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# Implementation of Blue Ocean Strategy in Facing Business Competition: A Startup Case Study of Lapangbola.Com

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## Abstract

**Research aims:** This study discusses the specific blue ocean strategy employed by lapangbola.com to emerge successful in the business competition.

**Design/Methodology/Approach:** This study employed a descriptive qualitative methodology, utilizing interviews with relevant individuals (Operations and Marketing managers) from lapangbola.com. The analysis was conducted using the Blue Ocean Strategy, employing a strategy canvas, a four-step framework, and a six-step framework for data gathering.

**Research findings:** A business competition strategy employs a blue ocean strategy approach that originates from business innovation, encompassing product development, operational enhancements, and the utilization of efficient digital marketing channels.

**Theoretical Contribution/Originality:** This research serves as valuable information for decision-makers, particularly in startup firms, seeking to enhance their business growth by adopting a blue ocean strategy approach. The successful implementation of this technique by lapangbola.com, a startup business in the sports industry, further exemplifies its effectiveness.

**Practitioners/Policy Implications:** Startup companies or businesses in the digital industry might employ a blue ocean strategy, characterized by a rigorous, flexible, and inventive approach, to analyze the market and formulate an effective formula for company development.

**Research Limitations/Implications:** The limitations of this research are found in the secondary data (literature studies) used, this is because not many businesses have consciously implemented blue ocean strategy simultaneously using canvas strategies, 4-step frameworks and 6-step frameworks. More in-depth analysis is needed on the implementation of the blue ocean business strategy that will be carried out at each startup.

**Keywords:** Startup; Blue Ocean Strategy; Lapangbola.Com

## Introduction

Startups in Indonesia are rapidly expanding (Adrianto & Hidayat, 2022). Based on startup ranking statistics, Indonesia ranks in the top 10 nations worldwide in terms of the number of companies. It has the largest number of startups in Southeast Asia, with a reported count of 2,530 in 2023. A startup is a firm that achieves success by its ability to innovate in digital technology, leveraging the advancements of the current period (Karina et al., 2021). As a company expands and progresses, it may have a substantial

influence by generating employment opportunities, mitigating economic disparities, lowering crime rates, alleviating social burdens, fostering economic growth, and enhancing public accessibility (Bayangkara, 2022). However, Several emerging startups with analogous concepts and established organizations with modified business plans to align with recent advancements may nevertheless become entangled in competition in the market. (Marpaung et al., 2023). In the 21st century, competitive environments have seen significant transformations, such as market volatility, rapid expansion, personnel mobility, heightened investment uncertainties, and shorter product lifespans (Mirghaderi et al., 2023). Furthermore, as York (2019) pointed out, the emergence of new competitors and rapid technological advances present additional challenges in market competition. This uncontrollable market competition can serve as a triggering factor for startup failures (Ball & Kittler, 2019; Dinesh & Sushil, 2019)

According to Kim and (Shyam, 2019), the market in a business is divided into two oceans: the red ocean and the blue ocean. The red ocean is all the industries that exist today and are well known by many people (Anthony et al., 2019; Caballero-Morales, 2021). Blue Ocean is an unincorporated and unknown market space (Puspitasari & Novasari, 2019). In essence, it serves as a metaphor for a pristine and extensive market with unexplored potential (Mirghaderi et al., 2023). Whereas, Yeshitila et al. (2020) explain that industrial boundaries have been widely defined and accepted in the red ocean. Several approaches can be implemented to determine strategies for dealing with market competition in a startup, one of which is the Blue Ocean Strategy (BOS) approach by Luo & Kao (2020) and York (2019), proven by research conducted by Puspitasari & Novasari (2019) who successfully applied Blue Ocean Strategy innovations to the Remove-Reduce-Improve-Create scheme. The Blue Ocean Strategy encourages companies to break through fierce red ocean competition by creating uncontested market space, with new demand for products and services through innovation (Kadam, 2022; Shyam, 2019; Yeshitila et al., 2020). Beside that, this strategy allocates organizational resources to activities that generate more value for customers (Yunus, 2021).

Research conducted by Koesdyah Mekasari & Priminingtyas (2022), revealed that the blue ocean strategy method can be a tool for formulating business development strategies (especially in the culinary business), but there has been no research that discusses more deeply the application of blue ocean strategies in startup businesses, especially in the field of sports. One notable gap in existing studies is the need for blue ocean strategy research in the Indonesian sports industry. Therefore, based on the description above, researchers formulate a problem: how Lapangbola.com implements the blue ocean strategy. This research presents an essential novelty by trying to fill the existing knowledge gap by applying the Blue Ocean Strategy approach to the sports industry. By utilizing the Blue Ocean strategy, business actors in the sports sector are given new opportunities to initiate innovative steps. These measures will enable startups in the sports industry to identify hitherto undiscovered opportunities, generate unique value for consumers, and avoid competition.

## Literature Review

Startups are renowned for their reputation as organizations that can address consumer issues with targeted solutions, while facing limited resources and time restrictions to achieve rapid breakthroughs (Slavik et al., 2020). To overcome these limitations, it is crucial to establish strategic objectives that are necessary for expansion. The key to attaining these objectives lies in the successful implementation of a well-devised plan (Aminova & Marchi, 2021) because innovative strategies force companies to change products or market segments so that startups can remain competitive (Aminova & Marchi, 2021). The level of innovation within a corporation is closely correlated with the increase in its market impact. Startups may enhance their performance and enhance their chances of survival by either growing their competitive edge or reducing expenditures (Aminova & Marchi, 2021). Currently, startup innovation can be seen in the various variations of the startup industry. The majority of startups include financial technology (fintech), science and health, and artificial intelligence companies with a percentage of 18.9%, followed by gaming at 4.7%, advertising technology (adtech) at 3.3%, and the rest are divided into education technology (ed-tech), cleantech, blockchain, robotics, cybersecurity, and agriculture technology (agtech) (Statista.com, 2022). However, in the early days of development, many startups experience a "Death Valley" phase, which is a phase where the company must start and adapt products to the market and obtain regular income to sustain the company itself; this stage usually results in success or vice versa, a low survival rate (Puspitasari & Novasari, 2019). Based on a project conducted by Startup by Caballero-Morales (2021), as many as 9 out of 10 startups fail; the highest cause of this failure, 34%, is the lack of product suitability in the market.

The concept of competitiveness is related to the concept of Porter (1980); according to him, competitiveness is the ability of a company to create and maintain a superior position in a competitive market. At the same time, *competitiveness* in companies is defined as a concept that examines the performance of companies in the context of economics, business, and management (Farida & Setiawan, 2022). It refers to the ability of a company to continuously meet two goals, namely, meeting customer needs while earning profits (Fernandes et al., 2023). This is reflected in the products and services offered in the market, which provide higher value to customers than competitors (Shyam, 2019). Companies can overcome competitive forces by describing three general strategies that firms can follow to pursue competitive advantage in the market, namely cost leadership strategies, whereby firms adopt low-cost positions, differentiation, where customers' specific needs are met in exchange for higher prices; and focus, which can be applied in conjunction with any of the above, and aims at serving very few niche markets (Luo & Kao, 2020). In startups, one of them plays an essential role in increasing global competitiveness. Start-ups can be competitive in an environment full of organizations and resources, but they need to understand which factors are most important to improve their level of competitiveness (Yeshitila et al., 2020).

*Blue Ocean Strategy* is a business strategy theory which explains how companies can gain a superior position in the market by creating and dominating new markets (blue ocean) previously untouched by competitors (Anthony et al., 2019). This theory focuses on

developing innovative strategies that eliminate competition and expand markets (Sadiq et al., 2021). Blue Ocean Strategy stems from the idea that many companies face increasing competition within the same market, often called the "red ocean" (Priilaid et al., 2020). In Red Ocean, companies fight for the same market and win the competition by offering lower prices, better quality, or better service (Ellinger et al., 2020). Blue Ocean Strategy comes primarily from within the Red Ocean by expanding the boundaries of existing industries and leveraging previously unused market space, creating demand and high growth opportunities. The blue ocean is how a business eliminates competition in it and even moves beyond competition (Yunus, 2021).

Since strategy makes competition challenging, organisations step into blue oceans that allow companies to create new market opportunities to achieve profits (Puspitasari & Novasari, 2019). According to (Awladthani et al., 2023), companies need a four-step analysis framework to enter the blue ocean through value innovation: eliminate, reduce, improve and create. A strategic profile with high blue ocean potential has three complementary qualities so the company can focus more and not spread its business to all major factors in the competition.

## **Research Methods**

The research was conducted on the Lapangbola startup, a ball statistics startup application. Lapangbola.com was chosen because it met the research criteria as one of the startups that has used the blue ocean strategy. The business model of this startup was the provision of tournament management, including live scores, team and player statistics for early childhood, amateur, and professional football known through preliminary studies carried out previously and found that lapangbola.com always innovate on the 4-Step framework. The research used a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study design to obtain detailed and in-depth results on an object by studying it as a case to find a data study by the reality at the location. Furthermore, the case study approach was carried out so the researchers gained a complete and integrated understanding of the various facts and dimensions of the particular case. The qualitative research approach was a research method used to examine and understand the behaviour of individuals or groups and social phenomena in natural conditions so that descriptive (non-quantitative) data was obtained in oral and written form, which is then interpreted descriptively as well (Júnior et al., 2022). Data collection instruments in this study included field research and literature studies. Field research was carried out by direct observation by the author of the place of the research object, namely the Lapangbola startup, to obtain the primary data needed. At the same time, a literature study was a data collection technique to find references to previous research that raised similar problems as the basis for this research. Literature studies were also essential to research activities because they were a secondary data source. Research involved a series of stages of structured and directed data analysis. First, the Preparatory Technique was used to gather important information and conduct literature studies on Lapangbola start-ups. Furthermore, researchers interview related parties with Data Collection Techniques to obtain relevant and comprehensive data, taking about 1-2 months. The collected data then underwent a process of Data Reduction

Techniques, converting it into specific patterns, focused, and categorized to make it more structured. After that, the Data Presentation Technique was used to qualitatively analyze the descriptive blue ocean strategy implementation strategy by the start-up Lapangbola.com. The analysis results finally helped in Drawing Conclusions, where the data was presented clearly and informatively so the conclusions obtained became a comprehensive picture of the implementation strategy.

## Results and Discussion

### General description of the state of affairs of the company

Lapangbola's startup business focuses on calculating football statistics. The primary purpose of Lapangbola is to help the development of amateur and professional football in Indonesia. Improving the quality and level of competition in the national football game is a significant focus, and Lapangbola is working to do so by offering cutting-edge sports technology services. Lapangbola offers services covering various aspects of the football world, from statistical analysis of player and team data management to individual performance monitoring. The platform enables clubs, coaches, players, and fans to access information and analyze data relevant to football activities.

### Strategy Canvas in Time Comparison

The strategy canvas assists the organisation in understanding and articulating the overall strategic plan and allows stakeholders to see the big picture, from vision to tactics. It also facilitates discussion, collaboration, and more effective decision-making in achieving strategic success. In this case, Lapangbola.com applies a strategy canvas that describes the factors that affect business competition.

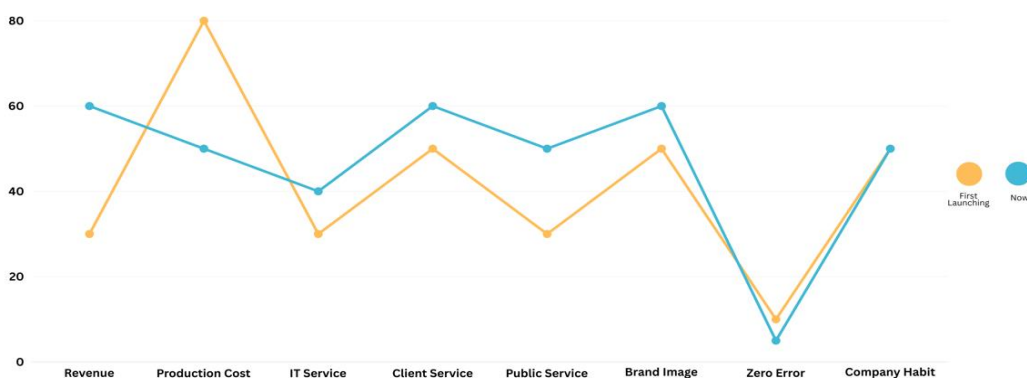


Figure 1 Canvas strategy lapangbola.com based on time

The image shows the change in lapangbola.com's strategy from the product launch to the present. Several strategies, from operations, marketing, and services to products, have changed as needed. The company focuses on increasing revenue value and decreasing production costs by considering aspects of service, brand image, zero error, and company

habit.

**Six-step framework**

**Table 1** Field 6-Step Framework

Six-Step Framework	Information
Looking at alternative industries	Examine in depth the business that suits the founder's passion, namely football, with alternative niches in the field of statistics.
Examining strategic groups in football	Some parties involved in football (individual player, a team, or a football organization)
Football fan groups	Fan-buying chains are amateur tournament managers, professional tournament managers, professional football clubs, and media.
Look at complementary product and service offerings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Provide feedback forms to B2B clients (annually at the beginning of the year or the end of the project) while including any new products offered and explaining why this is important to the client.</li> <li>b. Lapangbola.com also try to offer ideas that clients should have thought of before so they are tied to our service. This makes the client think twice before turning to a competitor because of the idea and services Lapangbola.com offer.</li> </ul>
Examining functional, emotional appeal to Buyers	Make innovation and value-added through providing customization to meet the demand for features that still need to be made available but needed by clients.
Keeping a close eye on time	Make innovation and value-added through providing customization to meet the demand for features that still need to be made available but needed by clients.

The research conducted at the Lapangbola startup suggests that there are business opportunities in the field of statistics for football enthusiasts. Football-related parties include professional football clubs, amateur and professional tournament organizers, media outlets, and fan-buying businesses. Lapangbola.com gives B2B clients ideas and feedback forms, and it may be customized to include the features the client wants. These results suggest that Lapangbola.com has the ability to provide cutting-edge football statistical services and value-added offerings.

**Four-Step Framework**

The process of deleting, reducing, improving, and creating is carried out in the four-step framework analysis. These measures include eliminating unnecessary elements, reducing the impact of potentially adverse factors, improving the performance of existing factors, and creating new things that can increase competitive advantage. In addition, this analysis aims to optimize the position of the company or organization in the market, considering

various relevant aspects of competition. With this approach, companies can respond more effectively to the challenges of the business environment and increase their chances of gaining a competitive advantage.

**Table 2** Four-Step Eliminate Framework Analysis

Aspects of the Eliminate Indicator	Result
Product Features	Sports tracker application, because it is necessary to retrieve data to the field
Work Process	Media and creative processes that are still done manually
Component	The number of people recruited to collect data is too large
Distribution Channel	The work system that is too rigid is a salary cut for employees who are late because it is less effective, so a personal approach is made directly to employees if there are violations.

Lapangbola Startup identifies several areas for improvement and innovation. The results indicate that there are business opportunities in the field of football statistics for enthusiasts. According to the research, there is an excessive number of workers hired to gather data, and the media and creative processes still rely heavily on manual labor. Furthermore, the staff distribution system is overly strict, which causes late arrivals to have their pay reduced. If there are infractions, a direct, personal approach to the staff would be more successful. An essential aspect of Lapangbola.com's product is its sports tracker application, which allows users to retrieve statistics from the field. Overall, the results point to Lapangbola.com's ability to develop cutting-edge football statistical services and value-added offerings.

**Table 3** Four-Step Create Framework Analysis

Aspect of the Create Indicator	Result
Product or service	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Data visualisation from statistical data</li> <li>2. Balapan. id products, according to customer wishes</li> <li>3. Streaming Facilities</li> <li>4. Workout from home during a pandemic</li> </ol>
Production Process	Conducting training for employees based on employee needs, training provided in the form of internal and external courses by presenting expertise.
New Customer Segments	New services with digital marketing, namely adjusting the user persona of website visitors with the brand segment that is the marketing target.
Digital Technology or Innovation	According to the client's request, an application was made specifically for football schools.

The training program used in the production process is customized to meet the individual demands of the workers. This strategy guarantees the workforce's expertise and knowledge. Moreover, the organization's focus on investigating novel client categories and employing digital marketing tactics denotes a commitment to remaining at the

forefront of customer outreach and engagement.

**Table 4** Four-Step Reduce Framework Analysis

Aspect of the Create Indicator	Result
Production Cost	Over-budget costs are based on evaluations conducted every three months.
Technology	Part-time IT staff who are less than optimal
Product Quality	Real-time data provision to users
User-Friendliness	Appearance visualization as much as possible with football data
Product Design	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ask for user feedback to improve design quality</li> <li>2. Customization of the design to the needs of the user</li> </ol>
Product Price	Base pricing that includes operational, marketing, and profit costs
User Service	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure the connection with the client is always maintained</li> <li>2. Offer new ideas to clients</li> </ol>

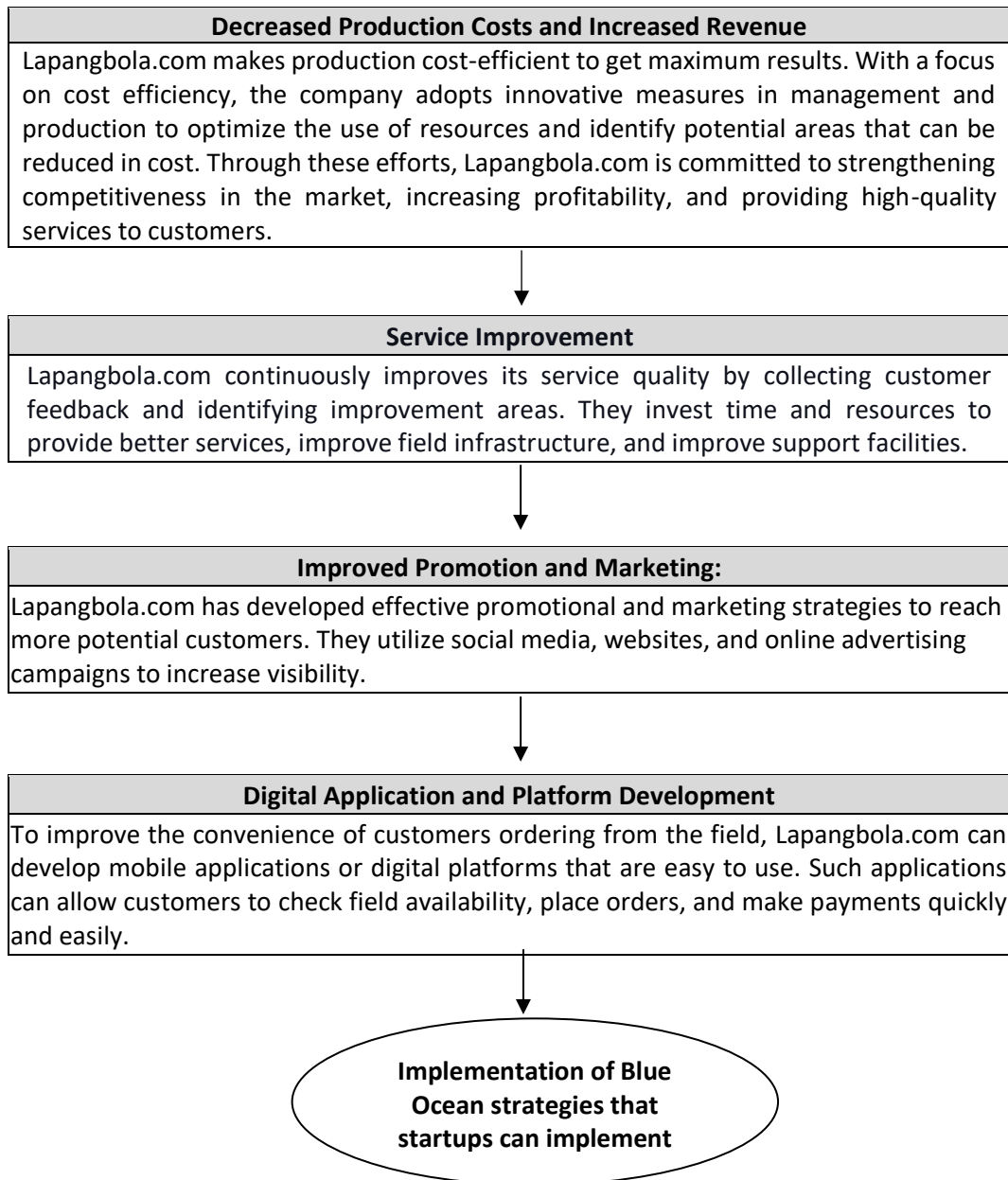
The significance of assessing production costs every three months to prevent going over budget supports the strategy's emphasis on cost leadership, according to Lapangbola.com. As the strategy emphasizes technical innovation, the necessity for technological advancements is also emphasized, especially in relation to part-time IT professionals.

According to the strategy's emphasis on delivering value for customers, lapangbola.com emphasized the significance of giving users access to real-time data in terms of product quality. This is because customer satisfaction and retention depend heavily on it. A crucial component of the startup's product design was found to be user-friendliness, and it was suggested that customers be given access to football data visualizations, which is consistent with the strategy's focus on usability.

Additionally, Lapangbola.com management recommended asking users for input in order to improve the quality of product designs and tailor the designs to customer requirements, which is consistent with the strategy's emphasis on distinction. Lapangbola.com adopted a pricing plan that incorporated marketing, operational, and profit costs into the basic price, in line with the strategy's cost leadership element. In keeping with the strategy's emphasis on distinction, Lapangbola.com management also suggested getting user feedback to enhance the caliber of product designs and customize the designs to customer specifications. In keeping with the strategy's cost leadership element, Lapangbola.com implemented a pricing structure that included marketing, operational, and profit expenditures in the base price.



### A series of Lapangbola.com strategies



**Figure 2** The Strategy Series Diagram of Lapangbola.com

## Conclusion

Lapangbola.com managed to achieve success in market competition thanks to the use of comprehensive strategies. First, the strategy canvas assists the organisation in understanding and articulating the overall strategic plan. It allows stakeholders to see the

big picture, from the vision to the tactics to be executed. Thus, Lapangbola.com can formulate the right and targeted strategy to gain an advantage in the market. The six-step framework is also one of the critical factors in Lapangbola.com's success. By looking at alternative industries, strategic groups, buyer chains, complementary product and service offerings, and functional, emotional appeal to buyers, Lapangbola.com can recognize the opportunities and threats in the market. Furthermore, understanding time becomes essential to decision-making so that Lapangbola.com can act appropriately at strategic times. The four-step framework also contributes to the success of Lapangbola.com. By eliminating ineffectiveness, creating relevant innovations, reducing unfavourable aspects, and improving favourable factors, Lapangbola.com can increase its competitiveness in the market. Lapangbola.com's success in market competition can be attributed to applying the strategy canvas and framework. Lapangbola.com ensures a structured plan, a good competitive analysis, and the ability to adapt to dynamic market changes. With this approach, Lapangbola.com achieved victory and strengthened its position as a significant player in the industry.

Implementing the Blue Ocean Strategy in the face of competition for startups shows a positive impact, so the Blue Ocean Strategy can be used in the face of increasingly fierce business competition as a foundation to continue identifying and exploring new market potential. Implementing the Blue Ocean Strategy must accompany a long-term commitment from the company's management and team. However, flexibility is also essential so companies can adapt strategies to market changes and trends. Further research in more detail is needed about the challenges faced, the strategies used, and their impact on business growth, as this will provide deeper insights for practitioners and academics. Broader trials also need to be conducted to more accurately measure the impact of the Blue Ocean Strategy in various business contexts.

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