

The Market Orientation Strategy Model for Healthy Vegetarian Frozen Food Through the ASEAN Economic Community

รูปแบบกลยุทธ์การมุ่งเน้นตลาดอาหารมังสวิรัตี่แช่แข็ง เพื่อสุขภาพสู่การเป็นประชาคมเศรษฐกิจอาเซียน

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Abstract

This research explores the market orientation strategy model for healthy vegetarian frozen food through the ASEAN economic community. The survey research conducted from July to September 2012 with the objectives: 1) to analyse marketing approach of the entrepreneur in the healthy vegetarian frozen food industry in the adjusting market orientation strategy by separating to external markets (focus on current target, on future target and government support) and internal markets (technology orientations, focus on barriers and risks, focus on the adaptation of entrepreneur) and focus on new product development) and marketing performance (income must be increased, increasing the number of new products and capable of exporting a new product to the ASEAN's markets) through the ASEAN Economic Community 2) to analyse the variables or factors that affect the intervening variable (Firm Size) and the causal relationship of the marketing performance from the hypothesis and 3) to present a causal relationship model for affecting the marketing performance of the healthy vegetarian frozen food industry. The research methodology used in-depth interview by five government executive agencies and a quantitative research using questionnaires

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completed by 549 entrepreneurs. Data analyses used were content analysis, frequency distribution, percentage, arithmetic mean, standard deviation and the evaluation of good-of-fit indices for the proposed Structural Equation Model (SEM) and testifying hypothesis. The findings showed that most of the government agencies supported the communication aspects rather than the money and marketing approach of the entrepreneur in the healthy vegetarian frozen food industry coming in overall at a high level in the market orientation strategy. The result of statistical significance at 0.05 found that the hypotheses 2, 6, 7, and 8 are all acceptable. Therefore, this model can develop to the parsimonious model ($R^2 = 42\%$) which had value of 40 percent or more.

Keywords: Market Orientation Strategy, Healthy Vegetarian Frozen Food, ASEAN Economic Community

บทคัดย่อ

งานวิจัยนี้ได้วิจัยเกี่ยวกับรูปแบบกลยุทธ์การมุ่งเน้นตลาดอาหารมังสวิรัติด้านหนึ่งเพื่อสุขภาพสู่การเป็นประชาคมเศรษฐกิจอาเซียน ได้เก็บข้อมูลภาคสนามระหว่างเดือนกรกฎาคม ถึง กันยายน 2555 โดยมีวัตถุประสงค์ 1) เพื่อวิเคราะห์หาแนวทางการตลาดของผู้ประกอบการในธุรกิจอุตสาหกรรมอาหารมังสวิรัติด้านหนึ่งเพื่อสุขภาพในการปรับกลยุทธ์การมุ่งเน้นตลาด โดยแยกเป็นการมุ่งเน้นตลาดภายนอก (การมุ่งเน้นกลุ่มเป้าหมายในปัจจุบัน การมุ่งเน้นกลุ่มเป้าหมายในอนาคต และการส่งเสริมสนับสนุนของภาครัฐ) และการมุ่งเน้นตลาดภายใน (การมุ่งเน้นด้านเทคโนโลยีการมุ่งเน้นที่ความเข้าใจถึงอุปสรรค และความเสี่ยงการมุ่งเน้นที่การปรับตัวของผู้ประกอบการ และการมุ่งเน้นที่การพัฒนาผลิตภัณฑ์ใหม่) และผลสำเร็จทางการตลาด (กำไรต้องเพิ่มขึ้น จำนวนผลิตภัณฑ์ใหม่เพิ่มขึ้น และสามารถนำผลิตภัณฑ์ใหม่สู่ตลาดอาเซียน) สู่การเป็นประชาคมเศรษฐกิจอาเซียน 2) เพื่อวิเคราะห์ตัวแปรหรือองค์ประกอบสำคัญที่มีผลกระทบจากตัวแปรแทรก (ขนาดองค์กร) ต่อความสัมพันธ์เชิงสาเหตุสู่ผลสำเร็จทางการตลาดขององค์กรตามสมมติฐาน และ 3) เพื่อนำเสนอรูปแบบความสัมพันธ์เชิงสาเหตุที่มีต่อผลสำเร็จทางการตลาดขององค์กรอุตสาหกรรมอาหารมังสวิรัติด้านหนึ่งเพื่อสุขภาพการวิจัยครั้งนี้เป็นการวิจัยเชิงคุณภาพ โดยใช้แบบสัมภาษณ์เชิงลึกกับกลุ่มตัวอย่างที่มาจากหน่วยงานภาครัฐจำนวน 5 หน่วยงาน และวิจัยเชิงปริมาณโดยใช้แบบสอบถามกับกลุ่มตัวอย่างที่เป็นผู้ประกอบการ จำนวน 549 คน วิธีการวิเคราะห์ข้อมูลโดยใช้วิธีวิเคราะห์เนื้อหา ค่าความถี่ ค่าร้อยละ ค่าเฉลี่ยเลขคณิต ส่วนเบี่ยงเบนมาตรฐาน และการทดสอบข้อมูลเพื่อหารูปแบบโมเดลสมการเชิงโครงสร้าง (Structure equation model : SEM) และทดสอบสมมติฐานผลการวิจัยพบว่า หน่วยงานภาครัฐส่วนใหญ่สนับสนุนด้าน

การสื่อสารมากกว่าสนับสนุนด้านการเงินและแนวทางการตลาดของผู้ประกอบการในอุตสาหกรรมอาหารมังสวิรัตที่แข็งแกร่งในภาพรวมอยู่ในระดับสูงจากกลยุทธ์ทิศทางการมุ่งเน้นตลาด ผลการวิเคราะห์ที่ระดับนัยสำคัญทางสถิติ 0.05 พบว่าสมมติฐานที่ 2 สมมติฐานที่ 6 สมมติฐานที่ 7 และ สมมติฐานที่ 8 เป็นสมมติฐานที่ยอมรับได้ เพราะฉะนั้น รูปแบบนี้สามารถพัฒนาขึ้นในรูปประหยัด ($R^2 = 42\%$) ที่มีค่าตั้งแต่ร้อยละ 40 ขึ้นไป

คำสำคัญ : กลยุทธ์การมุ่งเน้นตลาด, อาหารมังสวิรัตที่แข็งแกร่งเพื่อสุขภาพ, ประชาคมเศรษฐกิจอาเซียน

Research Problem

At the present time, the world situation is changing rapidly. As a result, the world economy is adjusting to the new situation and non-tariff barriers are used more frequently in international trade. The opportunities for Thailand to expand into the global market are many and varied. One of the ways or methods for Thailand is to use the marketing channel available via participation in the ASEAN Economic Community: AEC with a total of 10 countries which are: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Republic of Indonesia, Republic of Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Philippines, Republic of Singapore, Kingdom of Thailand, Socialist Republic of Vietnam, and Myanmar. Furthermore, AEC is based on economic cooperation and all the member countries have come together to build on the existing partnership agreements and provide a concrete and more structured community. The food has been recognized as having good taste and of a high quality. Products those are popular with both fresh and cooked ingredients. Although many countries are able to grow fruits and vegetables of the same variety as Thailand, many types of fruits imported from Thailand were regarded as having a superior taste (Export Import Bank of Thailand, 2012). Additionally, in today's health conscious society, consumers have increased their consumption of non-toxic fruits and vegetables, consume less meat and are generally more interested in consuming vegetarian food. Many consumers have limited time for cooking or preparing food for themselves and paying attention to their own health and for these reasons they are interested in consuming ready to eat vegetarian foods and that is why healthy Thai vegetarian frozen food will be popular and productive for Thailand to export. Thailand has many manufactures producing healthy vegetarian frozen food on the market that compete with each other such as

CP ALL Public Company Limited (Ezy Go) and S&P Syndicate Public Company Limited (Quick Meal).

Since food is one of the major components of the hospitality industry catering both for local residents and tourists, Thai vegetarian food is popular among international tourists and specifically those who are health conscious. For example, during Thailand's and ASEAN's vegetarian food festivals, many tourists from ASEAN countries traveled to Thailand to sample Thai vegetarian food and many of them also purchased frozen foods as souvenirs to take home. Therefore, Thai vegetarian frozen food is a lucrative niche market, not only among international tourists, but also among the larger community of ASEAN countries. Thus, it is necessary for the hospitality industry to properly market Thai vegetarian frozen food to the ASEAN community.

Verhees (2005) believed that market orientation and new product developments cannot succeed if they do not rely on other factors of organization, such as firm size and marketing channels. Additionally, Augusto and Coelho (2009) stated that market orientation, firm-specific factors and environmental forces are important drivers of a firm's new-to-the-world product innovation. Furthermore, Zhou, Yim, and David (2005) stated that making the organization a success also requires a focus on a firm's strategic orientations (from the resource-based view) and market forces (from the competitive force perspective), through organizational learning, to breakthrough innovations and firm performance. Also to start the learning process of organizations to develop new products they should rely on proper marketing technology and this will make launching new products more successfully. However, Madanmohan, Kumar, and Kumar (2004) argued that to adapt new technologies, organizations should receive government assistance because this is vital in the promotion and learning of new powerful technologies with business organizations in the country.

More specially, if one looks back to the research of Day (1999) argued that the concept of market orientation is that it is based on three factors: (1) the inability to control or keep track of customers, (2) inability to control current customers and increase potential new customers, and (3) the technology that is driving the market is not able to find a balance with the growth of the market. Since the argument of Day, the researchers returned to the study of various forms starting from the model of Verhees (2005), Augusto and Coelho (2009), Zhou, Yim,

and Tse (2005), and Madanmohan, Kumar, and Kumar (2004), researchers will understand more on the organization and have a good model specifically focusing on exporting market orientation. This means both internal and external factors of the organization have influenced the marketing performance and the researchers found that many of the reasons are related to the model of Zakaria and Abdul-Talib (2010) on the Islamic market-oriented cultural model. This is because their model showed that export enterprises must understand the strategies which focus on internal and external market influences in order to reach the right market and can understand customers and competitors as well as focusing on global customers such as Muslims and their competitors.

For all of the reasons stated above, the author would like to study the market orientation strategy model for healthy vegetarian frozen food through the ASEAN economic community. Especially as no past researches distinctly clarified the relationship between market orientation and marketing performance so that can be concluded as an empirical relationship. However, the results of this study will be useful for the vegetarian frozen foods entrepreneurs or companies. Also for those who are interested in an exporting business for healthy vegetarian frozen food, they can get information to guide the planning of new products to meet the needs of consumers and to be used as a concept in the development of new products in the market.

Objectives

1. To analyse marketing approach of the entrepreneur in the healthy vegetarian frozen food industry in the adjusting market orientation strategy and the marketing performance to the AEC.
2. To analyse the variables or factors that affect the intervening variable and the causal relationship of the marketing performance from the hypothesis
3. To present a causal relationship model for affecting the marketing performance of the healthy vegetarian frozen food industry.

Hypotheses

This paper puts forth the following eight hypotheses:

H1--focus on current targets has causal relationship with marketing performance.

H2--focus on future targets has causal relationship with marketing performance.

H3--government supports have causal relationship with marketing performance.

H4--technology orientations have causal relationship with marketing performance.

H5--focus on barriers and riskshave causal relationship with marketing performance.

H6--focus on the adaptation of entrepreneurs has causal relationship with marketing performance.

H7--focus on new product developments has causal relationship with marketing performance.

H8--firm sizes have causal relationship with marketing performance.

Literature Review

Doyle (2002) stated that the focus of the market (Market Orientation) is a condition that can be achieved when a business organization meets the needs of current and future customers better than its competitors in order to gain long-term profits. However, Hill (2007), Keegan (2002), and Porter (1998) believed that the concept of government support will be to help and encourage organizations to export new products to the world markets. In particular, the ability of the business to compete became widely popular in many countries (Ahmed, Mohamed, Jonhson, and Meng, 2002). Not surprisingly, Calantone and di Benedetto (1988), Gatignon and Xuereb (1997), Li and Calantone (1998), Song and Parry (1997) agreed that increasing the number of new products and technology orientation is one of the most complex technical or mechanical aspects that have impact on the behavior of consumers and can bring a distinct competitive advantage. At the same time, to reduce the risks involved with new product developments, organizations should focus on understanding the barriers and reasons for potential failures with their investments. Technological changes will also have to occur (Day and Wensley, 1988). Zheng, Gao, Yang, and Zhou (2005) stated that the British economist John Maynard Keynes said that when the state or the environment of the organization is changed then entrepreneurs must be decisive and make quick decisions. Therefore, if the organization spends a lot of money on market research especially on the use of market orientation strategy

then the organization will often see avenues of success by a sequence of ascending order of importance and will reach their marketing performance easily.

Methodology

The survey research was conducted from July to September 2012. The research methodology used in-depth interview questionnaires completed by 5 government executive agencies or persons (head office only) were related to the research and a quantitative research using questionnaires completed by 549 entrepreneurs from 25 companies in sectors relating to new product marketing processes. All respondents are active members of the 2012 Thai Food Processors' Association pre packaged food industry. Data analysis was performed in three approaches: firstly, content analysis was performed by drawing and verifying conclusion. Secondly, reliability analysis conduct using the computer package to evaluate the stability and consistency for measured items and usage survey and research statistics for analysis of frequency distribution percentage arithmetic mean and standard deviation. Thirdly, the evaluation of good-of-fit indices for the proposed Structural Equation Model (SEM) and testifying hypothesis were performed.

The author will prove these hypotheses by using data analysis to be performed by using the second and third approaches as stated above and the conceptual framework of the research is from figure 1 below.

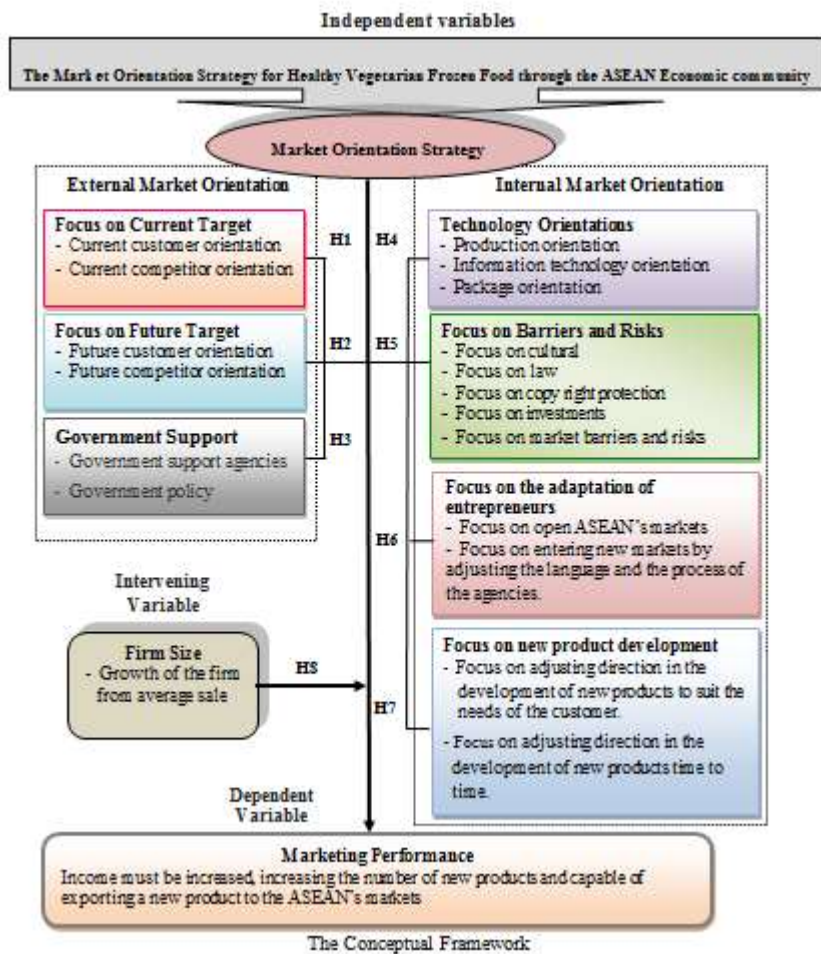


Figure 1 The Conceptual Framework (Adapted from Verhees (2005), Augusto and Coelho (2009), Zhou, Yim, and Tse (2005), and Madanmohan, Kumar, and Kumar (2005)).

Results

The findings from the in-depth interview showed that most of the government agencies had no policy support in areas such as finance, instead supporting the entrepreneur in communication aspects about marketing vegetarian frozen food in the adjusting market orientation strategy but depending on the needs of each organization. Concerning successful business marketing information, most government agencies will always be guided and determined by earnings every year, divided by one quarter to help evaluate the performance and the use of marketing channels then assist with training entrepreneurs who wanted to follow the plan and targeting. The study focuses on the market orientation strategy for healthy

vegetarian frozen food through the ASEAN economic community. The research was conducted by the research process method and findings of the quantitative survey are summarized as followed.

Table 1 Mean and Standard Deviation of the Market Orientation Strategy

The Market Orientation StrategyAdaptation	\bar{X}	S.D.	Level
1. Focus on Current Target	4.24	0.59	High
2. Focus on Future Target	4.35	0.61	High
3. Government Support	3.84	0.80	High
4. Technology Orientations	4.17	0.61	High
5. Focus on Barriers and Risks	4.12	0.62	High
6. Focus on the Adaptation of Entrepreneurs	4.16	0.65	High
7.New Product Development	4.17	0.61	High
Total	4.15	0.64	High



Figure 2 Graph of the Market Orientation Strategy Adaptation

Table 1 and figure 2 show that the marketing approach of the entrepreneur in the healthy vegetarian frozen food industry using the adjusting market orientation strategy was at a high level overall ($\bar{X} = 4.15$). The most important factor with marketing performance was the

focus on future target at a high level ($\bar{X} = 4.35$). The second was the focus on current target at a high level ($\bar{X} = 4.24$) and thirdly was the technology adaptation and the new product development at a high level ($\bar{X} = 4.17$) respectively.

Furthermore, all of the above mentioned were subjected to the path analysis, structural equation modelling (SEM) analysis. The structural equation modelling (SEM) was performed using the maximum likelihood method to test the hypotheses. This procedure permitted an assessment of the integrity measures as well as an evaluation of the degree to which the observed relations among variables fitted the hypothesized network of casual relationships.

Table 2 The statistical evaluation

Statistic Type	Measurement (Accept)	Statistic Value
Chi-square	P-value $0 \geq .05$	0.054
CMIN/DF	< 2.00	1.190
GFI	≥ 0.90	0.971
AGFI	≥ 0.90	0.952
NFI	≥ 0.90	0.956
IFI	≥ 0.90	0.993
CFI	≥ 0.90	0.992
RMR	< 0.05	0.024
RMSEA	< 0.05	0.019

Table 3 The Path Coefficient of the Analyses on the Market Orientation Strategy Model for Healthy Vegetarian Frozen Food

Factor	Path Coefficient				
	b	S.E.	Beta	C.R.	P
Performance <-- C-Current	-2.354	1.344	-0.453	-1.751	0.080
Performance <-- F-Future	1.000	-	0.421*	-	-
Performance <-- G-Government	-2.093	0.818	-0.766	-2.558	0.011
Performance <-- T-Technology	-1.472	0.841	-0.481	-1.749	0.080
Performance <-- R-Risk	-0.356	0.095	-0.261	-3.749	***
Performance <-- E-Entrepreneur	0.056	0.145	0.410*	0.384	0.701
Performance <-- N-Newproduct	0.068	0.100	0.510*	0.687	0.492
Performance <-- FirmSize	1.000	-	0.800*	-	-

Note: The statistical significance is 0.05 or better when the value of C.R. (t-statistic) is greater than 1.96.

Moreover, all the elements of the market orientation strategy model for healthy vegetarian frozen food through the AEC were validated with factor loading above 0.30. The focus on current target (C-Current) with (Cust_Curr) and (Comp_Curr) has the factor loading value at 0.521 and 0.650 respectively. The focus on future target (F-Future) with (Cust_Fut) and (Comp_Fut) has the factor loading value at 0.643 and 0.537. The government support (G-Government) with (1: Gov_S1) and (2: Gov_S2) has the factor loading value at 0.689 and 0.552. The technology orientations (T-Technology) with (TechnoP_T), (Pack_T), and (IT_T) has the factor loading value at 0.580, 0.550, and 0.524 respectively. The focus on barriers and risks (R-Risk) with (Cult_R), (Law_R), (Copy_R), (Invest_R), and (Markt_R) has the factor loading value at 0.675, 0.546, 0.662, 0.634, and 0.525. The focus on the adaptation of entrepreneurs (E-Entrepreneur) with (ASEAN_E) and (NewM_E) has the factor loading value at 0.594 and 0.641. The focus on new product development (N-New product) with (New proD_N) and (New proD_S) has the factor loading value at 0.621 and 0.599, marketing performance (Performance) with (Profit), (New product) and (ASEAN) has the factor loading value at 0.792, 0.591, and 0.750.

More specially, the implication of these results is a significant impact for marketing strategy related to an overall orientation on the marketing strategy evaluation where the entrepreneur in the

healthy vegetarian frozen food industry is ready to enter the ASEAN market and be a perform business. This model can develop to the parsimonious model ($R^2 = 42\%$) which has a value of 40 percent or more. This means if the entrepreneurs can adjust the market orientation strategy with the correct firm size, then the main marketing performance would be more profit and the number of new products can be increased along with the organizations capabilities of exporting new products to the ASEAN's markets or to the AEC.

The results of analysing the variables or factors that affect the intervening variable (Firm Size) and the causal relationship of the marketing performance from the hypotheses can be found as follows.

H1--focus on current targets has no causal relationship with marketing performance and no statistical significance of 0.05.

H2--focus on future targets has direct causal relationship with marketing performance and the statistical significance of 0.05.

H3--government supports have no causal relationship with marketing performance and no statistical significance of 0.05.

H4--technology orientations have no causal relationship with marketing performance and no statistical significance of 0.05.

H5--focus on barriers and risks have no causal relationship with marketing performance and no statistical significance of 0.05.

H6--focus on the adaptation of entrepreneurs has direct causal relationship with marketing performance and the statistical significance of 0.05.

H7--focus on new product developments has direct causal relationship with marketing performance and the statistical significance of 0.05 and

H8--firm sizes have direct causal relationship with marketing performance and the statistical significance of 0.05.

The results of the market orientation strategy model for healthy vegetarian frozen food through the ASEAN economic community can be written in the Structural Equation Model: SEM from the following.

Marketing Performance = $0.800^* \text{Firm Size} + 0.510^* \text{Focus on New Product development} + 0.421^* \text{Focus on Future target} + 0.410^* \text{Focus on the Adaptation of Entrepreneurs} + (-0.261) \text{Focus on Barriers and Risks} + (-0.453) \text{Focus on Current Target} + (-0.481) \text{Technology Orientations} + (-0.766) \text{Government Support}$

Conclusion

Objectives of this research were to analyse the marketing approach of the entrepreneur in the healthy vegetarian frozen food industry in the adjusting market orientation strategy and the marketing performance to the AEC, analyse the variables or factors that affect the intervening variable and the causal relationship of the marketing performance from the hypothesis, and present a causal relationship model for affecting the marketing performance of the healthy vegetarian frozen food industry. The research methodology used an in-depth interview questionnaires completed by 5 government executive agencies and a quantitative research using questionnaires completed by 549 entrepreneurs in sectors relating to new product marketing processes. The findings showed that most of the government agencies had no policy support in areas such as finance, instead supporting the communication aspects regarding marketing healthy vegetarian frozen food to the adjusting market orientation strategy but depending on the needs of each organization. The result also showed that the marketing approach of the entrepreneur in the healthy vegetarian frozen food industry using the adjusting market orientation strategy was at a high level overall. The results of analysing the variables or factors that affect the intervening variable (Firm Size) and the causal relationship of the marketing performance from the hypothesis have found that the hypotheses 2, 6, 7, and 8 are all acceptable and have direct causal relationship with the statistical significance of 0.05 and this model can develop to the parsimonious model ($R^2 = 42\%$) which had value of 40 percent or more.

The unacceptable hypotheses may have some reasons such as the entrepreneur or the manufacturer in the healthy vegetarian frozen food industry that may not only focus on the current target of the daily vegetarian consumer but also with Muslims who consume vegetarian food. However, to focus on more targeting of specific groups such as Muslims, they may need more government support such as advertising or help for Halal Food compliance and licensing and sometimes the cost of materials are expensive or increasing

due to factors such as changes in Thai Law such as the minimum daily wage to increase to 300 Baht per day. To maintain profits and reduce expenses in their organization the entrepreneur or the manufacturer in the healthy vegetarian frozen food industry will have to cut the workforce and restructure their organization to remain viable and competitive and be able to adjust the market orientation strategy at any time that is required to suit the present and future economic outlook.

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