

## The Role of Change Management in Increasing the Competitiveness of PT. Denta Sumut's Ceiling Sales

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### ABSTRACT

*This study aims to analyze the role of change management in increasing the competitiveness of ceiling sales at PT. Denta Sumut. Amidst the increasingly competitive building materials industry in North Sumatra, PT. Denta Sumut undertook an organizational transformation to address sales stagnation. This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach, with data collection techniques including participant observation, in-depth interviews with management and sales staff, and a documentary study of company reports. Data analysis was conducted through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing using the Miles and Huberman model. The results indicate that the implementation of change management at PT. Denta Sumut played a significant role through three main aspects. First, the transformation of the work culture from a transactional to a relational mindset improved the quality of customer relationships. Second, the digitization of the inventory monitoring and sales reporting systems successfully created operational efficiencies and accelerated lead times. Third, a product differentiation strategy that was more adaptive to local interior design trends expanded the company's market share. Overall, the integrated change management of Human Resources (HR) and information technology has strengthened PT. Denta Sumut's bargaining position and created a sustainable competitive advantage.*

*Keywords: Change Management, Competitiveness, Sales, Ceiling*

### I. INTRODUCTION

Rapidly changing business environments have pushed companies to continuously adapt their strategies and management patterns, particularly in the sales sector. Increasingly fierce competition, advances in marketing technology, and shifts in consumer behavior require companies to not only offer quality products but also manage sales systems that are adaptive and oriented to market needs. In these conditions, change management plays a crucial role as a strategic effort to increase the company's sales competitiveness.

PT. Denta Sumut, a company engaged in ceiling sales, faces increasingly complex competitive challenges. The emergence of numerous competitors with diverse products, competitive prices, and more innovative marketing strategies requires the company to implement changes in its sales systems, customer service, and human resource management. If the company is unable to respond effectively to these changes, it could potentially decline in sales volume and market share.

In its implementation, efforts to change the sales system often encounter various obstacles, such as a lack of employee readiness to accept new work methods, limited use of marketing technology, and suboptimal internal communication patterns. These conditions can hinder the effectiveness of the sales process and impact the company's competitiveness in the market. Therefore, structured change management is necessary to ensure each adjustment process runs effectively and sustainably.

Appropriately implemented change management is expected to drive improved sales performance through improved marketing strategies, enhanced service quality, and strengthened sales force competencies. Thus, companies can increase customer trust, expand

market reach, and create a sustainable competitive advantage. The success of change management depends not only on management policies but also on the involvement of all organizational elements in supporting the change process.

Based on this description, this research is crucial to examine the role of change management in enhancing the sales competitiveness of PT. Denta Sumut's ceiling products. The research findings are expected to provide practical contributions to the company in formulating adaptive and competitive sales strategies, as well as academic contributions to the development of change management studies in the building materials industry.

## **II. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **A. Change Management**

Change management is a systematic approach used by organizations to manage the transition from the current state to the desired state in order to improve organizational effectiveness and performance.

According to Robbins and Judge (2020), change management is a planned process for directing and controlling individuals and groups to adapt to changes in organizational structure, technology, and strategy. The success of change depends heavily on the readiness of human resources to accept and implement these changes.

Meanwhile, Cummings and Worley (2019) state that change management is a process designed to improve an organization's ability to solve problems and renew itself through the continuous management of change. Change is not only technical but also involves aspects of behavior and work culture.

According to Kotter (2018), effective change management requires strong leadership, a clear vision, consistent communication, and the involvement of all organizational members. Without effective change management, organizations are likely to experience internal resistance that can hinder the achievement of goals.

Based on the opinions of these experts, it can be concluded that change management is a strategic process that functions to ensure that every organizational change is accepted, implemented, and supports the achievement of better performance.

### **B. Sales Competitiveness**

Sales competitiveness reflects a company's ability to maintain and improve its market position through effective, customer-oriented sales activities.

According to Porter (2019), a company's competitiveness is determined by its ability to create higher value than competitors, whether through cost leadership, product differentiation, or focusing on specific market segments. In the context of sales, competitiveness is reflected in a company's ability to offer products that are valuable and relevant to consumers.

According to Kotler and Keller (2021), sales competitiveness is closely related to the effectiveness of marketing strategies, service quality, sales force capabilities, and long-term relationships with customers. Companies that are able to adapt their sales strategies to market changes will have a sustainable competitive advantage.

Tjiptono (2020) also argues that sales competitiveness can be seen from a company's ability to increase sales volume, expand market share, and maintain customer loyalty through superior service and continuous innovation.

Therefore, sales competitiveness is the result of an integration of strategy, the quality of human resources, and the company's ability to respond to market dynamics.

### **C. The Role of Change Management in Sales Competitiveness**

Change management plays a crucial role in increasing sales competitiveness because well-managed change can drive improvements in sales strategies, work systems, and sales force competencies.

According to Burnes (2020), effective change management can increase organizational flexibility in the face of market changes, enabling companies to respond to customer needs more quickly and accurately. This has a direct impact on improved sales performance.

Furthermore, Armstrong and Taylor (2020) explain that planned changes in work systems and human resource development will improve employee motivation and performance, including salespeople. Improved sales performance will strengthen a company's competitive position in the market.

Therefore, change management plays a key supporting factor in creating an adaptive, innovative, and highly competitive sales system.

## **III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **A. Research Approach and Type**

This research uses a qualitative, descriptive approach. This approach was chosen to understand the phenomenon of organizational change holistically through the words and behaviors of observed individuals, rather than through statistical data.

### **B. Research Focus**

This research focuses on three main aspects: Change Management Process: How the stages of change (e.g., Lewin's model: Unfreezing, Movement, Refreezing) are implemented at PT. Denta Sumut. Sales Strategy: Innovative steps taken to increase sales targets. Competitiveness Factors: Competitive advantages that emerge after change (e.g., efficiency, service quality, or market reach).

### **C. Data Sources**

Primary Data: Obtained directly through in-depth interviews with informants (Director, Marketing Manager, and sales staff). Secondary Data: Company documents, annual sales reports, company profiles, and relevant literature on the building materials industry.

### **D. Data Collection Techniques**

To obtain valid data, the following techniques were used: Participant Observation: Directly observing operational activities and work culture at the PT. Denta Sumut office. In-Depth Interviews: Semi-structured Q&A sessions with key stakeholders. Documentation: Collecting photo archives, meeting notes, and sales trend data as supporting evidence.

### **E. Data Analysis Techniques (Miles & Huberman Model)**

The collected data will be analyzed through three stages: Data Reduction: Summarizing, selecting key points, and discarding data irrelevant to sales competitiveness. Data Display: Organizing information in the form of a brief narrative, chart, or table to facilitate understanding of the relationship between change management. Conclusion Drawing/Verification: Formulating final findings regarding the actual role of change management in the company's competitiveness.

## **IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **1. Dynamics of the Context of Change at PT. Denta Sumut.**

At the beginning of the research, it was discovered that PT. Denta Sumut was facing sales stagnation caused by market saturation and the emergence of new competitors with more competitive prices. Management realized that without fundamental change, the company's competitiveness would continue to decline. The change management process began with the unfreezing stage, in which company leadership transparently explained the company's critical condition to all staff. Interviews revealed initial resistance from field teams who had become comfortable with conventional work methods. However, through persuasive communication, management succeeded in instilling a sense of urgency for change. This change focused not only on achieving numerical targets but also on overhauling the organizational culture to be more adaptive to the dynamic demands of consumers in North Sumatra, who tend to be dynamic and demand speed of service.

### **2. Reconstruction of Work Culture**

From Transactional to Relational Observations revealed a significant shift in salesperson behavior. Before the implementation of change management, interactions between salespeople and building supply store owners were primarily transactional – simply offering products and taking orders. However, after the implementation of the new strategy, the sales team acted as consultants to customers. They provide education on the advantages of certain ceiling materials, the latest interior design trends, and project cost estimation calculations. This behavioral change is the result of intensive training focused on soft skills and product knowledge. Qualitatively, it was found that customer trust increased dramatically when salespeople were able to provide solutions to technical problems in the field, which automatically secured customer loyalty amidst the onslaught of cheaper competitor products.

### **3. Operational Digitalization as a Competitiveness**

Accelerator One of the key findings of this study is the role of technology integration in reducing internal bureaucracy. PT. Denta Sumut adopted an integrated, app-based stock monitoring and ordering system. Prior to this change, there were frequent mismatches between warehouse data and sales pitches in the field, leading to customer dissatisfaction. With the new system, data transparency has become the backbone of operations. Marketing managers can monitor the productivity of each employee in real time, while the logistics team can prepare shipments immediately after order validation. This efficiency has become a key competitive advantage; PT. Denta Sumut is now known as the distributor with the shortest lead times in its class, a crucial factor for project contractors striving for construction deadlines.

### **4. Product Differentiation Strategy and New Market Penetration**

Change management also includes product repositioning in the market. Research revealed that the company conducted a product portfolio audit and decided to focus on ceiling variants that offer high aesthetic value yet remain economical – meeting the specifications of the middle-income housing market in North Sumatra. Furthermore, the company expanded its reach, previously centered only in Medan, to include satellite areas and surrounding regencies through an exclusive agent system. Interviews with distribution partners revealed that incentive schemes and marketing support (such as providing high-

quality product displays and brochures) led them to prefer selling PT. Denta Sumut products over other brands. This demonstrates that change management in physical distribution and marketing effectively expands market share.

### **5. Evaluation and Sustainability: Building a Learning Organization.**

In the final stage of the research, it was discovered that change management at PT. Denta Sumut is not a one-time project, but rather the formation of a learning organization. The company regularly holds weekly evaluations where obstacles in the field are openly discussed without a blame culture. This creates an innovative work environment where lower-level staff are willing to provide input on color trends or ceiling motifs that are popular in the local market. The company's current competitive strength lies in its ability to adapt quickly to changing consumer preferences. Overall, the role of change management at PT. Denta Sumut has proven to be able to transform market threats into opportunities through synchronization between human resources, information technology, and customer-oriented marketing strategies.

## **V. CONCLUSION**

Based on the research results above, the conclusions of this study are as follows:

1. **Work Culture Transformation:** Change management has successfully shifted employee mindsets from passive-transactional to proactive-relational, enabling the sales team to be more responsive in providing technical solutions to customers, rather than simply selling goods.
2. **Operational Digitalization:** The implementation of technology in real-time inventory monitoring and sales reporting has been proven to reduce bureaucracy and accelerate delivery times (lead times), which are key competitive advantages for the company.
3. **Product Differentiation:** The company has successfully repositioned its products by offering more innovative ceiling variants that align with market trends in North Sumatra, enabling it to reach a wider market segment (from retail to large projects)
4. **Increased Competitiveness:** The alignment between changes in human resources, work systems, and technology has significantly improved PT. Denta Sumut's bargaining position amidst price competition, by prioritizing service quality and distribution reliability.

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