

Optimization of the Marketing Mix in Enhancing the Competitiveness of Local Products in the Global Market

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Abstract

Local products face major challenges in entering the highly competitive global market. The lack of optimization of marketing strategies has resulted in many local products being unable to compete effectively with global products. In this context, the marketing mix becomes a crucial instrument for increasing competitiveness at the international level. This study aims to analyze how marketing mix strategies can be optimized to strengthen the position of local products in the global market. This study employs a qualitative approach, drawing on data from various relevant studies and publications that discuss local product marketing strategies and export challenges. Data is analyzed thematically to find strategic patterns that can be applied widely. The results of the study show that adjusting product characteristics to global market tastes, adaptive pricing, efficient distribution, and integrated promotions are key to increasing competitiveness. Promotion strategies that highlight cultural values and use a digital approach have proven effective in building a global product image. With proper marketing mix management, local products have a great opportunity to develop sustainably in the international market.

Keywords: *Marketing Mix, Competitiveness, Local Product, Global Market.*

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A. INTRODUCTION

In an era of increasingly integrated globalization, competition between products in the international market is becoming increasingly tight and complex. Products from various countries compete with each other in terms of quality, price, uniqueness, and brand image formed through structured marketing strategies (Huang et al., 2021). In this context, local products from various regions in Indonesia face a major challenge not only to maintain their existence in the domestic market but also to expand their reach to the highly competitive global market. The lag in taking advantage of international trade opportunities is often caused by weak marketing strategies implemented by local business actors, especially in adjusting their marketing approaches to the needs and preferences of very diverse global consumers (Elitan, 2020).

Amid the rapid flow of cross-country trade, local products are often trapped in limited access to market information, minimal understanding of foreign consumer tastes, and the less-than-optimal implementation of strategies that can highlight the strengths and advantages of the product itself. Many small and medium business actors still rely on conventional methods in marketing their products, so they are unable to compete with imported products that come with more attractive packaging, competitive prices, and promotional strategies that target consumers appropriately.

This condition causes many local products that have great potential in terms of quality and cultural value to be unable to gain a significant position in the global economic arena. On the contrary, products from other countries with strong marketing strategies can dominate local and international markets widely (Alfarizi et al., 2024).

This phenomenon shows an urgent need to take strategic steps that can optimize the potential of local products so that they can compete healthily at the international level. In many cases, local products based on local wisdom and natural resources have a great opportunity to be accepted by the global market, but the lack of a targeted and professional marketing strategy is often the main obstacle (Ambrogio et al., 2022). Several leading sectors such as processed foods, handicrafts, and traditional textile products show high appeal in foreign markets, but have not been able to penetrate the global market systematically and sustainably due to weak branding efforts, market segmentation, international distribution, and promotions that are adaptive to the characteristics of foreign consumers (Sasaki et al., 2021).

Increasing the competitiveness of local products is not only an important agenda for business actors but is also part of the state's efforts to strengthen the structure of the national economy. The government, through various export policies and trade promotions, has encouraged business actors to go international, but the responses that emerge are not always optimal if they are not accompanied by a deep understanding of the dynamics of global marketing (Aiginger & Rodrik, 2020). When local products are unable to adapt to rapidly changing global market demand patterns, the available opportunities will be easily seized by substitute products from other countries. Failure to develop a marketing strategy that is responsive to changing tastes, trends, and needs of global consumers will position local products as merely an alternative, not a primary choice (Obrenovic et al., 2024).

Furthermore, the challenges in increasing the competitiveness of local products are also closely related to the problem of inconsistent product quality, non-compliance with international standards, and the lack of synergy between the production and marketing sectors. Many local products have a distinctive taste and identity but fail in the international market because they are not marketed with the appropriate approach (Akiri et al., 2024). The absence of a competitive pricing strategy, an inefficient distribution system, and a promotional strategy that does not effectively target the target audience are factors that reduce competitiveness. In this case, optimizing marketing strategies is a key element in transforming local products into global products that are able to compete sustainably (Muhammad et al., 2020).

Indonesia's geographical conditions, which consist of thousands of islands, also pose a challenge to the distribution of local products. High logistics costs and uneven transportation infrastructure make it difficult for local products to reach the international market efficiently. This requires marketing planning and management that is not only oriented toward promotion but also considers aspects of product availability, delivery speed, and cost efficiency. In facing competitors from abroad who have advantages in logistics efficiency and production scale, local business actors

must have a careful and measurable marketing strategy to remain relevant and competitive (Santoso et al., 2021).

On the other hand, the development of digital technology and access to global e-commerce platforms opens up great opportunities for local products to be known more widely in various parts of the world. However, this opportunity will not have a significant impact if it is not accompanied by the ability to manage adaptive, creative digital marketing strategies based on strong market research (Wei et al., 2020). Local products that are able to utilize the power of digital marketing to build brand image, interact with global consumers, and adapt their products to market needs will have a greater chance of penetrating the international market. Therefore, the development of an integrated and optimal marketing strategy is the main foundation for increasing the competitiveness of local products in the dynamic global arena (Katsikeas et al., 2020).

Considering these challenges and opportunities, it is important to make systematic efforts to review and implement a more comprehensive marketing strategy for local products. The involvement of various stakeholders, from business actors, and government, to academics, is an important part of directing the transformation of marketing strategies towards a more innovative and competitive direction. Amid increasing global competition, only local products that are able to appear with the strength of superior marketing strategies will have a place in the global value chain. Optimizing the marketing mix is not just an option, but a necessity to answer the challenges of the global market and elevate the position of local products as a representation of the wealth of the Indonesian nation on the world stage.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Marketing Mix

Marketing is the process by which companies create value for customers and build strong customer relationships to extract value from customers when they come back. Marketing is not only interpreted as a form of creating value for customers (Abeza et al., 2020), a broader meaning of marketing is also put forward by Gundlach and Wilkie:

- a. Marketing is a process of planning and implementing conception, setting prices, and promoting and distributing ideas, goods, and services to create exchanges that satisfy individual and organizational goals.
- b. Marketing is an organizational function and a series of processes of creating, communicating, and delivering value to consumers, and managing consumer relations in such a way as to provide benefits to the organization and its stakeholders.
- c. Marketing is an activity, a series of institutions, and the process of creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging valuable offerings for consumers, clients, partners, and the wider community.

- d. Marketing is an organized activity both individually and organizationally in order to create, communicate, deliver, and exchange valuable offerings for consumers, clients, partners, and the wider community (Aman, 2020).

Based on the above understanding, it can be concluded that marketing is an activity of creating value, communicating/introducing, and transforming value carried out by business actors (both individuals and organizations) to fulfill customer needs that aim to bring benefits to all parties involved, both indirectly and directly (Burström et al., 2021).

Meanwhile, the Marketing mix strategy is one of the strategies that is often implemented by companies. The marketing mix strategy is closely related to determining how the company offers products as well as other strategic aspects, namely: price strategy, place strategy, and promotion, in certain market segments that are its target markets. Marketing mix is a strategy of combining offers, logistics, and product or service communication. With the marketing mix, it is not only necessary to make attractive offers and marketing, but also to think about the right tactics in distribution and promotion (Wichmann et al., 2022).

Kotler defines the marketing mix as a series of marketing instruments with controllable product, price, place, and promotion factors that are combined by the company to get the desired response in the targeted market. While Saladin defines "Marketing mix as a set of marketing variables that can be controlled and used by the company to achieve goals in the target market". Marketing mix or marketing mix is an instrument to implement the marketing strategy to be chosen. The marketing mix defines how the elements of product, price, promotion, and place are combined into a whole to suit the target market (Hayuningtyas, 2020).

C. METHOD

The method used in this study was designed to answer the focus of the study on optimizing the marketing mix in increasing the competitiveness of local products in the global market. Given the complexity of issues related to marketing strategies, competitiveness, and international market dynamics, a qualitative approach was chosen as the main approach in this study. This approach allows researchers to explore the meaning, interpretation, and context of various marketing practices carried out by local product business actors in facing global challenges. The focus of the study is directed at an in-depth understanding of the phenomena that occur, not on quantitative measurements that are statistical in nature. With this approach, researchers can also trace the patterns of marketing strategies that emerge in various situations and regions, and relate them to factors that influence the success of local products in the international market. The data in this study were obtained from various relevant secondary sources, such as previous research reports, scientific journal articles, official publications of related institutions, and literature that supports the topic of discussion. Data selection was carried out purposively based on its suitability and contribution to the development of the analysis. After the data was collected, the next step was to carry out a systematic analysis process by identifying

key themes. This analysis process aims to find a relationship between the marketing mix strategy used and increasing the competitiveness of local products in a global context. Thus, the results of this study are expected to provide a complete picture of how marketing strategies can be optimized to bring local products to penetrate the international market more effectively.

D. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Local Product Development Strategy Relevant to Global Market Needs

In facing increasingly complex competition in the global market, local products are required to transform to be more adaptive to the tastes and preferences of consumers across diverse countries. Consumer preferences in various regions of the world are not uniform but are shaped by specific cultural, social, economic, and lifestyle differences. Therefore, adjusting product characteristics is a very crucial initial step in a competitive local product development strategy. Products that want to be widely accepted in the international market must not only rely on the quality of materials or local advantages alone, but must also be able to adjust the taste, appearance, size, and presentation to suit global consumer expectations (Keskin et al., 2021). Failure to make this adjustment can cause local products to be irrelevant in the eyes of the international market, even though internally the product has high value.

In addition to adjusting characteristics, innovation strategies in terms of design, packaging, and function also play an important role in building a positive perception of product value in the global market. Design innovation is not only about aesthetics, but also functionality that supports comfort, safety, and ease of use by consumers from different cultural backgrounds. Packaging, for example, is not only a physical protector of the product, but also a visual communication tool that conveys quality, brand value, and emotional appeal that can shape consumer perceptions of the product. In the context of a highly competitive global market, attractive and innovative packaging can be a significant differentiator among similar products. Meanwhile, functional innovations that add practical utility to a product are also highly valued by global consumers who tend to be rational and oriented towards efficiency and usefulness.

Efforts to build competitiveness are also inseparable from the importance of product differentiation which is able to create a strong identity that is easily recognized by the global market. This differentiation does not only come from the physical elements of the product but also from the values carried by the product, such as cultural values, the uniqueness of the story behind the production process, to the producer's commitment to quality and production ethics (Tomo et al., 2022). Local products that have clear differentiation will more easily occupy their position in the minds of global consumers so that they are not easily replaced by other products that have similar functions. In market conditions that are full of substitutes and alternatives, the strength of product identity is key so that consumers have a strong reason to choose and remain loyal to local products.

To ensure that the entire local product development process is relevant to the dynamics and needs of the global market, international market research is a strategic step that cannot be ignored. This research provides an in-depth understanding of global consumer behavior, industry trends, competition maps, and potential market segmentation that can be entered. Through market research, local producers can obtain information about product features that are most valued by consumers in a particular country, effective distribution channels, and targeted communication strategies. Without strong research, product development decisions will be based solely on assumptions and speculations that carry a high risk of failure when the product is launched into the overseas market. With targeted and systematic research, local business actors will have a solid foundation in designing products that not only meet global standards but also suit the tastes and values of international consumers.

Furthermore, in recent years, sustainability and environmental friendliness have become increasingly important added values in the development of products aimed at the global market. Consumers in various countries, especially in Europe, North America, and parts of Asia, are increasingly paying attention to the social and ecological impacts of the products they consume. Therefore, local products that integrate sustainability principles into their production processes, such as the use of natural materials, minimal waste, and empowerment of local communities, will have a higher bargaining position in the global market. This approach not only provides added value functionally but also creates emotional and moral values that make consumers feel they have made a positive contribution when purchasing the product. Thus, sustainability is no longer just an ethical issue or additional discourse but has become a strategic element that must be integrated into the entire product development process to increase competitiveness sustainably.

A local product development strategy that is relevant to the needs of the global market requires a strong synergy between creativity, research, and sensitivity to international dynamics. Local products must move beyond their local boundaries, without losing their identity and authentic value, but remain flexible and responsive to changes in the global market. Within this framework, optimizing product development is an important step that not only aims to penetrate the global market in the short term but also build a long-term presence that is able to adapt to new challenges and opportunities in the era of free trade and global digitalization.

2. Competitive and Adaptive Pricing to International Markets

In the process of international market penetration, pricing is one of the crucial aspects that determines the success of local products in competing effectively with other global products. The price set not only functions as a transaction tool but also as a reflection of the product's position in the market and the overall business strategy. In this context, the underlying cost structure of local products needs to be carefully compared with competing products from other countries. Local products often face the challenge of higher production costs due to limited production scale, suboptimal supporting infrastructure, and dependence on imported raw materials. Meanwhile,

products from developed or industrialized countries have high production efficiency thanks to sophisticated manufacturing systems and solid supply chain integration. This inequality requires local products to be very selective and strategic in determining prices so as not to lose competitiveness in the global market.

Efforts to set competitive prices cannot be done uniformly across the market but must be adjusted to the characteristics of the targeted segment in each country. Consumers from the lower middle class will be very sensitive to price, while premium consumers pay more attention to the value and exclusivity of the product (Kopalle et al., 2023). Therefore, the pricing adjustment strategy needs to consider purchasing power, consumption patterns, and the value given by consumers to the products offered. Local products can take advantage of price flexibility by targeting certain markets that have a tendency towards cultural quality or authentic values, which can be used to justify slightly higher prices. This strategy requires a deep understanding of the target market segment so that pricing is not only seen from the cost aspect but also from the perception of value and economic feasibility in the marketing area.

In the export process, another challenge that often disrupts price stability is exchange rate fluctuations. Exchange rate instability can directly affect the profit margins of local business actors, especially when there is a depreciation of the foreign currency that is the benchmark for international trade transactions. This makes the price of local products appear more expensive in the eyes of foreign buyers, or conversely, causes a decrease in income if business actors maintain selling prices to maintain competitiveness. Therefore, business actors must have a mitigation strategy for exchange rate risk, either through futures contracts, diversification of export destination markets, or periodic adjustments to price policies based on exchange rate developments. Resilience to these fluctuations is one indicator of the professionalism and readiness of local products to enter the highly dynamic global market.

Furthermore, consumer perceptions of price also play an important role in influencing purchasing decisions in the international market. Price is not only seen as a number, but also as a representation of quality, exclusivity, and trust in the product. Foreign consumers, especially those from developed countries, often use price as a reference to assess whether a product is worth consuming or not (Dangi et al., 2021). Local products that are positioned too cheaply can be considered low-quality products, even though in reality this is not the case. On the other hand, too high a price without the support of quality and a strong brand image can make the product difficult to accept in the market. Therefore, pricing must be balanced between competitiveness and perceived value, taking into account brand positioning, product narrative, and the uniqueness offered as a justification for the price in the eyes of global consumers.

In this context, government support through incentive and subsidy policies plays a strategic role in helping local products set competitive prices in the international market. Production subsidies, export tax cuts, and logistics incentives can reduce the cost pressures faced by business actors, allowing them to set more competitive prices without sacrificing profit margins. Such policies are also a form of

state support in encouraging the growth of local product exports, especially from strategic sectors that have great potential but face high-cost constraints. The existence of this incentive policy not only provides financial benefits but also serves as a positive signal to trading partners and global consumers that local Indonesian products receive full support from the state in terms of market development and expansion.

By considering all these aspects, the pricing of local products for the international market must be carried out carefully and measurably, taking into account internal and external realities that affect competitiveness. It is not enough to simply imitate competitors' prices or follow market standards, but must be based on strategic calculations that include cost structure, macroeconomic conditions, consumer preferences, and policy support. In an era of globalization that is full of uncertainty, flexibility and adaptability in pricing strategies are the main keys for local products to remain relevant, competitive, and sustainable in the global market. An effective pricing strategy can not only increase export volume but also build a strong foundation for the growth of local brands on the international stage.

3. Utilizing Efficient and Integrated Global Distribution Channels

In determining the success of local products in penetrating the international market, the use of efficient and integrated global distribution channels is a fundamental element. In the increasingly complex dynamics of global trade, accessibility is the starting point for successful distribution, where local products must be able to reach consumers in various parts of the world through various channels, both digital and physical. Digital platforms such as international e-commerce, cross-border marketplaces, and social media channels have opened up great opportunities for local products to directly connect with global consumers without having to go through long and expensive conventional distribution channels. On the other hand, physical channels such as export retail, overseas wholesale distribution, or partnerships with importers remain important channels for certain products that require direct experience or special regulations. Integration between digital and physical channels is crucial in ensuring product availability and visibility in a highly competitive global market.

Despite the wide-open opportunities, local products still face major challenges in terms of logistics and infrastructure to ensure that goods can be distributed quickly, safely, and efficiently to the destination country. These obstacles include Indonesia's geographical conditions consisting of thousands of islands, high domestic logistics costs, and the uneven distribution of supporting facilities such as modern ports, export warehouses, and stable shipping routes. When products are to be shipped overseas, administrative issues such as customs regulations, product certification, and export permits are also inhibiting factors that increase distribution costs and time. Local products often lag behind global competitors not because of their lower quality, but because of the slow and inefficient distribution process, which has a direct impact on the trust and satisfaction of foreign consumers. In this context, a breakthrough is

needed in the logistics system that is not only reliable domestically but also connected to the global logistics network that supports trade expansion (Tarihoran et al., 2023).

To overcome these obstacles, collaboration with overseas distribution partners is an important strategy in expanding market reach and optimizing existing distribution channels. Distribution partners can be export agents, regional distributors, or multinational logistics companies that have the infrastructure and experience to manage cross-border shipping. By working together strategically, local products can leverage their partners' networks and knowledge in accessing previously difficult-to-reach markets, avoiding local trade barriers, and adapting distribution methods that suit local consumer characteristics. This partnership also opens up opportunities to develop a long-term contract-based distribution system that can guarantee the sustainability of supply and the presence of products in the global market, so that local products do not only appear occasionally but are able to be present consistently in the international supply chain.

Supply chain optimization is a further step that is no less important in supporting the smooth distribution of local products to the global market. A responsive and adaptive supply chain allows producers to adjust production and distribution based on fluctuating demand, avoiding excess stock or product shortages that can harm the image and trust of consumers (Unhelkar et al., 2022). The integration of information technology into the supply chain system, such as the use of real-time shipment tracking systems, data-based demand analytics, and automation in the ordering and packaging process, can accelerate the distribution process and improve operational efficiency. When supply chains are managed strategically and data-driven, manufacturers have the advantage of responding to market needs promptly and at lower costs, allowing local products to compete on speed and reliability of supply with established global brands.

In the context of highly dynamic and unpredictable global trade, stock management, and delivery strategies must also be carefully designed to avoid stockpiling of goods in overseas warehouses or shortages when demand suddenly increases. Adaptive stock management requires cross-system coordination, from production planning, and distribution, to retail sales in the destination country. Local producers need to determine strategic storage points such as regional distribution centers, choose logistics partners that have speed and wide reach, and design a stock rotation system that prevents product expiration, damage, or obsolescence. When the stock management system runs in an integrated manner with the delivery system, the distribution process becomes more agile and able to respond to demand dynamics quickly, including in emergency conditions or seasonal demand spikes that often occur in the global market.

With all the challenges and complexities that accompany it, the use of efficient and integrated global distribution channels is the main foundation in encouraging local products to survive and thrive in the international market. Success in distribution lies not only in the delivery of goods, but in the ability to build a sustainable, responsive, and collaborative system that supports the long-term existence of local

products. Thus, a smart and adaptive distribution strategy will be an important bridge for local products not only to reach the hands of global consumers, but also to grow into a brand that is known, appreciated, and chosen amidst very tight global competition.

4. Improving Promotional Strategies to Build Local Product Image Globally

To strengthen the position of local products in the international market, promotional strategies play a vital role in building a strong, authentic, and relevant brand image in the eyes of global consumers. During increasingly fierce competition, it is not enough to rely on product quality, but also requires a communication approach that is able to convey the value and superiority of the product effectively to international audiences. One of the main challenges in this regard is how to compose promotional messages that are able to cross cultural boundaries without losing the core meaning and local uniqueness. The messages used must be carefully designed so as not to collide with the norms, symbols, or values adopted by the community in the destination country. Adjusting language, symbols, communication tone, and the choice of local influencers are important elements so that promotions can be emotionally accepted by consumers, build strong connections, and do not cause resistance due to errors in delivering cross-cultural messages.

Along with the ever-growing digital transformation, digital media has become the main arena in global promotional strategies. The use of platforms such as social media, interactive websites, international marketplaces, and cross-country communication applications provides great opportunities for local products to build a consistent, broad, and dynamic presence (McCarthy et al., 2022). Through digital media, producers can reach consumers directly without going through intermediaries, while also obtaining real-time consumer responses and behavioral data. Promotion strategies carried out through digital media also allow for more precise segmentation, content customization based on geographic location, and the use of visual and interactive technologies that increase consumer engagement. In this context, consistency of visual identity, cohesive messaging, and speed in responding to trends is key so that local products are not only present in the global digital space but also able to compete with big brands that are already established internationally.

However, a digital presence will not be fully effective if it is not accompanied by the power of authentic storytelling. Narratives about the origins of a product and the local cultural values that accompany it are important assets in forming differentiation and emotional closeness with global consumers. Many international consumers, especially in the premium market, are looking for more than just a product; they are looking for experience, meaning, and value from what they consume. Therefore, telling the process of making a product, the story of the local community involved, and the cultural philosophy behind the product is a strategy that can elevate the product's image more deeply and memorably. This narrative not only increases appeal, but also strengthens the perception of authenticity, social commitment, and sustainability carried by local products. When consumers feel

emotionally connected to the story behind a product, they are more likely to build loyalty and spread the story organically through their social media.

Visual communication and narratives used in promotions also need to be designed with a strategic approach to strengthen the overall appeal of the product. The use of visual elements such as color, symbols, typography, and design layouts must be able to reflect local identity while being universally accepted (Ji & Lin, 2022). Visuals that are too local without global context can confuse foreign audiences, while visuals that are too generic can take away from the uniqueness of the product. Therefore, it is important to create harmony between local visuals and global tastes through a modern, minimalist design approach that still reflects cultural uniqueness. On the other hand, narrative communication used in promotional materials, whether in the form of text, video, or audio, must be able to convey the main message concisely, emotionally, and relevant to the lifestyle of consumers in the destination country. Consistency between visuals and narratives is the foundation for creating a complete, professional, and easily recognizable brand experience across channels.

To achieve maximum effectiveness, local product promotion strategies in the global market need to be supported by integrated campaigns between online and offline channels. Online promotions can reach a wide, fast, and efficient audience, while offline promotions still have the power to build direct interactions, create real experiences, and reach communities that are not yet fully digital. Integrated campaigns allow for synergy between digital presence and physical activities such as international exhibitions, pop-up stores, or collaboration with foreign trade partners. In this scheme, each channel has a specific but complementary role, so that the message received by consumers is complete and repeated in various forms. In addition, this integration strengthens product credibility, demonstrates professionalism, and provides confidence to global consumers that local products are managed seriously and are long-term oriented.

Improving promotional strategies is a strategic investment that determines the success of local products in building a strong position in the international market. By aligning messages, utilizing digital power, building strong narratives, managing visual communication appropriately, and integrating campaigns across various channels, local products not only have the opportunity to be known globally, but are also able to form a competitive, authentic, and highly competitive image. In the midst of a global landscape that is constantly changing and filled with various brands from all over the world, only local products that have adaptive promotional strategies and touch the emotional meaning of consumers will survive and grow to become part of the recognized global brand ecosystem.

E. CONCLUSION

Optimizing the marketing mix plays a very important role in increasing the competitiveness of local products in the global market. Product development strategies that adapt to the needs and preferences of international consumers are the main foundation for creating relevant and in-demand products. Innovation in design,

function, and packaging, strong product differentiation, and the use of cultural values and sustainability are crucial elements in creating a product identity that is able to compete internationally. Furthermore, competitive and adaptive pricing to global market dynamics is also a strategic instrument to balance product value and international consumer perceptions, taking into account the challenges of production costs, currency fluctuations, and fiscal policy support. In addition, efficient and integrated distribution channels allow local products to reach the global market widely and sustainably, where cooperation with distribution partners, utilization of logistics technology, and responsive supply chain management are important elements. Effective promotion has also proven to be a determining factor in building a product image globally. Adjusting messages to the consumer's cultural background, utilizing digital media, and developing narratives that highlight local values are key strategies to strengthen the position of local products in the minds of international consumers. By uniting all elements of the marketing mix synergistically and with a long-term orientation, local Indonesian products have a great opportunity to not only be present in the global market but also to become part of the competitive and dynamic world trade map.

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