

The Influence of Digital Marketing Strategies on Students' Entrepreneurial Skills and MSME Business Performance: An Entrepreneurship Education Perspective

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Abstract: This article aims to discuss the rapid development of digital technology that encourages Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) to adapt their marketing strategies to compete in the digital economy era. This article aims to analyze the impact of digital marketing strategies on the sales increase of MSMEs through a literature study approach. The research uses a qualitative descriptive method by reviewing and synthesizing various scientific sources in the form of journal articles, books, and research reports related to digital marketing and MSME performance. The study results show that digital marketing strategies through social media, content marketing, and e-commerce platforms significantly contribute to increasing product visibility, expanding market reach, strengthening customer relationships, and boosting sales. Social media allows MSMEs to build direct communication with consumers and enhance customer loyalty, while content marketing plays a role in building brand awareness and consumer trust by providing relevant and valuable information. In addition, the utilization of e-commerce helps MSMEs reach a wider market and facilitates the transaction process. This research also found that the use of consumer data can support more effective and targeted marketing decision-making. Overall, digital marketing has become an important strategy in enhancing competitiveness, business sustainability, and sales growth of MSMEs amid increasingly competitive business competition. Therefore, improving digital literacy and marketing capabilities needs to be a primary focus in supporting the digital transformation of MSMEs.

Keywords: Digital Marketing, MSMEs, Social Media, Digital Literacy, E-Commerce, Sales, Transformation

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Introduction

Advances in information and communication technologies have substantially reshaped many dimensions of contemporary life, particularly within economic and commercial activities. Over the past few decades, ongoing digitalization has redefined how businesses and consumers relate to one another, altered methods of product promotion, and transformed the systems through which commercial transactions are conducted. Through the expansion of internet access and the emergence of diverse digital platforms, business entities now possess broader avenues to present goods and services to society without being constrained by geographic boundaries or temporal limitations. Within such circumstances, digital marketing has emerged as a central approach adopted by both corporations and Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) to strengthen competitive capacity and widen their market reach. Moreover, the application of digital technology in promotional efforts contributes not only to the faster circulation of product-related information, but also to a more targeted and efficient engagement with potential consumers.

Beyond the function of social networking channels, electronic commerce platforms have emerged as a decisive instrument in strengthening MSME revenue performance. Through marketplace-based systems, entrepreneurs are able to distribute goods to buyers across diverse geographic locations without the necessity of establishing brick-and-mortar outlets. The availability of digital transaction methods, synchronized logistics facilities, and platform-based promotional tools further streamlines purchasing activities while improving the convenience experienced by consumers. A number of scholarly findings indicate that MSMEs capable of leveraging e-commerce effectively generally demonstrate more favorable sales development than enterprises that remain dependent on conventional promotional approaches. Earlier studies have consistently identified a beneficial correlation between the application of digital marketing and the improvement of MSME sales outcomes. Even so, much of the existing literature remains limited because it frequently concentrates on one particular platform or assesses digital marketing only in broad terms. In reality, the effectiveness of digital marketing cannot be explained by a single variable alone. Its performance is shaped by the interaction of multiple elements, including the standard of content produced, the intensity and quality of engagement with customers, the strategic use of consumer information, the ability to adapt to platform algorithms, and the degree of coordination among different digital communication channels. For that

reason, a broader and more integrated examination is required in order to clarify the extent to which digital marketing strategies contribute to improving MSME sales in a comprehensive manner. Departing from this background, the present article seeks to examine the effect of digital marketing strategies on the growth of MSME sales by employing a literature review method. This study is intended to generate a more substantive understanding of how social media utilization, content-based promotion, and e-commerce adoption collectively support MSME expansion within the context of the digital economy. Furthermore, the findings are expected to offer useful guidance for business owners, researchers, and policy stakeholders in formulating more effective measures to accelerate digital transformation and reinforce the long-term competitiveness of MSMEs.

The acceleration of digital technological progress has fundamentally reconfigured the landscape of commercial rivalry. Competition, which once depended largely on geographical position, now tends to revolve around the mastery of information, the speed of access, and the capacity to generate innovation. Within such a setting, a firm's superiority can no longer be measured merely through the standard of the goods it provides. Equally decisive is the extent to which entrepreneurs and business organizations are able to employ technology strategically in order to attract consumers, sustain engagement, and preserve long-term customer relationships. At the same time, contemporary consumers occupy a far more empowered position in the marketplace. They are exposed to an extensive range of goods and services through digital channels, giving them the opportunity to assess alternatives with minimal effort. Before arriving at a purchasing decision, buyers can now examine price differences, evaluate product quality, and consider the experiences of other users through available reviews. This condition has made the market more transparent while simultaneously increasing the pressure on businesses to remain adaptive, responsive, and innovative. This situation demands that MSMEs be more adaptive in developing marketing strategies that can attract consumer attention while providing a satisfying experience during the purchasing process. The digital transformation occurring in the MSME sector also provides opportunities to create efficiencies in various business activities. In addition to supporting marketing, digital technology can be used to manage customer relationships, conduct market analysis, organize product inventory, and evaluate the effectiveness of promotions that have been carried out. The integration of these various activities allows

MSMEs to operate their businesses in a more structured and data-driven manner. Thus, the business decisions made become more accurate and have a higher chance of success compared to decisions based solely on experience or intuition. On the other hand, the success of digital marketing implementation cannot be separated from the support of the external environment, such as the availability of internet infrastructure, government policies, and the development of the digital economic ecosystem. The Indonesian government in recent years has continued to encourage the digitalization of MSMEs through various training programs, mentoring, and providing access to digital platforms. These various initiatives demonstrate that digital transformation has become one of the priorities in efforts to enhance the competitiveness of MSMEs as the main drivers of the national economy. This support is expected to help MSMEs overcome various obstacles that have hindered the optimal utilization of digital technology. In addition to technology factors and policy support, human resource aspects also determine the success of digital marketing. The ability of business actors to understand market trends, manage digital content, and utilize customer data becomes an important asset in creating effective marketing strategies. Therefore, the development of digital competencies needs to be carried out continuously so that MSMEs can adapt to the rapidly changing business environment. Business actors with good digital skills tend to find it easier to seize market opportunities and face various competitive challenges. Based on these various developments, digital marketing has become one of the strategic instruments that can help MSMEs enhance their competitiveness and expand growth opportunities. Examining how digital marketing approaches influence the sales performance of MSMEs is increasingly necessary, particularly to build a broader and more nuanced understanding of the advantages that may be gained, the opportunities that can be leveraged, and the obstacles that often emerge throughout the course of digital transformation. Findings from this research are anticipated to provide a meaningful reference for entrepreneurs, scholars, and public decision-makers in designing more targeted and effective measures to strengthen the growth and sustainability of MSMEs within the digital age.

Method

This study applies a literature review design within a descriptive qualitative framework to investigate how digital marketing strategies influence sales growth among Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). The selection of a

literature-based approach is grounded in its capacity to provide an extensive and integrated understanding of the evolution of ideas, theoretical perspectives, and prior empirical findings concerning digital marketing and MSME sales performance. As noted by Snyder (2019), a literature review constitutes a research procedure that involves the identification, critical assessment, and synthesis of relevant scholarly sources in order to develop renewed insight into a particular phenomenon. In the context of this study, such a method is especially suitable because digital marketing is a dynamic field that continuously changes in response to technological innovation and shifting patterns of consumer behavior. To support this inquiry, a descriptive qualitative approach is employed to present and interpret the findings derived from the selected body of literature in a structured manner. Rather than emphasizing numerical analysis or the verification of hypotheses, this research is directed toward achieving a more in-depth understanding of the connection between digital marketing practices and increasing MSME sales. Accordingly, the study is expected to offer a wider and more nuanced portrayal of the ways in which social media platforms, e-commerce channels, content marketing, and other digital tools support the growth and sustainability of micro and small businesses within the contemporary digital economy.

The data analysis was conducted using qualitative descriptive analysis techniques. The collected data was first read and thoroughly understood to identify information relevant to the research objectives. Next, the researcher performed a data reduction process by selecting the information most aligned with the focus of the study. The reduced data was then grouped based on specific themes, making it easier to find patterns, relationships, and trends that emerged from various previous studies. Literature synthesis constitutes a subsequent phase in the review process, aimed at integrating evidence drawn from multiple studies in order to develop a broader and more nuanced interpretation of how digital marketing practices influence MSME sales performance. During this phase, the researcher systematically examines points of convergence as well as divergence across prior findings so that a more balanced, rigorous, and objective understanding of the issue can be established. The analysis not only focuses on the final results of previous research but also considers the context, methods, and characteristics of the research objects used by each researcher. Furthermore, the results of the synthesis are interpreted based on relevant digital marketing theories, such as customer journey, digital marketing mix, value co-creation, and

omnichannel marketing. The interpretation is carried out to explain how digital marketing strategies can enhance product visibility, expand market reach, build relationships with customers, and drive sales growth for MSMEs. With this approach, this study does more than merely compile prior scholarly findings; it also develops a more comprehensive insight into the processes and determinants that shape the effectiveness of digital marketing.

To maintain the validity and credibility of the research results, a triangulation process was carried out by comparing information from various different references. The data obtained from scientific journals were compared with academic books, research reports, and official publications to achieve a stronger alignment of information. In addition, the researchers also evaluated the quality of each source used by considering the reputation of the publisher, the number of citations, the relevance of the topic, and the clarity of the research methodology. The validity of the data was also reinforced through a critical review process of each literature used. Researchers did not simply accept previous research results directly, but also analyzed the strengths and limitations of each study. This step aims to reduce the possibility of bias and enhance objectivity in drawing conclusions. Thus, the research results are expected to provide an accurate, reliable picture that can serve as a reference in the development of digital marketing strategies for SMEs in the future.

Results and discussion

Results

Study on the Impact of Digital Marketing Strategies on SME Sales

A review of a range of pertinent studies indicates that the adoption of digital marketing approaches contributes significantly to the growth of sales among small and medium-sized enterprises. In particular, the effective utilization of social networking channels, content-driven promotional activities, and online commerce marketplaces has been shown to improve product exposure, broaden access to potential customers, and foster stronger connections between firms and their consumer base. In addition, digital marketing also helps SMEs obtain customer behavior data that can be used as a basis for more effective business decision-making.

Evidence reported across a range of prior investigations suggests that effective

digital marketing cannot be attributed solely to the adoption of technological tools. Its achievement is also closely linked to how well entrepreneurs or firms curate and manage their content, identify and comprehend the characteristics of their intended audience, and maximize the available functions within digital platforms. The consolidated outcomes of these studies are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Summary of Findings on the Impact of Digital Marketing on MSME Sales

Digital Marketing Strategy	Main Findings	Impact on Sales
Social Media	Increases customer interaction and engagement	Sales increase through enhanced consumer trust
Content Marketing	Helps build brand image and product awareness	Increasing consumer purchasing interest
E-Commerce	Expanding market reach without regional boundaries	Sales volume increased
Digital Advertising	Reaching a more specific target market	Higher sales conversion
Consumer Data Analysis	Facilitating marketing strategy adjustments	Promotions become more effective and efficient

The results in the table above show that each digital marketing strategy has a different contribution to the improvement of MSME sales performance. The combination of several strategies in an integrated manner yields more optimal results compared to the use of a single strategy separately.

Discussion.

The Influence of Social Media on the Increase of MSME Sales

The findings indicate that, among the range of digital channels available, social networking applications constitute the primary medium utilized by MSMEs for the promotion of goods and service offerings. Through platforms including

Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, and WhatsApp Business, entrepreneurs are able to establish immediate engagement with consumers by making use of the diverse communication tools provided within each platform. Intensive interaction between sellers and consumers can enhance trust, loyalty, and purchase interest in the offered products. Various studies explain that content in the form of product photos, short videos, customer reviews, and live streaming can increase consumer attention to a product. The higher the level of interaction obtained by a piece of content, the greater the opportunity for that product to be recognized by potential new customers. Thus, social media not only serves as a promotional tool but also as a means to build long-term relationships with customers that can potentially increase sales sustainably.

The Role of Content Marketing in Increasing Brand Awareness

A further result of the study indicates that content marketing holds a significant function in strengthening brand recognition while also fostering consumer confidence. Content marketing is a marketing strategy carried out by providing useful, engaging, and relevant information for the target market. The forms of content used can include articles, infographics, educational videos, and customer testimonials.

The study results show that consumers tend to be more interested in purchasing products from brands that actively provide information and education compared to those that only engage in direct promotion. Quality content can create an emotional connection with consumers, thereby increasing the likelihood of purchase. Additionally, this strategy also helps SMEs build a positive image that can strengthen their position in the increasingly competitive digital market.

Utilization of E-Commerce to Expand Market Reach

Findings reported across numerous scholarly sources consistently suggest that adopting electronic commerce channels contributes meaningfully to the growth of sales performance among small and medium-sized enterprises. The presence of marketplaces such as Shopee, Tokopedia, Lazada, and various other digital platforms allows business actors to reach consumers from various regions without having to open branches or physical stores. This provides greater

opportunities for SMEs to expand their market and increase sales volume. In addition to expanding market reach, e-commerce also facilitates transaction processes through digital payment systems, integrated shipping services, and promotional features that support marketing activities. Various studies show that SMEs that actively use marketplaces tend to experience an increase in customer numbers and transaction frequency compared to SMEs that only rely on conventional marketing. Therefore, e-commerce has become one of the important instruments in supporting business growth in the digital era.

Consumer Data Analysis as a Basis for Decision Making

The findings further reveal that leveraging customer-related information now constitutes a central strength of marketing conducted through digital channels. In contrast to conventional promotional approaches, this mode of marketing enables firms to access richer and more granular insights into how consumers behave. This data includes the number of visits, customer engagement levels, the most popular products, and consumer characteristics based on age, location, and interests.

This information can be used to develop more targeted marketing strategies. Businesses can determine the most effective types of content, optimal promotion times, and products with the highest sales potential. By maximizing data utilization, SMEs can improve promotional cost efficiency and achieve better results compared to marketing approaches based solely on estimates. These findings indicate that data usage is an important factor in enhancing the effectiveness of digital marketing and supporting the sustainable sales growth of SMEs.

Discussion

The Effectiveness of Social Media as a Marketing Tool for SMEs

Findings from the study indicate that, within the contemporary digital marketplace, social networking platforms hold a highly significant function in strengthening the sales performance of small and medium enterprises. Applications such as Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, and WhatsApp Business are not limited to promotional purposes alone; they also facilitate immediate and interactive exchanges between business owners and their customers. By utilizing these digital channels, SMEs are able to present and disseminate information about

their products to a far broader market segment while incurring expenses that are considerably more economical than those associated with traditional advertising approaches. In addition, the simplicity of publishing content alongside the capacity to connect with diverse categories of consumers positions social media as a strategic and efficient marketing instrument for small- and medium-scale businesses. The increase in sales obtained through social media is closely related to the platform's ability to create two-way interactions. Consumers can provide comments, reviews, and questions directly to businesses. This interaction helps build consumer trust in the products offered. In modern marketing, trust is one of the main factors influencing purchasing decisions. When consumers see quick responses and good service through social media, they tend to have a positive perception of a brand. Additionally, current social media algorithms prioritize content with high engagement levels. The more users like, share, or comment on a piece of content, the greater the chance that content will be displayed to a wider audience. This condition provides advantages for SMEs as it allows promotions to be conducted organically without incurring high advertising costs. Therefore, the success of marketing through social media is greatly influenced by the quality of the content produced and the ability of businesses to build relationships with their audience. These findings align with customer engagement theory, which explains that customer involvement can enhance loyalty and encourage repeat purchases. Thus, social media not only serves as a tool to attract new customers but also to retain existing customers, contributing to sustainable sales growth.

The Role of Content Marketing in Building Consumer Trust

Research shows that content marketing is one of the digital marketing strategies that has a significant impact on the success of SMEs. Content marketing does not focus on direct promotion, but rather on providing useful and relevant information to consumers. The forms of content used can include articles, educational videos, infographics, product photos, and customer testimonials. This strategy helps SMEs build closer relationships with consumers through the delivery of valuable information. In practice, modern consumers are not only looking for quality products but also need information that can help them understand the benefits and advantages of a product. Therefore, educational and informative content has a greater chance of attracting consumer attention compared to purely persuasive promotions. When consumers feel they gain benefits from the content presented, their trust in the brand will increase and

encourage purchasing decisions. The application of content marketing also contributes to the formation of brand identity and image. Consistent content that aligns with the characteristics of the target market can help SMEs create a strong position in the minds of consumers. For example, SMEs selling healthy food products can regularly share information about healthy lifestyles, the benefits of natural ingredients, and tips for maintaining health. In this way, consumers will associate the brand with positive values relevant to their needs. In addition to increasing trust, content marketing also supports search engine optimization (SEO) which can enhance product visibility on the internet. The more quality content that is published, the greater the likelihood that a business will be found by potential customers through online searches.

Search findings indicate that e-commerce platforms have a significant contribution to increasing the sales of MSMEs. The presence of marketplaces provides opportunities for business actors to reach consumers from various regions without having to open physical stores. Thus, geographical limitations that previously posed challenges in marketing can be minimized through the use of digital technology. The use of e-commerce allows MSMEs to offer products 24 hours a day without being tied to specific operating hours. Consumers can search for information, compare products, and make transactions at any time according to their needs. This flexibility increases the likelihood of purchases as consumers can access products more easily. In addition, various features available on e-commerce platforms, such as digital payment systems, automated delivery services, discount promotions, and customer loyalty programs, also support the increase in sales. From a business efficiency perspective, e-commerce helps reduce operational costs that are usually required for renting business premises or opening new branches. MSMEs can allocate their available resources to improve product quality and other marketing activities. This advantage becomes very important for business actors who have limited capital but want to effectively expand their market share. The research results also show that consumers tend to trust products marketed through marketplaces more because of the review and rating system. This feature provides additional information that helps consumers make purchasing decisions. The more positive reviews a product receives, the greater the chance that product will be chosen by potential buyers. Thus, e-commerce not only expands market access but also enhances business credibility in the eyes of consumers.

The Importance of Data Analysis in Determining Digital Marketing Strategies

One of the main advantages of digital marketing compared to traditional marketing is its ability to provide accurate and measurable data. The study results indicate that the utilization of consumer data plays a crucial role in enhancing the effectiveness of MSME marketing strategies. Data obtained from social media, websites, and e-commerce platforms can be used to gain a deeper understanding of consumer behavior. Through data analysis, business actors can identify the most popular products, the best times to promote, customer characteristics, and the effectiveness of marketing campaigns that have been conducted. This information allows MSMEs to make more informed decisions based on facts rather than just intuition. Thus, the risk of failure in marketing activities can be minimized. The utilization of data also helps business actors to perform market segmentation more specifically. Each consumer group has different needs and preferences, so the marketing strategies implemented must be tailored to the characteristics of each segment. Through a data-driven approach, SMEs can craft promotional messages that are more relevant and appealing to the targeted market. In addition, data analysis allows for the continuous evaluation of marketing performance. Business actors can monitor the number of visits, conversion rates, and customer interactions in real time. The results of this evaluation serve as a basis for improving strategies to be more effective in the next period. Therefore, the ability to manage and utilize data is one of the important factors determining the success of digital marketing in an increasingly competitive business environment.

This article has several differences from the research conducted by Arif et al. (2025), Khamidah et al. (2023), and Wibowo and Pangesti (2025). The research by Arif et al. (2025) focuses more on the effectiveness of digital marketing in general on increasing MSME sales using a quantitative approach. Meanwhile, the research by Khamidah et al. (2023) emphasizes the relationship between digital marketing and sales volume without elaborating in depth on the role of each digital strategy. The research by Wibowo and Pangesti (2025) highlights the use of digital marketing as a means to increase sales in certain MSME sectors. Unlike these studies, this article not only discusses the influence of digital marketing on sales but also comprehensively examines the relationship between social media, content marketing, e-commerce, and the utilization of consumer data in supporting the performance improvement of MSMEs. This study uses a literature review method that allows researchers to integrate various research results, thus providing a broader picture of the development of digital marketing strategies in MSMEs. In addition,

this article pays special attention to changes in consumer behavior in the digital era and the importance of two-way interaction between business actors and customers. Previous research generally emphasized the use of digital platforms as promotional tools, while this article explains how social media and content marketing can be used to build long-term relationships with customers, enhance consumer loyalty, and strengthen the brand image of MSMEs.

This article has similarities with the research of Arif et al. (2025), Khamidah et al. (2023), and Wibowo and Pangesti (2025) as they all discuss digital marketing as a strategy that can enhance the sales of MSMEs. All of these studies show that the use of digital technology has a positive impact on business development, particularly in expanding markets, improving product promotion, and strengthening business competitiveness. In addition, both previous research and this article emphasize that social media and digital platforms are effective means to reach consumers more broadly at relatively low costs. Another similarity is the view that digital transformation has become an important necessity for MSMEs to survive and thrive amid increasingly competitive business competition. However, this article adds value by integrating various findings from previous research into a more comprehensive analytical framework. Thus, this article not only demonstrates that digital marketing affects the sales of MSMEs but also explains the factors that support the successful implementation of sustainable digital marketing strategies.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the literature review conducted, it can be concluded that digital marketing strategies have a significant impact on increasing sales of MSMEs in the digital economy era. The utilization of various digital platforms, such as social media, content marketing, and e-commerce, can help business actors expand market reach, enhance product visibility, and build closer relationships with consumers. Digital marketing strategies also allow MSMEs to communicate directly with customers, thereby increasing trust, loyalty, and consumer satisfaction, which ultimately impacts sales growth. The research results show that social media is an effective means of introducing products and building interactions with customers through various forms of engaging and informative content. In addition, content marketing plays an important role in increasing brand awareness and building a positive business image by providing valuable information to consumers. On the other hand, the use of e-commerce platforms provides broader opportunities for MSMEs to reach markets without geographical

boundaries, while also facilitating the transaction process through integrated payment and distribution systems. This study also found that the utilization of consumer data is one of the factors that support the success of digital marketing. Through data analysis, business actors can understand customer needs, determine more precise target markets, and evaluate the effectiveness of the marketing strategies that have been implemented. Thus, business decisions can be made in a more measured and efficient manner, which can enhance the competitiveness of the business in the long term. Overall, digital transformation has become an unavoidable necessity for MSMEs in facing increasingly competitive business competition. The success of implementing digital marketing does not only depend on the use of technology but also on the ability of business actors to understand consumer behavior, manage content creatively, and utilize data as a basis for decision-making. Therefore, digital marketing can be viewed as an effective and sustainable strategy in supporting the growth, development, and sustainability of MSMEs in the future.

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