

A Malaysia Branding: Rise of Reen Cookies

Authors: Nurnaddia Nordin, Nurhaiza Nordin, Siti Zamanira Mat Zaib, Nur Ilyana Amiira Nordin

Prologue

At the heart of this story is Nurin Nazifa Binti Mohd Jais, a young entrepreneur who founded Reen Cookies with the early support of her mother. When she first started baking, her mother gave her full support. Since the age of 10, Nurin has been fascinated by her mother's expertise in baking, where she skillfully mixes various ingredients to create delicious confectionery for the family. From there, Nurin's interest in baking began to be triggered.

Understanding the importance of precision and patience in baking, Nurin's mother took the time to teach her skills to her daughter. She taught Nurin that baking well takes more than just following instructions; it also involves skill in using baking tools, precise textures, and, most importantly, incorporating compassion in every piece of work. Under the careful guidance of her mother, Nurin honed her skills with close supervision.

At 18, Nurin successfully pursued her studies at a matriculation college. With an entrepreneurial mindset, Nurin decided to start a small business. Unlike her friends, who chose a part-time job, Nurin chose to expand her interest in baking. With limited space and few baking utensils, Nurin made simple cookies and cakes and sold them to friends and lecturers alike. That was the first step towards establishing Reen Cookies, proving that even the slightest ambition can become a reality. A year in matriculation was passed with exemplary academic achievement and success in the cake and biscuit business.

A side business known as Reen Cookies turned into a full-time job at the age of 19, where he chose to pursue her studies at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan, in Bachelor of Entrepreneurship 2U2i. 2 years at UMK allowed Nurin to gain knowledge to become an entrepreneur and be practiced in the last two years of study. Balancing the growing demands of business with her studies, she often worked late at night and early in the morning. The biscuits, produced with love and meticulousness, began attracting people outside her closest friends. Each cookie became a symbol of her determination, her desire to succeed, and her dedication to using her skills to bring joy to others.

Reen Cookies reflect what can be achieved through passion, hard work, and a little creativity. Reen Cookies has grown into a well-known local brand from a humble rustic kitchen.

THE AUTHORS

Nurnaddia Nordin, Nurhaiza Nordin and Siti Zamanira Mat Zaib are based at the Faculty of Entrepreneurship and Business, Universiti Malaysia Kelantan, Malaysia. Nur Ilyana Amiira Nordin is based at the Faculty of Technology Management and Technopreneurship, Universiti Teknikal Melaka, Malaysia.

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Disclaimer

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Background

Established on 8 December 2018 in Kampung Pagar Ubi, Tepoh, Terengganu, Reen Cookies grew out of Nurin's passion for baking, which her mother supported since childhood. Starting as a small venture while in matriculation college and then at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan (UMK), Nurin has consistently balanced her academic interests with her growing interest in baking and late nights spent preparing orders to hone their baking skills and build loyal customers.

To make the most of her free time, Nurin turned her passion for combustion into a business in 2018, the year she started her university studies. News of her high-quality dessert quickly spread, and what started as a small experiment multiplied. Nurin gave her business name Reen Cookies, symbolising her entrepreneurial spirit and personal commitment. She started by taking orders from neighbors, friends, and relatives and often worked late into the night to meet demand. Nurin continued to grow her business despite the demands of her studies.

Realizing the potential in the deliciousness of cakes and biscuits she produced, Nurin chose to venture into sales. What started as a modest venture soon gained momentum as news spread about the incredible appeal of its cakes and cookies, which attracted more and more orders from enthusiastic customers. Driven by her commitment and entrepreneurial spirit, Nurin branded her new venture as Reen Cookies, a name taken from her character as a sign of her commitment.

She started by fulfilling orders from friends, family, and loyal neighbors, often working late into the night to ensure that each batch was produced perfectly. Despite the challenging academic demands, Nurin remains determined to support and develop her young endeavors. Through assertiveness, creative innovation, and love for baking, Nurin transformed Reen Cookies from a small venture into a thriving business, demonstrating how vital passion and perseverance are in achieving entrepreneurial success.

Nurin implemented several proactive steps to increase sales. She uses social media to promote her cakes and cookies, uploading attractive photos and customer testimonials that have attracted new followers. In addition, she began offering special orders for occasions and periodic promotions, which increased her profile in the local community. Understanding the importance of branding, Nurin invests in attractive packaging and limited-edition promotional materials to ensure that Reen Cookies are recognizable by their taste and appearance.

Her business ventures did not stop there. By forming partnerships with local cafes and other companies and supplying cakes and biscuits to complement their products, Nurin has expanded its customer base. She also actively participates in pop-up events and local markets, allowing people to taste Reen Cookies for themselves. Nurin's reputation grew with each sale, and her side projects, supported by her community and perseverance, grew into a successful company. Nurin developed Reen Cookies into an effective business by leveraging an unwavering passion for baking, creative innovation, and high diligence. Her actions prove the importance of intensity, perseverance, and smart planning in achieving success as an entrepreneur.

With this aspiration, Reen Cookies continues to grow.

“The beauty of being an entrepreneur is surrendering 100% to Allah while working relentlessly to achieve our dreams. It involves living the journey confidently and determined, knowing that success is ultimately in God's hands.”

“This perspective inspires us at Reen Cookies to give our best, face challenges with resilience, and remain humble. By leaving the results to God, we find peace in knowing that our efforts are guided by Divine wisdom, allowing us to pursue our dreams in baking with sincerity and purpose.”

Growth and Challenges

During the festive season in Malaysia, the demand for cakes and biscuits has increased significantly. Festivals such as Hari Raya Aidilfitri, Chinese New Year, Deepavali, and Christmas usually increase the consumption of different types of confectionery. The event is celebrated with social and religious gatherings where families and communities gather, often exchanging traditional dishes and confectionery. The demand for cakes and biscuits during this festive season is driven by the cultural practice of giving and sharing food with loved ones and the tradition of serving food to visiting guests. Many families and businesses prepare or purchase different types of cakes and biscuits to serve to guests, strengthening social bonds and creating a festive atmosphere.

Understanding and fulfilling these demands requires careful planning and organization for businesses like Reen Cookies. That includes predicting an increase in orders, adjusting production schedules, and possibly introducing unique holiday-themed products to cater to customers' tastes celebrating the event. This increase in demand opens up opportunities for businesses to expand their market reach and take advantage of the festive spirit that permeates Malaysian culture during these times.

As the popularity of Reen Cookies increased, Nurin thought about strengthening the Reen Cookies brand. Leveraging the broad reach of social media platforms such as Instagram and TikTok is important when Nurin creates engaging content through captivating photos and enticing content, thus attracting customers.

Nurin's unwavering commitment to innovation and quality is the main thing that sets Reen Cookies apart in a highly competitive market. She is always ahead of the curve by experimenting with flavours and recipes and regularly adapts to customers' changing tastes. Partnerships with local cafes and involvement in food events are the cornerstone of a strategy that increases brand awareness and expands market penetration, making Reen Cookies a unique and sought-after brand.

With the advent of social media, the Reen Cookies brand is becoming more and more popular. More than 20 new customers come in monthly due to social media advertising. Nurin had to increase production to meet the growing demand. The biggest challenge for her was finding ways to maximize her cookware and increase productivity without sacrificing quality. Due to the volatile cost of materials, it has become her daily struggle to stay within the budget and maintain a supply of high-quality materials. Nurin realizes that maintaining the high standards of its cakes and biscuits has a loyal clientele.

Nurin uses social media platforms such as Instagram and TikTok as learning and skill development tools, apart from promotional tools, to stay competitive. This online community proved invaluable as it helped improve her cooking techniques according to current market trends and customer feedback. Nurin also creates strong community relationships through regular customer interactions, such as surveys for new flavor recommendations and behind-the-scenes looks at its baking process. It builds ongoing customer loyalty and excitement towards new product launches.

Hiring and retaining quality staff is essential to maintaining Reen Cookies' high standards. A total of 4 employees work at Reen Cookies, where these employees are among the graduates from vocational colleges who have the skills and knowledge to produce high-quality cakes and cookies. By creating a collaborative and supportive working environment, she encourages her staff to continue to produce quality cakes and biscuits while enhancing the brand reputation of Reen Cookies.

Developing the strategic partnership is essential to Reen Cookies' expansion plan. Collaborations with well-known cafes such as Coffee Muda and involvement in regional culinary festivals increase sales while providing wider brand visibility to various consumer segments. By building mutually beneficial relationships within the local culinary community, the initiative expands market access and lays the foundation for future cooperation and economic opportunities.

Nurin outlined her advice to potential business owners based on her experience overcoming obstacles and seizing opportunities. She emphasized the importance of proactive decision-making, appreciated the value of starting with available resources, and emphasized the need to be open to learning from mistakes. Nurin encourages ambitious business owners to embrace the dynamic nature of their industry and see failure as an opportunity for personal growth rather than an obstacle to success. Her view that continuous effort and a desire to improve are the keys to achieving long-term entrepreneurial success supported by her concept of combining passion with perseverance.

Nurin faces and overcomes various challenges in managing the complexities of doing business, such as adapting to changing material costs and increasing production without sacrificing product quality. Its strategy involves careful planning, building strong supplier relationships, and establishing strict quality control procedures. Nurin ensures that Reen Cookies is always responsive to market dynamics and consumer expectations by aggressively seeking and using customer feedback through surveys, online reviews, and interactions on social media. It allows Nurin to continue to improve its Reen Cookies offering and stay ahead of competitors.

In an effort to achieve sustainable growth and market dominance, Nurin's entrepreneurial journey with Reen Cookies demonstrates resilience, creativity, and an unwavering commitment to excellence through a holistic approach that combines skills development, customer-centric innovation, and strategic collaboration. In the fast-moving confectionery manufacturing sector, Reen Cookies has the potential to continue to grow and compete effectively in the future. Nurin ensures that her company survives and thrives in a competitive industry by adopting innovation, strategic planning, and a customer-centric mentality.

Business Performance

Reen Cookies now generates around RM5000 in net monthly revenue, driven entirely by successful collaborations such as with Coffee Muda. Reen Cookies has expanded its sales of Cakes and biscuits to Kelantan, Selangor, and Pahang to increase revenue. Its flexible strategy in the face of market dynamics, coupled with its unwavering commitment to maintaining superior product standards, has attracted many new customers and formed a loyal customer base that guarantees a stable revenue stream.

By 2024, Reen Cookies renowned throughout Terengganu for its delicious cookies and the inspiring story of its founder, Nurin Nazifa Binti Mohd Jais. Nurin is determined to take Reen Cookies to new heights when she thinks about her future. Now that she has built a loyal customer base in Terengganu, she aims to take her brand across the country. However, growing her company meant facing new challenges, especially in branding and production. Nurin understands that improving revenue alone will not make Reen Cookies a widely recognized brand; instead, she must strengthen her brand identity and build her company as one of Malaysia's leading local confectionery producers.

Getting a machine is one of the initial steps in improving production efficiency. Although manual production gives a personal touch to each blend, Nurin realizes that it limits its ability to meet the growing demand. She can significantly increase productivity without sacrificing the quality that her buyers expect by automating several processes, such as mixing, baking, and packaging. It increases productivity and reduces labor costs, allowing it to expand its product range and reinvest in the company.

Still, Nurin knows that branding must be a big part of this development to succeed on a larger scale. The goal is to improve the visual identity of Reen Cookies. For starters, she will redesign the logo, use professional packaging, and give a consistent message to her business. She is considering innovative packaging options that will appeal to eco-friendly customers while maintaining the freshness and quality of her cookies throughout delivery, recognizing the importance of packaging in providing a memorable customer experience. Nurin is determined to implement eco-friendly strategies in its packaging by using biodegradable materials and reducing waste wherever it can, which aligns with the increased emphasis on sustainability.

Nurin also focuses on increasing brand awareness while streamlining the visual design of her business. She intends to use strategic partnerships and influencer marketing to enter new markets. Partnering with well-known food bloggers and regional influencers on social media such as Instagram and TikTok will help Reen Cookies become more well-known and reach a wider audience outside Terengganu. Nurin wants to reach a broader audience that values quality and authenticity in their purchases by telling the brand's story and maintaining its core principles through engaging content.

Nurin also hopes to improve her business image by participating in culinary competitions and exhibitions. She can place Reen Cookies among the leading brands in the confectionery industry and reach a wider audience by showcasing products at national events. Her motivation to continue

pushing the boundaries of what Reen Cookies can do is driven by her desire to be nationally recognised.

Nurin has a vision for Reen Cookies that goes beyond increasing production and streamlining branding, including an emphasis on customer interaction. She intends to launch a subscription service allowing loyal customers to receive monthly delivery of carefully selected boxes of cookies directly to their homes. By creating a sense of exclusivity towards its products, this approach improves customer interaction and encourages repeat business.

With all these strategies in place, Nurin has never wavered from her commitment to sustainability, community, and business success. She still sees entrepreneurship as a learning and development path, embracing challenges as improvement opportunities. Nurin is committed to sticking to the values that have shaped her company since its inception, as Reen Cookies became a nationally recognized brand.

Nurin is well-positioned to establish Reen Cookies as a local brand in Malaysia's cake and biscuit industry with its vision of automation, innovative packaging, and thoughtful branding. She inspires new business owners as she strives to leave her mark, demonstrating that the biggest goals can be achieved with hard work, strategy, and vision.

Epilogue

Because of the passion, diligence, and dedication to quality shown by Nurin Nazifa Binti Mohd Jais, Reen Cookies has grown from a small experiment in the kitchen to a fast-growing local brand. Driven by her mother's entrepreneurial spirit and teachings, Nurin has overcome many obstacles to set up Reen Cookies for greater success. After six years of establishment, Reen Cookies has managed to remain in the market and is known not only in Terengganu but throughout Malaysia, which shows that the goal of establishing Reen Cookies as a leader in the cake and biscuit industry in Malaysia has been successful. The knowledge gained during the two years of study at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan in the Bachelor's Degree in Entrepreneurship 2U2i, has skills without knowledge that will not guarantee success of Reen Cookies business. She is serious about achieving this by embracing sustainability, streamlining branding, and investing in automation. Nurin's story illustrates how dreams, perseverance, and creativity can transform a small company into a nationally recognized brand.