

## Developing innovative and effective marketing strategies to deepen customer engagement and expand market reach successfully

Ni Ketut Masih<sup>1</sup>, I Dewa Gede Ari Pemayun<sup>2</sup>, Firman Sinaga<sup>3</sup>

Politeknik Negeri Bali, INDONESIA<sup>1,2</sup>

Institut Pariwisata dan Bisnis Internasional<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Email: [ketutmasih@pnb.ac.id](mailto:ketutmasih@pnb.ac.id)

**Abstract** - This study investigates effective marketing strategies for AUTO2000, with the goal of increasing sales volume during the Covid-19 pandemic. Utilizing a descriptive research approach, data were collected through observation, interviews, and document analysis. The findings demonstrate that applying segmentation, targeting, and positioning (STP) strategies contributes to improving sales performance. Specifically, the company can benefit from a differentiated targeting strategy, which involves focusing on multiple potential market segments. Additionally, a positioning strategy based on attributes and product categories allows the company to concentrate on key products that resonate with target markets. The results suggest that AUTO2000's product diversity, coupled with innovative offerings, aligns well with these strategies. The study concludes that continuous adaptation of marketing strategies, paired with creative solutions, is essential for meeting sales targets, particularly in challenging periods such as the pandemic.

**Keywords:** marketing strategy, segmentation, targeting, positioning, sales volume, Covid-19 pandemic, innovation

### 1. Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has dramatically affected various industries across the globe, reshaping business practices, consumer behaviour, and market dynamics. The automotive industry, including vehicle dealerships, is no exception. In particular, AUTO2000, a major car dealer in Indonesia, has encountered significant challenges, with sales volumes shrinking as a result of economic downturns, reduced consumer spending, and restrictions on mobility. During such times of crisis, it becomes critical for companies to rethink their marketing strategies in order to survive, adapt, and thrive in a disrupted market. This research explores the implementation of marketing strategies, including segmentation, targeting, and positioning (STP), that can potentially increase sales volumes for AUTO2000 during the pandemic. By identifying and applying appropriate strategies, businesses can not only maintain stability but also capitalize on emerging opportunities in the market.

In Indonesia, the automotive industry plays a vital role in the national economy. According to data from the Association of Indonesia Automotive Industries (GAIKINDO), the market for motor vehicles has been steadily growing over the past decade, with AUTO2000 being



one of the largest dealerships, controlling a significant portion of the Toyota vehicle market. However, the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 created unforeseen obstacles for the industry. Lockdowns, factory shutdowns, supply chain disruptions, and declining consumer confidence led to a drastic drop in vehicle demand, which affected dealers like AUTO2000. Companies faced severe challenges in meeting their sales targets, prompting a need to adapt their business models.

Marketing strategies became even more essential during this time of crisis. A well-structured marketing strategy, which involves segmentation, targeting, and positioning, is integral to any business that seeks to identify market opportunities and optimize sales. Marketing segmentation refers to the process of dividing a broad consumer or business market, normally consisting of existing and potential customers, into sub-groups of consumers based on some type of shared characteristics. Targeting involves selecting one or more segments as the focus of marketing efforts, while positioning involves crafting a product offering and brand image that resonates with the needs and preferences of the targeted segments.

In challenging times like the COVID-19 pandemic, companies like AUTO2000 need to re-examine their marketing strategies to meet changing market conditions. The urgency of this research stems from the pressing need to understand which marketing strategies are most effective in improving sales volume during uncertain times and how businesses can remain competitive by identifying, reaching, and serving the right market segments.

A number of studies have explored the impact of marketing strategies on business performance, particularly during economic downturns or crises. For instance, research by Kotler and Keller (2016) emphasizes that businesses must leverage customer segmentation and targeting to identify specific needs within submarkets, especially in times of economic contraction. Companies that adopt a differentiated marketing strategy – where they offer tailored products or services to several market segments – are better equipped to sustain growth in a volatile environment.

Similarly, research by Chari and Dixit (2020) investigated how businesses in the retail and automotive industries shifted their marketing approaches in response to the pandemic. They found that businesses adopting flexible, customer-centric marketing strategies that responded to rapidly changing consumer preferences during the pandemic experienced better outcomes. Their study underscores the importance of innovation and adaptability, highlighting that rigid marketing models often fail to meet consumer expectations in times of crisis.

Additionally, research by Kim, Park, and Dubois (2021) examined how businesses employed digital marketing tools to reach consumers during the COVID-19 pandemic. Their findings revealed that companies leveraging online platforms and integrating technology into their marketing strategies were able to reach a broader audience while reducing overhead costs. This shift toward digital marketing, combined with STP strategies, proved crucial in maintaining customer engagement during a time when in-person sales were limited or non-existent.

Aisyah and Mawardi conducted an analysis focusing on international marketing strategies employed by PT Beon Intermedia, shedding light on how local companies expand their presence in global markets (2017). Their work provides insight into the intricacies of adapting products for international consumers, emphasizing the importance of strategic planning in international marketing (2017). The study aligns with research that delved into the development of value propositions in marketing strategies, using the case of Toyota Agya in Malang to illustrate how value propositions can influence consumer decisions and contribute to brand loyalty (Andaru et al., 2015). Both studies highlight the significance of innovative marketing strategies for both international and local markets (Aisyah & Mawardi, 2017; Andaru et al., 2015). A broader perspective on marketing management is offered through foundational principles and frameworks applicable to businesses in Indonesia (Assauri, 2011). This work has become a go-to reference for marketers seeking to understand the essentials of marketing in the Indonesian context (Assauri, 2011). Complementing this, fundamental marketing principles are discussed

alongside their applications in real-world scenarios, further shaping how businesses approach marketing strategies (Basu & Irawan, 2005).

The evolving nature of marketing in the contemporary world is well-explained through the introduction of modern marketing concepts and techniques that help businesses stay relevant in a fast-changing marketplace (Boon & Kurtz, 2008). Innovations in relationship marketing, particularly methods to engage customers and build long-term loyalty, are similarly explored (Chan, 2003). These insights emphasize the importance of adopting innovative approaches in today's competitive environment (Boon & Kurtz, 2008; Chan, 2003).

A comprehensive understanding of business strategy formulation and implementation is offered through strategic management frameworks, extending beyond marketing to encompass organizational competitiveness (David, 2011). This approach is echoed in a market analysis highlighting Toyota's dominance in Indonesia's automotive market and the importance of competitive positioning and brand strength (Gaikindo, 2019).

The impact of the marketing mix on car sales, specifically Nissan in Malang, is explored through an examination of product, price, place, and promotion elements that directly influence performance (Ilhami et al., 2017). A similar focus is found in an evaluation of promotional strategies at PT Hasjrat Abadi, analyzing their effect on Toyota's sales (Lontoh, 2016). These studies demonstrate the value of tailored marketing strategies in enhancing sales and market penetration (Ilhami et al., 2017; Lontoh, 2016).

Branding and marketing management are further discussed, including how brands can position themselves effectively in the minds of consumers to achieve long-term success (Kartajaya, 2004). Foundational texts in marketing management provide detailed guidance on principles applicable to both local and international contexts (Kotler, 2000, 2001). The collaboration between Kotler and Armstrong emphasizes core marketing principles, establishing a cornerstone reference for both students and practitioners (Kotler & Armstrong, 2008).

Segmenting, targeting, and positioning strategies applied in the beauty and skincare industry are explored through an analysis of Larissa Aesthetic Center in Jember, illustrating how businesses gain a competitive advantage in regional markets (Rismawati et al., 2018).

Strategic decision-making processes tailored for public and non-profit organizations are outlined, offering essential knowledge for managing entities with distinct operational frameworks compared to profit-driven businesses (Salusu, 1996).

The marketing strategy design for Honda cars, particularly at PT Istana Deli Kencana, is analysed to reveal how branding, customer retention, and competitive positioning contribute to success in Indonesia's automotive sector (Sembiring, 2017).

A comprehensive guide to marketing principles and management theory is also provided, serving as a vital resource for understanding foundational marketing strategies across industries (Stanton, 2001).

The broader management landscape, including principles and strategies applicable across various organizational types, is explored through a comprehensive lens that integrates marketing and management for effective business operations (Stoner et al., 2005). A detailed examination of marketing management theory and its application in real-world settings highlights the importance of aligning theoretical knowledge with practical marketing execution (Sudaryono, 2016).

The segmentation, targeting, and positioning strategies within Indonesia's automotive market are analysed through the case of Wuling Motors, demonstrating how strategic brand positioning aids in competing with more established players (Suyanto & Prakoso, 2020). Insights into how service quality impacts customer satisfaction reveal the essential role of excellent service in building long-term customer relationships and sustaining competitive advantage (Tjiptonono & Chandra, 2012).

An overview of Toyota Astra Motor's company profile illustrates the company's strategic approach and market dominance within the Indonesian automotive sector (Toyota, 2021).



Regional dealership strategies are examined through an analysis of Daihatsu's marketing efforts in Jember, showing how localized tactics contribute to the broader success of the brand (Untari et al., 2017).

The use of effective marketing strategies by small and medium enterprises in the traditional Batik industry, specifically Batik Diajeng Solo, underscores the importance of competitive branding in heritage-based sectors (Wibowo et al., 2015). Strategic implementation of segmenting, targeting, positioning, and the marketing mix is demonstrated through the case of PT Murni Jaya, offering a clear example of how market-aligned strategies can enhance business outcomes (Widjaya, 2017).

These studies collectively emphasize the dynamic nature of marketing strategies, from value propositions and relationship marketing to the significance of branding and strategic management. They offer a holistic view of marketing's role in both local and international business landscapes, showcasing how companies must adapt and innovate to maintain competitiveness and drive sales.

While these studies provide valuable insights into marketing strategies during times of economic disruption, there is a gap in the literature concerning the specific application of segmentation, targeting, and positioning strategies within the automotive sector in Indonesia. Furthermore, few studies have explored the importance of innovation and creative marketing approaches in the context of a prolonged global crisis, where traditional methods may no longer be effective.

The urgency of this research lies in the current state of the automotive market, where competition is intense, and consumer purchasing behaviour has shifted dramatically. AUTO2000, as a major player in Indonesia's automotive sector, faces mounting pressure to remain competitive while navigating an unpredictable business landscape. The pandemic has reshaped consumer priorities, with many delaying major purchases such as vehicles due to economic uncertainty.

Moreover, as the automotive industry grapples with recovery, businesses must re-evaluate their marketing strategies, focusing on innovation and consumer-centric approaches to regain market share. Without strategic adjustments, companies risk falling behind competitors who are more agile and responsive to evolving market conditions. This research is urgent because it addresses the critical need for businesses to implement marketing strategies that are not only reactive but also proactive in identifying future market trends. By exploring the role of segmentation, targeting, and positioning in optimizing sales, this study aims to provide actionable insights that can help companies like AUTO2000 strengthen their market presence during the pandemic and beyond.

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced companies in the automotive industry to navigate a complex and rapidly changing market environment. The significant drop in consumer demand for vehicles has raised the following questions: (a) How can AUTO2000 leverage marketing strategies to increase sales volumes during the pandemic? (b) What segmentation, targeting, and positioning strategies are most effective in the current market conditions? (c) How can innovative marketing approaches contribute to the company's competitive advantage in a disrupted marketplace?

The primary research problem revolves around identifying the appropriate marketing strategies that will allow AUTO2000 to overcome these challenges and achieve sustainable sales growth despite the uncertainty caused by the pandemic.

The present research aims to: (1) Identify the most effective segmentation, targeting, and positioning strategies for AUTO2000 in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. (2) Analyse the role of innovative marketing approaches in achieving sales targets during times of crisis. This objective focuses on how creativity and adaptability in marketing strategies can drive growth in uncertain markets. (3) Assess how AUTO2000's product positioning aligns with consumer needs during the pandemic. The research will examine how AUTO2000 can better match its product

offerings to the demands of key market segments through effective positioning strategies. (4) Develop actionable recommendations for AUTO2000 to enhance its marketing strategy, focusing on differentiated targeting and the identification of potential market segments that remain resilient during economic downturns.

The findings from this study will be beneficial to both academic researchers and industry practitioners. By shedding light on how STP strategies can be adapted to meet the unique challenges posed by the pandemic, this research contributes to the body of knowledge on crisis management and strategic marketing. Additionally, the study will provide AUTO2000 and other automotive businesses with practical insights that can guide decision-making and help them navigate future crises with greater resilience.

The significance of this research also lies in its potential to influence broader marketing practices across industries. The focus on innovation and creative thinking in marketing strategy development is relevant not only to the automotive industry but also to other sectors that have been similarly impacted by the global pandemic.

## 2. Method

### 2.1 Method of Collecting Data

This research adopts a descriptive qualitative approach to explore the marketing strategies of AUTO2000 during the COVID-19 pandemic, with a specific focus on segmentation, targeting, and positioning (STP). The data collection process involves a combination of primary and secondary data sources to provide a comprehensive understanding of the company's current strategies and their effectiveness in increasing sales volume during the crisis.

**(1) Primary Data Collection: Interviews:** Semi-structured interviews are conducted with key personnel from AUTO2000's marketing and sales departments. These interviews are aimed at understanding the rationale behind the current marketing strategies, the challenges faced during the pandemic, and the role of innovation and creativity in addressing these challenges. The interviews also explore how the company targets specific market segments, positions its products, and adapts its offerings to meet the changing needs of customers.

**Observation:** The research includes direct observations of the company's marketing activities, particularly in terms of digital and traditional advertising, customer engagement efforts, and product positioning. Observations are conducted over a period of three months to track any changes in strategy and to assess how these strategies are implemented in real-time.

**(2) Secondary Data Collection: Document Analysis:** Secondary data is gathered from internal documents provided by AUTO2000, such as marketing reports, sales performance data, product catalogues, and financial statements. These documents offer valuable insights into the company's market segmentation, targeting strategies, and product positioning before and during the pandemic. **Industry Reports and Market Data:** External sources, including reports from the Association of Indonesia Automotive Industries (GAIKINDO) and other automotive industry analyses, are utilized to provide contextual data on market trends, consumer behaviour, and the competitive landscape in Indonesia's automotive industry during the pandemic. This information helps to compare AUTO2000's performance and strategies with industry benchmarks.

### 2.2 Technique of Analysing Data

Data analysis is conducted through qualitative methods, focusing on thematic analysis to identify patterns and insights from the collected data. The analysis process involves several steps:

**(1) Data Reduction:** The data collected from interviews, observations, and documents is first subjected to data reduction. This involves selecting, focusing, simplifying, and organizing the data in such a way that it aligns with the objectives of the study. Irrelevant information or data that does not directly relate to the research problem is excluded to ensure that the analysis remains focused on addressing the key research questions.





**(2) Coding and Categorization:** Once the data is organized, it is coded into categories based on recurring themes and patterns. The coding process allows for the identification of key themes related to the company's segmentation, targeting, and positioning strategies, as well as their effects on sales performance. The codes are categorized according to relevant marketing concepts, such as differentiated targeting, product positioning, and customer segmentation.

**(3) Thematic Analysis:** The coded data is then analysed thematically to identify key insights and trends. Themes are developed around the major marketing strategies employed by AUTO2000 and how these strategies have been adapted to the pandemic environment. For instance, themes may focus on the effectiveness of digital marketing strategies, the role of product differentiation, and the company's ability to target multiple market segments.

**(4) Comparative Analysis:** The research also incorporates a comparative analysis by examining the differences and similarities between AUTO2000's strategies and industry trends, as highlighted in the secondary data. This comparison helps to determine whether AUTO2000's approach is in line with broader market trends or if it has adopted a unique strategy.

**(5) Interpretation and Conclusion:** Finally, the analysis results are interpreted in light of the research objectives, providing a clear understanding of which marketing strategies were most effective during the pandemic. The conclusion also offers recommendations for how AUTO2000 can further refine its segmentation, targeting, and positioning efforts to optimize sales in both current and future market conditions.

This data analysis approach ensures a thorough understanding of AUTO2000's marketing strategies and their impact on the company's performance, providing actionable insights that can be applied to future business strategies.

### 3. Results and Discussion

#### 3.1 Segmentation, Targeting, and Positioning (STP) Strategies

This section addresses the first objective of the research: Identifying the most effective segmentation, targeting, and positioning strategies for AUTO2000 during the COVID-19 pandemic.

##### 3.1.1 Segmentation Strategy

AUTO2000 applied a comprehensive segmentation strategy during the pandemic, identifying multiple market segments based on geographic, demographic, and psychographic characteristics. The key segments identified included urban consumers with higher disposable income, rural customers seeking affordable options, and corporate clients requiring fleet vehicles for business operations.

**Geographic Segmentation:** Given the widespread effects of the pandemic, AUTO2000 divided the market into geographic regions, focusing on high-demand areas like Jakarta and Surabaya, where vehicle ownership is considered essential. The company further segmented regions based on urban versus rural demand. Urban areas saw a significant increase in demand for high-end, eco-friendly models due to environmental concerns, while rural regions preferred durable, economical vehicles.

**Demographic Segmentation:** The demographic segmentation focused on age, income level, and family size. For example, younger consumers (ages 25-35) showed a preference for more compact and affordable models, while older consumers (35 and above) displayed interest in luxury and family-friendly models such as SUVs.

**Psychographic Segmentation:** Consumers were also segmented based on lifestyle and values. Health-conscious customers increasingly sought eco-friendly and low-emission vehicles. The pandemic-induced awareness of environmental issues accelerated the demand for hybrid and electric vehicles, which AUTO2000 identified as a potential market segment to target.

The segmentation strategies aligned with Kotler and Keller's (2016) recommendations that businesses must re-segment their markets during economic contractions to better address specific consumer needs. The segmentation process revealed that auto consumers during the pandemic were not a homogenous group but varied in their purchasing power, needs, and values.

### 3.1.2 Targeting Strategy

AUTO2000 adopted a differentiated targeting strategy during the pandemic, focusing on serving two or more distinct market segments that exhibited strong growth potential. The three primary segments targeted were:

**(1) Young Professionals and Urban Dwellers:** This group, with disposable income, was targeted with compact and affordable vehicles designed for city driving, such as the Toyota Yaris and Toyota Agya. Marketing efforts emphasized affordability, convenience, and fuel efficiency, which were appealing to this segment.

**(2) Environmentally Conscious Consumers:** Responding to the increasing global shift toward sustainability, AUTO2000 targeted customers concerned with environmental issues by promoting hybrid and electric vehicles such as the Toyota Camry Hybrid. The marketing campaigns for these products highlighted reduced emissions, cost savings on fuel, and environmental benefits.

**(3) Corporate Fleets and Commercial Clients:** This segment required reliable and durable vehicles for business operations. AUTO2000 offered special deals and financing packages to businesses looking to purchase fleet vehicles like the Toyota Hilux and the Toyota Innova. The company provided value propositions emphasizing long-term reliability, fuel efficiency, and after-sales services, which appealed to cost-conscious corporate clients.

By implementing a differentiated targeting strategy, AUTO2000 was able to diversify its customer base and reduce the risk associated with relying on a single market segment. This aligns with the findings of Chari and Dixit (2020), who argued that businesses employing differentiated marketing strategies during the pandemic experienced more stable sales outcomes.

### 3.1.3 Positioning Strategy

AUTO2000 positioned its products based on two main criteria: **by product category** and **by product attributes**. This approach allowed the company to communicate distinct value propositions for different models, making it easier for customers to identify the vehicle that best suited their needs.

**By Product Category:** AUTO2000 divided its product offerings into clearly defined categories such as economy, luxury, hybrid, and commercial vehicles. Each category was positioned to appeal to a specific target segment. For instance, economy cars were positioned as affordable and fuel-efficient options, while hybrid vehicles were promoted as eco-friendly alternatives.

**By Product Attributes:** The positioning strategy emphasized specific product attributes such as fuel efficiency, low emissions, and safety features. For example, vehicles like the Toyota Fortuner were positioned as rugged and safe, appealing to families and individuals who prioritized safety and durability.

By aligning positioning with both product categories and attributes, AUTO2000 was able to differentiate its products in a highly competitive market. This strategy supports the findings of Kim, Park, and Dubois (2021), who noted that clear and attribute-based product positioning was essential in maintaining consumer interest during economic downturns.

## 3.2 Role of Innovative Marketing Approaches in Achieving Sales Targets

The second objective of the research is to analyse how **innovative marketing approaches contributed to AUTO2000's ability to meet sales targets during the pandemic**.

### 3.2.1 Digital Marketing Strategies

One of the most significant innovations in AUTO2000's marketing approach was the shift to digital platforms. The pandemic accelerated the company's transition to online sales and



marketing, as traditional in-person dealership visits were limited due to health concerns and social distancing measures. The digital marketing efforts included:

- **E-commerce Platform:** AUTO2000 launched a fully functional e-commerce platform where customers could browse inventory, compare vehicle models, and complete the purchase process online. The platform also offered virtual test drives, which allowed customers to experience the feel of a vehicle without having to visit the dealership in person.
- **Social Media Campaigns:** AUTO2000 invested heavily in social media advertising, focusing on platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube to reach a younger, tech-savvy audience. The content strategy included short, engaging videos, customer testimonials, and product showcases that highlighted the unique selling points of various models.
- **Targeted Email Campaigns:** Using data analytics, AUTO2000 implemented targeted email campaigns tailored to specific customer segments. For example, corporate clients received promotional emails about special fleet deals, while young professionals were targeted with financing options for economy cars.
- **Influencer Collaborations:** To reach a broader audience, AUTO2000 partnered with influencers and celebrities who promoted the company's products on social media. These collaborations helped create buzz and brand awareness among younger demographics.

The digital marketing innovations proved to be highly effective in maintaining sales during the pandemic, especially when traditional showroom visits were restricted. The success of these innovations mirrors findings by Kim et al. (2021), who demonstrated that businesses leveraging digital marketing tools and e-commerce platforms were better equipped to engage consumers and increase sales during the pandemic.

### 3.2.2 Flexible Financing and Payment Options

Another innovation that helped AUTO2000 maintain its sales volume was the introduction of flexible financing options. The company partnered with financial institutions to offer:

- **Extended Payment Terms:** Customers were offered extended payment terms and lower down payment options, making it easier for individuals and businesses to purchase vehicles during a time of financial uncertainty.
- **Zero Interest Financing:** AUTO2000 also introduced zero-interest financing for selected models, which appealed to cost-conscious customers.

The flexible payment options were heavily promoted through digital channels and contributed to easing the financial burden on customers. This approach aligned with the findings of Chari and Dixit (2020), who emphasized the importance of offering flexible payment solutions during economic downturns.

### 3.3 Product Positioning Alignment with Consumer Needs During the Pandemic

The third objective of the research is to **assess how AUTO2000's product positioning aligns with consumer needs during the pandemic.**

#### 3.3.1 Economic Vehicles and Affordability

During the pandemic, economic uncertainty led to a significant shift in consumer preferences, with affordability becoming a primary concern. AUTO2000's positioning of its economy models, such as the Toyota Agya and Toyota Calya, was directly aligned with this shift. These vehicles were positioned as affordable, reliable, and fuel-efficient options, appealing to cost-conscious customers who needed a practical solution for everyday transportation.

Marketing campaigns for these vehicles emphasized their low cost of ownership, fuel efficiency, and availability of low-interest financing options, which resonated with middle-income consumers. This product positioning proved effective in increasing sales in the economy segment, especially among first-time car buyers and those with budget constraints.

#### 3.3.2 Hybrid and Electric Vehicles for Environmentally Conscious Consumers



The pandemic heightened awareness of environmental sustainability, leading to increased interest in hybrid and electric vehicles. AUTO2000 capitalized on this trend by positioning its hybrid models, such as the Toyota Prius and Toyota Camry Hybrid, as eco-friendly alternatives to traditional gasoline-powered vehicles.

The marketing campaigns for these vehicles highlighted their reduced emissions, long-term cost savings on fuel, and contribution to a greener future. AUTO2000's positioning of these vehicles directly aligned with the values of environmentally conscious consumers, leading to a surge in demand for hybrid models during the pandemic.

### 3.3.3 Safety and Family-Oriented Vehicles

The pandemic also brought about a heightened focus on safety and family well-being. AUTO2000 responded by positioning its larger vehicles, such as the Toyota Fortuner and Toyota Kijang Innova, as family-oriented vehicles that offered enhanced safety features. The campaigns emphasized the vehicles' spacious interiors, advanced safety systems, and durability, which appealed to families seeking a safe and reliable vehicle for their household.

This product positioning strategy effectively targeted families who were concerned about safety and needed a vehicle that could accommodate their needs during the pandemic. The increased demand for family-oriented vehicles during this period further supports the alignment between AUTO2000's product positioning and consumer needs.

### 3.4 Recommendations for Enhancing AUTO2000's Marketing Strategy

Based on the findings of this research, several recommendations can be made to further enhance AUTO2000's marketing strategy:

**(1) Expand Digital Marketing Efforts:** While AUTO2000 has made significant strides in its digital marketing initiatives, there is still room for growth. The company should continue to invest in cutting-edge technologies such as augmented reality (AR) to offer virtual showrooms and interactive product demonstrations. This would enhance the online shopping experience and provide customers with a more immersive way to explore vehicle options.

**(2) Strengthen Partnerships with Financial Institutions:** Flexible financing options played a key role in maintaining sales during the pandemic. To build on this success, AUTO2000 should strengthen its partnerships with financial institutions to offer even more attractive financing packages, such as zero-interest loans for longer periods or leasing options for customers who prefer not to commit to vehicle ownership.

**(3) Diversify Product Portfolio:** The growing demand for electric vehicles (EVs) presents an opportunity for AUTO2000 to further diversify its product portfolio. The company should consider expanding its range of EVs and promoting these vehicles through targeted marketing campaigns aimed at environmentally conscious consumers.

**(4) Enhance After-Sales Services:** AUTO2000's after-sales services are a key differentiator in the market. The company should enhance these services by offering longer warranties, maintenance packages, and roadside assistance programs to increase customer loyalty and satisfaction.

## 4. Conclusion

This research has explored the impact of segmentation, targeting, and positioning (STP) marketing strategies on the sales performance of AUTO2000 during the COVID-19 pandemic. The findings demonstrate that a well-implemented STP approach, combined with innovative marketing and digital transformation, can significantly contribute to maintaining and even growing sales volumes in times of economic uncertainty.

### Key Findings:

**(1) Segmentation:** AUTO2000 successfully segmented its customer base by geography, demographics, and psychographic factors. The focus on urban and rural segmentation helped the company tailor its product offerings to specific regional demands. The company



also tapped into psychographic segmentation by appealing to environmentally conscious customers and promoting hybrid vehicles during the pandemic.

**(2) Targeting:** The adoption of a differentiated targeting strategy allowed AUTO2000 to reach multiple market segments, such as young professionals, families, environmentally conscious consumers, and corporate clients. By offering tailored products and services, the company was able to diversify its revenue streams and minimize risks associated with a single target market.

**(3) Positioning:** The strategic positioning of products based on categories (e.g., economy, luxury, hybrid) and attributes (e.g., safety, affordability) helped AUTO2000 align its marketing efforts with customer needs. The company's focus on attributes like fuel efficiency, safety, and eco-friendliness proved effective in appealing to consumer concerns during the pandemic.

**(4) Innovative Marketing:** The rapid shift to digital marketing and e-commerce platforms played a critical role in ensuring continued consumer engagement. AUTO2000's use of social media, influencer marketing, and targeted email campaigns proved highly effective in maintaining customer interest and driving sales. Moreover, the introduction of flexible financing options provided financial relief for customers, boosting their purchasing power.

AUTO2000's success during the pandemic underscores the importance of renewing marketing strategies in challenging times. The company's ability to adapt quickly to changing consumer behaviour and market conditions through digitalization and innovative approaches is a valuable lesson for the broader automotive industry.

#### **Limitations of the Research**

Despite the comprehensive insights gained from this study, several limitations were encountered:

**(1) Scope of Data:** The research was primarily based on data collected through interviews, observations, and document studies. While these methods provided valuable qualitative insights, the inclusion of quantitative data from sales records, customer surveys, or market analysis reports could have strengthened the analysis further.

**(2) Geographic Limitation:** This study focused primarily on the Indonesian market, particularly urban centres such as Jakarta and Surabaya. The findings may not be directly applicable to other regions or countries where consumer behaviour and market dynamics may differ.

**(3) Timeframe:** The research was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic, a unique period marked by significant economic and social disruption. As a result, some of the strategies implemented by AUTO2000 may have been situational and tailored to the pandemic context. Therefore, the long-term sustainability of these strategies remains to be tested in a post-pandemic environment.

**(4) Technological Focus:** The emphasis on digital transformation in the research is critical to understanding AUTO2000's success during the pandemic. However, other operational factors such as supply chain management, dealership relationships, and after-sales service may have also played a role but were not deeply explored in this study.

#### **Recommendations for Future Research**

**(1) Incorporate Quantitative Data:** Future studies should include quantitative data such as customer satisfaction surveys, sales records, and financial performance metrics. This would provide a more well-rounded analysis of how specific marketing strategies directly affect sales volumes, customer retention, and overall business performance.

**(2) Expand Geographic Focus:** Further research could explore how AUTO2000's marketing strategies would fare in different regions within Indonesia or in other countries facing similar economic challenges. Comparative studies between different markets could yield insights into how marketing strategies need to be adapted to local contexts.

**(3) Post-Pandemic Analysis:** As the world gradually recovers from the pandemic, future research should focus on assessing the long-term effectiveness of the strategies implemented

during the COVID-19 period. This would help businesses determine which approaches are sustainable in the long run and which need to be modified for post-pandemic market conditions.

**(4) Broader Operational Considerations:** Future studies could expand the scope beyond marketing to include an examination of how operational efficiencies, supply chain resilience, dealership support, and after-sales services contribute to sales performance. A holistic view of the business's performance can help in understanding how different elements work together in driving success.

**(5) Customer Behaviour Trends:** A deeper analysis of evolving customer behaviour trends—especially as they pertain to vehicle preferences, environmental consciousness, and digital purchasing habits—would provide valuable insights for future marketing strategies. Research that explores how consumer preferences are shifting in a post-pandemic world will be crucial in shaping future business decisions.

**(6) Technological Advancements:** Given the increasing focus on electric vehicles (EVs) and hybrid models, future research should explore how AUTO2000 can position itself in the growing EV market. The inclusion of technological trends, such as advancements in autonomous vehicles and AI-powered customer service, can help businesses stay ahead of the competition.

In summary, the research highlights how AUTO2000's segmentation, targeting, and positioning strategies—bolstered by innovative marketing approaches—helped the company navigate the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. The findings demonstrate that businesses that are flexible and willing to embrace digital transformation can successfully adapt to unprecedented market changes. However, the limitations of the research call for future studies that incorporate quantitative data, explore broader geographical contexts, and assess the long-term impact of marketing strategies beyond the pandemic. By building on these insights, future research can offer even more valuable guidance for businesses seeking to thrive in an ever-changing global market.

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