

Training and Mentoring on Meta-Product-Based Digital Marketing Strategies to Increase the Competitiveness of School MSMEs

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Abstract.

The purpose of this Community Service activity is to improve the understanding and skills of students in grades X, XI, and XII of SMKN 1 Binjai in implementing digital marketing strategies based on Meta products to support the competitiveness of school MSMEs. The implementation method uses a participatory training approach and direct practical mentoring which includes understanding digital marketing concepts, introducing Meta products, creating promotional content, managing customer communications, and evaluating data-based marketing performance. Success was measured through pre-tests, post-tests, group practice observations, and Likert-scale questionnaires to assess the increase in knowledge, skills, and perceptions of participants regarding the benefits of the training. The results of the activity showed an increase in participants' understanding after participating in the training, especially in the aspect of using Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp Business, and Meta Business Suite as promotional media for school MSMEs. Participants also demonstrated the ability to compose promotional captions, create digital content designs, manage customer communications, and understand performance indicators such as reach, impressions, engagement, clicks, comments, and incoming messages. The results of this training and mentoring have been proven to help students understand digital marketing in a more applicable, creative, and data-driven way. This activity also strengthens students' digital entrepreneurship skills by utilizing the Meta ecosystem as a learning and promotional medium. The limitation of this activity lies in the evaluation, which still focuses on short-term results through pre-tests, post-tests, and participant perceptions. Contributions: This activity provides practical contributions in the form of a digital marketing training model based on Meta products for vocational school students and theoretical contributions in strengthening digital entrepreneurship in schools.

Keywords: Digital Marketing; Meta Products; MSMEs in Schools; Digital Entrepreneurship and Vocational High Schools.

I. INTRODUCTION

Digital transformation has transformed the way businesses market their products, build customer relationships, and create competitiveness, including for MSMEs growing in school environments. Globally, the number of internet users is projected to reach approximately 5.56 billion by early 2025, while in Indonesia, there are 212 million internet users with a penetration rate of 74.6% by early 2025. Digital marketing has become a crucial channel for small businesses [1].

In Indonesia, digital marketing opportunities are growing as the number of active social media users reached 139 million users in January 2024, while Meta ecosystems such as Facebook, Instagram, Messenger, and WhatsApp provide business tools for managing content, customer messages, advertising, and marketing insights. In North Sumatra, the need for MSME digitalization is increasingly relevant because the North Sumatra Statistics Agency (BPS) noted that the publication of the Micro and Small Industry Profile covers important issues such as internet usage, marketing distribution, business difficulties, capital, and business guidance in the micro and small industry sector [2], [3].

Ideally, school-based MSMEs are expected to leverage digital marketing to expand their market, strengthen their product image, increase customer engagement, and build a competitive advantage. Meta products such as Instagram Business, Facebook Page, WhatsApp Business, Messenger, Meta Business Suite, and Meta Ads should be affordable, accessible, and relevant to young consumers' digital behaviors. Meta Business Suite is even designed as a free tool for managing business insights and activities on Facebook, Instagram, and Messenger. However, the reality on the ground shows that many MSMEs still use social

media unplanned, lack a content calendar, don't utilize the WhatsApp Business catalog, and don't utilize insight data for marketing decision-making. Previous PKM activities also indicate that digital literacy and online marketing adoption among MSMEs remain low, hampering business competitiveness [4].

The theoretical foundation of this Community Service activity rests on the concepts of digital marketing, social media marketing, integrated marketing communications, digital entrepreneurship, and competitive advantage. Digital marketing is the use of digital media, the internet, and online technology to build relationships with consumers, deliver value, and increase the effectiveness of marketing strategies [5], [6], [7]. In this context, digital technology should be used to help people and organizations create more relevant and productive customer experiences [8], [9]. Social media marketing is an important foundation because Meta products such as Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp Business, Messenger, and Meta Business Suite can be used to build interactions, disseminate promotional content, manage customer communications, and expand market reach through participation and two-way conversations between businesses and consumers [10]. This activity is also supported by the theory of integrated marketing communications, which emphasizes the importance of message consistency, promotional media alignment, product identity clarity, and ongoing customer relationships through various marketing communication channels [11]. In addition, digital entrepreneurship theory explains that students can be trained to recognize business opportunities, create product value, use technology, and develop practice-based business creativity, while competitive advantage theory emphasizes that competitiveness can be built through product differentiation, service quality, effective communication, and the ability to utilize marketing data to make more informed decisions [12], [13]. Thus, training and mentoring on Meta product-based digital marketing strategies for grade XII students of SMA Negeri 1 Binjai has a strong theoretical basis because it combines conceptual understanding, practical skills, customer communication management, and data-based marketing performance evaluation to increase the competitiveness of school MSMEs.

This community service issue addresses how to improve the capabilities of school-based MSMEs in utilizing Meta products for digital marketing. School MSMEs serve a dual role as business units and educational platforms, fostering entrepreneurship and creativity within the community. Without an effective digital strategy, their products may remain under-exposed and struggle to compete with competitors. The urgent need for training and mentoring aims to help these MSMEs implement targeted digital marketing strategies using platforms like Instagram and Facebook to avoid being marginalized in the digital economy. Key metrics for assessment include understanding of digital marketing, utilization of Meta features, quality of promotional content, and customer engagement. This initiative, "Training and Mentoring for Meta Product-Based Digital Marketing Strategies to Enhance the Competitiveness of School MSMEs," seeks to improve digital marketing knowledge and practices, thereby increasing competitiveness and fostering a culture of digital entrepreneurship in education.

II. METHODS

The implementation method of this Community Service activity uses a participatory training approach and direct practical mentoring and socialization for 1033 students of SMK Negeri 1 Binjai as participants of the activity which was held on January 26-27, 2026. The stages of the activity day began with initial observation and coordination with the school to identify the level of student understanding of digital marketing, the use of business social media, and the potential of school MSME products that can be developed. Next, the activity was carried out through two structured training sessions which included the first day on understanding the concept of digital marketing strategy, market segmentation, and determining consumer targets. Furthermore, the second day was about understanding the preparation of promotional messages and a conceptual introduction to the Meta product ecosystem such as Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp Business, Meta Business Suite, and Meta Ads. After the conceptual training, students participated in direct practice in the form of creating an account or business account simulation, preparing a digital business profile, creating a product catalog, designing promotional content based on images and short videos, writing captions, using hashtags, preparing a content calendar, and simulating customer communication management through automatic message features, quick replies, and the WhatsApp Business catalog. The mentoring program divided students into small groups, allowing each group to design a digital marketing

strategy for one of the school's MSME products. The students then presented their results in the form of content designs, customer communication flows, and data-driven marketing performance evaluation plans.

Performance measurement techniques for the activity were quantitative and descriptive, using pre-tests, post-tests, practical observation sheets, content assessment rubrics, and digital performance evaluations [14]. The pre-test was administered before the training to gauge students' initial understanding of digital marketing, Meta product usage, content strategy, customer communication, and marketing performance analysis. The post-test was administered after the training to assess participants' knowledge gains [15]. Key performance indicators included improvements in digital marketing knowledge scores, ability to optimize Meta features, ability to create promotional content, ability to manage customer communications, and ability to interpret performance data such as reach, impressions, engagement, clicks, comments, incoming messages, and customer responses. Performance analysis was conducted by comparing the average pre-test and post-test scores, calculating the percentage increase in understanding, assessing the group's practical results using a 1–5 scale rubric, and measuring the achievement of activity targets based on the percentage of students who were able to develop digital marketing strategies and create promotional content according to criteria [16]. The success of the activity is declared achieved if there is an increase in the post-test score compared to the pre-test, at least 75% of participants are able to use the basic features of the Meta product correctly, at least 75% of groups are able to produce promotional content that is worthy of publication, and participants are able to explain how to evaluate data-based digital marketing performance as a basis for increasing the competitiveness of school MSME products [17].

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the training participant demographic data, 1,033 students were registered, consisting of 290 male students and 743 female students. Male participants comprised 28.07% of the total, while female participants comprised 71.93%. This composition indicates that the training was dominated by female students. The predominance of female participants may indicate a high level of interest in the Meta product-based digital marketing training among female students. Nevertheless, male student engagement remained significant, with nearly one-third of the total participants participating.

Pre- and post-test results indicated an increase in participant understanding after the training. For the male group, the average pre-test score of 80 increased to 98 in the post-test, representing an increase of 18 points, or approximately 22.50%. For the female group, the average pre-test score of 75 increased to 95 in the post-test, representing an increase of 20 points, or approximately 26.67%. When calculated overall based on the number of participants, the pre-test average was 76.40, while the post-test average increased to 95.84. This represents an average increase of 19.44 points, or approximately 25.44%, indicating that the training was effective in enhancing students' understanding of digital marketing strategies based on Meta products.

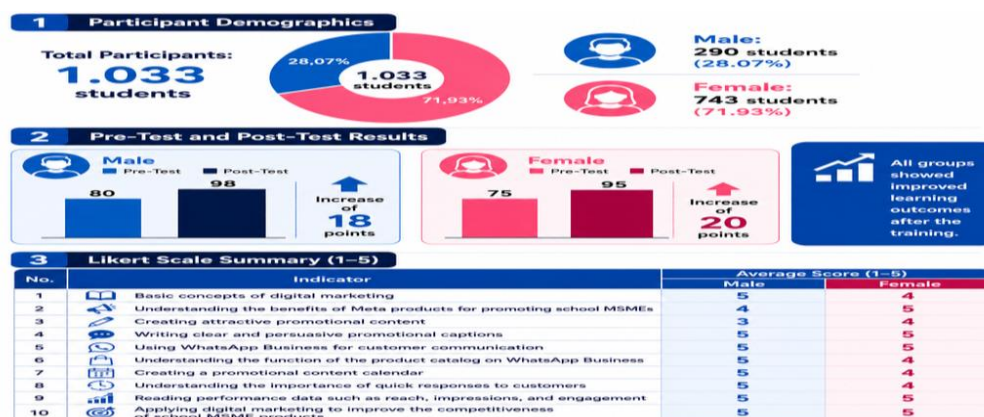


Fig. 1. Demographics of Training and Mentoring participants at SMAK 1 Binjai

Analysis of the Likert scale results showed that participants' perceptions of the benefits and practical skills after the training were in the very good category, with an overall average of 4.56 out of 5. The indicators with the highest scores were the ability to write clear and persuasive promotional captions, understanding how to use WhatsApp Business for customer communication, the ability to interpret performance data such

as reach, impressions, and engagement, and the confidence to implement digital marketing to increase the competitiveness of school MSME products, each of which received an average score of 5.00. This indicates that participants felt they had a strong understanding of promotional communication, digital customer service, marketing performance evaluation, and the application of digital marketing in the context of school MSMEs.



Fig. 2. Implementation of Training and Mentoring at SMAK 1 Binjai

The indicator with the lowest score was the ability to create engaging promotional content, with an average score of 3.72. Therefore, aspects of visual design, content creativity, use of design applications, and content concept development still need to be strengthened in further mentoring. Overall, the Likert scale results indicate that the training successfully improved students' readiness to understand and implement digital marketing based on Meta products. However, specific reinforcement of promotional content production skills is still needed to optimize training outcomes.

Based on a comparison of pre-test, post-test, and Likert scale results, the training activity was deemed successful due to a significant increase in knowledge and positive perceptions of the training materials and practices. The increase in post-test scores indicates that participants understood the material on digital marketing, Meta products, customer communication, and data-driven performance evaluation well. The Likert scale results also showed that students not only understood the material theoretically but also felt capable of applying it in school MSME promotional activities. However, findings on the promotional content creation indicator suggest the need for further sessions that emphasize the practice of visual content design, product storytelling, the use of promotional templates, simple product photography techniques, and the creation of short videos for Instagram or Facebook. Thus, this training has a positive impact on improving students' digital marketing literacy, while also serving as a foundation for developing a more sustainable school MSME mentoring program.

IV. CONCLUSION

Community service activities through training and mentoring on digital marketing strategies based on Meta products for grades 10, 11, and 12 students at SMKN 1 Binjai have met the primary objective of the program, namely to improve students' understanding and skills in utilizing digital media to support the competitiveness of school-based MSMEs. Key findings indicate that participants experienced improved

understanding after the training, particularly in understanding digital marketing concepts, using Meta products, creating promotional content, customer communication, and evaluating data-driven marketing performance. These results align with Sharabati et al.'s (2024) view that digital marketing can strengthen business performance by increasing market reach, customer interaction, and digital transformation [18]. Thus, this training demonstrates that vocational high school students can be directed to become active participants in strengthening school digital entrepreneurship through utilizing platforms closely related to their daily lives.

This activity also demonstrated that the use of Meta products such as Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp Business, and Meta Business Suite can be applied learning tools to build students' digital promotion skills. Participants gained not only theoretical knowledge but also practical skills in composing promotional messages, creating captions, managing customer communications, and understanding performance indicators such as reach, impressions, engagement, clicks, and incoming messages. These findings align with Cao and Weerawardena (2023), who explained that the strategic use of social media can strengthen market sensing, brand management, and customer relationship capabilities in small and medium-sized enterprises [19]. Therefore, the Meta product in this activity serves not only as a promotional medium but also as a learning tool for marketing communications, customer management, and data-driven decision-making.

The novelty of this Community Service program lies in the integration of digital marketing training, the use of the Meta ecosystem, promotional content practices, customer communication, and digital performance evaluation within a single mentoring model for vocational high school students. Unlike social media training, which solely emphasizes platform use, this activity connects social media marketing theory, digital entrepreneurship education, and competitive advantage into measurable school entrepreneurship practices. Wibowo et al. (2023) assert that digital entrepreneurship education can encourage digital entrepreneurial intentions and social media use in students [20], while Djiu et al. (2024) show that competitive advantage can be a crucial link between technological capabilities, social media use, and business performance [21]. Thus, this PKM provides practical and theoretical contributions by developing a model for empowering vocational high school students based on digital skills, content creativity, customer communication, and strengthening the competitiveness of school MSMEs.

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