

## Branding Strategy for MSME Outlets & Production Houses in Karangantu: Utilization of Information Technology Through Instagram

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### ABSTRAK

As is known, globalization as a whole has a huge influence in changing the various orders of human life. Buying and selling has not escaped the influence of the rapid flow of globalization at this time. Therefore, competition is also getting tougher in this field of entrepreneurship. In order to attract consumers, branding a business is needed as the main characteristic of a product. In the midst of the many social media that have developed, Instagram is present as a *platform* that is favored by almost all people. In the preparation process, this research chose to utilize the *systematic literature review* method, which is intended for systematic and planned literature review. The implementation is through combining various research data that has been found based on qualitative data collection. To strengthen the results and discussion contained in this research, the authors also applied the research methodology of guns to describe in detail about the description of the problems that are happening so that it can be identified that the UMKM & Rumah Produksi outlets are engaged as a means of marketing several handicraft products of several medium-sized business groups. However, as a place to market crafts that now has almost dozens of institutions or entrepreneurial groups, the *branding* or image owned by UMKM & Rumah Produksi outlets is still not clearly designed. This problem is considered an important urgency that needs to be solved as soon as possible.

**Keywords:** *Branding*, Instagram, and business.

### INTRODUCTION

Basically, globalization is a phenomenon that occurs in society and cannot be avoided. In addition to providing great opportunities for anyone who improves their life skills, if seen through a much broader perspective, it can be seen that globalization has a huge influence in changing the various orders of human life. Therefore, the field of technology and information has not escaped the influence of the rapid flow of globalization at this time. This is also reinforced by Muafani (2021: 135) in his article which says that, "*Currently disruptive technology or innovation has hit all fields ...*". The economic sector is also included as one of the sectors that has undergone changes due to the times, so this provides a new task for buying and selling actors to keep their products relevant to the needs of today's society.

The technology offered to humans at this time can also be said to be a form of peak of how sophisticated the world we live in is. With the development of technology and information, globalization indirectly provides opportunities for people to increase their creativity. Especially in the utilization of natural resources offered in the surrounding area. It is no secret that Indonesia is one of the many countries that are abundant in natural resources. Almost every corner of Indonesia has high potential to be used as a reference in surviving in today's development. One of them is the Gope Beach area.

Basically, Gope Beach is one of the many interesting tourist destinations located in the Karangantu area, Serang City, Banten. The natural marine conditions offered by Gope Beach are a special attraction for visitors, such as fish, shells, and various other marine animals and plants. The majority of the residents there have livelihoods as fishermen and traders. This also shows that the people of Gope Beach already have the awareness to participate in managing the existing natural resources and utilizing them as a foundation for living. For people who rely on buying and selling as

their main income, in the Gope Beach area itself, there is already a place to distribute the products they produce through Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) that bridge small traders in distributing their products.

The UMKM outlet and Production House is located right next to the right (from the entrance to Karangantu harbor) and has a focus on the business of cute accessories from shells. The facilities owned by these MSMEs can already be said to be more than enough. Unfortunately, although it can be said that they are "*capable*" of realizing that the available facilities have a high capacity to be utilized further, the observation results show that the surrounding community at Gope Beach still does not have a strong interest in expanding their market. Thus, in conducting buying and selling activities, the community there still conducts manual promotion (word of mouth). Moreover, in this rapid globalization, many traders and consumers have switched to using *online* buying and selling platforms by building their own unique *branding*.

Previously, it was known that Indonesians have a high addiction to social media. According to Nurlaily, F., et al (2021: 348), Indonesia is the third largest country with a growth rate of social media users in 2018 reaching 23% or 24 million users from 2017. The soaring number of social media users in Indonesia has also opened a new bridge for the digital economy. The easier it is for people to make transactions, the more diverse the needs of the community (Maulana, A., et al., 2021: 55). Therefore, in order to attract consumers, *branding* a business is needed. *Branding* is an identity that will be very attached to a business or product that will be promoted. *Branding* also determines the quality of service provided from the seller to the buyer, this is because *branding* gives its own characteristics to the product so that it looks different from other businesses. And in the midst of the many social media that have developed rapidly, Instagram is present as one of the most popular *online platforms* by many people. Instagram also facilitates its users to introduce and promote a business easily, this is because the information disseminated by Instagram is able to touch all levels of society because it can be accessed by anyone. Salsabila (2021) said that, "*The advantages of Instagram provide business opportunities but can also provide new business capabilities in society*" (Kusumadinata, A. A., et al., 2022: 150).

This development in technology and information has unwittingly created intense new competition in the economic field. The increasingly fierce competition of MSMEs in terms of the Digital Economy has become real with the development of technology, therefore MSMEs must really pay attention to this phenomenon and know and master *digital marketing* (p. 67). However, due to the lack of interest of traders in the area around Gope Beach to participate in utilizing existing technology, this is considered to greatly hinder the improvement of the quality of life, the author can then determine the focus and main topic of the compilation of this research is to further discuss the utilization of technology and information at MSME Outlets and Production Houses in building a *branding* through Instagram to create a process of buying and selling activities that are much easier than before.

## RESEARCH METHODS

In the preparation process, this research uses the *systematic literature review* method to conduct a systematic and planned literature review, namely by combining the types of previous research results that have been collected based on qualitative data collection. The purpose of using this method is to find out the extent to which the community in Gope Beach, especially those who are members of MSME Outlets & Production Houses, use social media as a means to improve their business branding. In the search for journal publications, the research design reviewed is all types of research relevant to the research theme *systematic literature review*, and uses keywords that are in accordance with the current topic.

In order to deepen the results and discussions listed in this research, the authors also apply descriptive qualitative research methodology, in which in this case the authors describe in detail the description of the problems that are currently occurring in the members of the UMKM & Production House Outlets. By conducting a direct approach with the related Gope Beach community, an array of data is collected whose validity can be adjusted to the existing social problems, until finally the collection of rough data that has gone through the reduction process can be re-analyzed to get the final results that can be presented properly and correctly to the readers.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Result

Based on its geographical location, this UMKM & Rumah Produksi outlet is in a place that is very likely to attract far more visitors. From the direction of the entrance gate to Karangantu Harbor, everyone can see the UMKM & Rumah Produksi outlet building standing firmly on the right side of the road. The building owned by the UMKM & Rumah Produksi outlet has a strategic location and is very easy to access, even with four-wheeled vehicles. The large enough land also provides an opportunity for managers to utilize it as a forum for their members to market and introduce their own products. The facilities owned by the outlet are also quite complete. This is because the building has 2 floors, each of which has well-functioning lighting, bathrooms, storage rooms, air conditioners, and even *computers* that can be utilized in carrying out all MSME activities.

In addition, it can also be seen that the UMKM & Rumah Produksi outlet is engaged as a forum that houses various entrepreneurial groups in marketing their products. The products offered have an interesting variety and spoil the eyes of anyone who sees them. This is because UMKM & Rumah Produksi outlets have a main focus on managing shells, as marine products, which are then presented into accessories with high value. However, it is unfortunate that these outlets still use traditional promotion methods, namely by "*word of mouth*" which requires prospective buyers to visit the outlets concerned before finally being able to see the form of the product being offered. In the midst of this digital age, of course this is considered to greatly hamper the process of developing the potential for their products to be known by more consumers. The use of this method is certainly not without reason. The interviewees said that the lack of knowledge and skills in utilizing social media channels to market their products underlies the manual promotion.

In addition, the factor that the majority of residents in the Gope Beach area are not young people who are considered more "*familiar*" with technology makes business actors there still unable to optimize the function and role of social media as a forum for improving their business *branding*. The problem of a lack of understanding in establishing business *branding* through social media is an important urgency that needs to be solved as soon as possible. This is then reinforced by Julita (2016) who said that in introducing MSME products and attracting consumer purchasing power, MSME players are strongly encouraged to master *digital* skills in order to produce product *branding* in a business that is being pioneered (Syahputra, R. A., et al., 2023: 522). Because basically, *branding* in business is responsible for increasing the percentage of *reachability* and *brand awareness* to potential buyers. *Branding* that is disseminated by a product can certainly create a strong attraction between potential buyers and sellers.

Based on the results of the research, it was found that there is some effectiveness of conducting training in improving business branding in order to disseminate the potential *brand awareness* of the products offered. Small businesses will have the opportunity to become large with prominent characteristics. To strengthen, it can be seen from the results of one of the trainings enacted by Sonani, N., & Sudrajat, A. P. (2023: 229), "*The results of this training can be concluded that training on branding building strategies is a very important training provision in helping to develop the cognitive aspects of MSME players, that a strong brand building process can turn a business from a small player into a successful big brand*". With *branding*, consumer trust can be well maintained. The ideas and messages contained in the product are also conveyed properly, so, this will certainly have a good impact on sales figures.

## DISCUSSION

With regard to that, based on the results of interviews that have been conducted previously, the business owners registered in the UMKM & Rumah Produksi outlets have shown their interest in learning more about the use of social media, especially Instagram, in marketing their products with the characteristics of their respective businesses. Instagram is one of the most *popular* social media today. With many features that provide easy access to information, it is no wonder that Instagram is used by almost all levels of society today. In general, Instagram allows its users to share almost all moments in their lives through an uploaded photo or video. However, with the passage of time that

goes hand in hand with the increasing ideas and creativity of each individual, many business people have started using Instagram as a medium in marketing their products through branding that is packaged as attractive as possible. Sakina, F., & Aslami, N. (2022: 182) explained that, "From the use of Instagram as a marketing social media in conveying information to the public, it is hoped that it can provide results in the form of useful knowledge for the public who reads and even sees it ...".

These advantages of Instagram are directly related to the desires and interests of consumers. Through photo galleries and *video* content, *brands* can showcase and promote real-life experiences, such as the experience of eating together. As a result, *brands* can describe the quality and type of experience that consumers will get by buying their products (Arviani, H., et al., 2020: 113). This shows that presenting a business *branding* through Instagram can increase the value of a product in the eyes of anyone who sees it. Therefore, the *branding* of a business must be able to adjust to the needs of its target. In determining it, of course, an objective observation is needed. Therefore, training or *work-shop* is very necessary to be applied to this UMKM & Production House outlet. Where the main material to be raised includes how to utilize social media in marketing a product that has been designed in such a way based on the results of predetermined *branding*. One of the understandings that really needs to be known by members who are included in these MSMEs is the implementation of determining the branding itself.

There are 4Cs in using social media in establishing a product *branding*, namely: *context*, *communication*, *collaboration*, and *connection* (Sakina, F., & Aslami, N., 2022: 181). The following is a further explanation of the 4C strategy, among others:

**a. Context**

How does a business actor, especially those who are members of MSME Outlets and Production Houses, package information that will be given to prospective buyers. This *context* also includes the language style, and the form of the message itself.

**b. Communication**

Covers how the producer or seller conveys the content of the predetermined content. In this phase, it is very necessary to consider from the prospective buyer's side by positioning yourself as one of the consumers. Such as estimating *feedback* and what benefits a product offers.

**c. Collaboration**

Creating a container or "*safe place*" between prospective buyers and business actors. Working together is considered very effective to improve the quality of a product that is being marketed. Therefore, being transparent as a producer is very important because it can make consumers feel comfortable in providing their aspirations and needs through social media. In short, *collaboration* can generate trust from consumers.

**d. Connection**

With the creation of a collaboration, it will also produce a relationship. In this *connection* section, MSME business actors are required to maintain existing relationships or connections in order to maintain consumer confidence in the quality of the products being traded.

When associated with the objectives and problem formulation in this topic, with the implementation of the 4 stages through Instagram social media, it can be seen that in the midst of the incessant increase in needs in this day and age, in fact, *branding* is really needed to be able to compete competently. With *branding*, MSME & Production House outlets can take advantage of this opportunity to increase the awareness of potential buyers about the products being offered, so that the role of *branding* as "*brand equity*" or the characteristics of a product has been running effectively and efficiently. Moreover, in the midst of the hustle and bustle of this hectic and relentlessly moving era, the unique seafood handicrafts produced are one of the interesting creations that can relieve boredom because the aesthetics are able to provide their own entertainment and value.

Basically, the strength of a *brand equity* can be measured based on 7 important aspects, such as: (1) the ability to influence the market, (2) maintain customer loyalty, (3) the ability to improve store or distributor performance, (4) the ability of the brand to move out of its geographic area or into other countries or regions, (5) the existence of the brand becomes increasingly important in the industry, (6)



the amount of funds spent to communicate the brand, and (7) the brand has legality (Pandiangan, K., et al., 2021: 472-3). From this description, it is known that *brand equity* itself is the value or advantages contained in products and services. By maintaining the harmony of these values, which will then produce several aspects and dimensions that are closely related to each other, namely consumer perceptions or responses to product quality, as well as customer loyalty to a product produced by the company. These two things show each other how important *branding is in a business* that is being run. As MSMEs that have a great opportunity to grow more rapidly, MSME & Production House outlets can utilize this strategy to improve the quality of their buying and selling business.

## CONCLUSIONS

It is no secret that Gope Beach, located in Karangantu Harbor, is one of the regional destinations in Serang, Banten, which has natural potential that can be developed further. With the majority of the population being mostly fishermen and traders, of course the competition between one seller and another can be said to be quite tight. With the presence of UMKM & Production House outlets, it is hoped that it can help sellers to market their products to a much wider target of buyers through healthy competition without violating and offending other parties. Even so, in its implementation in the field itself, the UMKM & Rumah Produksi booth still needs assistance and understanding of the utilization of products produced by technological developments, namely Instagram, in introducing its business. Therefore, as one of the business houses that certainly has bonds to keep up with the times along with the increasing needs of the community, Instagram provides an efficient way for potential buyers to meet MSME Outlets & Production Houses according to the algorithm and needs for its users. Therefore, Instagram social media is one of the most effective efforts to increase the chances of product recognition by a much larger mass presentation through *branding* that contains brief information about a business. The advantages possessed by Instagram greatly facilitate buying and selling activities, both on the part of consumers and producers, and also have a massive and very impactful reach. This is because *branding is* considered very capable of providing much higher value when viewed through the perspective of prospective buyers.

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