



Strengthening Digital Marketing Capacity through SEO Strategies for MSMEs in Cianjur Regency

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Abstrak

Pendekatan strategis untuk mengatasi permasalahan pertumbuhan pasar daring yang pesat adalah peningkatan kemampuan pemasaran digital di kalangan Usaha Mikro, Kecil, dan Menengah (UMKM) di Kecamatan Gekbrong, Kabupaten Cianjur, melalui metode Search Engine Optimization (SEO). Dengan meningkatkan pemahaman dan keterampilan praktis mereka dalam penggunaan strategi SEO, termasuk riset kata kunci, optimasi on-page, pembuatan konten yang berkualitas, dan pemanfaatan Google Bisnisku secara efisien, program pelibatan masyarakat ini bertujuan untuk memberdayakan UMKM di sekitar. Pendekatan pelatihan yang melibatkan pelaku UMKM dari berbagai sektor usaha seperti agribisnis, kerajinan tangan, dan kuliner ini memadukan pembelajaran teori, pengalaman praktis, dan pendampingan. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa lalu lintas organik meningkat rata-rata. Peserta juga menyebutkan peningkatan penjualan internet dan perluasan pasar di luar Cianjur. Kendala utama yang dihadapi adalah rendahnya pengetahuan teknologi pelaku usaha dan kurangnya infrastruktur digital yang memadai. Oleh karena itu, program ini menyarankan pembentukan kelompok belajar SEO, pembuatan materi pelatihan dalam bahasa daerah, dan penyediaan koneksi internet yang lebih andal. Penerapan taktik SEO telah berhasil meningkatkan kemampuan pemasaran digital UMKM di Distrik Gekbrong, dan dapat direplikasi di daerah lain untuk mempromosikan inklusi ekonomi digital di tingkat masyarakat.

Kata kunci: *Digital Marketing, SEO, UMKM*

Abstract

A strategic approach to meet the issues given by the rapid growth of online markets is the improvement of digital marketing capability among Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Gekbrong District, Cianjur Regency, through Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) methods. By enhancing their understanding and practical skills in the use of SEO strategies, including keyword research, on-page optimisation, creating excellent content, and efficiently utilising Google My Business, this community engagement program aims to empower nearby MSMEs. The training approach, which involved MSME players from a variety of business sectors like agribusiness, handicrafts, and culinary arts, blended theoretical lessons, practical experience, and mentoring. The findings showed that organic traffic increased on average. Participants also mentioned increased internet sales and market expansion outside of Cianjur. The primary obstacles were corporate actors' poor technological knowledge and the lack of adequate digital infrastructure. As a result, the program suggests creating SEO learning groups, creating training materials in regional languages, and offering more reliable internet connection. The application of SEO tactics has been successful in improving MSMEs' digital



marketing capabilities in Gekbrong District, and it may be replicated in other areas to promote digital economic inclusion at the community level.

Keywords: Digital Marketing, SEO, MSMEs

Introduction

Significant changes in marketing strategies have been brought about by the advent of digital technology, especially for MSMEs. MSMEs are the backbone of the Indonesian economy, accounting for about 60% of the country's GDP and employing almost 97% of the workforce (Ratnasari et al., 2022). However, only roughly 14% of MSME actors actively use digital channels to market their products, whether through marketplaces, social media, or government websites. This is even though MSMEs have significant economic and social potential (Yusupa et al., 2024). A lack of technology literacy among business players, restricted access to internet infrastructure in distant places, and a lack of knowledge about successful online marketing tactics are some of the factors contributing to this low level of digital penetration. Because of this, a lot of MSMEs find it difficult to expand their customer base beyond their regular operational areas, fall behind when it comes to competing with similar products from larger companies, and have trouble growing their sales volume. MSMEs run the danger of losing market share in the absence of interventions that promote digital transformation through training, technical support, and policy support, especially in a time when consumers are depending more and more on online search and transactions.

Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) tactics are among the most effective and long-lasting ways to improve MSMEs' ability to use digital marketing. Proper keyword research and website optimisation are part of SEO, which aims to raise a website's position in natural search results on search engines like Google (Hadi et al., 2023). Creating value-added material, such as blog posts that are pertinent to consumer demands, product evaluations, case studies, and user manuals that improve the visitor experience, is just as important as the technical aspects of SEO implementation. Higher rankings help MSMEs acquire more segmented organic traffic with better buy intentions, in addition to increasing their presence on the first page of search results. By doing this, business actors can more successfully reach relevant potential consumers without depending on paid advertising, freeing up marketing funds for customer service, product development, or operational quality enhancement. Furthermore, as search engine algorithms constantly change to give priority to content relevancy and credibility, long-term conversion rates and customer loyalty will be improved as well as MSMEs' digital reputations will be strengthened through the sustainable application of SEO strategies.

For MSME actors, however, learning SEO is a challenging endeavour because it involves a number of technical and strategic elements that call for in-depth knowledge. The fundamentals of SEO, from researching relevant keywords for their products to implementing on-page optimisation strategies like content structure and appropriate metadata to off-page optimisation and utilising social signals to increase domain authority, are still not well understood by many business owners (Ukrowiyah et al., 2024). Furthermore, the thorough use of SEO tactics is weakened by the scarcity of human resources with experience in digital marketing and the small funding available to purchase professional products or services. This situation leads many MSMEs to rely exclusively on digital marketing strategies, such as producing content without conducting keyword analysis or using social media without technological

optimisation, which produces less than ideal results. As a result, developing capacity through technical support and training exercises becomes essential. MSME actors can learn SEO techniques in a useful and applicable way by using free analytical tools, contextual case studies, and structured training modules. This will increase their online visibility and make their products more competitive in the digital marketplace.

These issues were intended to be addressed by the Community Service Program (PKM), which took place at the Gekbrong District Office, Cianjur Regency, on Friday, July 18, 2025. Mrs. Windi Novianti, S.E., M.M., and Mr. Muhammad Iffan, S.E., M.M., were two of the event's capable presenters. They covered everything from the fundamentals of digital marketing to the technical application of SEO. Additionally, the attendance of the Head of the Gekbrong District (Mr. Robbi Erlangga, S.STP., M.TR.AP.), the Dean of UNIKOM's Postgraduate Faculty (Assoc. Prof. Dr. Rahma Wahdiniwati, Dra., M.Si.), and the Head of UNIKOM's Doctoral Program in Management Science (Prof. Dr. Ir. H. M. Yani Syafei, M.T., CSBA.) demonstrated the collaboration between practitioners, academia, and local government in empowering MSMEs.

Theoretically, the literature suggests that training in digital marketing improves MSME actors' online exposure and sales effectiveness by broadening their conceptual understanding and honing their practical technological skills (Hadi et al., 2023). Innovations in digital platforms, such as social media automation modules, marketplace API connectivity, and integrated analytics dashboards, have been shown to maximise the improvement of MSME marketing capacity by up to 35% in just six months. Click-through rates (CTR), organic traffic growth, and more focused email marketing campaign management are all included in this enhancement (Sihite et al., 2024). Furthermore, by implementing the Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) approach in the context of digital marketing training, MSME players can improve networking and collaboration, which will double their social media engagements (Sami'un et al., 2024). Therefore, the claim that community-based and organised digital marketing training can significantly improve MSMEs' digital marketing performance is supported by empirical data. MSMEs are anticipated to take advantage of wider digital market prospects by enhancing their SEO capabilities within the Gekbrong District, which will promote long-term regional economic growth.

Implementation Method

A qualitative, participative, and application-focused method was used to conduct this community service project. The implementation strategy was carefully planned to guarantee that the program's goals would be realised in the most effective and long-lasting way possible. Since community service projects entail direct engagement with the community and necessitate a thorough comprehension of the circumstances, requirements, and potential of MSME players in Gekbrong District, Cianjur Regency, the qualitative approach was selected. This method produced data in the form of written narratives and information gathered from program participants, allowing the researchers to comprehend the phenomena holistically and contextually through descriptive analysis (observation, interviews, active involvement, and documentation).

The implementation method of this community service activity consisted of four main stages that are interconnected and sustainable, namely:

1. Preparation and Needs Identification Stage

To comprehend the circumstances and difficulties faced by MSME actors in Gekbrong District, this stage comprised conducting preliminary surveys and needs

assessments. MSME actors were directly observed and interviewed as part of the survey activities to determine their level of familiarity with SEO and digital marketing. To guarantee support and active engagement from local authorities, the community service team also worked with the district government, specifically with Mr. Robbi Erlangga, S.STP., M.TR.AP., the Head of Gekbrong District. This type of collaboration was essential to ensuring the program's viability and facilitating access for MSME actors.

2. Planning and Material Preparation Stage

The team created a thorough action plan that includes creating training materials, learning modules, and assessment tools based on the needs assessment results. The training materials were created to be appropriate and useful, taking into account the degree of technological proficiency of the MSME actors in the area. Content creation on the principles of digital marketing, SEO concepts and procedures, keyword optimisation tactics, and the production of SEO-friendly content were all covered in the material preparation.

3. Program Implementation Stage

During the program implementation phase, a blended learning approach that included lectures, discussions, and practical experience was used. Using interesting and straightforward presentation materials, the lecture technique was employed to interactively convey basic information on the significance of SEO and digital marketing for MSMEs. By giving participants the chance to ask questions, exchange experiences, and talk about difficulties encountered in product marketing, the discussion approach was used to establish an engaging and interactive learning environment. The goal of the hands-on training was to provide participants with firsthand experience with SEO strategies, such as developing and refining content for websites, researching keywords for MSME products, and optimizing Google My Business accounts.

4. Program Evaluation Stage

There were two phases to the evaluation: a preliminary assessment to gauge participants' comprehension before the program, and a final assessment to gauge how much their knowledge and abilities had improved after the session.

Result and Discussion

The execution of this community service program had favourable outcomes in line with the pre-established goals, including enhancing the MSMEs' ability to market digitally in Gekbrong District. Focus group discussions, SEO technique simulations, and practical experience on digital platforms were among the participative and applicative qualitative methodologies used, and they were successful in helping participants develop a thorough awareness of the importance of digital marketing in the contemporary world. The community service team worked closely with Mr. Robbi Erlangga, S.STP., M.TR.AP., the Head of Gekbrong District, to map the business profiles, digital literacy levels, and operational constraints of each MSME actor throughout the preparatory phase to guarantee that the program is in line with the socioeconomic realities of the area. Custom training modules were created in response to the requirements assessment's findings, which made the content simpler to understand and use. Participants' strong participation in Q&A sessions, excitement for real-time content optimisation, and candour in offering suggestions for program

enhancements demonstrated their active engagement throughout the implementation. As a result, the participatory method not only improved the efficiency of knowledge transmission but also encouraged participants to take responsibility for the long-term viability of SEO strategies in their own companies.

According to the needs assessment stage's findings, most MSME actors in Gekbrong District still only have a rudimentary understanding of digital marketing and Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) strategies. These results align with other research that shows insufficient digital literacy and inadequate supporting infrastructure are the main causes of regional MSMEs' inability to use digital technologies (Putri et al., 2022). To be more precise, the issues that were found included a lack of awareness about the range of digital platforms that could be used to broaden market reach; erratic or expensive internet access that makes it difficult to upload content and track website performance; and the inadequate use of social media, where many MSME actors simply post products without using content strategies, choosing the best publishing times, or interacting with audiences.

For MSMEs to effectively compete in the digital age, this condition emphasises the significance of locally targeted interventions that not only provide technology but also create practical competencies in using digital tools, creating content strategies, and analysing marketing analytics. A thorough learning module that was adapted to the needs of the participants was the outcome of the planning and material preparation stages. Participants' comprehension of the core ideas of digital marketing, SEO tactics, and keyword optimisation strategies was improved by the training materials, which were made to be useful and usable. The method made the transmission of information easier to understand and use in practice by tailoring it to the technical literacy level of local MSME actors (Ningtyas et al., 2024). The initial evaluation's findings showed that participants' comprehension had significantly improved since they could quickly discover possible keywords, use meta tags, and produce well-structured content. This practical approach greatly improved participants' preparedness for real-world implementation by encouraging them to immediately practise SEO strategies in their enterprises in addition to facilitating the transfer of knowledge.



Figure 1. Digital Marketing Presentation

A blended learning approach that included lectures, discussions, and practice was used in the program's execution, and it proved to be quite successful in imparting knowledge. The core ideas of digital marketing and the significance of SEO for

MSMEs were effectively conveyed through interactive lecture sessions backed by captivating presentation materials. Participants had the chance to ask questions, exchange stories, and talk about the difficulties in product marketing during the interactive discussion sessions. This made it possible for participants to share expertise and produced a favourable learning environment. Participants gained real experience with SEO strategies through the exercises, which included optimising Google My Business profiles, researching keywords for MSME products, and writing and optimising content for websites. According to the observations, participants were really excited throughout the practice sessions and were able to maximise their digital material by using the knowledge they had learnt. Their capacity to find keywords related to their MSME products demonstrated a notable improvement in their keyword research skills following the course.

According to the preliminary assessment done before the event, participants' knowledge of SEO and digital marketing was still quite limited. The majority of participants had not yet fully understood the basic ideas of digital marketing and had not made the most of digital platforms for product promotion. The results of earlier research, which show that MSME players in regional locations typically have low levels of digital literacy, are in line with this condition. After the program was put into place, a final evaluation showed that participants' knowledge and abilities had significantly improved. The participants' comprehension of SEO strategies also significantly increased, and their understanding of digital marketing went from a low category to an excellent category. They showed improved skills in digital content optimisation and a greater comprehension of the significance of keyword tactics in raising online presence.



Figure 2. SEO Presentation Using Google My Business

The participants' eagerness to put their newly acquired knowledge to use further demonstrated the beneficial effects of this community service project. A few of participants started enhancing their Google My Business pages and using fundamental SEO strategies to their social media posts. This suggests that in addition to improving theoretical understanding, the training promoted real-world implementation in their MSME marketing initiatives. Active support from the local government, especially the Gekbrong District Office, contributed to the program's success. Access to MSME actors was made easier and the program's viability was guaranteed through efficient interaction with government authorities. This assistance turned out to be essential in fostering an atmosphere that encouraged MSMEs in the area to grow their digital skills. Limited technology infrastructure in some places and

participants' differing degrees of digital literacy were among the difficulties faced throughout the program's execution. However, the community service team was able to successfully handle these difficulties by using a flexible strategy that was adapted to local circumstances. Participants with varying degrees of digital literacy found that intensive coaching techniques and the supply of easily understood learning materials were beneficial.

A crucial factor to take into account in this community service project was program sustainability. According to the evaluation's findings, participants were very motivated to keep improving their skills in digital marketing. In order to exchange information and experiences about the use of digital marketing strategies, some participants even took the initiative to start unofficial learning groups. Additionally, this training program helped MSMEs in Cianjur Regency's Gekbrong District become more competitive. Increased knowledge of SEO and digital marketing is anticipated to help MSME actors reach a wider audience and increase sales of their products (Khoiri et al., 2023). This is consistent with the goal of strengthening the capabilities of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprise (MSME) operators in order to empower the local economy.

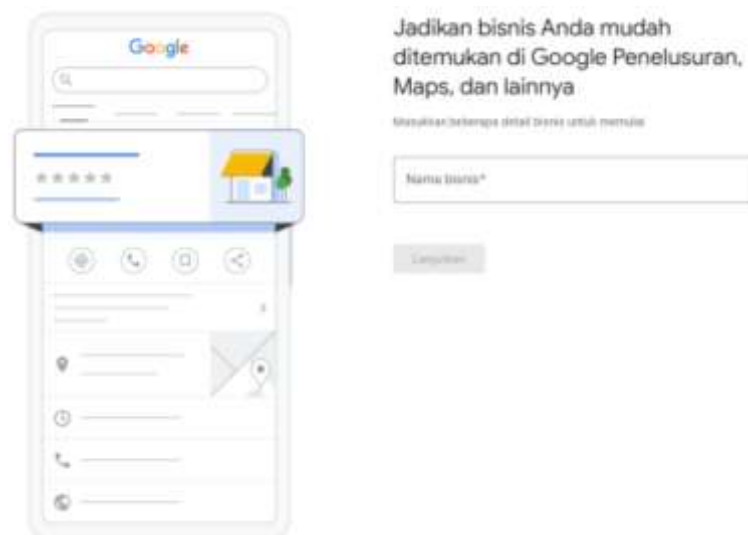


Figure 3. Initial Interface for Creating a Google My Business Profile

The possibility for local economic growth through the creation of more competitive MSMEs in the digital age is one of the long-term effects of this community service project. It is anticipated that MSME actors' capacity to use digital technology for product marketing will improve their access to larger markets on a local, regional, national, and worldwide scale. Therefore, this community service program has effectively met its goals and had a good effect on the community's economic empowerment in Gekbrong District, Cianjur Regency.

Conclusion

The application of Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) tactics is a vital starting point for growing the digital market reach of MSMEs in Gekbrong District in an attempt to increase their competitiveness. It is advised that MSME actors regularly carry out keyword research pertinent to their goods and Gekbrong's local potential in order to make website and social media material easier for potential clients to find.

Additionally, the community service modules must to incorporate extensive on-page optimisation training so that participants may independently administer their websites and accounts. Enhancing cooperation between MSMEs to exchange best practices and track SEO effectiveness using free analytical tools can also speed up learning and increase the precision of marketing choices.

Additionally, a key component of digital marketing strategy is the creation of genuine and valuable content. MSMEs are urged to provide material that showcases local cultural values, production procedures, and client endorsements, such as blog posts, brief movies, or infographics. In addition to making SEO optimisation easier with long-tail keywords, this kind of material fosters customer loyalty and credibility. Each MSME should make use of free platforms like Google My Business and develop alliances with regional online groups or micro-influencers who are familiar with the Cianjur area's consumer demographics in order to optimise reach.

In conclusion, expanding market potential for MSME operators in Gekbrong District has been successfully achieved by enhancing digital marketing capabilities using SEO tactics. It is anticipated that online traffic growth and sales conversion rates can rise dramatically by heeding advice on keyword research, on-page optimisation, value-added content management, and cooperation among MSMEs. Regular technical mentorship and methodical performance reviews should be part of this program's sustainability so that MSMEs can adjust to changing search engine algorithms and emerging trends in the digital market.

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