





## **IDEALOGY JOURNAL**

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# Design for The Real World: The Case Study of Fish-Ball Seller Cart

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#### **ABSTRACT**

Design has been known for its potential to solve problem outside of design industries, and one of them is the lack of competitiveness of micro businesses in Indonesia. This project will serve as the example on how design, through Design Thinking method could increase the competitiveness through adding value of the business in the form of well design bike cart. The micro business that become the object of this project is a fish ball street vendor in Bekasi town, Indonesia. The outcome of this project is the prototype of the cart that will be used by the user on his daily selling activity.

**Keywords:** design; real world; fish-ball seller cart.



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#### 1. BACKGROUND

Micro-business and SME in Indonesia play a significant role in the country economy, since it supplies 99,7% of the nation's employment (Ridwan Maksum et al., 2020). Most of the businesses are still untouchable by design, this quite unfortunate because design can add a value that could become their value proposition and lead to increase their competitiveness.

The role of design in social context is not a new thing. Most noticeably the integration of design to overcome social challenges by the governments in UK, Denmark, Finland and USA (Bason, 2013) (Durose & Richardson, 2015). Design is also known to be implemented into public health sector that aim to reducing health inequalities and enhancing health and well-being (Docherty, 2017). Victor Papanek said in his book Design for The Real World that only small part of designer's responsibility lies in the area of aesthetic (Papanek, 1985). Unfortunately, especially in the country like Indonesia, the idea of the implementation Design beyond premium consumer products are limited, especially for micro-business. This is such an unfortunate, because Design can play an important role to add value to it, which in turn could increase the revenue of the micro-business. SME are suffering from limited resources, and a lack of structured innovation processes (Gallanis, 2020). Unfortunately, SME have been rarely considered for studies on Design implementation (Gallanis, 2020).

A designer responsibility can direct support to the micro-business and SME that can significantly impact the community's income (Nugraha et al., 2020). There are various types in Indonesia. In this project, we discuss micro-businesses in food peddler. Which are alternative food sources, particularly consumption by low-income communities (Lucan et al., 2013).

A case study taken is the Fish-ball stall owned by Mr. Agus from a town called Bekasi. Fish-ball is one of the Indonesian street foods that can be found in many places, especially in the Jakarta and nearby cities. This is a preliminary study for design development through traditional selling by involving

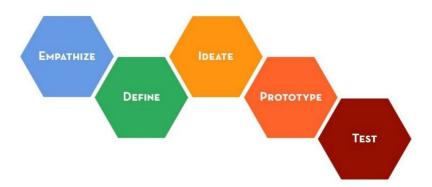


innovation to generate competitive advantage and improve SME sales performance. (Alfiero et al., 2017).

The objective of this project is to explore the implementation of Design Thinking in the field that rarely touched by design, in this case is redesigning fish-ball seller cart. Hence, it could increase the revenue of the seller.

#### 2. METHODOLOGY

This project using Design Thinking approach from D School Stanford University (Dorst, 2015) which emphasize on the empathic study in order to understand the need of the user. This methodology based on 5 steps: (1) Empathize, (2) Define, (3) Ideation (4) Prototyping and (5) Evaluate. As can be seen in Figure 1, stage (1) Empathize, here is the stage where the designer must understand the needs and perspectives of users. This process has been carried out in the form of the interview mentioned above. (2) Define, here is the stage where the problem boundary is determined which the result of the interview analysis is. (3) Ideation, here is the stage where an idea search process is carried out which can be a solution to the problems that have been obtained from the previous stages. This study uses the sketch technique in finding ideas (Figure 7). (4) Prototyping, here is the stage where the selected sketch results are realized in 3-dimensional form and 1: 1 size. This dimensional study will later be transformed into a finished product or prototype, but it cannot be presented in this progress report. (5) Evaluate; here is the evaluation stage when the prototype results are used by the user and an evaluation analysis is carried out for further improvement and development.



**Figure 1:** Design Thinking (Source: D School, Stanford University)

## 4. RESULT & DISCUSSIONS

## 4.1. Empathize

Just like what has been explained above, this project started with empathic study. Empathic study was conducted through qualitative approach in the form of depth interview with the user itself Mr. Agus in November 2020. The interview was through phone platform due to the health protocol during Covid-19 pandemic.

The questions were aimed to understand his daily routines in relation with selling the fish ball, such as what time he went to the spot, how many portions that he sold on a single day, the food preparation steps, the serving method, and the customer segment. All the answers then analyzed using Empathy Map from Nielsen and Norman.

#### **EMPATHY MAP**

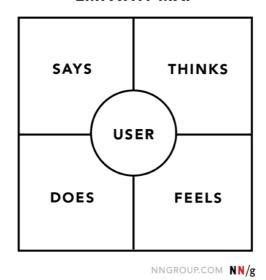


Figure 2: Empathy Map (Source: Norman & Nielsen)

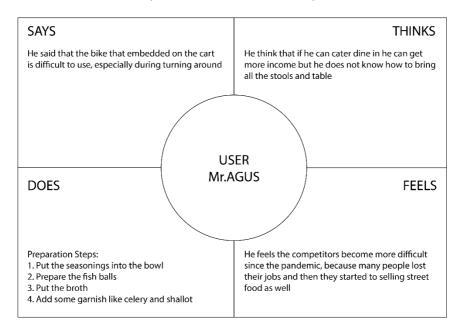


Figure 3: Empathy Map (Source: Norman & Nielsen)

## 4.2. Define

Based on the findings on the previous phase, we decided to analyze the data using traditional problem formulation approach by Kees Dorst [8].

## What +? = Outcome

**Figure 4:** Traditional Problem Formulation. (Source: Kees Dorst, 2015)



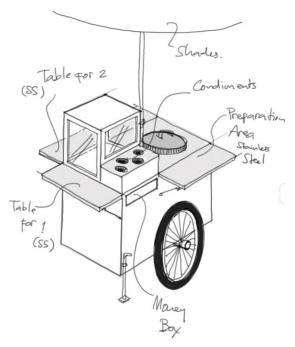
The variable of (What) will be replaced with the object of the research which is Fish-ball cart, while the (Outcome) will be replaced with the increase revenue and sales of Mr. Agus business.

## Fish-ball Cart +? = Revenue increased

**Figure 5.** Traditional Problem Formulation. (Source: Author)

### 4.3. Ideation

The ideation process developed based on the needs of the user, such as the possibility for dine in, more hygiene preparation area, and the repairmen of the bike itself. Based on this, we decided to explore the possibility for dine in by adding a folding table. In addition, in order to get more hygiene area, the preparation surface should be easy to clean and easy to maintain, stainless steel is the perfect material for this.



**Figure 6:** The sketch of the cart (Source: Author)

## 4.4. Prototype

The final sketch then implemented by disassembling the existing cart. We kept the main wooden structure of the cart because it is still in a good condition. The existing bike was replaced with electric bike. In addition, whole surface of the tabletop covered with stainless steel plate to ensure easy maintenance.





Figure 7: The existing condition of the cart (Source: Author)



Figure 8: Disassembly the existing of the cart (Source: Author)





Figure 9: Upgrading process of the cart (Source: Author)

## 4.5. Evaluate

The testing and evaluate process was conducted directly by the user Mr. Agus himself. He tried to assemble and disassemble the stools. He tried to ride the cart as well with electric bike that made his travel from his house to his usual spot become more convenient.



**Figure 10:** Testing and evaluate of the cart (Source: Author)

### 5. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATION

This project showed that with proper empathic study approach, Design Thinking could be implemented on SME and micro business. Through good empathic study and observation, traditional fish-ball cart could be turned into a modern fish-ball cart that will increase efficiency and will attract more customers.

Based on this project, there are so many loop holes and opportunities for design to solve the problem in micro businesses, especially in street vendors. Design could help to added value in order to increase the competitiveness of micro businesses especially during pandemic era. Hopefully this could encourage any future designers to collaborate more with them in order to see how design could give impact on people daily life.

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