



Rural Economic Improvement Strategies by Optimizing The Digital Marketing Application (Case Study: Tirtayasa Village, Serang Regency, Banten Province)

Deswita Herlina^{1*}, Togi Haidat Mangara², Olindayanti Siahaan³, Togi Marito Simanjuntak⁴

^{1*,2,3,4}Department of Development Economics, Universitas Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa, Indonesia

deswita@untirta.ac.id^{1*} (corresponding author)

Abstrak

Universitas Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa (Untirta) aktif melakukan pengabdian kepada masyarakat, salah satunya di Desa Tirtayasa. Desa ini memiliki kondisi demografi dan infrastruktur yang masih terbatas, dengan mayoritas penduduk bekerja sebagai petani atau buruh harian. Meskipun telah ada upaya pengembangan UMKM, potensi lokal seperti asyarak kuliner belum dimaksimalkan. Salah satu kendala utama asyarak rendahnya pemahaman dan keterampilan masyarakat dalam memanfaatkan platform digital untuk pemasaran produk. Untuk itu, dilakukan pelatihan digital marketing yang bertujuan meningkatkan kapasitas masyarakat dalam memasarkan produk secara online, sekaligus mendorong kreativitas dalam mengembangkan produk unggulan desa. Kegiatan ini dilaksanakan melalui empat tahap: persiapan, pelaksanaan, evaluasi, dan pelaporan, dengan menggunakan pendekatan analisis USG (Urgency, Seriousness, Growth) untuk mengidentifikasi masalah prioritas. Hasilnya, pelatihan ini tidak hanya berhasil mentransfer pengetahuan teknis, tetapi juga mendorong peserta untuk mengadopsi pendekatan inovatif dalam mengembangkan usaha mereka.

Kata kunci: Digital Marketing, Marketplace, Pengabdian masyarakat

Abstract

Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa University (Untirta) is actively involved in community service, one of which takes place in Tirtayasa Village. The village still has limited infrastructure and a demographic profile largely consisting of farmers and daily laborers. Although there have been efforts to develop micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), local potential—such as culinary products—has not been fully optimized. A major challenge is the community's lack of basic knowledge and skills in using digital platforms such as social media, online marketplaces, and digital marketing strategies. To address this issue, a digital marketing training program was conducted to improve the community's ability to promote their products online and to encourage creativity in developing the village's flagship products. The program was carried out in four stages: preparation, implementation, evaluation, and reporting. The USG (Urgency, Seriousness, and Growth) analysis was used to identify key problems. The results show that the training not only successfully transferred technical knowledge, but also inspired participants to adopt more innovative approaches in developing their businesses.

Keywords : Digital Marketing, Marketplace, Community Service



Introduction

In general, the number of academic and research publications in Indonesia has shown an increasing trend. Universitas Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa (Untirta) has initiated multiple programs to encourage the academic community to apply and internalize science and technology for the advancement of public welfare and the intellectual development of the nation. Through community service activities in rural areas, societal productivity can be improved, one of which is through the community service program.

Untirta has several partner villages (*desa binaan*), one of which is Tirtayasa Village in Banten, a province with potential for tourism development. Geographically, Tirtayasa Village covers an area of 250,6 hectares of a beautiful rural landscape, serving as a center for traditional agrarian activities, primarily focused on rice cultivation and vegetable farming. However, the demographic and infrastructure conditions in Tirtayasa Village remain relatively modest. Most residents depend on primary occupations such as farming or daily labor, although there have been efforts to diversify through small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Consequently, several local potentials have not yet been fully optimized, for instance, in the form of culinary industries that could provide alternative sources of income for the community.

One of the main challenges faced by the people of *Desa Bumi Tirtayasa* is the lack of skills in utilizing digital technology for online product marketing. In the current digital era, digital marketing plays a crucial role in expanding market reach and enhancing the competitiveness of local products. Unfortunately, many small business actors in the village still lack fundamental understanding and skills in using digital platforms such as social media, online marketplaces, and other online marketing strategies. As a result, the village's local products are less recognized by the wider market, even though they possess quality and uniqueness worthy of promotion.

Additionally, creativity and innovation in product development remain limited. Many products are still packaged and produced conventionally, making them less appealing to modern consumers who prefer products that are not only of good quality but also possess aesthetic value and strong market competitiveness. The lack of training, mentorship, and access to up-to-date information has made it difficult for the community to sustainably develop regional flagship products.

Given these challenges, strategic efforts are needed to enhance the community's digital marketing skills and foster creativity in developing regional flagship products. Community empowerment through training, mentoring, and the provision of digital facilities is an essential step toward promoting local economic growth and realizing village self-reliance based on existing potentials.

Implementation Method

The community service activities were conducted in Tirtayasa Village, Tirtayasa District, Banten Province. The participants consisted of members of the Tirtayasa Village community. The activities were carried out directly and in person at the location. The implementation method involved a team composed of Development Economics students conducting activities in the partner village together with residents of Tirtayasa Village, Tirtayasa District, Serang Regency. The team conducted a brainstorming session using the USG analysis (Urgency, Seriousness, and Growth) to identify issues encountered during the implementation process, which was divided into four stages:

Preparation Stage

The initial stage involved observing the village's environmental conditions and analyzing the local economy. This stage was carried out through interviews with several economic actors and the village head to identify the social and economic issues related to the topic. The findings revealed two main problems: a lack of understanding among the community regarding digital marketing and limited creativity and innovation in developing competitive products. Therefore, the proposed solution was to conduct training and mentoring programs to enhance the economic capacity of village Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) through creativity empowerment based on local superior products.

Implementation Stage

Identifying issues faced by partners and providing alternative solution perspectives for each issue. Explaining follow-up actions in the form of mentoring and training activities for selected partners, including traders and community members. Providing solutions for each identified and examined problem, particularly those prioritized for follow-up action.



Figure 1. Group Photo Session

Evaluation Stage

At this stage, the data collected and processed on the identified issues were analyzed, and alternative solutions were proposed as final resolutions. A comprehensive evaluation was then conducted covering all stages, from preparation and implementation to the final reporting phase.

Reporting Stage

After completing the previous stages, the final stage involved drawing conclusions based on the processed data and submitting a comprehensive report detailing the overall outcomes of the activity.

Result and Discussion

The community service program in Tirtayasa Village, Tirtayasa District, Serang Regency, Banten Province, was a significant milestone for local empowerment. The event, held from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Western Indonesia Time (WIB/GMT +7), attracted five participants, most of whom were engaged in micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs).

The MSME training workshop was lively and engaging, evidenced by the community's outstanding level of participation. Digital marketing was chosen as the core topic, considering its importance in improving sales and profits in today's marketplace (Wijayatri et al., 2021) The chosen training format promoted active

learning; its interactive approach allowed participants not only to absorb information passively but also to immediately put new knowledge into practice. This hands-on learning gave participants direct experience with digital marketing strategies, notably in setting up online marketplace accounts.

The workshop opened with a systematic mapping process, where facilitators conducted initial assessments to identify participants' business types, operational scales, marketing methods, and the key challenges they faced in business development. These insights were used to tailor the training to the participants' needs.

Initial surveys showed that most participants still relied on conventional marketing through traditional markets as their main sales channel, a preference shaped by village demographics and strong in-person shopping habits. While locally effective, facilitators observed significant potential for further development via digital marketing strategies. As more consumers shift to online platforms for their convenience (Caturani et al., 2021), complementing traditional marketing with digital approaches became essential.

In response, the facilitators introduced digital marketing as a complementary solution, emphasizing operational cost efficiency, market expansion, more precise audience targeting, and the central role of creativity in visual product presentation and packaging. Training progressed to hands-on demonstrations of relevant digital marketing platforms, focusing on online marketplaces such as Shopee, Tokopedia, and Lazada—platforms deemed highly promising for MSME business growth.

Participants were guided through the differences between marketplaces and social media for promotions and received technical support in creating online store accounts: profile setup, product uploads, and inventory management. Once participants mastered the basics, subsequent sessions focused on practical promotional strategies.

Practice exercises included registering for free accounts on marketplaces like Shopee and TikTok for product marketing. Participants watched YouTube tutorials explaining how to create attractive visual promotional content and received additional guidance on daily content creation and packaging design for both marketplaces and social media.

Participant enthusiasm peaked during practical sessions. Those with mobile devices implemented the demonstrated steps in real-time, while others took careful notes for future practice. Frequent, intensive interactions between participants and facilitators led to productive discussions about technical procedures and strategy. By the end, participants showed a solid understanding of how marketplace applications can boost business visibility and broaden their market reach.

The workshop concluded with the presentation of certificates and plaques, marking a new milestone that maintained high enthusiasm among participants beyond the session. Besides transferring digital marketing know-how, the event inspired participants to pursue more innovative approaches in their business development.

However, the program also surfaced real challenges. A key issue was the limited availability of digital devices such as mobile phones among participants, which prevented some from directly performing account registration or digital content editing. The open-air venue also posed obstacles; bright sunlight and uneven surfaces disrupted presentations and affected the quality of projected materials. Despite these limitations, facilitators provided tailored support, ensuring each participant could benefit from the program.



Figure 2. Workshop Implementation

Conclusion

The Digital Marketing training conducted in Tirtayasa Village, Tirtayasa District, Serang Regency proceeded smoothly and successfully improved community members' understanding of digital marketing principles. This training not only transferred technical knowledge but also inspired participants to adopt more innovative approaches in developing their businesses. The program demonstrated the potential to stimulate creative thinking and entrepreneurial transformation among local MSMEs.

The success of this activity also highlights the importance of improving technical and logistical aspects in future programs. Key recommendations include providing backup digital devices, selecting a comfortable indoor venue, and optimizing presentation media. With more comprehensive planning, similar initiatives can generate a greater impact by fostering digitalization among MSMEs and accelerating the economic transformation of the local community.

Acknowledgments

Authors express gratitude to Universitas Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa and the Institute for Research and Community Center (LPPM Untirta) for providing community service assistance in the form of 2025 Research Grant with which this program is enabled to be completed.

References

- Caturani, D., Prihatiningtyas, S., & Fahimah, M. (2021). 3P Marketing Strategy to Increase Furniture Sales Volume at CV Karya Apik Jombang. *INCOME: Innovation of Economics and Management*, 1(1), 26–34. <https://doi.org/10.32764/income.v1i1.1446>
- Wijayatri, R., Lestari, L., Benita, I. A., Narizki, M. J., & Octavianto, P. W. (2021). Strategi Digital Marketing dan Pengembangan Produk dalam Meningkatkan Daya Tarik Wisata Herbal di Desa Growong. *Community Empowerment*, 6(3), 486–491. <https://doi.org/10.31603/ce.4314>