

Movement “Penyu Bintang” as an Effectiveness of MSME Actors in Soko Village

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Abstract: *Currently, technological advancements and business trends are continuously evolving and diversifying. Many aspects of technological progress can be utilized to accelerate business processes, one of which is by leveraging digital media. Some of the benefits of using digital media include its use as a branding tool to introduce products, as a medium for sharing, promotion, and marketing. This is highly utilized by MSME actors in villages, especially in Soko Village, for product branding and marketing through digital means due to the increasingly competitive nature of the digital era. To achieve effective branding and digital marketing strategies, these efforts are implemented through mentoring methods in the form of material delivery and discussions about branding and marketing. With the implementation of this activity, it is hoped that MSME actors in Soko Village will become more aware of the importance of using the internet to build branding and enhance marketing. Participants who attended and followed the series of events responded very positively.*

Introduction

Soko Village is located in Glagah District, Lamongan Regency, East Java Province. This village is one of several villages in Glagah District. Soko Village is characterized by the livelihood of its people who are largely dependent on the agricultural sector, such as rice, corn, and various types of horticultural crops, as well as the fisheries sector, such as fish ponds. Meanwhile, in the economic sector, the average Soko Village resident creates Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). According to Prof. David Storey, a business economist, MSMEs are companies independently owned and run by individuals or families. These businesses also have a relatively small operational scale compared to large companies.

also show that MSMEs in Soko village still experience obstacles in marketing and the effective use of technology and digital platforms. Therefore, Branding and Digital Marketing Counseling (Penyu Bintang) activities are needed to help MSMEs in Soko village understand the importance of branding and digital marketing in an increasingly

competitive era. With technological advances in the business sector, MSMEs should utilize digital media to inform consumers about their products. Optimal use of digital media can provide significant benefits for MSMEs, especially in marketing so that their products can compete in the market.

Branding is a way to give identity to a product or service through giving a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of these elements that are intended to differentiate the product or service from other products or services offered by competitors (Oktaviani et al., 2018). Branding helps strengthen positive perceptions, adds emotional and functional value, and supports marketing and sales strategies, so that the product or company can be better known and appreciated in the market. Digital marketing is the use of digital technology and media to support marketing activities to increase engagement and interaction with consumers (Saifulloh, 2021). The main goal of digital marketing is to increase visibility, drive traffic to the website, build relationships with customers, ultimately increasing sales.

This article will discuss effective ways to implement branding and digital marketing strategies for MSMEs in Soko Village. It will also explore practical steps and approaches that can help MSMEs strengthen their brand identity, expand their market reach, and increase sales by leveraging digital tools. By understanding and implementing appropriate strategies, MSMEs in Soko Village can maximize their potential and compete in an increasingly competitive market.

Method

The method used in this study is a qualitative descriptive method whose data collection techniques are carried out through several stages. The first is counseling regarding effective branding and digital marketing strategy programs for MSMEs in Soko Village conducted by resource person Dr. Mohammad Rizal Nur Irawaan, SE., MM. As a companion for MSMEs in Lamongan Regency 2017-2019 by the Cooperative and MSME Office of Lamongan Regency and lecturers from the Faculty of Economics, UNISDA and the audience consisted of MSMEs and representatives of PKK mothers. This counseling was held at the Soko Village Hall which aims to provide a brief explanation of product branding and digital marketing, functions, objectives, and product branding and digital marketing strategies. The second is mentoring and training for branding and digital marketing which in its implementation is carried out by helping to find a name and logo to clarify product identity, creating social media accounts and using social media accounts consistently. With the stable use of social media, MSME branding can make it

much better known to potential customers.

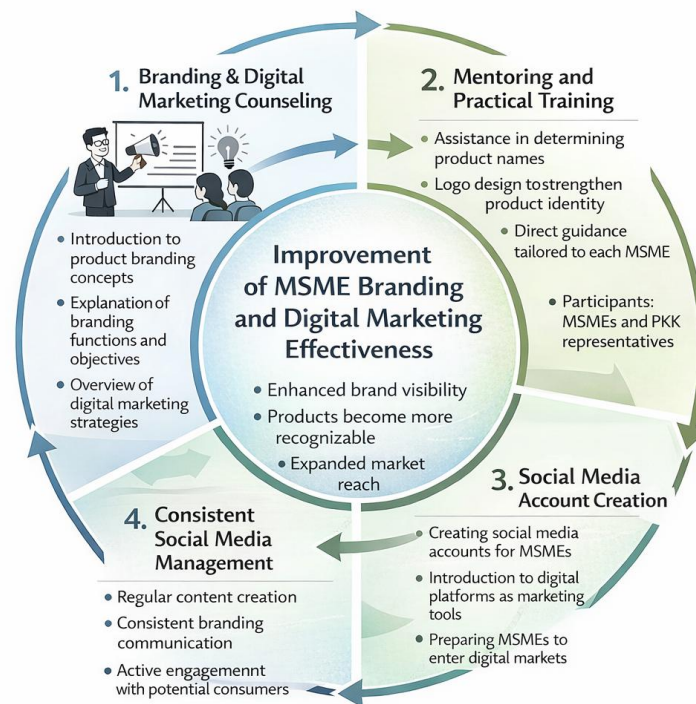


Figure 1. Circular Research Method for MSME Branding and Digital Marketing Development

Result and Discussion

Branding

Branding is a multifaceted concept encompassing the creation, communication, and management of brand image and identity. It serves as a signifier representing products, companies, places, and even individuals, imbuing them with a specific meaning or concept (Wijaya, 2019). Historically, branding has evolved from a simple signifier of ownership or origin to a complex symbol of identity and value. For example, in the context of the Vaiṣṇava tradition of southern India, branding has been transformed into a signifier of Vaidika devotion and Brahman identity, illustrating how physical and semiotic elements intertwine to create a sense of devotion and identity. (Peterson, 2024). In the business realm, branding is crucial for the sustainable development of a company, influencing customer decisions and forming the basis for many marketing operations. It involves a wide range of activities from the creation of a brand image to the final purchasing decision by the customer (Setiawati, 2019). Furthermore, branding extends beyond products and companies to territories, where it can encapsulate the socio-cultural and geographical characteristics of a place, transforming them into symbolic capital that drives economic development. In the modern world, branding has also

become a process of creating hyperreality, where actual objects are often overshadowed by their brand representations, leading to a continuous cycle of representation, communication and simulation [3]. This phenomenon is part of a broader trend in which branding contributes to the capitalization of ideas, objects and even the world itself, constructing a desired reality independent of traditional practices of governance and political domination [6]. Thus, branding is a dynamic and complex process that plays a crucial role in shaping perceptions, identities and economic outcomes across multiple domains.

Branding significantly influences customer loyalty and retention through various mechanisms, as evidenced by several studies. In the consumer durables sector, brand loyalty is crucial for customer retention, driven by factors such as product quality, brand reputation, and customer experience, especially in the context of evolving market trends and digitalization (Bing et al., 2024). In the pharmaceutical industry, the moderating role of physicians and the efficacy of branded drugs in disease history are crucial, with customer trust and satisfaction being key predictors of loyalty (Godwin, 2023). For online shopping platforms, attitudinal loyalty, which encompasses customers' emotional attachment and positive attitude toward the brand, has a greater impact on retention than mere behavioral loyalty, and this effect is further enhanced by a strong brand image (Dwivedi et al., 2024). In the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) industry, brand loyalty is crucial for repeat purchase behavior, influenced by factors such as brand reputation, product quality, price, and promotional activities, with customer satisfaction and trust serving as important mediators (Brand Loyalty and Its Impact on Repeat Purchase Behaviour of Customers: A Cross-Sectional Study in the FMCG Context, 2023). Furthermore, visual branding plays a crucial role in customer loyalty by acting as a mediator between product development and customer loyalty. Effective visual branding, which includes elements such as logos, colors, and designs, helps communicate reliable information to customers, thereby improving product performance and fostering loyalty (Kankam, 2024). Collectively, these studies underscore that a well-crafted branding strategy, which includes maintaining high product quality, building a strong brand image, ensuring customer satisfaction, and leveraging visual branding, can significantly improve customer loyalty and retention across various industries.

Brand consistency plays a crucial role in customer retention by fostering trust, satisfaction, and loyalty. Consistent brand messaging helps create a reliable and predictable image, which is crucial for building trust among consumers. For example, a study of business-to-consumer organizations highlighted that maintaining a consistent tone in brand messaging across digital platforms can generate trust and retain customers over time, as they develop an affinity for regularities and common patterns (Roy et al., 2020). This is further supported by research in the pharmaceutical sector, where consistent satisfaction with a brand, often influenced by a doctor's recommendation, significantly predicted customer loyalty. Customers tend to stick with brands that consistently meet their expectations, even if prices fluctuate, as trust is built on consistent

satisfaction (Godwin, 2023). In the hospitality industry, empirical evidence from online reviews of major US hotel chains suggests that consistent performance in service attributes such as location, cleanliness, and room quality significantly impact consumers' perceived value, satisfaction, and sentiment. Inconsistent performance can negatively impact customer evaluations and, consequently, their loyalty (Jeong et al., 2022). Moreover, the challenge of maintaining brand consistency in the digital age is underscored by the need for brands to produce large volumes of content while maintaining a coherent brand personality. Research shows that a consistent brand personality across content categories helps in maintaining a lasting impression on customers, which is crucial for long-term engagement and retention (Roy et al., 2019). Therefore, brand consistency not only enhances trust and satisfaction but also plays a crucial role in ensuring that customers remain loyal to the brand over time.

Brand uniformity plays a crucial role in customer retention by fostering a sense of fairness, satisfaction, and loyalty, which are essential for long-term customer retention. Uniform pricing, for example, addresses consumer concerns about price fairness caused by peers, which can reduce price competition and increase profitability for the company. This strategy is sustainable in the long run because it aligns with consumer fairness concerns, thereby promoting brand loyalty and reducing the likelihood of customers switching to competitors (Chen & Cui, 2012). Furthermore, the standardization inherent in franchise business formats can be a double-edged sword. While ensuring consistency and reliability, which are key to maintaining brand integrity and equity, may also require adapting to local demands to enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty. The challenge lies in balancing uniformity with customization to meet diverse customer needs without compromising the brand's core values (Streed, 2007). Furthermore, brand engagement acts as a buffer against customer dissatisfaction. Even when customers experience a negative shopping experience, high brand engagement can moderate their response and increase the likelihood of repatronage. This suggests that a strong and uniform brand presence can mitigate the adverse effects of occasional service failures, thereby retaining customers despite negative experiences (Shiue & Li, 2013). In short, brand uniformity, through consistent pricing and standardized service, plays a vital role in retaining customers by ensuring fairness, satisfaction, and loyalty, while also requiring a strategic balance with customization to effectively meet individual customer needs.

Digital marketing

Digital marketing is a multifaceted approach to promoting products and services using digital technologies, primarily the Internet, but also encompassing mobile devices, display advertising, and other digital media. It emerged in the 1990s with the advent of the Archie search engine and has since evolved significantly with the development of server/client architecture and the proliferation of personal computers, leading to the integration of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) applications into marketing technology (Kumari, 2024). The essence of digital marketing lies in its ability to leverage

various online platforms such as social networking sites, user review websites, discussion forums, and smartphone applications to reach and engage consumers (Pandey et al., 2024). This approach contrasts with conventional marketing by offering more targeted, data-driven strategies that can be tailored to specific business needs, thereby increasing the effectiveness of marketing efforts. (Ryan, 2016). Digital marketing encompasses a variety of components, including online advertising, email marketing, search engine optimization (SEO), social media marketing (SMM), content marketing, paid search marketing, mobile marketing, online reputation management, and video marketing, all of which enable businesses to understand and cater to audience preferences, behaviors, and demographics (Kumari, 2024). The integration of digital platforms into everyday life has made digital marketing an essential tool for modern businesses, enabling them to reach a larger audience of potential customers, improve communication, and ultimately increase sales and profitability (Gouveia, 2024). The effectiveness of digital marketing is further underscored by its ability to influence consumer behavior and purchasing decisions, emphasizing the need for authenticity, relevance, and ethical engagement to foster client trust and loyalty (Pandey et al., 2024). Thus, digital marketing is not just a trend but a vital component of contemporary business strategies, driving innovation and growth in the digital age.

Social media has profoundly transformed digital marketing by enabling direct and dynamic interactions between businesses and consumers. The rise of social media platforms has democratized the dissemination of information, allowing diverse viewpoints to be represented and fostering a more inclusive society (Zhao, 2023). This shift has empowered customers, increasing their engagement with brands and providing them with tools for information retrieval, evaluation, and decision-making (Al-Amawi et al., 2024). Businesses have adapted their marketing strategies to capitalize on the unique characteristics of social media, recognizing its potential for direct customer contact and meaningful engagement (Udhayalakshmi, 2024). The historical evolution of social media, from early platforms like Usenet to contemporary giants like TikTok and Instagram, underscores the growing importance of maintaining a strong online presence. Social media marketing, which involves the creation and distribution of content through user-to-user interactions, has become a crucial strategic pillar for companies aiming to attract and acquire new customers (Zhao, 2023). The impact of social media is particularly evident in sectors such as tourism, where positive consumer expectations significantly influence the adoption of digital marketing services (Al-Amawi et al., 2024). Furthermore, the influence of social media on consumer behavior and purchasing decisions is substantial, with platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google+, and YouTube playing a significant role (Pandey et al., 2024). Young people, in particular, are heavy users of social media for online purchases, prompting businesses to integrate social media into their operations to remain competitive in the digital age (Cornell, 2023). To optimize their social media strategies, companies must focus on authenticity, relevance, and ethical engagement to build trust and loyalty among consumers (Pandey et al., 2024).

Overall, the role of social media in digital marketing is indispensable, driving customer engagement, shaping consumer behavior, and enabling businesses to thrive in an increasingly digital world.

Social media significantly influences consumer behavior in marketing by reshaping how consumers interact with brands, access information, and make purchasing decisions. The proliferation of digital platforms such as social media networks, e-commerce websites, and mobile applications has created new opportunities for consumer-business interactions, providing consumers with access to product information, reviews, and price comparisons that influence their purchasing decisions (Antczak, 2024). In India, a rapidly growing online market, the influence of social media on consumer behavior is particularly prominent, shaping consumer attitudes, preferences, and purchasing decisions as businesses strive to engage effectively with the digital population (Mathew, 2024). Social media marketing initiatives have significantly impacted consumer purchasing patterns, brand loyalty, and engagement by leveraging content authenticity, consumer engagement, and the strategic use of influencers and user-generated content to increase brand visibility and strengthen consumer-brand relationships (Anjorin et al., 2024). The virtual world, facilitated by advances in information and communication technology, has introduced new influences such as brand community discussions and online brand endorsements, which assist consumers in making informed decisions and sharing information (Mishra, 2024). Trust, authenticity, convenience, and social interaction are key factors driving consumer purchasing decisions through social media platforms, with lifestyle and fashion-related items particularly prominent. The emergence of niche markets and influencer marketing strategies further exemplifies the evolving nature of social media-based commerce, highlighting the importance of understanding consumer motives and preferences in the digital age. (Adid, 2023). Collectively, these insights underscore the transformative power of social media in marketing, emphasizing the shift towards more interactive, personalized, and consumer-driven communications strategies that is essential for businesses looking to thrive in the contemporary retail landscape.

The following are the results achieved through the Branding and Digital Marketing Counseling activities for MSMEs and PKK mothers with the theme "Effective Branding and Digital Marketing Strategies for MSMEs in Soko Village" whose implementation is stated in the form of an activity results report, as follows:

1. Data collection of MSME actors in Soko Village was carried out from July 21-23, 2024, aimed at finding out MSME products in Soko Village and coordinating with resource persons Mr. Dr. Mohammad Rizal Nur Irawaan, SE., MM, as a companion for MSMEs in Lamongan Regency 2017-2019 by the Lamongan Regency Cooperative and MSME Service and lecturers at the UNISDA Faculty of Economics.
2. Preparations for branding and digital marketing counseling and training were held on Thursday, July 25, 2024, starting with the distribution of invitations to MSMEs and several PKK mothers in the morning, followed in the evening by the

installation of banners and the arrangement of tables and chairs at the Soko Village Hall.

3. On July 27, 2024, a branding and digital marketing outreach program was held at the Soko Village Hall and was divided into two stages. The first stage presented material on effective branding and digital marketing strategies for MSMEs. The presentation lasted for 40 minutes, followed by a 20-minute discussion or question-and-answer session. The second stage provided mentoring and training in branding and digital marketing, which included assistance in finding a name and logo to clarify product identity, creating social media accounts, and consistently using them. The branding and digital marketing outreach program lasted approximately 120 minutes for both stages.
4. The final activity was carried out with a group photo session and thanks from all parties starting from the resource persons and the activity implementation team, namely the UNISDA KKN student group from Soko Village, with the hope that this activity will have a big influence on the progress of MSMEs in Soko Village in the future.

The following are the results of the second phase of activities, namely mentoring and training in branding and digital marketing, starting with finding a name and logo and then creating social media accounts for MSMEs. We recruited two MSMEs: a milkfish cracker producer and an oyster mushroom producer. The following are the results of these activities:

1. branding by providing assistance to MSMEs, particularly in logo creation, so that products have an identity for brand positioning . Furthermore, assistance is provided with product photography to create attractive visuals as part of marketing, where the product photos are intended to attract public interest.



Figure 2. Logo of Milkfish Crackers MSME Product



Figure 3. Oyster Mushroom MSME Product Logo

2. The training focused on utilizing digital marketing as a marketing tool in the modern era , along with examples of MSMEs that have successfully used digital marketing to grow their businesses. It is hoped that MSMEs in Soko Village will understand, develop the skills, and knowledge of the importance of digital marketing for MSMEs.
3. Creating an Instagram social media account has the potential to expand market reach. Here, MSMEs are given an explanation of the functions that can be used for marketing activities. The following is an Instagram account created by the Soko Village Community Service Group.

Conclusion (Cambria, size 13)

The concept of branding and digital marketing in the context of training for MSMEs and PKK women in Soko Village. Branding is the process of creating, communicating, and managing a brand's image and identity, which can influence customer decisions and impact a company's sustainability. Branding also encompasses the socio-cultural and geographical influences of a place, as well as the phenomenon of hyperreality in the modern world.

Digital marketing, which encompasses various components such as online advertising and social media, is a multifaceted approach to product promotion using digital technology. Social media has significantly transformed digital marketing by enabling direct interaction between businesses and consumers, significantly influencing consumer behavior and purchasing decisions.

The branding and digital marketing outreach program in Soko Village involved data collection, outreach preparation, material delivery, and mentoring and training in branding and digital marketing. MSMEs, such as milkfish cracker and oyster mushroom producers, received assistance in logo creation, product photography, and social media account creation. This activity is expected to improve MSMEs' understanding and ability to utilize branding and digital marketing for their business growth.

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