

ENHANCING DIGITAL MARKETING SKILL FOR MEMBERS OF PERTUBUHAN MASYARAKAT INDONESIA (PERMAI) PULAU PINANG MALAYSIA

Arief Bowo Prayoga Kasmo^{1)*}, Heliantono²⁾, Diah Fistiani Sukardiman³⁾,
Khozaeni bin Rahmad⁴⁾

Universitas Mercu Buana, Indonesia¹⁻³⁾

PERMAI Pulau Pinang, Malaysia⁴⁾

*Corresponding author: ariefbowo@mercubuana.ac.id

ABSTRACT

The Indonesian Community Organization (PERMAI) in Penang, Malaysia, supports a diverse array of MSMEs known for their high-quality food, beverages, and handicrafts. To sustain their growth, these MSMEs must embrace digital marketing. Currently, many rely on outdated manual methods and have limited exposure to digital tools, which hinders their market reach and strategic optimization. In today's digital age, mastering digital marketing is essential for these businesses to remain competitive and unlock their full potential. The program focuses on three primary goals: (1) Skill Development: Empower MSME entrepreneurs with key digital marketing skills, such as SEO, social media marketing, content creation, and data analytics; (2) Technology Integration: Transition MSMEs from manual to digital marketing systems, enabling effective use of digital tools and platforms; (3) Competitive Edge: Enhance the competitiveness of MSMEs in Penang by equipping them with the knowledge and skills to implement impactful digital marketing strategies. Targeted outcomes include hosting hands-on workshops tailored to MSME needs, providing ongoing support and mentorship, and sharing success stories and best practices through scientific publications and media. By addressing the need for digital marketing skills and setting clear goals, this program aims to boost the digital marketing capabilities of MSMEs in Penang, ensuring their sustained growth and competitive edge.

Keywords: Digital Marketing; MSMEs; Technology Integration

ABSTRAK

Organisasi Masyarakat Indonesia (PERMAI) di Penang, Malaysia, mendukung beragam UMKM seperti makanan, minuman, dan kerajinan tangan dengan kualitas yang baik. Untuk mempertahankan pertumbuhan mereka, UMKM ini harus melaksanakan pemasaran digital. Saat ini, banyak dari mereka yang masih mengandalkan metode manual yang sudah ketinggalan zaman dan memiliki eksposur yang terbatas terhadap perangkat digital, sehingga menghambat jangkauan pasar dan pengoptimalan strategis mereka. Di era digital saat ini, menguasai pemasaran digital sangat penting bagi bisnis-bisnis ini untuk tetap kompetitif dan membuka potensi penuh mereka. Program ini berfokus pada tiga tujuan utama: (1) Pengembangan Keterampilan: Memberdayakan pengusaha UMKM dengan keterampilan pemasaran digital utama, seperti SEO, pemasaran media sosial, pembuatan konten, dan analisis data; (2) Integrasi Teknologi: Transisi UMKM dari sistem pemasaran manual ke digital, memungkinkan penggunaan alat dan platform digital secara efektif; (3) Keunggulan Kompetitif: Meningkatkan daya saing UMKM di Penang dengan membekali mereka dengan pengetahuan dan keterampilan untuk menerapkan strategi pemasaran digital yang berdampak. Hasil yang ditargetkan termasuk menyelenggarakan lokakarya langsung yang disesuaikan dengan kebutuhan UMKM, memberikan dukungan dan bimbingan yang berkelanjutan, dan berbagi kisah sukses dan praktik terbaik melalui publikasi ilmiah dan media. Dengan menjawab kebutuhan akan keterampilan pemasaran digital dan menetapkan tujuan yang jelas, program ini bertujuan untuk meningkatkan kemampuan pemasaran digital UMKM di Penang, memastikan pertumbuhan dan keunggulan kompetitif mereka yang berkelanjutan.

Kata kunci: Pemasaran Digital; UMKM; Integrasi Teknologi

INTRODUCTION

Developments in the era of globalization have created an increasingly rapid digital era. This situation requires various parties to be able to adapt to the new environment, including business actors, both small, medium and large scale business actors. Developments in the digital era, not only touch the production, education and communication processes, but also touch the process of introducing and selling products with very fast intensity. By using the internet as a medium in trade, MSMEs have a very large opportunity in contributing to the global economic chain, MSMEs can sell their products faster and by using digital media in the marketing and sales process, it can reduce operational costs including very high distribution costs. The challenge that needs to be faced by Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in this digital economy era is the low ability of human resources (HR) in facing trade methods from conventional to digital-based.

A Non-Political Non-Government NGO engaged in Social Education and Culture. Experts consist of Indonesian people domiciled in Malaysia, among others: Expatriates, Businessmen, Lecturers, Teachers, Students, Students, Workers residing in Malaysia.

Indonesian people domiciled in Malaysia who are members of the Permai NGO have many superior products produced by MSMEs, ranging from food, beverages and even to handicrafts (crafting). However, data from the Cooperative and MSME Office, only 30% of the 70,000 MSMEs that do marketing in trade use digital marketing, the remaining 70% use traditional marketing systems in trade. Whereas in the digital era, the speed of producing goods and the quality produced is no longer the main measure to boost sales, because consumers in this era prefer to make purchases through digital-based marketplace platforms, the reason consumers are very simple, they don't have to bother going to the store and choosing the desired product. This waste of time to shop traditionally is what makes them prefer to shop through internet-based

technology media. This is evident from the results of research by HootSuite and social marketing agency We Are Social released in January 2020, that the total population of Indonesia who have used the internet has reached 175.4 million people out of a total Indonesian population of 272.1 million. This means that internet usage in Indonesia has increased sharply, which is 17% compared to internet usage in 2019. In addition, the results of this study also stated that 59% of internet use by people in Indonesia is used to access social media (Ludwianto, 2020). Seeing public interest in the use of the internet, especially in the use of social media, MSME actors in Malaysia, especially Permai NGOs, must dare to change their marketing from traditional to digital-based. If they are unable to use paid digital-based marketing, then they can take advantage of digital-based marketing that is free and has been used daily, for example by using Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp and Line.

MSME players who have promoted their products through digital-based market place platforms in Malaysia generally come from abroad, this proves that digital marketing is able to touch consumers intensely and directly even though they are not in the same area, which means that consumers of this digital era prefer to use digital marketing in getting the products they want.

The rapid development of technology makes various groups in the business world must be able to utilize technology-based marketing media so that product information will reach consumers faster. A study by Itani et al. (2020) found that 91% of sales professionals utilize social media platforms as part of their sales strategy, highlighting the significant role social media plays in enhancing customer engagement and driving sales. A similar reference that supports the idea of social media platforms contributing to business performance can be found in the study by Tajvidi and Karami (2021). They argue that social media usage can enhance both financial and non-financial aspects of business performance, such as increasing brand awareness and improving customer

engagement. Their research emphasizes how social media facilitates better communication and interaction with customers, which can lead to improved financial outcomes and stronger business relationships. This is in line with the findings of Ancillai et al. (2019), who discovered that the strategic use of social media not only boosts sales performance but also strengthens customer relationships, trust, and overall satisfaction.

Universitas Mercu Buana carries out activities to the community which is one of the pillars of the Tri Dharma of Higher Education which must be carried out by every academic community as mandated by Law No. 20 of 2023 and Law No. 12 of 2012. In carrying out community service, Universitas Mercu Buana carries out activities oriented towards solving problems faced by the community in accordance with the expertise of the relevant academic community and the use of appropriate technology in a sustainable manner.

The UMB PKM Master Plan is expected to be a guide for the implementation of community service activities for the next 5 years both internally and in collaboration with UMB external parties so that UMB community service activities can solve problems faced by the community by utilizing the expertise of the relevant academic community; Utilize appropriate technology, develop teaching materials or training modules for enrichment of learning resources, make behavior changes in a positive direction and carry out activities that can improve the quality of the environment.

The rationalization of RIP PPM Universitas Mercu Buana refers to: (1) Law No. 20 of 2023 concerning the national education system and Law No. 12 of 2012 concerning higher education, so that the results of community service carried out by each academic community can apply, practice and cultivate science and technology in order to realize general welfare and educate the nation's life; (2) Refers to MKP. The scheme of PkM activities of Mercu Buana University (Internal, Domestic Cooperation and

Foreign Cooperation) and the field of science so that every implementing lecturer can apply, practice and cultivate science and technology which is the mastery of concepts, theories, methods, and / or philosophies in the field of science systematically according to scientific expertise for solving community problems through community service; (3) Referring to MKP, the scheme of PkM activities of Mercu Buana University and the field of science so that each graduate can realize graduate learning outcomes which are mastery of concepts, theories, methods and / or philosophies in the field of science systematically according to scientific expertise for solving community problems through community service.

PROBLEMS

The problem faced by MSMEs of the Indonesian Community Organization (PERMAI) Pulau Pinang is about digital marketing. Given the rapid movement of information through digital media and digital users and based on the qualitative and quantitative data above, it can be said that in NGO Prima Pinang Malaysia there are quite a lot of MSME actors with various problems who have not been able to implement a marketing system using digital marketing effectively.

Skills in mastering digital marketing are very important to be given to MSME actors in Pinang NGOs, because: First, they have not mastered digital-based marketing effectively so they have not utilized digital marketing optimally. Second, without having this competence (mastery of digital marketing), it will be difficult for MSME actors in the NGO Permai Pinang Malaysia to compete in trade, so this skill is important to be given first to MSME actors in the NGO Permai Pinang before providing assistance to others. The MSMEs that are used as the object of training are MSMEs of the Indonesian Community Organization (PERMAI) Pinang, Malaysia.

METHOD

The digital marketing mentorship and training program is designed to assist MSME (Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises) members of the Indonesian Community Organization (PERMAI) in Pinang, Malaysia. The primary objective of this program is to introduce the concept of digital marketing and train MSME actors in utilizing digital platforms, particularly Instagram, to increase their product sales and compete with products from outside Penang. Ziłkowska (2021), which highlights that digital transformation significantly influences marketing activities in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). The research emphasizes that digital tools are extensively used in marketing, contributing to building customer relationships and creating organizational value. This aligns with the broader understanding that digital technologies are critical in shaping marketing strategies and improving business performance.

Program Outline

This program will span six months, comprising three main phases: Preparation Phase, Implementation Phase, and Evaluation Phase. Preparation Phase (Month 1)

1. Needs Identification and Market Analysis

Questionnaires and Interviews: Collect data on the needs and challenges faced by PERMAI MSME actors regarding product marketing.

SWOT Analysis: Conduct a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis to understand the MSMEs' market position.

2. Curriculum Development

Basic Materials: Introduction to digital marketing, basic concepts of SEO (Search Engine Optimization), social media marketing, and content strategy. Advanced Materials: Techniques for using Instagram for business, Instagram analytics, paid advertising on Instagram, and case studies of successful digital marketing.

3. Recruitment of Mentors and Experts

Mentor Selection: Identify mentors with experience and expertise in digital marketing, especially on Instagram. Mentor Training: Provide brief training to mentors on the directed mentoring techniques to be used.

RESULT

In response to the rapid digitalization spurred by globalization, various sectors, including businesses of all scales, must adapt to the new landscape. The digital era not only revolutionizes production, education, and communication processes but also transforms product introduction and sales methods at an unprecedented pace. Leveraging the internet for trade presents Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) with significant opportunities to participate in the global economic chain by facilitating faster product sales and reducing operational costs, particularly distribution expenses.

However, one of the key challenges faced by MSMEs in this digital era is the limited capacity of their human resources to navigate the transition from conventional to digital-based trading methods.

Permai NGO, a non-political and non-governmental organization focused on social education and culture, conducted a training session targeted at Indonesian residents in Malaysia. The training aimed to equip MSMEs with the necessary skills to thrive in the digital economy. Despite the fact that only 30% of the 70,000 MSMEs engaged in trade utilize digital marketing, the training emphasized the importance of embracing digital platforms for marketing and sales activities.

Given the growing internet usage in Indonesia, particularly for accessing social media platforms, MSMEs, including those represented by Permai NGO in Malaysia, are encouraged to transition from traditional to digital marketing strategies. Even if they lack resources for paid digital marketing, free platforms like Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and Line can serve as effective alternatives.

Furthermore, the success stories of MSMEs utilizing digital marketplaces

abroad underscore the effectiveness of digital marketing in reaching consumers beyond geographical boundaries. As technology continues to advance, it becomes imperative for businesses to leverage digital marketing tools to disseminate product information swiftly.

In alignment with the Tri Dharma of Higher Education mandated by Law No. 20 of 2023 and Law No. 12 of 2012, Universitas Mercu Buana (UMB) actively engages in community service activities. The UMB Community Service Master Plan serves as a comprehensive guide for the institution's community outreach efforts over the next five years, emphasizing the utilization of relevant academic expertise, appropriate technology, and sustainable practices to address community challenges.

The rationalization of UMB's Community Service Plan is grounded in legal frameworks and institutional policies, aiming to apply scientific knowledge and technology to enhance societal well-being and national development. Through strategic partnerships and interdisciplinary collaboration, UMB endeavors to empower communities, foster positive behavioral changes, and contribute to environmental sustainability through its community service initiatives.

The Digital Marketing Skills Training was held from January 27th to 29th, 2024, at PERMAI NGO, located in Penang Island, Malaysia. This comprehensive training program covered various aspects of digital marketing, including social media marketing, search engine optimization, content creation, and digital marketing performance analysis. The training was delivered through practical sessions, seminars, and individual guidance sessions. Evidence of progress included training materials, participant attendance lists, as well as evaluations from both participants and instructors.



Figure 1. Sharing Session

During the training sessions, there were interactive discussions between the participants from PERMAI NGO and the faculty members from the Faculty of Economics at Universitas Mercu Buana. Participants raised various questions, one of which focused on utilizing capital for business purposes without exhausting it on daily living expenses. Similarly, participants from PERMAI NGO inquired about digital marketing strategies for entrepreneurs already engaged in small to medium-scale businesses. They sought advice on how to effectively market their products digitally to ensure the smooth operation of their businesses.



Figure 2. Discussion

The training sessions aimed to equip participants with practical skills and knowledge in digital marketing, enabling them to leverage digital platforms to enhance their business performance. Through hands-on activities, participants learned how to develop engaging content, utilize social media platforms for marketing purposes, and analyze the effectiveness of their digital marketing efforts. Additionally, they received personalized guidance to address specific challenges and opportunities in their respective businesses.



Figure 3. Collaboration with PERMAI NGO

The collaboration between PERMAI NGO and Universitas Mercu Buana's Faculty of Economics facilitated a rich exchange of ideas and expertise. Faculty members shared insights and best practices in digital marketing, drawing from their academic knowledge and professional experience. Participants benefitted from the diverse perspectives offered by both the academic and practical realms, gaining a holistic understanding of digital marketing strategies and techniques.



Figure 4. Mentoring

Furthermore, the training emphasized the importance of continuous learning and adaptation in the rapidly evolving field of digital marketing. Participants were encouraged to stay updated on emerging trends and technologies, enabling them to remain competitive in the digital marketplace. Through ongoing support and mentorship, PERMAI NGO and Universitas Mercu Buana aim to empower participants to achieve sustainable growth and success in their businesses.



Figure 5. Photo With Participants

In conclusion, the Digital Marketing Skills Training provided participants with valuable insights, practical skills, and personalized guidance to excel in the digital marketing landscape. By fostering collaboration and knowledge exchange between academia and industry, the training program positioned participants to leverage digital platforms effectively, drive business growth, and contribute to the thriving digital economy.

CLOSING

The digital marketing mentorship and training program aims to empower MSME members of the Indonesian Community Organization (PERMAI) in Pinang, Malaysia, by enhancing their digital marketing skills. With rapid advancements in technology and the increasing importance of an online presence, mastering digital marketing has become crucial for MSMEs to remain competitive and succeed. This program provides a structured approach, combining workshops, individual mentoring, practical projects, and case studies to ensure comprehensive learning and practical application.

By setting clear goals and utilizing high-quality resources, participants can tailor their learning journey to their specific needs and career aspirations. The focus on Instagram as a primary platform for digital marketing will equip participants with the tools and strategies necessary to effectively engage with their target audience, boost sales, and build a strong online presence.

In conclusion, this program is a significant step towards bridging the digital skills gap for MSMEs in the PERMAI community. It offers a valuable opportunity for participants to learn from experts, gain hands-on experience, and apply best

practices in digital marketing. The insights and skills acquired through this program will undoubtedly contribute to the growth and success of their businesses, positioning them competitively in the digital marketplace.

REFERENCES

- Abiyyuansyah, F., Kusumawati, A., & Irawan, A. (2019). Analysis of Content Marketing Strategy Implementation in Increasing Customer Engagement (Study on Amstirdam Coffee Malang Content Marketing Strategy). *Journal of Business Administration*. 73(1): p. 78-87.
- Ancillai, C., Terho, H., Cardinali, S., & Pascucci, F. (2019). Advancing social media use in B2B sales: How social media helps salespeople drive customer performance. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 82, 293-305. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.indmarman.2019.01.012>
- Buffer. (2019). *The State of Social 2019 Report: New Data and Social Media Marketing Research*. Retrieved from <https://buffer.com/resources/the-state-of-social-2019-report-new-data-and-social-media-marketing-research>
- Itani, O. S., Agnihotri, R., & Dingus, R. (2020). Social media use in B2B sales and its impact on competitive intelligence collection and adaptive selling. *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, 35(6), 817-825. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JBIM-04-2018-012>
- Ludwianto, B. (2020). Research: 64% of Indonesia's population already uses the internet.(online). (<https://kumparan.com/kumparantec> h/riset-64-penduduk-indonesia-sudahpakai-internet-1ssUCDbKILp/full). Accessed on November 29th 2023.
- Kaplan, A. M., & Haenlein, M. (2010). Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of Social Media. *Business Horizons*, 53(1), 59-68. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bushor.2009.09.003>
- Tajvidi, R., & Karami, A. (2021). The effect of social media on firm performance. *Journal of Business Research*, 124, 560-575. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2020.10.017>
- Wati, A. P., Martha, J. A., & Indrawati, A. (2020). Improving marketing skills through Whatsapp Business training for MSMEs. *Dedication: Journal of Community Service*, 4(2), 137-148.
- Zakiah, E.F., Kasmoo, A.B.P., Nugroho, L. (2022). Peran Dan Fungsi Usaha Mikro Kecil Dan Menengah (UMKM) Dalam Memitigasi Resesi Ekonomi Global 2023, *Jurnal Cakrawala Ilmiah* Vol.2, No.4, Desember 2022.
- Ziółkowska, M. J. (2021). Digital transformation and marketing activities in small and medium-sized enterprises. *Sustainability*, 13(5), 2512. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13052512>