

Porter's Generic Strategies: A Case Study of The Transition of Indonesian Conventional Taxi Company to An Online Based

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Abstract

Today's technology has experienced a fairly rapid development. This is marked by the presence of the internet which can facilitate communication and information for its users. And over time, some companies began to combine transportation and technology to meet the needs of human movement that is considered vital. This digital strategy also has an impact on the development of the global transportation industry. So that an online-based transportation service is formed, where conventional taxis are the ones that have adapted from these technological developments. Taxis are one of the most widely used forms of transportation in big cities. The cost of this transportation fare is more expensive than public transportation because taxi fares are calculated using a meter, based on the distance traveled. Competition for each taxi company is getting tougher because of the presence of online taxis (Grab-Car and Go-Car) which are more popular than conventional taxis. To compete with online taxis, taxi companies need a competitive strategy to develop their business. This study aims to determine the implementation of Porter's Generic strategy and form a SWOT analysis on conventional taxi companies in Indonesia. Based on this research, it was found that taxi companies implement a differentiation strategy and focus on developing mobile applications in ordering taxis. Therefore, this research helps to find out the right competitive strategy based on the company's strengths and threats.

Keywords

Digital Strategy, Conventional Taxi, Porter's Five Generic Strategies, SWOT Analysis.

1. Introduction

In the digital information era, the industry has experienced rapid growth in the types of business models brought about by digital technology (Guarda et al. 2021). If an organization cannot keep up with technological advances, the company will experience collapse and sales decline. One of the most powerful disruptive trends is the digital revolution. This revolution has become part of a new trend that adapts almost every industry. This situation has changed traditional industries and created new modern changes (Cahyani 2020). Digital technology enables a combination of radically new products or services and a go-to-market approach. As a result, the entire chain is affected and creates a new customer value proposition. Technology-enabled business model changes are causing disruption in all sectors of the global economy, including transportation companies. Even established businesses

must recognize these changes and transform their organizations to mitigate new threats and take advantage of new opportunities created by digital technology.

The digital strategy focuses on using technology to improve business performance, such as creating new products or redesigning existing processes. These activities determine the direction that the organization will take to create new competitive advantages, as well as the strategies that will be used to achieve business model changes (Ziyadin et al. 2020). According to Porter (1985), approaches are examples of generic strategies which can be applied to all industries and organizations that produce products or services. Nowadays, digital technology becomes more widely used and also moving further along the transformation journey. It is important to remember that digital strategy is a concept for an organization that leads to the creation of concrete plans. This digital strategy also impacts the development of the transportation industry in Indonesia (Dewi 2020).

Types of transportation in Indonesia are varied, such as cars, motorbikes, buses, and bicycles. Every modal transportation is widely used by local people to travel from one place to another place. Taxis are one of the most extensively used transportation in big cities. The cost of this transportation fare is more expensive than public transportation because taxis fare is calculated using a taximeter, based on the distance traveled. The taxi company owners compete with each other to offer their services with competitive costs and facilities. In addition, the competition is also tight due to the existence of online taxis (Grab-Car and Go-Car) which are more popular than conventional taxis (Sitinjak et al. 2019). In this modern era, conventional taxi companies try to shift into an online base in order to survive and compete with online taxis. This gives challenging competition between conventional and online taxis to offer their online-based services.

1.1 Objectives

- How can Porter's generic strategy be implemented in Indonesian taxi companies?
- What points are needed to identify the strengths and threats experienced by Indonesian taxi companies using SWOT analysis?
- Is the transition of Indonesian conventional taxis aimed to online platforms effective?

2. Literature Review

2.1 Porter's Five Generic Strategies

In an analysis of competitive strategy, Michael A. Porter introduces 3 types of generic strategies, including cost leadership, differentiation, and focus (Porter 1985). Cost leadership is a low-cost strategy that emphasizes efforts to produce the same standard product in all aspects at a very low cost per unit. These products, whether price or service, are usually aimed at consumers who are relatively easily affected by price shifts or use price as a decision-making factor. Differentiation is a product differentiation strategy that encourages companies to be able to find their own uniqueness in the target market. The uniqueness of the products produced, both goods and services, allows a company to attract the greatest interest from potential customers. This type of strategy is usually aimed at potential consumers who do not prioritize price relatively in their decision-making. The focus strategy is used to build a competitive advantage in a narrower market segment. This type of strategy is intended to serve the needs of consumers who are relatively small in number and in making decisions to buy are relatively not influenced by price (Porter 1985) which is shown in Table 1. This strategy is usually used by niche market suppliers to meet the needs of a particular product or service.

Table 1. Porter's Five Generic Strategies (Porter 1985)

Size of Market	Generic Strategies		
	Cost Leadership	Differentiation	Focus
Large	Cost Leadership – Low Cost Cost Leadership – Best Value	Differentiation	—
Small	—	Differentiation	Focus – Low Cost Focus – Best Value

Source: Competitive Strategy: Techniques for Analyzing Industries and Competitors (p.35-40) by Michael E. Porter, 1980, New York: Free Press. Copyright (1980) by Free Press.

2.2 The Product Development Strategy

New product development is a problem that must be faced by companies for sustainable operations. In the product development process, the product must be continuously improved. The magnitude of the change or the speed of change, as well as the product life cycle are issues that need to be considered. Although the success rate of new product development is low, companies are mostly conservative and cautious about new product development. But at the same time, enterprises need to evaluate competition, technology and resources to adjust development strategy, also to pursue profit and survival effectively. Therefore, how to increase the success rate of new product development will be an important goal of the company (Yang and Hsu 2019). For the implementation of the product development design strategy, starting from the initial specification design, cost effectiveness testing, market competitiveness, confirmation of the feasibility of new product development, completion and testing of prototypes, to confirmation of mass production marketing (Yang and Hsu 2019). The main goal is to achieve a durable design. However, companies must understand and recognize, the design decisions in the previous paragraph have irreversible characteristics.

2.3 SWOT Analysis

The SWOT analysis was created to help organizations or companies to evaluate the efficacy of an activity based on data, so it will make better decisions for the future strategy (Arani et al. 2021; Kartini et al. 2021). In addition, this analysis evaluates the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to assist organizations in overcoming their largest problems and exploring the most profitable prospective markets. Internal and external elements are included in the S.W.O.T analysis. Internal factors come from inside an organization and are typically under one's control, such as manufacturing capabilities, market awareness, distributor management, and so on. Strengths and weaknesses are internal components in the SWOT analysis. The term "external factors" refers to components that are generally outside one's control, the majority of which are related to external environmental factors including politics, economics, sociology, and technology (Limbong 2019). SWOT analysis has been widely used in various corporate sectors. For example, analyzing marketing strategies (Komari et al. 2020), environmental risk management strategies (Taufik et al. 2021), and improving education strategies (Fardani et al. 2020).

3. Methods

The methodology of this research uses qualitative analysis that focuses on the implementation of differentiation and focus strategies from Porter generic strategies. A case study of Blue Bird taxis was used in this research and going to be analyzed using SWOT analysis. This research focuses on strategies of the taxi company to make innovative technology optimization to achieve consumer mobility needs. This qualitative analysis can determine the strategy that was used to compete with other taxi companies, especially online taxis. The data information was collected from the annual report 2020 of PT Blue Bird Tbk. In addition, the information was also collected from academic journals review, headline news, and websites regarding the strengths and threats of the taxi company.

4. Data Collection

4.1 Development Taxi in Indonesia

In 1971, official taxis in Indonesia were introduced to operate on the streets of Jakarta. This is because the official taxi requirements regulations were made to reduce the number of illegal taxis that are dangerous for public transport. After that regulation, the number of official taxis increased gradually. Especially in metropolitan areas, there are lots of taxi service companies operating in this area. However, only a few have an excellent service reputation. The Blue Bird Group, with its iconic blue-colored taxicabs, is one of the most famous taxi companies in Indonesia. If New York has yellow taxis, Jakarta has blue bird taxis that decorate every part of the urban area. Blue Bird company has two types of taxi service categories, namely regular taxis and executive taxis. Each of these categories offers different types of vehicles, facilities and also fare. For regular taxis, there are Limo (4 seater), Mobilio (7 seater), and Transmover (7 seater). While the executive taxis, there are Mercedes C200 (4 seater) and Alphard (4 seater) which accommodate all executive or VIP needs. To support renewable energy in the transportation sector, Blue Bird also operates electric vehicles in Jakarta, such as Tesla and BYD. In addition, The Blue Bird Peduli CSR program presents a new taxi type, the MPV with 7 seats, with the superior feature of Power Slide Up Seat, an electric chair mover that brings the seat closer to customers with special needs, such as wheelchair users, elder people, and pregnant women. All of these car facilities provide a pleasant experience for customers on their every journey.

In terms of performance and service to the consumer, Blue Bird Group continues to improve the quality of drivers skills. This transportation company has implemented service standards related to security aspects that make customers feel comfortable with the services provided. Every taxi driver is trained to have good driving skills, communication skills, and insight (Atmabrata and Tresani 2020). Every executive taxi driver must pass an English language test before officially driving the luxurious car. Moreover, in tourism areas, taxi drivers can act as a tourist destination consultant or tour guide advising Blue Bird passengers on the best hotels, restaurants, historical, etc, especially for local and international travelers. On the other hand, the technology developed by Blue Bird group was also extraordinary to facilitate consumer needs.

This giant blue taxi company tries to be leading taxi companies in technology innovation and can be seen as the first taxi meter installer for automatically showing the taxi fare. After that, followed by technological developments with computerized system marketing and 24-hour hotline service. Nevertheless, technological changes can also bring disruptive innovation in the transportation sector. In 2016, more than a hundred of taxi drivers protested against the online taxi business in Indonesia. The income of conventional taxi drivers is tremendously reduced by the presence of online taxis which are cheaper because there are no government regulations regarding online transportation fees. After the demonstration, the cost competition for every online and offline taxi company is fairer than before. Blue Bird taxi is trying to catch up and starting to make some breakthroughs by using digital strategies to improve the easy access of booking platforms. To fulfill customer needs, Blue Bird group has launched My Blue Bird application in Google Play and App Store and upgraded the payment method using non-cash, like credit cards, debit cards, and e-wallet. This app will help taxi users (customers) to find drivers and fixed fares to their destination point. In promoting the app, Blue Bird company offers discounts through online promo code and partnership with other business sectors, such as McD which gives discounts when customers show My Blue Bird app. Furthermore, this taxi company also has officially collaborated with Gojek to enhance the strategic partnership in their online ordering channels, called Go-Blue Bird.

4.2 Taxis Segmentation

There are four main market segments in industrial taxis, including the hailing segment, the taxi rank segment, the pre-book segment and the contract segment (Aarhaug 2014). The call segment is the taxi calling on the road, which segment is most prominent in large, high-density cities. The taxi rank segment is a taxi waiting area in the form of a taxi stand or taxi stand, where taxis wait for rental using a first in first out system. These ranges are usually located outside of major transportation hubs such as shopping centers and airports. In the prebook segment, customers order taxis through telephone operators. In this market segment there are significant economies of scale, as there is economic density and the need to maintain expensive computer infrastructure and round-the-clock telephone services (Aarhaug 2014). However, in a market in this segment it can work well because customers can compare prices and availability. In the contract segment, public authorities and companies have a recurring need for taxi services. Using the transportation services of one of the taxi companies can be an economically attractive option. Therefore, industrial taxis will usually face competition from competitors.

However, current technological developments have made these road-based conventional taxis slowly begin to lose their market share to intermediary modes such as shared taxis (Sitinjak 2020). The phenomenon of ridesharing is common, so the cab-sharing concept was developed (Sitinja, 2020). Shared taxis are a form of public transportation, between a regular taxi and a mass transit system controlled by an operator. Here the sending company collects trips with almost the same origin and destination, and groups them into shared vehicles, at lower fares than metered fares in conventional taxis (Aarhaug 2014).

5. Results and Discussion

5.1 Blue Bird Company Differentiation Strategy

The company provides regular taxi services at various locations in Indonesia, especially in big cities that have high mobility, such as Jakarta, Depok, Tangerang, Bekasi, Bandung, Cilegon, Batam, Semarang, Manado, Medan, Padang, Palembang, Pekanbaru, Surabaya, Makassar and Bangka Belitung. In April 2019, PT Blue Bird Tbk officially launched a taxi with electric fuel. Blue Bird is claimed to be the first taxi operator in Indonesia to operate an electric car. And until the end of 2020, the company owns and operates a taxi fleet spread throughout Indonesia as many as 16,963 units. The advantages of this regular taxi service are a large fleet, new output, cleanliness and passenger comfort, friendly drivers, and maintaining a good corporate image in the eyes of consumers.

Demographically, this regular taxi service targets middle-upper consumers, as well as office workers and tourists, because the prices charged are quite expensive among taxi services. Until 2021, the initial fare for this taxi service is IDR 4,350 per km, the door opening rate is IDR 6,500 and the waiting rate is IDR 48,000 per hour. We have summarized the prices of electric and conventional Blue Bird taxi services above based on the Blue Bird taxi admin chat on the official website. Psychologically, the company has an image of itself as a "good" taxi, so that consumers are influenced and gain consumer trust. The company's way of introducing itself to the public is through its "Below The Line" brand strategy to reach its consumers, less advertising, more events. The segmentation of regular taxi services is divided into several markets that the company offers.

5.2 Blue Bird Company Focus Strategy

The Executive taxi of Blue Bird Company called Silver Bird is a luxury taxi with a luxurious vehicle that has a spacious interior to pamper its customers. The interior of the vehicle is specially designed soundproof for comfort and silence while driving so that passengers will not be disturbed by the outside noise. Target market for this service is executive level and VIP guest or visitor. Customers can order this taxi car through My Blue Bird app and 24-hour call center, because the number of vehicles is not as much as regular taxis. Range area of Silver Bird is around Jakarta, Depok, Tangerang, Bekasi, and Surabaya. The area is limited to the office area or city center which is the target of Silver Bird users.

The number of Silver Bird taxis is only around 1,200 units with various types of vehicles, such as Mercedes Benz C200 CGI & C230 elg & E200 CGI & E200 K, Toyota Vellfire, Toyota Alphard and Toyota Camry. Blue Bird company also launched Tesla X 75D to support green energy in Indonesia. Moreover, every car is equipped with a GPS device that can be easily tracked by the system to support passenger safety. Easy payment is one of the convenience facilities offered by Blue Bird company for customers in paying the taxi fares. To support this payment access, Blue Bird forms a partnership with a bank in Indonesia in the installation of electronic data capture (EDC) for every Silver Bird taxi. This will allow passengers to pay with any debit or credit card while traveling with a taxi. Not only that, the man behind the steering wheel has been trained on their technical knowledge of the car, English communication skills, and also the knowledge of every street area. The new innovation of this premium taxi is Silverbird Hourly, with hourly duration service making customers more freedom to travel and they can see the duration of the trip in real-time on the IoT screen that is available on Silver Bird taxi. All of these facilities make Silver Bird taxis become an exclusive taxi rate and have specific target consumers. Silver Bird taxi flagfall starts from IDR 13,000 and the waiting rate is IDR 50,000. When the taxi is running, the fare per kilometer is charged at IDR 7,000. While the rate for electric cars is shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Silver Bird Taxi Fare Based on the Type of Vehicle

Type of Vehicle	The Flagfall Fare	The Fare Per Kilometer
Mercedes Benz	IDR 13,000	IDR 7,000
Alphard	IDR 17,000	IDR 9,000
Tesla X 75D	IDR 19,200	IDR 11,000

Source: Harga.web.id. Available: <https://harga.web.id/tarif-silver-bird-alphard-tesla.info>. Accessed on May 18, 2022

5.3 SWOT Analysis

5.3.1 Strengths

Blue Bird continues to strive to be able to manage the challenges faced through various initiatives, strict efficiency to increasing service standards to ensure customer safety and comfort. In order to improve service quality and visibility of the Company's assets, Blue Bird launched an IoT operating system which is a solution to the previous system, as a meter counter device and order receiver that has been used in Blue Bird's fleet. Blue Bird IoT devices as multifunctional computer devices will be installed in all types of Blue Bird fleets complete with features such as argometer system for taxis, delivery of passenger orders, Global Positioning System (GPS), communication with passengers and central operators, and also payments. This device is also connected directly to the vehicle so that it

can read vital data from the vehicle's condition and send it directly to the Blue Bird application system. Moreover, Blue Bird also implements digitalization with the latest information technology system to provide comfort and accuracy in their service. An integrated information system makes it easy for the drivers to be more accurate in picking up their guests, find out locations with high demand and find out more precise routes to save time and improve service. Digitalization also makes it easy for the Company to get to know their customers better. Through data management, the Company can provide the right offer according to the customer needs, build loyalty through the Loyalty program and open opportunities to collaborate with their partners through digital platforms.

Blue Bird has constantly updated its information technology system that provides customers with ease and comfort. Through My Blue Bird application, customers are able to enjoy numerous features including the ability to see available nearby taxis, driver rating system, and advance booking. In addition, My Blue Bird application also allows customers to make non-cash (cashless) payments. Blue Bird also launched the #BirukanLangitJakarta campaign as a form of concern for environmental sustainability, especially improving air quality in Jakarta. Apart from the existence of e-Blue Bird as a taxi with zero emission, Blue Bird also launched the One Ride One Seed program. Collaborating with WWF-Indonesia, this program allows everyone to adopt a tree seedling on every trip using e-Blue Bird. It is hoped that the One Ride One Seed program will not only help reduce air pollution, but also be able to help preserve the environment and sustain clean water for the people of Jakarta. As a commitment of the company, since 2019 the company has officially operated an electric taxi fleet for the first time in Indonesia. The number of its electric fleet increased as a form of service innovation and environmental preservation.

5.3.2 Weaknesses

Weaknesses can be found in every company, without exception. Blue Bird also has weaknesses that try to be improved to meet consumer satisfaction. Currently, not many people have downloaded the My Blue Bird app because of a lack of promotion about functions of the online platform to the public. This taxi company has offered many promotional codes, but the promo amount is too small and does not attract customers. Based on user experience, there is no procedure for using the application and also the button functions instructions after registering an account.

Besides the online ordering platform, the Blue Bird company needs to increase the speed of customer service in helping and responding to customer needs. This is because the customer service takes a long time to answer phone calls and customer online chats. In addition, the company also has an obligation to improve the welfare of employees who work as taxi drivers. Some drivers complain that the distribution of incentives is not satisfactory, making it difficult for daily operational costs.

5.3.3 Opportunities

Blue Bird also strives to continue the innovations that have been made before. The company believes that their ability to innovate places them at the forefront of the transportation industry. The company continues to develop existing digital functions to provide convenience, comfort and added value to customers.

This blue taxi company has constantly updated its information technology system that provides customers with ease and comfort. Through the My Blue Bird application, customers are able to enjoy numerous features including the ability to see available nearby taxis, driver rating system, and advance booking. In addition, the MyBlueBird application also allows customers to make non-cash (cashless) payments.

5.3.4 Threat

The phenomenon of online-based transportation is starting to emerge in Indonesia, especially in big cities. The number of online transportations is increasing. This is in contrast to conventional public transportation which is considered less comfortable, secure and still has high social and economic costs. The majority of people prefer land transportation such as online motorcycle taxis to meet their needs. People's dependence on this type of transportation is very high with the reason to shorten travel time.

Also, the year of 2020 was a challenging year for Blue Bird. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a major impact on the transportation industry. Social distancing policies and reduction in community mobility have significantly reduced the performance of the transportation industry. After that, there were threats from online taxi platforms, such as Go-Car and Grab-Car, which are now widely used by the people of Indonesia. This makes price competition

more intense and facilities increasingly competitive between taxis. This taxi competition causes blue bird taxi profits to decrease every year.

5.4. Effectiveness of Online Application

Due to the presence of disruptors, Blue Bird became one of the most heavily impacted companies. Blue Bird's operational profit has fallen from 2015 to 2020, according to the financial reports of Blue Bird company (Figure 1). Blue Bird competes with local taxis and application-based transportation in numerous cities. Indonesian local people, especially in the city center, prefer to use "Ojek" to travel around. Ojek or motorbike taxi is more popular because of the fast solution in the rush hour and with cheap price. Besides that, the decline also occurred due to COVID-19 and the regulations that limit people's activities outside the home. However, Blue Bird was not deafeningly quiet. They have been catching up and beginning to develop some advancements since 2015.

MyBlueBird application is one of the innovations of Blue Bird company to compete with other online-offline taxi companies. It is hoped that this application can increase the company's income. But in fact, the application has not fully provided revenues for the company. This application is still unable to compete with other competitors that offer multi-service technology that provides access to a wide range of services including transportation, payments, food delivery, logistics, and many more. As time goes by, Bluebird has collaborated with online ride-hailing platforms such as Gojek and Shopee to increase public interest in using Blue Bird taxis. Figure 1 represent the operational revenue of Blue Bird Taxi 2015-2020 in million Rupiah.

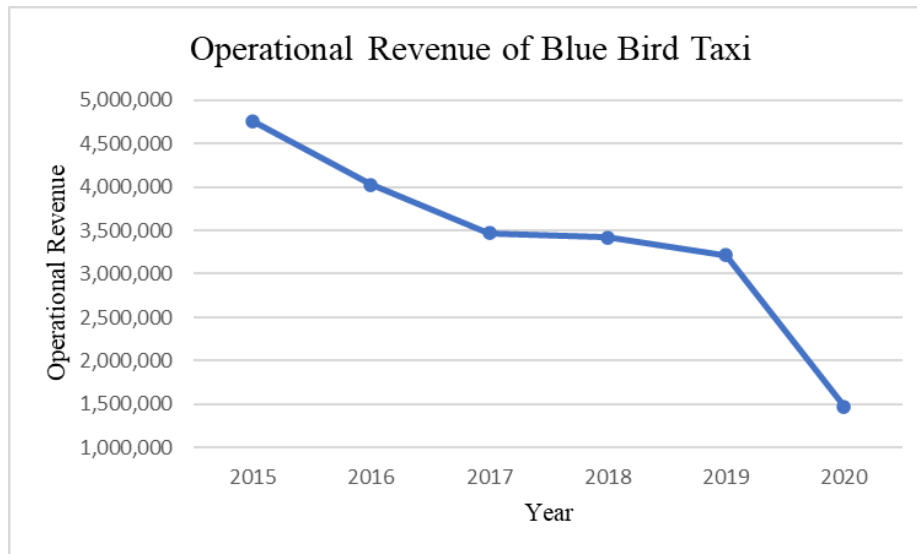


Figure 1. Operational Revenue of Blue Bird Taxi 2015-2020 in million Rupiah.
Source: Annual Report Blue Bird 2015-2020

6. Conclusion

From the analysis that has been carried out, the authors conclude that one of them is the Blue Bird taxi company adopting several competitive forces by Porter in running its business. Blue Bird Group performs geographic segmentation by selecting several cities with high mobility distribution to offer company services, as well as psychological segmentation by imaging itself as a "good" taxi service provider, so that consumers are influenced and give trust to the company. For the special passenger transportation business, Blue Bird categorizes its services into several subsidiaries for different target markets. In general, taxis that have a blue or metallic blue color target the general public segment. The main target of consumers with a background aged 25 years and over, as well as the target market for consumers who want a good quality, safe and comfortable trip. In the Executive segment, Blue Bird provides Silver Bird with its black fleet.

The main concentration of Blue Bird company is to maintain the quality of service to customers. However, as a market leader, maintaining a reputation as a reliable transportation partner is not easy. Therefore, to build consumer

brand loyalty, Blue Bird implements quality control in all its business lines, from technical support to customer service. However, the amount of competition certainly requires a strategy to create new innovations that are right on target and can create a good image for the company. Competition in transportation services is currently presented with various choices of transportation services. To survive in the competition for transportation services, PT Blue Bird Tbk presents a new innovation, namely an online taxi ordering service. In 2011 Blue Bird launched a new innovation called the Taxi Mobile Reservation service, and due to a decrease in revenue at the company, Blue Bird presented an application called MyBlueBird in 2016 where this application is an attempt to change the company name. previous application. However, with many existing competitors such as Gojek and Grab, the competition is getting tougher for the transportation industry, especially PT. Blue Bird Tbk. Thus, the company needs to innovate in the form of collaboration with competing companies to raise their revenue.

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Biographies

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Djoko Nurprawito is currently employed at Indonesia's state-owned energy company and as a PhD student in the Department of Industrial Engineering, Faculty of Engineering, University of Indonesia. Most of his experiences related to Supply Chain Management in the Geothermal and Oil & Gas industry. He has an undergraduate degree in Mechanical Engineering from Trisakti University and MBA degree from Oklahoma City University.

Marissa Puspita is a Master's Degree student in the Industrial Engineering Department, Faculty of Engineering University of Indonesia with a specialization in industrial management. She holds a Bachelor of Science from the University of Indonesia and has presented her research at The 6th International Science and Mathematics Academics Research Talks. On top of that, she also has experience as an Indonesian Junior High School Tutor at the International Junior Science Olympiad.