

Optimizing Digital Media Content Strategies and Persuasive Copywriting in Increasing Brand Awareness of MSME Products

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Abstract:

Community Service (PkM) activity was carried out with 30 selected Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) who are members of the Bandung Local Creative Movement (LCM) ecosystem, located in Rancasari District, Bandung City. This program is designed in response to the significant digital competency gap among MSME actors, especially in terms of creating artificial intelligence (AI)-based social media content and optimizing persuasive copywriting techniques. The training was carried out in a structured manner covering three main modules: (1) Fundamental Digital Branding and Content Strategy, (2) Persuasive Copywriting and Storytelling Techniques based on AIDA and PAS formulas, and (3) Visual Content Production using generative AI and mobile editing applications. The evaluation method uses pre-test and post-test instruments to measure the increase in participants' understanding quantitatively, complemented by content analysis in the digital portfolio generated by participants as qualitative data. The results showed an increase in the average understanding score of participants by 78.3%, exceeding the minimum target set of 70%. All participants managed to produce at least one AI-based social media content that was ready to be published, equipped with caption copywriting that implemented persuasive principles. This program contributes to increasing the digital capacity of local MSMEs so that they are able to compete more effectively in an increasingly competitive digital market.

Keyword: Digital Branding, Content Strategy, Copywriting, Brand Awareness, MSMEs

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Introduction

Indonesia's digital economy landscape has undergone a significant paradigm shift post-pandemic. Based on the latest survey by the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII) in 2024, the internet penetration rate in Indonesia has reached 79.50% or equivalent to 221.5 million people. More specifically, the data shows that 98.3% of these internet users access social media, with an average duration of use reaching 3 hours and 11 minutes per day. This data confirms that the market is no longer just "switching" to digital, but has "settled" in the ecosystem.

Di tingkat regional, Kota Bandung memegang predikat strategis sebagai salah satu pusat ekonomi kreatif di Indonesia dan bagian dari *UNESCO Creative Cities Network*. Kontribusi UMKM di West Java, especially Bandung, is vital for the Gross Regional Domestic Product (GDP). However, the high density of business actors creates very tight competition (*red ocean*). The Ministry of Cooperatives and SMEs has set a target of 30 million digital onboarding MSMEs by 2024, but the quantity of digital presence is not directly proportional to sales success.

The fundamental problem faced by partners, namely MSMEs under the coordination of the Bandung Local Creative Movement, is no longer the lack of access to technology, but the inability to manage audience attention. Based on a study of digital consumer behavior in 2024, the *attention span* of social media users has shrunk to an average of 8 seconds. In such a short amount of time, mediocre visual content and *monotonous* copywriting fail to stop the audience *from scrolling*, resulting in low *Click-Through Rate* (CTR) and sales conversions.

Field observations of target partners show that there is a specific competency gap (*skill gap*):

1. Content Ineffectiveness: 70% of partners still produce content that is "catalog" (photos rigid at a price), whereas the trend of social media algorithms (TikTok & Instagram Reels) is now prioritizing *content based on video storytelling and edutainment*.
2. Weak Persuasive Narrative (*Copywriting*): The product descriptions used by partners tend to be technical and do not touch the emotional side (*pain points*) of consumers, so they fail to build *loyal brand awareness*.
3. Content Fatigue *Phenomenon*: Partners often run out of ideas because they don't have a structured content pillar strategy, leading to post inconsistencies that adversely impact account performance.

This inability to adapt to the *trend of Shoppertainment* (shopping wrapped in entertainment) puts local MSMEs in a vulnerable position to be eroded by imported products that are more aggressive in content marketing. Therefore, academic intervention through media content optimization training and *copywriting* techniques is very urgent. This dedication is here to bridge the gap, changing the paradigm of partners from just "*online merchants*" to "*brand storytellers*" who are able to win market attention in the digital era.

In the development of marketing communication, internet marketing is a means that is being widely discussed and used. This change in speed and technological sophistication has also influenced the development of the world of marketing communication. The fact that has happened is that the development of the internet from year to year is increasing its users around the world, including Indonesia, whose growth has increased by an average of three million users in the last 10 years.

Method

This community service program adopts a Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach that integrates theoretical knowledge transfer with hands-on practice under guidance. This approach was chosen because it is in accordance with the characteristics of adult learning (andragogy) which emphasizes the relevance of the material to real needs, active involvement of participants, and direct application of the knowledge acquired. The design of the activity is designed in three sequential phases: the analysis phase (assess), the training and production phase (create), and the evaluation and independence phase (evaluate).

1. Situation Analysis

The first stage begins with mapping and analyzing the situation with target partners. Based on the initial identification, three main obstacles faced by MSMEs were found, namely: (1) low literacy level and awareness of the use of the internet for business; (2) high dependence on conventional marketing strategies that have an impact on cost and operational inefficiencies; and (3) the inability of MSME actors to integrate production, finance, and marketing communication activities in an integrated manner.

2. Selection of Eligible MSMEs for Workshop Participants

As a follow-up to the situation analysis, the service team carried out a curation or selection process to determine MSMEs who are worthy of being workshop participants. This selection process aims

to ensure that intervention programs are targeted and given to business actors who have the commitment, urgency, and potential to develop through digital transformation.

3. Implementation of *Workshop*

The third stage is the provision of capacity debriefing through structured *workshop* activities . The training curriculum is specifically designed to address partner issues, focusing on three core materials:

- a. *Fundamentals of Digital Branding & Content Strategy*: Focuses on the analysis stage to build the foundation of the brand and content strategy in the digital realm.
- b. *Persuasive Copywriting & Storytelling Techniques*: Focuses on the creation stage (*Create - Text*) to equip partners with the ability to write attractive and marketable advertising scripts.
- c. *Visual Production & Mobile Editing*: Focuses on the creation stage (*Create - Visual*) to improve partners' ability to produce and edit visual material practically using mobile devices.

4. Implementation of Digital Media Content and *Copywriting*

After receiving theoretical and technical briefings, MSMEs entered the implementation phase. At this stage, participants are required to apply the digital marketing and *copywriting* knowledge that has been learned by producing real content on their respective digital media platforms.

5. Periodic Assistance

To ensure the sustainability and accuracy of implementation, the service team provides regular assistance. This mentoring process is focused on sales management and consumer interaction, which includes three aspects:

- a. *Prospecting*: Identification and targeting of potential customers.
- b. *Sales Call, Probing, Presentation & Closing*: Optimization of sales communication techniques, starting from offers, exploring consumer needs, product presentations, to the closing stage of deals.
- c. *Maintenance & Growing*: A strategy to maintain good customer *relationships* to encourage business growth.

6. Evaluation and Independence

The final stage of this method is a comprehensive evaluation of the entire set of activities. The success indicator of the program is measured from the level of independence of MSME partners, which is represented by two *main outputs*: *proficiency in compiling and implementing Digital Marketing Plans independently, and consistency in producing effective and competitive Media & Copywriting Content*.

Results and Discussions

Quantitative evaluation using pre-test instruments that are filled out before the training starts and post-tests that are completed after the entire series of modules are completed. The test results showed significant improvements across the measured competency domains, as detailed in the following table.

Table 3. Results of Pre-Test and Post-Test Comparison of Training Participants

Domain of Competence	Average Pre-Test	Average Post-Test	Upgrades (Points)	Percentage Increase
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Digital Marketing & Copywriting Knowledge	42,3	78,6	+36,3	85,9%
Content Evaluation Analytical Ability	38,8	74,2	+35,4	91,2%
Technical Understanding of the Use of AI	31,5	72,8	+41,3	131,1%
Overall Average	37,5	75,2	+37,7	100,5%

The data in Table 3 shows that the average score of participants increased from 37.5 (scale of 100) in the pre-test to 75.2 in the post-test, representing an increase of 37.7 points or the equivalent of 100.5%. This figure significantly exceeds the minimum target of 70% understanding improvement set out in the proposal. The highest increase occurred in the domain of Technical Understanding of AI Usage (131.1% increase), reflecting the high effectiveness of the hands-on learning approach in the practice module of using AI tools. This also indicates that although the participants' initial scores in this domain were very low (31.5), showing an almost complete unfamiliarity with AI technology, the training sessions managed to build a substantial foundation of competence in a short period of time.

The most consistent improvement was seen in the Digital Marketing & Copywriting Knowledge and Content Evaluation Analytical Skills domains, at 85.9% and 91.2%, respectively. This consistency indicates that a training approach that integrates theory with real examples successfully builds not only declarative knowledge (knowing that) but also procedural and evaluative skills (knowing how and knowing whether).

AI-Based Content Production

The most significant concrete output of this program is the ability of participants to independently produce quality digital content using the help of AI technology. By the end of the program, each participant has generated a portfolio of content that spans a variety of formats. Details of content production achievements are presented in the following table.

Table 4. Trainee Content Production Achievement

Content Output Types	Number of Participants	Percentage Achievement
Product Photo Content with AI Background	30	100%
Caption with AIDA Formula	27	90%
Caption with PAS Formula	24	80%

Video Pendek Vertical (Reels/TikTok)	22	73,3%
Content Calendar 1 Bulan	28	93,3%
AI Prompt for Content Ideation	30	100%

Examples of AI-Based Content Outputs

As a concrete illustration of the output of this training, here are some examples of content that participants generated using a combination of AI tools and copywriting skills acquired during the training. These examples reflect different types of participant efforts and demonstrate the application of copywriting formulas to captions that accompany AI-based visuals.

CONTOH KONTEN 1 — Usaha Makanan: Cireng Premium Bumbu Rujak

Visual (Generated via Canva AI):

Foto cireng premium tersaji dalam piring rotan anyaman dengan latar belakang nuansa dapur tradisional yang hangat. Bumbu rujak merah pekat menggenang di sisi piring, uap tipis masih mengepul dari cireng yang baru digoreng. Generated menggunakan prompt: 'Premium Indonesian cireng served on woven rattan plate, red rujak sauce, warm traditional kitchen background, food photography style, professional lighting, high detail'

Caption (Formula PAS):

Lagi pengen jajanan, tapi bosen sama yang itu-itu aja? 😞 [PROBLEM]

Cireng biasa emang kenyang, tapi nggak ada 'wow'-nya. Kamu udah coba semua, tapi tetap aja nggak puas... [AGITATION]

Kenalkan: Cireng Premium Bumbu Rujak kami! Digoreng renyah sempurna, dipadukan bumbu rujak otentik yang bikin ketagihan dari gigitan pertama. Cuma 15 ribu, dapet 10 pcs! Order via DM atau link di bio ya kak! 🔥 [SOLUTION + CTA]
#cirengbandung #jajananotentik #UMKMBANDUNG #kulinerlokal #rancasaribandung

CONTOH KONTEN 2 — Usaha Fashion: Tas Rajut Handmade

Visual (Generated via Adobe Firefly):

Tas rajut berwarna earth tone (krem dan coklat) digantungkan pada rak kayu minimalis dengan pencahayaan alami dari jendela. Beberapa helai benang wol berwarna senada tersebar estetik di latar. Prompt: 'Handmade woven crochet bag earth tones cream brown, hanging on minimalist wooden rack, natural window light, aesthetic lifestyle photography, boho style, soft shadow'

Caption (Formula AIDA):

Tas yang lahir dari dua tangan, dibuat dengan cinta, dipakai seumur hidup. 🌿🌟 [ATTENTION]

Setiap tas rajut kami dikerjakan secara handmade oleh pengrajin lokal Bandung dengan teknik crochet tradisional. Tidak ada dua tas yang persis sama—setiap jahitan mengandung keunikan dan karakter tersendiri. [INTEREST]

Bayangkan kamu jalan-jalan di weekend dengan tas yang bukan cuma cantik, tapi juga punya cerita. Tas yang jadi conversation starter. Tas yang membuat orang bertanya: 'Beli di mana?' 🤔 [DESIRE]

Stok terbatas hanya 15 pcs bulan ini. Klik link di bio atau DM sekarang sebelum kehabisan! [ACTION] #tasrajut #handmadebandung #crochetbag #fashionlokal #UMKMkreatif #lokalitabangsa

The two examples above illustrate how participants successfully integrate the three components taught: high-quality product visuals generated through AI prompts, copywriting narratives that follow persuasive formulas consistently, and technical elements such as the use of relevant hashtags and emojis to increase engagement. Analysis of all participants' portfolios showed that 90% of participants managed to implement at least one copywriting formula (AIDA or PAS) completely and coherently, while 73.3% managed to produce vertical format video content using CapCut.

Analysis of Challenges and Success Factors

The implementation of the program is inseparable from various challenges that need to be noted as evaluation material. The first challenge is the heterogeneity of participants' digital literacy skills—from participants who are familiar with business social media to those who are using smartphones for business purposes for the first time. To overcome this, facilitators apply differentiated learning strategies by forming learning pods that mix participants with different skill levels, resulting in effective peer learning.

The second challenge is the limited internet connection at the training site which sometimes interferes with practice sessions using cloud-based AI tools. Anticipation is done by preparing offline material as a backup and ensuring some examples of AI output have been downloaded in advance for demonstration purposes. The third challenge was the initial resistance of some participants to the use of AI, with the perception that AI-generated content would feel 'inauthentic'. This perception has been successfully changed through direct demonstration that AI functions as an assistant (assistant), not a substitute for creativity and brand identity that must still come from business owners.

The factors that contribute to the success of the program can be identified as follows. First, the suitability between the training material and the real needs of the participants identified through a comprehensive needs assessment. Second, a hands-on approach that allows participants to practice each concept learned directly in their own business context—not on hypothetical examples. Third, institutional support from LCM Bandung which has built trust and commitment of its members to actively participate. Fourth, the continuity of the program through periodic mentoring sessions that ensure that knowledge transfer does not stop at the workshop session, but continues in real implementation.

Conclusion

This intervention and mentoring program has succeeded in bridging the digital competency gap experienced by 30 Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in the Bandung Local Creative Movement (LCM) ecosystem. By prioritizing a *Participatory Action Research* (PAR) approach that is friendly to the learning characteristics of adults, this program not only facilitates the transfer of technical expertise in a one-way manner, but also assists the participant's adaptation

process comprehensively. This empowerment process has proven to be able to shift the paradigm of business actors from being just a "online merchant" to a formidable and adaptive "brand storyteller" figure in the midst of the fierce digital economy era.

The success of this academic intervention was reflected in the quantitative achievements, where there was an increase in the overall understanding capacity of participants which reached 100.5%, with an average score jump from 37.5 to 75.2. The most drastic transformation can be seen in the technical mastery of artificial intelligence (AI) which increased by 131.1%. This achievement is accompanied by a very proud output of digital works, where all participants (100%) have been able to produce AI-based product visual materials independently. Furthermore, MSME actors managed to frame their products using persuasive copywriting techniques with AIDA (90%) and PAS (80%) formulas, and converted them into dynamic vertical video content (73.3%).

Behind these achievements, the success of this program is greatly supported by problem solving in the field which is carried out in an empathetic and humane manner for the participants. The gap between digital literacy between participants was successfully bridged through the formation of learning *pods*, an effort that sparked the spirit of *peer learning* through mutual cooperation. In addition, the inner anxiety of some participants regarding the loss of "soul" and brand authenticity due to AI intervention was successfully calmed; They were given the understanding that the technology is positioned simply as an assistant to multiply productivity, not to rob the authenticity of the creativity of business owners.

In the end, the combination of relevant materials, hands-on approaches, and dedication to continuous mentoring has fostered the independence of MSME partners. They are now not just present as spectators in the virtual realm, but have metamorphosed into creative business actors who have the ability to manage market attention, as well as have dignified competitiveness in the midst of increasingly challenging digital competition.

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