


Digital Communication Analysis on the Marketing of SME's (Small and Medium Enterprises) by Karang Taruna of Ciampea Udik Village in the Era of Globalization

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
Keywords: Digital Communication, Globalization, Marketing SME's.	The Youth Organization (Karang Taruna) of Ciampea Udik Village, as a Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) actor, has great potential for growth; however, they still face challenges in adopting digital technology as part of their marketing strategy. Karang Taruna in Ciampea Udik Village, as a Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) actor, also needs to optimize the use of digital communication to enhance marketing effectiveness and expand market reach. Digital communication encompasses various tools and platforms such as social media, websites, email marketing, and instant messaging applications that can be used to reach consumers broadly and efficiently. The use of online media as a marketing tool allows SMEs to interact directly with customers, build brand awareness, and promote products at a lower cost compared to traditional media. However, the implementation of digital communication in rural areas is often hindered by limitations in human resources, infrastructure, and access to technology.
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INTRODUCTION

Globalization has transformed the way small and medium enterprises (SMEs) operate, including those managed by Karang Taruna in Ciampea Udik Village. It enables local products and services to be marketed to a broader audience, including international markets (Suryani, 2020:45). However, this also intensifies competition from global market players, requiring SMEs to adapt to digital technology in their marketing strategies. Digital communication through online media such as social media, websites, and e-commerce has become an essential tool for enhancing competitiveness and market access for SMEs (Pratama, 2021:78).

The era of globalization has also transformed various aspects of life, including how small and medium enterprises (SMEs) conduct their marketing activities. Digital communication technology has become increasingly important, particularly in enhancing the competitiveness of SMEs in facing the growing complexity of global markets (Wibowo, 2021:45). The Karang Taruna of Ciampea Udik Village, as an SME actor, has significant

potential for growth; however, they still face challenges in adopting digital technology as part of their marketing strategy.

Although digital technology has become an integral part of global business strategies, SMEs in rural areas often face obstacles such as limited resources, lack of technological knowledge, and inadequate digital infrastructure (Yuliana, 2022:102). The Karang Taruna in Ciampea Udik Village, as an SME actor, also needs to optimize the use of digital communication to enhance marketing effectiveness and expand market reach.

Digital communication, on the other hand, encompasses a variety of tools and platforms such as social media, websites, email marketing, and instant messaging applications that can be used to reach consumers widely and efficiently (Purwanto, 2020:60). The use of online media as a marketing tool enables SMEs to interact directly with customers, build brand awareness, and promote products at a lower cost compared to traditional media (Santoso, 2020:112). However, the implementation of digital communication in rural areas is often hindered by limitations in human resources, infrastructure, and access to technology (Suryani, 2021:89).

Table 1. Framework for Digital Communication Analysis on the Marketing of SMEs Karang Taruna of Ciampea Udik Village

VARIABLE	INDICATOR	DESCRIPTION
Digital Communication	Use of Social Media	Identifying social media platforms used, such as Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok
	Website and e-commerce	Assessing the presence and function of websites or online stores for marketing
	Digital Content	Analysis of the types and quality of content (images, videos, text) used for promotion.
Marketing SME	Brand Awareness	Measuring the extent to which consumers are aware of Karang Taruna SME products.
	Sales Increase	Evaluation of sales growth before and after the use of digital communication.
	Customer Interaction	Assessing customer responses through comments, likes, and messages on digital platforms.

The table above illustrates various aspects of digital technology usage in marketing, such as the use of social media, websites, and digital content. In SME marketing, it highlights indicators of marketing success through digital communication, including increased brand awareness, sales growth, and customer interaction.

Digital communication technology enables businesses to connect more effectively with consumers, not only in local markets but also globally. This development presents significant opportunities for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) or Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), which play a crucial role in Indonesia's economy, especially in rural areas such as Ciampea Udik Village. Karang Taruna, as a youth organization, functions not only in

social development but also facilitates economic growth through small businesses run by its members. With the emergence of digital media such as social media, e-commerce, and other digital communication platforms, Karang Taruna of Ciampea Udik Village faces the opportunity to enhance their product marketing. However, the challenges in adopting this technology are also quite significant, especially in rural areas (Kusuma, 2022:74).

In adopting digital communication, the biggest challenges faced by SMEs, especially in villages like Ciampea Udik, are the lack of infrastructure and digital skills. Most business actors within Karang Taruna do not yet have sufficient knowledge on how to effectively utilize digital technology. Limited infrastructure, such as slow internet access and minimal technological devices, also constitutes a major obstacle to optimizing digital marketing (Firdaus, 2020:47).

In terms of digital content, SME actors in Ciampea Udik Village also face significant challenges. The digital content used for product promotion is often unappealing and poorly planned. Yet, engaging and informative content is crucial in digital marketing, especially on social media where visuals and messages must capture consumer attention in a short amount of time. Without an effective content strategy, the opportunity to reach a wider audience will be limited (Purwanto, 2020:66).

Overall, digital communication holds great potential to support the growth and sustainability of SMEs in Ciampea Udik Village. With the proper adoption of digital technology, SMEs can more easily reach wider markets, increase brand awareness, and build stronger relationships with consumers. This study is expected to provide deeper insights into the challenges and opportunities of digital communication for SME marketing, as well as formulate relevant recommendations for rural economic development in the era of globalization.

METHODS

According to Nasution (2020:32), research focusing on rural communities in Indonesia often employs a qualitative approach to understand complex social and cultural dynamics. This approach enables researchers to engage directly with participants and gain a better understanding of the local context.

In addition, the research design also includes ethical considerations. Researchers must ensure that participants understand the purpose of the study, provide informed consent, and are not harmed during the research process. Riyanto (2020:35) emphasizes that research ethics are a vital component of any research design, especially in studies involving human subjects. Researchers must maintain the confidentiality of participant data and respect their rights throughout and after the research process.

This study employs a qualitative approach using a case study method to gain an in-depth understanding of the impact of digital communication on the marketing of Karang Taruna SMEs in Ciampea Udik Village. The qualitative approach was chosen because it allows for a detailed exploration of participants' experiences and perspectives regarding the phenomenon under investigation (Creswell, 2016:78).

Data analysis was conducted using the thematic analysis method, which involves the process of coding data, grouping codes into themes, and interpreting the findings within the context of the research (Braun & Clarke, 2006:88). Thematic analysis was chosen for its flexibility in identifying key themes from qualitative data and constructing a narrative that comprehensively represents the experiences of the research subjects.

The validity of the data was ensured through source and method triangulation techniques. Source triangulation was carried out by comparing data obtained from interviews, observations, and document analysis. Method triangulation involved using various data collection techniques to ensure the consistency and validity of the findings (Patton, 2002:93).

The research began with the preparation of a proposal and obtaining permission at the research site. Once approval was granted, data collection was carried out using a participatory approach, involving the research subjects in the process of data gathering and validation. The collected data were analyzed iteratively to ensure the accuracy and relevance of the findings. The research results were then compiled into a final report and presented to the relevant stakeholders.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In-Depth Interviews

Conducted with six managers of Karang Taruna SME's, focusing on their understanding and experiences in using digital media for marketing.

Key Findings:

1. 100% of respondents use WhatsApp and Instagram as their main marketing platforms.
2. 83% admit they do not yet have a consistent content strategy.
3. 67% believe that digital communication has increased market reach but has not yet had a significant impact on sales.

Field Observation

Observations were conducted over one week on five social media accounts owned by Karang Taruna SMEs.

Observation Findings:

1. Only 2 out of 5 accounts posted regularly (at least 3 times per week).
2. The use of hashtags and captions was minimal and lacked calls-to-action.
3. Interaction (likes/comments) averaged fewer than 10 per post.

Document Analysis

The documents analyzed included:

1. The last 15 social media posts.
2. Sales reports from the past 3 months.
3. Digital brochures/infographics.

Findings from Document Analysis:

1. There is a weak correlation between digital activity and sales growth.
2. Promotional materials tend to be informative but lack storytelling elements or strong visual branding.
3. Sales reports indicate stagnation, with only a 3% increase following social media activity.

Digital Platforms Used by SME Managers

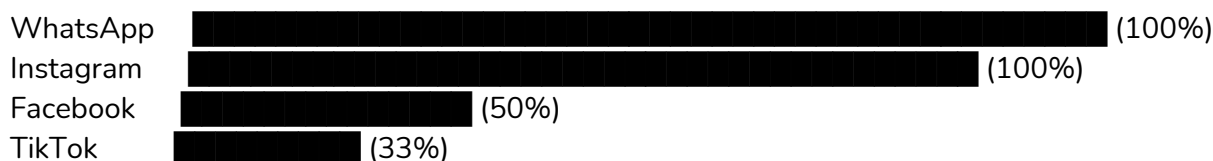


Table 2. Summary of Interview and Observation Findings

Aspect	Key Findings
Platforms Used	WhatsApp & Instagram dominate usage
Posting Consistency	Only 40% of accounts post regularly
Content Strategy	No strong storytelling or branding approach
Impact on Sales	Low – only a 3% increase after active digital marketing
Main Challenges	Limited knowledge and resources to manage digital content
Perceived Benefits	Market reach has increased, but has not effectively improved sales conversion

Data Analysis Technique

Interpretation of Findings

Theme: Adoption of Digital Communication

The majority of SME managers in Ciampea Udik Village have adopted social media as their primary marketing channel. They believe that digital communication can expand market reach, in line with globalization and changing consumer behavior.

Theme: Operational Challenges

Although adoption has occurred, there are obstacles in content management, such as inconsistent posting and lack of technical skills in creating digital promotional materials. This results in the digital marketing potential not being fully optimized.

Theme: Market Interaction and Response

Customer responses via social media remain limited, so the direct impact on sales has not yet been significant. The lack of interaction also indicates that communication strategies have not been designed to build strong customer engagement.

The thematic analysis shows that digital communication has become an important part of the marketing efforts of Karang Taruna SMEs in Ciampea Udik Village, but operational challenges still hinder its effectiveness. Managers need to improve their digital skills and

develop more interactive communication strategies to enhance market response and sales conversion.

Triangulation Method Technique

This study combines three data collection methods: in-depth interviews, direct participatory observation, and digital document analysis. The purpose of this triangulation technique is to ensure that a finding does not rely solely on one source or method, but has been confirmed through different approaches. Based on source and method triangulation, it was found that the data in this study is valid and consistent. There were no contradictions between what was stated by the informants, what was directly observed in the field, and what was found in official documents. Thus, as suggested by Patton (2002:93), the use of triangulation in this research has successfully strengthened the reliability of the data and increased confidence in the findings obtained.

CONCLUSION

In facing the era of globalization that demands digitalization across various sectors, this study reveals that the SMEs managed by Karang Taruna in Ciampea Udik Village have begun to adopt digital communication as part of their marketing strategy, particularly through platforms such as WhatsApp and Instagram. Although this initial step indicates an awareness of the importance of digitalization, the use of digital media remains basic and lacks strategic structure. Findings from interviews, observations, and document analysis show that most managers still lack adequate skills in managing digital content, are inconsistent in conducting online promotions, and have not yet established effective online interactions with customers. As a result, although there has been a slight increase in market reach, sales conversion remains low and stagnant. Through thematic analysis and data triangulation, the main obstacles identified include a lack of technical training and the absence of a clear communication strategy. Therefore, it can be concluded that while digital communication has been implemented, its effectiveness in supporting SME marketing growth is still limited. Improvement is needed through targeted training, consistent content creation, and the development of a more professional digital identity.

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