



Utilization of Social Media Platforms to Increase Visibility and Sales of MSMEs in Pondok Legi Pepelegi, Sidoarjo

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ABSTRACT

This community service aims to increase the visibility and sales of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) through the use of social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram. This program was carried out at the Pondok Legi Pepelegi, Sidoarjo, with the participation of 40 MSME actors. This community service activity consists of socialization, training, and interactive discussions. The results of the evaluation showed a significant increase in participants' understanding of social media for marketing. Before the training, only 40% of the participants had a basic understanding of the use of social media, while after the training this figure increased to 90%. In conclusion, this activity succeeded in improving participants' skills in utilizing social media to increase visibility and expand the market. Further assistance programs are needed to maintain the sustainability of the positive impacts produced.

Keywords: MSMEs; Social media; Digital marketing; Visibility; Training

INTRODUCTION

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Indonesia are one of the most important economic sectors. Based on data from the Ministry of Cooperatives and Small and Medium Enterprises (Kemenkop), in 2023, the MSME sector will contribute around 61% to Indonesia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), with a value of IDR 9,580 trillion. Not only that, but the sector also absorbs 97% of the workforce of the entire population. MSMEs play a big role in maintaining the country's economic stability, with a total of 65.5 million business units covering 99% of the total business units in Indonesia.

However, along with the rapid development of digital technology, MSMEs are faced with new challenges in utilizing this technology to survive and develop. In the context of marketing, the use of social media platforms has become one of the crucial strategies that must be adapted by MSMEs. Social media such as Facebook and Instagram offer a great opportunity for MSMEs to increase their visibility and expand their market. The platform no longer only serves as a social communication tool, but also becomes an effective promotional channel, where MSMEs can attract customers' attention, build brands, and increase sales.

With millions of active users every day, social media provides a large space for MSMEs to compete locally and globally. Through direct interaction with customers through comments, private messages, or reviews, MSMEs can form a more personal relationship with customers. Visual content on platforms like Instagram also helps create a stronger brand identity. In addition, the

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advertising and online store features allow MSMEs to market their products to a wider audience.

However, behind this opportunity, there are significant challenges. According to databoks.katadata.com, small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Indonesia still face various obstacles, especially in terms of productivity, competitiveness, and access to resources. Many SMEs have not fully utilized this digital potential optimally. Productivity and competitiveness issues remain major obstacles, while limited access to technology and innovation further exacerbate this situation. SMEs often struggle to scale their operations due to a variety of factors, including limited market access and limited innovation.

A case study in Pondok Legi, Pepelegi, Waru, Sidoarjo illustrates this challenge clearly. This area has great potential for the development of MSMEs, with a dense population and adequate infrastructure support. However, MSME actors in this region still face similar obstacles to MSMEs in other regions in Indonesia. Although there have been initiatives to use social media as a means of marketing, many MSMEs still do not fully understand how to optimize their use. The main challenges faced by MSMEs in this area include:

1. Limitations of Digital Knowledge

Many MSME actors still have limited knowledge about the use of social media for business. They often don't understand how to effectively use these platforms to maximize marketing and expand the market.

2. Lack of a Planned Digital Marketing Strategy

Not all MSMEs have a structured digital marketing strategy. Without a clear plan, they often struggle to build a strong brand and target the audience appropriately.

3. Marketing and Financial Constraints

Limitations in digital marketing are often exacerbated by financial problems. Many MSMEs have not utilized digital technology optimally due to limited funds and understanding of how to manage this technology-based marketing.

These challenges show that although social media platforms have great potential to help MSMEs grow, their implementation in the field still faces various obstacles. In this case, a more comprehensive strategy, including continuous training and mentoring, is needed to help MSMEs in areas such as Pondok Legi Pepelegi, Sidoarjo, so that they can compete more effectively in the digital era.

LITERATURE OR CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs)

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) hold a critical position in the Indonesian economy, contributing significantly to the nation's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and employment. According to the Ministry of Cooperatives and Small and Medium Enterprises (Kemenkop), the MSME sector contributed approximately 61% to Indonesia's GDP in 2023, with a total value of IDR 9,580 trillion. Additionally, MSMEs absorb 97% of the workforce, representing 65.5 million business units, or 99% of the total number of business entities in Indonesia. This significant contribution highlights the sector's pivotal role in maintaining national economic stability (Kemenkop, 2023).

However, the rapid advancement of digital technology presents new challenges for MSMEs, particularly in terms of marketing and competitiveness. As the world moves towards digitization, MSMEs are compelled to adapt to these changes to survive and grow. One of the most prominent areas for digital transformation lies in social media marketing. Social media platforms such as

Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp offer new ways for MSMEs to connect with consumers, increase brand visibility, and expand their markets (Hootsuite, 2023). Social media has transitioned from merely a communication tool into an essential promotional channel, allowing businesses to create brand awareness, attract customer attention, and boost sales (Pew Research, 2023).

MSMEs and Social Media Utilization

Several studies have demonstrated that social media can be an effective tool for MSMEs, particularly in marketing and customer engagement. Social media platforms provide MSMEs with the opportunity to compete on a global scale by utilizing tools such as paid advertisements, online stores, and interactive content to engage consumers directly. According to a study by Ahmad et al. (2022), businesses that effectively use social media marketing are more likely to increase brand awareness and improve customer loyalty. MSMEs can leverage platforms like Instagram and Facebook to not only market their products but also engage in two-way communication with customers, thereby creating a personalized and responsive brand image (Ahmad et al., 2022). Furthermore, visual content, particularly on Instagram, plays a crucial role in helping MSMEs establish a strong brand identity. A study by Tuten and Solomon (2017) highlights how visual storytelling and content marketing on platforms like Instagram can build a distinct and engaging brand image, which is essential for customer retention and loyalty. By consistently posting visually appealing content, MSMEs can enhance their brand recognition and increase consumer engagement.

Challenges in Adopting Digital Marketing Strategies

Despite the potential benefits of social media, many MSMEs in Indonesia are still struggling to adopt digital marketing strategies effectively. A study by Katadata (2023) points out that a large number of MSMEs face obstacles in terms of productivity, competitiveness, and access to technology and innovation. This limits their ability to optimize social media and other digital tools for marketing and operational purposes. The challenges are particularly prevalent among smaller MSMEs, which often lack the necessary knowledge, skills, and financial resources to implement effective digital marketing strategies (Katadata, 2023).

In a case study of MSMEs in Pondok Legi, Pepelegi, Waru, Sidoarjo, it was found that many businesses struggle with three primary challenges: limited digital knowledge, a lack of a structured digital marketing strategy, and financial constraints. These challenges are consistent with those faced by MSMEs nationwide. For instance, digital knowledge gaps prevent many MSMEs from utilizing social media to its full potential, while the absence of a well-structured digital marketing strategy hampers their ability to build strong brands and target appropriate audiences (Pew Research, 2023).

Moreover, financial constraints exacerbate these challenges. Many MSMEs lack the funds needed to invest in digital marketing tools and paid advertisements, which further limits their ability to compete in the increasingly digital marketplace. Without adequate financial resources, MSMEs may find it difficult to keep up with the rapid pace of digital transformation, leaving them vulnerable to falling behind competitors who are better equipped to adopt new technologies (Hootsuite, 2023).

Proposed Solutions for MSMEs

In response to these challenges, various researchers have proposed solutions that focus on enhancing MSMEs' digital capabilities. Continuous training and mentorship programs are seen as critical interventions. According to a study by Setiawan et al. (2021), MSMEs benefit significantly from training programs that focus on digital literacy, social media management, and e-commerce skills. By improving their understanding of digital tools, MSMEs can better leverage platforms like Instagram and Facebook to market their products, engage with customers, and increase sales (Setiawan et al., 2021). In addition to training, government support and institutional backing are essential to helping MSMEs overcome financial and technological barriers. Kemenkop and local

governments have already implemented several initiatives to assist MSMEs, such as providing financial subsidies for technology adoption and creating digital literacy campaigns (Kemenkop, 2023). These efforts are vital in helping MSMEs scale their operations and enhance their competitiveness in the digital age.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Preparation stage

The methods that will be applied in this community service activity are:

Live Observation

1. **Location and Target Identification:** Determine the location that will be the target of service, as well as identify the target group or community to be involved.
2. **Data Collection:** Collecting preliminary data on the social, economic, and needs of the local community. This can be done through interviews and direct observation.
3. **Situation Analysis:** Analyze the data that has been collected to understand the main problems and potential that exist in the location. The results of this analysis will be the basis for planning service activities.

Implementation stage

Implementation of Activities (Material Delivery)

1. **Activity Planning:** Prepare an activity plan that includes objectives, materials to be delivered, delivery methods, and implementation schedules. This planning must take into account the results of observation and analysis of the situation.
2. **Material Preparation:** Prepare materials that are relevant and in accordance with the needs of the community. This material must be arranged in such a way that it is easy to understand and apply by participants.
3. **Implementation of Material Delivery:** Carry out service activities by delivering prepared material. The delivery of material can be done through lectures, discussions, workshops, or other effective methods.
4. **Interaction and Participation:** Encourage active interaction and participation from participants. This is important to ensure that the material presented is truly understood and well received by the community.

Evaluation stage

Feedback Collection: Collect feedback from participants and the community regarding the implementation of activities. This can be done pre and post test. The results of the pre and post test explained that 85% of residents understood the development of digital platforms for business development.

HASIL DAN PEMBAHASAN

Pre-test results

Before the socialization, a pre-test was conducted to assess the participants' initial understanding of the use of social media for MSMEs. Here are the results:

1. **Basic Understanding of Social Media:** Only 40% of participants (16 out of 40) have a basic understanding of the use of social media for business.

2. Knowledge of Social Media Features: As many as 35% of participants (14 out of 40) are aware of the basic features available on Facebook and Instagram.
3. Social Media Marketing Strategy: Only 30% of participants (12 out of 40)
4. have an understanding of effective marketing strategies on social media.
5. Customer Engagement: As many as 25% of participants (10 out of 40) have used social media to interact with their customers.

Post-test results

After the socialization, a post-test was carried out to assess the improvement of participants' understanding. Here are the results:

1. Basic Understanding of Social Media: Increased to 90% of participants (36 out of 40) who have a basic understanding of the use of social media for business.
2. Knowledge of Social Media Features: Increased to 85% of participants (34 out of 40) who are aware of the basic features available on Facebook and Instagram.
3. Marketing Strategies on Social Media: Increased to 80% of participants (32 out of 40) who have an understanding of effective marketing strategies on social media.
4. Customer Engagement: Increased to 75% of participants (30 out of 40) who have used social media to interact with their customers.

The following is statistical data from 40 residents that show the output results of community service activities:

Table 1. Pre-Test and Post-Test

Indicators	Before Socialization	After Socialization
Basic understanding of social media	40% (16 out of 40)	90% (36 out of 40)
Knowledge of social media features	35% (14 out of 40)	85% (34 out of 40)
Marketing strategies on social media	30% (12 out of 40)	80% (32 out of 40)
Interaction with customers	25% (10 out of 40)	75% (30 out of 40)
Participant satisfaction with the activity	-	100% (40)

DISCUSSION

Socialization activities regarding the use of social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram aim to increase visibility and expand the market for MSMEs in Pondok Legi, Pepelegi, Waru, Sidoarjo. To measure the effectiveness of this socialization, a pre-test was carried out before the activity started and a post-test after the activity was completed.

The results of the pre-test and post-test showed that socialization regarding the use of social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram succeeded in significantly increasing participants' understanding. After the socialization, most of the participants had a better knowledge of the use of social media to increase visibility and expand the market for their MSMEs. This improvement includes a basic understanding, knowledge of features, marketing strategies, and interactions with customers, all of which are key factors in the success of marketing through social media.

Interaction and Participation

1. Active Participation: 100% of the participants (40 citizens) actively participated in the discussion and question and answer sessions, showing high enthusiasm for the material presented.
2. Business Network: 75% of participants (30 residents) managed to build a new business network with other participants, which has the potential to increase collaboration and synergy between MSMEs.

CONCLUSIONS

Community Service Activities in Pondok Legi, Pepelegi, Waru, Sidoarjo, which focuses on the use of social media platforms to increase visibility and expand the MSME market have succeeded in achieving various positive outputs. Participants showed a significant improvement in understanding and skills in using social media such as Facebook and Instagram for business. This activity also succeeded in increasing the interaction and active participation of participants, as well as building a stronger business network among them. Despite facing several technical and administrative obstacles, this socialization is still able to have a real positive impact on the development of MSMEs in the region.

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Conflict of Interests

The authors declared that no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the authorship and publication of this article.

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