

USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN IMPROVING MARKETING OF UMKM PRODUCTS MAMA CAKE SHOP IN BEKASI DISTRICT

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Abstract

The aim of this research is to analyze the use of social media to improve marketing of MSME products through a case study at the Mama Cake Shop in Bekasi Regency. The development of information technology, especially social media, has provided enormous opportunities for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) to sell their products at lower costs and with a wider market reach. However, MSMEs often face obstacles in utilizing social media optimally, such as limited knowledge about paid advertising features and consistent content management. This research uses in-depth interview methods to explore the understanding and experience of MSME actors in using social media, especially Instagram and Facebook, to market their products. Research finds that social media with interactive features such as visual uploads, has helped Mama Cake Shop increase product awareness, reach a wider market, and increase customer loyalty. However, obstacles such as lack of time to manage social media accounts and limited understanding of digital marketing strategies are still challenges. This research suggests implementing a more planned marketing strategy and maximizing use of social media features to increase the competitiveness of MSMEs. It is hoped that the results of this research can provide practical recommendations to other MSMEs, as well as contribute to the development of digital marketing strategies in the MSME sector.

Keywords: social media, product marketing, MSMEs, digital marketing.

Introduction

Background

Advances in information and communications technology (ICT) have changed many aspects of human life, including the way businesses operate. One of the significant impacts of this development is the emergence of social media as a strategic platform for marketing. Social media not only functions as a means of communication between individuals, but is also a very effective means of introducing and promoting products and services to a wider audience. This enables economic actors, especially Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), to overcome the limitations they often face, such as lack of market access, limited funds and human resource constraints. Diniati, et al. (2023) stated that "the use of social media as a digital marketing tool really helps MSME players in expanding their market network and increasing their sales, especially in the Sumedang area."

MSMEs have a central role in supporting the Indonesian economy. According to data from the Ministry of Cooperatives and Small and Medium Enterprises, this sector contributes more than 60% to the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and creates jobs for more than 97% of the workforce in the country. However, MSMEs often face various obstacles in developing their businesses, MSMEs often face limitations in terms of market access and product promotion, especially due to a lack of adequate resources and marketing skills (Tambunan, 2021). Social media, as a digital technology product, offers relevant solutions. With features such as comments, direct messages (DM), visual uploads, and targeted paid advertising, social media allows MSMEs to reach a wider market, create consumer engagement, and increase consumer loyalty. Syahputro (2020) emphasized that "social media allows MSMEs to jump-start their marketing in a cost-effective but very effective way."

Bekasi Regency, as one of the regions that has a fairly high level of MSME development, is a potential area for implementing social media-based marketing strategies. With the number of social media users in Indonesia exceeding 150 million people, platforms such as Instagram and Facebook are the main choice for MSMEs. Social media not only supports visual product promotion, but also provides opportunities to interact directly with consumers. Permadi, et al. (2022) explained that social media, especially Instagram and Facebook, are the main platforms used by MSMEs to market their products. The planned use of social media in Bekasi Regency can help MSMEs increase their competitiveness in the local market and even reach the national market.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the role of social media has become increasingly important for the continuity of MSME businesses. The pandemic has forced many business actors to adapt to changing market conditions, including restrictions on physical interactions which require them to shift marketing activities to digital platforms. Social media is not only the main communication tool but also a vital marketing channel for maintaining and even increasing sales. Kustiyahningsih, et al. (2022) noted that "social media and marketplaces have become the main channels for MSMEs to maintain and even increase their sales during the pandemic." Apart from that, closer relationships between MSMEs and consumers can be created through social media, which ultimately increases customer loyalty (Sofiyana, et al. 2021). Thus, social media not only functions as a marketing tool but also becomes a means of creating sustainable relationships between MSMEs and consumers.

One of the MSMEs in Bekasi Regency that has utilized social media is Mama Cake Shop, a business in the culinary sector that offers premium quality home-made cake products. In facing increasingly tight market competition, Mama Cake Shop relies on Instagram and Facebook as the main tools to visually display products, increase interaction with consumers, and increase brand visibility. Rahman & Kurniawati (2021) stated that "the use of social media by MSMEs allows them to compete with large businesses through effective digital marketing strategies." Through attractive visual uploads, consistent content management, and digital advertising-based promotions, Mama's Cake Shop has succeeded in attracting consumer interest and increasing sales.



Figure 1
Mama Cake Shop Products

However, in practice, Mama's Cake Shop's use of social media is not free from challenges. These challenges include limited understanding of paid advertising features, lack of consistent content management, and limited time and human resources to manage social media platforms optimally. This challenge reflects a common problem faced by many MSMEs in Indonesia. Therefore, as stated by Adam, et al. (2023) "Implementing a planned social media strategy can help MSMEs retain old customers and attract new customers".

The aim of this research is to find out how the use of social media can help improve the marketing of MSME products, especially at the Mama Cake Shop in Bekasi Regency. It is hoped that this research can contribute to the development of more effective and efficient social media-based marketing strategies for MSMEs. With the right approach, MSMEs such as Mama's Cake Shop can utilize social media to increase competitiveness, expand market reach, and attract and retain customers. It is also hoped that the results of this research can provide practical recommendations to other MSMEs in Bekasi Regency and other areas to optimize the potential of social media in supporting business growth.

Formulation of the problem

1. How does Mama Cake Shop in Bekasi Regency utilize social media such as Instagram and Facebook to support the marketing strategy for MSME products?
2. What are the obstacles faced by Mama's Cake Shop in utilizing social media for marketing, and what strategies can be implemented to overcome these obstacles?
3. To what extent does the use of social media contribute to increasing marketing and sales of Mama Cake Shop products in Bekasi Regency?

Research purposes

The purpose of the studies are analyzing how the use of social media, especially Instagram and Facebook, is used to improve marketing of Mama Cake Shop MSME products in Bekasi Regency, identifying the obstacles faced by Mama's Cake Shop in utilizing social media for product marketing, and how they overcome these challenges, evaluating the contribution of the use of social media in increasing sales and visibility of Mama Cake Shop MSME products in local and national markets and providing

recommendations for more effective and well-planned social media-based marketing strategies for MSMEs, especially Mama's Cake Shop, in order to increase competitiveness and business growth. It is hoped that these goals can make a significant contribution to the development of more efficient digital marketing strategies, especially for MSMEs in Bekasi Regency and its surroundings.

Benefits of research

This research is very useful for MSMEs, especially Mama's Cake Shop, by providing strategic recommendations so they can utilize social media more effectively to market their products. With more planned and optimal use of social media, it is hoped that MSMEs can increase product visibility, expand markets and increase sales. It is also hoped that the recommendations provided will help MSMEs overcome the various obstacles they face, such as limited resources, understanding social media features, and content and time management.

This research also encourages innovation in marketing approaches for MSMEs. With a deeper understanding of the use of social media, MSMEs are expected to be more creative and adaptive in facing changing digital marketing trends, as well as developing marketing strategies that are more relevant to the needs of today's consumers. Overall, the benefits of this research are expected to have a wider positive impact on the development of MSMEs and the regional economy.

Research Methodology

This research method uses descriptive research with a qualitative approach. The qualitative method was chosen because the aim of this research was to gain an in-depth understanding of how social media can be used to improve marketing of MSME products, especially Mama's Cake Shop in Bekasi Regency. The aim of this research is to provide a more comprehensive picture of the use of social media by MSMEs as a means to promote their products, as well as to understand the factors that influence the success or challenges in using social media to improve product marketing. Data was collected through in-depth interviews with the owner of Mama's Cake Shop, as well as observations of Mama's Cake Shop's social media activities. In addition, content analysis of Mama Cake Shop's social media accounts on Instagram and Facebook was carried out to identify the marketing strategies used and their impact on sales.

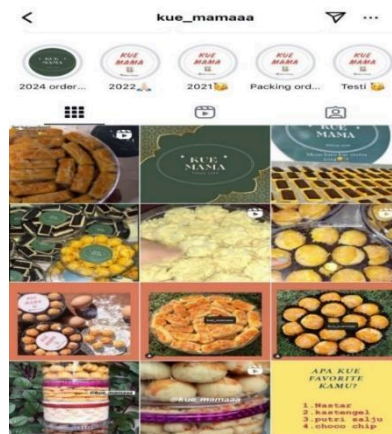


Figure 2
Mama's Cake Shop Instagram Content

Research Results

Based on in-depth interviews conducted with the owner of Mama Cake Shop in Bekasi Regency, there are several important findings regarding the use of social media to improve marketing of their MSME products. These findings lead to an in-depth understanding of how social media, especially Instagram and Facebook, play a role in marketing Mama's Cake Shop products, as well as the challenges and obstacles they face. Utilization of Social Media in Product Marketing The owner of Mama Cake Shop stated that social media, especially Instagram and Facebook, are the main platforms in their product marketing strategy. The use of Instagram to display visually attractive photos of cake products has been proven to have a significant impact on increasing product visibility. One of the superior features used is Instagram

Stories, where they can display a variety of cake products in the form of short videos that attract the attention of potential consumers. "Every time there is a new product or promotion, we upload it on Instagram, and usually many customers are immediately interested," said the owner. Apart from that, they also use Facebook as a supporting platform, especially to interact with consumers who are more on that platform. Mama's Cake Shop owners say they rely on Facebook to share more detailed information about products and services, as well as to interact directly with consumers through comments and private messages. Then, paid Advertising Features and Challenges in Optimizing These Features Even though Mama Cake Shop owners are aware of the importance of paid advertising on social media, they revealed that their knowledge regarding managing these advertisements is still limited. The owner explained, "We have tried paid advertising, but we haven't found it optimal because we don't know how to target the right audience." They admit that paid advertising is very helpful in increasing marketing reach, but there is still confusion in determining the right targeting strategy and setting the advertising budget. This suggests that there is a need for further training on optimizing paid advertising features to increase the effectiveness of marketing campaigns. Moreover, constraints in Content Management and Social Media Management Time One of the big challenges faced by Mama's Cake Shop is limited time and human resources in consistently managing social media accounts. The owners expressed that although they realize the importance of maintaining consistency in posting content, they often find it difficult to do so due to their primary focus on business operations, especially in cake production. "We are very busy with production, so sometimes we cannot post content on social media regularly," said the owner. This obstacle causes irregularities in posting which ultimately affects interactions with consumers. Furthermore, The owners also admitted that although they had tried utilizing different types of content, such as product photos, baking videos, and customer testimonials, they found it difficult to produce consistently engaging content. This shows the importance of careful content planning and appropriate time allocation for social media management.



Figure 3
Customer Testimonials at Mama's Cake Shop

First, Interaction with Consumers via Social Media The owner of Mama Cake Shop considers that one of the biggest advantages of using social media is the ability to interact directly with consumers. Direct message (DM) and comment features on Instagram and Facebook allow them to answer consumer questions, take orders, and provide more personalized customer service. "It's easier for customers to contact us via DM, and that makes them feel closer to us," said the owner. Additionally, direct interaction via social media also allows owners to receive valuable feedback from customers. This feedback, whether in the form of criticism or suggestions, really helps them in improving the quality of the products and services provided. This has a positive impact in building closer relationships with customers and increasing their loyalty. Then, marketing Success via Social Media Despite facing several obstacles, the owners of Mama's Cake Shop admit that the use of social media has had a positive impact on their business. As stated by Rahmawati, et al. (2020) that "The use of social media has proven effective in increasing brand awareness and making it easier for consumers to access MSME products." Mama's Cake Shop noted an increase in orders, especially during promotions or campaigns they run through paid advertising and regular uploads. The owners noted that the increase in sales occurred after they started utilizing Instagram and Facebook more actively. "As we become more active on social media, the demand

for our products also increases," the owner added. Apart from that, they also recognize that social media provides an opportunity to build stronger branding. Consistent use of social media helps Mama's Cake Shop to introduce their brand to a wider audience, introduce new products, and keep existing customers engaged.

The results of this research can be concluded that the use of social media by Mama Cake Shop has had a positive impact on increasing product visibility and sales. However, there are still several obstacles, such as limited time and energy to manage social media consistently, as well as limited understanding of the paid advertising features on Instagram and Facebook. To overcome this obstacle, further training is needed for MSME owners on digital marketing strategies and the use of social media features to strengthen the marketing of their products.

Discussion

Based on the research results obtained, the following is a description of the main findings related to the use of social media in marketing MSME products, especially at Mama's Cake Shop in Bekasi Regency. First, utilizing Social Media for Product Marketing Mama Cake Shop utilizes Instagram and Facebook as the main platforms for marketing their products. This is in accordance with the findings of Permadi, et al. (2022), which states that Instagram and Facebook are the main platforms used by many MSMEs to market their products. Social media makes it easy for Mama Cake Shop to promote their products visually, which is very relevant for culinary businesses that prioritize the visual aspect of the product. This is also supported by Syahputro (2020), who states that social media allows MSMEs to carry out marketing at low costs but is very effective. The use of visual features such as photos and videos can attract consumers' attention in a more direct and interesting way. Then, increased Visibility and Market Reach One of the main benefits of social media for Mama's Cake Shop is increased visibility and market reach. Paid ads on Facebook and Instagram provide the ability to target more specific audiences, such as by location, age, and interests. This is in line with research findings by Kustiyahningsih, et al. (2022) which states that social media and marketplaces are the main channels for MSMEs to increase their sales. By using the advertising targeting features provided by social media platforms, Mama Cake Shop can reach a wider market, even beyond the Bekasi Regency area, and increase brand awareness. However, even though market reach can be expanded, the challenge faced by Mama's Cake Shop is the difficulty in optimizing the advertising budget. This means that while social media offers an effective platform for low-cost marketing, a deeper understanding of paid advertising strategies is essential to achieve optimal results from the marketing investments made. Moreover, Increased Customer Loyalty Social media has also helped Mama Cake Shop to build closer relationships with customers, which in turn increases customer loyalty. Direct interaction through comments and direct messages (DM) provides an opportunity for Mama's Cake Shop to provide a more personal and responsive service. This is very important for building long-term customer relationships that can increase loyalty and repeat purchases. As in research by Sofiyana, et al. (2021), which states that social media enables closer relationships between MSMEs and consumers, which can increase customer loyalty. However, even though customer loyalty is increasing, Mama's Cake Shop must maintain these interactions consistently so as not to lose customer engagement. Efficient time management and the use of automated features such as chatbots can help reduce the workload in managing communications with consumers. Furthermore, Challenges in Using Social Media Some of the challenges faced by Mama's Cake Shop in using social media are limited knowledge about paid advertising features and inconsistencies in content management. As explained by Rahman & Kurniawati (2021), many MSMEs have limitations in managing their social media accounts optimally due to limited human resources. The uncertainty in adjusting the advertising budget to the desired results shows the importance of training and developing knowledge about digital marketing for MSME players. Inconsistent content management is also an obstacle for Mama's Cake Shop. Limited time and human resources are the main reasons why social media account management is often disorganized. In fact, the success of MSME marketing strategies through social media is influenced by consistency in content management, which can improve customer relationships (Achmad, et al. 2020). Therefore, MSMEs such as Mama's Cake Shop need to look for ways to improve content management, such as scheduling uploads or using automatic tools to make managing their social media accounts easier. Meanwhile the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Marketing The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the shift of MSME players to digital platforms, including social media. Restrictions on physical interaction during the pandemic caused Mama's Cake Shop to shift their marketing strategy significantly to social media. This reflects the results of research by Kustiyahningsih, et al. (2022), which shows that social media is the main channel for MSMEs to maintain their sales during the pandemic. With

increasing dependence on social media, Toko Cake Mama shows how this platform not only functions as a marketing tool, but also as the main channel for maintaining business continuity amidst conditions full of uncertainty.

The use of social media in marketing MSME products, especially Mama's Cake Shop, has proven to provide significant benefits in increasing visibility, market reach and customer loyalty. However, challenges in understanding paid advertising, consistent content management, and limited human resources need to be overcome so that the use of social media can be more optimal. This research suggests implementing a more planned and systematic digital marketing strategy to maximize the potential of social media, as well as increasing knowledge and skills about digital marketing for MSMEs.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the research conducted, it can be concluded that the use of social media, especially Instagram and Facebook, has a significant influence on increasing the marketing of MSME products, as is done by Mama Cake Shop in Bekasi Regency. Social media has been proven to help Mama's Cake Shop in increasing product visibility, expanding market reach, and building customer loyalty. Interactive features such as visual uploads, paid advertising, and direct communication via private messages allow Mama's Cake Shop to interact more closely with consumers and reach a wider audience.

However, even though the use of social media provides many benefits, Mama's Cake Shop faces several challenges, especially related to limited understanding of paid advertising features and inconsistencies in content management. And the main obstacle hindering the optimization of the use of social media is limited time and human resources.

Thus, this research recommends that MSMEs, such as Mama's Cake Shop, adopt a more planned and consistent digital marketing strategy. In addition, it is important for MSME players to expand their knowledge and skills about digital marketing, including managing paid advertising and content strategies, in order to maximize the potential of social media in supporting business growth. It is hoped that the implementation of a more systematic marketing strategy can increase the competitiveness of MSMEs and be able to survive and develop in an increasingly competitive market.

Suggestions

Based on the findings and conclusions of this research, there are several suggestions that can be given to Mama Cake Shop and other MSMEs to optimize the use of social media in marketing their products such as increasing the digital knowledge and skills. MSMEs such as Mama's Cake Shop are advised to increase their understanding of various social media features, especially in terms of managing paid advertising and digital marketing strategies. Training or workshops on digital marketing, the use of paid advertising on Instagram and Facebook, and content marketing techniques can help increase the effectiveness of online marketing. Then, consistent content management can overcome the problem of inconsistency in content management. It is recommended that Mama's Cake Shop develop a structured content calendar, which includes a regular posting schedule with relevant themes. This can increase interaction with customers and maintain product visibility on social media. Moreover, Optimization of Social Media Features. In order to maximize the potential of social media, Mama's Cake Shop must take advantage of all available features, such as Instagram Stories, Reels and Facebook Ads. Using targeted advertising and targeting the right audience will help increase sales conversions and expand market share. Moreover, making collaboration with influencers or local partners. Mama Cake Shop is advised to explore the possibility of collaborating with local influencers or other brands to increase exposure of their products. This kind of collaboration can introduce a product to a larger audience, increase credibility, and build a loyal community of followers. Furthermore, making time and resource management to overcome the constraints of limited time and manpower, it is recommended that Mama's Cake Shop consider outsourcing some social media marketing tasks to a third party, such as a social media manager or digital marketing agency. In this way, the main focus on production and product innovation can be maintained. Then, making periodic evaluation and analysis. Mama Cake Shop is also advised to regularly evaluate and analyze the performance of marketing campaigns on social media. Using analytical tools provided by platforms such as Instagram Insights and Facebook Ads Manager will provide a clear picture of the audience, customer preferences, and the effectiveness of the marketing strategies implemented.

By implementing these suggestions, it is hoped that Mama Cake Shop and other MSMEs can make more optimal use of social media as a marketing tool to increase competitiveness, expand market reach, and create closer relationships with consumers.

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