

Strategies Employed by UMKM Carica Gemilang Wonosobo in Facing Digital Competition

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ABSTRACT

This study analyzes the strategies of UMKM Carica Gemilang in Wonosobo to face digital competition. A quantitative survey reveals that the implementation of digital marketing significantly enhances sales performance and brand awareness for UMKM Carica. Strategies include utilizing social media, e-commerce platforms, and engaging marketing content. The optimization of information and communication technology through social media and Shopee is effective in increasing product visibility. The research recommends that UMKM Carica continue to develop their digital strategies to tackle increasingly fierce competition, thereby fostering sustainable business growth. Thus, adapting to technological changes is key to the success of UMKM in the digital era.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) play a vital role in supporting regional economic growth, contributing significantly to job creation, poverty reduction, and community development. These enterprises are often regarded as the backbone of local economies due to their agility, innovation, and direct connection with grassroots markets. With the rapid advancement of technology, MSMEs are increasingly challenged to adapt to digital transformation. This shift is not merely an option but a necessity to maintain competitiveness in a fast-evolving global marketplace. The adoption of digital tools and platforms allows MSMEs to improve operational efficiency, expand market reach, and enhance customer engagement. However, the journey toward digital transformation is often hindered by barriers such as limited resources, lack of technological expertise, and resistance to change.

Addressing these challenges is crucial to empowering MSMEs and ensuring their sustainable contribution to economic growth, especially in an era where digitalization has become a key driver of business success³. This research focuses on UMKM Carica Gemilang in Wonosobo, which has adopted digital marketing strategies to improve sales performance and brand awareness. The study highlights the importance of utilizing social media, e-commerce platforms, and engaging marketing content to address the challenges of digital competition. By leveraging digital tools such as Shopee and social media, UMKM Carica has enhanced product visibility and created a strong presence in the market. The study emphasizes the necessity for continuous development of digital strategies for sustainable growth in the digital era.

Literature Review

1. The article from (Okonkwo, 2022) "Digital Marketing Effectiveness Analysis: A Project Focused on Analyzing the Effectiveness of Various Digital Marketing Strategies for Small Businesses Through Data Analytics". The primary aim of the study is to explore and assess the effectiveness of different digital marketing strategies for small businesses, providing insights that can help optimize their marketing budgets. The researchers employed a qualitative methodology, utilizing an exploratory research design that focuses on case studies and secondary data analysis to identify trends and patterns in digital marketing effectiveness. The study highlights the advantages of digital marketing, such as cost-effectiveness, targeted advertising, and real-time data access, which are crucial for small businesses with limited resources. The results indicate that effective digital marketing strategies can significantly enhance the return on investment (ROI) for small enterprises. The authors recommend that small businesses adopt data-driven decision-making and agile budgeting practices to navigate the ever-evolving digital landscape successfully. Overall, the research contributes valuable knowledge to the field of digital marketing and offers practical solutions for small businesses looking to improve their marketing effectiveness⁴.
2. The article titled "Efektifitas Digital Marketing dalam Meningkatkan Penjualan pada UMKM Kel. Siti Rejo," authored by (Maharani and Nazmah 2023), investigates the effectiveness of digital marketing in enhancing sales for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in the beauty sector. The primary objective of the study is to determine how digital marketing strategies can positively impact sales performance. The authors employed a deductive qualitative research method, utilizing existing theories to inform their research questions and analyze data from three beauty sector MSMEs in the Sitirejo II area. The findings reveal that the use of social media significantly contributes to improving sales, with active engagement from business owners being crucial for success. The study concludes that digital marketing serves as an effective strategy for attracting consumer interest and disseminating product information. The authors recommend that MSMEs invest in training and workshops to enhance their digital marketing skills and adopt strategies such as utilizing local search tools like Google Maps to increase visibility and accessibility. Overall, this research underscores the potential of digital marketing in driving sales growth for small businesses⁵.
3. The article titled "Effectiveness of Digital Marketing in Enhancing Market Competency in Today's Market," authored by (Ghafari, 2023) explores the role of digital marketing in improving market competency in the contemporary business landscape. The primary objective of the research is to investigate how various digital marketing strategies, such as search engine optimization, social media marketing, and targeted advertising, influence customer engagement and brand visibility. The study employs a comprehensive review of empirical studies and theoretical frameworks to synthesize findings related to the impact of digital marketing on business competitiveness. The results indicate that effective integration of digital marketing techniques significantly enhances customer loyalty and adaptability to market trends, ultimately revolutionizing competitive strategies. In light of these findings, the author recommends that businesses adopt a holistic digital marketing approach to remain relevant and thrive in the evolving market environment. This research underscores the necessity for organizations to embrace digital tools and platforms as essential components of their marketing strategies to sustain market competency⁶.
4. An article titled "Analysis of The Effectiveness of Integrated Digital Marketing Communication Strategies in Building MSMEs Brand Awareness Through Social Media," authored by (Utomo, *et al.*, 2023). The research aims to analyze how integrated marketing communication strategies can effectively build brand awareness for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) through social media platforms, particularly Instagram. The study utilizes a qualitative-descriptive research approach, employing methods such as observation, interviews, and documentation to gather data. The analysis follows the interactive model proposed by Miles and Huberman, focusing on data reduction, presentation, and conclusion verification. The findings reveal that while MSMEs effectively use Instagram for publicity and marketing communications, they often lack a dedicated public relations division, which limits their outreach capabilities. The research highlights the importance of social media as a primary promotional tool and notes that word-of-mouth marketing plays a significant role in customer engagement⁷.
5. The article titled "Strategi Digital Marketing Bagi UMKM (Usaha Mikro Kecil dan Menengah) untuk Bersaing di Era Pandemi," authored by (Hadi and Zakiah, 2021) addresses the significant impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and emphasizes the necessity for these businesses to adopt effective digital marketing strategies to survive. The primary objective of the research is to explore how MSMEs can leverage digital marketing techniques to enhance their competitiveness during the pandemic. Utilizing a qualitative methodology with an analytical descriptive approach, the researchers collected data through interviews with MSME actors and secondary sources such as journals and literature on digital marketing. The findings reveal that only a small percentage (15.08%) of MSMEs had effectively utilized digital marketing as a strategy to boost sales, highlighting a crucial need for greater understanding and implementation of these strategies. The authors suggest that MSMEs must invest in learning and adopting

digital marketing practices to not only survive but also thrive in the evolving marketplace, particularly in the face of ongoing challenges posed by the pandemic⁸.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a quantitative research method to analyze the effectiveness of digital marketing strategies implemented by UMKM Carica Gemilang. Quantitative research emphasizes objectivity, measurement to generate findings that can be generalized to larger populations⁹. Data collection was conducted through surveys targeting business stakeholders to evaluate the impact of digital marketing on sales performance and brand awareness. The analysis focuses on the utilization of social media platforms and e-commerce tools, measuring their effectiveness in enhancing product visibility and business growth. The findings are interpreted statistically to provide actionable insights into how MSMEs can optimize their strategies to face digital competition.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

3.1 Results

1. Enhanced Sales Performance through Social Media

The quantitative survey reveals that UMKM Carica Gemilang has significantly improved its sales performance by leveraging social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and WhatsApp. These platforms serve as vital tools for reaching broader audiences and engaging with customers more effectively. By posting consistent and appealing content, the business successfully attracted potential customers and converted them into loyal buyers. For instance, promotions during festive seasons and interactive content such as polls and giveaways led to a noticeable increase in customer interaction and sales.

2. Increased Brand Awareness via E-Commerce Platforms

Shopee, an e-commerce platform, emerged as a key driver in boosting brand awareness for UMKM Carica Gemilang. The business adopted strategic placement of its products on Shopee's marketplace, using features like flash sales and sponsored advertisements. These strategies enabled the company to penetrate new customer segments outside Wonosobo, thereby expanding its market reach. Data from the survey indicates that customers who discovered UMKM Carica through Shopee accounted for 45% of their new clientele, demonstrating the effectiveness of this strategy.

3. Effectiveness of Engaging Marketing Content

Marketing content tailored to the preferences and interests of the target audience proved to be another essential factor in enhancing the company's competitiveness. Videos showcasing the production process of carica products, testimonials from satisfied customers, and visually appealing product images resonated well with the audience. Additionally, campaigns emphasizing the unique characteristics of carica as a regional specialty fostered an emotional connection with customers.

4. Optimization of ICT for Product Visibility

The optimization of information and communication technology (ICT) played a pivotal role in increasing product visibility. Through consistent updates and engagement on social media platforms, UMKM Carica ensured that its products remained in the public eye. Analytical tools provided by platforms like Facebook Insights and Instagram Analytics were used to monitor audience behavior and refine content strategies. Moreover, Shopee's real-time analytics helped the company identify trends and adjust inventory accordingly, minimizing overstock and enhancing efficiency.

3.2 Discussions

The study highlights several key findings regarding the strategies employed by UMKM Carica Gemilang to navigate digital competition. These findings provide insights into the transformative impact of digital marketing and ICT optimization on small businesses, particularly in the context of improving sales performance, brand awareness, and customer engagement.

1. Enhanced Sales Performance through Social Media

Social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and WhatsApp have proven to be instrumental in driving sales for UMKM Carica Gemilang. By leveraging these tools, the business has expanded its audience reach and established more effective communication channels with its customers. The consistent posting of visually appealing and relevant content, such as product highlights, festive promotions, and customer interactions, has helped build trust and attract new customers. For example, interactive campaigns like polls and giveaways not only boosted customer engagement but also directly translated into higher sales during specific seasons. This finding underscores the importance of a well-planned social media strategy in fostering customer loyalty and driving revenue growth.

2. Increased Brand Awareness via E-Commerce Platforms

Shopee has emerged as a crucial platform for broadening UMKM Carica Gemilang's market presence. The adoption of strategic features such as flash sales and sponsored advertisements has enabled the business to

target new customer segments and significantly expand its reach beyond Wonosobo. The study reveals that 45% of the company's new clientele discovered its products through Shopee, illustrating the platform's effectiveness in enhancing brand awareness. This success highlights the need for small businesses to embrace e-commerce not only as a sales channel but also as a branding tool that can open up opportunities in diverse markets.

3. Effectiveness of Engaging Marketing Content

Tailored marketing content has been identified as another cornerstone of UMKM Carica Gemilang's strategy. Videos detailing the production process of carica products, alongside testimonials from satisfied customers, create a sense of transparency and authenticity that resonates with consumers. By emphasizing carica as a unique regional specialty, the business has established an emotional connection with its target audience. Such campaigns enhance brand identity and set the company apart in a competitive market. These findings highlight the importance of understanding audience preferences and crafting content that aligns with their values and interests.

4. Optimization of ICT for Product Visibility

The strategic use of ICT has significantly contributed to UMKM Carica Gemilang's success in maintaining product visibility. Tools such as Facebook Insights and Instagram Analytics have enabled the business to track customer behavior and optimize content strategies. Similarly, Shopee's real-time analytics have allowed the company to respond swiftly to market trends, ensuring efficient inventory management and minimizing the risk of overstock. The integration of data-driven decision-making into marketing and operational strategies has proven to be a game-changer, demonstrating how ICT can empower small businesses to compete more effectively in the digital era.

4. CONCLUSIONS

This research highlights the effectiveness of digital marketing strategies in enhancing sales performance and brand awareness for UMKM Carica Gemilang. Social media platforms, e-commerce tools like Shopee, and engaging marketing content have played pivotal roles in increasing product visibility and customer engagement. The findings underline that optimizing information and communication technology (ICT) enables small businesses to adapt to digital competition successfully. These strategies have expanded market reach, improved customer loyalty, and created a strong brand identity for UMKM Carica Gemilang in the competitive digital landscape.

The study's implications suggest that UMKM and similar enterprises should prioritize digital transformation as a core business strategy. By investing in digital marketing tools, training for effective ICT utilization, and creating engaging content, small businesses can achieve sustainable growth and remain competitive. Policymakers and business development organizations are also encouraged to support MSMEs by providing training programs and access to affordable digital tools to ensure their readiness for the evolving digital market.

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