

TRAINING ON THE UTILIZATION OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY TO IMPROVE MARKETING PERFORMANCE OF MSMEs IN MESUJI REGENCY

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ABSTRACT

The development of information technology encourages MSME actors to utilize digital marketing in improving business marketing performance. However, most MSMEs in Mesuji Regency still use conventional marketing methods due to their low understanding of information technology. This community service activity aims to determine the level of MSME understanding of information technology, the role of training in improving marketing performance, and effective digital marketing strategies applied to MSMEs in Mesuji Regency.

This community service program used a participatory approach by actively involving partners in all stages of the activity, starting from problem identification, training implementation, mentoring, and evaluation. This approach was applied so that the program would not only be theoretical but also provide a real impact on improving the digital capabilities and marketing performance of MSMEs in Mesuji Regency.

The results of this community service activity indicate that information technology training plays an important role in improving MSME marketing performance through more effective utilization of digital media. This training is expected to become a reference for developing digital-based MSME empowerment programs.

Keywords: Information Technology, Digital Marketing, MSMEs, Training, Marketing

INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of information technology in the digital era has brought significant changes to various aspects of human life, including the economic and business sectors. Information technology is no longer merely a communication tool but has become a strategic instrument for business management, product promotion, customer service, and marketing network development. Changes in consumer behavior, which increasingly rely on internet-based platforms, require business actors to adapt to technological advancements in order to remain competitive in a dynamic market environment.

Digital transformation in the business sector is evident through the growing use of social media, online marketplaces, and internet-based applications in commercial activities.

Consumers now tend to search for product information online before making purchasing decisions. This trend encourages businesses to utilize information technology as an effective and efficient marketing strategy. Digital technology enables business owners to reach broader markets without geographical and time limitations.

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) play a crucial role in national economic development. MSMEs contribute significantly to job creation, income generation, and regional economic stability. Due to their strategic role, strengthening MSME capacity has become one of the main priorities in both national and regional economic development programs.

Mesuji Regency has considerable potential in the MSME sector, particularly in culinary businesses, trade, agriculture, handicrafts, and home industries. MSMEs serve as one of the primary drivers of the local economy by creating employment opportunities and improving household income. However, many MSME owners continue to face challenges in business development, particularly in marketing activities. Marketing efforts are still largely dependent on conventional methods such as direct selling and word-of-mouth promotion. As a result, market reach remains limited, and business growth tends to be slower than expected.

At the same time, changing consumer behavior and the increasing use of digital platforms require MSMEs to adopt information technology as a marketing tool. However, limited digital literacy, insufficient skills in using social media and online marketplaces, and a lack of access to information technology training remain significant barriers to digital transformation among MSMEs in Mesuji Regency.

Previous studies have demonstrated that the adoption of information technology and digital marketing can improve MSME marketing performance by expanding market reach, enhancing customer engagement, and increasing sales. Nevertheless, the implementation of digital technology among MSMEs continues to face various challenges, particularly those related to human resources and technological adaptation. Furthermore, studies focusing on capacity-building initiatives through information technology training for MSMEs in Mesuji Regency remain limited.

Based on these conditions, training programs aimed at enhancing the knowledge and skills of MSME owners in utilizing information technology for marketing purposes are highly needed. Such training is expected to equip participants with practical competencies in using social media, online marketplaces, digital business applications, and technology-based marketing strategies that are relevant to their business needs.

This community service program aims to improve the ability of MSME owners to utilize information technology in supporting product marketing activities. Through this training, participants are expected to be able to implement digital marketing strategies effectively, expand their market reach, enhance business competitiveness, and contribute to sustainable economic growth in Mesuji Regency.

METHODS

The implementation method of this Community Service Program (PKM) was systematically designed to address the challenges faced by MSMEs in Mesuji Regency, particularly the limited understanding of information technology utilization, the suboptimal application of digital marketing strategies, and the inadequate use of technology to improve marketing performance. To address these issues, a training program on the utilization of information technology for enhancing MSME marketing performance was conducted.

The program was implemented through four main stages: preparation, training implementation, mentoring, and evaluation. Each stage actively involved the participation of the partner MSMEs to ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of the program.

Preparation Stage

The preparation stage served as the initial phase of the program. During this stage, the implementation team conducted observations and needs assessments to identify problems faced by MSME owners in Mesuji Regency regarding the use of information technology for marketing activities. Data were collected through interviews, discussions, and field observations to obtain information about current marketing practices, digital literacy levels, and challenges encountered by business owners.

Based on the findings, the team developed training materials tailored to the participants' needs. The training topics included the introduction of information technology, social media marketing, digital marketing strategies, marketplace utilization, digital promotional content creation, and the use of business-

support applications such as WhatsApp Business and Canva.

In addition, coordination was carried out with partner organizations regarding the training schedule, venue, facilities, and participant recruitment. Training modules, presentation materials, practice tools, and evaluation instruments were also prepared.

Partner Participation in the Preparation Stage

Partner participation during this stage included:

- a) Providing information regarding MSME conditions and challenges.
- b) Selecting participants who would attend the training.
- c) Providing venues and supporting facilities.
- d) Coordinating with the implementation team regarding schedules and training requirements.

Training Implementation Stage

The training stage constituted the core activity of the community service program. The training employed lectures, discussions, demonstrations, and hands-on practice to ensure that participants gained both theoretical knowledge and practical skills.

The training materials included:

- a) Introduction to digital marketing as a modern marketing strategy.
- b) Training on the use of online marketplaces such as Shopee and Tokopedia.
- c) Techniques for creating digital promotional content using Canva.
- d) Product branding and online customer service strategies.

During this stage, participants were actively engaged in practical activities, including creating business social media accounts, uploading products to online marketplaces,

designing simple promotional content, and developing effective marketing captions.

Partner Participation in the Training Stage

Partner participation during this stage included:

- a) Attending and actively participating in all training sessions.
- b) Practicing the use of information technology directly.
- c) Discussing challenges encountered in digital marketing activities.
- d) Bringing their products for use during practical training sessions.

Mentoring Stage

Following the training sessions, mentoring activities were conducted to assist participants in applying the acquired knowledge and skills to their daily business operations. Mentoring was provided through both direct assistance and digital communication platforms such as WhatsApp groups.

The implementation team provided guidance on managing business social media accounts, developing promotional content, utilizing online marketplaces, and communicating effectively with customers through digital channels. Technical assistance was also provided to help participants overcome challenges encountered during implementation.

The mentoring process was conducted periodically to ensure that participants could independently and sustainably apply digital marketing strategies. Through continuous assistance, MSME owners were expected to gain greater confidence in utilizing information technology as a marketing tool.

Partner Participation in the Mentoring Stage

Partner participation during this stage included:

- a) Implementing the training outcomes within their businesses.

b) Actively consulting with mentors regarding technological challenges.

c) Independently developing digital marketing platforms.

d) Regularly updating promotional content and product information.

Evaluation Stage

The evaluation stage was conducted to assess the effectiveness of the community service program and measure improvements in participants' knowledge and skills after completing the training. Evaluation methods included observation, interviews, discussions, and assessments of participants' abilities to utilize information technology for marketing purposes.

The evaluation indicators included:

a) Participants' ability to use social media and online marketplaces.

b) Participants' ability to create digital promotional content.

c) Improvement in digital marketing activities among MSMEs.

d) Participants' responses and satisfaction with the training program.

The evaluation results were used as feedback for improving future training programs and ensuring their relevance to the needs of MSME owners in Mesuji Regency.

Partner Participation in the Evaluation Stage
Partner participation during this stage included:

a) Providing feedback on the implementation of the program.

b) Demonstrating the application of information technology within their businesses.

c) Participating in evaluation activities and final discussions.

d) Providing recommendations for future program development.

Participatory Approach

This community service program employed a participatory approach, which actively involved partners in every stage of the program, from problem identification and training implementation to mentoring and evaluation. This approach was adopted to ensure that the program was not merely theoretical but capable of producing tangible impacts on the digital capabilities and marketing performance of MSMEs in Mesuji Regency.

Through a systematic and participatory implementation process, the program was expected to enhance MSME owners' knowledge and skills in utilizing information technology, thereby improving business competitiveness, expanding market reach, and increasing community income.

Community service programs conducted by higher education institutions represent a form of collaboration between academia and society, creating a synergistic relationship between both parties. Universities play a strategic role in bridging community needs with research-based innovations developed within academic institutions. Through such collaboration, research-based solutions can be implemented to address various social and economic challenges while simultaneously enhancing the relevance and achievement of higher education performance indicators.

MEASUREMENT OF COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAM (PKM) SUCCESS

A. Program Success Measurement

The success of the Community Service Program (PKM) entitled "Marketplace Training Using Shopee and Tokopedia for MSMEs in Mesuji Regency" was measured through improvements in participants' knowledge, understanding, skills, and ability to utilize marketplace platforms as digital marketing tools and business development media.

The assessment was conducted using a qualitative approach through:

- a) Direct observation during the training activities.
- b) Interviews and discussions with participants.
- c) Evaluation of participants' practical performance in using Shopee and Tokopedia marketplaces.
- d) Comparison of Pre-Test and Post-Test results.
- e) Documentation of participants' online store activities after the training.

The evaluation was carried out to determine the extent to which the program contributed to enhancing participants' capabilities in utilizing marketplace platforms to expand market reach and improve product sales.

B. Qualitative Activity Performance Indicators (API)

No.	Activity Performance Indicator (API)	Success Measurement
1	Increased participant understanding of marketplace platforms	Participants are able to explain the benefits of marketplaces for business development
2	Improved ability to create marketplace accounts	Participants are able to independently create Shopee or Tokopedia accounts
3	Enhanced online store management skills	Participants are able to manage store profiles and business information

4	Improved product listing skills	Participants are able to upload product photos, descriptions, and pricing information correctly
5	Increased ability to utilize promotional features	Participants are able to use vouchers, discounts, and other promotional tools
6	Transition from conventional to digital marketing practices	Participants begin marketing their products through marketplace platforms
7	Increased confidence in using marketplace applications	Participants are able to operate marketplace applications independently
8	Establishment of sustainable communication and mentoring	Participants actively participate in consultations and follow-up mentoring activities

C. Pre-Test and Post-Test Questionnaire

This questionnaire was designed to measure the improvement in participants' knowledge and skills before and after attending the marketplace training program.

Instructions

Please mark (✓) the response that best reflects your level of understanding.

Rating Scale

1 = Strongly Do Not Understand

2 = Do Not Understand

3 = Moderately Understand

4 = Understand

5 = Strongly Understand

D. Questionnaire Items

Pre-Test and Post-Test

1. I understand the benefits of marketplace platforms (Shopee and Tokopedia) in supporting the marketing of MSME products.

Score:

1 2 3 4 5

2. I know how to create an account and set up an online store on Shopee or Tokopedia.

Score:

1 2 3 4 5

3. I understand how to upload products, including photos, descriptions, and pricing information, to a marketplace platform.

Score:

1 2 3 4 5

4. I know how to utilize promotional features available on marketplace platforms to increase sales.

Score:

1 2 3 4 5

5. I feel capable of independently managing an online store and marketing products through marketplace platforms.

Score:

1 2 3 4 5

E. Evaluation Analysis

The results of the Pre-Test and Post-Test were compared to assess the improvement in participants' knowledge and skills after completing the training program.

The program was considered successful if:

a) The majority of participants demonstrated higher Post-Test scores compared to their Pre-Test scores.

b) Participants were able to create marketplace accounts and manage online stores independently.

c) Participants were able to upload products and utilize marketplace features for marketing purposes.

d) Participants began implementing digital marketing strategies through Shopee or Tokopedia in their respective businesses.

e) Participants showed enthusiasm and active participation throughout the training activities.

Through this evaluation process, the implementation of the Community Service Program (PKM) can be systematically assessed and is expected to generate a tangible impact on improving the digital marketing capabilities and competitiveness of MSMEs in Mesuji Regency.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the Marketplace Training Using Shopee and Tokopedia for MSMEs in Mesuji Regency were analyzed to determine the level of understanding of MSME entrepreneurs regarding marketplace utilization, how marketplace training contributes to improving marketing performance, and the effectiveness of digital marketing strategies implemented through marketplace platforms.

The findings were obtained through observation, in-depth interviews, documentation, and evaluation of training participants, who were MSME entrepreneurs from various sectors in Mesuji Regency. Based on the results, it was found that most

participants initially had a limited understanding of the use of marketplace platforms for product marketing. Prior to the training, the majority of MSME entrepreneurs relied on conventional marketing methods such as direct selling, word-of-mouth promotion, and sales to regular customers within their local communities. The use of digital platforms, particularly Shopee and Tokopedia, was still very limited due to insufficient knowledge and skills in operating marketplace applications.

Interview results revealed that many participants perceived marketplace platforms as complicated and difficult to implement in their businesses. Factors such as age, educational background, and limited experience with digital technology were identified as the main reasons for the low utilization of marketplaces. Furthermore, several participants admitted that they had not fully understood the potential benefits of marketplace-based marketing in increasing product sales and expanding market reach.

Following the training program, significant improvements were observed in participants' knowledge and skills regarding marketplace utilization. Participants gained a better understanding of the importance of digital platforms as effective marketing channels. The hands-on training sessions provided practical experience in creating marketplace accounts, setting up online stores, uploading products, managing transactions, and utilizing promotional features available on Shopee and Tokopedia.

Based on the results of the pre-test and post-test evaluations, there was a noticeable improvement in participants' understanding of marketplace utilization for MSME marketing activities. Before the training, participants generally demonstrated a low level of understanding. However, after the training, participants showed considerable progress in their ability to use marketplace platforms effectively.

Table 1. Pre-Test and Post-Test Results of Training Participants

Assessment Indicator	Average Pre-Test Score	Average Post-Test Score
Understanding of marketplace concepts	45	82
Ability to create and manage marketplace accounts	48	85
Product listing and content creation skills	42	80
Marketplace utilization for sales activities	40	78
Understanding of digital marketing strategies	46	84

The improvement in these scores indicates that the training program had a positive impact on participants' knowledge and skills. In addition, participants became capable of operating marketplace applications such as Shopee and Tokopedia to support their business marketing activities.

Participant Understanding Improvement
Pre-Test: 45%



Post-Test: 82%



The findings also indicate that marketplace utilization has become one of the most promising digital marketing strategies for MSMEs in Mesuji Regency. Most participants considered Shopee and Tokopedia effective platforms because they provide access to a broader customer base, integrated payment systems, promotional features, and logistics support. Through these platforms, MSME

entrepreneurs can promote products, provide detailed product information, and interact directly with customers from different regions.

Furthermore, participants began utilizing various marketplace features such as product categorization, discount vouchers, free shipping programs, and keyword optimization to increase product visibility. Several participants reported increased confidence in managing online stores and handling digital transactions after completing the training.

Another important finding is that marketplace training not only enhanced participants' marketing capabilities but also increased their motivation and self-confidence in developing their businesses. Participants felt more optimistic because they had acquired new skills and strategies to introduce their products to wider markets. This finding suggests that digital transformation among MSMEs affects not only economic performance but also entrepreneurs' mindset and readiness to adapt to technological advancements.

In addition to the main findings, the study identified several supporting factors that contribute to the successful implementation of marketplace-based marketing, including internet accessibility, smartphone ownership, family support, and participants' willingness to learn new technologies. Conversely, several challenges were also identified, such as limited digital skills among older entrepreneurs, inadequate technological infrastructure in some areas, and the need for continuous mentoring after the completion of the training program.

Overall, the results demonstrate that marketplace training plays a significant role in improving the marketing performance of MSMEs in Mesuji Regency. These findings answer the research objectives by showing that the training successfully enhanced participants' knowledge, skills, and ability to implement digital marketing strategies through Shopee and Tokopedia. With improved marketplace utilization skills, MSME entrepreneurs have greater opportunities to expand their market reach, increase sales, and strengthen their competitiveness in the digital economy era.

DISCUSSION

The results indicate that marketplace training through Shopee and Tokopedia had a positive impact on improving the marketing capabilities of MSME entrepreneurs in Mesuji Regency. The findings suggest that the previously low utilization of marketplace platforms was not caused by a lack of willingness among business owners, but rather by limited knowledge, skills, and access to training related to digital commerce. After participating in the training program, participants gained a better understanding of how marketplace platforms can function as effective and efficient tools for modern marketing.

These findings are consistent with the **Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)**, which explains that individuals are more likely to adopt and use technology when they perceive it as useful and easy to use. In this study, MSME entrepreneurs began to accept and utilize Shopee and Tokopedia after understanding the benefits of these platforms in expanding market reach, increasing sales opportunities, and improving business competitiveness. The practical training sessions enabled participants to experience firsthand that marketplace platforms can be operated relatively easily to support business activities.

The results also support digital marketing theories, which emphasize that online platforms can expand market access, strengthen customer engagement, and enhance product visibility. Prior to the training, most participants marketed their products only within their local communities. Following the training, participants recognized that marketplace platforms provide opportunities to reach customers at regional and national levels. This demonstrates that marketplace utilization offers MSMEs a cost-effective method of promotion while significantly increasing market exposure.

Furthermore, the findings are consistent with previous studies indicating that digital commerce training contributes to improving the performance of micro and small enterprises. Earlier research has shown that marketplace utilization can enhance promotional effectiveness, increase sales potential, and improve customer accessibility. However, this

study contributes additional insights by focusing on MSMEs in Mesuji Regency, where digital literacy levels and technological infrastructure differ from those in more developed urban areas.

In a broader context, the findings suggest that digital transformation among MSMEs cannot be achieved instantly. Instead, it requires continuous education, practical training, and sustained mentoring. Training programs that focus solely on theoretical concepts are often less effective than those incorporating hands-on practice and direct assistance. The participatory approach adopted in this program enabled participants to learn through direct experience, thereby improving their understanding and confidence in using marketplace applications.

The study also revealed that Shopee and Tokopedia were considered effective marketing platforms because of their integrated features, including online payment systems, logistics support, promotional tools, and broad customer networks. Participants found these features beneficial in simplifying business operations and increasing product visibility. Several participants reported that promotional tools such as discount vouchers, free shipping programs, and product keyword optimization could potentially enhance customer interest and sales performance.

Despite the positive outcomes, several challenges were identified during the implementation process. These included limited internet connectivity in some areas, varying levels of digital literacy among participants, limited access to smartphones with adequate specifications, and difficulties in creating attractive product content. These challenges indicate that successful marketplace adoption depends not only on the willingness of MSME entrepreneurs but also on supporting infrastructure, government policies, and continuous assistance programs.

The implications of this study highlight the importance of developing sustainable marketplace training programs for MSME entrepreneurs. Local governments, universities, and relevant institutions should collaborate to provide regular training and mentoring

activities to ensure that business owners can continuously improve their digital competencies and adapt to evolving market trends. Follow-up mentoring is particularly important to help participants overcome technical difficulties and optimize the utilization of marketplace features.

This study has several limitations. The number of participants was relatively limited, and the duration of the training program was relatively short, making it difficult to assess the long-term impact on business performance and sales growth. In addition, differences in participants' digital competencies required varying levels of assistance during the training process. Therefore, future studies are recommended to examine the long-term effectiveness of marketplace training and its impact on MSME income, business sustainability, and competitiveness.

Overall, this study contributes to the development of knowledge regarding digital marketing and marketplace adoption among MSMEs. The findings demonstrate that marketplace training can serve as a strategic solution for improving the marketing capabilities of MSME entrepreneurs, particularly in developing regions such as Mesuji Regency. In addition to its theoretical contributions, this study provides practical implications for local governments, educational institutions, and community development organizations in supporting the digital transformation of MSMEs toward a more competitive, innovative, and sustainable economy.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

The community service program entitled "Training on the Utilization of Information Technology to Improve the Marketing Performance of MSMEs in Mesuji Regency" demonstrates that information technology plays a crucial role in supporting the marketing development of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in the digital era. Based on the results obtained through observations, interviews, documentation, and training evaluations, it was found that prior to the

training program, most MSME owners had a limited understanding of the use of information technology for business marketing. The majority of participants still relied on conventional marketing methods and had not optimally utilized digital media for product promotion and sales activities.

The results of the training indicate that information technology training successfully improved participants' knowledge and skills in utilizing digital media as a marketing tool. After attending the training, participants gained a better understanding of how to use social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp Business for product promotion. In addition, they developed the ability to utilize online marketplaces and create simple digital promotional content. The improvement in pre-test and post-test scores demonstrated a significant increase in participants' understanding of information technology applications in business marketing.

The findings also reveal that the most effective digital marketing strategy for MSMEs in Mesuji Regency is the use of simple and accessible social media platforms that match the capabilities of local business owners. WhatsApp Business and Facebook emerged as the most frequently utilized platforms because they are practical and familiar to the community. These platforms were found to help MSMEs expand market reach, improve customer interaction, and promote products more effectively at relatively low costs.

From a theoretical perspective, this community service activity contributes to the development of knowledge in digital marketing and technology-based MSME empowerment. The findings reinforce the theory that the adoption of digital technology can improve marketing effectiveness when supported by appropriate training and mentoring. Furthermore, the results indicate that the success of digital transformation among MSMEs depends not only on the availability of technology but also on the capability of human resources to utilize it effectively.

From a practical perspective, the outcomes of this program provide valuable insights for local

governments, educational institutions, and MSME owners in designing digital marketing training programs that meet community needs. Information technology training can serve as an effective strategy for economic empowerment by enhancing the competitiveness of MSMEs in the digital economy. Moreover, the study highlights the importance of continuous mentoring to enable MSME owners to independently develop and sustain their digital competencies.

Despite its positive outcomes, this community service program has several limitations. These include the relatively limited number of participants, the short duration of the program, and differences in technological capabilities among participants. Furthermore, the study did not comprehensively measure the long-term impact of information technology adoption on income growth and business sustainability following the training.

Therefore, future community service programs are expected to involve a larger number of participants and longer implementation periods to generate more comprehensive results. Future studies may also investigate the impact of information technology utilization on sales growth, customer loyalty, and business sustainability using quantitative or mixed-method approaches. Such efforts will contribute to the advancement of MSME digitalization studies and support the development of technology-based community economic empowerment.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this community service program, several recommendations can be proposed to optimize the utilization of information technology in improving MSME marketing performance.

For MSME owners in Mesuji Regency, it is recommended that they continuously improve their knowledge and skills in information technology, particularly in digital marketing. Business owners should actively utilize social media platforms, online marketplaces, and other digital applications as tools for product promotion and sales in order to remain

competitive in an increasingly digital business environment.

For local government agencies, greater support should be provided for the development of digitally empowered MSMEs through training programs, mentoring activities, and the provision of information technology facilities. The government should also expand access to digital marketing training in rural areas to ensure equal opportunities for all MSME owners. In addition, improving internet infrastructure remains essential to support the successful digital transformation of MSMEs in Mesuji Regency.

For higher education institutions and academics, the findings of this study can serve as a foundation for developing more practical and sustainable community service programs. Universities are encouraged to continue playing an active role in providing education, mentoring, and innovation related to information technology utilization among MSME owners. Training activities should emphasize practical applications alongside theoretical knowledge to ensure that participants can directly implement the acquired skills in their businesses.

Furthermore, future community service initiatives conducted by lecturers and researchers should involve broader coverage and employ more diverse methodologies. Future studies may combine qualitative and quantitative approaches to obtain a deeper understanding of the impact of information technology on marketing performance and MSME income growth. Additional research may also examine the effectiveness of specific digital platforms, local product branding strategies, and consumer behavior in digital marketing contexts.

To address the limitations of this study, future programs should involve a larger number of participants from diverse business sectors and be conducted over a longer period to enable a more comprehensive assessment of information technology adoption among MSMEs. Continuous evaluation of training and mentoring activities is also necessary to

maximize outcomes and enhance the validity and generalizability of future findings.

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