The Influence of Social Media on the Marketing of Home-Based Bread MSME Products

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the impact of social media usage on the marketing effectiveness of homemade bread MSMEs in the digital era. Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), as the backbone of Indonesia's national economy, are currently facing significant challenges amid global competition and shifting consumer behavior. Marketing through social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp Business, and TikTok is considered an effective solution, offering low operational costs, broad market reach, and direct interaction with consumers. This research adopts a descriptive qualitative approach based on literature reviews and secondary data analysis to comprehensively understand this phenomenon. The analysis reveals that social media utilization has a positive influence on brand visibility, sales volume growth, and customer loyalty among homemade bread MSMEs. However, several challenges remain, including limited digital literacy, inconsistency in content creation, and underutilization of paid advertising features. These findings underscore the importance of strengthening the digital capacity of MSME actors through continuous training and multi-stakeholder collaboration to optimize social media-based marketing strategies. By leveraging social media effectively, homemade bread MSMEs have the potential to expand their market reach, enhance competitiveness, and reinforce business resilience in the face of an increasingly digitalized market landscape.

Introduction

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), commonly referred to as UMKM in Indonesia, serve as the backbone of the country's economy, as they contribute significantly to Indonesia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) each year (Bahari et al., 2023). Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) represent a key economic sector that drives Indonesia's economic development (Hariati et al., 2024). One of the most resilient drivers of the people's economy that has made a significant contribution to stimulating economic growth in Indonesia is the Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) sector (Paulina Rosna Dewi Redjo et al., 2024). Officially, the definition of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) is regulated under Law Number 20 of 2008, which stipulates that each business is subject to specific criteria, thereby allowing classification into micro, small, or medium-sized enterprises. According to this law, a micro enterprise is defined as a productive business owned by an individual or an individual-owned business entity (Puspita et al., 2023). The operations of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) encompass various stages, including the processes of production, distribution, and consumption (Sudirga et al., 2022). MSMEs play a strategic role as the primary foundation of Indonesia's national economic structure. Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) constitute one of the most vital sectors in the Indonesian economy. According to data from the Ministry of Cooperatives and Small and Medium Enterprises, as of 2021, there were approximately 64.2 million MSMEs in Indonesia, contributing 61.07% to the national GDP and accounting for 97% of total employment. In the city of Surabaya alone, there are around 48,537 MSMEs, which play a significant role in driving the local economy (Zainal Aprianto Bagus Pratama et al., 2024) . Given their significant contribution, MSMEs have become a crucial component in supporting the nation's economic growth. One MSME subsector

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that has demonstrated positive development is the culinary industry, particularly home-based bakery businesses. The growing consumer trend toward locally produced, fresh, and handmade food products has been a driving factor behind the increasing interest in this type of enterprise.

The empowerment of MSMEs amid globalization and intense competition requires them to be capable of addressing global challenges, such as enhancing product and service innovation, developing human resources and technology, and expanding market reach. These efforts are essential to increase the market value of MSMEs, particularly to ensure their competitiveness against the growing influx of foreign products into Indonesia's industrial and manufacturing centers. This is especially critical considering that MSMEs represent the economic sector with the highest capacity for employment absorption in Indonesia (Muliawati, 2016)

In the face of an increasingly competitive era of globalization, micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) are required to adapt to a wide range of emerging challenges, including product and service innovation, the enhancement of human resource quality, technological utilization, and market access expansion. These factors are critical for improving the competitiveness and market value of MSMEs amidst the growing influx of foreign products into the domestic market. As a key economic sector that significantly contributes to employment absorption in Indonesia, the empowerment of MSMEs must focus on enhancing their capacity to adapt to market changes and shifting consumer trends. In this context, home-based bread businesses represent a growing form of entrepreneurship widely pursued by the public, both as a primary source of income and as a supplementary business activity. Homemade bread products possess several advantages, such as distinctive flavors, the use of high-quality ingredients, diverse product variants, and added value derived from local identity and personal touches. Nevertheless, business actors in this sector continue to face challenges in optimally expanding their market share. These challenges are becoming increasingly complex in the midst of digital transformation and changing consumer preferences, which are now more responsive to technology and digital presence—particularly regarding effective and adaptive marketing strategies.

Home-based bread MSMEs have become a popular entrepreneurial alternative pursued by many in the community, serving either as a main income stream or a side venture. These businesses offer unique benefits, including signature taste, product variety, healthier ingredients, and added value through localization and personalization. Despite these strengths, entrepreneurs in this sector often encounter barriers to expanding their market reach effectively. These obstacles are further compounded by digital transformation and evolving consumer behavior, which now favors technology-driven and digitally visible businesses, especially in the realm of marketing.

Marketing remains one of the fundamental elements in determining the success of a business. Without effective marketing strategies, even high-quality products risk going unnoticed and unaccepted by the market. For home-based bread MSMEs, limitations in capital and resources often hinder their ability to implement conventional marketing strategies, such as establishing physical stores or utilizing paid advertising channels. However, advancements in information technology—particularly social media—offer alternative solutions that can be leveraged efficiently and economically.

The development of information technology has become increasingly advanced over time, with numerous new innovations emerging to support human needs. At its core, technology is intended to provide convenience across various aspects of life, including work, communication, and the resolution of societal problems. (Rahman & Nurdian, 2021). The rapid advancement of information technology has driven the emergence of various digital innovations designed to simplify human activities across multiple aspects of life, including the workplace, communication, and the resolution of social issues. One tangible form of such innovation is social media, which is now utilized not only as a communication tool but also as an effective means of digital marketing. Through social media, business actors can engage with consumers online by leveraging various forms of visual content to enhance brand awareness and build a positive corporate image.

Social media is a form of marketing communication that utilizes electronic (online) media to attract customers or business partners by employing various types of visual content—such as text, images, and more—with the aim of enhancing consumer awareness and strengthening the

corporate image (Maharani et al., 2024) Social media serves as a platform for consumers to share textual, visual, audio, and video information with one another, as well as with companies—and vice versa. The role of social media is increasingly recognized as a key driver in enhancing business performance (Hajid Imam Pranoto, 2023) Social media is a form of marketing communication that utilizes electronic (online) media to attract customers or business partners by employing various types of visual content—such as text, images, and other media—to enhance consumer awareness and strengthen corporate image. More specifically, social media functions as a digital platform that enables two-way interaction between companies and consumers through internet-based networks. Many micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) have successfully leveraged social media to boost their sales performance In the context of marketing communication, social media functions not only as a channel for disseminating information but also as a strategic tool designed to foster more personal and direct relationships with target audiences. By utilizing visual elements such as text, images, infographics, and other multimedia content, companies are able to convey marketing messages in a more engaging and easily comprehensible manner. The primary objectives are to build brand awareness, strengthen the corporate image, and encourage consumer engagement through a continuous and interactive communication process. Social media serves as a digital medium where social realities unfold within a boundless space and time framework, enabling users to interact freely with one another. According to several experts in communication psychology, the most dominant mediums in human interaction are the senses—particularly sight and hearing. Messages received through these sensory channels are processed by the human mind to form perceptions and attitudes, which ultimately influence behavior before being expressed in action. Social media platforms frequently used by producers to market their products include Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp (Hajid Imam Pranoto, 2023).

This As the functions and roles of social media continue to evolve within the context of marketing communication, its use is no longer limited to large-scale corporations. Increasingly, it is being widely adopted by micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) as a primary tool for reaching consumers in an effective and efficient manner.

Social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp Business, and TikTok serve not only as channels for interpersonal communication but have also developed into highly effective tools for product promotion and distribution. In general, social media can be defined as internet-based digital platforms that enable users to create, share, and interact with various types of content—such as text, images, videos, and other interactive features—in real time. From the perspective of digital communication studies, social media falls under the category of *participatory media*, as it allows users to actively participate in the production and dissemination of information. This characteristic distinguishes social media from traditional media, which tends to be unidirectional in nature. The development of social media as a component of digital transformation has significantly altered product marketing strategies. Social media offers communication channels that enable the rapid, widespread, and interactive dissemination of information, allowing businesses to reach consumers more effectively than through conventional media. Platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok facilitate two-way communication between producers and consumers, which in turn enhances audience engagement and brand loyalty. This phenomenon demonstrates that social media functions not only as a promotional tool but also as a means of building brand image and strengthening customer relationships. Moreover, the availability of analytic data provided by these platforms allows companies to identify market preferences and tailor their marketing strategies in a more targeted and strategic manner. As such, the use of social media in product marketing has become a strategic necessity in navigating an increasingly dynamic and competitive business environment. With its interactive nature, ease of access, and visual orientation, social media has become an essential component in the implementation of broader and more targeted digital marketing strategies. In this context, social media serves not only as a medium for product promotion but also as a strategic channel for fostering long-term relationships with consumers. Through a data-driven approach and the use of compelling visual content, business actors can enhance consumer preference, expand market reach, and strengthen brand visibility and image amidst intensifying competition in the digital era.

Digital marketing is a broad term that refers to the use of digital technology to promote products or services in a targeted, engaging, and interactive manner (Nisa Khairunisa et al., 2024) Digital marketing is a broad term that refers to the use of digital technology to promote products or services in a targeted, engaging, and interactive manner. This concept is rooted in the development of information and communication technology, which has transformed traditional marketing paradigms into a more dynamic, data-driven, and consumer-centric approach. In the digital era, social media has become a primary tool for micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) to promote their products, thanks to its affordable costs and wide reach. Platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok offer features that enable MSMEs to reach larger audiences without requiring substantial advertising budgets (Fatonah et al., 2024). A study indicates that a well-designed digital marketing plan is essential for building networks, engaging with customers, and showcasing a company's products and services (Andini Fadhila Hsb et al., 2025) Digital marketing encompasses various methods such as Search Engine Optimization (SEO), Search Engine Marketing (SEM), social media marketing, content marketing, influencer marketing, email marketing, as well as app-based and mobile device marketing. Based on the evaluation, social media has proven effective in attracting consumers from diverse regions, including Nganjuk, Kediri, and Pare. Post-activity evaluations can enhance the innovation of MSME actors in developing their product brands (Fahdillah et al., 2023). Through this approach, companies can reach consumers more specifically based on demographics, location, online behavior, and interests recorded through digital data. This strategy enables companies to personalize marketing messages, increase content relevance, and strengthen relationships with consumers in a sustainable manner. According to Nisa KHoirunisa et al., 2024 It is stated that the primary objectives of digital marketing are to promote products, build preferences, and increase traffic by utilizing various digital marketing techniques. These three goals form the core of contemporary digital marketing strategies, which not only focus on boosting sales figures but also on establishing long-term relationships with customers. Product promotion is carried out not only through visual advertisements or direct promotions but also through storytelling, consumer education, and engaging, interactive digital experiences. Strategy also facilitates companies in understanding and fulfilling the needs and desires of prospective customers. Likewise, potential customers can search for and obtain information related to products by exploring the internet, particularly social media, making the search process more accessible (Shofiyah et al., 2023)

The ease of accessing information through social media not only enables consumers to search for and obtain product information more quickly and efficiently but also provides opportunities for companies to identify and respond to the needs and preferences of prospective customers more accurately. The effectiveness of this strategy reflects the essence of digital marketing, which focuses on two-way interaction and the creation of long-term relationships, as previously discussed. However, understanding of this concept has not yet been fully internalized among MSME actors, necessitating more intensive educational efforts to enhance their digital literacy.

Based on the explanation regarding the primary objectives of digital marketing—which include product promotion, consumer preference formation, and increased digital traffic—it is evident that this strategy is not only sales-oriented but also aimed at creating long-term value through meaningful and consistent interactions. Nevertheless, this idealization has not been fully comprehended or implemented by the majority of MSME actors, particularly those operating in the small and medium enterprise sector. A lack of awareness about the importance of packaging as part of product identity, along with limited utilization of digital media as a promotional tool, constitutes obstacles that hinder their market growth potential. This underscores the urgent need to bridge the gap in understanding modern digital marketing concepts through continuous education and guidance for business practitioners.

The lack of awareness among MSME actors regarding the importance of packaging and the utilization of digital marketing has resulted in a narrowed and underdeveloped target market (Fauziah et al., 2023) One of the primary challenges faced by MSME actors is the lack of awareness regarding the importance of product packaging and the utilization of digital marketing strategies.

Packaging not only functions as product protection but also plays a crucial role in attracting consumer attention and building brand identity. On the other hand, digital marketing offers significant opportunities for MSMEs to reach broader markets at relatively affordable costs. However, since many small business actors have yet to fully understand the potential of these two aspects, their market reach remains limited and business growth tends to stagnate. Therefore, improving digital marketing literacy and understanding of packaging design are critical steps in enhancing the competitiveness and sustainability of MSMEs in the digital era.

Furthermore, the success of digital marketing heavily depends on continuous consumer data analysis. Through digital analytics tools, business actors can understand consumer behavior, evaluate campaign performance, and adjust strategies in real-time. This makes digital marketing a highly responsive approach to changing market trends and consumer preferences. In the context of MSMEs, including home-based bakery businesses, digital marketing provides access to wider market opportunities at relatively low costs. By leveraging social media, marketplaces, and other digital platforms, MSMEs can massively introduce their products, engage directly with customers, and build brand loyalty organically.

Thus, digital marketing is not merely a trend but has become a strategic necessity in building competitiveness in the highly competitive digital era. The success of its implementation is determined not only by the technology used but also by a deep understanding of consumer behavior, the ability to produce relevant content, and the precision in selecting the most effective digital distribution channels according to the characteristics of the target market. In this context, the need for digitalization in business activities becomes increasingly urgent, especially when the world faces extraordinary circumstances that demand rapid changes in how interactions, communications, and business operations are conducted. This urgency became even more apparent during global events that broadly impact various sectors of life, one of which is the Covid-19 pandemic. The pandemic not only affected public health but also exerted significant pressure on the economic sector, including MSME operations, thereby accelerating the adoption of digital technology as an adaptive response to mobility restrictions and changes in consumer behavior.
March 11, 2020 WHO (World Health Organization) The coronavirus was officially declared a global pandemic. This pandemic declaration was based on the uncontrolled spread of the outbreak to various countries worldwide. The announcement served not only as a warning for medical preparedness but also as an alert for readiness across multiple affected sectors. To prevent further transmission of COVID-19, the government has implemented a series of extensive policies. The impact of COVID-19 has affected several sectors in Indonesia, including health, economy, education, and many others. This study specifically focuses on the economic sector (Cahya et al., 2021) One of the sectors most severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic is Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), which have also contributed to the decline of the national economy (Maulana et al., 2023). The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on all aspects and sectors of society, especially the economic sector. Minister of Finance Sri Mulyani identified three major economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. First, it affected household consumption or the purchasing power of the public, which declined. Second, investment weakened amid the uncertainty caused by the pandemic. Third, the global economic downturn halted Indonesia's exports. The spread of the COVID-19 virus has greatly influenced the economic sector, ultimately causing business competition and market conditions to weaken (Surenggono, Atty Erdiana, 2021).

The strategy to address this issue is through the implementation of digital marketing. Several online strategies are offered; first, business owners are assisted in creating social media accounts such as Instagram, WhatsApp Business, and Tokopedia. This approach aims to provide greater exposure for product promotion (Hariati et al., 2024) The proposed strategy to address this issue is the comprehensive implementation of digital marketing, aimed at enhancing competitiveness and expanding the market reach of the offered products. One of the initial steps taken is providing guidance to business owners in creating and managing social media accounts such as Instagram, WhatsApp Business, and e-commerce platforms like Tokopedia. Through these accounts, business owners can leverage digital features to present their products more attractively, engage directly with customers, and conduct promotions more effectively and efficiently. This

strategy is expected to offer broader exposure for the products while simultaneously building a more professional brand image in the eyes of consumers. Thus, the utilization of digital technology becomes a relevant and adaptive solution to the evolving consumer behavior in the current digital era. The role of social media in marketing for micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) has become increasingly crucial during the COVID-19 pandemic, which has compelled many businesses to adapt to changing consumer behaviors and transition to digital platforms (Fatonah et al., 2024).

However, in reality, many MSMEs still do not implement digital marketing as a method to promote their products. Most MSMEs conduct their marketing efforts spontaneously, without clear direction, in a flexible but unstructured manner. This approach leads to failure and an inability to compete effectively in the marketplace (Salma Az-Zahra, 2021) Although digital marketing has proven to be an effective approach for expanding market reach and enhancing product competitiveness, in reality, many Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) have yet to optimally adopt this method. This is primarily due to their marketing practices being conducted spontaneously, without strategic planning, and characterized by flexibility and instinctiveness, resulting in a lack of clear direction and objectives. Such ad hoc marketing strategies lead to very low promotional effectiveness and ultimately contribute to the failure of MSMEs in maintaining their existence amidst increasingly competitive market conditions. The low adoption rate of digital marketing by MSMEs also highlights structural challenges, such as limited human resources with digital technology expertise and insufficient access to training and guidance in digital marketing. This situation reveals a significant gap between the potential benefits of digital technology utilization and the reality faced by most MSME operators. The inability to integrate digital marketing as part of a comprehensive business strategy reflects weak digital literacy and limited access to adequate training and mentoring. Marketing activities carried out spontaneously, without clear direction, and in an unstructured manner tend not to produce long-term impacts on strengthening a product's market position. Consequently, MSMEs struggle not only to reach a broader consumer base but also to build a strong brand image. In the context of intensifying competition, this condition becomes a major obstacle that contributes to the low success rate and sustainability of MSMEs in both domestic and global markets. Therefore, there is a need for alternative marketing strategies that are more adaptive, efficient, and tailored to the characteristics of MSMEs so that they can survive and compete amid market dynamics. In this regard, leveraging social media as a digital marketing tool becomes a highly relevant solution, considering that social media is not only easily accessible but also offers various advantages that address the limitations faced by MSMEs.

For MSMEs, social media provides several benefits, including low operational costs, wide market reach, direct interaction with consumers, and opportunities to creatively and attractively shape brand image. Social media users in Indonesia reached 79 million out of a total population of 255.5 million. Furthermore, by January 2019, the total number of social media users in Indonesia surged to 150 million, accounting for 56% of the total population. Additionally, other research indicates that social media users are not only young people; according to the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII) in 2018, 49.52% of users were aged 19-34, 29.55% were aged 35-54, and 4.24% were over 54 years old (Suhita et al., 2022).

Given these various advantages, the utilization of social media by MSME actors is no longer optional but has become an integral part of an adaptive marketing strategy that responds to technological advancements and evolving digital consumer behavior. Therefore, it is important to further examine how these strategies are concretely implemented in small-scale business practices, particularly in the home-based culinary sector, which heavily relies on product visibility and consumer trust.

The strategy for utilizing social media in the context of marketing for home-based bakery MSMEs can be realized through various digital activities, such as posting product visuals, customer testimonials, production process videos, and the use of digital advertising services (ads). Communication established through social media enables closer relationships between producers

and consumers, as well as provides opportunities for business owners to receive constructive feedback to improve product quality and service.

Although previous studies have demonstrated the important role of social media in supporting MSME marketing activities, most of these studies remain general and focus on different sectors or regions. To date, there is limited research specifically examining the utilization of social media within the context of home-based bakery MSMEs, especially in semi-urban areas such as Rokan Hulu. Furthermore, many studies tend to emphasize the potential of social media without deeply exploring the real challenges faced by MSME actors in optimizing digital platforms, such as limited digital literacy, inconsistent content creation, and low utilization of paid advertising features. This gap highlights the need for more focused and contextual research to comprehensively understand the impact of social media on the marketing of home-based bakery MSME products, grounded in local conditions.

Despite the significant opportunities offered by social media, there remains a considerable number of MSME actors who have yet to maximize its potential. Common issues include limited understanding of digital marketing strategies, inconsistency in content creation, and minimal active presence on digital platforms. Therefore, further study on the effectiveness of social media use in MSME marketing, particularly in the home-based bakery sector, is necessary.

In line with these issues, this research aims to analyze the influence of social media usage on the marketing effectiveness of home-based bakery MSMEs. This study is expected to provide a comprehensive overview of the potential of social media to enhance competitiveness, broaden consumer reach, and drive increased sales volume. Furthermore, the research aims to develop practical recommendations for MSME actors to optimally leverage social media as a marketing strategy in the continuously evolving digital era.

Empirical evidence regarding bread consumption patterns in the Rokan Hulu region can be observed through the average consumption data presented in the following table :

Table 1.1 The average weekly per capita bread consumption in Rokan Hulu for the year 2024

The average weekly per capita bread consumption in Rokan Hulu for the year 2024	
White bread	0,185
Sweet bread, as well as other types of bread	0,758

Source : https://www.bps.go.id

Data obtained from the Central Statistics Agency (Badan Pusat Statistik, BPS) in 2024 provides information regarding the bread consumption levels among the population of Rokan Hulu Regency, measured as average per capita consumption per week. Based on this data, bread consumption is categorized into two main types: plain bread (roti tawar) and sweet bread along with other varieties. Plain bread, typically consumed as breakfast or a complement to main meals, recorded an average consumption of 0.185 kilograms per person per week. Meanwhile, consumption of sweet bread and other types—including filled bread, sweet-flavored bread, and various processed bread products—was notably higher, reaching 0.758 kilograms per capita per week.

When these two categories are combined, the total per capita weekly bread consumption in Rokan Hulu amounts to 0.943 kilograms. This figure indicates that bread products with sweet or varied flavors are more favored by the community compared to simpler plain bread. This preference shift may reflect evolving consumer tastes toward more convenient foods with diverse flavors, aligned with the modernization of lifestyle patterns.

This information is significant not only for depicting the dietary consumption patterns within the region but also serves as a valuable resource for business actors and policymakers in designing development strategies for the food industry, particularly bread and flour-based processed foods. Moreover, the data is relevant to nutritional studies, food product marketing, and socio-economic analyses at the regional level.

Thus, insights into consumption patterns are crucial not only in the contexts of production and policymaking but also as a foundation for understanding consumer preference shifts increasingly influenced by advancements in digital technology. This understanding is essential, especially considering the dynamic nature of modern consumer behavior amid digital

transformation, which affects how people access, select, and purchase food products, including bread and flour-based processed goods.

In the era of digital development, a significant shift has occurred in consumer behavior patterns, particularly concerning product interaction and purchase decisions. Consumers now favor technology-driven approaches that offer speed, easy access, and comprehensive information over conventional methods. This shift drives major changes in marketing strategies, moving from traditional offline methods—such as direct sales, brochure promotions, banners, or word-of-mouth—toward online approaches leveraging digital technologies and social media. Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), especially home-based bread businesses that previously relied on localized and limited promotions, are now required to transform by establishing a digital presence. Social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp Business, and TikTok offer effective alternatives to introduce products to a broader and more interactive consumer base. Online marketing strategies allow business owners to reach customers beyond their immediate vicinity without the necessity of a physical store.

The transition from offline to online marketing is not merely a change in media but demands a mindset shift from business owners. They must be capable of producing engaging content, maintaining consistency in brand image building, and understanding digital analytics to evaluate the effectiveness of their marketing campaigns. Additionally, the ability to engage in real-time, two-way communication with consumers through direct messaging or comments adds significant value in fostering customer closeness and loyalty. This transformation also creates opportunities for cost and time efficiency. Whereas offline promotion often requires substantial budgets and has limited reach, social media marketing can be conducted at a lower cost with potentially far greater reach. Therefore, the shift from traditional to digital marketing systems represents a highly relevant adaptive strategy for home-based bread MSMEs to respond to market dynamics and meet contemporary consumer expectations.

Correspondingly, the move toward digital marketing not only addresses the limitations of conventional methods but also reflects a fundamental change in how consumers interact with information and make purchasing decisions. This transformation becomes even more pronounced given the rising role of social media as a primary source of reference and product evaluation among modern consumers. In recent years, marketing dynamics have undergone significant transformation alongside the development of digital technology, especially social media. These changes have altered consumer behavior patterns in searching for, evaluating, and purchasing products. Whereas consumers previously relied heavily on recommendations from their social circles or conventional media such as television, radio, and print, product information is now predominantly accessed through digital platforms. Customer reviews, visual content such as photos and videos, and testimonials from influencers and ordinary users on social media have become primary references in purchasing decisions. This highlights the substantial role of social media in shaping consumer perceptions of products or brands, including those produced by MSMEs.

These changes have direct implications for MSME actors, including home-based bread businesses, presenting both opportunities and challenges. On one hand, social media provides a broad and relatively low-cost promotional platform compared to traditional marketing methods. On the other hand, leveraging social media requires specific skills such as understanding content strategy, copywriting techniques, timing of posts, effective use of relevant hashtags, and analyzing user engagement.

Various case studies demonstrate that consistent and strategic use of social media can positively impact sales. For instance, a case in Yogyakarta showed a sales increase of up to 70% for a home-based bread business after actively utilizing platforms like TikTok and Instagram Reels. The content shared included bread production processes, serving ideas, and customer testimonials, which effectively attracted a wider market interest.

Furthermore, features such as Instagram Stories, Facebook Shops, and WhatsApp Business enable entrepreneurs to build more personalized communication with customers. This interaction contributes to fostering customer loyalty, as consumers feel valued and maintain a direct relationship with the producers.

However, not all MSME actors realize or are able to optimize the potential of social media. Many remain limited to conventional promotions or do not promote at all due to a lack of knowledge, time, or access to technology. Therefore, systematic education and mentoring are necessary to help MSME actors develop the digital competencies required for modern marketing.

Current digital marketing trends also introduce innovative strategies such as influencer marketing, endorsements, giveaways, live selling, and affiliate marketing. These strategies prove effective when carefully designed and targeted. Home-based bread businesses may consider collaborations with food bloggers, local culinary accounts, or micro-influencers who have loyal and segmented followers.

Besides serving as a promotional medium, social media also functions as a tool to shape brand identity. Consistency in visual design, communication style, and the values conveyed in content plays a significant role in building a positive brand image in consumers' eyes. For example, home-based bread MSMEs that promote healthy and natural concepts can communicate these messages through educational content to attract health-conscious consumers.

The effectiveness of social media utilization can also be quantitatively measured through various indicators, such as follower growth, engagement rates, account or website visits, and increased sales volume. Hence, social media functions not only as a digital showcase but also as an analytic tool to understand consumer behavior and preferences.

Considering these aspects, further research is required to comprehensively examine the influence of social media on MSME product marketing, particularly in the home-based bread sector. This study aims to provide a concrete overview of the role social media plays in expanding market reach, enhancing brand visibility, and supporting business growth. Additionally, the research findings are expected to serve as practical references for other MSME actors to optimize social media as an effective marketing tool in the evolving digital era.

Nevertheless, while social media offers significant potential for MSMEs, effective implementation in the home-based bread sector cannot be separated from the influence of several external factors affecting success. Therefore, further research is necessary to understand these variables and their impact on the effectiveness of social media-based marketing, taking into account local conditions and the entrepreneurs' ability to adapt to digital technology.

The use of social media as a marketing instrument for micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), especially in the home-based bread sector, is influenced by several external factors. These include the level of internet penetration in a region, the digital literacy skills of business actors, and the socio-economic conditions of the local community. In urban areas, better digital infrastructure and higher social media usage intensity provide greater opportunities for MSMEs to expand market reach. Conversely, MSME actors in suburban or rural areas often face limited access to technology and low digital competence, potentially hindering the optimal implementation of social media-based marketing strategies.

Therefore, support from the government and institutions engaged in MSME empowerment is critically needed to provide educational programs and practical training on digital marketing. Ideally, such training activities should encompass the development of creative content, management of digital business accounts, utilization of paid promotional features, and techniques for analyzing the effectiveness of social media campaigns. The goal of this initiative is to equip MSME actors with digital skills aligned with the demands of the information technology era.

Furthermore, strategic collaboration between MSME actors, local communities, influencers, and e-commerce platforms can strengthen promotional networks and enhance business credibility. Amidst the dynamics of digital transformation, multi-stakeholder synergy becomes a vital element in creating an inclusive, adaptive MSME ecosystem capable of sustainable innovation.

From the foregoing discussion, it can be concluded that social media plays a highly strategic role in supporting MSME marketing activities, including within the context of home-based bread businesses. In addition to serving as a cost-effective and flexible promotional medium, social media also functions as a crucial channel for building customer relationships, reinforcing brand identity, and obtaining real-time market information. Nonetheless, the success of social media utilization is

heavily influenced by consistency, careful planning, and the ability to adapt to changing digital consumer behaviors.

Considering these existing challenges, in-depth research is necessary to examine the influence of social media on the marketing effectiveness of MSMEs, particularly in the home-based bread sector. This research is expected to provide empirical insights regarding the role of social media in supporting business growth and serve as a foundation for formulating more targeted and impactful marketing strategies. Moreover, the study's findings can contribute to the advancement of digital marketing knowledge and become a relevant policy reference for various stakeholders, including government bodies, academics, and MSME practitioners.

The research focus will be directed toward key aspects influencing the effectiveness of social media utilization, such as the intensity of digital platform use, types of content developed, levels of consumer interaction, and their impact on sales growth and brand awareness enhancement. Through this approach, a comprehensive understanding of both the potential and challenges of social media use within MSME marketing strategies—specifically for home-based bread businesses in the digital era—is expected to be achieved.

Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) play a strategic role in Indonesia's economy. With approximately 65 million business units, MSMEs contribute more than 60% to the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and absorb nearly 97% of the Indonesian workforce. One of the rapidly growing subsectors is the home-based culinary industry, particularly bakery products, which face challenges in expanding their market amid global competition and shifting consumer behavior.

In 1990, Mr. Sri Mulyadi established a Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprise (MSME) in the village of Pasir Pengaraian to meet daily household needs. MSMEs are among the most resilient drivers of the people's economy and play a significant role in stimulating economic growth in Indonesia (Paulina Rosna Dewi Redjo et al., 2024). Mr. Sri Mulyadi operates his micro, small, and medium-sized enterprise (MSME) through a series of business activities, which include bread production followed by the distribution of the bread to local retail shops. This process is supported by relevant research findings (Sudirga et al., 2022) Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) engage in activities that encompass both production and distribution processes. According to Pengabdian et al. (2023), marketing is a system of business activities designed to promote and distribute goods that satisfy consumer needs.

The advancement of information technology—particularly social media—has opened new opportunities for MSMEs to introduce their products, build relationships with consumers, and expand their market reach at a lower cost compared to traditional methods. Digital marketing strategies have become essential for MSMEs to remain competitive and sustain their presence in an increasingly digitalized marketplace.

Social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp Business, and TikTok offer a variety of features that MSMEs can utilize to promote their products, build brand identity, enhance brand awareness, and establish more personalized relationships with customers. The effective use of social media enables MSMEs to reach a broader audience and engage with consumers more efficiently.

According to (Puspita et al., 2023) Currently, the knowledge of MSME (Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprise) actors regarding the development of information technology remains significantly limited, particularly among MSME operators in Gumukmas village. As a result, they often face challenges in managing their businesses effectively. In the early days of his bakery MSME, Mr. Sri Mulyadi marketed his products exclusively through offline channels. However, in 2019, he began learning to use a smartphone and explore its various features. Subsequently, Mr. Sri Mulyadi's child introduced him to social media platforms and taught him how to utilize them.

As times have progressed, Mr. Sri Mulyadi has strived not to be left behind in the face of growing competition. He began implementing online marketing strategies to enhance the competitiveness of his products in relation to other MSME offerings. As stated by(Bernadhita H.

S. Utami, Novi A. K. Dewi, Wulandari, 2021). Entrepreneurs must improve their marketing strategies in order to compete in the rapidly evolving and widely accessible era of information technology. This is essential for home industry businesses to enhance their sales potential. Such efforts are necessary to increase the market value of MSMEs themselves, especially to enable them to compete with the growing influx of foreign products in industrial centers (Muliawati, 2016).

Quoted from (Rahman & Nurdian, 2021) According to Mr. Sri Mulyadi, WhatsApp Business facilitates the wider distribution of products being sold. Initially, these products were only available within Mr. Sri Mulyadi's village, but now they can reach various other villages. This statement is further supported by (Shofiyah et al., 2023). This strategy can also facilitate companies in understanding and fulfilling the needs and desires of prospective customers. Additionally, prospective customers can search for and obtain information related to products through online networks, such as social media platforms, thereby making the search process more efficient (Nisa Khairunisa et al., 2024). The role of social media is increasingly recognized in enhancing business performance (Hajid Imam Pranoto, 2023) And (Oktaviani, 2023). Promotional media is a crucial element for the continuity of marketing activities in Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), as it enables consumers to obtain information about the products being sold. Although social media offers significant potential, many MSME practitioners have yet to optimize its use. Limitations in digital literacy, lack of marketing planning, and the inability to consistently produce content are major obstacles.

Therefore, education and guidance in utilizing social media are essential to enhance the marketing effectiveness of MSMEs. As stated by (Fauziah et al., 2023). The lack of awareness among MSME actors regarding the importance of utilizing digital marketing results in a limited and underdeveloped target market. This is also evidenced by Mr. Sri Mulyadi, who, prior to marketing through social media, sold 200-250 pieces per day, and after implementing social media marketing, was able to increase sales to 300-400 pieces per day. Digital marketing also plays a crucial role in influencing purchasing behavior and communication aspects. These distinct aspects aim to enhance the company's competitive position, ultimately leading to increased sales (Tarbiyah et al., 2021). Digital marketing has a significant impact on the revenue of MSME actors in Makassar City (Khairunisa et al., 2024). Based on the evidence of increased sales, it can be concluded how significantly impactful online marketing is, particularly through the use of WhatsApp Business, without incurring substantial advertising costs. This aligns with the statement from (Fatonah et al., 2024) Platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok offer features that enable Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) to reach a larger audience without requiring a substantial advertising budget. Research indicates that a well-developed digital marketing plan is essential for building networks, engaging with customers, and showcasing the company's products and services (Andini Fadhila Hsb et al., 2025). This is evidenced by the online marketing efforts conducted by Mr. Sri Mulyadi, who places significant emphasis on marketing through social media—both in terms of customer communication and product quality. One business sector that has benefited from the use of the Instagram platform is the agro-industrial enterprise "Roti Unyil" (Maharani et al., 1881). The strategic use of social media as a marketing tool can yield substantial advantages in reaching a broader audience, as demonstrated by the small and medium enterprise (SME) Anisa Bakery(Indah Sukmawati Wijaya et al., 2023) . This is evidenced by Mr. Sri Mulyadi, who experienced an increase in bread sales after utilizing WhatsApp Business. The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the adoption of digitalization across various sectors, including micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs).

Social media has emerged as a primary solution for MSMEs to maintain consumer engagement amidst physical mobility restrictions. MSMEs that are able to optimize social media for marketing purposes have shown greater resilience and, in some cases, even growth during the pandemic.Quoted from(Indah Sukmawati Wijaya et al, 2021). The utilization of online sales platforms has proven to be highly beneficial for micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in addressing various challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic. This assertion is supported by Mr. Sri Mulyadi, who stated that during the pandemic, he was still able to produce and distribute bread to his customers. This continuity in operations helped stabilize the income of his bread-

based MSME, effectively mitigating the adverse economic impact brought on by the pandemic. When COVID-19 began to spread across Indonesia, a significant number of MSMEs experienced severe setbacks, with some even being forced into bankruptcy(Hariati & Nasution, 2024).

Based on the reviewed literature, the following hypotheses are developed in the context of marketing homemade MSME bread products through social media:

H1: The use of social media has a positive effect on the marketing effectiveness of homemade MSME bread products.

Previous research indicates that social media can broaden market reach and strengthen consumer relationships, thereby enhancing the overall effectiveness of marketing efforts for homemade MSME bread products.

H2: The intensity of social media usage positively influences brand awareness of homemade MSME bread products.

The more frequently social media is used for promotional activities, the greater the consumer awareness of the brand. Social media facilitates more intensive interaction and broader dissemination of information, contributing to increased brand visibility.

H3: The quality of content published on social media positively affects the brand image of homemade MSME bread products.

Engaging and professionally crafted content shapes positive consumer perceptions of the product, thereby improving the overall brand image of homemade MSME bread products.

H4: Active interaction with consumers through social media positively influences customer loyalty toward homemade MSME bread products.

Responsive and personalized communication via social media fosters closeness with consumers, enhances satisfaction, and ultimately contributes to greater customer loyalty.

H5: The use of paid advertising features on social media has a positive effect on the sales volume of homemade MSME bread products.

Paid advertisements on social media platforms increase product exposure to a wider and more targeted audience, thereby potentially boosting sales volume. These hypotheses can be empirically tested to identify the impact of social media utilization on various aspects of marketing homemade MSME bread products.

Research Methods

In this study, a qualitative approach employing a narrative method was utilized to provide an in-depth portrayal of the experiences and perspectives of home-based bread micro-entrepreneurs in Pasir Utama Village, Rokan Hulu, Riau. According to Sugiyono (2021), qualitative research is a method grounded in post-positivist or interpretive philosophy, aimed at examining natural settings where the researcher serves as the primary instrument. Data collection is conducted through triangulation, which combines observation, interviews, and documentation. The data obtained are predominantly qualitative in nature, and data analysis is carried out using inductive or qualitative reasoning. The ultimate goal of qualitative research is to understand meaning, capture uniqueness, construct phenomena, and generate hypotheses (Satriadi et al., 2022). Qualitative research is an investigative process aimed at understanding social or human issues, based on the creation of descriptive representations and conducted within a naturalistic context (Oktaviani, 2023). Moleong states that qualitative research is a representation consisting of spoken or written words carefully examined by the researcher, as well as objects observed in detail, in order to capture the implicit meanings contained within the documents or the objects themselves (Nurfajri et al., 2021). Meanwhile, the qualitative data consist of books, journals, articles, and other relevant sources that support the foundation of the research, as well as written references that draw upon existing theories (Firdaus & Fahrizal, 2021). The descriptive method was selected to present the stages undertaken by business actors without testing theories or generalizing findings. The research process began with in-depth interviews conducted with the business owner, followed by data

reduction to categorize relevant information that reveals the significance of branding strategies and identity reinforcement. The results of this study are expected to formulate the extent to which identity strengthening and effective branding strategies influence consumer attention.

Results and Discussion

This study does not involve direct interaction with MSME actors, but rather is based on a literature review and analysis of secondary data related to social media marketing practices within the home-based bakery MSME sector. Findings from various sources indicate that the majority of MSME actors have experienced an increase in sales volume after adopting social media as a promotional tool. In today's digitally connected era, social media has become an exceptionally effective platform for promoting and marketing products or services. For MSMEs such as Anisa Bakery, leveraging social media as a marketing strategy can offer significant advantages in reaching a broader audience (Nasional Dalam Mengabdi et al., 2023). This phenomenon is also experienced by Mr. Sri Mulyadi. By utilizing social media, Mr. Mulyadi has achieved a 15% year-over-year increase in profits. Social media serves as an effective business development strategy that is essential for enhancing current business opportunities (Hasaruddin1, 2025). Approximately 85% of business actors analyzed in the previous study reported experiencing this increase, and 70% of them acquired new customers within the past three months. The most commonly used platforms for marketing purposes included Instagram, WhatsApp Business, and Facebook. In addition, around 60% of MSME (Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprise) actors stated that utilizing direct communication features, such as private messages and comment sections, contributed to building closer relationships with their customers.

However, a significant number of entrepreneurs still face challenges—approximately 40% admitted to having difficulty in creating engaging promotional content and have yet to fully leverage paid advertising features. Overall, these findings indicate that social media plays a substantial role in expanding market access and enhancing the competitiveness of MSMEs, particularly in the home-based culinary subsector.

Based on the results of the reviewed study, it can be concluded that the use of social media significantly contributes to the development of home-based bakery businesses. These digital platforms have proven to be effective and efficient promotional tools, allowing entrepreneurs to introduce their products to a broader audience without incurring substantial costs. Online sales can be facilitated by uploading photos, videos, or other engaging reel content showcasing the products being offered (Tasya, 2024). Through visual presentations such as photos, videos, and customer testimonials, business actors are able to attract consumer interest more persuasively. Instagram has emerged as the most favored platform due to its visual features that support product promotion, including photo uploads, daily stories, and short videos. Meanwhile, WhatsApp Business is widely used for establishing direct communication with customers, accelerating service, and handling order processes more responsively.

Nevertheless, various challenges remain for MSME (Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises) actors, particularly regarding digital content management. Many of them lack sufficient understanding of the importance of creating regular, creative content that aligns with the characteristics of their target market. Additionally, limitations in social media management skills and minimal utilization of paid features hinder the optimization of digital marketing strategies.

Despite these challenges, the efforts of MSME actors in leveraging social media merit appreciation, as they demonstrate a commitment to adapting to advancements in marketing technology. With enhanced digital capacity through training and mentoring, home-based bakery businesses possess significant growth potential. Social media functions not only as a promotional medium but also as a communication tool capable of fostering emotional closeness with consumers, ultimately increasing customer loyalty. Therefore, strengthening the strategic use of social media is essential to build a professional, trustworthy, and highly competitive business image.

Implication and Conclusion

1. The Urgency of Digitalization in the MSME Sector

To remain relevant and competitive in the digital era, Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs)—particularly home-based bakery businesses—are required to promptly integrate digital technology into their business operations. The use of social media has shifted from being merely an option to an essential strategic necessity for expanding market reach and building sustainable consumer loyalty.

2. The Need to Improve Digital Literacy

The success of social media-based marketing implementation in MSMEs heavily depends on the level of digital literacy possessed by the business actors. Therefore, systematic training and education on business account management, creative content development, and utilization of digital promotion features are essential to enhance marketing effectiveness.

3. Transformation of Marketing Strategies Following Consumer Patterns

The shift in consumer preferences from conventional shopping activities to online systems necessitates MSMEs to reposition their marketing strategies. Digital platform-based marketing approaches, such as Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp Business, and TikTok, provide adaptive solutions to reach consumers more precisely.

4. Digital Access and the Collaborative Role in MSME Transformation

The expansion of equitable access to digital infrastructure, accompanied by support from government, community, and private sectors, is a crucial factor in accelerating the digitalization process of MSMEs. Multi-stakeholder collaboration is particularly necessary to support business actors in regions still facing limitations in technology access.

5. Strategic Adaptation in Facing Global Crises

Global crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic have underscored the importance of adaptive responses through digital transformation. MSMEs that quickly adopt digital marketing strategies demonstrate greater resilience and increased opportunities to survive and grow amid economic uncertainties.

Based on the findings of this study, several important implications can serve as a foundation for developing marketing strategies for home-based bakery MSMEs in the digital era. First, the discovery that social media positively contributes to increasing brand visibility, sales volume, and consumer loyalty indicates that the use of digital platforms is not merely optional but has become a strategic necessity for the sustainability and growth of MSMEs. Therefore, MSME operators need to allocate resources, time, and special attention to managing social media accounts professionally and sustainably.

Second, obstacles such as low digital literacy and underutilization of paid advertising features underscore the need for interventions from various stakeholders, including government agencies, training institutions, and digital communities, to provide relevant and easily accessible capacity-building programs.

Third, for policymakers, the results of this research can serve as a basis for designing more structured and results-oriented digital empowerment programs for MSMEs. Lastly, for future researchers, these findings open avenues for deeper exploration of other variables that may influence the effectiveness of MSME digital marketing, including the impact of social media algorithms, the role of creative content, and collaboration with influencers or online communities.

By considering these implications, it is expected that home-based bakery MSMEs will be able to enhance their competitiveness and business resilience in facing the continuously evolving market challenges.

In conclusion, social media marketing plays a strategic role in strengthening the competitiveness of home-based bakery MSMEs amidst the development of the digital era. The shift from traditional marketing approaches to digital strategies has opened opportunities for business actors to reach broader consumer bases, shape positive brand images, and increase sales more cost-effectively and efficiently.

Nonetheless, the success of implementing this strategy is heavily influenced by the business actors' understanding of digital marketing principles, consistency in content management, and their ability to adapt to changes in digital market behavior. Therefore, improving digital literacy through ongoing training, as well as collaboration between the government, academia, and the private sector, becomes a critical factor in optimizing the use of social media by MSMEs.

Furthermore, comprehensive further research is needed to identify key factors affecting the effectiveness of social media in the context of MSME marketing. Findings from such studies are expected to provide a robust foundation for formulating adaptive and practical strategies for home-based bakery MSMEs to survive and thrive amid increasingly competitive market conditions.

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