

# Strengthening Digital Marketing Capacity among Culinary MSMEs through Collaborative Empowerment

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| Article History                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Abstract                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
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| <p>Received: 19 August 2026<br/>Revised: 27 August 2026<br/>Accepted: 30 August 2026<br/>Published: 31 August 2026</p> <p><b>Keywords:</b> <i>digital marketing, MSMEs, capacity building, community empowerment, collaboration.</i></p> | <p>Digital marketing has become important for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) to expand market reach and build more sustainable relationships with customers. This community service activity aimed to provide MSME actors with practical knowledge of digital marketing through collaboration among UPZ, the Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Banjarnegara Regency, and Universitas Amikom Purwokerto. The activity was held on April 27, 2026, at Saung Bu Mansur, Banjarnegara, and was attended by 20 MSMEs from various creative-economy sectors. The activity used interactive presentations, discussions, question-and-answer sessions, case studies, and follow-up action planning. The material covered digital marketing channels, content strategy, customer journey, marketing funnel, targeting, data-driven marketing, KPIs, data analysis, budgeting, A/B testing, and digital ethics. The activity indicated active participant engagement through questions, experience sharing, and discussions on social media and content strategies. The activity also provided participants with initial knowledge and clearer directions for subsequent digital marketing implementation. However, quantitative measurement through pre-tests and post-tests was not conducted. Practical and continuous mentoring is therefore needed to support the consistent application of the knowledge in participants' businesses.</p> |

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) play an important role in supporting community economic activity. However, changes in consumer behavior and the increasing use of digital platforms require MSME actors to develop more adaptive marketing approaches. Digitalization enables small businesses to manage communication, promotion, transactions, and customer relationships through various channels that can be accessed at relatively affordable cost. At the same time, digital transformation should not be understood merely as the use of social media, but as the integration of technology into business functions and marketing decision-making [1].

The digital marketing framework positions customers, content, communication, connection, and data use as interrelated components of the marketing process. Therefore, having a social media account does not automatically indicate a business's digital readiness. MSME actors need to understand communication objectives, target-audience characteristics, the customer journey, and performance indicators that can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of content and promotion [2].

Studies on MSMEs show that some business actors have not yet utilized the potential of digital channels optimally. Limited knowledge, internal resources, experience in managing technology, and

strategic planning capabilities can constrain adoption. In Indonesia, e-commerce adoption and technology use among MSMEs are also influenced by perceived benefits, technological readiness, managerial capability, and the business environment [3], [4]. This condition shows that training should focus on applicable capabilities rather than merely introducing digital terminology.

Training-based empowerment programs in digital marketing have been implemented in several MSME communities and have shown the relevance of social media, content creation, and customer communication materials to strengthening business marketing readiness [5]. Social media also creates opportunities for two-way interaction and content co-creation, but its use needs to be accompanied by message planning, consistent business identity, and communication ethics so that it does not stop at unmeasured content-posting activities [6].

In this activity, MSME actors in Banjarnegara Regency required support in selecting and utilizing appropriate digital marketing channels to promote their products. Based on the initial needs assessment conducted before the activity, participants demonstrated varying levels of digital marketing practices, particularly in the use of social media platforms, content planning, customer targeting, and the use of marketing data. The assessment also indicated that participants needed practical guidance to connect digital marketing strategies with their day-to-day business activities. Therefore, the training materials were designed to bridge strategic concepts, such as the customer journey, marketing funnel, targeting, data-driven marketing, and KPIs, with practical marketing practices relevant to the participants' business experiences. This approach is consistent with recent evidence emphasizing the importance of data use, customer responsiveness, and the management of digital communication risks [6], [7].

This community service activity was conducted through collaboration among UPZ, the Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Banjarnegara Regency, and Universitas Amikom Purwokerto. The collaboration brought together MSME empowerment needs, institutional networks, and academic knowledge. The activity aimed to provide MSME actors with practical knowledge of digital marketing and enable participants to identify appropriate digital marketing channels and develop follow-up action plans relevant to their respective businesses. The expected outcomes were active participation in the training sessions, identification of suitable digital marketing channels, and completion of a practical follow-up action plan for subsequent business implementation.

## 2. METHOD

The activity used participatory training. Participants received the material and connected digital marketing concepts with their product-marketing experiences. It involved 20 MSMEs from creative-economy sectors and was held on Monday, April 27, 2026, from 08:00 WIB until completion at Saung Bu Mansur (Glass House Hall), Jl. Bambang Sugeng No. 31, Parakancanggih, Banjarnegara. Following the event rundown, digital marketing was delivered in two sessions and concluded with a Follow-up Action Plan (RTL). The first session ran from 11:30 to 12:00 WIB, the second from 13:15 to 14:00 WIB, and the RTL from 14:30 to 15:00 WIB. This arrangement allowed gradual delivery and opportunities for questions and experience sharing.

Table 1. Digital marketing training session sequence

| Time        | Session                      | Activity focus                                                                                                 |
|-------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 11:30-12:00 | Digital Marketing Session I  | Introduction to digital marketing, digital channels, and the MSME marketing context.                           |
| 13:15-14:00 | Digital Marketing Session II | Content strategy, customer journey, funnel, targeting, KPIs, tools, data analysis, budgeting, and A/B testing. |
| 14:30-15:00 | Follow-up Action Plan (RTL)  | Formulation of implementation directions                                                                       |

Delivery methods included interactive presentations, discussions, question-and-answer sessions, and case studies. The material progressed from concepts to application: (1) digital marketing concepts and developments; (2) digital channels; (3) content strategy; (4) customer journey and marketing funnel; (5) targeting; (6) data-driven marketing and KPIs; (7) digital marketing tools; (8) data analysis; (9) budgeting; (10) A/B testing; and (11) implementation and ethics. Examples and case studies linked the material to MSME marketing activities.

Evaluation was conducted descriptively as an implementation evaluation rather than as a measurement of learning gain. The observation sheet recorded participant engagement, relevance of questions and responses, connections between the material and participants' business experiences, and the follow-up directions discussed during the RTL session. Observers recorded relevant participant responses, questions, and discussion outcomes during the activity and compiled the observations after the session. The qualitative notes were reviewed descriptively by grouping observations according to the predetermined indicators of engagement, relevance, business-context connection, and follow-up direction. The activity was considered to have met its implementation objectives when participants actively participated in the sessions, raised questions or provided responses relevant to the material, related the concepts to their business experiences, and identified follow-up directions during the RTL discussion. Because no validated instrument or pre-test/post-test measurement was used, these observations are interpreted as evidence of participant engagement and implementation outcomes, not as evidence of increased digital marketing capacity.

### **3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **3.1 Implementation and collaborative activities**

The activity took place in an interactive atmosphere in the glass-house hall of Saung Bu Mansur. Participants followed the presentation with the support of laptops, a projector, and presentation materials. The documentation shows the delivery of the material, interaction between the facilitator and participants, and discussions among MSME participants. The use of case examples helped direct the discussion toward real issues, such as selecting social media platforms, preparing messages, and maintaining consistency in product communication.

The collaboration among UPZ, the Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Banjarnegara Regency, and Universitas Amikom Purwokerto provided an institutional foundation for program implementation. The collaboration was important not only during delivery but also for sustainability, because strengthening digital capacity requires access to knowledge, networks, and mentoring. This collaborative model is relevant to MSME empowerment, which cannot be addressed through a single meeting or a single type of intervention alone.



Figure 1. Delivery of the material using presentation media and video conferencing.



Figure 2. MSME participants listening to the training material.

### 3.2 Relevance of the material to MSME needs

The material covered both strategic and operational aspects of digital marketing. The discussion of digital channels addressed the differences in audience characteristics, content formats, and communication objectives across various digital media. The content strategy session focused on developing messages that are informative, persuasive, and consistent with product uniqueness. The customer journey and marketing funnel sessions then introduced the stages through which potential customers interact with and respond to digital marketing activities. Through these topics, digital marketing was presented as a process for building and maintaining customer relationships rather than merely as a short-term promotional tool. Examples and case studies were used to relate these concepts to marketing activities commonly encountered by MSME actors.

The concepts of customer journey and marketing funnel provided a framework for understanding stages of customer interaction, from product awareness and consideration to purchase and the possibility of repurchase. Targeting helped participants consider which prospective customers were most relevant, while data-driven marketing and KPIs introduced a simple way to assess audience responses to content. Emphasizing data is important because digital-channel use is more beneficial when marketing decisions are based on information that is observed and evaluated periodically [2], [7].

The topics of budgeting and A/B testing broadened participants' understanding that digital promotion requires resource management and testing. MSME actors can start with a limited budget, set

clear objectives, and then compare variations in messages, visuals, or publication times based on relevant indicators. This approach is consistent with findings that the use of digital channels by MSMEs needs to be supported by the ability to manage objectives, select channels, and evaluate use so that digital opportunities do not stop at a passive online presence [3], [5].

### 3.3 Participant engagement and activity outcomes

Participant engagement was documented through observations of questions, responses, experience sharing, and contributions during discussions on social media use and content strategy. The facilitators recorded participant questions and discussion points during the activity and noted examples in which participants related the material to their own product-marketing experiences. During the RTL discussion, participants were also invited to identify digital marketing actions relevant to their respective businesses. These observations indicate that the activity generated discussion related to participants' existing marketing practices and provided opportunities to connect the presented concepts with their business contexts. However, because the activity did not use a structured engagement scale or quantitative participation measurement, the observations are reported as implementation evidence rather than as a quantitative measure of learning or capacity improvement.



Figure 3. Interaction between the facilitator and participants during the discussion session.

The main achievement at this stage was the formation of a more structured initial understanding of digital marketing. This finding is consistent with previous community service activities that position social media and digital marketing training as an initial step in developing MSME actors' knowledge [5], [8]. However, this achievement cannot be interpreted as an improvement in business performance or sales because the activity did not collect sales data, account metrics, or pre- and post-training measurements.

Table 2. Evaluation indicators and descriptive findings

| Indicator                 | Observation method            | Activity findings                                                                                                 |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Attendance and engagement | Observation during sessions   | All 20 MSMEs participated in the activity series and engaged in the learning process.                             |
| Interaction               | Questions and responses       | Participants asked questions and shared their product marketing experiences.                                      |
| Relevance of the material | Discussion and case examples  | Discussions of social media, content, target audiences, and analytics were considered relevant to business needs. |
| Sustainability            | Follow-up action plan session | Participants identified a need for more practical activities and continued mentoring.                             |

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### 3.4 Follow-up plan and limitations

The RTL session showed that a one-time training activity needs to be followed by more practical activities. Mentoring priorities include content creation, social media management, target-audience identification, content-calendar development, and digital marketing performance analysis [8]. Mentoring can be conducted through simple product-based assignments, such as developing one customer profile, creating several content variations, setting indicators, and evaluating the results over a specified period [9], [10].

A limitation of the activity was that the training time was divided into several sessions and was not accompanied by quantitative measurement. In addition, the available documentation primarily recorded the implementation process rather than changes in marketing behavior after the activity. Previous community service programs have addressed this limitation by combining training with pre-test and post-test assessments, observation of digital marketing practices, and follow-up monitoring to evaluate changes after the intervention [11], [12]. Other studies have also highlighted the need for competency-based evaluation and post-program measurement when formal pre-test and post-test instruments are not used [13]. Therefore, future programs should incorporate pre-tests and post-tests, practical worksheets, periodic monitoring of social media accounts or content, and follow-up interviews. These measures would provide stronger evidence of whether the knowledge introduced during training develops into consistent digital marketing practices over time [14],[15].



Figure 4. Group documentation with participants and partner representatives.

## 4. CONCLUSION

The digital marketing capacity-building activity, implemented through collaboration among UPZ, the Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Banjarnegara Regency, and Universitas Amikom Purwokerto, introduced 20 MSME participants to digital marketing channels, content strategy, customer journey, marketing funnel, targeting, KPIs, data analysis, and digital marketing ethics. Participant engagement was observed through questions, experience sharing, and discussions related to the application of social media and content strategies in their businesses. During the follow-up action plan (RTL) discussion, participants were also encouraged to identify digital marketing actions relevant to their respective businesses. These findings describe the implementation and observed participant engagement and should not be interpreted as evidence of increased digital marketing capability or improved business performance. Because no pre-test, post-test, or validated measurement instrument was used, quantitative changes in knowledge, capability, or business performance could not be established. Future programs should incorporate practical content-creation activities, social media

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management, target-audience identification, and performance monitoring, accompanied by structured evaluation and follow-up mentoring, to assess and support the application of digital marketing practices.

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