit threats are plagiarism, and copyright issues have an impact on designs that are easily imitated by other brands, textile waste that pollutes the environment, Longgar Outfit do not have the ability to use environmentally friendly fabrics due to the limited suppliers that sell environmental friendly fabrics and the very high price will affect the product selling price, entering fashion industry is very easy, many competitors from old players and newcomers, many players in the fashion industry and buyers have the power to choose products with price and quality they want, the consumer will

easily switch to substitute products, Longgar Outfit has a smaller market segment than the competitors, competitors have a good positioning in plus size clothing on online business, competitors have many product and size choices, competing in the same places with competitors by online marketing, customers feel that Longgar Outfit has a few product and size choices, customers expect to reach Longgar Outfit products in online and offline, customers expect plus size clothing design that is slim-look and elegant, customers expect attractive and reusable packaging design, and customers expect Longgar Outfit to have a physical store yet.

Temporary conclusion results in the form of SWOT analysis above are useful for determining which factors greatly influence the Longgar Outfit problem. Found several main causes of problems form Longgar Outfit that comes from weakness and threat factors. This factor directly influences business issues regarding unstable sales of Longgar Outfit. Based on internal analysis, the main root causes come from marketing strategy and value chain, while the main root causes of external analysis come from competitors and customers.



**Figure 1. Longgar Outfit Root Cause Diagram**

#### Alternative Business Solution

Analysis of the root cause above will help to find an alternative business solution for Longgar Outfit. The alternative business solution is to develop a new STP strategy, create value proposition canvas, create a point of difference and point of parity, develop a new marketing mix (4Ps) strategy, and organizational structure plan. Develop a new STP strategy to solve 'STP strategy has not been validated in the market' and 'competitors have a good positioning in online marketing' problems. Create value proposition canvas to solve 'Longgar Outfit product choices are not diverse', 'Longgar Outfit has limited places of sales', 'marketing and sales are still focused on online approach', 'competitors have many product and size choices', and 'customers expect to reach Longgar Outfit product by online and offline' problems. Create a point of difference and point of parity to solve 'Longgar Outfit product choices are not diverse', 'Longgar Outfit has limited places

of sales', and 'competitors have many product and size choices' problems. Develop new marketing mix (4Ps) strategy to solve 'Longgar Outfit product choices are not diverse', 'Longgar Outfit has limited places of sales', 'product promotion has not been routine, intense, and effective', 'marketing and sales are still focused on online approach', 'competitors have many product and size choices', and 'customers expect to reach Longgar Outfit product by online and offline' problems. Organizational structure plan to solve 'lack of human resources' and 'Longgar Outfit does not have a team' problems.

#### New STP Strategy

The first alternative business solution is to create a new STP strategy that has been validated in the market. Longgar Outfit is targeting a local market that is Indonesia, specifically in Java and Sumatera. City reach targets include Bandung, Jakarta, Yogyakarta, Medan, Palembang, Bogor, Dumai, Solo, Indramayu. Targeting women, aged 23 to 34 years, and has an income of around IDR 3,500,000 to 5,000,000 based on an average income. Longgar Outfit will position itself as an oversized brand specialist for women. This is reflected in the target size ranging from size M to XXXL. Longgar Outfit's positioning strategy will target women who are looking for plus size clothing and women who like oversized clothing style.

<b>Geographic</b>	
Country	Indonesia
Region	Java and Sumatera
City	Bandung, Jakarta, Yogyakarta, Medan, Palembang, Bogor, Dumai, Solo, Indramayu.
<b>Demographic</b>	
Age	23 – 34 years
Gender	Female
Income	IDR 3,500,000 – 5,000,000
Occupation	Private employee, doctor, college student, government employee, entrepreneur
Education	High school, undergraduate, graduate
<b>Psychographic</b>	
Size	M, L, XL, XXL, XXXL
Social class	The lower middle class, middle class
Lifestyle	Followers (following trend), fashionable, stylish
Personality	Fashion enthusiast
<b>Behavioral</b>	
Habits	Buying Once until four times per month
Status	Benefits Quality, fashionable
	Loyalty Medium

The usage rate of internet	Medium user, heavy user
Attitude toward product	Enthusiastic, positive
<b>Positioning</b>	
Oversized brand specialist for women	

**Table 2. New STP Strategy for Longgar Outfit**

### Create Value Proposition Canvas

The value proposition is made to create added value for consumers, why ultimately consumers choose our products compared to other products. A good value proposition is when the products we offer can solve problems and meet the needs of customers. Longgar Outfit has determined the value proposition canvas adjusted to the results of customer jobs, customer pains, and customer gains. Jump into the market to explore what problems that consumers want to solve, what pains they have been feeling, and what they expect from the plus-size or oversized product. Longgar Outfit conducts a market survey for potential customers, according to STP.

Most potential customers are looking for oversized clothes and plus size clothes to support their daily activities. Most of their activities are working, go to campus, hang out, traveling, go to a mall, hunting cafes, worship, family events until regular social gatherings. The most important thing when using plus size or oversize clothes is confidence. Build the confidence to use clothes that are different from medium size. In addition, besides increasing confidence, the presence of plus size or oversize clothing brands can meet lifestyle needs and support the fashionable appearance. Consumers feel they are not out of date and can adjust to trends. Customers also want to build self-protection through the clothes they wear, build a sense of pride for using local products, and pride in buying products with their own hard work.

Potential customers feel some pains when using or looking for plus size clothing. There are many things that customers do not want when using plus size or oversize clothes, as they look bigger, uncomfortable material because it is tacky or does not absorb sweat, not as expected color with reality especially when online shopping, unsuitable size can be too big or too small, ordinary packaging, hairy material, unsuitable design for large bodies, and unfriendly service. Besides, customers feel barriers to accessing plus size product such as store location unreachable, expensive price, limited brands, and long delivery service. These obstacles are considered by customers in making purchasing decisions. These obstacles will waste time, energy, and costs that can be detrimental to customers.

Customers have several required gains related to comfortable material, diverse products, and affordable prices. Expected gains in plus size clothing is a simple design but can give an elegant impression when used. Simple design but looks elegant can be combined from the selection of materials, good cutting, and color. Another desired gain that customers want is a size fits for the large body (appropriate size) and attractive model or design. In addition, Muslim customers demand Longgar Outfit to make Muslim friendly collections such as not transparent, high collar to cover the chest, and long sleeves that make it easy for ablution.



After knowing the needs, wants, and desires from the customer profile, we should create a value map that useful as a differentiator of the value offered by Longgar Outfit compared to competitors. Customer profile results will be answered by offering a product that can be pain relievers and gain creators. Longgar Outfit offers products to overcome problems on the customer jobs side. Longgar Outfit offers products that focus on oversized clothing for women. Longgar Outfit wants to overcome the problem of large women in finding clothes. Customers want easy access to buy oversized clothing products that support their daily activities, feel confident, and look fashionable like other medium-sized women.

Longgar Outfit will offer clothing products using comfortable materials that can absorb sweat and are not easily hairy. Loose or drop shoulder-clothing products to overcome models that are not suitable for customers. Slim-look models to cope with plus size or oversize clothes that look big on the body. Offering reasonable product prices that match the quality offered. In addition, Longgar Outfit takes two approaches to reach customers through online sales and offline sales with consignment stores (stockists). The last is to eliminate the anxiety of customers in detail about color and size chart specifically. This is to overcome online purchases that are felt to be always not in accordance with reality, such as the color is different from the picture, and size does not match with the description. Longgar Outfit also will focus on long sleeves for Muslims, provide a simple design, and provide three to four times new product articles every month.

#### Create Point of Difference (POD) and Point of Parity (POP)

In positioning the brand, we must have a Point of Difference and Point of Parity when compared with competitors. The goal is as a process to create a brand position. After creating a value proposition, Longgar Outfit must determine Point of Difference (PODs) and Point of Parity (POPs). PODs become a uniqueness or excellence that is owned by a product that makes the product different from competitors. PODs become something that is desired by consumers. Thus the determination of PODs is able to give consumers a strong reason to buy a product that cannot be matched by competitors. The way to do this is by communicating the benefits of unique products. POPs are the similarity of the company's products with other companies that must be owned if the brand wants to exist in market competition. POPs are not important or unique, but they are essential to ensure brand legitimacy and credibility. POPs are not a reason for consumers to choose a brand; the absence of POPs is a strong reason to reduce brand value.

POD and POP must be owned by a product because both are equally important. Determination of POD and POP formulated by Longgar Outfit based on benchmarking with competitors. Look for weaknesses from competitors to be used as POD opportunities for Longgar Outfit. PODs of Longgar Outfit are the drop shoulder sleeve model, size chart, target market, and service while POPs of Longgar Outfit are plus size apparel and marketing channel.

#### Develop New Marketing Mix (4Ps) Strategy

Longgar Outfit needs to make a new strategy related to the marketing mix. The aim is to make a new product, price, place, and promotion recommendations based on the needs and desired of potential customers. Look into the 4Ps variations that potential customers want in plus size or oversized clothing brand. In addition to finding the difference between Longgar Outfit marketing mix strategies and those of competitors.

Most of the potential customers are local markets that live in a tropical climate. Tropical climate characteristics that have an average temperature of 20°C – 30°C and require Longgar Outfit to choose product material that is comfortable to wear and can absorb sweat well. Potential customers want product material that suitable for a tropical climate such as Japanese cotton, combed cotton, rayon, linen, and cerutti. Expected colors are basic colors like black, gray, beige, brown, white, mustard, red, blue, pink, purple, and green. In addition to color selection, the motif is also a concern for potential customers besides plain clothes. Various kinds of clothing motifs are available in the market, but the motifs that are preferred by potential customers are abstract, stripe, and polkadot. Potential customers usually use plus size clothing starts from L or XL size. The combination of each size will be adjusted to bust and armpit size. Clothing size adjusted to the results of customers' demand, bust sizes range from 100 – 125 cm while armpit sizes range from 40 – 45 cm.

Types of clothing that potential customers want and often used in their daily activities are outer, shirt, t-shirt, tunic, and sweater. This type of clothing was chosen because it is easy and suitable to combine in everyday outfits. Dynamic life and lifestyle are other reasons. Another part of the product is the packaging. Packaging will be an added value for potential customers in buying clothes. Not all buyers pay attention and care about the packaging used. However, there are some potential customers who consider packaging as important. Product packaging for potential customers must be neat, attractive, and can be used or reused. Longgar Outfit will use strong and durable materials include spunbond, canvas, parachute, gunny sack, and rice sack.

Overall from product details expected by potential customers, customers willing to pay for plus size or oversized product with a range of IDR 100,000 until 300,000 per item. Customers realize the plus size or oversized clothes is not a relatively low price. The selling price will represent the quality of the material used. Customers feel that many plus size or oversize products are affordable in the market but do not provide comfort for users. This price range can be used as a benchmark for Longgar Outfit to market their products. The price given must remain comparable to the quality expected by customers.

The place of sales that potential customers like to find plus size or oversize products through online and offline. The results of the interview stated that most of the potential customers preferred offline shopping than online shopping. Customers do online shopping through social media like Instagram and some marketplaces, while customers usually do offline shopping in stores and department stores. When offline shopping, customers can try whether the clothes fit or not with their bodies and whether it is comfortable or not. Longgar Outfit currently markets its products through Instagram may consider selling through marketplaces and offline stores. Longgar Outfit will take advantage of the marketplace, such as Shopee, Tokopedia, or other marketplaces, to expand online marketing. Meanwhile, to reach offline marketing, Longgar Outfit plans to cooperate with brands that already have a store and put Longgar Outfit products in their place. This collaboration is called a consignment store or stockist.

The last marketing mix strategy is promotion. Most of the potential customers like to search and find for plus size brands through online media. Potential customers find many plus size clothing brands through Instagram Ads, celebrity accounts, and bazaars. Longgar Outfit can use Instagram Ads for routine promotion per day, while promotion through celebrity accounts and bazaar events

will be adjusted to the promotional budget. In addition, Longgar Outfit also makes promotional efforts to attract customers by using discounted price and shipping promos.

#### Organizational Structure Plan

Longgar Outfit faces problem-related to unstable sales because the system and job tasks are only done by one person, the owner itself. The solution is to make a plan to create an organizational structure that aims to make the business run effectively and efficiently. The existence of organizational structure will help to divide the job according to abilities and skills. Longgar Outfit requires several divisions, including a product development team, design team, finance and administration team, production team, also marketing and delivery team.

#### CONCLUSION

The unstable sales of Longgar Outfit caused by internal problems related to weak STP, weak marketing mix, and lack of human resources. Apart from internal problems, external factors also affect the business issue of Longgar Outfit. High competition with existing competitors and adjust to the needs and desires of customers. This business issue is resolved by proposing alternative business solutions. Longgar Outfit should create and validate the target market and positioning based on segments that have been created. Create products that fit the needs and desires based on customer profiles (customer jobs, pains, and gains). Determine the products' point of difference offered compared to competitors. The most important thing is to apply the organizational structure.

Longgar Outfit has two implementation plans from a business solution that have been made. The first thing to do is to focus on forming a business team. After the business team is formed, Longgar Outfit will improve on the marketing mix (4Ps) concept.

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