

## Optimization Of Digital Marketing In The Marketplace

Alfina Maulida<sup>1</sup>, Dwimei Ayudewandari Pranatami<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Walisono State Islamic University Semarang, Indonesia

Address: Semarang, Indonesia

[alfinamaulida90@gmail.com](mailto:alfinamaulida90@gmail.com)

**Abstract.** This Real Work Lecture (KKN) program aims to improve the digital marketing skills of MSME players in Sekaran Village, Gunungpati District, Semarang City. With technological developments, digital marketing has become important to expand market reach and increase sales. This activity includes training and seminars on the basics of digital marketing, choosing the right marketplace, optimizing seller accounts, as well as implementing SEO and decorating online stores. Participants are also invited to practice directly creating an account, uploading products, and optimizing their shop. The results of the activity showed an increase in participants' knowledge and skills in digital marketing, as well as an increase in traffic and sales on their marketplace accounts. This program has succeeded in having a positive impact on MSMEs, helping them utilize technology to achieve greater business success.

**Keywords:** Digital Marketing, Marketplace, MSMEs, Technology.

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### 1. BACKGROUND

The development of technology and the internet has brought major changes in various aspects of human life, including in the business world. In this digital era, the marketing concept has evolved from traditional methods to digital marketing which offers various advantages. Digital marketing allows businesses to reach a wider audience, save on promotional costs, and measure campaign effectiveness accurately and in real-time. Marketplace, as a digital platform, provides opportunities for business people to sell their products online with a market reach that is not limited by geographical boundaries.

In Sekaran Village, Gunungpati District, many micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) still rely on traditional marketing methods such as word of mouth and direct promotions to consumers. Although this method has its advantages, especially in building personal relationships with consumers, its effectiveness is limited in today's digital era. Lack of understanding and skills in digital marketing is one of the main obstacles for MSMEs in Sekaran Village, Gunungpati District to compete in a wider and more competitive market.

The Community Service Program (KKN) carried out by Walisongo State Islamic University students aims to overcome this challenge by providing training and seminars in digital marketing to MSMEs in Sekaran Village, Gunungpati District. This program is designed to introduce basic digital marketing concepts, how to choose the right marketplace, seller account optimization techniques, as well as implementing SEO and online store decoration. Through this approach, it is hoped that MSME players can understand and utilize digital marketing to increase sales and develop their business.

The training and seminars held in this KKN program cover various important topics in digital marketing. Participants are taught about online advertising, social media, email marketing, SEO optimization, affiliate marketing, websites and video ads. Apart from that, they also gain knowledge about how to choose a marketplace that suits their business needs, paying attention to the features offered, industry specialization, as well as applicable commissions and administration fees.

One of the main focuses of this program is teaching practical steps in creating and optimizing seller accounts on the marketplace. Participants are invited to immediately practice creating an account, uploading products, and optimizing the appearance of their shop. SEO optimization techniques and store decoration are also an important part of this training, because they can increase product visibility and attract more buyers. The use of high-quality product photos, attractive product descriptions, and choosing the right background are important aspects in effective online store decoration.

With this KKN program, it is hoped that MSMEs in Sekaran Village, Gunungpati District can be better prepared to face challenges and take advantage of the opportunities offered by digital marketing. Increasing knowledge and skills in digital marketing is expected to help them increase sales, expand markets and develop their businesses sustainably. This program also aims to create sustainability in the application of digital marketing among village MSMEs, so that they can continue to develop and compete in an increasingly competitive market. Through this approach, the KKN program is expected to have a significant positive impact on local economic development in Sekaran Village, Gunungpati District.

## **2. METHOD**

This research was carried out as part of the Real Work Lecture (KKN) program for UIN Walisongo Semarang students which aims to improve the skills and knowledge of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in optimizing digital marketing in the marketplace.

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study method. This approach was chosen to understand in depth the digital marketing strategies implemented by MSMEs in the marketplace and the challenges they face. This case study focuses on several MSMEs in KKN locations who are partners in this research.

The research location was chosen based on an area that has high potential for MSMEs, but with a low level of digital marketing adoption. The research subjects are MSME owners or managers who have run their businesses in the marketplace, but have not yet optimized their digital marketing strategies to the maximum.

Data is collected through the following techniques:

- In-depth Interviews: Interviews were conducted with MSME owners or managers to understand their knowledge about digital marketing, experience in using marketplaces, and the obstacles they face in optimizing digital marketing.
- Participatory Observation: The KKN Team carried out direct observations of digital marketing activities carried out by MSMEs in the marketplace, including analysis of uploaded content, use of SEO, and interactions with customers.
- Documentation: Secondary data such as sales records, online store visitor statistics, and digital advertising performance analysis are also collected to complement primary data.

The collected data was analyzed using thematic analysis techniques. This process involves identifying the main themes that emerge from the interview and observation data, as well as the relationships between these themes. This analysis aims to find general patterns in the marketing strategies used by MSMEs and the factors that influence the effectiveness of these strategies.

Based on the findings from data analysis, the KKN team develops and implements digital marketing strategies tailored to the needs of each MSME. This implementation is carried out in stages by involving MSME owners in every process, starting from content creation, SEO optimization, to the use of digital tools such as AI. Evaluations are carried out to assess the success of implementing the strategy through increasing store traffic, increasing customer interaction, and changes in sales figures.

The results of implementing this digital marketing strategy are then compiled in the form of a final KKN report which contains the main findings, analysis and recommendations for MSMEs and related stakeholders. This report is also accompanied by documentation of the process and results which can be used as a reference for the implementation of subsequent KKN or other MSME empowerment programs.

This methodology is expected to be able to provide a comprehensive picture of the real conditions of MSMEs in utilizing digital marketing in the marketplace and make a significant contribution to increasing digital marketing capabilities among small businesses.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### Results

#### Increased Understanding of Digital Marketing:

- In-depth Interviews: From the results of in-depth interviews with MSME owners or managers, it was found that most business actors have a limited understanding of the concept of digital marketing. They are generally familiar with marketplace platforms, but do not yet fully understand optimization strategies such as SEO, effective use of social media, and use of AI.
- Participatory Observation: Observations show that many MSMEs have not made maximum use of the features available on the marketplace, such as strategic keyword placement, product image optimization, and attractive product descriptions. Most only rely on product uploads without paying attention to optimization aspects that can increase visibility and sales.



**Figure 1.** There was a presentation of material about digital marketing

#### Challenges Faced by MSMEs:

- Technical Barriers: Many MSMEs find it difficult to implement digital marketing strategies due to limited technical knowledge. They face difficulties in understanding and applying SEO concepts, creating interesting content, and using digital tools such as AI.

- Limited Resources: Some MSMEs have limitations in terms of time and energy to manage online stores optimally. This causes them to be unable to consistently update content or respond quickly to customers.



Figure 2. Asking the audience about digital marketing barriers

### **Strategy Implementation Effectiveness:**

SEO and Content Optimization: After implementing a digital marketing strategy involving SEO optimization and creating more interesting content, most of the MSMEs involved in this program experienced a significant increase in their online store traffic. There is also an increase in customer interactions, which leads to increased sales.

### **Increasing MSME Competency:**

This program has succeeded in increasing the competency of MSME players in using digital marketing. Many of those who were previously unfamiliar with concepts such as SEO and AI can now apply them with more confidence in the management of their online stores.

### **Discussion**

This research shows that continuous education and training is very important in empowering MSMEs in the digital era. This training is needed because there are still many MSME players who face big challenges in understanding the technical aspects of digital technology. This lack of understanding is often the main obstacle that prevents MSMEs from utilizing technology optimally in managing their business. To overcome this obstacle, a structured and in-depth training program is needed. Continuous training will provide MSMEs with the opportunity to learn and update their knowledge as technology develops. In this way, MSMEs will not only follow trends, but will also be able to understand and apply digital

technology in their business strategy. This education is not only limited to introducing new technology, but also includes effective ways of managing digital business, such as online marketing, inventory management, and data analysis. With in-depth understanding, MSMEs can be more confident in facing the changes and challenges that arise in the digital business world. They will be better prepared to innovate and adapt quickly to changing market needs, thereby increasing their competitiveness.

Technology, especially artificial intelligence (AI), plays an important role in helping MSMEs manage and optimize their online stores. AI offers various solutions that can make things easier for MSMEs, such as process automation, data analysis, and personalization of customer experiences. In the context of online businesses, AI can be used to manage inventory, forecast sales trends, and even provide product recommendations to customers based on their shopping behavior. This is very helpful for MSMEs which often have limited resources, both in terms of labor, time and expertise. By utilizing AI, MSMEs can overcome these limitations, so they can focus on other aspects of their business that require more attention. Apart from that, AI technology also allows MSMEs to remain competitive in an increasingly tight digital market. In a dynamic business environment, AI helps businesses to remain relevant and able to compete with larger companies. With the right implementation of AI, MSMEs can optimize their operations, increase efficiency, and ultimately strengthen their position in the market.

Marketplaces currently provide various features that MSMEs can utilize to increase the visibility and sales of their products. These features, such as paid promotions, store display settings, and data analysis, are designed to help businesses attract more customers and increase sales conversions. However, without good understanding and the right strategy, many MSMEs are unable to take full advantage of these features. This lack of understanding often causes them to miss out on big opportunities that could actually improve the performance of their online store. Therefore, coaching that focuses on using these marketplace features is very important. With the right coaching, MSMEs can learn how to utilize each feature to support their business goals. This coaching also helps them in designing effective strategies to attract more customers, increase product visibility and optimize sales. When these features are used optimally, the impact can be very significant on the growth of MSME businesses on the marketplace platform.

Implementing the right digital marketing strategy has been proven to have a direct effect on increasing traffic and customer interaction in MSME online stores. This shows that digital marketing optimization is not just theory, but can be applied practically with real results. When MSMEs implement well-designed strategies, they can see an increase in the number of visitors

coming to their online stores, as well as increased interactions with customers. A good strategy covers various aspects, from SEO optimization, use of social media, to paid advertising campaigns. All of this is designed to grab the attention of potential customers and encourage them to interact with the business. When this strategy is implemented correctly, MSMEs will not only see an increase in traffic, but also an increase in conversion rates and sales. This is because interested and engaged customers are more likely to make a purchase. Therefore, it is important for MSMEs to understand and implement appropriate digital marketing strategies to ensure that they can maximize the potential offered by the digital world to support their business growth.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

Marketplaces have become the main platform for business actors to reach consumers more widely and efficiently. With easy access and features provided by the marketplace, business actors can increase sales and expand their market share.

Implementing digital marketing strategies, such as SEO optimization, use of social media, and implementation of AI, is very important to increase product visibility and competitiveness in the marketplace. Students are expected to be able to assist MSMEs in designing and implementing these strategies during KKN.

The use of artificial intelligence (AI) technology in digital marketing enables more efficient and effective processes, especially in content creation and SEO optimization. Students are expected to introduce and teach this technology to MSMEs during the KKN program.

Through the KKN program, students play an active role in supporting MSMEs to adapt to changing trends and technology. This not only helps MSMEs survive, but also thrive amidst increasingly fierce competition in the digital market.

Overall, the training and seminar activities in this KKN program are expected to increase the capacity of MSMEs in utilizing digital technology for their business growth, as well as provide valuable practical experience for students in applying the knowledge they have learned at university.

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