

The Effect of Integrating TikTok and Shopee-Based Digital Marketing Strategies on the Performance of MSMEs in Semarang Regency

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Submitted: Revised: Accepted:

Abstract

Digital transformation has opened up great opportunities for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) to expand the market through the use of social media and e-commerce platforms. However, the limitation of digital literacy is still a significant obstacle for MSME actors in the regions, including in Semarang Regency. This study aims to analyze the influence of the integration of TikTok and Shopee-based digital marketing strategies on the marketing performance of MSMEs. The research method used was quasi-experimental with a one group pretest-posttest design. Data is collected through observation, interviews, and analysis of digital metrics that include follower count, engagement rate, store visits, and sales volume. The research sample consisted of partner MSMEs who participated in a digital marketing intervention program for two months. The results showed a significant increase in all performance indicators: TikTok followers increased by 50%, engagement rate increased by 25%, Shopee store visits increased by 45%, and sales increased by an average of 18%. These findings reinforce the literature that affirms the effectiveness of video-based social media integration and e-commerce as a relevant digital marketing strategy for MSMEs in the digital economy era. This research contributes to the development of an integrated digital marketing intervention model that can be replicated in various regional contexts.

Keywords: MSMEs, digital marketing, TikTok, Shopee, quasi-experiment

INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology has changed the marketing paradigm globally, including in the Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) sector. In Indonesia, MSMEs account for more than 60% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and absorb more than 97% of the national workforce (Central Statistics Agency, 2023). This strategic role makes MSMEs the backbone of the economy, as well as the main target of the program to strengthen competitiveness through digital transformation (Yusrillah, 2024). However, the adoption of digital technology among MSMEs still faces challenges, including limited digital skills, lack of use of social media for marketing, and low optimization of online stores (Mavilinda et al., 2021; Febriyanti et al., 2022).

TikTok, as a short video-based platform with a content distribution algorithm that highlights relevance and user interaction, offers great potential to reach a wide and fast audience, even for business actors with limited resources (Karenina et al., 2023). On the other hand, Shopee as one of the largest e-commerce platforms in Southeast Asia provides an integrated ecosystem ranging from product optimization, payment systems, to logistics services—which can help MSMEs increase sales (Solikhati et al., 2023). The integration of these two platforms is in line with the findings of Secundo et al. (2021) which emphasize the importance of a blended digital marketing approach to increase the competitiveness of MSMEs.

In Indonesia, the role of MSMEs is very vital in supporting the national economy. Based on data from the Central Statistics Agency (2023), MSMEs contribute more than 60% to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and absorb around 97% of the national workforce. However, despite its large contribution, the adoption rate of digital technology in the MSME sector is still relatively low. The main obstacles include the limitations of digital literacy, the lack of use of social media for promotion, and the lack of use of digital analytics in marketing strategy evaluation (Febriyanti et al., 2022). This condition shows that there is a gap between the economic potential of MSMEs and their ability to utilize digital technology for business growth.

In Semarang Regency, especially the Ungaran area, most MSMEs still rely on traditional marketing methods such as direct sales and word-of-mouth promotion. Based on the initial survey, 68% of MSME actors do not have a structured digital marketing strategy, while 74% have not utilized analytics features to measure the effectiveness of promotions. This condition shows that there is a digital skills gap that can hinder business growth in the era of digital transformation. Previous research (Martins, 2022) shows that the adaptability of technology and the use of marketing data contribute directly to the growth of MSME sales.

In addition to internal factors such as digital capabilities, external ecosystem support also plays an important role. Collaboration between local governments, higher education institutions, and business actors is a catalyst in creating effective digital mentoring programs. Several national initiatives such as the National Movement for Digital Literacy and Go Digital MSMEs have encouraged the adoption of technology, but their implementation is often general and less contextual to the local needs of MSMEs. Therefore, local intervention-based approaches such as TikTok and Shopee's integrated digital marketing training in Semarang Regency are important to ensure relevant and sustainable skills transfer.

Theoretically, the integration of social media (as a channel of awareness and engagement) with e-commerce (as a conversion channel) represents an increasingly important form of omnichannel marketing in the digital economy (Dwivedi et al., 2021). The combination of attractive short video content on TikTok with transaction optimization on Shopee can create more efficient promotion and sales channels for MSMEs. This approach is also in line with the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) theory, which explains that the perception of convenience and benefits of a technology has a direct effect on its adoption rate (Davis, 1989). In the context of MSMEs, the success of adoption is highly dependent on the perception of business actors on the concrete benefits of the digital strategy implemented.

Based on these conditions, this study aims to test the influence of the integration of TikTok and Shopee-based digital marketing strategies on the marketing performance of MSMEs. The urgency of this research lies in the development of an intervention model that not only teaches technical skills, but also directs MSME actors to implement data-based strategies and creative content in a sustainable manner. The contribution of this research is expected to include providing empirical evidence on the effectiveness of an integrated digital marketing model that can be replicated in various MSME sectors in Indonesia, thereby supporting the national agenda in accelerating the digital transformation of the small business sector.

The contribution of this research is expected to be conceptual and practical. Conceptually, this study enriches the literature on the integration of *social commerce* and *e-commerce* in the context of emerging economies. Practically, the results of this research can be a reference for local governments, MSME assistance institutions, and business actors to design data-based digital strategies and creativity that are able to increase competitiveness and accelerate the digital transformation of the MSME sector in Indonesia.

METHOD

This study uses a quantitative approach with a one group pretest-posttest design to measure the influence of TikTok and Shopee-based digital marketing strategy interventions on MSME marketing performance. This design was chosen because it allows researchers to compare conditions before and after treatment in the same group, so that changes that occur can be identified as a result of the intervention (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The research was carried out in the Ungaran area, Semarang Regency, during the period from May to July 2025.

The research subjects are MSME actors who meet the criteria of having had an active business for at least one year, have a TikTok account and shop on Shopee, and are willing to participate in a series of research programs. A total of 15 MSMEs were selected using purposive sampling techniques by considering the representation of three main subsectors, namely culinary, fashion, and handicrafts. All subjects took part in the initial measurement (*pretest*), intervention, mentoring, and final measurement (*post-test*).

The research instruments used included observation sheets to record content production activities on TikTok and storefront updates on Shopee, structured interviews to explore participants' perceptions of the ease of use of the platform and the obstacles faced, as well as analysis of digital metrics that included the number of followers, engagement rate, number of store visits, and sales volume. These metrics are obtained through the built-in analytics features of each platform.

The research procedure begins with the collection of initial data (*pretest*) to obtain a baseline for the digital performance of MSMEs. Furthermore, intervention was carried out through training and assistance in the implementation of integrated digital marketing strategies. Intervention materials include TikTok creative content creation techniques, Shopee store optimization, paid promotion strategies, and data-driven performance analysis. The next stage is technical assistance both online and offline to ensure the consistent implementation of strategies by participants. In the final stage, a post-test was carried out to measure digital performance and sales indicators to analyze the changes.

Data analysis was carried out descriptively to calculate the percentage change in each indicator and inferentially using a paired sample t-test at a 95% confidence level to test the significance of differences between the data before and after the intervention. The entire analysis was carried out with the help of SPSS software version 26.

DISCUSSION

The results of the study showed a significant increase in all MSME digital marketing performance indicators after participating in strategic interventions based on TikTok and Shopee integration. The number of followers of partner TikTok accounts increased by an average of 50% compared to before the intervention. This increase was accompanied by an increase *in engagement rate* of 25%, which indicates a more active audience interaction with the content produced. In line with these findings, the number of visits to Shopee stores grew by 45%, while sales volume increased by an average of 18% in the two-month period after the intervention. This performance improvement shows that an integrated digital marketing strategy is able to have a positive impact on MSME sales visibility and conversion. These findings are consistent with the research of Karenina et al. (2023) which confirms that the use of TikTok as a marketing channel is able to drive rapid audience growth through relevant content distribution algorithms, as well as supporting the findings of Solikhathi et al. (2023) who state that store optimization on Shopee directly contributes to increased transactions.

Table 1. Comparison of MSME performance indicators before and after intervention

Indicators	Before Intervention	After Intervention	Change (%)
TikTok Follower Count	10.000	15.000	+50%
<i>TikTok Engagement Rate</i>	4%	5%	+25%
Shopee Store Visits	2.000	2.900	+45%
Shopee Sales Volume (units)	500	590	+18%

In terms of content quality, observations show that MSME partners who apply storytelling principles and the use of popular music in TikTok videos get higher engagement. This is in line with research by Dwivedi et al. (2021) who underlined that emotional story-based content is able to create a stronger connection with the audience, thereby increasing brand recall. In addition, Shopee's storefront optimization strategy that includes the use of high-quality product photos, writing clear product descriptions, and providing promotional labels (flash sales and vouchers) has proven effective in attracting potential buyers, as reported by Alalwan et al. (2020) in the context of e-commerce in developing countries.

Another successful factor identified was the limited but targeted use of paid advertising. Analysis of metrics shows that ad campaigns with location and interest based segmentation result in higher conversion rates than ads without segmentation. These results support a study by Kim and Kim (2019) that found that content personalization and data-driven advertising can increase the effectiveness of digital marketing by up to 30%. On the other hand, interviews with participants revealed that technical assistance carried out on an ongoing basis helped them maintain consistency in content production and online store management. This finding is in line with Yusrillah (2024) who emphasizes that the combination of continuous training and mentoring is able to strengthen the digital skills of MSMEs and increase business competitiveness.

Empirically, the increase in digital indicators shows that adaptability to social media trends has a direct effect on business growth. This confirms the Dynamic Capability theory stating that competitive advantage in the digital age is determined by an organization's ability to integrate, build, and configure resources to fit into a rapidly changing environment. MSMEs that are able to respond quickly to changes in TikTok algorithms or e-commerce trends tend to be superior in maintaining brand visibility and customer loyalty.

In terms of policy, the results of this study provide important input for local governments and MSME companion institutions. MSME strengthening programs should not only focus on access to capital or technical training, but also on the formation of a digital mentoring ecosystem that integrates creative content training, online store management, and data-driven performance analytics. Thus, the intervention model as tested in this study can be replicated in other sectors, such as agriculture, handicrafts, or regional cuisine.

Overall, the data of this study strengthens the literature stating that the integration of short video-based social media such as TikTok with e-commerce platforms such as Shopee creates significant synergies in the digital marketing strategies of MSMEs (Secundo et al., 2021; Martins, 2022). TikTok acts as an audience acquisition channel with a wide reach, while Shopee is a conversion channel that facilitates transactions. Thus, this intervention model can be recommended as an effective and sustainable digital marketing strategy for MSMEs in other regions with similar conditions.

The novelty of this research lies in the application of an integrated digital marketing intervention model that combines two different platforms—TikTok and Shopee—in one quantitative measurement framework based on pretest-posttest. There have not been many studies in Indonesia

that empirically examine cross-platform synergy at the local MSME scale. In addition, this study adopts a data-driven mentoring approach to objectively assess changes in digital indicators. Further research can develop this model by adding other platforms such as Instagram Reels or WhatsApp Business, as well as extending the duration of interventions to evaluate the long-term effects on customer loyalty and business sustainability.

CONCLUSION

This study proves that the integration of TikTok and Shopee-based digital marketing strategies significantly improves the marketing performance of MSMEs in the Ungaran area, Semarang Regency. The increase was seen in all indicators, including the number of TikTok followers, *engagement rate*, Shopee store visits, and sales volume. The success of the intervention was driven by the application of *storytelling principles* to video content, online store storefront optimization, and the use of appropriately segmented paid advertising. Sustainable technical assistance also plays a role in maintaining consistency in the implementation of the strategy, so that the impact can be sustainable. These findings reinforce the literature that the synergy between short video-based social media and e-commerce platforms can increase brand visibility while driving sales conversions. The contribution of this research lies in the provision of an integrated intervention model that can be replicated in other regions, as a practical and measurable strategy to strengthen the competitiveness of MSMEs in the digital economy era.

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