

Optimization of Digital Applications for Creative Content Creation in Digital Marketing as A Smart Village Development

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ABSTRACT

The advancement of digital technology offers villages opportunities to adopt the Smart Village concept through digital marketing strategies. This study examines the optimization of digital applications for creating creative content to enhance the village's attractiveness and visibility. The method employed is Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR), with a case study conducted in a village implementing digital marketing. The findings indicate that applications such as Canva, CapCut, and Shopee can improve content quality, expand promotional reach, and attract tourists and investors. However, challenges such as digital literacy and internet access remain significant obstacles. The proposed solutions include training and mentoring programs for village communities to help them use technology optimally. Therefore, optimizing digital applications in creative content creation can serve as an innovative strategy to strengthen the Smart Village ecosystem and enhance village competitiveness in the digital era.

Keywords:

Digital Marketing; Creative Content; Digital Application; Smart Village

Introduction

The advancement of digital technology has transformed various aspects of life, including in the fields of marketing and rural development. Most business actors in villages still rely on conventional marketing methods, such as direct sales and word-of-mouth promotion, resulting in a highly limited market reach (Sri Utami & Sasmita, 2022). The Smart Village concept has emerged as an innovative solution for developing technology-based villages, aimed at improving community welfare and local economic competitiveness (Klenova et al., 2021). The internet can no longer be viewed merely as a medium for exchanging information in this digital era—it has also become a powerful business platform. One of the key strategies in implementing this concept is digital marketing, which enables villages to promote their distinctive potential through digital platforms.

This concept does not merely focus on the use of digital infrastructure, but also encompasses the social and economic transformation of villages to adapt to the progress of the times. Through the application of technologies such as the Internet of Things (IoT), artificial intelligence (AI), and digital platforms, villages can develop sectors such as agriculture, tourism, education, and healthcare more efficiently (Degada et al., 2021). Furthermore, Smart Village also emphasizes the importance of active community participation in the utilization of technology, so that residents do not merely serve as users but also as innovators capable of creating local solutions to address various challenges. As such, the objective of Smart Village is to create villages that are more self-reliant, productive, and competitive in the digital economy era (Prayitno, G., Subagiyo, A., Dinanti, D., & Sari, N., 2021).

The success of this strategy greatly depends on the quality of the content produced. Therefore, optimizing digital applications in creating creative content becomes essential to enhance the attractiveness and visibility of the village in digital marketing (Pujianto et al., 2022). These applications not only facilitate the creation of professional visual designs but also improve the effectiveness of communicating information to target audiences. Creative content produced through digital platforms helps villages attract tourists, investors, and increase the marketing of local products. Nevertheless, villages still face a number of challenges when implementing digital marketing. Therefore, efforts are needed to empower village residents through training and support to effectively use digital applications.

Through the Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) method, women's communities will play an active role in designing and implementing digital-based solutions to enhance their businesses (Schiffrin et al., 2021). This research aims to analyze the role of digital applications in creating creative content for digital marketing strategies as part of economic development in the village. By understanding the potential and challenges of its implementation, the findings of this study will be recommended strategically for villages to optimize digital marketing in fostering local economic growth and competitiveness in the digital era.

Shopee Video is a feature within the Shopee application that allows users to create and share short, interactive videos (Amriwan, A., Mahmud, I., Salsabila, R. A., & Anisa, N., 2024). This feature is designed to increase user engagement and help sellers promote their products in a more appealing manner. In addition, Shopee Video is integrated with a live shopping feature, allowing viewers to purchase the products shown in the video without having to leave the application.

Kalimati Village is home to a variety of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) operating in the fields of handicrafts, culinary products, and other local goods. The use of Shopee Video can offer a number of benefits for MSMEs in this village. Supported by Shopee's algorithm that favors video content, MSME products from Kalimati Village can be more easily accessed by potential buyers from various regions. Furthermore, Shopee Video enables MSME owners to showcase their production process, the local raw materials used, and the cultural values embedded in their products, thereby enhancing their appeal (Afriani et al., 2022). This feature also allows sellers to interact directly with potential buyers through comments and messages, which can build customer trust and loyalty. Videos that present product details in an engaging way can persuade consumers to make a purchase, thus increasing the sales conversion rate.

To maximize the use of Shopee Video, several strategies can be implemented by MSMEs in Kalimati Village. Content that showcases the production process, such as the processing of natural materials for handicrafts or regional cooking techniques, can attract viewers' attention and add value to the products being offered. Additionally, incorporating appealing visual and audio effects in short videos can enhance attractiveness and audience engagement, making viewers more interested in watching and interacting with the content (Malawat, F. M. R., & Hariyanto, D., 2024). With the right strategy, Shopee Video can serve as an effective tool to help MSMEs in Kalimati Village expand their market and increase sales.

Methods

This community service activity was carried out through direct, hands-on training. The training was intended for members of the PKK (Family Welfare Empowerment Organization) of Kalimati Village, Tarik District, Sidoarjo Regency, and was attended by 25 participants. The activity was the result of a collaboration between students of Institut Agama Islam Uluwiyah and the PKK members of Kalimati Village—an organization focused on family welfare empowerment, recognized as a group of mothers who carry out positive activities to optimize digital applications and participate in creating creative content. This collaboration also provided an opportunity for the exchange of knowledge and experience between the facilitators and the training participants.

The training employed the Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) method, in which women's communities actively participated in designing and implementing digital-based solutions to improve their businesses. The aim was to enrich the training materials for optimizing digital applications in creating creative content within digital marketing as part of Smart Village development. This community service activity was carried out in three main stages: preparation, implementation, and evaluation.

- a. The preparation stage included identifying community needs, preparing training materials, and coordinating with the PKK organization of Kalimati Village. During this phase, a needs analysis was conducted to determine the objectives of the training materials aimed at maximizing digital applications in creative content creation as part of Smart Village development. The results of this analysis served as the foundation for developing training materials that were relevant and tailored to the local context needed by MSME owners in Kalimati Village. The expected output of this

preparation stage was that the community in Kalimati Village, particularly MSME owners, would develop an understanding of digital entrepreneurship.

- b. The implementation stage included the delivery of materials, question-and-answer sessions, discussions, and hands-on practice. The training was structured systematically to ensure participants gained a thorough understanding of the materials, as the content was relevant to the actual conditions faced by MSMEs in Kalimati Village. The training adopted a comprehensive approach, in which participants not only gained theoretical knowledge but also had the opportunity to exchange ideas about business algorithms. The training materials covered a range of important topics, including budgeting, adapting to consumer needs and raw material requirements, gross income and profit, and marketing management. Each topic was explained in detail using simple, easily understandable language for participants, accompanied by practical examples relevant to their daily lives. Beyond the presentation of materials, the training also provided participants with the opportunity to engage actively through question-and-answer sessions and discussions. Participants were encouraged to ask questions, share experiences, and discuss challenges they faced in managing their businesses in the era of digitalization. This interaction allowed the facilitators to provide feedback and advice tailored to the needs and circumstances of each participant, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of the training. To support participants' comprehension, the training also incorporated the use of visual aids such as presentations, videos, and practical examples. These aids helped participants understand and retain the material presented, and served as references they could use after the training concluded. Participants were also provided with written guides on improving business targets, including practical tips, budgeting templates, and additional resources they could use to continue developing their financial literacy independently.
- c. The assessment stage was conducted at the end of the training. The feedback gathered was highly valuable for the improvement and development of future financial literacy training programs, as well as for measuring the impact and achievement of the objectives of this community service activity. The assessment also encompassed an evaluation of the increase in participants' knowledge and skills, as well as changes in their attitudes and behaviors regarding family financial management.

According to Donald Kirkpatrick, evaluation comprises four levels as follows:

Reaction Evaluation

This evaluation aims to measure the level of participant satisfaction with the training they have attended. The success of the training can be assessed through the positive reactions of participants toward various elements of the training implementation, including the materials, methods, and quality of the instructors. The interest, attention, and ambition of participants also influence the effectiveness of the training. This evaluation is carried out by measuring two key aspects: participants' reactions to the resource persons and to the overall organization of the training. The purpose of this evaluation is to provide feedback to the training organizers for future improvements, to give instructors feedback on the effectiveness of their teaching, and to provide information to policymakers and resource persons so they can enhance the quality of future training sessions.

Learning Evaluation

At this stage, the evaluation is directed at assessing the extent to which participants have gained new knowledge, skills, and changes in attitude following the training. This evaluation aims to measure whether participants have successfully achieved the established learning objectives. A participant is considered to have succeeded in the learning activity if there is a transformation in attitude, an increase in knowledge, or new skills acquired. Through this evaluation, the effectiveness of the teaching methods used can be assessed, as well as which aspects need to be improved in order to achieve more optimal results.

Behavior Evaluation

Behavior evaluation aims to assess the changes that occur in participants' behavior following the training, particularly in the application of the material in the workplace. Kirkpatrick establishes four conditions for this evaluation to take place effectively: participants must have the desire to change, they

must understand what needs to be done and how to do it, they must work in an environment that supports change, and they must receive recognition for the changes they have achieved. The work environment and managerial support also play an important role in determining the success of these behavioral changes.

Result Evaluation

Result evaluation aims to measure the impact of training on the ultimate objectives of the organization. This requires several steps, such as first conducting a behavior evaluation, allowing time to observe the impact of the training, and using survey or interview methods with participants and organizational leaders. Measurement can be carried out by comparing data before and after the training, as well as considering the costs incurred relative to the results achieved. In addition, secondary data, such as sales or production data, can also be used to reinforce the findings of this evaluation.

The Importance of Sequential Evaluation

Evaluation must be carried out systematically so that the results are accurate and do not lead to incorrect conclusions. If a training program is deemed ineffective based on the behavior evaluation, the root cause may stem from a lack of comprehension of the material or dissatisfaction among participants with the training itself. Therefore, each level of evaluation must be conducted in sequence to identify the root causes of any issues and to formulate appropriate solutions for improving the effectiveness of training (Azizah, D. N., & Fatonah, U., 2023).

Results and Discussions

Kalimati Village, located in Sidoarjo Regency, East Java, is a village in which many residents participate in the MSME sector, particularly in the fields of agriculture and home industry. MSME products in this village include agricultural produce and crackers (krupuk) manufacturers. Nevertheless, MSMEs in Kalimati Village still face significant challenges in the area of marketing. The majority of business actors in the village still rely on conventional marketing methods, such as direct sales and word-of-mouth promotion, resulting in a highly limited market reach (Sri Utami & Sasmita, 2022). Amid rapid digital technological advancement, marketing through digital platforms—commonly known as digital marketing—has become an essential need for MSME actors to compete in a broader market. Digital marketing enables MSMEs to market their products more efficiently at lower costs, while simultaneously reaching a greater number of consumers located in distant areas through the use of social media.

By leveraging digital technology, MSMEs are not only able to increase sales, but can also develop their brand and strengthen their competitiveness. However, MSME actors in Kalimati Village still possess limited understanding and knowledge regarding how to utilize digital marketing. Low digital literacy, restricted access to reliable internet connectivity, and the lack of adequate training have caused many business actors in the village to remain unable to harness the considerable potential offered by digital marketing (Teguh et al., 2022). These limitations place them at a disadvantage when competing with MSME actors from other regions who have been quicker to implement digital technology in their marketing activities. Our team from IAI Uluwiyah Mojokerto organized a digital marketing training workshop as a form of community service. This activity was designed to help maximize the utilization of digital marketing as a means of MSME development in Kalimati Village. Through training and socialization on digital marketing, it is expected that MSME actors will be able to enhance their understanding and skills in marketing products digitally. The proper implementation of digital marketing can help MSMEs expand their market access, increase competitiveness, and ultimately contribute to the welfare of the community in Kalimati Village.

Figure 1 show socialization of creative content creation. The socialization regarding the importance of digital marketing as a means of business development received a positive response from the community of Kalimati Village, particularly among MSME actors. At the beginning of the activity, the community had not yet fully grasped the potential offered by digital marketing. The majority of business actors in the village were still dependent on traditional marketing methods, such as word-of-mouth promotion and direct sales in the local market. This was indicated by the initial interviews, in

which approximately 80% of MSME actors stated that they had never used a digital platform to market their products. However, after the socialization regarding the benefits and opportunities offered by digital marketing was conducted, community enthusiasm began to grow.



Figure 1. Socialization of Creative Content Creation

Following the socialization stage, intensive training was conducted to provide MSME actors with practical skills. The training covered an introduction to social media as a marketing tool, guidance on creating business accounts on e-commerce platforms, and basic product photography techniques (Figure 2). The results of this training demonstrated a significant improvement in participants' understanding of the use of digital technology for marketing. Approximately 70% of participants who attended the training were able to create promotional photos and videos, and understood how to produce visually appealing product photos and videos. In addition, the product photography training also yielded positive outcomes. Previously, many MSME actors had only used basic product photos without paying attention to visual appeal. After receiving training, participants were taught how to take good product photos using a smartphone, as well as basic techniques for using editing applications such as Canva—including how to obtain high-quality images by ensuring a clean and aesthetic background, adequate lighting (bright or dark), appropriate camera angles, and watermarking with the brand logo. The results of this training showed that 65% of participants began to be capable of creating more visually attractive and aesthetically appealing content, which is expected to draw the attention of consumers on digital platforms.



Figure 2. Hands-on Practice of Creative Content Creation

Based on the results of this community service activity, it can be concluded that digital marketing holds considerable potential to support MSME development in Kalimati Village. The training conducted had a positive impact on the understanding and skills of MSME actors in marketing their products digitally (Afandi et al., 2023). However, to achieve more optimal results, sustained support is required, particularly in terms of internet access, continued mentoring, and the provision of adequate technological devices for business actors. As a recommendation, it is hoped that the local government will pay greater attention to digital infrastructure in Kalimati Village, such as improving internet access and providing periodic digital marketing training. In doing so, MSME actors in the village will be better prepared to face the challenges of the digital era and compete with business actors from more advanced regions.

Conclusion

The conclusion of this article emphasizes that the optimization of digital applications in creative content creation plays an important role in digital marketing strategies to support the development of the Smart Village concept in Kalimati Village. The utilization of digital technology through applications such as Canva, CapCut, and Shopee has proven capable of improving the quality of promotional content, expanding marketing reach, and attracting the attention of tourists and investors (Ayu Nuryani & Munawaroh Munawaroh, 2024). Through digitalization, village business actors are not only able to introduce their products to a broader market, but can also build the image and competitiveness of the village in the digital economy era.

However, in its implementation, there are still challenges that need to be addressed, including low digital literacy among the community, limited internet access, and insufficient understanding of effective digital marketing strategies. To overcome these obstacles, a Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR)-based training and mentoring program was implemented as a solution that involves the active participation of the community, particularly women's groups, in designing and implementing digital strategies suited to local needs.

The results of the training conducted demonstrated a substantial improvement in the understanding and skills of MSME actors regarding digital marketing. Many participants who had previously relied on conventional marketing methods began to recognize the importance of visually engaging content and digital marketing strategies for increasing sales. In addition, the training also provided insights into how to optimally utilize social media and e-commerce platforms so that local products become more widely recognized (Manika et al., 2023).

To ensure the sustainability of this program, continued support is needed from various parties—including local government, academia, and the private sector—in providing adequate digital infrastructure, expanding internet access, and organizing periodic training sessions. With the right strategy and strong collaboration, the optimization of digital marketing can become an innovative solution to drive village economic growth, improve community welfare, and strengthen the Smart Village ecosystem amid the rapid advancement of technology.

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