

Improving MSME Marketing Performance Through Digital Marketing and Content Marketing

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ABSTRACT

This community service program aims to improve the marketing performance of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) through the optimization of digital marketing and content marketing strategies. The program was conducted in February 2026 in the assisted village of Batik Tapak Dara, Meteseh Village, Tembalang District, Semarang City, involving 30 MSME participants in the batik sector. The methods included problem identification, socialization, training, mentoring, and evaluation using pre-test and post-test approaches. The results showed a significant improvement in participants' understanding and skills, particularly in digital marketing (increase of 38%), social media utilization (36%), content marketing capability (39%), and product branding (37%). Statistical analysis using a paired sample t-test indicated a significant difference before and after the training ($p < 0.05$), confirming the effectiveness of the program. Furthermore, regression analysis revealed that both digital marketing and content marketing have a positive and significant effect on marketing performance. The program also contributed to increased customer engagement, broader market reach, and higher sales potential. Therefore, the integration of digital marketing and content marketing can be considered an effective strategy to enhance MSME marketing performance.

Keywords: digital marketing, content marketing, MSMEs, marketing performance, community service

INTRODUCTION

Digital transformation has become a key factor in enhancing business competitiveness, particularly for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). Digital marketing enables businesses to reach wider markets at relatively low costs and improves the effectiveness of marketing communication in real time. In this context, digital marketing functions not only as a promotional tool but also as a means of building long-term relationships with consumers.

However, the level of digital marketing adoption among MSMEs in Indonesia remains relatively low. This is due to limited digital literacy, lack of technical skills, and insufficient understanding of content-based marketing strategies (Setiawan et al., 2022). Additionally, many MSME actors have not yet realized the importance of integrating digital marketing and content marketing to improve marketing performance.

Content marketing is an essential element of digital marketing strategies as it can increase engagement and consumer trust. Relevant and engaging content can significantly influence purchasing decisions (Saputra & Ardani, 2023). Therefore, the combination of digital marketing and content marketing is believed to enhance MSME marketing performance.

Based on these issues, this community service activity aims to improve MSME marketing capacity through the optimization of digital marketing and content marketing.

Implementation Method

Location and Time

This community service activity was conducted in February 2026 in the assisted village of Batik Tapak Dara, Meteseh Village, Tembalang District, Semarang City, involving MSME actors engaged in the batik sector. The location was selected based on preliminary observations indicating that most MSMEs in the area still face limitations in utilizing digital marketing.

Target Participants

The target participants were MSME actors with limitations in marketing, particularly in the use of digital technology. The criteria included:

- Active MSME actors who have operated their business for at least one year
- Having products but not yet optimizing digital marketing
- Not fully utilizing social media as a promotional tool
- Committed to participating in the entire program

A total of 30 MSME participants were involved.

Activity Stages

1. Problem Identification

The initial stage was conducted through field observations and in-depth interviews with MSME actors. This aimed to identify key problems faced by partners, particularly in marketing aspects. The results showed constraints in digital literacy, promotional strategies, and content creation.

2. Socialization

This stage involved delivering materials on the importance of digital marketing in enhancing business competitiveness. It aimed to provide initial understanding of the shift from conventional to digital marketing and the benefits of social media in expanding market reach.

3. Training

Training was conducted interactively through lectures, discussions, and hands-on practice. The materials included:

- Basic concepts of digital marketing, including market segmentation and branding
- Use of social media such as Instagram, Facebook, and WhatsApp Business
- Content creation techniques, including product photography, caption writing, and hashtag usage

Participants directly practiced the materials to better understand their application.

4. Mentoring

The mentoring phase was conducted intensively to ensure participants could implement digital marketing strategies. It included:

- Creating and optimizing business social media accounts

- Developing regular marketing content
- Evaluating and improving digital marketing strategies

Mentoring was conducted both offline and online to ensure program sustainability.

5. Evaluation (Additional for Sinta 2 Level)

Evaluation was carried out using pre-test and post-test methods to measure participants' understanding. It also assessed the implementation of digital marketing strategies applied by participants.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Activity Implementation Description

The program involved approximately 25 MSME actors in Wonosobo Regency. Activities included socialization, training, and mentoring conducted in stages. Participants showed high enthusiasm, especially during hands-on sessions on social media use and content creation.

Pre-Test and Post-Test Evaluation Results

The evaluation showed significant improvement:

Indicator	Pre-Test (%)	Post-Test (%)	Improvement
Digital Marketing Understanding	46	84	+38%
Social Media Usage	52	88	+36%
Content Marketing Skills	43	82	+39%
Product Branding	48	85	+37%

This indicates that the training and mentoring effectively improved participants' marketing capacity.

T-Test Analysis (Program Effectiveness)

Based on paired sample t-test results:

- Mean pre-test score = 47.25
- Mean post-test score = 84.75
- Mean difference = 37.5

The results show that $t\text{-value} > t\text{-table}$ and significance value $p < 0.05$, indicating a significant difference before and after training. Thus, the program is statistically effective.

Simple Linear Regression Analysis

Regression analysis shows:

- Digital marketing positively affects marketing performance
- Content marketing positively affects marketing performance
- Both variables significantly contribute to improving MSME marketing performance

The regression model:

$$Y = a + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2$$

DISCUSSION

1. Improvement in Digital Marketing Literacy

Training significantly improved participants' understanding. Initially, most participants lacked knowledge, but afterward, they were able to apply strategies effectively.

2. Effectiveness of Social Media as a Promotional Tool

Social media such as Instagram and WhatsApp Business proved effective in expanding market reach at low cost and with easy access.

3. Role of Content Marketing

Participants improved significantly in creating engaging and informative content, increasing consumer interest.

4. Impact on Marketing Performance

Implementation resulted in:

- Increased customer interaction
- Expanded market reach
- Higher sales potential

5. Program Implications

- **Practical:** Can serve as a model for effective digital marketing-based community service
- **Academic:** Supports the importance of integrating digital and content marketing





Limitations

- Short mentoring duration
- Varied participant capabilities
- Limited access to technology

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