

From Local Products to Strong Brands: Empowering MSMEs Through Digital Branding and Business Innovation

¹⁾Erina Sovania*, ²⁾Stefanus Rumangkit, ³⁾Baghas Budi Wicaksono, ⁴⁾Rakhdiny Sustaningrum

^{1,2,3)}Management Department, Binus Online Learning, Bina Nusantara University, Jakarta, Indonesia

⁴⁾Management Department, Atma Jaya Catholic University of Indonesia, Jakarta, Indonesia

Email Corresponding: erina.sovania@binus.edu *

Email Corresponding Author: erina.sovania@binus.edu *

INFORMASI ARTIKEL

ABSTRACT

Keywords:

Digital Branding
Business Coaching
Content Marketing
Business Innovation
MSMEs

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) play an important role in supporting economic growth and community welfare in Indonesia; however, many MSMEs continue to face challenges in developing digital branding, content marketing, and effective social media utilization, which may limit brand awareness and competitiveness in digital markets. This community service program aimed to strengthen the digital branding capabilities and business competitiveness of CV Syabina Berkah Sejahtera through international collaborative business coaching and digital marketing mentoring. The program was conducted collaboratively by BINUS University, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, and Atma Jaya Catholic University of Indonesia, with CV Syabina Berkah Sejahtera as the partner. The activities employed observation, knowledge sharing, business coaching, mentoring, and practical implementation of digital branding and content marketing strategies. The results indicated that participants demonstrated improved understanding of branding consistency, social media optimization, visual content development, and the application of artificial intelligence for market research and business development. Participants also demonstrated greater awareness of the importance of transforming local products into distinctive and recognizable brands for digital markets. The program contributed to strengthening the partner's digital marketing capabilities, strategic awareness, and readiness to adapt to digital market dynamics. Overall, the activity demonstrates that collaborative business coaching and practical digital marketing mentoring can support MSMEs in improving competitiveness, sustainability, and adaptability in the digital transformation era.

This is an open access article under the [CC-BY-SA](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/) license.



I. INTRODUCTION

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) play a strategic role in supporting economic growth, generating employment opportunities, and improving community welfare. In Indonesia, MSMEs represent an important component of the national economic structure and have demonstrated considerable resilience amid rapid changes in the business environment. However, the acceleration of digital transformation has fundamentally changed how consumers search for information, interact with businesses, evaluate products, and make purchasing decisions. Digital platforms and social media have consequently become important channels through which businesses build visibility, communicate value propositions, and maintain relationships with customers. Recent developments in digital marketing indicate that businesses are increasingly required to adopt adaptive, interactive, and customer-oriented approaches to remain competitive in digitally mediated markets (Setio et al., 2026). For MSMEs, this transformation creates both opportunities for broader market access and challenges related to digital capability, branding, content development, and strategic utilization of digital platforms.

The development of the digital economy provides MSMEs with opportunities to overcome geographical limitations and reach broader consumer segments at relatively lower promotional costs. Digital marketing can

support market expansion, customer engagement, and business efficiency when it is implemented as an integrated strategic activity rather than merely as an additional promotional channel. Digital technology adoption can improve MSMEs' access to markets, information, and business networks, while also strengthening their capacity to adapt to changing market conditions (Anistia & Azmi, 2026). Similarly, contemporary marketing literature emphasizes that digital marketing increasingly encompasses customer experience, brand engagement, personalized communication, and relationship building rather than conventional promotional activities alone (Monfort, 2025). Therefore, digital transformation among MSMEs requires not only the adoption of technological platforms but also the development of capabilities to manage digital branding, content, customer interaction, and data-informed marketing decisions.

One of the increasingly important components of MSME digital transformation is digital branding. In highly competitive online environments, consumers are exposed to numerous products with similar functional characteristics. Consequently, product quality alone may not be sufficient to establish differentiation and sustainable competitive advantage. A strong digital brand enables businesses to communicate a distinctive identity, create recognizable visual and verbal associations, and establish meaningful relationships with consumers. Consistent branding across digital touchpoints can strengthen brand awareness and improve consumer perceptions of credibility and value. In this context, digital branding should be understood as a strategic process that integrates brand identity, visual communication, content, customer interaction, and digital experiences to create a consistent market position (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2022).

The strategic importance of social media has further increased as consumers increasingly use digital platforms not only to communicate but also to discover products, evaluate alternatives, and share consumption experiences. Social media provides MSMEs with opportunities to communicate directly with consumers, distribute visual content, receive market feedback, and develop communities around their brands. However, the existence of social media accounts does not automatically translate into effective digital marketing performance. MSMEs need capabilities in content planning, visual communication, audience targeting, engagement management, and performance evaluation. Previous studies have indicated that many MSMEs continue to experience limitations in digital literacy and social media management, particularly in transforming social media from a passive promotional medium into a strategic customer engagement platform (Alshurideh et al., 2022). This challenge is particularly relevant for local culinary businesses, whose products can benefit substantially from attractive visual presentation, storytelling, and consistent digital communication.

Content marketing is therefore another important capability that needs to be strengthened among MSMEs. Effective content marketing enables businesses to communicate product value through informative, persuasive, entertaining, and visually appealing content rather than relying exclusively on direct sales messages. Storytelling and visual content can help businesses communicate product uniqueness and establish emotional connections with consumers. Recent marketing research suggests that engaging and relevant digital content can contribute to brand awareness, consumer engagement, and purchase-related responses when content is aligned with consumer needs and brand positioning (Wang & Kim, 2023). Similarly, interactive social media strategies can strengthen consumer-brand relationships by encouraging participation, communication, and ongoing engagement (Tuten & Solomon, 2023). These findings indicate that MSME digital marketing development should integrate branding and content strategies rather than treating social media posting as an isolated promotional activity.

In addition to branding and content capabilities, the utilization of data and artificial intelligence offers new opportunities for MSMEs to improve the quality of marketing decisions. Artificial intelligence can assist businesses in identifying consumer preferences, analyzing market trends, generating content ideas, and supporting more data-driven customer targeting. Huang & Rust (2021) highlighted the increasing strategic role of artificial intelligence in marketing, particularly in supporting customer understanding, personalization, and decision-making. For MSMEs with limited resources, accessible artificial intelligence-based tools may provide an opportunity to conduct basic market research and generate insights without requiring extensive analytical infrastructure. Nevertheless, the effective utilization of such technologies requires appropriate knowledge and practical guidance so that technology is applied to actual business problems rather than merely adopted as a technological trend.

The integration of digital branding, content marketing, social media optimization, and artificial intelligence-based market research is particularly relevant to local culinary MSMEs. Culinary products possess strong potential for visual storytelling because product appearance, packaging, preparation processes, local

identity, and consumption experiences can be translated into engaging digital content. Nevertheless, many local culinary businesses still emphasize product availability and short-term sales communication without sufficiently developing a distinctive brand identity. This situation can make products difficult to differentiate from competitors and may increase dependence on price-based competition. From a long-term perspective, strengthening brand identity and customer engagement is therefore important for increasing perceived product value, developing customer attachment, and supporting business sustainability.

The relevance of this issue can be observed in CV Syabina Berkah Sejahtera, a culinary MSME located in Pamulang, South Tangerang. The business offers several local culinary products, including Bolu Batik, Mak Jurig, Sambal Ceu'meti, and frozen food products. Although these products have distinctive characteristics and market potential, the partner continues to face challenges in strengthening digital branding, developing structured content marketing, and optimizing social media as a strategic marketing channel. The existing digital marketing activities require greater consistency in brand identity, visual presentation, content planning, and communication of product differentiation. The partner also requires practical guidance in identifying market opportunities and consumer preferences through accessible digital and artificial intelligence-based tools. These conditions indicate that the key challenge is not simply the availability of digital platforms, but the partner's capability to integrate these platforms into a coherent and sustainable digital marketing strategy.

Previous studies have provided substantial evidence regarding the role of digital marketing, social media, branding, content marketing, and artificial intelligence in strengthening business competitiveness. However, much of the existing literature examines these components independently or focuses primarily on business performance and consumer behavior. From the perspective of community service, there remains an opportunity to integrate these capabilities into a practical and contextualized intervention for local MSMEs. In particular, limited attention has been given to community service programs that combine international business coaching with hands-on digital branding development, content marketing implementation, social media optimization, and artificial intelligence-based market research for local culinary MSMEs. This represents a practical and methodological gap between the growing body of knowledge concerning digital transformation and the actual capabilities required by MSME partners to implement digital strategies consistently.

The research gap also concerns the form of intervention provided to MSMEs. Conventional community service activities frequently emphasize one-directional training or general digital marketing knowledge. Such approaches may improve participants' awareness but do not necessarily ensure that the acquired knowledge is translated into actual business practices. MSMEs require contextualized assistance that connects strategic concepts with their specific products, target consumers, brand identity, and digital communication channels. Therefore, a coaching and mentoring approach that combines knowledge sharing with direct observation, consultation, practical implementation, and feedback is considered more appropriate for strengthening sustainable digital capabilities. The present program addresses this gap by positioning digital transformation not only as a technological adoption issue but also as a capability-building process involving branding, content, customer engagement, and data-informed decision making.

The novelty of this community service program lies in the integration of international collaborative business coaching with practical digital branding, content marketing, social media optimization, and artificial intelligence-based market research specifically designed for a local culinary MSME. Rather than providing generic digital marketing training, the program applies an educational, consultative, and implementation-oriented approach in which participants are encouraged to translate the concepts into practical improvements in their own business activities. The international collaboration among BINUS University, The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK), and Atma Jaya Catholic University of Indonesia further provides a broader perspective for business development and digital marketing practices. The combination of international knowledge sharing and contextualized mentoring is expected to strengthen the partner's ability to recognize the strategic value of branding, develop more relevant digital content, optimize social media communication, and utilize accessible artificial intelligence tools for market-oriented decision making.

Based on the identified conditions, the main problem addressed in this community service program is the limited capability of CV Syabina Berkah Sejahtera to develop an integrated and sustainable digital marketing strategy, particularly in the areas of digital branding consistency, content marketing, social media optimization, and artificial intelligence-based market research. The partner needs to strengthen its ability to transform distinctive local culinary products into recognizable brands, communicate product value through attractive digital content, engage consumers through social media, and utilize digital tools to better understand market

opportunities. Addressing these problems is important not only for improving the partner's current promotional activities but also for strengthening its long-term competitiveness and adaptability within an increasingly digital business environment.

Therefore, the objective of this community service program is to strengthen the digital branding capabilities and business competitiveness of CV Syabina Berkah Sejahtera through international collaborative business coaching and digital marketing mentoring. Specifically, the program aims to improve the partner's understanding and practical capabilities in developing consistent brand identity, creating relevant visual and content marketing materials, optimizing social media utilization, and applying artificial intelligence-based market research to support business development. The expected contribution of the program is the strengthening of the partner's digital marketing capabilities, greater awareness of the strategic importance of branding and customer engagement, and improved readiness to transform local culinary products into stronger and more recognizable brands in digital markets. From an academic and community engagement perspective, the program contributes an implementation-oriented model of international collaborative MSME empowerment that connects contemporary digital marketing knowledge with practical business mentoring and contextual problem solving.

II. SITUATION ANALYSIS AND PARTNER PROBLEMS

CV Syabina Berkah Sejahtera is a Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprise (MSME) operating in the culinary sector and located in Pamulang, South Tangerang, Indonesia. The business offers a variety of local culinary products, including Bolu Batik, Mak Jurig, Sambal Ceu'meti, and frozen food products. These products have distinctive characteristics and potential market value that can be further developed through stronger branding and digital marketing strategies. The partner also has the opportunity to expand its market reach through the effective utilization of social media and other digital platforms. Therefore, strengthening the partner's digital marketing capabilities is considered important to support the transformation of its local products into stronger and more recognizable brands.

Based on the initial observation, discussions, and business coaching conducted with the partner, CV Syabina Berkah Sejahtera has already utilized digital platforms, particularly Instagram and WhatsApp, to support its promotional activities. However, the utilization of these platforms has not yet been implemented in a structured and integrated manner as part of a long-term digital branding strategy. Promotional activities tend to focus on short-term product sales and information delivery, while brand identity development, visual consistency, storytelling, and customer engagement require further improvement. As a result, the potential of the partner's local culinary products has not been fully translated into a distinctive and recognizable brand within the digital marketplace.

The first major problem identified concerns the limited implementation of digital branding strategies. The partner has not yet established a strong and consistent brand identity across its products and digital communication channels. Although each product has its own characteristics, these distinctive attributes have not been consistently communicated through visual identity, promotional materials, and brand messaging. Inconsistent presentation may weaken overall brand recognition and make the products more difficult to differentiate from competitors. In the increasingly competitive digital marketplace, this condition may limit the partner's ability to build brand awareness and establish a clear market position.

The second problem relates to the limited optimization of social media and content marketing. Although social media has been used as a promotional channel, the content developed by the partner still requires improvement in terms of visual presentation, storytelling, content consistency, and audience engagement. Product photographs, promotional videos, and captions have not yet been fully optimized to communicate product value and create stronger consumer interaction. This is particularly important for culinary MSMEs because food products have strong visual characteristics that can be effectively communicated through product photography, short-form videos, preparation processes, product stories, and local cultural narratives. The limited ability to develop such content has therefore restricted the effectiveness of social media as a strategic marketing and customer engagement channel.

The third problem concerns the limited utilization of digital technology and artificial intelligence (AI) to support business innovation and marketing decision-making. Based on discussions with the partner, the use of AI for market research, consumer understanding, trend identification, content ideation, and business development remains limited. AI-based tools can provide accessible support for MSMEs in identifying

consumer preferences, exploring market trends, developing content ideas, and generating insights for marketing decisions. However, limited knowledge and practical experience in applying such technologies have prevented the partner from fully utilizing their potential for business development.

In addition to these challenges, the situation analysis indicates that CV Syabina Berkah Sejahtera possesses several important strengths and opportunities. Its products, including Bolu Batik, Mak Jurig, Sambal Ceu'meti, and frozen food products, provide diverse opportunities for visual branding and digital storytelling. Culinary products are particularly suitable for social media content because their appearance, packaging, preparation processes, serving methods, and local characteristics can be transformed into engaging visual narratives. Therefore, the primary challenge faced by the partner is not the absence of marketable products or digital platforms, but the limited capability to integrate its products, brand identity, content, social media channels, and digital technologies into a coherent and sustainable marketing strategy.

The need assessment conducted through observation and discussions with the partner identified three interconnected root causes. The first is related to branding capability, particularly the lack of consistency in brand identity and product positioning. The second concerns digital marketing capability, particularly limitations in planning, producing, and optimizing relevant and attractive digital content. The third relates to digital business innovation, particularly the limited utilization of AI and digital tools for market research and data-informed business decision-making. These three areas are closely interconnected because weak branding may reduce the effectiveness of digital content, while limited digital capabilities and technology utilization may constrain the development of more adaptive marketing strategies.

These problems may affect the partner's ability to increase brand awareness, establish product differentiation, expand market reach, and strengthen competitiveness in digital markets. Products with good potential but insufficiently developed brand identities and digital communication strategies may face difficulties in gaining consumer recognition. Furthermore, an excessive focus on short-term promotional communication may limit opportunities to establish long-term relationships with customers. The limited use of AI and digital tools for market research may also result in marketing decisions being based primarily on experience and intuition rather than structured market information.

Based on the situation analysis, strengthening digital branding and digital marketing capabilities was identified as the primary priority for intervention. This priority was selected because branding provides the foundation for product positioning and differentiation, while digital marketing capabilities are required to translate the brand identity into consistent communication across social media and other digital channels. The introduction of AI-based market research was subsequently positioned as a supporting component of business innovation. This integrated approach was considered more appropriate than providing general digital marketing training alone because it addresses the interconnected capabilities required by the partner to develop a stronger and more sustainable digital presence.

Accordingly, the community service program was designed using an international collaborative business coaching and mentoring approach that combines knowledge sharing, business coaching, mentoring, discussion, practical demonstrations, and hands-on implementation. The program involved collaboration among BINUS University, The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK), and Atma Jaya Catholic University of Indonesia. The target participants consisted of the owner, management team, and operational staff of CV Syabina Berkah Sejahtera who were involved in business development and marketing activities. Through this approach, the program was designed to strengthen the partner's understanding and practical capabilities in digital branding, content marketing, visual branding, social media optimization, and AI-based market research.

Overall, the situation analysis demonstrates that CV Syabina Berkah Sejahtera possesses products with potential for development as distinctive local brands but requires further strengthening in branding, content marketing, social media utilization, and digital business innovation. These identified conditions provide the basis for determining the methods, activities, and evaluation indicators of the community service program. The initial condition of the partner should also be documented through photographs of the business location, products, existing promotional materials, and digital platforms to provide visual evidence of the situation prior to program implementation.



Figure 1. Community Service Activities at CV Syabina Berkah Sejahtera



Figure 2. Product list of CV Syabina Berkah

III. METHOD

1. Location and Time of Implementation

The community service program was conducted at CV Syabina Berkah Sejahtera, a culinary Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprise (MSME) located in Pamulang, South Tangerang, Indonesia. The location was selected based on the partner's identified needs related to digital branding, content marketing, social media utilization, and digital business innovation. The program was implemented through an international collaboration involving BINUS University, The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK), and Atma Jaya Catholic University of Indonesia. The activities consisted of direct observation, knowledge sharing, business coaching, mentoring, practical implementation, and evaluation. The physical and digital business environment of the partner was considered during the implementation to ensure that the recommendations provided were relevant to the partner's actual business conditions.

2. Target Participants and Community Service Partner

The target partner of the program was CV Syabina Berkah Sejahtera, a culinary MSME producing local food products, including Bolu Batik, Mak Jurig, Sambal Ceu'meti, and frozen food products. The participants consisted of the MSME owner, management team, and operational staff who were directly involved in business development, marketing, and promotional activities. A total of 23 participants were directly involved in the business coaching and mentoring sessions.

The participants were selected based on their direct involvement in the partner's business activities and their relevance to the implementation of digital branding and digital marketing strategies. Their participation was considered important because the sustainability of the program depends on the ability of the business team to apply the knowledge and skills obtained during the activities to the partner's daily marketing practices.

3. Stages of Program Implementation

The community service program adopted an educational, consultative, participatory, and implementation-oriented approach. The activities were organized into several interconnected stages, beginning with preparation and need assessment and continuing through coaching, practical implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.

a. Need Assessment and Initial Observation

The first stage involved identifying the partner's existing conditions and priority needs. The community service team conducted direct observation and discussions with the MSME owner and business team to identify challenges related to digital branding, content marketing, social media utilization, customer engagement, and digital business innovation. The assessment focused on the consistency of the partner's brand identity, existing promotional materials, social media utilization, visual content, product positioning, and understanding of digital technologies. Information was collected through direct observation, informal interviews, discussions, and documentation of the partner's business and promotional activities. The results of this stage were used as the basis for determining the priority problems and designing the coaching and mentoring materials.

b. Coordination with the Partner

The second stage involved coordination between the community service team and CV Syabina Berkah Sejahtera. Coordination was conducted to confirm the identified problems, determine participant involvement, establish the implementation schedule, and align the program content with the partner's business needs. The coordination process also ensured that the activities would focus on practical problems faced by the partner rather than providing generic digital marketing training. The partner was involved in identifying relevant products, existing promotional practices, and areas requiring improvement.

c. Preparation of Learning Materials and Supporting Media

Based on the results of the need assessment, the community service team prepared materials covering digital branding, visual branding, social media marketing, content marketing, storytelling, product positioning, and artificial intelligence (AI)-based market research. Supporting materials included presentation slides, examples of digital branding, social media content samples, visual communication references, product documentation, and practical examples relevant to culinary MSMEs. Smartphones, laptops, internet access, and digital platforms were also utilized to support hands-on activities. The materials were designed collaboratively by the community service team to combine academic knowledge, international business perspectives, and practical digital marketing applications.

d. Initial Evaluation

An initial evaluation was conducted through observation and interactive discussions to identify the participants' existing understanding of digital branding, social media marketing, content creation, and digital business innovation. Because standardized pre-test data were not collected as part of the documented activity, the initial evaluation was used primarily as a qualitative baseline for understanding participant knowledge and identifying topics requiring greater emphasis during the coaching sessions.

e. Knowledge Sharing and Business Coaching

The next stage consisted of knowledge sharing and business coaching. Participants were introduced to the principles of digital branding, brand consistency, visual identity, content marketing, social media optimization, storytelling, and customer engagement. The coaching sessions were conducted interactively through presentations, examples, discussions, and case-based learning. Participants were encouraged to relate the concepts to their own products and existing promotional activities. Particular attention was given to how local culinary products could be transformed into stronger and more recognizable brands through consistent visual and verbal communication.

f. Practical Mentoring and Implementation

Following the knowledge-sharing sessions, participants received direct mentoring and practical assistance. The activities focused on translating the concepts into potential improvements for the partner's actual marketing activities. Participants were guided in developing ideas for product visualization, social media content, promotional messages, storytelling, and brand consistency. Products such as Bolu Batik, Mak Jurig, and Sambal Ceu'meti were used as practical examples for discussing product positioning and digital communication. The mentoring also introduced participants to the use of AI-based tools for market research and business development. Participants were guided to explore how AI could support consumer insight generation, market trend identification, content ideation, and marketing decision-making. The emphasis was placed on the practical and accessible application of AI rather than on technical development of AI systems.

g. Monitoring of Implementation

Monitoring was conducted throughout the mentoring process through direct observation, discussion, participant responses, and review of the practical outputs developed during the activities. The community service team observed participant engagement and assessed whether participants were able to relate the materials to their business activities. Feedback was provided during the implementation process to help participants improve their understanding and refine their proposed branding and digital marketing strategies.

h. Final Evaluation

The final evaluation focused on changes in participant understanding, participation, and ability to identify practical applications of the materials provided. Evaluation was conducted through interactive discussions, participant feedback, observation of practical activities, and review of the branding and content ideas developed during the mentoring process. The evaluation emphasized four areas: understanding of digital branding, ability to identify social media optimization opportunities, ability to develop content marketing ideas, and understanding of AI-based market research applications. The results were analyzed descriptively to identify the main achievements and areas requiring further development.

i. Reflection and Follow-up Recommendations

The final stage involved reflection by the community service team and the partner. Participants were encouraged to identify which strategies could be implemented immediately and which areas required further development. Based on the evaluation and discussion, follow-up recommendations were formulated, including continued development of consistent brand identity, regular production of social media content, improvement of visual promotional materials, utilization of social media analytics, and continued exploration of AI-based tools for market research and business development.

4. Materials, Media, and Technology Used

The materials provided during the program consisted of:

- a. Digital branding and brand identity development;
- b. Visual branding and product presentation;
- c. Social media marketing and optimization;
- d. Content marketing and storytelling;
- e. Product photography and promotional visual content;
- f. Customer engagement through digital platforms;
- g. Artificial intelligence-based market research;
- h. Digital business innovation and market opportunity identification.

The supporting media and technologies included presentation slides, digital branding examples, social media content references, product photographs, smartphones, laptops, internet access, social media platforms, and AI-based digital tools. These resources were selected based on their accessibility and relevance to the partner's existing business activities.

5. Instruments and Data Collection Techniques

Several instruments and data collection techniques were used to document the implementation and evaluate the achievement of the program. These included:

- a. **Observation sheets**, used to document the partner's initial digital branding, social media utilization, content practices, and participant engagement;
- b. **Discussion and interview guides**, used to identify the partner's business challenges, needs, and expectations;
- c. **Documentation**, including photographs, product materials, promotional content, and records of community service activities;
- d. **Participant feedback**, collected through interactive discussions and feedback sessions;
- e. **Practical activity observation**, used to assess participant involvement and the ability to apply the concepts introduced during the mentoring sessions.

The data were collected during the initial assessment, coaching, mentoring, and evaluation stages. The combination of these techniques was intended to provide a more comprehensive understanding of both the partner's initial condition and the outcomes of the intervention.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Implementation of the Community Service Program

The community service program entitled “From Local Products to Strong Brands: Empowering MSMEs Through Digital Branding and Business Innovation” was implemented at CV Syabina Berkah Sejahtera, Pamulang, South Tangerang, Indonesia. The program was conducted through an international collaboration among BINUS University, The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK), and Atma Jaya Catholic University of Indonesia. A total of 23 participants consisting of the MSME owner, management team, and operational staff participated directly in the business coaching and mentoring activities

The implementation followed the stages described in the methodology, beginning with initial observation and need assessment, followed by coordination, preparation of learning materials, knowledge sharing, business coaching, practical mentoring, monitoring, and final evaluation. The initial observation identified several priority issues, including inconsistent digital branding, limited optimization of social media, insufficient development of visual and storytelling-based content, and limited understanding of artificial intelligence (AI)-based market research.

The knowledge-sharing and business coaching sessions subsequently focused on digital branding, visual identity, social media marketing, content marketing, storytelling, product positioning, and AI-based market research. Rather than delivering the materials solely through conventional lectures, the program used interactive discussions and business examples relevant to the partner’s culinary products.

The mentoring stage emphasized practical application. Participants were guided to examine the presentation of their existing products and identify opportunities for improvement in brand consistency, visual communication, promotional content, and social media utilization. Products such as Bolu Batik, Mak Jurig, and Sambal Ceu’meti were used as practical examples for discussing how local products could be positioned and communicated more effectively in digital markets.

The program also introduced AI-based market research as an accessible approach to support business development. Participants were introduced to the potential use of AI tools for identifying consumer preferences, exploring market trends, developing content ideas, and supporting marketing decisions. This activity was designed to encourage participants to view digital technology not merely as a promotional tool but also as a resource for business innovation and decision-making.



Figure 3. Knowledge Sharing and Business Coaching Activities: Digital Branding and Content Marketing Mentoring

2. Results of the Community Service Program

The implementation of the program generated several outcomes related to participants’ understanding of digital branding, content marketing, social media optimization, and digital business innovation. The results were identified through observation, interactive discussions, participant responses, and practical mentoring activities.

The first major outcome was an improved understanding of digital branding and brand consistency. During the coaching process, participants were able to identify the importance of establishing a consistent identity across product presentations and digital communication channels. The discussion encouraged

participants to recognize that branding extends beyond a logo or product name and includes visual presentation, communication style, product positioning, and the overall way in which consumers recognize the brand.

The second outcome concerned social media optimization and content marketing. Participants demonstrated greater awareness of the need to develop content that is not solely focused on direct sales but also communicates product value and creates engagement. Through the mentoring process, participants explored ideas for product photography, short-form promotional videos, storytelling-based captions, and other visual content that could be adapted to platforms such as Instagram and TikTok.

The third outcome was related to visual product communication. The mentoring activities helped participants identify how the visual presentation of culinary products can influence consumer attention and brand recognition. Products such as Bolu Batik, Mak Jurig, and Sambal Ceu'meti provided practical examples through which participants could discuss differences in positioning, visual presentation, and promotional messaging.

The fourth outcome was the introduction of AI-based market research and business innovation. Participants gained an initial understanding of how AI-based tools can support market research, consumer insight generation, trend identification, content ideation, and marketing decision-making. The activity therefore expanded the participants' understanding of digital transformation from social media utilization toward broader technology-supported business development. The main outcomes of the program are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Outcomes of the Community Service Program

No.	Program Component	Initial Condition	Outcome After Coaching and Mentoring
1	Digital Branding	Brand identity and communication were not yet fully consistent across products and digital channels	Participants gained better understanding of brand consistency, identity, and product positioning
2	Social Media Optimization	Social media was primarily utilized as a promotional channel	Participants identified opportunities to use social media more strategically for engagement and brand awareness
3	Content Marketing	Visual content and storytelling were not yet fully optimized	Participants developed greater awareness of visual content, storytelling, and promotional content strategies
4	Product Visualization	Product presentation required further strengthening	Participants identified opportunities to improve product photography and visual promotional materials
5	AI-Based Market Research	Limited understanding of AI applications for business development	Participants gained initial understanding of AI-supported market research and business innovation
6	Business Innovation	Digital technology was not yet fully integrated into marketing decision-making	Participants recognized the potential of digital tools to support adaptive and data-informed marketing strategies

The findings indicate that the program achieved its immediate objective of strengthening participants' awareness and practical understanding of digital branding and digital marketing. However, the results should be interpreted primarily as capability-building outcomes, rather than direct evidence of increased sales or revenue. The available evaluation data do not include standardized financial performance measurements or pretest and post-test scores; therefore, claims regarding quantitative changes in business performance are not made.

3. Community Service Outputs

The program generated several outputs that can support the partner's continued digital transformation. The primary output was the development of greater practical understanding of digital branding and content marketing among the partner's business team.

The second output was the identification and development of branding and content improvement concepts for the partner's culinary products. The coaching process provided participants with practical directions for strengthening visual identity, product presentation, storytelling, and promotional communication.

The third output was the introduction of AI-based market research as a practical digital business innovation approach. Participants were introduced to potential applications of AI for understanding consumers, identifying trends, generating content ideas, and supporting marketing decisions.

The fourth output was the strengthening of collaboration between higher education institutions and the MSME partner. The involvement of BINUS University, CUHK, and Atma Jaya Catholic University of Indonesia provided an international collaborative dimension to the business coaching process. The outputs generated through the program are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Community Service Outputs

No.	Output	Description	Beneficiary
1	Digital Branding Knowledge	Understanding of brand identity, consistency, and positioning	MSME owner and business team
2	Content Marketing Concepts	Ideas for visual content, storytelling, and promotional communication	MSME marketing team
3	Social Media Optimization Guidance	Recommendations for improving social media utilization	MSME business team
4	Product Branding Development	Identification of opportunities to strengthen product presentation and positioning	CV Syabina Berkah Sejahtera
5	AI-Based Market Research Introduction	Basic understanding of AI applications for market and consumer analysis	MSME owner and business team
6	International Business Coaching	Knowledge exchange and mentoring involving three higher education institutions	MSME partner and community service team

4. Discussion

The results demonstrate that the community service program was able to address the partner's main capability gaps in digital branding, content marketing, social media utilization, and digital business innovation. The findings support the view that digital transformation among MSMEs should not be limited to technological adoption but should also involve the development of organizational and marketing capabilities.

The improvement in participants' understanding of digital branding is consistent with the argument that branding has become increasingly important in digital markets where consumers encounter numerous competing products through online channels. Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick (2022) emphasized the strategic importance of digital marketing and digital brand management in creating awareness and engagement. In the context of CV Syabina Berkah Sejahtera, strengthening brand consistency provides a foundation for making products such as Bolu Batik, Mak Jurig, and Sambal Ceu'meti more recognizable and differentiated.

The findings related to content marketing also support previous research emphasizing the role of relevant and engaging digital content in building consumer relationships. Wang & Kim (2023) highlighted the importance of storytelling and visual content in strengthening brand awareness and consumer engagement. The mentoring activities in this program translated this principle into a practical MSME context by encouraging participants to develop product photographs, short promotional videos, and storytelling-based communication.

The results further demonstrate the importance of moving from simple social media presence toward strategic social media utilization. Tuten & Solomon (2023) explained that social media marketing can facilitate interaction and relationship building between brands and consumers. The program therefore encouraged the partner to consider social media not merely as a place to upload promotional materials but as a channel for communication, engagement, and brand development.

The introduction of AI-based market research represents an additional dimension of the program. Huang & Rust (2021) explained that AI can support marketing through improved customer understanding, personalization, and data-informed decision-making. For the partner, the introduction of AI-based tools provided an initial pathway toward more adaptive business decision-making. Nevertheless, the current result

should be considered an initial capability-building outcome rather than evidence that AI adoption has already generated measurable business performance improvements.

The effectiveness of the program was also influenced by the participatory coaching approach. Unlike a purely lecture-based training model, the activity connected the learning materials with the partner's actual products and existing marketing practices. This allowed participants to discuss concrete problems and immediately relate the concepts to their own business environment. The combination of knowledge sharing, coaching, mentoring, and practical implementation therefore contributed to the relevance and applicability of the program.

At the same time, the results indicate that digital capability development is a gradual process. A single community service intervention cannot immediately resolve all aspects of digital transformation, particularly when the partner still requires continuous practice in content production, social media management, analytics, and technology utilization. Therefore, the program should be viewed as an initial intervention that establishes the foundation for longer-term digital capability development.

5. Program Success Evaluation

The success of the program was evaluated using the indicators established in the Method section. The evaluation focused on participant understanding, participation, practical application, and the relevance of the outputs to the partner's business needs.

Table 3. Evaluation of Program Achievement

No.	Success Indicator	Evidence Observed	Achievement
1	Understanding of digital branding	Participants were able to discuss brand consistency, identity, and positioning	Achieved
2	Social media optimization	Participants identified opportunities for improving social media utilization	Achieved
3	Content marketing capability	Participants developed ideas for visual content and storytelling	Achieved
4	Visual branding awareness	Participants identified areas for improvement in product presentation	Achieved
5	Understanding of AI-based market research	Participants were introduced to and discussed practical AI applications	Achieved
6	Participant participation	Participants actively engaged in discussions and mentoring	Achieved
7	Practical implementation	Branding and content improvement opportunities were identified during mentoring	Achieved
8	Relevance of program	Participant responses indicated that the materials were relevant to their business needs	Achieved

6. Supporting Factors and Implementation Constraints

Several factors supported the successful implementation of the program. First, the partner demonstrated openness to learning and willingness to discuss its actual business challenges. This enabled the community service team to adapt the coaching process to the partner's specific needs. Second, the characteristics of the partner's culinary products provided substantial opportunities for visual branding, storytelling, and social media content development. Third, the international collaboration among BINUS University, CUHK, and Atma Jaya Catholic University of Indonesia provided diverse perspectives and strengthened the knowledge-sharing component of the program.

The use of practical examples was another supporting factor. Rather than relying exclusively on theoretical explanations, the coaching process used the partner's actual products and digital marketing conditions as discussion materials. This helped participants understand how the concepts could be applied directly to their business.

However, several constraints were also identified. The participants had different levels of digital literacy and prior experience in creating digital content and using digital marketing tools. This variation required the facilitators to adjust the depth and pace of explanations. Time limitations also restricted the extent to which all proposed digital marketing strategies could be implemented and evaluated during a single program.

To address these limitations, the facilitators used practical demonstrations, interactive discussions, and direct mentoring to simplify the application of digital marketing concepts. Participants were also encouraged

to continue practicing the strategies after the activity. These approaches helped reduce the gap between conceptual understanding and practical application.

7. Impact of the Community Service Program

The immediate impact of the program was reflected in the strengthening of the partner's awareness and capability regarding digital branding and digital marketing. Participants became more aware that product promotion should be supported by a consistent brand identity, attractive visual communication, relevant content, and meaningful consumer engagement.

The program also contributed to a shift in perspective regarding the role of social media. Social media was increasingly viewed not only as a promotional channel but also as a platform for building brand awareness, communicating product value, and developing relationships with consumers. This change in understanding is important for a culinary MSME seeking to compete in digital markets.

Another potential impact is the partner's increased awareness of the role of AI in business development. By introducing AI-based market research, the program encouraged participants to consider technology as a supporting tool for identifying consumer needs, exploring market trends, developing content, and improving marketing decisions.

From a broader perspective, the program contributes to the digital transformation of local culinary MSMEs by strengthening capabilities that can support market adaptability and competitiveness. Nevertheless, longer-term impacts such as increased sales, revenue, productivity, or customer acquisition require continuous monitoring and were not directly measured within the current program.

8. Program Sustainability

The sustainability of the program is directed toward the continued application of the knowledge and strategies introduced during the community service activities. The partner is encouraged to maintain consistent branding across its products and digital channels, establish a regular content development routine, improve product visualization, and optimize social media engagement.

Future mentoring can focus on more advanced areas, including social media analytics, content performance measurement, e-commerce optimization, AI-supported customer analysis, digital customer relationship management, and data-driven marketing strategy. These activities can help the partner move from basic digital adoption toward more systematic and measurable digital business management.

Continued collaboration between the partner and higher education institutions also provides an opportunity for periodic monitoring and further capacity development. Follow-up activities may include online mentoring, periodic business consultations, review of social media performance, and additional workshops on digital marketing and AI applications.

The sustainability approach is particularly important because digital transformation is a continuous process rather than a one-time intervention. By maintaining the application of the strategies introduced during the program and receiving continued guidance where necessary, CV Syabina Berkah Sejahtera is expected to progressively strengthen its digital branding, marketing capabilities, and adaptability to changes in the digital marketplace.

V. CONCLUSION

The community service program entitled *"From Local Products to Strong Brands: Empowering MSMEs Through Digital Branding and Business Innovation"* successfully improved the understanding and capabilities of CV Syabina Berkah Sejahtera in implementing digital branding, content marketing, and business innovation strategies. Through international collaborative business coaching and mentoring activities, participants gained broader insights into the importance of building strong brand identities, utilizing social media effectively, and developing attractive visual content to increase customer engagement and business competitiveness in digital markets.

The program demonstrated that integrating digital branding strategies, social media marketing, content marketing, and AI-based market research can support MSMEs in transforming local products into stronger and more recognizable brands. The mentoring activities also encouraged participants to improve branding consistency, optimize digital promotion strategies, and better understand consumer behavior and market trends through digital approaches. In addition, the educational and consultative methods used in this program were considered effective in helping MSMEs apply practical solutions that are relevant to their business conditions.

Although several challenges were identified, particularly related to digital literacy limitations and the consistency of digital content development, the participants showed strong enthusiasm and willingness to continue improving their digital marketing capabilities. Therefore, future community service activities are expected to focus on more advanced digital business development, including e-commerce optimization, social media analytics, artificial intelligence implementation, and sustainable digital business strategies to further strengthen MSME competitiveness and sustainability in the digital transformation era.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The authors would like to express sincere gratitude to BINUS University, The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK), and Atma Jaya Catholic University of Indonesia for their support and collaboration in the implementation of this community service program. Appreciation is also extended to CV Syabina Berkah Sejahtera as the MSME partner for their active participation, cooperation, and commitment throughout the business coaching and mentoring activities.

The authors would also like to thank all lecturers, students, facilitators, and supporting teams who contributed to the success of the program through knowledge sharing, digital branding assistance, and business innovation mentoring. Their valuable contributions and collaborative efforts greatly supported the implementation of this community service activity and its impact on strengthening MSME competitiveness in the digital era.

REFERENCES

- Alshurideh, M. T., Al Kurdi, B., Tariq, E., Alhamad, A., Alzoubi, H. M., & Ahmad, A. (2022). The Effect of Social Media Marketing on Consumer Engagement and Brand Loyalty: Evidence from Digital Businesses. *International Journal of Data and Network Science*, 6(3), 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.5267/j.ijdns.2022.1.001>
- Anistia, S., & Azmi, K. (2026). *Challenges and Opportunities in Digital Technology Adoption among MSMEs in Jakarta*. 11(1), 313–325.
- Chaffey, D., & Ellis-Chadwick, F. (2022). *Digital Marketing: Strategy, Implementation and Practice* (8th ed.). Pearson Education Limited.
- Huang, M.-H., & Rust, R. T. (2021). A Strategic Framework for Artificial Intelligence in Marketing. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 49(1), 30–50. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-020-00749-9>
- Monfort, A. (2025). Brand trust and consumer experience in digital marketing environments. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 42(3), 215–230.
- Setio, T., Suharto, U., & Hermawan, I. (2026). *Smart Digital Platform Capabilities for Customer Experience Innovation and Brand Engagement in Indonesian SMEs*. 9(1). <https://doi.org/10.32877/bt.v9i1.3938>
- Tuten, T. L., & Solomon, M. R. (2023). *Social Media Marketing* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.
- Wang, Y., & Kim, S. (2023). The Role of Visual Content Marketing and Storytelling in Enhancing Customer Engagement and Purchase Intention in SMEs. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 61(1), 45–59. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.intmar.2022.09.004>