

Optimization Of Msmes Marketing Using Whatsapp

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Submitted: 28th Oct 2021/ **Edited:** 25th Dec 2021/ **Issued:** 01st Jan 2022

Cited on: Sanitias, S., & Dani, M. (2022). Optimization Of Msmes Marketing Using Whatsapp. *Jurnal PKM Manajemen Bisnis*, 2(1), 1-10.

ABSTRAK

Covid-19 tidak hanya mengancam kesehatan, namun juga kelangsungan hidup manusia. Covid-19 melumpuhkan sektor ekonomi, baik usaha skala kecil, menengah, maupun besar. Oleh karena itu, dibutuhkan kesadaran semua pihak, untuk dapat saling berkolaborasi dalam memperkuat kegiatan ekonomi. Pengabdian ini dilakukan sebagai bentuk kontribusi dunia pendidikan terhadap permasalahan yang dihadapi masyarakat. Kegiatan pengabdian fokus pada pembekalan pengetahuan pemasaran digital, sebagai salah satu alternatif bagi usaha UMKM di tengah-tengah pandemi covid 19. Metode kegiatan berupa pelatihan dan pendampingan, bagaimana caranya menggunakan aplikasi digital whatsapp untuk kegiatan bisnis. Kegiatan pkM dilakukan pada pelaku usaha UMKM di kota depok. Hasil dari kegiatan ini adalah berupa pengetahuan dalam memanfaatkan aplikasi digital sebagai sarana pemasaran UMKM di masa pandemi. Kemudian, kegiatan ini membantu pelaku UMKM dapat memasarkan produknya secara digital melalui pemanfaatan aplikasi whatsapp.

Kata Kunci : Whatsapp business, Digital Marketing, UMKM

ABSTRACT

Covid-19 has paralyzed the economic sector, both small, medium and large scale businesses. Therefore, it takes awareness of all parties, to be able to collaborate with each other in strengthening economic activities. This service is carried out as a form of contribution to the world of education to the problems faced by the community. Service activities focus on providing digital marketing knowledge, as an alternative for MSME businesses in the midst of the covid 19 pandemic. The method of activity is in the form of training and mentoring, how to use the WhatsApp digital application for business activities. PKM activities are carried out on MSME business actors in the city of Depok. The result of this activity is knowledge in utilizing digital applications as a means of marketing MSMEs during the pandemic. Then, this activity helps MSME actors to market their products digitally through the use of the WhatsApp application.

Keywords : Whatsapp business, Digital Marketing, MSMEs

INTRODUCTION

Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises or commonly referred to as MSMEs are the lifeblood of the national economy (Elwisam & Lestari, 2019). Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) are productive economic businesses owned by individuals or business entities that are run by individuals, households or business entities with micro,

small and medium scale businesses whose criteria have been regulated and stipulated in Government Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 7 of 2021 concerning Ease, Protection and Empowerment of Cooperatives and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises which is the implementing regulation of Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 11 of 2020 concerning Job Creation (Mandasari, Widodo, & Djaja, 2019).

The growth of MSMEs in the past few decades has been very good, this reflects that resources and innovation as well as community creativity continue to develop from time to time. Various types of products, both goods and services produced by MSMEs with certain characteristics, both those born from local cultural wisdom and innovations from ideas that developed in the community have given color and wealth of cultural treasures and intellectual property that are priceless for the Indonesian nation (Utama, 2019). MSMEs continue to grow and develop along with the birth of ideas, creativity and ideas from MSME actors and the growing demand or market for MSME products, even in difficult conditions or crises like today (Hapsoro, Palupiningdyah, & Slamet, 2019).

Maftuhah & Rafsanjani (2019) said that MSMEs have a strategic role in national economic development, as evidenced by the time the Indonesian nation experienced a crisis that occurred some time ago, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) were more resilient in facing this reality, while large-scale businesses stagnated and even stopped their activities. History has proven that MSMEs are able to survive in the midst of an economic crisis (Naimah, Wardhana, Haryanto, & Pebrianto, 2020).

MSMEs are proven to absorb a larger workforce in the national economy. With the number of workers absorbed, the MSME sector is able to increase people's income. Therefore, MSMEs have a strategic role in reducing unemployment and poverty. For the contribution and role of MSMEs, it is important for the government to continue to support MSMEs through strengthening so that their role as pillars in building the nation's economy can run optimally (Sasongko, Putri, Alfiani, Qiranti, Sari, & Allafa, 2020).

In its development, MSMEs are faced with various problems, both from aspects of raw materials, innovation and technology, marketing of MSME products, and even capital problems. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a negative impact on multi-sector businesses including MSMEs, especially when the implementation of the Community Activity Restriction (PPKM) policy where community mobility was severely restricted, causing a decline in sales turnover of MSME products. This restriction on community mobility has

narrowed the space for both MSME actors to produce products or services and narrowed the movement space of consumers of MSME products (Irfani, Yeni, & Wahyuni, 2020).

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced MSMEs to be able to change their marketing strategies in order to survive during this pandemic. Marketing strategies in the New Normal era have fundamental differences with marketing strategies before the COVID-19 era. The difference lies in how to interact between the business and the customer (customer). If in the era before COVID-19 every business could more easily carry out marketing activities both offline such as being present in crowded and congested locations, launching events, promotions using testers or distributing brochures on streets and entertainment venues, then in the New Normal era This marketing strategy with the use of social media applications is a very applicable alternative solution (Alfrian & Pitaloka, 2020). Changes in the customer landscape, where we must be able to focus more on customer trust in our business. Many consider that returning to the current digital marketing strategy is one of the best ways to take the benefits and opportunities and rearrange them by developing short-term and long-term strategies.

Conventional marketing strategies are certainly one of the obstacles in marketing MSME products. With all the limitations that exist during the current Covid 19 pandemic, changes in MSME marketing strategies must inevitably change, one of which is by utilizing technology and social media applications. In the current digital era, the use of technology has provided convenience for both MSME actors and consumers (Bakhri & Futiah, 2020).

In his study, Nielsen in CPG, FMCG & Retail 04-14-2020 said that "Following the country's stay-at-home policy to prevent the spread of COVID-19, 30% of respondents planned to shop online more often". So since the imposition of the stay-at-home order to prevent the spread of Covid-19, around 30% of consumers plan to shop online. Meanwhile, consumers who spend more time using websites get 19.7% (Nielsen, 2020).

Digital marketing includes all marketing efforts that use electronic devices or the internet. Businesses leverage digital channels such as search engines, social media, email, and other websites to connect with current and potential customers. Social media is still an inseparable medium for communicating with customers or potential audiences. Customers not only interact with the posted content but also treat it as a medium to raise their concerns. In fact, 34% of customers have used social media to ask service-related

questions. 47% of them even consider it an effective channel for customer service. Thus, digital marketing, one of which is through social media, can be used as a marketing tool in the New Normal era during the Covid 19 pandemic (Arianto, 2020).

Seeing the problems faced by MSMEs during the current pandemic, especially in the marketing sector for MSME Food products, try to understand and analyze marketing problems faced by MSMEs and provide concrete and applicable solutions for MSMEs in particular. Food SMEs through Community Service activities. In accordance with (Laura Hardilawati, 2020) a marketing communication strategy in order to develop an effective marketing communication strategy in reaching its target consumers.

In relation to food needs, creations emerged from basic food ingredients, how to process them and the planned results. The basic ingredients of this food, if traced, are from plants which are commonly called vegetable and some are from animals. Plant-based ingredients can also be developed with various specializations such as medicinal plants, fruits and vegetables. Likewise with how to process it such as what tools are used, what technology is used, what chemicals are used. All these human needs give rise to various types of branches of knowledge and business and job opportunities (Anggoro & Hasugian, 2020).

The main purpose of this community service activity is to provide counseling, assistance and training regarding marketing strategies for food MSME products that are effective and applicable to be implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic. The specific objectives are to explore the real problems faced by Food MSMEs who are members of West Java MSMEs, the champions of Depok City during the Covid 19 pandemic and to conduct training and direct assistance to Food MSMEs in the framework optimization of marketing and sales through the implementation of the use of the whatsapp business.

METHOD

Seeing the problems faced by MSMEs during the COVID-19 pandemic, the steps taken to achieve the objectives of this activity are to take a direct approach to MSME actors, provide counseling, assistance and training in using the WhatsApp business application in relation to product marketing. SMEs.

This Community Service activity is carried out through outreach/counseling activities, mentoring and training. The implementation methods carried out are:

1. Observation and Interview. This method is carried out with the community and MSME actors who are members of the West Java Champion MSMEs in the Depok City area to see the extent of their understanding and knowledge of various business opportunities in times of crisis and marketing activities that can be carried out by MSMEs. in times of crisis.
2. Lectures and Discussions. This method was chosen so that the writer as well as the speaker can easily present important concepts so that they can be understood and the socialization participants can easily master them. The lecture method through the delivery of presentations by displaying attractive pictures and displays that are relatively dense, fast, and easy can attract the attention of participants so that they are actively engaged in discussions. Lectures and discussion materials include knowledge about the New Normal era, various business opportunities during the pandemic crisis, creative economy, and marketing strategies.
3. Demonstration and Practice. This method shows the marketing process that can be carried out by MSMEs to support product marketing in the New Normal era, where there are various restrictions on space for movement such as the use of digital technology as an easy and free marketing medium, through the smartphone used. With this, participants are also invited to actively carry out the program directly from the concepts being taught.

The material or material for socialization and discussion that is proposed leads to the main problem analysis to be studied, namely about various business opportunities during a crisis and marketing strategies to develop business in the New Normal era during the Covid 19 and post-pandemic. Participants are given knowledge and understanding about the New Normal era and the policies in it, strategies to maintain business during the pandemic crisis, marketing strategies in the New Normal era and motivation to continue to develop MSMEs with a creative economy and marketing by utilizing social media in order to continue to survive in the world. the New Normal era during Covid 19 so that the wheels of the economy continue to run. Participants can also get to know more about various MSME business opportunities in the crisis era.

DISCUSSION

The implementation of this Community Service activity has been carried out well, carried out from 13 to 15 October 2021 by combining online and offline methods.

Training activities, providing theory, discussions and interviews were carried out online on October 13 and 15, 2021, and for assistance activities and application of the WhatsApp business they were carried out offline on October 14, 2021 at the Office of Cooperatives and SMEs, Depok City, West Java Province.

Submission of material related to the use of the WhatsApp application business has been conveyed well by Br. Agus Hermawan, assisted by Br. Sharif, Mr. Bakti Abu Birgantoro and Br. Moh. Anwar Gani under the guidance of Dr. H. Sugiyanto, MM and Dr. Ali Maddinsyah SE, MM MSME actors generally immediately apply the WhatsApp business application on their smartphone. The discussion forum also went very well, where many MSME actors were critical and curious which is certainly driven by the desire to continue to grow with the MSME business it runs. In addition to the material presentation and discussion activities, promotional activities were also carried out by MSME actors and immediately put them into practice through the WhatsApp business application.

One advantage of the WhatsApp application is that it is tied directly to a telephone number and provides business profiles from brand, not in the form of a series of digits. Thus, consumers immediately know who they are talking to or having a dialogue with. Simply put, WhatsApp Business allows companies to send messages to their customers privately safely and conveniently via the WhatsApp messaging platform. WhatsApp also gives companies another added benefit of knowing what messages have been sent and in the end, read them in real time. The current growing trend, sales teams answer product or customer service questions with rich contextual messages for business messaging purposes so that customers are comfortable and happy.

Along with technological developments towards the 4.0 revolution, the WhatsApp application has been installed on many smartphone phones around the world. The number of users continues to grow. The following are the advantages that can be obtained from WhatsApp Business:

1. Two-Way Communication In real time. WhatsApp Business associates companies with business numbers by only being tied to one phone number. This app is very familiar to everyday chat conversations by offering businesses a convenient and direct to various personal communications and customer campaigns. By providing the information and support that customers are looking for, WhatsApp Business helps

increase customer loyalty and trust by shortening customer service time and time because messaging activities can be carried out in real time.

2. **Conversation and Branding.** In the WhatsApp application, a unique business identity can be entered into a WhatsApp Profile conversation as an element of brand equity. Companies can add contact numbers, website URLs, store locations, promotion details, and more. WhatsApp Business also allows adding multimedia to messages, including images, videos and documents.
3. **Global Reach.** The WhatsApp app is currently the most popular in more than 100 countries in the messaging app world, with its global subscriber base exceeding 2 billion. This makes it a relatively perfect channel for businesses to reach a general audience.
4. **Can Insert Automation.** The WhatsApp Business messaging app provides template telling customers to take the next step and start a conversation. By enforcing strict policies for content quality and response time, WhatsApp ensures users don't receive spam or other irrelevant communications. WhatsApp also requires business users to respond to incoming customer messages within 24 hours using non-template messages.
5. **Added Security With Opt-in Messages.** WhatsApp includes security features such as end-to-end encryption and two-factor authentication to keep consumers and businesses safe and to manage various regulatory and statutory compliances. WhatsApp Business will also verify business accounts after registration, confirming the identity of customers when they choose to receive texts and communications.
6. **Adding Profit.** WhatsApp is an alternative chat platform to increase business profits. However, because WhatsApp is more personal, there are many things to consider when using it as a business strategy. Anything? Here is an explanation of using WhatsApp for business that you can follow.

Apart from these advantages, the advantages of WhatsApp business are related to its features. The general features of WhatsApp business include:

1. **One to one chat.** According to Nielsen's Facebook Messaging Survey, 67% of mobile messaging application users have no problem using it when communicating with business people in the last two years. We can use this for the one to one chat with

customers. Moreover, the data also proves that 53% of mobile messaging admit that they prefer businesses that have chat features on WhatsApp.

2. Labels for organizing customers. WhatsApp Business can label your customers to make them easier to identify. This label usually consists of new customers, new orders, incomplete payments, completed payments and existing customers. This label can also be given to distinguish old, new customers, and also customers who make frequent purchases.
3. Take advantage of message statistics from WhatsApp Business. By using the WhatsApp Business application, access to important data can be done easily in a graphical form that is easy to understand. The things that can be accessed include what percentage of messages were successfully sent, received, and read by users. So that what better strategy can be done in the future to serve them and optimize engagement.
4. Automation for effective replies. Automation can be used for greeting messages or replies from customers. Some questions can be answered quickly without having to type them first.

After knowing how the benefits and the advantages of the WhatsApp Business application, business actors can apply WhatsApp Business on their smartphones. The way it works and how to install WhatsApp Business is quite easy considering that this application has a friendly interface so it doesn't bother users for understand in using it. As for how WhatsApp business works/installs, it's as follows:

1. If the company already has a business number that is used for WhatsApp, we have to back up chat data to cloud storage first. To do so, go to Chats > Chat backup > then hit the Back Up button. Make sure the upload to the cloud is complete.
2. Next, download the WhatsApp Business application from the Google Play Store, then install it, and then launch it by tapping the new icon on the home screen of the smartphone .
3. After opening the app, first verify the business phone number. This will be a channel of communication with customers. Once the number is verified, we can choose to restore the previous chats associated with the mobile number which will be backed up in step 1.

4. Set our company business name and then in the chat area, tap the menu button and go to Settings > Business settings > Profile. Here we will get many fields similar to a contact card and we can fill in all the details that we want to share with our customers.

CONCLUSION

Community Activities Assistance (Food MSME Business Actors who are members of West Java Champion MSMEs, Depok City) are very enthusiastic in participating in Community Activity. In difficult conditions such as the COVID-19 pandemic, there are still concrete strategies that can be carried out by Food MSME business actors in the context of optimizing the marketing and sales of their products, including the use of social media applications in the form of WhatsApp business. Food MSME Business Actors who are members of the West Java MSME Champion, Depok City immediately implemented the use of the WhatsApp business application in marketing and selling their products.

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