

ADOPTION OF INFORMATION SYSTEMS AND DIGITAL PROMOTION STRATEGIES AMONG RURAL MSMES

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Abstract: This community empowerment initiative aims to enhance the digital readiness of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Permata Baru Village, Ogan Ilir Regency, through the implementation of information systems and digital promotion strategies. Prior to the program, local MSME actors faced several challenges, including limited digital literacy, a lack of understanding of online marketing strategies, and minimal utilization of social media as a promotional tool, resulting in restricted market reach. The program adopts an educational and participatory approach, combining community-based learning, interactive discussions, and consultation sessions facilitated by lecturers and students from the Faculty of Economics, Sriwijaya University. The findings indicate strong enthusiasm among MSME participants and an improved understanding of how digitalization can expand market access. Participants have begun to utilize social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok to promote their products. Overall, this initiative contributes to advancing digital literacy and technology-based marketing skills among rural MSMEs, thereby fostering inclusive and sustainable local economic growth.

Keywords: community engagement; digital literacy; digital promotion; information systems; MSMEs; rural development

Abstrak: Inisiatif pemberdayaan masyarakat ini bertujuan untuk meningkatkan kesiapan digital Usaha Mikro, Kecil, dan Menengah (UMKM) di Desa Permata Baru, Kabupaten Ogan Ilir, melalui penerapan sistem informasi dan strategi promosi digital. Sebelum program ini dilaksanakan, para pelaku UMKM masih menghadapi sejumlah kendala, seperti terbatasnya literasi digital, kurangnya pemahaman mengenai strategi pemasaran daring, serta minimnya pemanfaatan media sosial sebagai sarana promosi sehingga jangkauan pasar mereka relatif sempit. Program ini mengadopsi pendekatan edukatif dan partisipatif, yang menggabungkan pembelajaran komunitas, diskusi interaktif, dan sesi konsultasi yang dilakukan oleh dosen dan mahasiswa dari Fakultas Ekonomi, Universitas Sriwijaya. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa peserta UMKM menunjukkan antusiasme yang tinggi dan peningkatan pemahaman tentang bagaimana digitalisasi dapat memperluas akses pasar. Mereka telah mulai memanfaatkan platform media sosial seperti Instagram, Facebook, dan TikTok untuk promosi produk. Secara keseluruhan, inisiatif ini berkontribusi untuk memajukan literasi digital dan keterampilan pemasaran berbasis teknologi di kalangan UMKM pedesaan, yang mendorong pertumbuhan ekonomi lokal yang inklusif dan berkelanjutan.

Kata kunci: pengabdian kepada masyarakat; literasi digital; promosi digital; sistem informasi; UMKM; pembangunan perdesaan

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is among the countries with the largest number of internet users globally, and this figure continues to grow each year. According to data from the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII) reported in Mufti Prasetyo et al. (2024), the number of internet users reached 221,563,479 in 2024, representing an increase of 1.4 percent compared to the previous year. This rapid expansion in internet connectivity presents significant opportunities for the digitalization of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), as broader access enables more efficient, cost-effective, and wide-reaching marketing and business interactions (Laeli Istikharoh et al., 2025).

As the largest economic sector in Indonesia, MSMEs play a crucial role in job creation, unemployment reduction, and in strengthening economic resilience during periods of crisis. The growing penetration of internet use provides a strategic foundation for enhancing MSME competitiveness through the adoption of digital technologies, including online marketing, e-commerce platforms, and digital business information systems. Thus, the increasing number of internet users not only reflects the advancement of information technology in Indonesia but also constitutes a critical driver of the national digital transformation of MSMEs (Ulum et al., 2023). For example, in the post-pandemic period, numerous MSMEs began integrating e-commerce platforms such as Tokopedia and Shopee, utilizing social media channels like Instagram and TikTok for promotional activities, and adopting digital payment systems to improve operational efficiency and market reach (Pramesti & Fauzatul Laily Nisa, 2024).

The definition of MSMEs is stipulated in Undang-Undang Negara Republik Indonesia No. 20 Tahun 2008. According to the law, a micro enterprise is a productive business owned and managed by an individual or sole proprietor that fulfills the regulatory criteria. In contrast, a small enterprise refers to an independent productive economic unit, operated by an individual or business entity, that does not function as a subsidiary or branch of a medium or large enterprise, either directly or indirectly (Widyanata et al., 2022). Furthermore, small enterprises must also comply with the criteria established under the prevailing law.

According to data from the Ministry of Cooperatives and Small and Medium Enterprises (Kemenkop UKM), the number of MSMEs in Indonesia currently reaches approximately 66 million business units, contributing around 62.5% to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), equivalent to about 9,000 trillion rupiah. In addition, MSMEs play a vital role in the Indonesian economy, as they are capable of absorbing more than 98% of the workforce and contribute approximately 61% of the total investment in the country (Ristanti & Agung Sulistyo, 2025).

In general, it can be concluded that MSMEs serve as the backbone of Indonesia's economy (Aprieni et al., 2024). One of the main characteristics of MSMEs is their ability to adapt and develop flexible business processes while maintaining relatively low operational costs (Widyanata et al., 2023). Therefore, the success of the MSME sector holds significant potential to generate a positive and substantial impact on Indonesia's overall economic growth (Raja et al., 2023; Yolanda, 2024).

After examining the national potential of MSMEs, conducting an assessment at the local level becomes cru-

cial to capturing the real dynamics, resource limitations, and context-specific opportunities that influence their development. Localized analysis enables policymakers and researchers to identify factors that may be overlooked in national statistics, including community economic structures, production characteristics, and market linkages unique to specific regions. In this context, a more in-depth evaluation of MSME development potential in particular areas, such as Permata Baru Village in South Sumatra, becomes increasingly significant. The village, located in Ogan Ilir Regency, is demographically marked by a population that relies heavily on informal economic activities and home-based industries, making MSMEs a central pillar of household economic resilience. Economically, Permata Baru Village is also recognized as a local center for traditional processed food production, contributing to value creation and supporting the livelihood of its surrounding communities.

Permata Baru Village produces a variety of MSME commodities, including crackers, chips, kemplang, pempek, and handmade crafts such as keychains. Considering the diversity of these products, it is necessary to conduct outreach activities focusing on information systems and digital promotion to facilitate more effective marketing and sales processes. Nevertheless, despite the presence of several promising products, many business owners continue to rely on conventional marketing methods and have not yet fully utilized digital channels. This situation restricts market reach and limits the visibility of their products beyond the local area. Furthermore, some MSME actors still face challenges in adapting to new digital platforms. These circumstances indicate the need for more systematic interventions through targeted support and

capacity-building initiatives to enable them to manage technology-based marketing activities more effectively and sustainably.

Given the substantial potential of MSMEs in Permata Baru Village and the steady increase in internet usage, these developments motivated the Community Service Team from the Faculty of Economics, Sriwijaya University to conduct outreach activities targeted at local MSME actors. This initiative is designed to enhance their understanding of how to effectively utilize the internet, particularly as a tool for sales and digital promotion that can expand market reach and sustainably increase MSME income, thereby improving business profitability and overall household welfare. Strengthening these digital capabilities is increasingly critical as market competition is now heavily influenced by online visibility, consumer interaction, and the ability to adapt to rapid technological change. Through this program, the team aims not only to improve technical skills but also to cultivate broader digital literacy, enabling MSME actors to make informed decisions regarding online marketing strategies, platform selection, and the use of digital financial tools. Ultimately, this initiative seeks to reinforce the digital resilience of MSMEs, enhance their business competitiveness, expand access to diverse market segments, and contribute to a more inclusive and sustainable pathway for local economic development.

METHOD

This Community Service Program was carried out through a series of structured stages, conducted at the Permata Baru Village Office located in Ogan Ilir

Regency. The activity was implemented in collaboration with the Village Head, local community leaders, and supported by a team of lecturers and students from the Faculty of Economics, Sriwijaya University. To achieve the predetermined objectives, this Community Service Program employed a set of systematically designed methods, which include the following:

Community Education: This method was implemented as the initial stage to ensure that MSME actors gained direct exposure to the use of the internet for information systems and digital promotion. The activity began with the presentation of case examples tailored to participants' business profiles, illustrating common challenges faced by MSMEs and demonstrating how digital platforms can be applied as practical solutions.

Following this introduction, the program continued with step-by-step simulation sessions, where participants practiced using various digital applications such as Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok. The simulations were structured progressively, starting from basic features and advancing to marketing functions, enabling participants to gradually build confidence and overcome psychological or technical barriers related to digital adoption.

Through this hands-on and application-oriented approach, participants were able to ask questions, practice directly, and evaluate their learning outcomes iteratively. As a result, MSME actors not only gained conceptual understanding of digital tools but also developed operational skills that could be immediately applied in their business practices. This integrated academic-practical method effectively supports the sustainable enhancement of MSMEs' digital capacity.

Discussion and Question-Answer Session: The question-and-answer session served as a key component of the Community Service Program, providing MSME participants with a platform to discuss challenges and seek solutions related to the use of the internet for information management and digital promotion. The session began by inviting participants to share the obstacles they encountered in adopting digital technologies, particularly those related to limited digital literacy, technical skills, and unfamiliarity with online business tools.

Through an interactive dialogue facilitated by lecturers and students from the Faculty of Economics, Sriwijaya University, participants received personalized explanations and practical solutions tailored to their business needs. Relevant case examples from the participants' own business contexts were used to ensure that the guidance provided was both realistic and directly applicable.

During the session, MSME actors were introduced to various digital platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, websites, and other online marketing tools. They also received guidance on customer data management, online market analysis, and the use of digital business applications (including accounting and inventory software) to support more efficient operations. Issues related to data security and privacy were also addressed, helping participants understand safe online practices and the ethical use of digital content.

By following this structured interactive process, participants gained clearer insights into how digital technology can enhance business efficiency, visibility, and competitiveness. The session ultimately strengthened their confidence and motivation to apply digital tools strategi-

cally, contributing to their empowerment and growth within the digital economy.

DISCUSSION

The method implemented in this community service activity was interactive socialization, designed to ensure that MSME actors in Permata Baru Village could clearly and comprehensively understand the materials presented. The approach emphasized active involvement and mutual exchange, allowing participants to connect new information with their prior experiences as business practitioners. Instead of relying solely on one-way explanations, facilitators encouraged dialogue, questions, and reflection, creating a learning environment where participants could critically explore the challenges they face in their business operations. This interactive setting also supported a collaborative learning process in which knowledge was not only delivered but also constructed together with participants, enabling them to internalize the material more effectively and apply it directly within their business contexts.

The active and participatory atmosphere of the discussion enabled the facilitators to deliver context-specific solutions tailored to the issues faced by MSME participants, particularly regarding digital promotion strategies and internet-based information systems. This approach ensured that the learning process was both practical and responsive to the participants' real needs, thereby enhancing their capacity to apply digital tools effectively in managing and promoting their businesses.



Figure 1. Socialization Activity



Figure 2. Socialization Activity

One of the primary challenges expressed by MSME actors was the lack of customers, which represents a significant risk in sustaining their businesses. In response to this issue, the facilitator advised participants to market their products through online platforms in order to reach a broader consumer base. The facilitator also explained effective strategies for utilizing social media and e-commerce platforms (such as Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok) as promotional tools to enhance product visibility, strengthen competitiveness, and expand market reach.

Participant engagement during the activity was assessed through several structured indicators. First, active attendance was reflected in participants' consistent involvement throughout the sessions, both during the material presentations and the hands-on simulations. Second, interaction and verbal participation were evaluated based on the frequency and relevance of questions raised, partic-

ularly those related to digital marketing strategies, content management, and technical aspects of using digital applications. Third, practical performance was measured through the outputs produced during simulation activities, such as creating social media accounts, experimenting with product content uploads, and navigating basic platform features. These indicators collectively demonstrate that participants were not only attentive but also actively involved in the learning process.

The level of engagement was further supported by measurable improvements in participants' digital competencies. A total of 24 out of 30 participants successfully completed practical tasks, including creating product posts, drafting simple promotional captions, and operating basic features on Instagram and TikTok. Additionally, 21 participants who initially had limited or no experience with digital platforms were able to upload sample content and explore basic analytics features to assess audience reach by the end of the session. Moreover, approximately 75% of participants demonstrated the ability to identify and select promotional strategies relevant to their business characteristics. These quantitative outcomes indicate that the socialization activity not only fostered active participation but also generated tangible skill enhancements that can be directly applied to improve daily business operations.

The results of the socialization activity indicate a strong interest among MSME actors in Permata Baru Village in adopting internet-based systems for information management and digital promotion. This interest is evident from their intention to utilize platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, and Facebook as marketing channels for their products.

With a clearer understanding of the potential of digitalization and active engagement throughout the activity, MSME actors have developed greater confidence that internet-based tools can enhance business competitiveness, streamline marketing processes, and open wider opportunities for business growth. Beyond these immediate outcomes, the positive response shown by participants suggests a gradual shift toward a more digitally oriented business culture within the village, laying the groundwork for broader digital transformation among local MSMEs. This momentum also highlights the need for future activities that provide more advanced guidance (such as digital content creation, online customer engagement, and basic data analytics) to ensure that the progress achieved can be sustained and further strengthened.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the Community Service Program conducted by the Faculty of Economics, Sriwijaya University, the MSME participants demonstrated a high level of interest and enthusiasm toward the socialization activities provided. They were not only actively engaged in the learning sessions but also participated in discussions to deepen their understanding of how to implement information systems and digital promotion strategies within their businesses. This enthusiasm reflects the strong demand among MSME actors for relevant and applicable knowledge to enhance business performance amid the rapid advancement of digital technology, which increasingly shapes market behavior, consumer preferences, and competitive dynamics in the digital economy.

The socialization activity successfully provided substantial knowledge enhancement for MSME actors, particularly in the use of the internet for information systems and digital promotion. With an improved understanding of various digital platforms, MSME participants have developed the capacity to market their products through social media such as Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok, enabling them to expand their market reach and strengthen product competitiveness. This progress suggests a growing readiness among MSMEs to adapt to digital transformation trends that are essential for sustaining business operations in an evolving economic landscape. In line with this development, continued support (such as more advanced training, periodic assistance in digital implementation, or structured follow-up evaluations) will be valuable to ensure that the skills acquired can be maintained, refined, and effectively integrated into daily business practices, thereby fostering long-term growth opportunities in the digital economy era.

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