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**I'D RATHER HAVE A FLY IN MY SOUP! MUTTERINGS OF MS. ZIZI
IN PANDEMIC TIMES**

**ANTES FOSSE UMA MOSCA NA SOPA, SÔ! MURMÚRIOS DE DONA ZIZI EM TEMPOS
DE PANDEMIA**

**MEJOR QUE FUERA UNA MOSCA EN LA SOPA! LOS MURMULLOS DE DOÑA ZIZI EN
TIEMPOS DE PANDEMIA**

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ABSTRACT

Dilemma: In scenarios of great uncertainty due to the COVID-19 pandemic, is it still feasible to maintain the tradition of purely face-to-face sales, or is it time to join the delivery system? And is that enough?

Educational objective: This case aims to provide students with experience of situations consistent with the organizational reality and the development of decision-making abilities, focusing on the dilemma of whether or not to implement an alternative service system, given the operating restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Contextualization: COVID-19 caused sweeping changes in the daily life of Brazilian enterprises, including the Eating Out sector (known in Portuguese as *Alimentação For a do Lar* - AFL). Ms. Zizi and her son Pedro, owners of a homemade food restaurant in the municipality of Goiânia, needed to reinvent themselves during the pandemic period, in order to avoid the losing, laying off staff, and closing the establishment.

Main topic: Decision-making in times of pandemic.

Audience: Students at undergraduate level in business administration, in the disciplines of marketing, entrepreneurship and strategic planning.

Originality/value: Students will play the role of managers and will be asked to make decisions about a series of issues that arise in the daily lives of companies in times of crisis. The study focuses on basic concepts of the Marketing Mix, Porter's Five Forces, Decision-Making theory and Analysis of the Competition, seeking to outline strategies to deal with contingences in times of pandemic, and increase the value proposition of the Gastrô Mineiro restaurant.

Keywords: Decision-making; Times of Crisis; COVID-19 pandemic; Delivery.

RESUMO

Dilema: Em cenários de grandes incertezas decorrentes da pandemia, ainda é viável manter a tradição de apostar somente no atendimento presencial ou é hora de aderir ao sistema de *delivery*? Somente isso é suficiente?

Objetivo educacional: Este caso de ensino propicia aos discentes vivências de situações condizentes com a realidade organizacional e o desenvolvimento da capacidade de tomada de decisão, ao analisar o dilema de implantação ou não de um sistema alternativo de atendimento, dadas as medidas restritivas de funcionamento decorrentes da pandemia da COVID-19.

Contextualização: O advento da COVID-19 ocasionou mudanças drásticas no cotidiano dos empreendimentos brasileiros, inclusive no setor de Alimentação Fora do Lar (AFL). Dona Zizi e seu filho Pedro, donos de um restaurante de comida caseira no município de Goiânia, precisaram reinventar o formato do atendimento ao cliente no período pandêmico, com o intuito de evitar a perda da clientela, a demissão em massa de colaboradores e o fechamento do estabelecimento.

Tema principal: Tomada de decisão em tempos de pandemia.

Público: O caso pode ser aplicado a estudantes dos cursos de graduação em administração, nas disciplinas de *marketing*, empreendedorismo e planejamento estratégico.

Originalidade/valor: Os discentes irão assumir o papel do gestor e tomar decisões sobre um leque de inquietações e problemas que surgiram no cotidiano do Gastrô Mineiro, no período da pandemia. Este caso de ensino resgata conceitos teóricos básicos sobre o Mix de *Marketing*, Cinco Forças de Porter, Teoria da Decisão e Análise da Concorrência, com objetivo de traçar estratégias que atendam as contingências decorrentes da pandemia e ampliar a proposta de valor do restaurante em estudo.

Palavras-chave: Tomada de decisão; Tempos de crise; Pandemia da COVID-19; *delivery*.

RESUMEN

Dilema: En escenarios de grandes incertidumbres derivados de la pandemia, ¿sigue siendo viable mantener la tradición de apostar solo en el servicio presencial o es momento de sumarse al sistema de entrega? Solo eso es suficiente?

Objetivo educativo: Este caso tiene como objetivo brindar a los estudiantes experiencias de situaciones de acuerdo con la realidad organizacional y desarrollo de la capacidad de toma de decisiones, al momento de analizar el dilema de implementar o no, un sistema de cuidado alternativo, dadas las medidas restrictivas de funcionamiento derivadas de la Pandemia de COVID-19.

Contextualización: El surgimiento del COVID-19 provocó cambios drásticos en el día a día de las empresas brasileñas, incluso en el sector de Alimentos Fuera de Casa. Doña Zizi y su hijo Pedro, dueños de un restaurante de comida casera en el municipio de Goiânia, necesitaban reinventarse en el período de la pandemia para evitar la pérdida de clientes, el despido masivo de empleados y el cierre del establecimiento.

Tema principal: Toma de decisiones en tiempos de crisis.

Público: El caso puede aplicarse a estudiantes de carrera en administración en las asignaturas de Marketing, Emprendimiento y Planificación estratégica.

Originalidad/valor: Los alumnos asumen el rol de gestor y toman decisiones sobre una serie de inquietudes y problemas que surgen en el día a día de las empresas en tiempos de crisis. El estudio rescata conceptos básicos del Mix de marketing, Las cinco fuerzas de Porter y la teoría de la decisión, en busca de respuestas al escenario cambiante, análisis de la competencia, alternativas estratégicas y mejora de la propuesta de valor de Gastrô Mineiro.

Palabras clave: Toma de decisiones; tiempos de crisis; Pandemia de COVID-19; entrega.

INTRODUCTION

At the start of another working day, Pedro calls Ms. Zizi to have a cup of coffee, waking her up not only because it is morning, but to tell her about the unprecedented difficulties that ô Mineiro restaurant is facing. In the first half of 2020, the new coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic drastically impacted all aspects of society, establishing the so-called 'new normal'. This new reality affected commercial relations in several sectors, requiring companies to adapt immediately, in order to prevent loss of income and even bankruptcy.

Since it first opened, in the city of Goiânia, Goiás, Gastrô Mineiro restaurant had never seen such turbulent times. Ms. Zizi, the head chef, who had first set up the business, is helped by her son Pedro, who has a degree in business administration. He takes care of running the family business. That morning, over coffee, Pedro and Ms. Zizi reflected with grave concern over the growing uncertainties caused by the pandemic situation.

– *Pedrinho, you know that Gastrô Mineiro is not just a family business, but represents years of dedication and hard work. My very essence is there.*

– *Yes mom! It's your recipe lab. What's more, the memories of our homeland are everywhere. It's where we see our customers every day.*

– *It is true, my son! but, honestly, I don't know what to do about this critical scenario that you are presenting. We've never been through anything like this before.*

Prompted by his mother's statements, Pedro adds:

– *There are so many restrictive measures. I lay awake all night thinking about it. The alternative that came to me was to make some urgent adaptations, especially in our form of service. What do you think?*

– *Changes in our service?* ponders Ms. Zizi. *Our customers don't only like our food, they also enjoy coming to the restaurant. It's one of our competitive advantages. And our staff?*

– *I understand your concern, mother! I'm sure we'll think of an alternative that is safe for our customers and our staff, and keeps the restaurant operating. But everyone needs to embrace the idea.*

In mid-August 2020, after a long period of restrictive measures and lockdowns, a period commercial establishments in Goiânia were allowed to partially open, with alternate opening hours. Even so, this measure was not sufficient for Gastrô Mineiro to return to its full activities, especially as it only provided in-person service to its customers. Faced with these restrictive measures, and in an attempt to keep the business running, the owners found themselves facing a dilemma: in this scenario of great uncertainty due to the pandemic, it is still feasible to maintain the tradition of in-person service only, or is it time to start a delivery system? And would that be enough?

THE CASE

Changing airs, keeping the seasoning!

The history of Gastrô Mineiro is intrinsically related to the decisions taken by Ms. Zizi. The patron is from Patos de Minas (MG), As a single mother, she had to fight to support of her family from an early age. She had a passion for

cooking, always cooking with pleasure for her children, using the gift she had inherited from her grandmother, who also had a love for the typical cuisine of Minas Gerais, and was a self-taught cook. At the end of 2008, Ms. Zizi decided to seek new horizons. She sold everything she had, and moved to Goiânia with her children.

With the money she had saved, Ms. Zizi rented a commercial property in a well-located neighborhood in the city of Goiânia. She had decided to fulfil a childhood dream, and put her culinary skills to good use. By replicating traditional Minas Gerais recipes, combining them with her grandmother's teachings, Ms. Zizi cooked meals for the neighborhood, preparing her traditional delicacies. The wonderful taste of her dishes won her a loyal clientele, and led her to expand production. The small snack bar soon became a restaurant, which sold several dishes, the house speciality being the delights of Minas Gerais cuisine.

Gastrô Mineiro officially opened in June 2009, opening from Monday to Saturday, during business hours. The restaurant proposed two different services: the "per kilo" system (i.e. paying for food by weight) and the "marmiteix" (lunch box to take away). Its layout was designed with a space for tables and another for the buffet. The buffet area had two heated rows for hot dishes and two refrigerated lanes for salads and desserts.

The restaurant is located in the South Sector, in a commercial area with many large car dealerships, whose employees make up a large part of Zizi's clientele. As it is located in a commercial and residential area, the point was considered strategic and presented a certain security and stability. Added to this, it was the only restaurant in this region to exclusively specialize in Minas Gerais cuisine (Figure 1).

Figure 1.

Personality pamphlet of Gastrô Mineiro



Source: Prepared by the authors

In its first six years of operation, demand for Gastrô Mineiro increased considerably. With a loyal clientele, in 2015, Ms. Zizi started the process of buying the commercial property outright, expanded its structure, and hired more staff, including: cooks, cashiers and waiters. She also invested in sending her eldest son, Pedro, to business school. Pedro graduated in 2016 and went on to assume the bureaucratic and managerial control of the family business. The average annual turnover of the micro-enterprise was approximately R\$350,000.00 (three hundred and fifty thousand reais).

The special way of combining the cuisine of her homeland led to some significant awards in the 'Requintes Culinários' contest, promoted by the Goiás Gastronomy Agency (AGAEGO), with her dishes being placed among the top five over three years of this event. Despite having a small structure, Zizi's gift for cooking, her unique touch in the flavor of the dishes offered, and the affordable prices, won a loyal clientele and consolidated the business.

A fly in the soup? The nightmare of COVID-19!

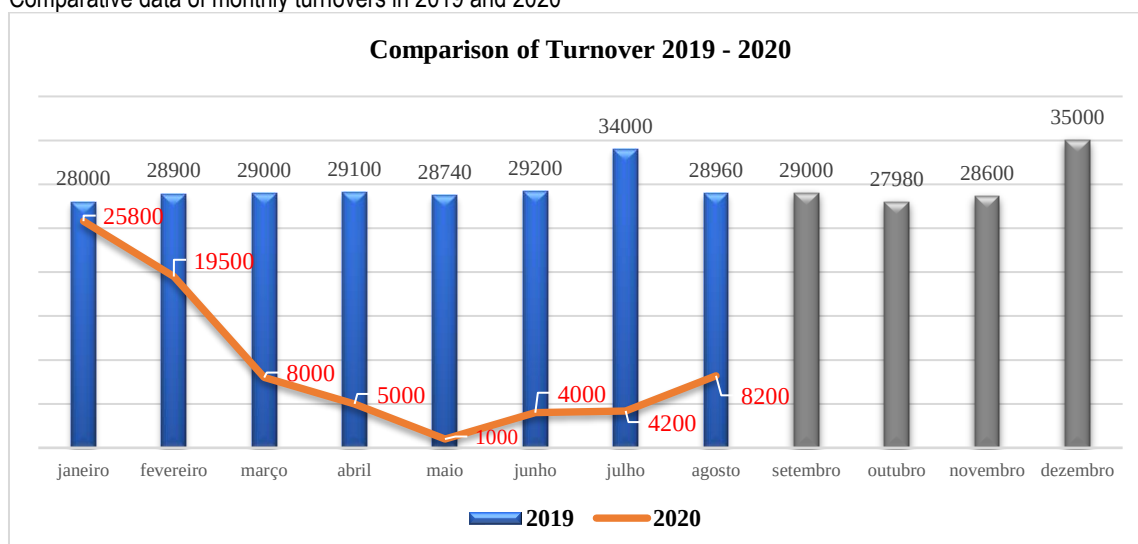
At the beginning of 2019, an epidemic broke out in the Chinese city of Wuhan, caused by a totally unknown biological virus with a high rate of contagion that threatened to spread the virus globally. In a short space of time, almost all countries in the world were affected by the pandemic of the new coronavirus, a type of Sars-Cov-2, better known as COVID-19. The first case in Brazil was detected on February 26, 2020, in the city of Sao Paulo. Less than a month later, on March 12, the first three cases were identified in Goiânia (Túlio & Oliveira, 2020).

The lethal nature of the virus forced governments to take swift and harsh decisions in an attempt to stop the mass contagion and preserve lives. The reality was catastrophically changed, and the imminent need for social isolation led to substantial changes in social, labor and economic relations. In the business context, the restrictive measures also took their toll. Enterprises operating in several sectors began to learn to live with the partial restrictions, until the lockdown forced them to close completely.

The Eating Out sector, especially bars and restaurants, was also affected by these measures. Despite having finalized the purchase of the commercial property in December 2019, Ms. Zizi and Pedro found themselves facing a completely new situation. The first half of 2020 was the worst scenario ever experienced by the management of Gastrô Mineiro, with a reduction of almost 80% of its revenue at the peak of the first wave of the pandemic (see Figure 2).

After several acts and decrees issued by the national government and the government of the state of Goiás, imposing various restrictive measures, in mid-August 2020, the numbers of people affected and deaths caused by COVID-19 finally began to decline. In the major newspapers, Goiás moved from yellow (representing stability) to blue (a decline) in the average number of deaths. The state government then made the operation of commercial establishments more flexible, given the desperate economic situation, with the lack of revenues and the mass closure of many local establishments.

Figure 2.
Comparative data of monthly turnovers in 2019 and 2020



Source: Prepared by the authors (Illustrative data).

Faced with this scenario, Pedro could not hide his concern for the future of Gastrô Mineiro. Despite the small signs of recovery, partial operating times were imposed, with reduced opening hours of commercial establishments, including in-person service in the mornings only, leaving the other hours free for deliveries only. However, Gastrô Mineiro still only operated with in-person service, because for Ms. Zizi, the good location of the business, its structure, the welcoming atmosphere and the affordable price of the food, were enough to add value and retain customers.

Previously, being one of the only establishments to sell specialties from Minas Gerais cuisine in the vicinity, with an affordable price, good location and pleasant ambiance, the business had seemed to have an air of permanence and solidity. The relationship established between Gastrô Mineiro and its customers seemed unshakable. However, in the pandemic scenario, the future of the enterprise was looking gloomy for managers. When searching for information about their competitors, Pedro found that most restaurants had started doing deliveries, and had signed up to food delivery apps.

Pedro was excited about the possibility of implementing a delivery system at Gastrô Mineiro, but besides convincing his mother Zizi, he knew he would need to take additional actions and make investments to strengthen and make the new delivery system viable. Based on information he had gleaned from their competitors, he prepared a list of actions that would help in the development of the process (see Figure 3).

Figure 3.

Complementary actions to the delivery system

Actions	Description	Tools / Means
1	Meet customer needs in an interactive, fast and customized way.	Applications that enable real-time interactivity with customers and store information.
2	Advertise the menu in an organized manner.	Create profiles on social networks to provide the menu that is always updated.
3	Create personalized and resistant packaging to promote the strengthening of Gastrô Mineiro brand.	Use sustainable packaging that promotes the restaurant's image with customers, especially in terms of safety, conservation and product quality.
4	Train employees to use the software.	Online courses for operating the business format of social media.
5	Hire / form partnerships with delivery drivers	Select the best rated profiles.

Source: Prepared by the authors.

For Pedro, the delivery system was feasible, as the actions needed to implement it would be low in cost, especially given the range of free tools that could be used by Gastrô Mineiro. In fact, it seemed to Pedro that most of the restaurant's employees were already familiar with using these tools, so large investments in training would not be required. The next step would be to convince Ms. Zizi that it was a good idea. Pedro's reasoning was that it would enable them to mitigate the restrictions and difficulties imposed on companies in the Eating Out sector.

Wasting no time, Pedro met Ms. Zizi and laid out his plan, presenting his ideas and discussing the possibility of signing up to a delivery system. Despite the critical scenario, Ms. Zizi still clung to the competitive advantages that Gastrô Mineiro had in in-person service. These included, for example, the small spaces reserved for coffee and prose, a games room, and somewhere to relax after lunch. But Pedro counter-argued that these facilities could no longer operate amidst the restrictive measures and with the scarcity of financial resources, having a delivery system would add value to the business, mitigating the impacts of the crisis on the drop in turnover.

Despite trusting her son's technical knowledge, Ms. Zizi wanted to see numbers. So, she asked Pedro to gather all the necessary information to support the implementation of the business strategy he was proposing. After a few days, Pedro came back to her with all the information she had requested.

Difficult to swallow! The pandemic has passed the point!

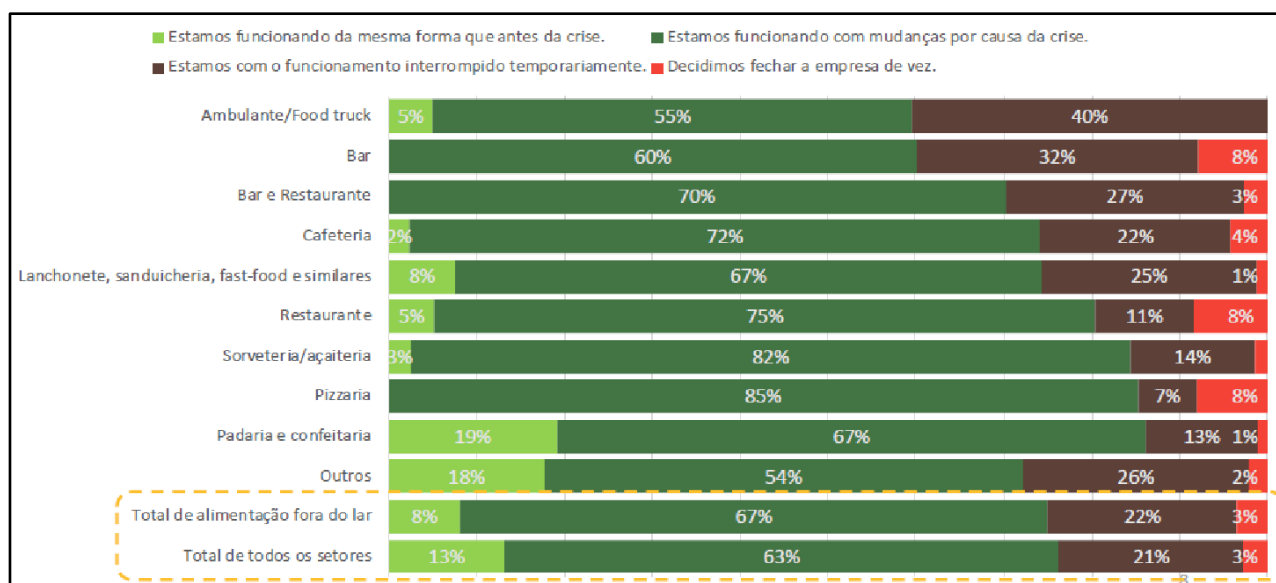
To convince Ms. Zizi about the feasibility of implementing the delivery system, Pedro decided to search for data in two ways: (a) to carry out a survey of the situation of the bar and restaurant sector in the country, and; (b) to show the potential advantages of signing up to a delivery system. He did this research quickly, because the situation of Gastrô Mineiro was growing steadily worse.

The first data search was conducted on the website of the Brazilian Association of Bars and Restaurants (Abrasel), which evaluates and monitors the sector in Brazil. To his surprise, he found two editions of surveys carried out by the association in partnership with the Brazilian Micro and Small Business Support Service (Sebrae), including the second online survey that covered exactly the critical period that Gastrô Mineiro was going through - July 27 to August 6, 2020.

This research portrayed the situation and the prospects for the Eating Out sector (https://redeAbrasel.Abrasel.com.br/upload/files/2020/08/EGNMNa49RLwks9YwvCib_31_58ec68afc5677fa8d059774cc4942bfd_file.pdf). Pedro quickly saw, in the Abrasel (2020) survey, that micro-enterprises (MEs) such as Gastrô Mineiro represented the highest percentage (47%) of businesses in the restaurant niche, with half of these being located in municipalities where there were restrictions on operating hours - lockdown, social isolation, or in the process of reopening.

The survey also showed that a large number of restaurants in Brazil were operating with changes because of the pandemic (75%), with only 5% still maintaining the same form of service as before. Another 11% had temporarily ceased trading, and 8% had closed their doors for good, as shown in Figure 4 (Abrasel, 2020). Gastrô Mineiro was among the majority that had changed its operation, although it was suffering from the restricted opening hours, given that it only served customers in person.

Figure 4.
Operating status during the crisis



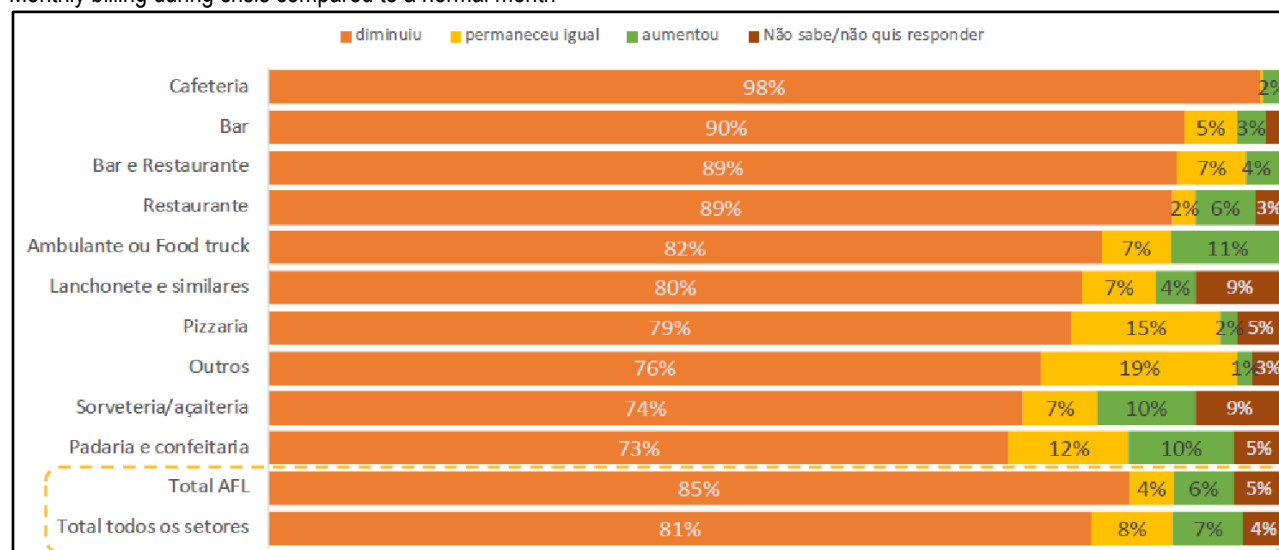
Source: Abrasel (2020).

Another point that Pedro could see was that the drop in turnover of Gastrô Mineiro was similar to that of other establishments, at the national level. The vast majority of restaurants in Brazil (89%) had, in general, seen a decrease in their monthly turnover, with weekly reductions of 53% (Abrasel, 2020), as shown in Figure 5. Pedro and Ms. Zizi were working just to keep the family business running; they had given up their own salaries in order to keep their staff and be able to afford the other expenses. This was also in line with the national scenario, in which the average number of people employed in restaurants was 5.3 (Abrasel, 2020).

Having gathered all this information, Pedro decided to switch to the second alternative of his quest and check the delivery strategy and its potential advantages. The figures confirmed his theory that this delivery system would become a reality for the vast majority of businesses in the sector, with the delivery system being adopted by 77% of restaurants (Abrasel, 2020).

Figure 5.

Monthly billing during crisis compared to a normal month

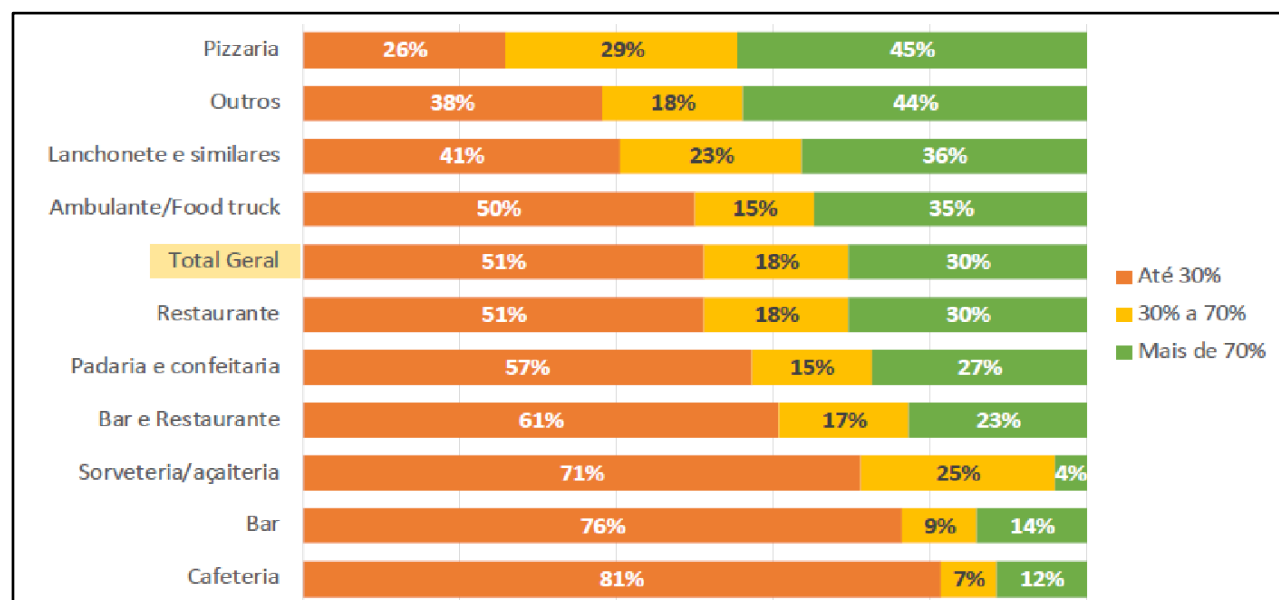


Source: Abrasel (2020).

Pedro also found that deliveries had a very significant market share during the pandemic scenario, as shown in Figure 6. In 30% of the segment's budget, the system represents a share of more than 70% (Abrasel, 2020). For Pedro, it was evident that Gastrô Mineiro was at a disadvantage using only in-person service, as the survey also showed that for 50% of companies, their revenue had increased in the pandemic, as the delivery service had enabled them expand their sales.

Figure 6.

Share of delivery in companies' turnover during the crisis



Source: Abrasel (2020).

With this information, Pedro called Ms. Zizi and presented the data to her (Figures 4 to 6). At the end of Pedro's explanation, Ms. Zizi had a better understanding of the critical situation that the COVID-19 pandemic had imposed on Gastrô Mineiro, but she also had some concerns about the extra expenses that would be incurred with the new delivery system. Pedro was very keen to implement the delivery system in the family business, but he couldn't do it without his mother's full agreement. Some doubts still needed to be resolved before making a final decision.

Who embraces the idea?

Ms. Zizi's indecision, and the government's rules on limited opening hours, bothered Pedro. Even after presenting all the results of his research, with information about joining the delivery system, the conversation ended without any firm decision being made. So Pedro looked for more arguments to convince his mother. He knew that Miss Zizi's other major concern was that higher expenses might force them to lay off employees. Due to her great concern for her staff and their families, she was adamant that they would only be dismissed if the situation became dire.

Figure 7.

Proposals for employees of Gastrô Mineiro, during the COVID-19 pandemic

Proposals	Goals	Time	Involved
1. Suspends payment for bonus functions.	Reduce personnel expenses.	Up to 10 months initially.	The management team.
2. Pay by installments.	Reduce personnel expenses.	Up to 5 months, initially.	All the staff.
3. Reduce salaries by 50% (in the case of tax incentives or government aid).	Reduce personnel expenses.	For the duration of the incentive/assistance.	All the staff.
4. Suspend the payment of food aid and transport vouchers.	Reduce personnel expenses and channel resources to other purposes associated with the delivery system.	Up to 5 months, Resuming with payments by instalments.	All the staff.
5. Use employees' mobile devices.	Fulfil customer orders, avoiding further investments in new devices.	Until the restaurant has enough profit margins to purchase new equipment.	All the staff.
6. Ask staff to help with deliveries.	Keep the links of all team members active, temporarily relocating the workforce.	As long as the rules on restricted opening hours are imposed on the food sector.	The service team.
7. Form networks of collaboration and sharing among staff.	Encourage a team spirit, even for particular situations such as lack of food or allowances to cover other expenses.	As long as the crisis situation of the pandemic remains. However, it could become permanent company policy.	All the staff.

Source: Prepared by the authors.

With this in mind, Pedro did not give up on his idea, and decided to meet with the employees of Gastrô Mineiro, without Ms. Zizi present. He prepared, in advance, graphs showing the drop in turnover in the first half of 2020 (Figure 2), as well as a list of proposals (Figure 7). Pedro's goal was to keep his staff in employment, but at a reduced cost, in order to channel resources towards the implementation of the delivery system. Pedro knew that he would be more likely to obtain his mother's seal of approval for the plan if no staff had to be dismissed in the process.

After presenting the data and justifying his proposal to the staff, Pedro got straight to the point and asked the question: Who agrees with the idea? A "no" at that moment would mean the end of all his attempts.

But to his surprise, all the employees raised their hands. Only one of them replied: but what does Ms. Zizi think about the idea? For a moment, faced with the atmosphere of tension, Pedro lowered his head and was silent. He knew that his mother's indecision could be an obstacle to the getting the staff to agree. However, convinced that implementing a delivery system could increase the company's revenue, and with the team's agreement to his proposal, he informed them that Zizi's position was favorable. However, he feared his mother's reaction.

The next day, before starting work at the restaurant, Pedro decided to tell his mother about the meeting he had held with the staff. Initially, Ms. Zizi was annoyed that he had done this, as she felt it undermined her authority, but Pedro was determined to convince her.

– Mom... Mom, stay calm! The staff approved the proposals. Now I need you to read it and say whether or not you also approve" Pedro replied, handing Ms. Zizi a sheet of paper with the proposals.

However, she went on:

– But Pedro, we've been working like this for years, is it worth changing just because of the pandemic? Will we keep the same quality of the meals served in person? Is delivery alone really enough to keep the restaurant running?

Zizi's questions still surrounded the persistent dilemma faced by Gastrô Mineiro: in times of uncertainty, is it feasible to maintain in-person service only, or is it time to sign up to a delivery system? The pandemic scenario required a decision to be made urgently.

TEACHING NOTES

The plot of this case describes the efforts undertaken by Pedro, administrator of Gastrô Mineiro restaurant, to implement a delivery system, aiming to mitigate the effects of the restrictions on the operation of establishments in the Eating Out sector, during the crisis resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. Founded by Ms. Zizi, head chef and Pedro's mother, Gastrô Mineiro faced unprecedented difficulties due to the restrictions on opening hours, as it had always offered only in-person services.

Educational objective

This fictional narrative aims to provide students with experience of situations consistent with the organizational reality, by analyzing the advantages and disadvantages of whether to implement an alternative customer service system. Besides developing analytical skills, students can discuss ethical issues faced by the administrator and exercise the decision-making process from the perspective of competitive strategies, gaining insight into how theory and practice are interrelated. The study provides theoretical and methodological support for the development of content in the disciplines of strategic planning, marketing and entrepreneurship, taught in undergraduate courses in business administration.

Characters and data

Ms. Zizi and Pedro are fictional characters who play the leading role in the narrative of a restaurant that is facing difficulties due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Ms. Zizi made the decision to move from her homeland, Pato de Minas (MG) to pursue her dream of setting up a restaurant to earn money, exercising her gift of cooking in the southern region of Goiânia (GO). The business was successful, gained solidity and made it possible for Pedro to graduate in administration, later taking over the running of the family enterprise called Gastrô Mineiro.

This teaching case combines its fictional narrative with real secondary data from research carried out by the Sebrae and Abrasel partnership, from 07/27/2020 to 08/06/2020, which presents indicators of the Situation and Perspectives of the Eating Out sector. This information is important for promoting reflection, analysis and a closer understanding of the organizational reality of Gastrô Mineiro.

Class organization

This case can be used in various ways. However, it is suggested that the teacher carry out a thorough analysis of the content presented, identifying potential topics that will be addressed in the classroom and considering the time it will take to complete the activity, the logical sequence of actions to be adopted, and the content of the discipline. The teacher should give out the case to the students in advance, indicating the tasks to be worked on in class.

At the beginning of the application, it is recommended that the teacher divide the into groups of 5 to 6, and carry out a warm-up strategy, posing some questions that will enable the students to identify narratives similar to those of Gastrô Mineiro. The teacher should then start the discussion of the questions. Thus, the class can be divided as follows (Figure 8):

Figure 8.
Lesson plan in minutes

Steps	Activity Time	Activity Time
Planning	Previous reading by the teacher	–
	Handing out the case in advance to the students	
Application	Randomly dividing the students into discussion groups (between 5 and 6 students)	5 minutes
	Reading the case	20 – 30 minutes
	Open discussion of the issues with the whole class	35 – 45 minutes
	Closing the discussions and reinforcing the concepts and theories presented in the case.	20 minutes
Evaluation	Elaboration of a proposal or opinion on the case, drawing up a list of advantages or disadvantages that adopting the dilemma can bring for the restaurant portrayed in the case study.	–
Total		Between 80 and 100 minutes

Source: Prepared by the authors

At the end of the discussions, it is recommended that the teacher adopt assessments that can be made both individually and in groups, e.g.: preparing a proposal or opinion on the case, drawing up a list of advantages or disadvantages that incorporating the delivery system can bring for the enterprise, and other possible alternatives. The success of the class will depend on the teacher's correct approach to the central issues of the case study, and the relationship with the fundamental concepts of the discipline. It is also important to stick to the times stipulated in the lesson plan.

Questions for discussion

- 1) How can the owners of Gastrô Mineiro deal with the changes brought by technological advances, especially with regard to the use of a delivery system during the pandemic and competition with apps?
- 2) Conduct an environmental analysis of the restaurant, indicating strengths and weaknesses, as well as threats and opportunities, taking into account the pandemic scenario.
- 3) How can Pedro implement decisions for improvement at Gastrô Mineiro, and obtain the approval of Ms. Zizi and the full consent of the other staff? How should he deal with queries?
- 4) How can the managers improve the value proposition of Gastrô Mineiro, optimizing its market positioning and customer attractiveness? Prepare a marketing mix for Gastrô Mineiro, aimed at the delivery system.

Discussion of issues associated with the literature

1) How can the owners of Gastrô Mineiro deal with changes brought by technological advances, especially with regard to the use of a delivery system during the pandemic and competition with apps?

On this point, the teacher can resume the discussion about the need for changes both in how Gastrô Mineiro, and in the traditional culture rooted in Ms. Zizi, that the privileged location of the business and the affordable price are sufficient competitive advantages. Traditionalist administration makes it impossible to implement new management strategies to cope with environmental changes, as it is a culture based on obsolete methods that cannot adapt to the current competitive model.

The culture of an organization is composed of a set of behavioral patterns, beliefs and values, transmitted collectively. It should not be seen as something static or immutable, as it is influenced by the macroeconomic environment (technological, political, economic, society, environment). Hence the importance of continually restructuring organizations and making the necessary changes to follow the evolution of processes and market dynamics (Svaldi et al., 2006).

The concepts developed by Caves and Porter (1977) corroborate the view that variations in the company's performance occur not only because of its market power, but also because of the strategic decisions undertaken (Veloso et al., 2013). Thus, the teacher can initiate a debate related to Porter's Five Forces (2005), seeking to identify, together with the students, the environmental variables of Gastrô Mineiro, such as: (1) Threat of new entrants, (2) Threat of substitutes, (3) Bargaining power of customers, (4) Bargaining power of suppliers and (5) Rivalry between competing companies.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, food delivery using apps was already being used by different sectors of the economy (Rebechi & Baptistella, 2022). With the pandemic, the use of this type of service grew, as it became one of the only viable alternative to minimize the contact and proliferation of the virus. The students can discuss the information shown in Figure 5 and compare the data with other sectors of the economy. If they are able to identify more competitive methods in the use of the delivery system, they can adopt benchmarking strategies to adapt to the restaurant sector.

The managers of Gastrô Mineiro need to understand that the way the company competes in the market, its goals, policies and the relationship with the environment are essential for the development of its competitive strategy (Porter, 2005). In the case of Gastrô Mineiro, the teacher can also suggest an analysis of actions to complement the delivery system, (Figure 3), evaluating, together with the students, whether the actions proposed by Pedro are sufficient to withstand the scenario of changes that the restaurant is going through.

Considering that companies acquire individual character from choices, expansion will take place through the set of external and internal opportunities, derived from the sets of resources that the company has. In other words, its competitive capacity is based on knowing how to select and combine adequate resources (Vasconcelos & Cyrino, 2000).

2) Conduct an environmental analysis of the restaurant, indicating strengths and weaknesses, as well as threats and opportunities, taking into account the pandemic scenario.

The development of scenarios does not fit into the molds of an exact science (Soetanto et al., 2011). Also, it is not about trying to predict the future, but about understanding the variables that will compose the environment in which organizations operate, allowing the managers to devise more assertive strategies to deal with changes and variations. The operations of *Gastrô Mineiro* were abruptly interrupted by a pandemic that forced the managers to make quick and costly decisions, without even having similar background scenarios to refer to.

In this question, the teacher will be able to develop the analysis of *Gastrô Mineiro* scenarios through the tool called SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats). For Srinivasan (2010), strengths and weaknesses are internal factors and are defined as follows: (a) strengths stem from organizational skills and the company's tangible and intangible resources, which help in market performance and in facing the competition; (b) weaknesses are flaws and difficulties that prevent the effective development of the company.

Also, according to the author, opportunities arise when organizations take strategic actions in the external occurrence of events and trends that compete to improve business performance. On the other hand, threats are external environmental factors that can affect the company's performance and reduce its competitive advantage in the market, if strategic avoidance decisions are not taken. It is suggested, therefore, that the teacher develops, together with the students, the analysis of the scenario experienced by *Gastrô Mineiro* and transcribes the identified variables into the quadrants of the SWOT matrix.

Through this, it is expected that students will be able to identify essential variables of the endogenous and exogenous context of *Gastrô Mineiro*, to help them better understand the plot of the aforementioned restaurant in the pandemic period. Internally, for example, some of the enterprise's strengths are the tasty Minas Gerais cuisine provided by Ms. Zizi, the excellent location of the business, and the ambiance of the restaurant. On the other hand, weaknesses may stem from a lack of planning, too much clinging to tradition, the absence of marketing strategies, the pandemic scenario itself, and management challenges in times of crisis.

SWOT analysis is a relatively simple tool that aims to identify variables of the internal and external environments of a company, as well as possible strategies to be adopted (Certo, Peter & César, 2010; Mirales, Jacomino & Baldin, 2019). This model is important as it provides managers with decision-making support in terms of actions to enhance strengths, reduce weaknesses, ward off threats and take advantage of the company's opportunities. For this, the involvement of all stakeholders is also essential to identify the necessary future responses (Soetanto et al., 2011).

As a complementary tool, the teacher can present the OKRs (Objectives and Key Results) methodology, encouraging the class can create objectives aligned with the scenario identified in the SWOT analysis. According to the definition given by Niven and Lamorte (2016, p. 6), OKRs is "a framework of critical thinking and continuous discipline that seeks to ensure that employees work together, focusing their efforts to make measurable contributions that drive the company forward". The effectiveness of this tool depends on the engagement of the leaders and teams in a way that allows the socialization of acquired knowledge (Stray et al., 2022).

Souza (2018) also states that the OKRs framework can be defined by the following structure: I will [Goal] measured by [Key Results]. Thus, OKRs create synergy and alignment between stakeholders during management and measurable delivery of results (Lamorte, 2015). In the case of *Gastrô Mineiro*, the successful implementation of the proposals presented by Pedro will depend on the involvement of the entire functional team, which needs to know what direction is to be followed in order to achieve the desired objectives.

It is important to clarify the difference between objectives and key results; objectives are statements of a qualitative nature, aimed at leading the organization in the desired direction, Key results are quantitative in nature, and measure how well the outlined objectives are being achieved (Niven & Lamorte, 2016). In this context, Pedro's proposals are still just goals to be pursued, i.e., the administrator of *Gastrô Mineiro* is indicating what he wants to do. From this, the students can develop quantitative metrics to measure key results, that is, to say how these objectives will be achieved.

3) How can Pedro implement decisions for improvement at Gastrô Mineiro, and obtain the approval of Ms. Zizi and the full consent of the other staff? How should he deal with queries?

In this question, the teacher can resume the concepts and applicability of Decision Theory, given that Gastrô Mineiro restaurant is in a situation of conflict, uncertainty and financial difficulties. For Goldschmidt (1969), one of the main dilemmas faced by businesses is decision-making, as there is a continuum of environmental events that they cannot control, called states of nature. This requires the administrator to be prepared to make decisions in an unstable, contingency and critical environment (Prêve, Moritz & Pereira, 2010).

In organizations, the actors in the decision-making process can influence the course of decisions. The state of conflict is very common among people, and when this happens, several courses of action can be taken. However, there are always doubts about which way to go, or which decision is more assertive (Goldschmidt, 1969). Decisions are often shaped by information (Bazerman & Moore, 2014). In Pedro's case, despite gathering a robust base of information, he still needs to demonstrate other collective benefits of his decisions.

For Goldschmidt (1969), decision theory can be based on certain premises: (a) actions can follow two or more possible streams of action, properly represented by S1, S2, ... Sn. Only one of these will be followed, in a mutually exclusive relationship, i.e., when one occurs, the other is excluded; (b) the decision making consists of choosing one of these courses to be carried out in a convenient way; (c) the selection process consists of selecting the course that will lead to the achievement of some previously planned objective.

From this perspective, it appears that the "person who makes decisions starts with any number of possible courses of action until he/she reaches a determined course of action, with known objectives" (Goldschmidt, 1969, p. 93). Based on this, Pedro, manager of Gastrô Mineiro, can choose the action that leads to the objective of urgently improving the performance of the enterprise to restore its share of the market, either by increasing profits, for example, or by reducing costs, according to the actions proposed in Figure 7.

However, the course of action of the decision-making process in family businesses is more complex (Pereira et al., 2021). It should be assumed that organizations are social institutions formed by different groups of people, with different interests and values. In this aspect, Pedro needs to make decisions for improvement that are not too costly for the employees of Gastrô Mineiro, a fact that represents a strong concern for Ms. Zizi.

Despite obtaining approval from the staff of Gastrô Mineiro to implement his proposals, Pedro had to deal with questions from his staff and from Mrs. Zizi about the success or failure of the measures taken. At this point, the teacher can encourage debate about perceptions of justice in the decision-making process. For Bazerman and Moore (2014), the explanatory limitation of the implementation of actions that cause economic impacts can inhibit considerations of justice, generating dysfunctions in the way of perceiving.

In order to be effective, Pedro's decisions must follow a rational flow of analysis, based on information and individual benefits, to foster the cognitive understanding of the proposals and the fairness considerations of the collaborators and Ms. Zizi. To this end, Bazerman and Moore (2014) recommend considering: (1) individual judgment and expectations; (2) economic interest and; (3) the social comparison process associated with employees' underlying preferences. In this way, students can analyse whether or not Pedro's decisions actually contribute to generating perceptions of justice that serve the organization as a whole.

4) How can managers improve the value proposition of Gastrô Mineiro, optimizing the company's positioning in the market and customer attractiveness? Prepare the marketing mix for Gastrô Mineiro, aimed at the delivery system.

Considering that Gastrô Mineiro does not have a strategic document, the teacher will be able to work on the concepts of the marketing mix, using essential tools for building and improving the company's value proposition, such as the Golden Circle and the Value Proposition Canvas, used in strategic business plans and business plans.

The marketing mix, commonly known as the four Ps of marketing, is: product, place, promotion and price (Kotler & Keller, 2013). These are basic and essential concepts for the company to get to know its products better, gain a better view of its market, and ensure an affordable and adequate price policy for its clientele. According to Kotler (1988), companies that provide services with high quality standards have strategies aimed at customers, aiming to satisfy their needs, winning them over and increasing their portfolio.

"Price" is a component of the marketing mix that is related to revenue generation, playing a key role in the restaurant's market share and profitability. It involves, in addition to the price per kilo of food, for example, profit margins, payment terms that are not allocated in the financial spreadsheet (meals paid on the credit card enter as revenue in the same way as those paid for using a debit card).

"Place" is the marketplace where negotiations for the purchase and sale of products and services take place. Related to this point are all the issues that involve the logistics and distribution of the product: transport, storage, information exchange and stock. Here, the lack or inefficiency of inventory management can be addressed, since inputs are not purchased from large wholesalers on a regular basis, which increases the cost of raw materials. One can also study the economic viability of acquiring a mode of transport, observing which one is best suited to meet the demand of Gastrô Mineiro. Finally, the food delivery apps that exist on the market can be listed, proposing the use of the one that is most consistent with the characteristics of the customers of Ms. Zizi's enterprise.

"Product" refers to the goods and services that are offered in the market. This includes requirements such as quality, variety of meals, salad options and takeaway packaging. Another point that needs to be worked on at the restaurant is the variety in the meals offered. Often, the customer goes to another competitor because in search of freshly prepared pasta or a more diversified salad, or some other option that is not available at Gastrô Mineiro.

"Promotion" refers to actions to publicize the product or service. It includes advertising and sales promotion on social media and other vehicles.

To help in this process, the teacher can present the Business Model Canvas, which is a quadrant created by Osterwalder and Pigneur. It has nine interconnected blocks and allows the analysis of business models, both for beginners and for more advanced students (Vicelli & Tolfo, 2014). The nine blocks of the Business Model Canvas are analyzed: Customer Sector, Value Proposition, Channels, Customer Relationships, Revenue Sources, Key Resources, Key Activities, Key Partnerships and Cost Structure.

Another tool that the teacher can introduce to the students is the Golden Circle model, created by Simon Sinek. This is a powerful tool for strategic management and leadership (Sharma & Singh, 2020). According to Sinek (2009), most companies have no idea why consumers seek their products. In general, the company's approach should be guided by three questions that make up the Golden Circle: (a) Why i.e. the company's purpose or central question; (b) How, in which company seeks ways to achieve its objectives; and (c) What, which refers to the company's differentials, which may be characteristics linked to products or services.

These are questions that can prompt the managers of Gastrô Mineiro to rethink their value proposition for the enterprise in the midst of a set of variables, enhancing their strengths and taking actions to correct strategic errors and wrong decisions. By putting themselves in the role of managers, the students will be able to understand how important it is to have defined the purpose and reason for existing of any company, to make it inspiring and enable its survival in the market, and this can be done through essential management tools.

Potential outcome of the case

Pedro carried out a survey of expenses and income, both fixed and variable, analysed scenarios, checked menus and many other aspects involving Gastrô Mineiro. He presented detailed information on the crisis and launched proposals that involved all employees, who embraced the idea, aiming to keep the business afloat under its motto 'Zero Layoffs, Sô!' (Zero Layoffs, and that's it!). Upon learning more about Pedro's plan, Ms. Zizi finally agreed with the proposals to be implemented, as no members of her team would be penalized with dismissal due to the effects of the pandemic.

With the agreements signed and the consent of Ms. Zizi, Pedro created a strategic plan with actions that made the adoption of the delivery system feasible, adapting the restaurant's services to the new reality. The entire team saw the restaurant's turnover increase, as it started to provide service both in-person and through deliveries, during the period of restrictions on the opening hours of food establishments.

In addition, to improve the company's value proposition and reposition it in the market, Pedro implemented complementary marketing actions, necessary for the maintenance of the delivery system, among them: he signed partnerships with food ordering and delivery apps; created sustainable, personalized packaging with photos of the environments of Gastrô Mineiro, the food preparation process and quotes from the most frequently played songs in the relaxation environment; and created multilateral profiles of Gastrô Mineiro on social networks, among others.

All these actions contributed to the repositioning and appreciation of Gastrô Mineiro brand, giving wide publicity and giving the Minas Gerais food made by Ms. Zizi a competitive advantage over the competitors. The family business thrived, and continued to operate with its entire workforce, even in the face of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

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