

Marketing Strategy for Offshore Support Vessels (OSVs) in Indonesia

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Abstract. This research explores the marketing strategies and operational improvements of PT. Pertamina Trans Kontinental (PTK) in Indonesia's offshore support vessels industry using a qualitative method for in-depth analysis. The study focuses on product differentiation, flexible pricing, and digital marketing, demonstrating how these strategies enhance PTK's competitive edge. A SWOT analysis identifies PTK's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, offering valuable insights for industry practitioners. However, the research is limited to PTK and the Indonesian offshore support vessels market, potentially not fully capturing the dynamics of non-captive markets or other regions. Future studies should expand the scope to include external variables and address the challenges of technology implementation and market changes, ensuring the long-term relevance of the findings.

Keywords : Offshore support vessels, Marketing Strategy, SWOT Analysis

Abstrak. Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi strategi pemasaran dan peningkatan operasional PT. Pertamina Trans Kontinental (PTK) di industri kapal pendukung lepas pantai Indonesia dengan menggunakan metode kualitatif untuk analisis mendalam. Studi ini berfokus pada diferensiasi produk, penetapan harga yang fleksibel, dan pemasaran digital, menunjukkan bagaimana strategi ini meningkatkan keunggulan kompetitif PTK. Analisis SWOT mengidentifikasi kekuatan, kelemahan, peluang, dan ancaman PTK, menawarkan wawasan berharga bagi praktisi industri. Namun, penelitian ini terbatas pada PTK dan pasar kapal pendukung lepas pantai Indonesia, yang berpotensi tidak sepenuhnya menangkap dinamika pasar non-captive atau wilayah lain. Studi di masa depan harus memperluas ruang lingkup untuk memasukkan variabel eksternal dan mengatasi tantangan implementasi teknologi dan perubahan pasar, memastikan relevansi jangka panjang dari temuan tersebut.

Kata Kunci : Kapal pendukung lepas pantai, Strategi Pemasaran, Analisis SWOT

1. Introduction

Indonesia, as an archipelagic state, has vast maritime territories and significant offshore oil and gas reserves. Offshore support vessels are critical to the exploration, extraction, and transportation of these resources, making them essential components of the nation's maritime infrastructure. Offshore support vessels (OSVs) provide a range of services, including supply runs to offshore rigs, anchor handling, towing, and platform support. Offshore support vessels (OSVs) are crucial components in the logistics support chain (Skoko Ivica et al., 2020). The strategic importance of these vessels cannot be overstated, as they play a vital role in maintaining the operational efficiency of offshore activities.

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Despite the critical role of offshore support vessels, the industry faces numerous challenges (Oloruntobi et al., 2023). The global oil and gas market is notoriously volatile, with fluctuations in oil prices directly impacting the demand for offshore services (Resi Yunita, 2021) (Pindyck, 2004). Additionally, offshore support vessels companies in Indonesia contend with intense competition, both from domestic players and international firms. Regulatory challenges, high operational costs, and the need for continuous technological advancements further complicate the business landscape. These factors necessitate the development and implementation of effective marketing strategies to ensure the sustainability and growth of offshore support vessels companies.

Marketing strategies in the maritime sector, particularly for offshore support vessels, are not as extensively studied as in other industries. According to (Zulfikar, 2023) A robust marketing strategy can enhance a company's market share, improve customer satisfaction, and build brand loyalty. Understanding the current marketing practices and identifying areas for improvement can provide a competitive edge to offshore support vessels companies in Indonesia. Therefore, This research seeks to develop marketing strategies to strengthen market position and/or increase market share of PTK in domestic OSV market.

The offshore Supply vessels industry in Indonesia faces several challenges that hinder its growth and competitiveness. The volatility of the global oil and gas market affects the demand for offshore services, while intense competition from both domestic and international companies, market share faces significant pressure. High operational costs and stringent regulatory requirements add to the complexities. PT. TPK currently holds a very low market share of only 4%, primarily due to its high operational costs and intense competition within the offshore support vessels industry. Additionally, many companies lack differentiated marketing strategies, leading to a homogenous market landscape. These issues underscore the need for a comprehensive analysis of the current marketing strategies of PT. PTK and the development of effective approaches that can enhance market share, offer innovation, and provide added value to compete more effectively in this industry.

Offshore supply vessels (OSVs) vary in type, size, and design, and they represent the most critical element in the offshore logistics supply chain (Skoko Ivica et al., 2020). Offshore support vessels, such as platform supply vessels (PSVs), anchor handling tug supply vessels (AHTSVs), and multipurpose supply vessels (MPSVs), play a crucial role in supporting offshore exploration and production operations. These vessels offer various services, including the transportation of goods and personnel, towing, anchor handling, and emergency response.

AHTS vessels serve as the primary key assets in the offshore oil and gas industry and are generally created to be multipurpose. These vessels are equipped with work wires and winches, enabling them to handle anchor operations for various types of rigs such as jack-up, semi-submersible, accommodation barges, and FPSO units. In addition to these tasks, they also manage rig and barge relocations, tanker lifting during crude oil offloading, towing, and various other operations specific to this vessel type.

MPSVs are often regarded as a subset of AHTS vessels. Designed for flexibility and adaptability, MPSVs are primarily used in construction and subsea operations, encompassing the

upkeep of offshore platforms, Remote Offshore Vehicle (ROV) operations, diving tasks, and assistance with well interventions.

PSVs, which lack anchor handling equipment, feature expansive deck areas to handle substantial drilling equipment like casings and drilling pipes. These vessels are capable of carrying comparable bulk and liquid cargo, though in somewhat larger volumes within their below-deck storage tanks. PSVs are classified into three size categories—small, medium, and large—depending on their deadweight or cargo deck area. Typically, these vessels measure between 45 and 105 meters in length and can carry up to 36 passengers.

Offshore support vessels play a crucial role in ensuring the operational efficiency of offshore oil and gas activities (Aas et al., 2009) (Osheyor Gidiagba et al., 2023). According to (Stopford, 2009) the maritime industry's success is heavily dependent on the availability and efficiency of offshore support vessels. These vessels are integral to maintaining the supply chain and logistical support required for offshore operations.

Offshore support vessels companies face several challenges, including high operational costs, regulatory compliance, and market volatility. According to (Opsealog, 2024) indicates that the cost of maintaining and operating offshore support vessels is substantial, requiring companies to invest in regular maintenance and upgrades to remain competitive. Additionally, navigating the complex regulatory environment adds to the operational challenges faced by these companies.

The offshore market is shaped by several elements, such as international oil prices, advancements in technology, and changes in regulations. According to a study (Yu et al., 2019), fluctuations in oil prices have a direct impact on the demand for offshore services, with higher prices driving increased exploration and production activities. The Offshore Support Vessel (OSV) market has gone through several phases that have caused significant changes. Between 2017 and 2019, the industry began to recover from the oil price crash of 2014. From late 2019 to 2021, the market faced uncertainty due to the pandemic, leading to low employment levels. In 2022, oil prices soared, and oil companies reported substantial revenues. Over the next five years, Brent crude prices are expected to stay above USD 70 per barrel.

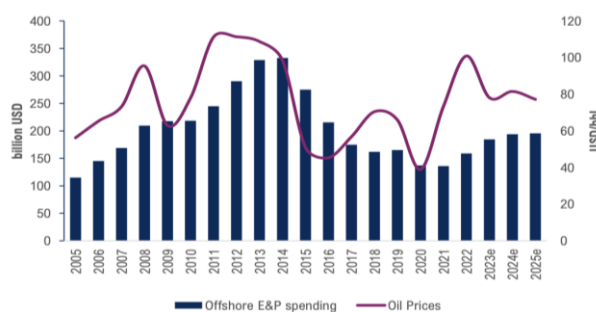


Figure 1. Oil Price and Offshore exploration and production spend

Source: Drewry Shipping Consultants (2023)

Despite the challenges, the offshore market presents significant growth opportunities. The increasing demand for energy and the ongoing exploration of new offshore reserves are key drivers of market growth. Research by (Colmenar-Santos et al., 2016) suggests that the expansion of offshore wind farms and renewable energy projects also presents new opportunities for offshore support vessels companies. Demand for Offshore Support Vessels (OSVs) is anticipated to increase across all regions. Australasia is expected to experience significant growth in demand. The United States and Canada, along with South and Central America and Mexico, are likely to see moderate growth. In contrast, the growth in demand for OSVs in the Middle East Gulf, East Africa, the Indian Subcontinent, the Far East, the Caspian Sea, Northwest Europe, the Mediterranean, and West Africa is projected to be relatively lower.



Figure 2. Offshore Support Vessels demand growth rate by region (2023-2027)

Source: Drewry Shipping Consultants (2023)

The offshore market is extremely competitive, with many domestic and global companies competing for a share of the market. To remain competitive, companies must differentiate themselves through innovative marketing strategies and superior service quality. A study by (Ferreira et al., 2020) highlights the importance of strategic alliances and partnerships in enhancing competitiveness and expanding market reach.

The regulatory landscape is pivotal in influencing the dynamics of the offshore market. Stricter environmental regulations and safety standards have increased the operational costs for offshore support vessels companies. According to research by (Brooks et al., 2021) compliance with these regulations is essential for maintaining market access and avoiding legal penalties. The European Union plans to include Offshore Support Vessels (OSVs) above 400 Gross Tonnage (GT) in its regulations starting in 2025. The International Maritime Organization (IMO) may adopt similar measures.

The Marketing Mix, comprising Product, Price, Place, and Promotion, is a fundamental framework for developing effective marketing strategies. According to Kotler and Keller (2016) in (Wardhana et al., 2023) emphasize the importance of aligning these elements to meet customer needs and achieve competitive advantage.

- a. Product: Offshore support vessels companies must offer a diverse range of services to meet the varying needs of their clients. This includes providing specialized vessels and value-added services such as technical support and crew training.
- b. Price: Pricing strategies must consider the high operational costs and competitive landscape. Research by (Hussien, 2022) suggests that flexible pricing models and cost-efficient operations can enhance market competitiveness. Price is one of the determining factors for customer to buy (Simarmata et al., 2016)
- c. Place: Efficient logistical support and strategic positioning are critical for ensuring timely service delivery. The location of operational bases and the availability of support infrastructure are key factors influencing the effectiveness of the "Place" element.
- d. Promotion: Effective promotional strategies include digital marketing, participation in industry events, and building strong customer relationships (Yulihapsari et al., 2023). (Ologunibi & Taiwo, 2023) highlight the growing importance of digital marketing in reaching a wider audience and engaging customers.

Digital marketing has become increasingly important in the maritime industry. According to (Ologunibi & Taiwo, 2023), digital marketing avenues like social media, search engine optimization (SEO), and content marketing provide fresh opportunities for connecting with customers and broadening market reach. Offshore support vessels companies can leverage these channels to enhance brand visibility and communicate their value propositions effectively.

CRM approaches are crucial for fostering enduring relationships with clients and improving their satisfaction. Research by (El Sheikh et al., 2020) indicates that effective CRM practices, such as personalized service offerings and responsive customer support, can lead to higher customer retention and loyalty. Implementing CRM systems enables companies to manage customer interactions more efficiently and gain insights into customer preferences and behavior.

Forming strategic alliances and partnerships is a key strategy for enhancing competitiveness in the offshore market. Collaborative efforts with other maritime and oil and gas companies can lead to shared resources, cost efficiencies, and expanded service offerings. A study by (Ferreira et al., 2020) suggests that strategic alliances can also facilitate access to new markets and technologies, further strengthening a company's market position.

2 Research method

This study employs qualitative research methods. The qualitative component includes interviews with industry experts and case studies of successful marketing strategies (Putri & Burhanuddin, 2024). This study utilizes a descriptive qualitative method, in which the researcher expresses the collected data through written descriptions or narratives. The research draws on literature sources, including journals, reports, and articles from credible sources. The process begins with identifying the market and the challenges within Indonesia's offshore support vessels industry with focusing on PT. Pertamina Trans Kontinental case. This study will explore the factors that

influence the formulation of marketing strategies in the offshore support vessels industry in Indonesia.

The population for this study includes offshore support vessels companies operating in Indonesia. A purposive sampling technique will be used to choose a sample of marketing managers, customers, and industry experts. The sample size will be determined based on the research objectives and the availability of respondents. To collect comprehensive and accurate data for this research, OSV Industry representative and players in this industry will be the sample.

Qualitative Data: Interviews with industry experts will be conducted to gain insights into the challenges and opportunities in marketing offshore support vessels. Case studies will be developed based on successful marketing strategies identified during the interviews. Secondary data pertains to information obtained indirectly from the research subject (Sari & Zefri, 2019). For this study, the secondary data comprises journals, references relevant to the research topic, and company data used to support the analysis.

A SWOT analysis will be performed to assess the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats associated with the marketing strategies of offshore support vessels companies (Analysis et al., 2023).

To guarantee the accuracy and consistency of the research tools, pilot testing will be conducted for the surveys. The interview guides will be reviewed by experts to ensure they capture relevant information. Triangulation will be used to validate the findings from different data sources.

The research will follow ethical standards by securing informed consent from participants, maintaining confidentiality, and minimizing potential risks to them. The data will be stored securely and used solely for research purposes.

3 Results and Discussion

Through its efforts to provide the best service, PT. Pertamina Trans Kontinental aims to enhance its competency level and achieve sustainable competitive advantages. As a subsidiary of Subholding Integrated Marine Logistics (SH IML), PT. Pertamina Trans Kontinental continues to strengthen its business to support (SH IML) in becoming a leader in the maritime shipping and offshore support vessels industry. Business transformation is also being carried out through five strategic initiatives in various areas, including commercial, operational, fleet, digital, and organizational & cultural, to reinforce the business foundation of Subholding Integrated Marine Logistic (SH IML).

PTK operates in the maritime shipping and services industry with three main focuses: ship chartering (shipping activities), marine services, and logistics services. However, in this research, we will focus on shipping activities, specifically offshore support vessels services. The following are PTK's work plan and strategic programs to enhance offshore support vessels services:

- a. Targeting the development of the vessel provision market segment in Subholding Upstream while maintaining HSSE (Health, Safety, Security, and Environment) and operational excellence for existing customers (SH C&T and SH R&P).
- b. Continuing the implementation of the Computerized Maintenance Management System (CMMS) on all owned vessels to ensure vessel reliability and achieve target commission and commercial days.
- c. Enhancing HSSE and operational excellence through crew training and competency improvement programs to maintain customer trust.
- d. Implementing e-procurement and umbrella contract strategies with vendors/suppliers of spare parts related to vessel maintenance to achieve target commission and commercial days.

Marketing strategy and Key Success Factors with case study of PT. Pertamina Trans Kontinental

- a. Develop Regional Expertise and Strengthen Customer Relationships: PTK should build a proactive commercial team that is well-versed in the specific needs and conditions of different regions. Establishing close relationships with end customers is vital to securing contracts and negotiating favorable terms. Hiring local residents as part of the regional team can enhance daily operations and help navigate local market dynamics, which can also reduce the risk of early contract terminations.
- b. Optimize Fleet Availability and Equipment: To achieve economies of scale and reduce operating costs, PTK should aim to have a fleet of approximately 5-6 vessels in key markets. This demonstrates to major charterers that PTK has the capacity to meet their needs effectively. A strategic focus on ensuring the availability of vessels and necessary equipment is essential for maintaining competitiveness.
- c. Enhance Vessel Quality and Technical Capabilities: PTK should ensure that its fleet includes modern vessels that meet the technical specifications required in various markets. By focusing on high-quality, well-equipped vessels, PTK can increase the likelihood of securing charters, thereby improving its market position.
- d. Leverage Market Regionalization: Given the unique characteristics and regionalization of markets, PTK must establish and maintain strong relationships with prominent charterers in each region. Utilizing local agents can help PTK gain valuable market insights and develop effective strategies for vessel deployment.
- e. Ensure Compliance with Local Legal Requirements: Each market has distinct local content and legal requirements. PTK should ensure it has the legal capability to provide services in the regions where it operates by collaborating with local companies. This strategy not only ensures compliance but also facilitates smoother operations and enhances reputation.

- f. **Focus on Competitive Pricing and Cost Management:** To gain a competitive edge, PTK should prioritize cost control to offer competitive pricing. This can be achieved by streamlining operations and reducing unnecessary expenses. Currently, with high operational costs, PTK needs to focus on optimizing its cost structure to become more competitive.
- g. **Maintain a Strong Contract Backlog:** To mitigate the risk of revenue shortfalls due to early termination or lay-up clauses, PTK should aim to maintain a contract backlog of at least two years for each vessel. This will provide a buffer against sudden drops in revenue and ensure more stable financial performance.
- h. **Implement Rigorous Risk Assessment Processes:** Given that major oil and gas companies require strict due diligence for supplier selection, PTK should develop and adhere to rigorous risk assessment processes to meet these standards. By doing so, PTK can minimize the risk of charter contract termination and enhance its reputation as a reliable partner.
- i. **Diversify Customer Base:** Given that the OSV market is largely controlled by major oil firms, PTK should focus on broadening its customer base by reaching out to additional marine contractors and construction firms. A diversified portfolio will reduce dependency on a few key clients and mitigate customer concentration risk.
- j. **Attract and Retain Skilled Personnel:** PTK should focus on building a pool of qualified and skilled personnel to address potential shortages caused by the low OSV market from 2014 to 2022. Moreover, recruiting cost-effective and well-trained crews from emerging seafaring nations, such as Indonesia, India, the Philippines, and Myanmar, will be crucial in maintaining operational efficiency and competitiveness.

By implementing these strategies, PTK can enhance its position in the OSV industry, capture a larger market share, and strengthen its competitive standing

To succeed in the competitive shipping, maritime services, and logistics industries in 2024, PTK needs to assess both its internal situation and external conditions. This analysis will assist in uncovering the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) that PTK faces across various aspects.

SWOT analysis

Table 1 Strengths Analysis

Indicators	Value	Ranking	Score
+ Expertise and extensive experience in the shipping industry to support Pertamina Group and SH IML.	35%	3	1.1
+ Integration with Pertamina Marine, which increases the number and competence of experts.	15%	2	0.3
+ Ownership of vessels with various types and diverse marine & logistics services.	20%	2	0.4
+ Strong support from management within the Pertamina Group.	30%	2	0.6

Source: Analysis and Created by Author.

Table 2 Weaknesses Analysis

Indicators	Value	Ranking	Score
- Dependence on the captive market, leading to limited penetration in the non-captive market	10%	2	0.2
- Significant improvements are needed in aligning business processes to support current and future business needs.	20%	2	0.4
- Competitiveness in the marine services business requires improvements and enhancement of competencies.	25%	3	0.8
- Current service standards need to be elevated to compete in the non-captive market through open tenders.	25%	3	0.8
- There is a need for IT development that is integrated with subsidiaries, subholdings, and Pertamina.	20%	2	0.4

Source: Analysis and Created by Author

Table 3 Opportunities Analysis

Indicators	Value	Ranking	Score
+ Potential synergy with Pertamina Group and other state-owned enterprises (BUMN) or affiliates.	35%	3	1.1
+ Opportunity to expand business by penetrating the non-captive market and increasing market share in the shipping, marine, and logistics services sectors.	30%	2	0.6
+ Continuous innovation aligned with Environmental Social Governance (ESG) principles, such as new & renewable energy in vessel operations, green ports, and solar panels.	20%	2	0.4
+ Opportunity to explore alternative funding options through sustainable financing or green financing (e.g., green bonds: debt securities whose proceeds are used to finance or refinance, in whole or in part, environmentally friendly business activities).	15%	1	0.2

Table 4 Threats Analysis

Indicators	Value	Ranking	Score
+ Shipping and marine service companies outside the Pertamina Group ecosystem that could pose a threat to PTK's entry into the non-captive market.	20%	2	0.24
+ The COVID-19 pandemic, which has and will continue to alter industry patterns in the future.	20%	1	0.2
+ Regulations that may potentially restrict business line development (e.g., dockyard) and need further evaluation.	40%	3	1.2
+ Skill and competency gaps arising from changes in the market and technology.	20%	2	0.4

Source: Analysis and Created by Author.

From the analysis of each SWOT aspect, the total score is then calculated:

Table 5 Total Score of SWOT Analysis

Index	Aspect	Total Score
A	Strength	2.4
B	Weakness	2.5
C	Opportunity	2.2
D	Threat	2.2
E	Internal Factor	-0.1
F	External Factor	0

Source: Analysis and Created by Author

Next, after the total score is obtained, the PTK position is determined.

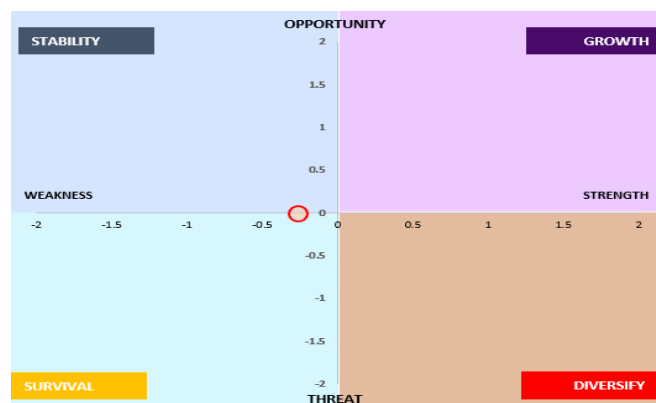


Fig 3. Positioning of PT. Pertamina Trans Kontinental

Source: Analysis and Created by Author

To position itself in the Growth quadrant within the next five years, PTK is implementing a comprehensive strategy focused on internal improvement and service expansion. The key priorities are as follows:

- Reinforce (Strengthen).** PTK aims to enhance cost competitiveness to offer more efficient and competitive services in the market. The company will also improve internal business processes, including management and operational systems, to become more responsive to market needs. A critical step is the integration of the Smart GEP (General Enterprise Process) within Pertamina's ecosystem, which will optimize synergies and operational efficiency, especially in supporting upstream activities.
- Eliminate (Remove Barriers).** In response to the global shift towards sustainability, PTK will reduce emissions by adopting dual-fuel technology or alternative fuel sources across its fleet. This initiative not only aligns with environmental standards but also enhances PTK's reputation and appeal in sustainability-focused offshore support vessels markets.
- Expand (Service Expansion).** PTK will broaden its service portfolio. Additionally, the company plans to optimize fleet utilization by reducing reliance on third-party chartered vessels. This strategy will increase operational efficiency, lower costs, and unlock new opportunities to maximize the use of internal assets.
- Innovate (Foster Innovation).** PTK seeks to establish strategic collaborations with major OSV's players through joint operations. These partnerships will enable PTK to expand its market reach, leverage partners' expertise, and add value to its service offerings. Through such innovations, PTK aims to strengthen its market position and access broader market segments.

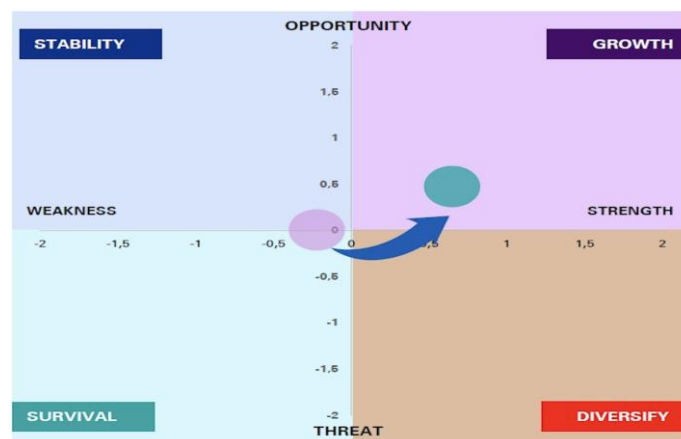


Fig 4. Strategies for PTK to Achieve the Growth Quadrant

Source: Analysis and Created by Author

2. Conclusion

PT. Pertamina Trans Kontinental's success in the highly competitive offshore support vessels market can be attributed to its strategic focus on product differentiation, flexible pricing, and effective use of digital marketing and CRM systems. By continuously adapting to market conditions and leveraging strategic alliances, PTK has maintained its competitive edge and positioned itself for future growth in the evolving maritime industry. The SWOT analysis highlights both the strengths and challenges faced by PTK, providing a roadmap for sustaining its market leadership while exploring new opportunities in the renewable energy sector.

PTK's strategic focus on operational excellence, innovative marketing, and strategic alliances has positioned it as a robust player in the offshore support vessels market. However, addressing weaknesses such as market dependence and IT development, while capitalizing on opportunities for market expansion and technological innovation, will be crucial for sustained growth. By navigating threats and leveraging its strengths, PTK can continue to enhance its competitive position and achieve long-term success in the maritime shipping and services industry.

The research highlights that PTK's strategies in product differentiation and technological innovation provide a valuable model for enhancing competitiveness and efficiency in the maritime industry. The findings emphasize the importance of flexible pricing and digital marketing for adapting to market changes and reaching broader audiences. Additionally, the integration of ESG principles and strategic alliances offers a framework for sustainable growth and innovation, making the study relevant for industry practitioners and academics focused on maritime operations and sustainability.

This research is limited to the offshore support vessels industry in Indonesia, focusing on the PT. PTK case, so the results may not fully reflect the dynamics of the non-captive market or other regions with different conditions. Additionally, it does not delve deeply into the challenges of technology implementation and market changes, which could affect the relevance of the findings in the long term. Future research should expand the scope and consider various external variables that impact this industry.

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