

Empowering Wedang Uwuh MSMEs through Basic Digital Marketing Training in Wukirsari Village

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Abstract.

This community service initiative aims to strengthen the capacity of Wedang Uwuh micro-enterprises in Wukirsari Village by providing basic digital marketing training. Although these MSMEs possess high cultural and economic value, they face persistent challenges such as limited use of social media, the absence of brand identity, and low levels of digital literacy. A descriptive qualitative approach was employed, involving observation, interviews, and documentation. Results indicate that participants gained a clearer understanding of digital marketing, created business accounts on social media, and redesigned their packaging and promotional content. Despite these improvements, key obstacles remain, including limited youth involvement, lack of technological resources, and absence of sustained mentoring. This program demonstrates that well-targeted basic training can serve as a foundation for the digital transformation of local MSMEs, paving the way for more competitive marketing efforts.

Keywords: *community empowerment; digital marketing; MSMEs; training; Wedang Uwuh*

I. INTRODUCTION

Micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) play a vital role in Indonesia's economy. According to the Ministry of Cooperatives and SMEs (2023), they contribute over 60% to GDP and employ approximately 97% of the national workforce. In an era of globalization and digital disruption, the role of MSMEs becomes even more strategic in promoting inclusive and sustainable economic development. Nevertheless, the major challenge they face is the limited ability to adopt digital technologies, particularly in marketing (Sirodjudin, 2023).

One promising MSME sector with both cultural and economic value is the traditional beverage industry, including Wedang Uwuh, a herbal drink native to Bantul, Yogyakarta. This drink is made from a mixture of spices like ginger, sappanwood, and nutmeg leaves. Despite its cultural significance, many Wedang Uwuh MSME actors in Wukirsari Village lack adequate knowledge of modern marketing strategies to broaden their reach (Ompusunggu & Febrian, 2023).

The primary issues they face include insufficient understanding of digital marketing, limited skills in using platforms such as Instagram, and the absence of product branding elements like

logos, packaging, and storytelling. These gaps hinder effective promotion and make it difficult to reach digital consumers. As Soriton, Tumbuan, & Tawas (2022) argue, low digital literacy is a key barrier in the digital transition of MSMEs.

On the other hand, the opportunity for digitalization is vast. The Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association reports over 210 million internet users in the country, most of whom access social media daily. This opens up a promising path for MSMEs to reach broader markets efficiently. However, education and training programs must be adapted to local contexts simple, practical, and aligned with the real needs of MSME actors (Suhayati et al., 2024).

This training program was designed as a community empowerment activity to support local MSMEs in Wukirsari Village. The objectives were to:

1. Introduce basic concepts of digital marketing;
2. Enhance technical skills in social media use and promotional content design;
3. Guide participants in building brand identity (logo, packaging, and narrative);
4. Encourage collaboration among MSME actors, academics, and local government.

Through such capacity-building, Wedang Uwuh entrepreneurs are expected to become more confident and competitive in the digital era, while also contributing to a sustainable, locally driven economic empowerment ecosystem.

II. METHODS

This community service program was conducted in Wukirsari Village, Imogiri Subdistrict, Bantul Regency, Yogyakarta Special Region—an area known for its production of the traditional herbal drink Wedang Uwuh. The activity took place over four days, from May 19 to 22, 2025. Direct observations were made during the training session on May 20, as part of the International Community Service program, to monitor how MSMEs responded to the materials and the effect on their marketing strategies (Izzalqurny et al., 2024)

The program adopted a descriptive qualitative approach to explore the development dynamics of Wedang Uwuh MSMEs in addressing digital marketing challenges and to assess how basic training improved their business capacity. This method enabled researchers to naturally understand the social and cultural context as well as participants' behavioral changes through experiential learning (Raras et al., 2025)

The target participants were local MSME actors engaged in the production and sale of Wedang Uwuh who took part in the digital marketing training. The focus was on using accessible digital platforms, primarily Instagram, as a tool for visual promotion. This platform was selected to allow participants to immediately practice digital promotion in line with their existing skills and business needs (Justitia, 2021; Meilani & Cuandra, 2025).

Data collection involved the following stages:

1. Problem identification regarding participants' lack of digital marketing and branding knowledge;
2. Direct observation of the training activities, participant interaction, and behavioral shifts in content creation;
3. Semi-structured interviews to explore participants' experiences and feedback;
4. Documentation through photographs, digital promotion screenshots, and packaging designs before and after the training.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Initial observations and interviews revealed that although some participants already had Instagram accounts, their usage was sporadic and lacked strategy. The content posted was inconsistent, lacking cohesive visual themes, brand identity, or communication tone. This made social media ineffective as a digital storefront or promotional tool (Wulandari et al., 2025). The opening session of the training is shown in Figure 1.



Figure SEQ Figure * ARABIC 1. Opening Session of Basic Digital Marketing Training for Wedang Uwuh MSMEs

The training revealed that most MSME actors came from older generations unfamiliar with digital marketing trends. Their sales strategies typically relied on face-to-face interactions and local networks. This is consistent with Ridhasyah & Nurkholik (2022), who found that older entrepreneurs often struggle with digital marketing adoption. Figure 2 shows a participant's Instagram account after training.

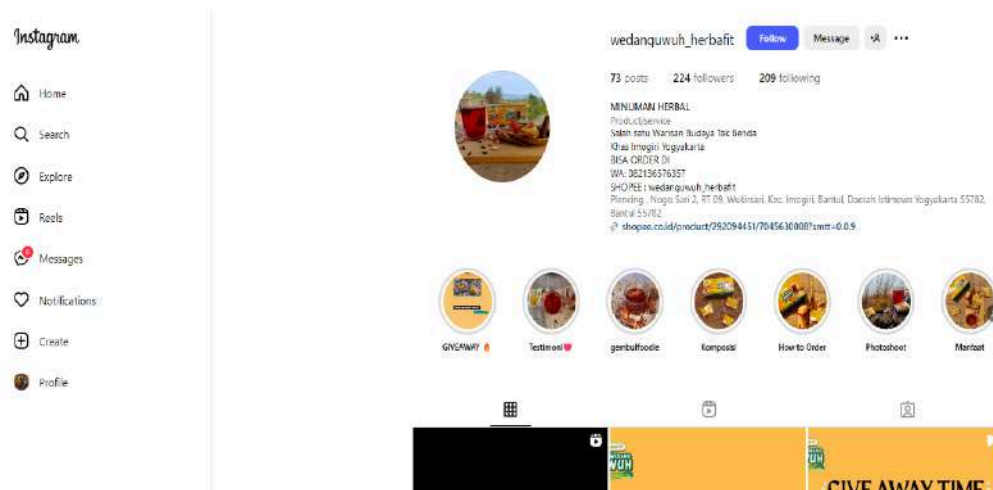


Figure SEQ Figure * ARABIC 2. Instagram Account of MSME: Wukirsari_Herbafit

Interestingly, younger family members of MSME owners demonstrated strong potential in design and social media but had not yet been engaged in marketing activities. This reveals an untapped opportunity for intergenerational collaboration in the digital transformation of Wedang Uwuh MSMEs.

A key recommendation from the findings is the importance of involving younger generations (Gen Z) in digital marketing. Born in the digital age, they possess intuitive skills in managing online platforms and creating engaging content. Ramdhani & Madani (2023) argue that young people can significantly drive local product digitalization if given trust and creative freedom.

However, real-world constraints remain. Many MSMEs are still operated traditionally by older generations resistant to digital shifts. Youths often view MSME promotion as unappealing unless they are provided with flexible roles and proper incentives. Beyond technical skills, young people also need 21st-century competencies to become innovation drivers and active players in local economic development (Alawiyah & Harared, 2023).

Another issue identified was the lack of product labeling. Most Wedang Uwuh products were packaged in plain plastic bags without any logo, product name, composition, or producer information. This weakens consumer trust, especially outside local markets. Figure 3 illustrates a product without a label.



Figure 3. Product Before Training: No label

Product labeling is a vital component of brand identity, influencing consumer perception and trust. Silaningsih & Utami (2018) state that informative and attractive labels can significantly impact consumer buying decisions and enhance perceived product quality. Unlabeled products are often seen as informal or substandard, reducing their competitiveness in both digital and retail markets

During the training, participants were guided to create basic labels including the product name, ingredients, and producer contact information. This step was intended not only to improve social media presentation but also to meet basic marketing and consumer trust standards, as shown in Figure 4.



Figure 4. Product after training: with label.

IV. CONCLUSION

The digital marketing training provided to Wedang Uwuh MSMEs in Wukirsari Village had a significant impact on enhancing participants' basic skills and awareness of online product promotion. Prior to the training, most relied solely on traditional methods, lacking knowledge of visual content, brand identity, and digital presence.

Post-training, participants began actively utilizing social media—especially Instagram—with a more attractive visual approach. They also recognized the importance of labeling as part of brand development. Previously plain packaging was replaced with labels featuring product names, brief descriptions, and contact details. This aligns with Hidayat (2025) who found that attractive labeling enhances product quality perception and consumer trust.

However, challenges remain, such as low digital literacy among older entrepreneurs, limited access to technology, and minimal youth involvement. To address this, continuous mentorship and collaborative strategies are essential, particularly by integrating village youth as creative teams and digital content managers. This approach will sustainably strengthen MSME capacity to meet digital transformation challenges and compete in broader markets.

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