

Addressing Market Saturation and Competition in Digital Freelancing

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ABSTRACT:- The advent of digital freelancing platforms has significantly altered global work dynamics, fuelled by technological progress and shifting worker preferences. This research focuses on Sribu.com, a leading Indonesian digital freelancing platform experiencing intense market saturation and competition. It explores strategic challenges and opportunities within this saturated market to find sustainable solutions that enhance platform competitiveness.

Exploratory work began by reviewing the theoretical frameworks of digital marketplaces, concentrating on supply-demand dynamics, competition theory, and platform economics. This involved a comprehensive literature review, data analytics, and qualitative analysis of platform-specific metrics, such as freelancer engagement, client retention, and service diversification, to understand the complexities of operating in a competitive digital freelancing environment.

An in-depth analysis of the current market conditions at Sribu.com revealed key issues like freelancer supply, job completion rates, and client engagement trends. The research examined the impact of market saturation on freelancers competition and clients retention, testing various hypotheses through data collection, metrics, and analysis, which highlighted potential areas for strategic improvement.

The findings advocate for strategic initiatives aimed at mitigating market saturation effects and bolstering the competitive edge of freelancers and the platform. Proposed measures include enhancing freelancer vetting processes, improving client-freelancer matching algorithms, and introducing innovative service offerings. The research not only contributes to academic discussions on digital freelancing but also provides actionable insights for platform operators and policymakers aimed at fostering the growth of digital freelancing ecosystems.

Keywords: Digital Freelancing, Market Saturation, Platform Economics, Strategic Initiatives, Data Analytics, Freelancer Competition, Client Retention

I. INTRODUCTION

Digital freelancing has markedly transformed the global labour market by introducing flexible and diverse work opportunities across various sectors. This transformation is propelled by significant factors such as technological advancements, the global impact of COVID-19, and shifting work preferences, especially among younger generations like Gen Z. Platforms such as Upwork and Fiverr have revolutionized the way businesses connect with freelancers, effectively altering traditional employment dynamics. The World Economic Forum (2020) forecasts that the gig economy is set to expand by 17% by 2025, significantly influencing global labour markets. Upwork's 2023 report indicates it hosts over 12 million freelancers who collectively earned upwards of \$3.8 billion in fields like web development, creative design, and customer support. Fiverr, on the other hand, showcases a substantial growth trajectory with a 25% annual increase in new freelancer registrations, serving over 4 million active buyers.

The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the shift towards digital freelancing as businesses adapted to lockdowns and remote work setups. Platforms like Fiverr experienced significant increases in both freelancers and clients, underlining a broader trend where remote work and freelancing became crucial for business continuity. The International Labour Organization (2021) noted a 20% increase in global freelance workers during the pandemic, highlighting the growing reliance on digital platforms.



Figure 1: Online Global Labour Supply and Demand (ILO, 2021)

The Upwork Research Institute's 2023 Freelance Forward survey illustrates that 52% of Gen Zers and 44% of Millennials engaged in freelance work in 2023, compared to lower percentages among older generations. This indicates a strong inclination towards freelancing among younger cohorts, driven by their preference for flexibility and independence. Upwork's Freelance Forward survey, a representative study of 3,000 professionals, found freelancers contributed approximately \$1.27 trillion in annual earnings to the U.S. economy in 2023. In a year where prolonged economic uncertainty has converged with the rise of new technologies such as generative AI, record numbers of the U.S. workforce are embracing skilled freelancing as an alternative to traditional career pathways (Upwork, 2023).

The phenomenon of market saturation on Sribu.com manifests in several critical ways. Firstly, the market is characterized by an excess supply where freelancers outnumber available projects, leading many to face sporadic work and unstable income. This situation is highlighted in the works of Kotler and Keller (2016), who discuss how oversupply in a market can lead to significant challenges in maintaining a consistent workflow. Furthermore, the marketplace struggles with decreased differentiation, as noted by Porter (1985), where a surplus of freelancers offering similar services dilutes individual uniqueness, forcing many to compete aggressively on prices rather than quality or innovation. On the supply side, the sheer number of freelancers necessitates that individuals either specialize in niche areas or broaden their skill sets to maintain a competitive edge, a strategy echoed in the works of Grant (1991). On the demand side, the growth in project availability does not keep pace with the increasing freelancer population, leading to demand stagnation. This imbalance, if left unchecked, could lead to a stagnant or even declining market for new and existing freelancers on Sribu.com.

Should these issues remain unaddressed, the implications: For freelancers include reduced earnings and diminished job satisfaction, which could accelerate turnover and prevent skilled professionals from joining or staying on the platform. For clients, the unpredictability in service quality might discourage ongoing engagement with Sribu.com, driving them towards competitors with more reliable freelancer pools. For Sribu.com itself, failing to tackle these fundamental challenges could undermine the platform's strategic growth objectives and long-term viability. The platform risks losing its competitive edge and market share, diminishing its brand as a top-tier freelancing platform in Indonesia.

Stakeholders Involved

In Sribu.com's Market Saturation and Competition are Freelancers whose are the primary service providers on Sribu.com. Their success and satisfaction are crucial for the platform's reputation and growth. Issues like market saturation directly affect their earnings, job satisfaction, and retention rates. High competition can lead to lower income and demotivation, which may cause talented freelancers to leave the platform. Next, Clients are the demand drivers on Sribu.com, seeking various services such as graphic design and digital marketing. Their experience and satisfaction with the platform are vital for continued business and referrals. Market saturation can impact the quality of services they receive, leading to dissatisfaction and potential loss of trust in the platform. The last, Sribu.com as platform is responsible for the strategic direction and operational efficiency of the platform. They need to address market saturation and competition to maintain a balanced ecosystem that supports both freelancers and clients. Effective strategies and innovations are essential to attract and retain high-quality freelancers and clients.

Research Questions

Based on the business issue discussed earlier, the following research questions are defined: What are the factor(s) causing of market saturation and intense competition on Sribu.com?; What strategic initiatives can Sribu.com implement to mitigate the effects of market saturation and enhance competition among freelancers?; What recommendations and priorities should Sribu.com adopt in the first 12 months to effectively address market saturation and competition issues?.

Research Objectives

Moreover, based on the business issue and research questions, the following research objectives are defined: To identify and analyse the most common factor(s) that contribute to market saturation and intense competition on Sribu.com; To propose strategic initiatives that Sribu.com can implement to mitigate the effects of market saturation; To prioritize and recommend specific actions that Sribu.com should adopt within the first 12 months to effectively address market saturation and competition.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Gig Economy and Digital Labour Platforms

The gig economy is characterized by a labour market focused on short-term contracts and freelance work rather than permanent jobs. Platforms like Upwork, Fiverr, and Sribu.com are central to this economy, connecting freelancers globally with clients and facilitating diverse project engagements. According to De Stefano (2015), these platforms enhance labour market efficiency by improving the matching of supply (freelancers) with demand (clients), thereby reducing transaction costs significantly.

Platform Business Models

Digital freelancing platforms operate on business models that create marketplaces where clients and freelancers interact. Revenue streams for these platforms typically include commissions on transactions, membership fees, and payments for additional services like enterprise solutions. Parker, et.al., (2016) describe these as multi-sided markets, which thrive on network effects where the platform's value increases as more users join, enhancing its utility and appeal.

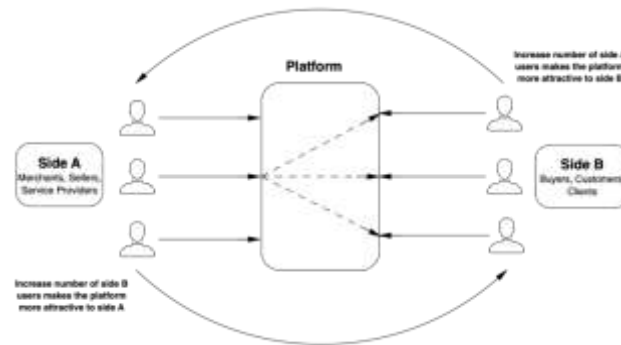


Figure 2: Platform Business Model by Parker et.al. (2016, Adapted)

Supply and Demand in Multi-Sided Platforms

Multi-sided platforms (MSPs) represent a complex type of market where the platform facilitates interactions among various user groups. Fisher (2019) notes that MSPs are not solely driven by price but by the value created through interactions among different user groups. Balancing supply and demand across these groups, while managing network effects, is essential for maintaining a healthy market equilibrium.

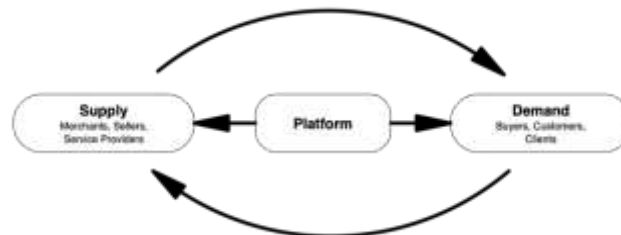


Figure 3: Multi-sided Platforms by Fisher (2019, Adapted)

Market Saturation and Competitive Dynamics

Market saturation in the context of digital freelancing occurs when the number of freelancers outpaces the available projects, leading to intense competition and potentially lower earnings. Porter’s analysis of competitive forces (1979) provides a framework for understanding how the power dynamics between freelancers and clients, threat of new entrants, and the rivalry among existing competitors shape the market.

Excessive competition and product homogeneity, where services become indistinguishable, often lead to price-based competition, diminishing profitability. Differentiation strategies, therefore, become crucial in such saturated markets to help freelancers and platforms maintain a competitive edge.

Innovation and Technology Adoption

Technological innovation is fundamental to the evolution of digital freelancing platforms. The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) by Davis (1989) explain how technological advancements and innovations spread and are adopted in the market. These models highlight the importance of perceived ease of use and usefulness in influencing user adoption rates.

Data Analytics

In *Competing on Analytics: The New Science of Winning*, Thomas Davenport and Jeanne Harris articulate a compelling case for the strategic role of analytics in business decision-making. They argue that businesses can achieve a competitive edge by mastering sophisticated analytics to delve deep into data to uncover actionable insights. According to Davenport and Harris (2007), the power of analytics extends beyond traditional business boundaries, influencing everything from customer service strategies to supply chain management. Their framework suggests that companies excelling in analytics can not only predict trends but also shape them, thus driving industry standards and expectations.

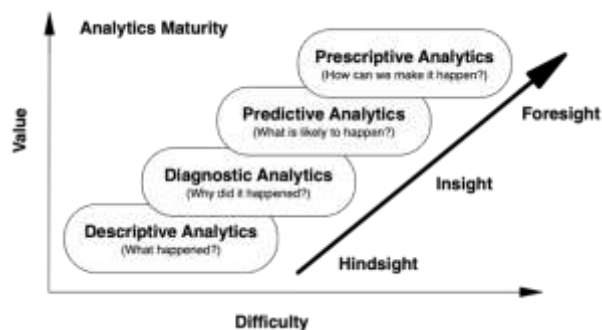


Figure 4: Data Analytics Maturity from Davenport and Harris (2007, Adapted)

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework provided outlines the interrelations between market conditions, data analytics, strategic initiatives, and outcomes for Sribu.com, illustrating how internal strategies and external market factors influence the platform's performance and stakeholder satisfaction. As per research scope and limitation, in this study we only examine to internal market conditions. A breakdown narrative for the conceptual framework:

Internal Market Conditions

The framework is structured around two central inputs: the high number of freelancers and the limited number of client projects, which are both outcomes of market saturation influenced by economic, technological, and regulatory factors. This saturation impacts Sribu.com’s strategic approach in two distinct areas: initiatives targeted at freelancers and those aimed at clients. Numbers of Freelancers: This component acknowledges the competitive environment created by a freelancer base. The strategic initiatives for freelancers are designed to enhance their engagement and service quality on the platform. Numbers of Client Projects: This reflects the challenges in project availability due to intense competition and possibly limited market outreach, driving the need for client-focused strategic initiatives.

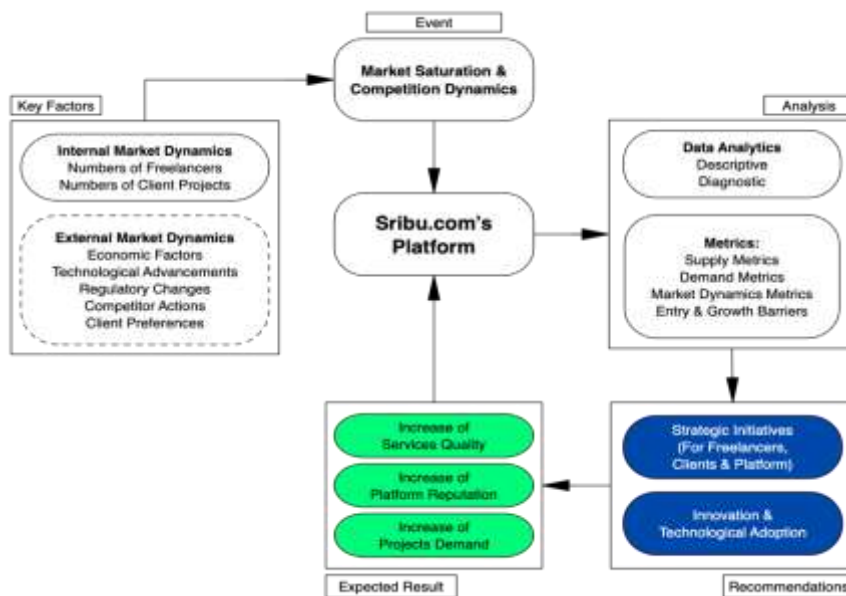


Figure 5: Conceptual Framework

Data Analytic as Strategic Tools

At the heart of the framework is the application of data analytics, encompassing both descriptive and diagnostic forms. Descriptive analytics helps Sribu.com understand what is happening on the platform by summarizing past data and trends, thus providing a clear view of the current market status. Diagnostic analytics goes a step further by analysing the data to understand why certain trends are occurring, which is crucial for addressing issues of market saturation and intense competition. Metrics such as supply, demand, market dynamics, and barriers to entry and growth are crucial for this analysis, offering insights that guide strategic decision-making.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a qualitative research approach utilizing secondary data to deeply explore the market saturation and competitiveness challenges facing Sribu.com, a prominent digital freelancing platform in Indonesia. Qualitative methods are particularly suited for this study as they allow for an in-depth examination of complex market dynamics and strategic interactions within the digital freelancing environment.

Qualitative research focuses on understanding phenomena from a contextual perspective, making it ideal for exploring nuanced market dynamics and evolving industry trends. It provides rich, detailed narratives that can illustrate complex interactions and processes (Creswell, 2013).

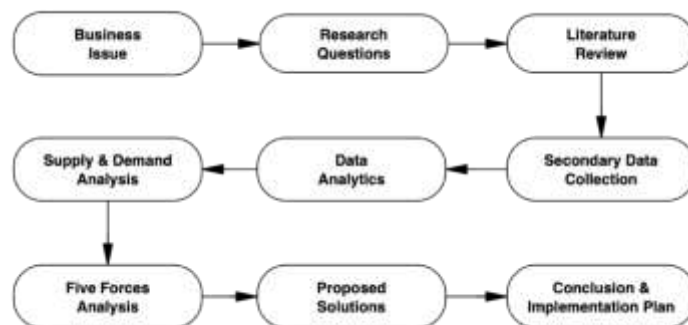


Figure 6: Research Design (Author, 2024)

Use of Secondary Data

Utilizing secondary data enables this research to integrate a wide range of perspectives and findings from existing records from digital platforms. This approach is cost-effective and extensive, allowing for a comprehensive analysis of established data which adds depth to the understanding of the marketplace (Smith, 2008; Largan & Morris, 2019). Examination of Sribu.com’s official site and other related digital platforms was

conducted to gather comprehensive data on user demographics, platform policies, and operational details. For effective data gathering, the Instant Data Scraper software was utilized. This tool allowed for efficient extraction of structured data from the website, ensuring a streamlined and systematic collection process that captured relevant information without manual data entry errors. Post-collection, the data underwent rigorous cleansing and hygiene processes to ensure its usability for analysis. DataTab Calculator and Microsoft Excel were the primary tools used for this purpose. DataTab Calculator facilitated the handling of large datasets, allowing for efficient sorting, filtering, and error correction, while Microsoft Excel provided additional functionalities for data manipulation and preliminary analysis. These steps were crucial to prepare the dataset for further analytical procedures, ensuring the integrity and reliability of the research findings.

Data Analysis Method

The analytical core of this research leverages qualitative data through a comprehensive, structured approach to unearth and interpret the dynamics of the digital freelancing market, with a specific lens on Sribu.com. This analysis incorporates a blend of theoretical frameworks and practical insights, translating complex data into actionable strategies. Descriptive analytics forms the primary phase of our data analysis in this research. This methodology involves collecting and processing raw data from Sribu.com to provide statistics that describe the past behaviour and characteristics of our variables of interest. The process includes compiling data on the number of jobs posted, freelancer engagement levels, and client activity over the research period, mainly from 2012 to 2023.

Supply and Demand Analysis

The examination of supply and demand within Sribu.com involves a detailed exploration of how the platform's resources which are freelancers and project postings align with each other. This section of the methodology addresses the crucial balance between freelancer availability and the demand for their services, which is fundamental to the platform's operational efficiency and market position. Through a meticulous breakdown of the types and quantities of projects versus freelancer skills and availability, this analysis sets out to identify the areas where imbalances might exist, providing a baseline for strategic adjustments. Breakdown of the main analysis are: Supply Analysis: Evaluates the number and diversity of freelancers on Sribu.com, identifying potential oversupply or deficits in specific categories; Demand Analysis: Examines the volume and type of projects available, assessing how well these align with freelancer capabilities and availability; Equilibrium Strategies: Proposes methods by which Sribu.com could balance supply and demand, such as marketing strategies aimed at attracting more clients or offering training to freelancers to enter underserved categories.

Porter's Five Forces Analysis

Porter's Five Forces Analysis is employed here as a strategic tool to delve into the competitive environment of the digital freelancing industry in which Sribu.com operates. This methodological approach is designed to uncover the underlying forces shaping the industry's landscape, from internal competition to external threats. By dissecting these dynamics, the analysis contributes to a deeper understanding of the strategic factors that Sribu.com must navigate to fortify its market presence and operational sustainability. These involving: Competitive Rivalry: Assesses the degree of competition within the digital freelancing market; Threat of New Entrants: Considers how easily new platforms could disrupt the market; Bargaining Power of Suppliers: Looks at the influence freelancers have over terms of engagement; Bargaining Power of Buyers: Analyses how clients can influence pricing and service offerings; Threat of Substitutes: Evaluates the risk posed by alternative solutions to traditional freelancing platforms.

FINDINGS: BUSINESS SOLUTION

Market saturation significantly influences the dynamics of supply and demand within digital freelancing platforms. By evaluating the balance between the number of freelancers (supply) and the available jobs or projects (demand), we can determine the degree of market saturation and its implications.

Table 1: Types of Market Saturation

Market Type	Characteristics	Implications
Saturated Market	Supply of freelancers aligns closely with or slightly exceeds demand.	Enough work to keep many freelancers busy, but high competition may drive down prices.

Over-Saturated Market	Significant excess of supply over demand.	Many freelancers struggle to find consistent work, leading to lower earnings and underemployment.
Under-Saturated Market	More demand than supply, more jobs than freelancers.	Higher earnings potential and less competition per job.

Table 2: Indicators of Market Saturation

Indicator	High Scenario	Low Scenario
Job Completion Rates	High completion rates indicate a balanced or under-saturated market.	Low completion rates suggest an over-saturated market.
Market Entry Dynamics	Low entry barriers and high growth suggest an under-saturated market.	High entry barriers and low growth indicate a saturated or over-saturated market.

To effectively analyse market saturation within the digital freelancing domain of Sribu.com, a comprehensive set of metrics is employed. These metrics provide a structured insight into the supply and demand dynamics, the ease of market entry, and the overall market growth, all of which are crucial for understanding the competitive landscape and operational challenges faced by Sribu.com. The following table consolidates these key various metrics to offer a clear and organized view of the factors influencing market saturation.

Table 3: Metrics to Analyse Market Saturation at Sribu.com

Category	Metric	Description
Supply Metrics	Number of Active Freelancers	Tracks the total number of freelancers available on Sribu.com.
	Growth Rate of Freelancer Registrations	Measures how quickly the freelancer community is expanding.
Demand Metrics	Number of Jobs Posted	Counts the total jobs available on the platform over a specified period.
	Client Re-engagement Rate	Measure the percentage of clients who post jobs multiple times within a certain period.
Market Dynamics Metrics	Freelancer to Job Ratio	A direct comparison of the number of active freelancers to the number of jobs posted.
	Job Completion Rate	The percentage of posted jobs that are completed by freelancers.
Entry and Growth Barriers	Ease of Entry for New Freelancers	Evaluated based on the process and requirements for new freelancers to register and start receiving job offers.
	Market Segment Growth Analysis	Reviews historical data to determine the growth trajectory of different service categories within Sribu.com.

Supply Metrics

To understand the landscape of market saturation on Sribu.com, we first examine the total number of freelancers in each major category. This provides a baseline for analysing the distribution of freelancers and understanding the competitive intensity within each segment. Understanding the growth trends within each category by examining the number of freelancers who joined in different time periods provides insights into how each category has evolved over time. This helps in assessing whether market saturation is increasing and the potential challenges new freelancers face.

Table 4: Total Number of Freelancers per Category

Category	Total Freelancers
Graphic Design & Branding	5,984
Writing & Translation	3,015
Videography, Photography & Audio	1,982
Web & Programming	1,805
Marketing & Ads	1,284
Total	14,070

The data clearly indicates that all major categories on Sribu.com have experienced significant growth in the number of freelancers over the years. This growth is particularly pronounced from 2019 to 2023, suggesting a surge in interest and perceived opportunities in the freelance market. However, the high number of new entrants across all categories also points to increasing competition and potential market saturation. New freelancers face significant challenges in securing jobs, especially in highly saturated categories like Graphic Design & Branding and Writing & Translation. The large influx of freelancers in recent years means that competition for each project is intense, and standing out requires not only skill but also effective marketing and client engagement strategies.

Demand Metrics

The dynamics of market saturation and job completion on Sribu.com, focusing on the distribution of freelancers across different job completion ranges within various service categories. Understanding these distributions is crucial for identifying saturation points and evaluating the competitive landscape of the platform. By analysing the data, we aim to provide insights into the supply and demand balance and the implications for freelancers operating within these categories.

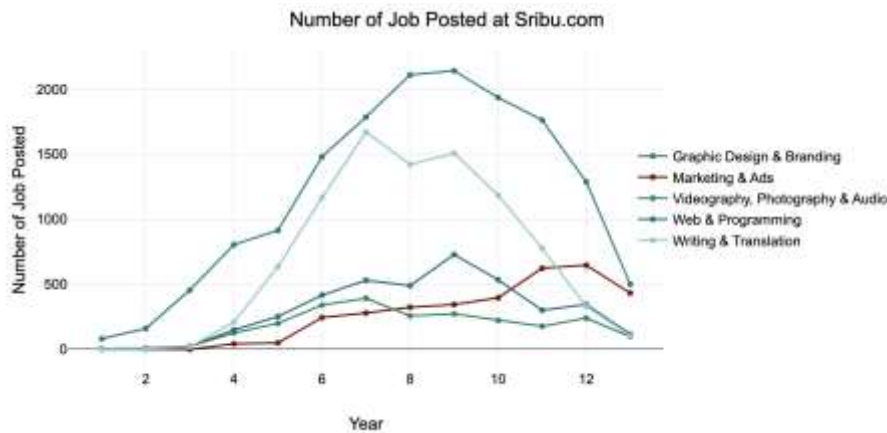


Figure 7: Chart for Number of Job Posted at Sribu.com during 2011-2024

Overall, these trends not only highlight the changing landscape of digital freelancing but also suggest shifting priorities and technological advancements influencing market demand. Such insights are crucial for platform stakeholders to strategize effectively, anticipate market needs, and adjust their service offerings to maintain competitiveness and relevance in a rapidly evolving digital environment.

Furthermore on the Repeat Orders from Client side, the following table illustrates the retention rate of clients on Sribu.com, highlighting the platform's capacity to maintain client engagement over time. Out of the platform's unique client base 19.18% have placed orders in multiple distinct years. This retention metric is vital as it underscores both the platform's success in meeting client needs and the areas where enhancement is needed. The majority of repeat orders by the same clients, have interacted with the platform between 1 to 5 distinct years, accounting for 95.14% of the total repeat client base. This substantial portion indicates a solid foundation of client retention within a short to medium term, suggesting that the platform effectively meets recurring client needs during this period. On the other hand, a smaller segment 4.86% of repeat clients, have demonstrated long-

term loyalty by engaging with the platform for 6 to 10 years. This indicates a deeper level of satisfaction and dependence on the services offered by Sribu.com.

However, the fact that over 80% of clients do not extend their engagement beyond the initial year poses a significant challenge. It suggests that while Sribu.com is adept at attracting a broad user base, it faces hurdles in fostering sustained relationships that encourage long-term engagement. This aspect highlights the potential strategic focus areas for the platform, particularly in improving customer experience, satisfaction, and tailored service offerings to enhance client retention over time.

Client Retention Dynamics

In analysing the client retention dynamics at Sribu.com, a key focus within the digital freelancing market in Indonesia, it's essential to recognize the competitive advantage that maintaining a loyal customer base offers, particularly in a saturated market. The provided data, spanning from 2012 to 2024, reveals a repeat order rate of 13.57%. This statistic is derived from observing 641 unique clients, among whom 87 have engaged in more than one contest, reflecting a sustained interaction with the platform over time. This repeat engagement rate is a critical indicator, not only of customer satisfaction but also of the perceived ongoing value offered by Sribu.com amidst fierce market competition. In Contest side, modest repeat order rate suggests several strategic imperatives for Sribu.com. Firstly, it underscores the importance of enhancing user experience and customer service to boost client retention rates. A deeper dive into the types of contests and client feedback could illuminate specific areas for improvement, such as the efficiency of the contest process, the quality of submissions, or the responsiveness of customer support. Moreover, the longitudinal data provides a unique opportunity to track changes in client retention over time, potentially correlating these shifts with previous strategic initiatives or external market changes. Such analysis not only aids in pinpointing effective strategies but also helps in understanding the evolving needs and preferences of freelancers and clients in the digital marketplace.

Market Dynamics Metrics

Market dynamics metrics, specifically the freelancer-to-job ratio and job completion rate, are crucial for assessing the health of a digital freelancing platform like Sribu.com. The freelancer-to-job ratio provides a direct comparison of the number of active freelancers to the number of jobs posted, indicating the balance between supply and demand. A high ratio suggests an oversupply of freelancers, leading to intense competition and potential underemployment. Conversely, a balanced or lower ratio indicates healthier market conditions with ample opportunities for freelancers. The job completion rate measures the percentage of posted jobs that are completed by freelancers, reflecting the platform's effectiveness in matching freelancers with suitable projects and ensuring successful project outcomes. High completion rates signify efficient operations and client satisfaction, while low rates highlight potential issues in job matching processes or freelancer reliability.

Job Completion Ranges per Category by Freelancers

Conversely, the presence of 31 freelancers in the "More than 100" jobs category suggests that a small group of top performers dominates the market, securing a substantial share of the available projects. The intermediate ranges (10-50 jobs and 50-100 jobs) have relatively fewer freelancers, indicating that transitioning from a low-activity to a high-activity freelancer is challenging in this saturated market. The high competition in Graphic Design & Branding is indicative of a saturated market, where many freelancers are vying for a limited number of projects, leading to intense competition and potential downward pressure on prices.

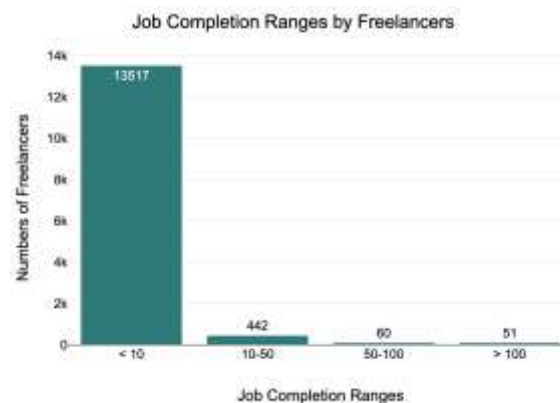


Figure 8: Job Completion Ranges by Freelancers

Comparative Table of Freelancers With Jobs vs. Freelancers With No Jobs

Table 5: Percentage Portion of Freelancers With Jobs and Freelancers With No Jobs

Category	Freelancers With Jobs	Freelancers With No Jobs
Graphic Design & Branding	20.81%	79.19%
Marketing & Ads	14.25%	85.75%
Videography, Photography & Audio	14.13%	85.87%
Web & Programming	24.09%	75.91%
Writing & Translation	37.57%	62.43%
Total	23.29%	76.71%

Across all categories, there are 14,070 freelancers, with 3,276 actively completing jobs and 10,794 not. This results in an overall inactivity rate of 76.71%, indicating high market saturation and intense competition on Sribu.com.

The comparative analysis of freelancers with jobs versus those without jobs reveals high levels of market saturation across all categories on Sribu.com. The majority of freelancers in each category are not securing consistent work, indicating intense competition and significant barriers to entry. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for developing strategies to support freelancers and enhance their success on the platform. This detailed examination sets the stage for further analysis and strategic recommendations to balance the supply-demand equation and foster a thriving freelance marketplace.

By comparing the number of new freelancer registrations with job completions, we can assess the balance between supply (freelancers) and demand (jobs). The graph highlights periods where freelancer registrations significantly outnumber job completions, suggesting potential market saturation. Conversely, periods where job completions keep pace with or exceed registrations indicate a healthy balance between supply and demand.

The data reveals that in certain periods, the influx of new freelancers outpaces the number of jobs completed. This imbalance can lead to market saturation, where there are more freelancers than available jobs, increasing competition and potentially driving down prices.

Jobs Completed Jobs and Freelancer Growth by Year

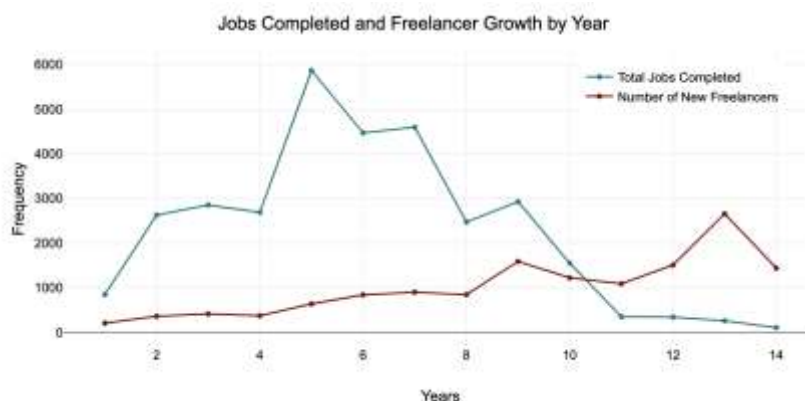


Figure 9: Jobs Completed and Freelancer Growth by Year

The data analysis spanning from 2011 to May 2024 reveals critical insights into the evolving dynamics of freelancer hiring rates on Sribu.com. The cumulative number of freelancers has increased steadily, highlighting a growing influx of new entrants each year. This upward trend in freelancer registrations has significantly impacted the average number of jobs completed per freelancer, particularly affecting those who joined more recently. For instance, freelancers who joined before 2023 have generally completed more jobs on average compared to those who joined in 2023 and onwards. Specifically, freelancers who joined in 2015 had an average of 9.22 jobs completed per person, whereas those who joined in 2023 had an average of only 0.10 jobs completed per freelancer. This stark contrast underscores the competitive pressures faced by newer entrants in a marketplace increasingly saturated with freelancers.

These trends highlight the critical importance of experience and an established presence on Sribu.com. Experienced freelancers, who have been on the platform for several years, benefit from accumulated client trust and a proven track record, which significantly boosts their hiring rates. In contrast, newcomers struggle to gain traction in a competitive environment, often requiring additional support to improve their job acquisition rates. Therefore, strategic initiatives aimed at supporting new entrants, such as mentorship programs and enhanced visibility for experienced freelancers, are essential to maintain a balanced and competitive marketplace on Sribu.com.

Increasing job concentration in lower brackets, where a clear trend is the growing number of freelancers who have completed very few or no jobs at all, especially evident in the 2019-2023 group where a massive 7084 freelancers completed 0 jobs. This trend continues in 2024 with 1410 freelancers not completing any jobs, highlighting the increasing difficulty new freelancers face in securing work due to intense competition and market saturation.

Table 6: Percentage Distribution of Jobs Completed by Freelancers Based on Grouped Years of Join

Joining Year Group	0 Jobs (%)	1-5 Jobs (%)	6-10 Jobs (%)	11-20 Jobs (%)	21-50 Jobs (%)	51-100 Jobs (%)	>100 Jobs (%)
2011-2014	58.44	24.59	5.85	3.78	4.30	1.41	1.63
2015-2018	46.93	36.86	7.17	4.22	3.11	0.93	0.78
2019-2023	87.88	9.48	1.27	0.73	0.47	0.12	0.05
2024*	97.98	1.81	0.14	0.00	0.00	0.07	0.00

In the other side, there are decreasing advancement to higher job ranges: There is a noticeable decrease in freelancers moving into higher job completion brackets over time. For instance, from 2015 to 2018, there were a moderate number of freelancers who managed to complete between 21 to over 100 jobs. However, in 2019-2023, the numbers dramatically dropped, and the trend continues into 2024, where almost no freelancers reach these higher job completion ranges.

There are dominance of zero job completion where the table highlights the increasing dominance of freelancers who have completed zero jobs, especially in the most recent periods. For instance, in 2024, nearly 98% of freelancers had not completed any jobs. It is also describe the decrease in higher job completions, where there’s a clear trend of decreasing participation in higher job completion categories over time. The percentages of freelancers completing more than 50 jobs are diminishing, further illustrating the competitive pressures and saturation in the market. This percentage-based distribution underscores the increasing difficulty for new freelancers to break into the market, highlighting the intense competition and saturation on the platform. It provides quantitative support for the need to implement strategies that help new entrants gain visibility and secure initial projects to foster their growth and sustainability on the platform.

These insights confirm the challenges that come with the platform’s low entry barriers, such as excessive competition and a market too saturated for most freelancers to achieve consistent success, reinforcing the need for strategic adjustments on Sribu.com to support freelancers’ sustainable growth.

Analysis of Freelancer Skill Homogeneity and Market Competition

The analysis focuses on the distribution and competition among freelancers in various skill categories over the years at Sribu.com. The following tables present the absolute number of freelancers in each category per year, based on their year of joining to the Sribu.com platform, and the corresponding percentages, showing the distribution dynamics over time. This table reflects a comprehensive view of the distribution and dynamics of freelancers across different skill categories over the years:

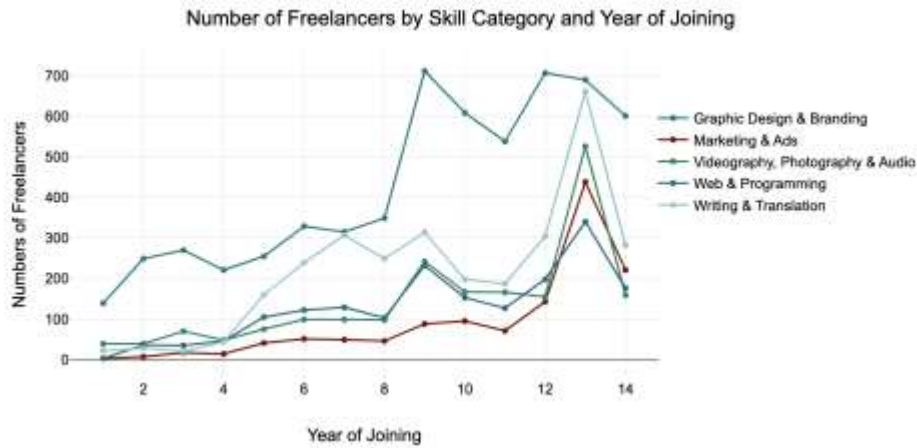


Figure IV.17: Number of Freelancers by Skill Category and Year of Joining

Table 7: Average Trends in Freelancer Skill Categories

Skill Category	Average Trend
Graphic Design & Branding	↓ (Decrease)
Marketing & Ads	↑ (Increase)
Videography, Photography & Audio	↓ (Decrease)
Web & Programming	↓ (Decrease)
Writing & Translation	↑ (Increase)

A general decrease in the dominance of Graphic Design & Branding, Videography, Photography & Audio, and Web & Programming, suggesting a shift towards a more diversified set of skills among freelancers. An increase in Marketing & Ads and Writing & Translation, reflecting the growing importance of digital marketing and content creation in today’s business environment.

Supply and Demand Analysis for Sribu.com

The analysis focus on exploring the dynamics between the number of freelancers (supply) and the available client projects (demand) on the platform. This analysis will help in understanding the underlying causes of market saturation and intense competition that Sribu.com faces:

1. Supply Dynamics: The Influx of Freelancers Sribu.com, like many digital freelancing platforms, has experienced a significant surge in the number of freelancers joining the platform. This influx is primarily driven by the appealing prospect of flexible work arrangements and the potential for freelancers to engage with a global client base. However, the rapid increase in supply has not been met with a proportional increase in demand. This mismatch has significant implications for the economic environment within which these freelancers operate, notably leading to increased competition among them.

2. Demand Dynamics: Stagnation in Client Projects Concurrently, the number of client projects available on Sribu.com has not seen a corresponding rise. The platform's client base growth has been relatively stagnant, a trend that can be attributed to various factors, including economic cycles, market penetration challenges, and competitive pressures from other freelancing platforms. This stagnation in demand, when compared with the fast growing supply of freelancers, creates a precarious market condition where the supply significantly outstrips the demand.

3. Impact on Freelancer Earnings and Employment Stability: The natural consequence of this supply-demand imbalance is a decrease in average earnings per freelancer and a lack of employment stability. With more freelancers compete for fewer projects, many find it increasingly challenging to secure consistent work. This situation is intensify by the bidding system employed by many freelancing platforms, where freelancers often lower their rates to remain competitive.

4. Client Bargaining Power: From the client's perspective, this imbalance enhances their bargaining power. Clients can choose from a wider pool of freelancers and often negotiate lower prices for projects. While

this might seem beneficial for clients in the short term, it may affect the quality of work they receive, as highly skilled freelancers may be reluctant to accept lower-paying projects.

5. Freelancer Differentiation Challenges: One of the most significant challenges highlighted by this imbalance is the difficulty freelancers face in differentiating themselves. With an oversupply of freelancers, those who do not have unique skills or established reputations find it increasingly difficult to stand out. This lack of differentiation further fuels the competitive fire, forcing freelancers to either specialize or find other ways to add value to their services.

Porter's Five Forces Analysis

Focusing on Porter's Five Forces applied to Sribu.com, this section will delve deeply into the dynamics of the digital freelancing marketplace and its impact on Sribu.com. This analysis is crafted to provide a rich narrative that leverages the extensive data provided in the earlier parts, ensuring each force is thoroughly analysed and understood in the context of Sribu.com.

1. Competitive Rivalry within Digital Freelancing: Sribu.com operates in the intensely competitive digital freelancing sector, a marketplace characterized by an abundance of platforms each compete for a significant share of the market. This competitive rivalry is marked not just by the number of competitors but also by the similarity of services offered, which pressures platforms like Sribu.com to innovate continually. The data indicates that several new entrants have gained traction over the last year, capturing market share through aggressive pricing and niche offerings, highlighting the need for Sribu.com to differentiate itself effectively.

2. Analysing the Bargaining Power of Clients: Clients on digital freelancing platforms like Sribu.com wield considerable power. They have a wide range of options to choose from, which empowers them to demand higher quality work at lower prices. This force is particularly potent in the freelancing market due to the low switching costs associated with moving from one platform to another. Client reviews and feedback, as detailed in the data, suggest that job completion timeframe is a significant factor, necessitating Sribu.com to strike a delicate balance between speed of delivery and quality to maintain client loyalty.

3. Understanding the Bargaining Power of Suppliers (Freelancers): Freelancers, the suppliers in this marketplace, also possess substantial bargaining power. They can choose among various platforms to offer their services, each providing different benefits. The analysis of freelancer migration patterns shows a trend where high-skilled freelancers gravitate towards platforms that offer better visibility and higher rates. Sribu.com must, therefore, offer compelling reasons for freelancers to stay, such as superior earnings potential, more significant opportunities, or better support services.

4. The Threat of New Entrants: The digital nature of the freelancing industry significantly lowers the barriers to entry, allowing new platforms to emerge with relative ease. These entrants often bring innovative approaches to matching clients with freelancers, or they might compete on price, which can quickly change the competitive landscape. Sribu.com's challenge is to innovate continuously, not just to retain its market share but to deter new competitors by solidifying its market position as a leader in quality and reliability.

5. Evaluating the Threat of Substitute Services: Substitutes for Sribu.com include not only other freelancing platforms but also in-house hiring by firms and the increasing prevalence of automated tools that can replace some of the services freelancers offer. The trend towards automation and the gig economy's integration into traditional employment models present a significant threat, making it imperative for Sribu.com to offer services that are clearly superior to these substitutes in terms of cost, quality, and scalability.

The competitive dynamics elucidated by Porter's Five Forces analysis highlight several strategic imperatives for Sribu.com. To maintain and enhance its competitive edge, Sribu.com must focus on innovation in service delivery, enhancing user engagement, and maintaining an agile approach to market changes. The data underpins the necessity for strategic adaptations that anticipate market movements and pre-emptively address potential challenges.

Aggregate of Analysis of Sribu.com's

The aggregate analysis of Sribu.com compiles findings from multiple analyses to provide a consolidated view of the platform's operational dynamics and market positioning. By integrating data from supply and demand

assessments alongside competitive analysis, this evaluation highlights the key strengths and areas of vulnerability within Sribu.com’s business model. The aggregation of these insights is essential for understanding how different aspects of the platform interact and impact its overall performance in the competitive digital freelancing marketplace.

From the analysis discussed above we can conclude the key factors contributing to market saturation on Sribu.com are:

1. **Low Barriers to Entry:** The ease of entry into the freelancing market, which attracts numerous entrants seeking to capitalize on market opportunities.
2. **High Number of New Freelancers:** The rapid influx of new freelancers joining the platform, leading to an oversupply of talent.
3. **Limited Number of Client Projects:** The limited number of client projects available, increasing the competition and making it difficult for freelancers to secure projects.
4. **Lack of Differentiation Among Freelancers:** The lack of differentiation among freelancers, making it difficult for them to stand out and secure projects.

These factors contribute to market saturation by creating an oversupply of freelancers and a limited number of client projects, leading to intense competition for freelancers.

Strategic Initiatives for Sribu.com

This section will propose strategic initiatives based on the identified challenges. Each initiative will be backed by data and aligned with the goal of enhancing competitiveness and managing market saturation.

Table 8: Summary of Strategic Initiatives for Sribu.com

Strategic Initiatives	Initiative Items
Enhancing Freelancer Quality	1. Stricter Vetting Processes
	2. Continuous Skill Development
Increasing Project Demand on Sribu.com	1. Client Acquisition and Incentives
	2. Targeted Marketing Campaigns
	3. Engagement and Retention Programs
	4. Partnerships and Collaborations
Improving Platform Features	1. Quality Assurance Mechanisms
	2. Enhanced Matching Algorithms

Moreover, project management tools integrated within freelancing platforms, like Sribu.com, provide sophisticated dashboards that allow freelancers and clients to track project progress in real-time, manage deadlines more effectively, and maintain a clear and accountable record of work milestones. This level of transparency and operational efficiency, enabled by advanced technological tools, not only bolsters trust between the parties but also streamlines the administrative burden of project management, making the freelancing process more seamless and professional.

Furthermore, the advent of advanced technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning has introduced a new dimension to freelancing by automating routine tasks and generating sophisticated data analytics. AI-driven tools can help freelancers in digital marketing, graphic design, and web development by providing them with insights into latest trends, client preferences, and competitive benchmarks. For instance, AI-powered design programs can suggest colour schemes, layouts, and styles that are most likely to appeal to a specific demographic, thus enabling freelancers to deliver more targeted and effective solutions.

On the client side, AI can assist in the preliminary screening of freelancers, matching project requirements with freelancer skills more accurately through algorithms that analyse past performance, client reviews, and portfolio relevance. This not only enhances the match precision between freelancers and projects but also reduces the time clients spend in the selection process.

IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Conclusion

From the detailed of Data Analytics, Supply and Demand Analysis, and Five Forces Analysis, for Sribu.com, we focus on exploring the dynamics between the number of freelancers (supply) and the available client projects (demand) on the platform. The analysis will help in understanding the underlying causes of market saturation and intense competition that Sribu.com faces.

1. **Supply Dynamics: The Influx of Freelancers.** Sribu.com, like many digital freelancing platforms, has experienced a significant surge in the number of freelancers joining the platform. This influx is primarily driven by the appealing prospect of flexible work arrangements and the potential for freelancers to engage with a global client base. However, the rapid increase in supply has not been met with a proportional increase in demand. This mismatch has significant implications for the economic environment within which these freelancers operate, notably leading to increased competition among them.

2. **Demand Dynamics: Stagnation in Client Projects.** Concurrently, the number of client projects available on Sribu.com has not seen a corresponding rise. The platform's client base growth has been relatively stagnant, a trend that can be attributed to various factors, including economic cycles, market penetration challenges, and competitive pressures from other freelancing platforms. This stagnation in demand, when compared with the rapid supply of freelancers, creates a problematic market condition where the supply significantly outstrips the demand.

3. **Impact on Freelancer Earnings and Employment Stability.** The natural consequence of this supply-demand imbalance is a decrease in average earnings per freelancer and a lack of employment stability. With more freelancers compete for fewer projects, many find it increasingly challenging to secure consistent work. This situation is intensify by the bidding system employed by many freelancing platforms, where freelancers often lower their rates to remain competitive.

4. **Client Bargaining Power.** From the client's perspective, this imbalance enhances their bargaining power. Clients can choose directly from a wider pool of freelancers and often negotiate lower prices for projects. While this might seem beneficial for clients in the short term, it may affect the quality of work they receive, as highly skilled freelancers may be reluctant to accept lower-paying projects.

5. **Freelancer Differentiation Challenges.** One of the most significant challenges highlighted by this imbalance is the difficulty freelancers face in differentiating themselves. With an oversupply of freelancers, those who do not have unique skills or established reputations find it increasingly difficult to stand out. This lack of differentiation further fuels the competitive fire, forcing freelancers to either specialize or find other ways to add value to their services.

Recommendations

For Sribu.com, these dynamics pose long-term strategic challenges. Maintaining a satisfied base of freelancers is crucial for the platform's sustainability, as it relies on their continued engagement to attract and retain clients. The platform must find ways to increase the number of client projects available while managing the growth of its freelancer base, such as:

1. **Strategies for Addressing Supply-Demand Imbalance.** To address this imbalance, Sribu.com might consider implementing measures such as improving its matching algorithms to ensure that clients are paired with the most suitable freelancers. This could help increase client satisfaction and project retention, indirectly encouraging more project postings.

2. **Enhancing Freelancer Value Proposition.** Additionally, Sribu.com could develop programs to enhance the value proposition for freelancers. This might include training and certification programs, which could help freelancers better differentiate themselves and improve their visibility on the platform.

3. **Marketing and Client Acquisition.** On the demand side, Sribu.com needs to strengthen its efforts in marketing and client acquisition. By expanding its client base and exploring new market segments, the platform can increase the number of projects available, thus helping to balance the supply-demand equation.

4. **Feedback and Continuous Improvement.** Continuous feedback from both freelancers and clients should be integrated into Sribu.com's strategy. This feedback can provide actionable insights that help improve service offerings, refine user experience, and adjust platform functionalities to better meet the needs of both freelancers and clients. Thus, following metrics can be added to monitor the improvement of the platform:

5. **Monitoring Economic and Market Trends.** It is also vital for Sribu.com to keep a close eye on economic and market trends that could influence both supply and demand. By anticipating changes and adapting quickly, Sribu.com can mitigate the negative effects of these fluctuations.

In conclusion, the analysis of Sribu.com reveals a significant challenge of market saturation due to an imbalance between the growing number of freelancers and the stagnating volume of client projects. Addressing this challenge requires a multi-faceted approach that focuses on enhancing the platform's value proposition for both freelancers and clients, improving technological capabilities, and expanding market reach. These strategies will be essential for Sribu.com to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage in the bustling marketplace of digital freelancing.

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