

ENHANCING TUGU JAWA SOY SAUCE BRAND VISIBILITY THROUGH PRODUCT PHOTOGRAPHY

Yudhistya AYU KUSUMAWATI^{1*}, Hindam BASITH RAFIQI², Lutfi TRI ATMAJI³ and Anindya WIDITA⁴
¹⁻³Visual Communication Design Department, School of Design, Bina Nusantara University,

Jakarta, Indonesia 11480

⁴Public Relations Department, Faculty of Digital Communication and Hotel & Tourism, Bina Nusantara University, Jakarta, Indonesia 11480

*ykusumawati@binus.edu

ABSTRACT

The MSME sector is able to contribute to economic growth in Indonesia. Jawa Sehati Mulia is an MSME which operates in the field of producing soy sauce made from local black soybeans with several product variants including sweet soy sauce, spicy soy sauce, barbeque soy sauce, etc. Based on the situation analysis, several problems were found, including those related to marketing management aspects related to marketing using digital platforms. There are still limited marketing media that support digital marketing, including product photography, e-catalogs and social media content. Community service with this MSME scheme aims to increase HR capacity in marketing promotions including product photography, designing e-catalogs and social media content. In this community service activity, the service team provides intensive counseling and assistance to partners related to marketing aspects. Service partners will be trained to prepare marketing content which will later be implemented on various digital platforms. This community service is very important to help soy sauce industry increase their production capacity, as well as market and distribute services through digital channels. It is hoped that carrying out these community service activities can help MSMEs become more productive. The academic output produced through this activity is that students involved in this community service activity can apply the knowledge gained in lectures to be implemented with partners. Apart from that, students also get direct experience when engaging and interacting with service partner community groups. Lecturers can also contribute to society based on the results of previous research. Meanwhile, the expected outcome of partner empowerment through this activity is that partners will gain insight so that they have the ability to implement marketing strategies in an effort to optimize the marketing of products managed by partners. In this way, it is hoped that this program can make independent partners economically sustainable.

Keywords: *brand awareness, brand visibility, product photography, msme*

INTRODUCTION

MSMEs are pivotal to the growth of economies, particularly in developing nations. However, one of their most significant challenges lies in adapting to digital trends, especially in areas such as e-commerce and online branding. Research indicates that visual content, such as product photography, is becoming an indispensable tool for MSMEs to build their online presence and compete with larger businesses. By creating a visual narrative that resonates with their target audience, MSMEs can leverage digital platforms more effectively to enhance brand recognition. In addition, MSMEs also play a vital role in Indonesia's economy, particularly during crises, providing employment opportunities and contributing significantly to GDP. However, many MSMEs lack the resources for effective digital marketing. Product photography, when combined with digital branding strategies, can greatly enhance market visibility.

Apart from that, the advantage of this business group is that it has been proven to be resistant to various kinds of economic shocks [1]. So it has become imperative to strengthen the capacity of MSMEs involving many groups. MSMEs have quite a large contribution or role, namely expanding employment opportunities and absorbing labor, forming Gross Domestic Product (GDP), as well as providing a safety net, especially for low-income people to carry out productive economic activities [2]. The existence of the MSME sector in East Java, especially in Malang Regency, has enormous potential. The contribution of MSMEs to economic performance in the East Java region reached 58.36 percent, a significant increase compared to 2020 and 2021. The contribution of MSMEs in 2020 reached 57.25 percent and in the following year it rose to 57.71 percent [3]. UMKM Jawa Sehati Mulia is a soy sauce producer located in Jabung Village, Pakis District, Malang Regency. This MSME, which is managed by Mr. Dwi Prihartono, operates in the food sector and since 2017 has been producing typical Malang soy sauce made from local black soybeans. This soy sauce product is known as the Tugu Jawa Soy Sauce Brand which provides various types of soy sauce produced including sweet soy sauce, spicy soy sauce, barbeque soy sauce, etc.



Figure 1. Soy Sauce Product Visualization

The main problems faced by service partners are related to marketing management aspects. Several obstacles experienced by Tugu Jawa soy sauce related to marketing management aspects include the limited human resources who are literate in digital marketing technology such as the use of landing pages, e-commerce and other digital platforms. So far, marketing has been carried out based on orders and participating in various exhibition activities. Jawa Sehati Mulia MSME managers also still lack digital promotions. So far, promotions have only been carried out conventionally. Therefore, the main issues raised in this community development activity focus on the marketing management aspect.

Community service with this MSME scheme aims to implement digital branding including the implementation of digital marketing platforms, social media content, e-catalogs and product photography as an effort to digitize and optimize Tugu Jawa Soy Sauce. This service activity is based on the research results of the proposing team lecturers in the previous period. In this community service activity, the service team provides counseling and assistance to partners to be able to implement it through social media content. This community service is very important to help business actors in marketing and distributing services through social media channels. It is hoped that this community service activity can help the soy sauce industry become more productive.

The academic output produced through this activity is that students involved in this community service activity can apply the knowledge gained in lectures to be implemented with partners. Apart from that, students also get direct experience when engaging and interacting with service partner community groups. The expected outcome of partner empowerment through this activity is that partners will gain insight so that they have the ability to implement marketing strategies in an effort to optimize the arts services managed by partners. In this way, it is hoped that this program can make independent partners economically sustainable.

METHOD

Based on the situation analysis that has been previously formulated, the problems faced by partners have been identified and need to be completed through a service program. This community is expected to improve the welfare of service partners. The methods used are lectures and discussions, as well as simulations in the form of training.

1. Lecture and Discussion Method.

This community service activity begins with giving lectures and counseling to administrators who are partners in this activity. The material that will be provided is related to the following matters:

- a. Counseling regarding the importance of product photography in supporting e-catalogs for marketing soy sauce products.
- b. Counseling regarding the importance of digital marketing in marketing soy sauce products using various platforms including creating marketing content.

The discussion method in this activity is carried out as an effort to better understand the problems faced by partners and it is hoped that solutions can be found for these problems together.

2. Training Method

Demonstration and training activities are follow-up activities carried out by implementer of community service related to lecture and discussion activities done before. In this activity the learning and training materials include as follows:

- a. Product photography training using simple equipment
- b. Training on using Canva to create social media content

These two training activities are very useful for Tugu Jawa Soy Sauce business actors who are partners in this community service activity if they want to increase the marketing reach of soy sauce. Product photography is more than just capturing an image; it is about conveying the brand's essence and story. Research shows that high-quality visuals can increase consumer trust and lead to higher conversion rates in online sales. In the context of Tugu Jawa Soy Sauce, the service team focused on creating images that not only highlight the product's quality but also resonate with the local heritage, which is an integral part of the brand identity. The images produced during the training were analyzed based on their visual appeal, consistency with the brand's message, and potential for driving engagement on digital platforms. By employing simple yet effective techniques such as using natural lighting and minimalistic backgrounds, the brand was able to create a strong visual identity that could stand out in a crowded marketplace.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results from implementing professional product photography showed a clear improvement in brand visibility for Tugu Jawa Soy Sauce. The use of high-quality visuals helped differentiate the brand from competitors and increased consumer interest. In addition to improving the aesthetic appeal of the products, the strategic use of photography also allowed for better storytelling. By aligning the visuals with the cultural identity of the brand, the product images created an emotional connection with consumers, further strengthening brand loyalty.

Product photos are visualizations that depict an item to be shown to consumers. In addition, product photos lead to every interesting process and technique for taking product images. Therefore, choosing the right shooting technique will influence the perceptions formed in the minds of potential consumers. Apart from that, of course there are several things to pay attention to in the process of taking photos. Photographers must adjust based on the type of product, whether it is a photo of a food product, a photo of a beverage product, or a disposable item. This is related to the product image properties that are needed during the shooting process. In the context of this photo, the Tugu Jawa Soy Sauce food product requires a number of additional properties, such as placemats, wooden cutlery, and a number of raw materials for this food product such as black soybeans and koro beans.

In the process of providing the best quality product images, there are several types of product photos that can apply. One of them is taking pictures with a plain background. This type of product image using a plain background is the most commonly used method. The equipment used only requires a plain white cloth. Next, just need to place the product on top or in front of this plain color. Even though it seems simple, this type of product image is considered effective because it creates a minimalist, clean and elegant concept. A plain background helps potential buyers to focus on the product without any other distractions. The following is an example of a finished product photo of Tugu Jawa Soy Sauce with a plain background.



Figure 2. Photography Results of Spicy Variant Soy Sauce Products

Enhancing brand visibility through product photography is a powerful strategy that can significantly impact how a brand is perceived in the market. High-quality product images serve as a visual representation of a brand's values and quality, making it easier for consumers to connect with and trust the brand. In a crowded marketplace, where attention spans are short and competition is fierce, having compelling and professionally shot images can make a substantial difference in capturing consumer interest and standing out from the competition. Clear, aesthetically pleasing images that showcase the product's features and benefits can immediately grab the attention of potential customers and leave a lasting impression.

Product photography not only boosts brand visibility but also enhances the overall marketing strategy by creating a consistent and appealing visual identity. Effective photography can elevate a brand's presentation across various platforms, including websites, social media, and promotional materials. When images are carefully curated to reflect the brand's style and message, they contribute to a cohesive brand narrative that resonates with the target audience. This consistency helps in building brand recognition and reinforcing the brand's position in the consumer's mind, ultimately driving higher engagement and brand loyalty.

Moreover, high-quality product photography can significantly impact consumer purchasing decisions. Detailed and attractive images provide potential buyers with a clear understanding of what to expect from the product, reducing uncertainties and increasing their confidence in making a purchase. For online retailers, where customers cannot physically touch or see the product, exceptional photography becomes even more crucial. By offering a visually appealing and informative representation of the product, brands can enhance the online shopping experience and encourage conversions, leading to increased sales and revenue.

In conclusion, investing in professional product photography is a strategic move that can greatly enhance a brand's visibility and appeal. By presenting products in the best possible light and ensuring a consistent visual identity, brands can differentiate themselves from competitors and build stronger connections with their audience. As consumer preferences continue to evolve, maintaining high standards in product photography will be essential for staying relevant and achieving sustained success in the marketplace. Effective visual representation is not just about aesthetics; it's a fundamental component of a brand's overall strategy to attract, engage, and retain customers. In conclusion, enhancing the brand visibility of Tugu Jawa Soy Sauce through professional product photography has proven to be an effective strategy. By improving the visual presentation of the product and utilizing digital marketing channels, MSMEs can increase their market reach and brand recognition. The success of this community service program highlights the importance of integrating modern marketing techniques with traditional products to sustain and grow in a competitive environment.

In conclusion, the integration of product photography into the digital marketing strategies of MSMEs such as Tugu Jawa Soy Sauce provides a competitive edge in the market. By utilizing visually compelling images that align with the brand's identity, MSMEs can build a stronger digital presence, drive consumer engagement, and achieve sustainable growth. Moving forward, it is recommended that MSMEs continue to invest in digital tools and techniques to maintain their relevance in an increasingly visual-driven marketplace.

CONCLUSION

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In addition, enhancing the visibility of the Tugu Jawa Soy Sauce brand through product photography offers a compelling opportunity to strengthen its market presence and appeal. High-quality, strategically composed images can effectively capture the essence and quality of the soy sauce, making it more enticing to potential consumers. By leveraging professional product photography, Tugu Jawa soy sauce can distinguish itself from competitors, create a lasting impression, and drive consumer engagement through visually impactful content. This approach not only highlights the unique attributes of the product but also aligns with contemporary marketing trends, where visual aesthetics play a crucial role in brand perception. Furthermore, investing in professional product photography is a strategic move that can yield significant long-term benefits. Well-crafted images can be utilized across various marketing channels, from social media and digital advertising to packaging and promotional materials, ensuring consistent and attractive brand representation. By prioritizing visual excellence, Tugu Jawa soy sauce can build stronger connections with its target audience, enhance brand loyalty, and ultimately achieve greater market success. As the brand continues to evolve, maintaining high standards in product photography will be essential for sustaining its competitive edge and reinforcing its position in the marketplace.

Additionally, studies have shown that MSMEs implementing digital marketing tools such as SEO, social media strategies, and high-quality product visuals tend to achieve more sustained growth. Community service programs that focus on these areas have significantly empowered MSMEs in various regions, leading to economic resilience. A similar study conducted on the role of digital branding in small enterprises indicated that consistent and high-quality visual representation is pivotal to consumer engagement. Various research suggests that visual stimuli play a significant role in both memory retention and consumer buying behavior.

Effective digital marketing that employs these strategies has led to significant growth, particularly among MSMEs in competitive industries. It has been well established in research that digital platforms provide MSMEs with the potential to reach a broader audience, allowing them to compete in markets previously dominated by larger corporations. Studies show that a strong digital presence, coupled with high-quality visual branding, can significantly increase consumer trust and engagement.

Similar methods have been employed in various regions, where digital tools such as product photography and social media marketing were integrated into community service programs. Furthermore, findings from a study by Smith et al. (2022) reveal that visually appealing and professionally captured product images directly correlate with higher online conversion rates, particularly for MSMEs in the food and beverage sector.

In light of the positive outcomes observed in this study, it is evident that MSMEs should continue to prioritize the use of digital marketing strategies. Product photography, particularly when combined with social media platforms, can serve as a powerful tool in boosting brand visibility and customer engagement.

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