

Business Development Strategy of KALN: A Community-Based Men's Activewear Brand in Indonesia

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Abstract: This study investigates the business development strategy of KALN, a local men's activewear brand targeting Indonesia's automotive communities. Utilizing a qualitative descriptive methodology with an interpretative approach, the research draws upon Customer Value Theory, Design Thinking, Business Model Canvas (BMC), and the Timmons Model to analyze business potential and feasibility. Data were collected through participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and literature reviews. Findings reveal that KALN has strong potential by leveraging community values, digital marketing, and co-creation strategies. The study proposes an integrated development strategy through social engagement, product differentiation, and sustainable positioning within the niche fashion market.

Introduction

Fashion has long been a reflection of culture, identity, and social affiliation. In recent years, academic attention has grown toward fashion's role in constructing subcultural meaning, especially within communities defined by shared interest and lifestyle (Amin, 2021; Lestari & Yuliana, 2021). Within this discourse, the activewear segment has risen as a dynamic intersection between performance apparel and symbolic expression. Activewear today serves not only to support physical activities but also to project values of modern masculinity, affiliation, and personal style (Berezina & Drummond, 2021).

Global demand for activewear continues to climb, with Statista and Mordor Intelligence projecting Indonesia's market to exceed USD 740 million by 2025, growing annually by 5–7 percent. While international brands such as Nike and Adidas continue to dominate, they often lack cultural proximity to Indonesia's unique lifestyle communities. Local brands have started gaining momentum, yet few cater to the nuanced preferences of niche segments, particularly the automotive community a growing cultural force among Indonesian men.

Automotive clubs, such as HRVRT and TGRI, are not merely hobbyist collectives but social ecosystems marked by loyalty, visibility, and visual coordination. Apparel in these

groups operates as both function and symbol. According to Sari and Susilawati (2020), success in activewear branding relies on embedding emotional and social values into the product. These findings are reinforced by Amin (2021), who argues that community-based branding increases perceived authenticity and loyalty among subcultural consumers.

Responding to this cultural and commercial gap, KALN positions itself as a community-rooted men's activewear brand tailored for Indonesia's automotive enthusiasts. The brand combines functional product features, such as UV-protective fabrics, with emotional cues like club-inspired aesthetics and co-created design elements.

This research explores how KALN can develop an integrated business strategy that addresses the expectations of its niche target market. Specifically, this study investigates consumer preferences within automotive communities, formulates a business development strategy across marketing, operations, human resources, and digitalization, and evaluates the business feasibility of KALN through frameworks such as Design Thinking, the Timmons Model, and the Business Model Canvas.

By grounding its approach in both cultural theory and practical frameworks, this research contributes to academic literature on lifestyle branding and offers applicable insights for entrepreneurs seeking to build sustainable, identity-based fashion ventures. a major transformation, where apparel functions not only as a necessity but also as an expression of personal and communal identity (Kotler & Keller, 2022). This is especially evident in the rise of activewear, a segment that combines comfort, functionality, and style. Global trends indicate increasing demand for multifunctional apparel aligned with lifestyle values (Berezina & Drummond, 2021). According to Statista and Mordor Intelligence, Indonesia's activewear market is projected to surpass USD 740 million by the year 2025, growing at an annual rate of 5–7 percent.

Despite the dominance of global brands like Nike and Adidas, local brands are beginning to gain consumer trust. However, fashion tailored to niche identities such as automotive communities remains underdeveloped. Community identity and visual representation are essential for members of automotive clubs, where style reflects affiliation and masculinity (Lestari & Yuliana, 2021).

Previous studies have highlighted the power of culturally relevant fashion branding. Amin (2021), in a study published in JABTER, emphasizes that consumer loyalty can be strengthened by aligning brand narrative with group identity. In support of this, Sari and Susilawati (2020) found that activewear success depends on the emotional and social value perceived by its users.

Against this backdrop, KALN seeks to serve as a local brand tailored for Indonesia's automotive community. KALN's brand combines performance-based design and lifestyle appeal. This study seeks to explore consumer preferences and values among male consumers in automotive communities in Indonesia, identify effective integrated business strategies in marketing, operations, human resources, and digitalization, and evaluate the feasibility of KALN's business model when analyzed through the lenses of Design Thinking, the Timmons Model, and Business Model Canvas. This study contributes to the body of knowledge on community-based fashion brands and offers practical insights for entrepreneurs seeking to build lifestyle-centered businesses.

Research Method

This research employs a qualitative descriptive method within an interpretative paradigm, aiming to uncover the social meanings embedded in consumer behavior and brand

interaction. Data were collected from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data were obtained through participatory observation and semi-structured interviews. Secondary data included journal articles, books, market reports, government statistics from institutions such as BPS and Statista.

The researcher attended various automotive events including ISSOM, national slalom competitions, and club gatherings held in Bandung, Jakarta, and Yogyakarta. These observations captured patterns in dress code, community values, and brand preferences, offering rich ethnographic insight. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with fifteen informants including members of automotive communities such as HRVRT and TGRI, local fashion entrepreneurs, custom garage owners, automotive event organizers, and a digital strategist specializing in apparel branding. The interviews were recorded with consent, transcribed verbatim, and analyzed thematically.

Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis supported by NVivo software. The process included coding, categorization, and theme mapping. Theoretical interpretation was guided by Customer Value Theory, Design Thinking, Business Model Canvas, and SWOT analysis. To ensure research rigor, triangulation was applied across data sources, member checking was conducted to validate interpretations, and an audit trail documented all research steps for transparency and repeatability. Ethical clearance included obtaining informed consent from participants and ensuring their anonymity throughout the research process.

Result and Discussion

Consumer Behavior and Brand Perception

Consumers from the automotive community place high value on clothing that reflects their identity, affiliation, and masculinity. Functional needs such as sweat-wicking materials and UV protection are equally important as the emotional value of pride and representation, as emphasized by Amin (2021) and Fortuna (2021). One respondent, a member of the HRVRT community, shared, “We always want to wear something that speaks for our team, not just something random that looks sporty.” Another participant from TGRI stated, “The right clothes make us feel more connected before we even hit the track.” These narratives indicate that clothing in these circles serves not only as personal apparel but also as a collective expression of pride. During a modification expo, observational notes indicated a consistent trend of matching apparel that carried club emblems or stylized text indicating the vehicle brand. KALN’s approach to co-creation through continuous community feedback enhances brand authenticity and loyalty by incorporating such symbolic visual elements and material preferences into product designs. on clothing that reflects their identity, affiliation, and masculinity. Functional needs such as sweat-wicking materials and UV protection are equally important as the emotional value of pride and representation, as emphasized by Amin (2021) and Fortuna (2021). KALN’s approach to co-creation through continuous community feedback enhances brand authenticity and loyalty.

In terms of strategic development, KALN applies the five stages of Design Thinking to design products that resonate with its audience. The Business Model Canvas reflects a strong value proposition centered on durability, style, and emotional relevance. The brand strategically positions itself toward urban male consumers aged between twenty and forty-five who are actively engaged in automotive communities.

Marketing strategies emphasize digital engagement through platforms such as Instagram and TikTok, complemented by offline interactions during pop-up events. The 7P

marketing mix informs brand positioning, highlighting innovation in product design, competitive pricing strategies ranging from IDR 150,000 to 450,000, and consistent branding.

Table 1. SWOT Analysis of KALN

Strength	Weaknesses
Strong community brand identity	Limited capital and infrastructure
Niche market focus	New brand awareness
Product relevance and design	Limited offline reach
Opportunities	Threats
Growth in men's activewear	Global brand competition
Digital marketing trends	Fast- changing fashion trends
Automotive community expansion	Risk of imitation by competitors

Key Partners -Automotive communities (e.g., HRVRT, TGRI) -Event organizers (e.g., Genta Autosport) -Local fabric suppliers	Key Activites -Product design & prototyping -Digital Marketing& content creation -Community engagement via events	Key Resources -Apparel designers and digital team -Community brand ambassadors -Online platforms (Instagram, Tiktok)
Value Proporsitions -Stylish, funcional activewear tailored to automotive community identity -Comfort with features like IV protection and breathable materials -Co-creation process with users builds emotional loyalty		
Customer Relationship -Community-focused engagement -Limited-edition drops with feedback integration	Channels -Instagram, Tiktok Shop, Whatsapp -Offline booths at automotive events	Customer Segments -Men aged 18-45 actives in car communities -Urban lifestyle and streetwear audience
Cost Structure -Product development and manufacturing costs -Market and sponsorship -Event participation and logistics		Revenue Streams -Direct sales (online/offline) -Pre-order sales -Merchandise bundles

Figure 1. KALN's Business Model Canvas

KALN's business feasibility is further supported by the Timmons Model (Velasquez, 2018), demonstrating a balanced alignment among market opportunity, the entrepreneurial team, and available resources. Financial projections indicate a break-even point within eighteen months and a return on investment of approximately 160 percent within three years. Pre-order systems and low overhead costs contribute to operational sustainability.

The SWOT analysis reveals that KALN is strongly positioned within niche markets, with brand differentiation as a key advantage. Nonetheless, challenges such as limited financial resources and competition from established global brands require strategic agility and continuous innovation (Rangkuti, 2021).

Table 2. Marketing Mix 7P Implementation at KALN

Element	Strategy Example
Product	UV-protective dry-fit materials with motorsport-inspired prints
Price	Competitive price range (IDR 150.000 - 450.000)
Place	Online via Tiktok Shop and Instagram, offline at event booths
Promotion	Influencer marketing and community endorsement
People	Brand ambassadors from automotive clubs
Process	Ready Stocks; Pre-order system and limited edition drops
Physical Evidence	Premium packaging and branded tags

Financial Feasibility Analysis

KALN's financial feasibility is evaluated through a projection model based on assumptions gathered from field observations and market research. The initial capital required to establish KALN is estimated at IDR 150 million, which covers prototype development, digital branding, production of the first limited batch (approximately 1,000 units), packaging, and event participation.

Based on a projected sales target of 2,500 units per year, with an average selling price of IDR 250,000 per unit, the total projected annual revenue reaches IDR 625 million. The estimated cost per unit, including production, packaging, and fulfillment, is IDR 130,000, resulting in a gross margin of approximately 48%.

Operating expenses, including marketing, logistics, event fees, and administrative costs, are projected at IDR 200 million per year. With these assumptions, the projected net profit reaches IDR 65 million in the first year. Break-even is expected to occur after 18 months of operation, assuming linear monthly growth and reinvestment of profits.

The Return on Investment (ROI) over a three-year period is calculated at approximately 160%, which reflects a strong potential for sustainable profitability. The use of a pre-order system further minimizes inventory risk and improves cash flow by reducing the need for unsold stock. These findings demonstrate that KALN's business model is not only culturally and strategically aligned with its community but also financially feasible.

Conclusion

KALN exemplifies the potential of community-rooted branding to stimulate business growth. Through the integration of value-driven strategies, participatory design, and adaptive business modeling, the brand is well-positioned to compete within Indonesia's activewear landscape. This research affirms the significance of aligning functional, emotional, and social values in entrepreneurial fashion branding and offers strategic guidance for similar ventures aiming to serve lifestyle-based consumer segments. To further solidify its market presence, it is recommended that KALN strengthens its collaboration with prominent automotive event organizers and digital creators in niche communities. Building a stronger omnichannel strategy, particularly enhancing offline visibility at key community touchpoints, can increase brand recall and trust. Additionally, future innovations in eco-friendly materials and sustainable packaging could support brand positioning among environmentally conscious consumers. This study also implies that academic and vocational institutions might consider incorporating modules on community-based entrepreneurship into their curricula to nurture brands like KALN that are socially anchored and market-responsive.

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