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Digital Content Marketing for Promoting Creative Economy At Dharmawangsa Entrepreneur Community (DEC)

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ABSTRACT

As technology advances, digital content marketing becomes crucial for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) like the Dharmawangsa Entrepreneur Community (DEC), which face challenges in adopting new marketing strategies. This study explores the integration of both conventional and digital marketing methods by DEC members to enhance their competitiveness. Using a mixed-methods approach, data were collected through purposive sampling involving interviews and questionnaires. Findings indicate that while DEC members predominantly use traditional methods such as bazaars, 20% engage in digital marketing, utilizing platforms like Canva, WhatsApp, Instagram, and TikTok. Key sectors include food & beverage (56.7%) and creative industries, with women comprising 60% of the community. The main challenges identified were limited digital skills and reliance on traditional approaches. The study concludes that targeted training and mentorship programs are essential to foster greater digital adoption among MSMEs, ultimately enhancing visibility and business performance.

Keyword: creative economy; digital content marketing; promotional media

INTRODUCTION

In the modern era, technology has become an inseparable part of daily life, especially in the business sector, where it plays a crucial role in facilitating communication and addressing challenges (Khairani & Fachira, 2021). The advent of the internet, a vast network of interconnected computers, has fundamentally transformed the nature of commerce, eliminating traditional barriers of space and time and shifting consumer habits towards online shopping (Siregar et al., 2021). This transformation has enabled businesses to exchange information efficiently and fostered the rapid growth of e-commerce. Consequently, many companies are leveraging digital platforms to implement promotional strategies and tap into broader markets (Widjaja et al., 2022).

The Fourth Industrial Revolution, characterized by advancements in information and communication technologies, has further intensified the integration of digital marketing into business operations (Alzaanin, 2020). Social media platforms have emerged as powerful tools

for expanding market reach, allowing businesses to communicate directly with consumers and promote their products with minimal cost (Romdonny & Maulany, 2020). The development of online marketing strategies, supported by tools such as websites, blogs, and social networks, has empowered businesses to reach global audiences, effectively leveling the playing field between large corporations and small enterprises (Paramita et al., 2022). Despite these opportunities, the adoption of digital marketing among Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) remains limited. Many MSMEs still prefer traditional marketing methods, such as physical bazaars and word-of-mouth, due to factors like limited digital literacy, insufficient resources, and a lack of familiarity with digital platforms (Lestari & Pratama, 2019). This hesitation prevents them from fully benefiting from the opportunities offered by digital transformation. In contrast, larger companies with established digital infrastructures are better positioned to leverage these tools to their advantage, thereby widening the gap between MSMEs and more resourceful competitors (Wawrowski & Otolá, 2020).

Most previous studies, such as those conducted by (Siregar et al., 2021) and (Paramita et al., 2022), have focused primarily on optimizing digital marketing for large corporations, examining aspects like paid advertising, platform optimization, and the technical implementation of marketing campaigns. Similarly, research by (Judijanto et al., 2024) emphasized social media marketing but was limited to the context of larger enterprises, overlooking the unique challenges faced by MSMEs in adopting these technologies. These studies provide valuable insights into the benefits of digital marketing; however, they do not adequately address the specific obstacles faced by smaller enterprises, which often lack the resources and expertise required for successful digital adoption (Lopes & Casais, 2022). The gap in the existing literature is particularly pronounced in the context of MSMEs led by women, which often face additional challenges, such as social and economic constraints, that hinder their ability to adopt digital tools effectively. The Dharmawangsa Entrepreneur Community (DEC), an MSME network that is predominantly composed of female entrepreneurs (60%), presents a unique case study to explore the adoption of digital marketing practices. DEC members operate across diverse sectors, including food and beverage, legal services, and creative industries, providing an opportunity to understand how different types of small businesses are navigating the shift towards digital marketing.

This research aims to fill the existing gap by focusing on a community-based approach to digital marketing among MSMEs, particularly emphasizing the experiences and challenges of DEC members. The study investigates both conventional and digital marketing methods employed by the community, examining specific processes such as market research, audience mapping, ideation, planning, content creation, amplification, evaluation, and distribution. Tools like Canva for graphic design and WhatsApp for communication are used extensively by DEC members, alongside popular social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, and Wattpad, which enable them to reach and engage with their target audiences effectively.

The novelty of this research lies in its detailed examination of the practical implementation of digital content marketing within a community-based setting. Unlike previous studies that focus on large enterprises or the technical aspects of digital marketing, this research provides insights into the gender-specific dynamics and strategies of MSMEs, particularly in the context of a predominantly female entrepreneurial community. It highlights the unique challenges these businesses face, such as limited access to resources, lack of technical skills, and the need for support systems to facilitate digital transformation. By exploring how MSMEs like DEC leverage digital technologies to enhance their visibility and competitiveness, this

research provides a deeper understanding of the practical implications of digital marketing adoption in a community-based setting. It also offers practical recommendations for addressing the barriers faced by MSMEs, such as the need for targeted training programs to enhance digital literacy, access to affordable digital tools, and community-based support initiatives to encourage broader digital adoption.

Ultimately, this study contributes not only to the academic literature by filling a significant research gap but also offers actionable insights that can help empower MSMEs, particularly those led by women, to thrive in a rapidly evolving digital economy. By understanding the specific needs and challenges of MSMEs in adopting digital marketing, policymakers, support organizations, and community leaders can develop more effective interventions to support these enterprises, thereby fostering economic growth and sustainability in the broader community.

METHODS

The method used in this research is a combination research method (mixed methods). The combination research method is an approach in research that combines or connects quantitative and qualitative research methods. It includes a philosophical foundation, the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches, and combining both approaches in research (Chan, 2022). In this study, the sampling technique used was a non-probability sampling method, specifically accidental sampling. Non-probability sampling is a technique that does not provide equal opportunities for each element or member of the population to be selected as a sample (Ayu et al., 2022). This means that not every individual in the population has a chance of being included in the sample. Accidental sampling, a subset of non-probability sampling, involves selecting individuals who happen to be available and meet the criteria for the study. This method relies on spontaneity, where anyone who the researcher encounters by chance and who fits the desired characteristics can be selected as a respondent. This approach is convenient but may introduce bias because it doesn't ensure a representative sample of the entire population.

The data collection technique for this study involved two primary methods: interviews and online questionnaires distributed via Google Forms. Interviews were conducted to gather in-depth qualitative data from respondents, allowing for detailed responses and follow-up questions. This method helps obtain rich, nuanced insights into the respondents' experiences and opinions. The online questionnaire, on the other hand, is a data collection technique where a set of structured questions or statements is provided to respondents to answer. Using Google Forms, the questionnaire can be easily distributed to a larger audience, facilitating the collection of quantitative data that can be analyzed statistically. This dual approach ensures a comprehensive data set, combining the depth of interviews with the breadth of survey data.

The validity of the data in this study was ensured through the use of triangulation techniques. Triangulation involves using multiple methods or sources of data to cross-check and verify the findings, thereby eliminating bias and increasing the reliability of the results. In this study, primary data sources were obtained through interviews with several entrepreneurs who have successfully used digital content marketing to promote their products and increase sales. These firsthand accounts provide direct insights into the effectiveness of digital marketing strategies. Secondary data sources were gathered from journals, books, and other references related to digital content marketing. These sources offer theoretical and contextual background information, supporting and enriching the primary data. By comparing and contrasting data

from these various sources, the study achieves a more comprehensive and accurate understanding of the topic.

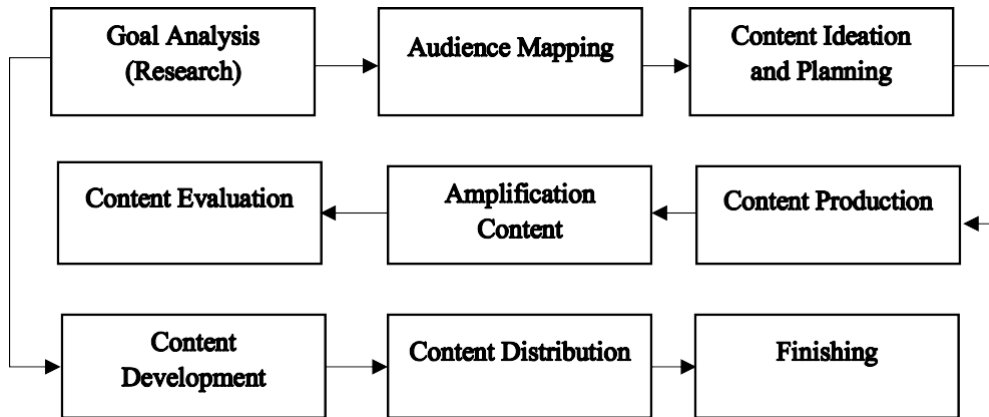


Figure 1. Stages of Utilizing Digital Content Marketing

Source: previous studies analysis

The goal of this research focuses on two main areas: sales and brand development. For sales, metrics such as sales closure, cross-selling, and up-selling are examined. Sales closure refers to finalizing a sale, cross-selling involves suggesting additional products related to the original purchase, and up-selling encourages customers to consider a higher-end product. Regarding brand development, the study considers brand awareness (how well customers recognize the brand), brand association (connections customers make with brand attributes and values), and brand loyalty (customer attachment to the brand, influencing repeat purchases). Audience mapping in this study is based on geography, demographics, psychographics, and behavior to understand different audience segments. Geographical segmentation considers the audience's location, demographic segmentation includes factors such as age, gender, and income, psychographic segmentation involves understanding lifestyles and values, and behavioral segmentation looks at purchasing habits and brand interactions.

Content creation in this research involves several stages, from ideation to planning and distribution. The goal is to generate relevant themes that align with audience preferences, ensuring the content effectively conveys the intended message. High-quality content that reflects the brand's mission is essential for building trust and engaging the audience. To increase content reach, influential figures, such as influencers and endorsers, are considered to enhance visibility and engagement on social media. Content evaluation is carried out to assess its success throughout the customer journey, including stages like awareness, appeal, and action, to identify strengths and areas for improvement. Content development is an ongoing process, focusing on refining content based on performance data and audience feedback to ensure relevance and effectiveness. Distribution involves utilizing various channels, including owned media (websites), paid media (advertisements), and earned media (social media). A comprehensive distribution strategy aims to ensure that the content reaches the target audience effectively.

The research population is anticipated to consist of members of the Dharmawangsa Entrepreneur Community (DEC), primarily small and medium-sized enterprises, with a focus on female-led businesses (approximately 60%). The sample is expected to be selected using purposive sampling, targeting members actively using both conventional and digital marketing

methods. The research object is intended to be conducted within the DEC community, covering sectors like food and beverage, legal services, and creative industries. Data collection is proposed to be conducted through interviews and questionnaires to gain insights into marketing practices, though these methods are subject to further review and confirmation.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The determination of informants was conducted using a purposive sampling technique, which involves selecting individuals based on specific criteria or characteristics relevant to the study. This approach ensures that the selected informants possess qualities or experiences that can provide valuable insights related to the research objectives, making the data gathered more targeted and meaningful. The purposive sampling technique is particularly suitable for qualitative research, where the depth of information from specific informants is more valuable than the number of participants. The informants in this research were 30 Entrepreneurs who are members of the Dharmawangsa Entrepreneur Community, which comprises lecturers, alumni, and students. These individuals were selected because they actively run businesses utilizing digital content marketing. Their involvement in the community provides a rich context for understanding the dynamics of entrepreneurship in a digital age. Being part of this network indicates not only their entrepreneurial commitment but also their exposure to contemporary business practices, including the use of digital tools for marketing.

Their experience with digital content marketing strategies makes them suitable representatives for exploring how these strategies influence business growth and sustainability. By focusing on entrepreneurs who leverage digital content marketing, this study aims to understand the ways in which digital platforms can be optimized to enhance business visibility, engage target audiences, and ultimately drive sales. The insights gained from these informants are expected to contribute to the broader understanding of digital marketing's role in entrepreneurial success.

Based on the table above, this study involved a sample of 30 members of the Dharmawangsa Entrepreneur Community (DEC), consisting of 4 lecturers, 9 alumni, and 17 students. The majority of the participants were female (18 people, 60%), while 12 were male (40%). The high representation of women is reflective of their preference to become entrepreneurs, motivated by financial security and flexibility, rather than being primary breadwinners. This aligns with the societal norm that often places men in the role of financial providers, while women balance family responsibilities. However, the interviews revealed that women entrepreneurs are driven by multitasking abilities and a strong desire for independence. The informal sector is preferred over the formal sector, as entrepreneurship offers freedom from gender biases and allows collaboration and contribution in the creative economy. This insight highlights women's motivations to foster and grow their businesses in a flexible environment.

The DEC community primarily includes businesses in food and beverage (17 people, 56.7%), followed by Wattpad/anthology writers (3 people, 10%), and advocate/legal services, handicrafts, product resellers, and beauty services, each comprising 2 members (6.7%). Additional sectors include event decoration services, convection, fish hatcheries, and egg suppliers, each represented by 1 member (3.3%). Digital content marketing is widely used at DEC as a tool for promoting creative economy products. Interviews revealed that DEC members actively create product photos, profile videos, and testimonials using mobile

applications. A significant portion (73.3%) uses CapCut for video editing, while others use VN (6.7%), or a combination of both (3.3%).

Table 1. Recapitulation Of Survey Results

No			Total	%
1	Gender	Men	12	40
		Women	18	60
		Total	30	100
2	Profession	Lecturer	4	13.3
		Alumni	9	30.0
		Student	17	56.7
		Total	30	100.0
3	Business Type	Advocate/Lawyer Service	2	6.7
		Culinary (Food & Bavarage)	17	56.7
		Edupreneur (Author)	3	10.0
		Event Organiser	1	3.3
		Handycraft	2	6.7
		Fish Hatchery	1	3.3
		Convection	1	3.3
		Egg Supplier	1	3.3
		Beauty Product	2	6.7
		Total	30	100.0
4	Market tools	Mobile Phones	30	100.0
5	Social Chatting	Whatsapp	30	100.0
		Photo, Video	15	50.0
6	Type Of Content	Photo, Video, Flyer	15	50.0
		Capcut	22	73.3
7	Editing Software	Capcut, VN	1	3.3
		VN	2	6.7
		None	5	16.7
		Total	30	83
8	Social Media	IG, FB	2	6.7
		IG, FB, WA, Tiktok	5	16.7
		WA	1	3.3
		IG, WA	12	40.0
		IG, FB, WA	4	13.3
		IG, FB, Wattpad	2	6.7
		IG, WA, Tiktok	3	10.0
		IG	1	3.3
		Total	30	100
9	Marketplace	Gojek	6	20.0
		None	24	80.0
		Total	30	100.0
10	Promotion Frequency	Everyday	6	20.00
		-	24	80.0
		Total	30	100.0

Source: TI2PB Dharmawangsa, 2023

About 16.7% of members do not use specific applications for editing, instead opting for basic mobile tools. This data, coupled with interview feedback, shows a strong inclination towards accessible and user-friendly tools to create high-quality visual content. For graphic design, Canva was highlighted in interviews as an essential tool for DEC members. Members

expressed that Canva's simplicity and efficiency enabled them to create visually appealing marketing materials, such as flyers and menus, which align with their branding efforts. This demonstrates the preference for tools that are both effective and accessible on mobile devices, allowing members to manage their marketing efforts independently.

All 30 DEC members rely heavily on their mobile phones to create and manage their digital marketing content. This includes producing photos, videos, and flyers showcasing their products. Interviews indicate that this mobile-centric approach supports the need for convenience, as members balance their entrepreneurial activities with other responsibilities. Social media updates are done at least once daily, which members reported helps maintain visibility and customer engagement. WhatsApp is the primary communication tool for DEC members, with 100% usage for marketing purposes. Interviews provided qualitative insights into why WhatsApp is preferred—members value its ease of use for direct, real-time communication with customers, enabling them to share promotional updates and build strong relationships efficiently. In terms of content mix, half of the members utilize a combination of photos and videos, while the other half add flyers to their content. Interviews revealed that this approach is driven by time efficiency and resource management, ensuring that their content remains diverse and engaging without overextending their capacity. The qualitative feedback emphasized the importance of maintaining an active and varied online presence to keep the audience engaged.

DEC members maximize the use of social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, WhatsApp, and Wattpad for marketing. Consistency is crucial, as emphasized during interviews—members pointed out that maintaining a regular presence on social media helps increase business reach, customer communication, and brand awareness, ultimately driving sales. Interviews also highlighted the importance of creating content that resonates with the audience to attract customers and encourage purchases. Around 20% of DEC members use online marketplaces such as Gojek for marketing, while the remaining 80% prefer face-to-face interactions. The qualitative data from interviews showed that those who prefer traditional methods value personal engagement and direct customer feedback, which they believe builds stronger customer relationships. This indicates a blend of digital and traditional marketing strategies, with members making conscious decisions based on their comfort levels and business needs.

The process of creating and sharing content includes taking, recording, editing, and uploading photos or videos to social media accounts. Interviews revealed that members ensure every post includes relevant captions and hashtags, improving the visibility of their posts and broadening their audience. This meticulous approach to content creation, as explained by participants, underscores the importance of strategic and detailed marketing efforts. Regular updates to social media accounts, such as posting business activity stories using photos, flyers, or short videos, serve as promotional tools. From the interviews, members expressed that these updates are crucial in signaling business activity and promoting their brand. The qualitative insights emphasized that regular updates reinforce brand presence, maintain customer engagement, and ensure continuous promotional exposure, reflecting the members' commitment to leveraging digital platforms for sustained business growth.

CONCLUSIONS

The research aimed to address the challenges faced by MSMEs, particularly within the Dharmawangsa Entrepreneur Community (DEC), in adopting digital marketing strategies

alongside conventional methods. The study highlights the importance of integrating both approaches to enhance visibility and competitiveness in the creative economy. Based on the findings, it can be concluded that while DEC members have started using digital content marketing tools like Canva, CapCut, and social media platforms, adoption is still limited due to a lack of digital skills and comfort with traditional marketing methods. This limitation impacts the ability of MSMEs to fully benefit from digital transformation. To address this problem, it is crucial to provide structured business assistance and coaching, supported by regular training on digital marketing and content creation. Establishing a centralized system for marketing, such as a unified website and social media account managed by UPT TI2PB, will also facilitate better collaboration among DEC members.

Furthermore, mentorship programs involving experienced entrepreneurs can support MSMEs in navigating digital marketing challenges effectively. Access to funding and digital marketing tools should be ensured to enable growth, while creating opportunities for networking and partnerships will foster collaboration and expand market reach. Performance tracking systems and regular feedback can help DEC members refine their strategies, ensuring their content remains engaging and relevant. By adopting these strategies, the integration of cloud catalogs and digital marketing for MSMEs led by students can be significantly improved. This approach will enhance brand awareness, increase customer engagement, and ultimately lead to better business performance and sustainable growth, directly addressing the initial problem of limited digital marketing adoption among MSMEs.

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