



## DIGITAL MARKETING STRATEGIES OF KALORIS HERBAL BEVERAGE MSMEs IN EXPANDING THE LOCAL MARKET

<sup>1</sup>Asep Purwo Yudi Utomo, <sup>2</sup>Siti Hadiati Nugraini, <sup>3</sup>Muhammad Feriady, <sup>4</sup>Hanum Sa'ada Fidaroeni, <sup>5</sup>Salsabila Budi Utami

<sup>1,4,5</sup>Fakultas Bahasa dan Seni, Universitas Negeri Semarang; <sup>2</sup>Fakultas Ilmu Komputer, Universitas Dian Nuswantoro; <sup>3</sup>Fakultas Ekonomika dan Bisnis, Universitas Negeri Semarang

<sup>1</sup>aseppyyu@mail.unnes.ac.id, <sup>2</sup>shnugraini@dsn.dinus.ac.id, <sup>3</sup>mferiady@mail.unnes.ac.id, <sup>4</sup>hanumsaada@students.unnes.ac.id,

<sup>5</sup>salsabilabudiutami@students.unnes.ac.id

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### ABSTRAK

*Usaha Mikro, Kecil, dan Menengah (UMKM) merupakan pilar utama dalam perekonomian nasional, namun masih menghadapi hambatan signifikan dalam aspek promosi dan transformasi digital. UMKM Minuman Herbal Kaloris, sebagai produsen berbasis bahan alami, memiliki prospek besar sejalan dengan meningkatnya tren gaya hidup sehat. Meskipun demikian, strategi pemasarannya masih didominasi oleh metode konvensional, seperti promosi dari mulut ke mulut. Tantangan utama yang muncul mencakup lemahnya upaya branding, keterbatasan dalam pengelolaan konten digital, serta rendahnya pemanfaatan media sosial dan pasar daring. Untuk mengatasi permasalahan tersebut, program pengabdian ini menerapkan pendekatan Participatory Action Research (PAR) yang menitikberatkan pada pelatihan strategi digital marketing, meliputi optimalisasi media sosial, pembuatan konten visual, dan pengelolaan marketplace. Hasil implementasi menunjukkan bahwa UMKM Kaloris mampu membangun identitas digital yang lebih konsisten yang tercermin dari peningkatan signifikan jumlah pengikut di media sosial, engagement rate, serta pesanan dari konsumen lokal. Peningkatan interaksi digital tersebut juga disertai dengan respons positif terhadap mutu produk dan desain kemasan. Dengan demikian, penerapan strategi digital marketing terbukti efektif dalam memperluas jangkauan pasar lokal, meningkatkan brand awareness, serta memperkuat daya saing UMKM minuman herbal pada era ekonomi digital.*

### ABSTRACT

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) serve as a cornerstone of the national economy, yet they continue to face significant challenges in terms of promotion and digital transformation. Kaloris Herbal Beverage MSME, as a producer of natural-based products, holds substantial potential in line with the growing trend of healthy lifestyles. However, its marketing practices remain largely conventional, relying primarily on word-of-mouth promotion. The major obstacles encountered include weak branding efforts, limited digital content management, and underutilization of social media and online marketplaces. To address these issues, this community engagement program applied a Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach, emphasizing training in digital marketing strategies such as social media optimization, visual content creation, and marketplace management. The outcomes demonstrate that Kaloris MSME successfully established a more consistent digital identity, reflected in a significant increase in social media followers, engagement rates, and local consumer orders. This surge in digital interaction was also accompanied by positive consumer responses regarding product quality and packaging. Thus, strengthening digital marketing strategies has proven effective in expanding local market reach, enhancing brand awareness, and improving the competitiveness of herbal beverage MSMEs in the digital economy era.

Address: L Building, Campus Sekaran, Gunungpati, Semarang,  
Indonesia, 50229

Correspondent Address:

Fakultas Bahasa dan Seni, Universitas Negeri Semarang

Email : aseppyyu@unnes.mail.ac.id

## INTRODUCTION

One of the recurrent challenges faced by MSMEs is the ability to adapt dynamically to ongoing developments. MSMEs must navigate increasingly complex market dynamics arising from product competition and shifting consumer preferences. These conditions demand that MSMEs adopt modern marketing strategies to maintain competitiveness. The OECD (2021) report emphasizes that digital transformation is a crucial factor in enhancing MSME capacity across sectors.

Digital marketing serves as a strategic instrument to overcome existing MSME marketing challenges by expanding market reach and responding to modern competition (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019). Unfortunately, limitations in knowledge and resources continue to hinder many MSMEs, making digital marketing capacity building an urgent need for business sustainability.

Kaloris Herbal Beverage MSME offers substantial potential as it produces natural-based herbal drinks aligning with the growing trend of healthy lifestyles (Dini, 2019; Mannur et al., 2023). The demand for herbal beverages continues to increase, supported by rising consumer awareness of health and opportunities for product diversification. Previous studies show that herbal drinks, such as agarwood tea, can open new markets at local and regional levels (Wangiyana & Nikmatullah, 2022). However, Kaloris MSME has not fully capitalized on this potential due to weak branding strategies and limited digital marketing efforts.

A major issue affecting Kaloris MSME is weak brand identity. The product's visual presentation lacks consistency, making it difficult to compete with well-established competitors (Kotler & Keller, 2016; Moslehpour et al., 2022).

Branding should not only involve logos or packaging but also the narrative and product positioning in the marketplace. Komari et al. (2020) emphasize that 7P marketing strategies significantly influence consumer purchasing decisions for herbal products. Meanwhile, Kaloris's promotional practices remain limited to traditional approaches such as word-of-mouth promotion and offline distribution, which are less effective in reaching digital consumers.

Therefore, strengthening digital marketing strategies becomes essential. The use of social media and online marketplaces can broaden consumer reach and increase brand awareness (Kotler & Keller, 2016; Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019). Digital branding has been shown to enhance consumer trust (Moslehpour et al., 2022) and support the promotion of traditional products, including herbal beverages (Serravalle et al., 2019). Digital transformation not only enlarges market potential but also enhances consumer interaction and opens opportunities for global market access (OECD, 2021; UNCTAD, 2022).

This article aims to describe the design and implementation of digital marketing strategies for Kaloris Herbal Beverage MSME. The focus includes strengthening branding, improving consumer trust, and expanding the local market (Komari et al., 2020; Kuswinarno et al., 2025). This program also analyzes supporting factors and challenges in applying digital marketing. The study contributes theoretical insights to the digital marketing literature for MSMEs and provides practical guidance for business actors in designing sustainable marketing strategies.

## **METHOD**

This community engagement program utilized a range of digital platforms, including Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp Business, and online marketplaces such as Shopee and Tokopedia. Instagram and Facebook were selected due to their large user bases, making them effective channels for strengthening brand awareness of Kaloris products. WhatsApp Business served as a direct communication medium that enabled personalized interactions with consumers. Meanwhile, Shopee and Tokopedia functioned as transactional platforms to expand market reach through secure and integrated purchasing systems. The selection of these platforms aligns with Chaffey's (2019) recommendations on digital marketing planning and previous community empowerment practices demonstrated by Soeswoyo et al. (2021).

In addition to digital platforms, the program employed various supporting tools to enhance promotional effectiveness. Canva was used to design visual promotional content, Google Analytics to monitor real-time campaign performance, and Meta Ads Manager to manage paid advertisements based on targeted audiences. Basic photography equipment was utilized to produce product photos and videos, complemented by packaging designs, consumer testimonials, and product storytelling. This strategy resonates with Hadriyani et al. (2024), who highlight the significance of content quality in herbal product promotion, as well as Wijana et al. (2023), who emphasize innovation and communication as key elements in attracting consumer interest. These tools were selected for their practicality, accessibility, and suitability for Kaloris MSME's operational context.

The methodological approach adopted in this program was Participatory Action Research (PAR), which emphasizes active involvement of all stakeholders throughout the process. PAR was chosen due to its collaborative nature, enabling the MSME owner, production team, and supporting partners to participate in each stage of activity. Kemmis and McTaggart (2005) describe PAR as a cyclical process involving problem identification, action, and reflection, making it well-suited for MSME empowerment initiatives. Creswell (2018) further notes that participatory research enhances validity by ensuring that participants are directly involved in decision-making processes. Thus, PAR served as a robust methodological foundation for this engagement program.

Implementation of PAR within Kaloris MSME extended beyond technical training by fostering collective awareness of the importance of digital transformation. Through collaborative sessions, the business owner and production team contributed to developing marketing strategies aligned with their capacity and business needs. Yin (2017) argues that participatory approaches produce more field-applicable findings, while Munir et al. (2025) demonstrate the success of participatory training in website content management for culinary MSMEs. Accordingly, PAR not only enhanced practical digital marketing skills but also supported the sustainability of the MSME's marketing practices.

The initial stage of the program involved problem identification through observation and interviews with the Kaloris MSME owner. Analysis revealed several key issues, including inconsistent branding, reliance on traditional promotional methods, and limited digital marketing utilization. These findings correspond

with Kumar et al. (2005), who highlight the importance of presenting the value propositions of herbal products, and Kuo et al. (2020), who emphasize understanding product characteristics as essential for effective marketing strategies. Thus, the needs assessment established a solid foundation for designing targeted interventions.

The subsequent stage involved planning, including the preparation of digital marketing training modules tailored to the partner's needs. The modules covered visual content creation, herbal product storytelling, and marketplace strategies for expanding reach. Creswell (2018) asserts that a data-based planning process is crucial for program effectiveness, while Hadriyani et al. (2024) underscore the importance of high-quality content in enhancing product appeal. Accordingly, this planning stage ensured a well-structured implementation process.

During the implementation stage, activities were divided into four core training sessions: (1) introduction to digital marketing and branding, (2) content creation for photos, videos, and copywriting, (3) practical marketing using social media and marketplaces, and (4) monitoring consumer interactions. The final stage—evaluation—was conducted by comparing social media engagement levels and sales figures before and after the training implementation. The evaluation approach aligns with the recommendations of Wijana et al. (2023) regarding innovation effectiveness and Soeswoyo et al. (2021) on program sustainability assessment.

A validation stage was also conducted in collaboration with the MSME team to ensure that the branding instruments developed during the

program met expert standards. Experts specializing in digital marketing content and branding were involved in this process to refine the outputs.

Participants in the program included the MSME owner, production team members, and local supporting partners. The owner played a role in making strategic decisions, the production team managed digital content, and partners served as facilitators and mentors. This distribution of roles reflects the principles of collaboration within PAR. Kemmis & McTaggart (2005) state that active involvement enhances participants' sense of ownership, while Kuo et al. (2020) emphasize that direct engagement promotes a deeper understanding of product characteristics and marketing strategies. This structure ensured that the program fostered sustainable improvements in Kaloris MSME's digital marketing practices.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **1. Preparation and Scheduling**

The initial stage of the program involved identifying the challenges faced by the partner MSME. This process was carried out through discussions aimed at uncovering underlying issues. Preliminary interviews confirmed the need to strengthen branding and expand market reach through digital marketing strategies. The interviews also revealed that promotional activities still relied heavily on traditional methods, primarily word-of-mouth, which limited consumer reach. These findings align with Komari et al. (2020), who emphasize the importance of structured marketing strategies in driving consumer purchasing decisions, as well as Kuswinarno et al. (2025), who highlight the

necessity of competitive strategies for sustaining the relevance of herbal industries. Consequently, initial coordination served as a critical foundation for designing suitable intervention activities.

Specific needs were identified through observations of Kaloris's promotional practices and interviews with the owner and production team. The assessment revealed weaknesses such as inconsistent branding, limited visual content, and minimal use of online marketplaces. These findings support Irjayanti & Azis (2023), who state that human resource limitations and technological access remain major barriers to digital transformation among MSMEs. Similar concerns are expressed by Nurkhamid et al. (2025), who underscore the importance of effective digital content management for attracting consumers. This needs assessment allowed the team to map the MSME's main weaknesses and develop training materials accordingly.

A training module was then designed, covering the fundamentals of digital marketing,

branding strategies, visual content creation, and marketplace management. The module was informed by contemporary digital marketing literature, which stresses creativity, consistency, and market analysis (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019). Additionally, it incorporated the unique characteristics of herbal beverages as key branding elements, following insights from Antasionasti et al. (2023) and Kautsar et al. (2024) on product diversification. Thus, the training module balanced technical digital skills with an emphasis on reinforcing the MSME's local identity.

To ensure the activities progressed in an organized manner, an Activity Plan Table was created, detailing the schedule, types of activities, and target participants. This structured planning approach aligns with OECD (2021), which highlights the importance of systematic planning in MSME digital transformation, and Wahab et al. (2017), who argue that successful marketing innovations require careful preparation. The complete activity plan is presented in Table 1.

**Tabel 1.** Activity Plan and Implementation Time

Step Action	Activity	Time	Target
Scheduling and Preparation	Initial coordination, identification of digital promotion needs, preparation of training modules	Week 1–2	UMKM Owner & Production team
Implementation – I Session	Introducing digital marketing & branding	Week 3	UMKM Owner & Production team
Implementation – II Session	Content creation training (product photos, short videos, copywriting)	Week 4	UMKM Owner & Production team
Implementation – III Session	Marketing practices via Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp Business, Shopee, Tokopedia	Week 5	UMKM Owner & Production team

Implementation IV Session	– Monitoring consumer interactions and online sales simulations	Week 6	All Participant
Evaluation	Engagement & sales analysis, reflection on strategy sustainability	Week 7	UMKM Owner & Production team

## 2. Implementation

The training began with an introductory session on digital marketing and branding to build foundational understanding. The session emphasized the importance of maintaining a consistent brand identity and using digital platforms to expand market reach. Kotler & Keller (2016) identify branding as the core of effective marketing strategies, while Moslehpour et al. (2022) demonstrate that digital branding significantly enhances consumer trust toward MSME products. The participatory approach enabled participants to engage in interactive discussions and share prior promotional experiences.

The second session focused on content creation, including product photography, short video production, and advertising copywriting. Participants practiced these skills directly, resulting in improved visual promotional materials. Wijana et al. (2023) emphasize that the appeal of herbal products can be enhanced through innovation combined with strong visual communication. In line with this, Mishra et al. (2019) explain that the bioactivity of herbal beverages can serve as an additional selling point when effectively conveyed. Therefore, this session highlighted the importance of aligning design elements with product value.

The third session concentrated on digital promotion through social media and online marketplaces. Participants learned how to utilize

Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp Business, Shopee, and Tokopedia for promotional and sales purposes. Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick (2019) assert that selecting the appropriate marketing channel can significantly expand product reach. Participant enthusiasm was reflected in their willingness to explore new promotional features across platforms.

The final session involved monitoring consumer interactions and conducting online sales simulations. Participants learned how to interpret engagement data, respond to customer inquiries, and evaluate the effectiveness of promotional content. Malcienė & Skauronė (2019) note that leveraging digital analytics enhances competitiveness in the food and beverage sector, while Ren et al. (2021) underscore the importance of monitoring consumer behavior for business sustainability in the post-pandemic era. Through this session, participants gained essential skills to maintain adaptive marketing strategies.

## 3. Evaluation

Evaluation was carried out by comparing social media follower counts and engagement rates before and after the training. Results showed a significant increase in the number of Instagram followers, rising from 200 to 650 within three months. Engagement rates also improved, as reflected in increased likes, comments, and interactions on product-related posts. These outcomes support Komari et al. (2020), who argue

that content-based marketing strengthens consumer engagement.

Sales performance also improved, with a 40% increase in monthly local orders after the training. This reflects a shift from traditional promotional methods to more effective digital strategies. Kuswinarno et al. (2025) emphasize that innovative and competitive strategies increase the market attractiveness of herbal products, consistent with Mannur et al. (2023), who highlight the commercial potential of herbal beverages.

Consumer responses gathered through testimonials further confirmed the positive impact of digital marketing. Consumers reported that product information was more accessible and that visually appealing content enhanced trust in product quality. Antasionasti (2023) explains that nutritional information can be used as an additional value proposition, while Lenoir et al. (2012) show that herbal beverages offer protective health benefits appealing to health-conscious consumers.

Table 2 presents a comparison of key indicators before and after the training, highlighting consistent improvements in engagement, follower count, and sales performance. These findings align with Tangian et al. (2020), who emphasize the role of ICT adoption in MSME empowerment, and Fatmawati et al. (2023), who argue that digital-based creative economies enhance MSME competitiveness.

**Tabel 2.** Comparison of Indicators Before and After Training

Indiacator	Before	After (3 month)	Percentage Increase
Number of Instagram Followers	200	650	+225%
Engagement Rate (%)	1,5%	4,8%	+220%
Number of Sales	50	70	+40%
Positive Response from Consumer (%)	60%	85%	+25%

#### 4. Discussion

The implementation of digital marketing strategies significantly strengthened Kaloris MSME's position in the local market. This aligns with Kotler & Keller (2016), who highlight the importance of consumer orientation and consistent branding in marketing strategies. Similarly, Moslehpour et al. (2022) found that digital branding boosts consumer loyalty toward MSME products.

Digital marketing not only expanded market reach but also increased brand awareness and enhanced consumer relationships. Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick (2019) argue that digital strategies enable MSMEs to target audiences more effectively. Anggaeni (2019) also notes that innovations in food and beverage products generate stronger consumer appeal when combined with appropriate digital marketing approaches.

The success of the program was supported by several factors, including the partner's openness to innovation, access to internet infrastructure, and the creativity of the production team in managing promotional content. Wahab et al. (2017) highlight that readiness and adaptability are vital for marketing innovation success. Malcienė & Skauronė (2019) also emphasize technology adoption as a key driver of MSME competitiveness.

However, challenges persisted, particularly in maintaining posting consistency and allocating budgets for paid advertising. Ren et al. (2021) identify resource limitations as a major challenge for sustaining creative businesses in the post-pandemic era. Mishra et al. (2019) further emphasize that continuous innovation is necessary for herbal products to remain competitive. These reflections suggest that digital marketing strategies must be developed continuously through additional training and intensive mentoring to ensure long-term success.

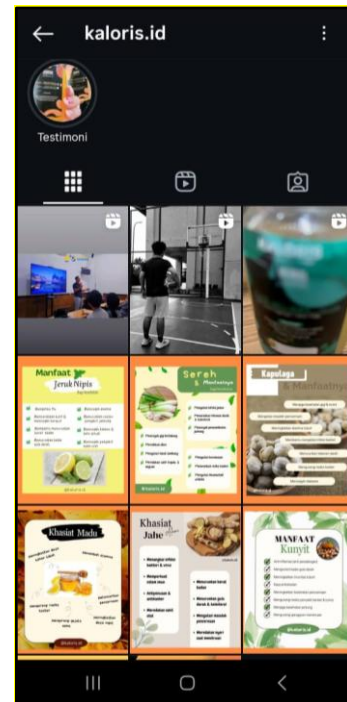
For more information about outcome of Community Service you can follow the Figure 1, 2 and 3 as follows:



**Figure 1.** Digital Marketing Training

Furthermore, the results of the development of digital content for the Calories product and

branding for the product can be seen in example Figure 2 as follows:



**Figure2.** Instagram Content of Calories Product



**Figure 3.** Consumer Response

## CONCLUSION

The program on strengthening digital marketing strategies for the Kaloris Herbal Beverage MSME proved effective in enhancing branding capacity, expanding the local market,



and reinforcing consumer engagement. Through the use of the Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach, this program not only focused on technical training but also encouraged active involvement of the MSME partners in all stages—from problem identification to evaluation. The implementation results indicated significant improvements in social media indicators, with an increase in follower count, higher engagement rates, and a corresponding rise in product sales. These findings affirm that digital marketing integration is a strategic and relevant solution for addressing MSME challenges in the digital economy.

Despite the positive achievements, the program also highlighted several supporting factors and challenges within the Kaloris MSME. The MSME's openness to innovation, availability of technological infrastructure, and creativity in developing value-based herbal product content contributed greatly to the program's success. Nevertheless, limitations in human resources, inconsistency in content management, and insufficient budgeting for paid promotions remain obstacles that must be addressed through ongoing support. Therefore, digital marketing should not only serve as a promotional instrument but also as a foundation for building long-term sustainability and competitiveness in the herbal beverage industry.

The measurable impact of this program was reflected in market expansion as indicated by the increased number of social media followers. In addition, several Kaloris products received branding exposure through newspaper publications and various media channels. These efforts contributed to a 40% increase in product sales over the past three months. This

demonstrates that well-executed digital marketing strategies can significantly strengthen MSME performance and market visibility.

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Our sincere appreciation is conveyed to the Kaloris Herbal Beverage MSME, including the business owner, production team, and all supporting partners who actively participated in the training activities. We hope that the outcomes of this program will contribute meaningfully to strengthening digital marketing strategies, especially within the herbal beverage sector, and inspire future empowerment initiatives in the digital economy era.

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