

Increasing Entrepreneurship Competency Through Digital Marketing Training for the Entrepreneurs in Malaysia

Muhammad Ichan Hadjri¹, Isnurhadi², Lina Dameria Siregar³, Mulyadi⁴, Zulnaidi Yaacob⁵

^{1,2,3,4}Universitas Sriwijaya, Palembang, Indonesia

⁵Universiti Sains Malaysia, Malaysia

Email: ichsanhadjri@fe.unsri.ac.id

Abstract

Currently, digital marketing is very important for the growth of businesses and companies. This is of course very relevant considering that currently the number of internet users is increasing. It is felt that digital marketing can help business owners reach customers more easily, increase sales, and make branding easier for all types of businesses (both small and large scale). Internet technology is an instrument that can promote business effectively and efficiently and help business sustainability because it allows businesses to reach a wider market share and this is done quickly. Responsive digital marketing has enabled business owners to promote their products online. The advantages of digital marketing for businesses and companies encompass effortless connectivity with online consumers, enhanced sales conversions tailored to specific target audiences, cost-effective marketing expenditures, real-time consumer service capabilities, and the capacity to augment the sales efficacy of their products. The participants for this community service activity are the entrepreneurs in Malaysia. The number of participants in this community service activity is 30 people in Balik Pulau Area, Penang, Malaysia. Most entrepreneurs in the Balik Pulau Area, Penang, Malaysia have not done digital marketing. They do not have social media to do digital marketing yet. After carrying out community service activities, entrepreneurs already have social media and understand the basics of digital marketing, especially using social media to market their products.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Digital Marketing, Social-Media, Malaysia.

A. INTRODUCTION

The ability to entrepreneurship and create jobs is one of the competencies that the entrepreneurs must have. One of the characteristics of edupreneur that is widely developed is education-based entrepreneurship and in certain realms, there is an optimistic anticipation that it can substantially contribute to the advancement of the entrepreneurial landscape worldwide and Micro and Small Enterprises and in the wider community (Pajarianto et al., 2019). The aim of this entrepreneurship is for the entrepreneurs to help create a quality and independent society. Independence here can be interpreted as not depending on available jobs, but being able to be independent in economic activities and even creating jobs (Arda et al., 2021).

Entrepreneurship is currently, it serves as an alternative solution to address the issue of limited employment opportunities. Furnishing entrepreneurial support to aspiring entrepreneurs constitutes one endeavor aimed at fostering self-sufficiency among the youth. It is widely acknowledged that the annual surge in college graduates surpasses the capacity of the job market to absorb them all. Therefore, there

is a clear recognition of the significance of entrepreneurship in empowering individuals to create their own opportunities (Yanti, 2019).

Entrepreneurial skills it is imperative to cultivate this mindset deliberately from an early age, thereby encouraging the younger generation to view entrepreneurship as a pivotal career choice that contributes to the nation's future prosperity. As stated by Fatoki (2014), higher education serves as a conduit between theoretical knowledge and practical engagement, fostering an understanding of how to foster the emergence of potential young entrepreneurs originating from educational backgrounds. Universities act as one of the driving factors for entrepreneurship growth in a country through the provision of entrepreneurship education (Chimucheka, 2013).

Entrepreneurship can open up employment opportunities, absorb labor, hone people's independence and creativity, and increase competitiveness so that it is hoped that people's welfare can increase. However, with limited information, willingness, ability, knowledge and skills of the younger generation, it becomes a challenge in itself to make this happen, especially in the digital era like today. Digital skills are very important for prospective entrepreneurs to have. With more and more people using the internet, business opportunities using digital marketing are becoming bigger (Riscal & Sahbany, 2023). Unfortunately, there still needs to be continuous efforts to increase digital literacy where currently there are many digital application products that really support increasing digital entrepreneurship, but in its development the use of technology and even the internet is still often neglected due to various conditions, limited facilities, infrastructure, financial limitations, even competence of entrepreneurs (Yanti, 2019).

The current digital era has an influence on marketing trends which are increasingly developing along with the development of technology. Digital marketing is all efforts carried out in the process of marketing a valuable product or service through or using internet media. Digital marketing or what is usually called digital marketing, what is meant by digital marketing is the efforts made by a market/company, both micro and macro, to market products using internet devices. Digital marketing is in the promotional sub-content in which promoting a product or service, producers begin their activities in building various channels of information and persuasion to sell, as well as introducing an idea for a product they want to market. Apart from that, digital marketing can be controlled in real time. The benefit for consumers with digital marketing is that it is easier to get products or services (Hidayatullah et al., 2022).

As a result of profiling of the target audience, namely the entrepreneurs in Malaysia, a crucial problem that needs to be addressed immediately is increasing the literacy of the younger generation about entrepreneurship, especially digital-based ones. This community service aims to provide Digital Marketing education and training for the entrepreneurs in Malaysia. Another aim of this service is to provide training and mentoring on entrepreneurial principles and the use of digital applications in business marketing. It is hoped that the entrepreneurs will become

independent entrepreneurs and opening up employment opportunities thereby improving the welfare of society. Based on the situation analysis above, it can be concluded that the Entrepreneurship Competency Improvement Training program through Digital Marketing Training for the entrepreneurs in Malaysia is really needed considering that entrepreneurial skills are not only able to create a product, but also have the ability to promote their business goods, one of which is using digital marketing.

The benefits of holding this international community service activity are in accordance with the international service program of the Faculty of Economics, Universitas Sriwijaya, that cooperated with School of Distance Learning, University Sains Malaysia, namely contributing by providing provisions in the form of Entrepreneurship Competency Improvement Training through Digital Marketing Training for the entrepreneurs in Malaysia. With this service activity, the entrepreneurs in Malaysia can realize entrepreneurial skills in the era of society 5.0 in today's generation. Through the role of digital marketing, it is hoped that it can improve the entrepreneurial skills of the entrepreneurs in facing the era of society 5.0, where currently the flow of technological information is growing rapidly. The benefits of this service activity are expected to be that the entrepreneurs in Malaysia can connect easily with consumers online, have higher sales conversions for targeted consumers, reduce promotional costs, save marketing costs, reach more consumers, and be able to serve consumers in real time and the potential to increase the selling power of his business.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

Digital Marketing refers to marketing activities, including branding, conducted through various web-based media. It involves utilizing digital technology to achieve marketing objectives and involves efforts to evolve or adapt marketing concepts. Its scope extends to global communication and transforming how companies engage with customers. Essentially, digital marketing utilizes digital applications of technology. Internet marketing (or e-marketing) represents one facet of digital marketing, focusing on marketing processes that leverage electronic communication technologies, notably the internet. The significance of a digital marketing strategy lies in its ability to track advancements in digital technology and formulate plans to engage consumers through a blend of electronic and traditional communication channels (Febriyantoro & Arisandi, 2018).

Digital marketing entails promotional activities and market research conducted through various online digital media, leveraging platforms such as social networks. In today's cyberspace, connectivity extends beyond linking devices; it connects people worldwide. Typically interactive and integrated, digital marketing facilitates interaction among producers, market intermediaries, and prospective consumers. This approach streamlines businesses' ability to monitor and cater to the needs and desires of potential consumers. Simultaneously, prospective consumers can effortlessly access product information by browsing cyberspace, simplifying the

search process. With buyers increasingly empowered to make purchasing decisions independently based on their research, digital marketing transcends geographical and temporal boundaries, reaching audiences regardless of location or time constraints (Syukri & Sunrawali, 2022).

Digital marketing is marketing in which messages are sent using media that depend on digital transmission. But by far, the internet is the most significant digital medium. Many experts say that changes in marketing have occurred due to technological developments, especially the internet. The benefit of employing digital marketing via the internet lies in its ease, cost-effectiveness, and speed of communication. However, digital marketing transcends mere technological comprehension; it encompasses understanding people how they utilize technology and leveraging it to engage with them more effectively. Therefore, digital marketing should prioritize the quality of communication over its quantity, recognizing that meaningful engagement fosters stronger connections with the target audience (Kartikasari et al., 2021).

Utilizing digital marketing presents numerous benefits, encompassing the ability to: (1) delineate targets based on demographics, residence, lifestyle, and even behavioral patterns; (2) promptly observe outcomes, enabling marketers to swiftly implement corrective measures or adjustments if deemed necessary; (3) incur significantly lower expenses compared to conventional marketing methods; (4) achieve a broader outreach unimpeded by geographical constraints; (5) remain accessible at all times without temporal limitations; (6) quantify results, including metrics such as website traffic and online purchase transactions; (7) tailor campaigns to individual preferences, fostering a sense of personalization; and (8) directly engage with consumers bidirectionally, facilitating the cultivation of relationships and the cultivation of consumer trust by business entities.

C. METHOD

The execution of this community service endeavor will be undertaken offline using the method of distributing materials, lectures, and discussions/questions and answers. The participants for this community service activity are the entrepreneurs in Malaysia. The number of participants in this community service activity is 30 people in Balik Pulau Area, Penang, Malaysia.

Table 1 Method of Implementing Community Service Activities

Preparation Phase	
Pre-Survey	✓ Identify the situation and specific problems faced by partners.
Administration Preparation Stage	
Formation of a Community Service Team	✓ Team formation: formation of a team of lecturers and young people who participate

	✓ The lecturer team is organized according to areas of expertise and the type of team expertise is adjusted to partner problems.
Preparing Proposals	✓ Making service proposals with descriptions of solutions to problems for partners.
Coordination of the Community Service Team and Partners	✓ Coordination of preparations for the implementation of service activities, preparation of the team and job description for each member of the Community Service Team.
Preparation of Tools & Materials & Training Materials	✓ Preparation of tools and materials as well as making activity materials.
Service Activity Implementation Stage	
Training to Increase Entrepreneurship Competency through Digital Marketing Training for the Entrepreneurs in Malaysia	✓ Carried out with material presentation, discussion and questions and answers.
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Program Evaluation	
This is carried out by comparing the conditions of partners before and after being given training in this service activity. Success indicators are carried out by looking at the development and improvement of partner businesses.	
Reporting	
The implementation and results of these service activities are compiled into a Service Activity Report and subsequently published in journals and mass media articles.	

D. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Social media holds the potential to aid entrepreneurs in marketing their products, including those situated in the Balik Pulau Area of Penang, Malaysia. It is defined as a collection of internet-based applications that underpin the ideology and technology framework of Web 2.0, facilitating the creation and exchange of user-generated content. Encompassing a spectrum of applications from instant messaging to social networking sites, social media platforms empower users to interact, connect, and communicate with one another. These platforms serve to initiate and disseminate online information regarding user experiences with products or brands, with the overarching objective of engaging the public. Within a business context, such engagement can translate into profit generation.



Figure 1. The participants of International Community Service

Digital marketing strategies influence the competitive advantage of entrepreneurs in the Balik Pulau Area, Penang, Malaysia, in marketing their products. These strategies consist of:

- a. Access to product information and guides;
- b. Access to visual content, such as product photos or illustrations;
- c. Access to videos for product visualization and presentations;
- d. Access to document attachments containing information in various formats;
- e. Online communication channels with entrepreneurs;
- f. Availability of transaction tools and diverse payment methods;
- g. Access to consumer assistance and support services;
- h. Online platforms for opinion sharing and support;
- i. Display of customer testimonials;
- j. Visitor log availability for tracking site traffic;
- k. Special offers and promotions;
- l. Updates on the latest information through SMS-blogs;
- m. Streamlined product search functionality;
- n. Establishment of brand visibility and awareness;
- o. Identification and attraction of new customers;
- p. Enhancement of brand image perceived favorably by consumers.



Figure 2. The participants of International Community Service

Utilizing digital marketing offers several advantages, which include:

- a. Precision in targeting based on demographics, residence, lifestyle, and behavioral patterns;
- b. Prompt visibility of results, facilitating timely corrective measures or adjustments as needed;
- c. Cost-effectiveness compared to traditional marketing methods;
- d. Extensive outreach unhindered by geographical constraints;
- e. Accessibility round-the-clock, devoid of temporal limitations;
- f. Measurable outcomes, such as website traffic and online purchase metrics;
- g. Customization of campaigns to suit individual preferences;
- h. Direct and bidirectional communication, enabling businesses to establish relationships and cultivate consumer trust effectively.

The business value of using social media for entrepreneurs in the Balik Pulau Area, Penang, Malaysia includes:

- a. Establishment of enduring marketing channels;
- b. Achievement of both immediate revenue boosts and sustained long-term sales growth;
- c. Decrease in advertising expenditures;
- d. Lowering of overall marketing outlays;
- e. Development of a competitive edge;
- f. Streamlined cross-platform social media promotion;
- g. Amplification of brand and product visibility;
- h. Introduction of the organization or company to the public.



Figure 3. The activity of International Community Service

The dissemination of digital marketing strategies through social media platforms is pivotal as it equips entrepreneurs in the Balik Pulau Area, Penang, Malaysia, with knowledge regarding methods and phases for expanding consumer networks through social media, thereby augmenting their competitive edge. Despite the shift in marketing practices from traditional to digital realms, the adoption of digital marketing by entrepreneurs in the Balik Pulau Area, Penang, Malaysia, remains limited, notwithstanding the potential for entrepreneurs to propel the Malaysian economy. Leveraging technology-driven digital marketing concepts is anticipated to serve as a breakthrough for entrepreneurs, positioning them as economic powerhouses. Social media emerges as a potent digital marketing tool, renowned for its cost-effectiveness and minimal entry barriers in terms of requisite skills, while also offering direct access to consumers.



Figure 4. The Products from Participants of International Community Service

The lack of knowledge among entrepreneurs in the Balik Pulau Area, Penang, Malaysia, about the influence of digital marketing has inspired the Community Service team to conduct socialization and training sessions on the utilization of

information and communication technology. By fostering an understanding among entrepreneurs regarding the significance of digital marketing for their ventures, it is anticipated that they will be encouraged to employ digital marketing as a mode of communication and promotion. Moreover, they can directly engage in its implementation by harnessing the power of social media platforms.

Through the execution of this Community Service initiative, it has been observed that entrepreneurs in the Balik Pulau Area, Penang, Malaysia, exhibit an interest in leveraging digital marketing and maximizing social media platforms. However, they encounter various obstacles along the way. These hurdles include a deficiency in comprehending the significance of digital marketing, a lack of proficiency in information and communication technology, as well as inadequate knowledge on how to effectively utilize social media. Additionally, impatience to see immediate results and a lack of understanding in crafting engaging posts are among the challenges faced by these entrepreneurs.

E. CONCLUSION

The outcomes derived from this community service initiative indicate that (1) the majority of entrepreneurs in the Balik Pulau Area, Penang, Malaysia have yet to employ digital marketing strategies for promoting their products; (2) Entrepreneurs in this area encounter challenges including a lack of awareness regarding the significance of digital marketing, limited knowledge about information and communication technology, as well as effective methods for harnessing social media, along with a deficiency in crafting engaging content. Subsequent to the community service interventions, entrepreneurs have now established a presence on social media platforms and have gained a basic understanding of digital marketing principles, particularly in utilizing social media channels for product promotion.

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