

Social Media Analysis of the Brand Image of Bakso Gajah Bang Ucok Products at Tuasan Tempuling Medan

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Abstract:

The study aims to analyze the effect of social media use on brand image and consumer interest in UMKM products Bakso Gajah Bang Ucok located in Tuasan, Tempuling, Medan. This research also uses descriptive qualitative research methods, derived from data collected through observations and interviews with the owner and employees of Bakso Gajah totaling 12 employees. The results showed that the use of social media such as TikTok, Instagram, and Facebook has a significant role to build brand image through creative content that utilizes emotional appeal, personal selling, and soft selling. Interactive features on TikTok, Instagram Reels, and customer comments are proven to improve brand image, expand consumer coverage, and create a closer relationship between consumers and businesses. However, this study has limitations as it only focuses on one location, one type of product, and has not explored other digital platforms that may be relevant for UMKM with different target markets. Future research is recommended to further compare the effectiveness of various social media in diverse types of UMKM and examine resource management strategies in content creation. This research not only confirms the importance of digital adaptation for UMKM to remain competitive, but also shows that marketing strategies need to be tailored to the unique characteristics of each business and target market.

Keywords: Social media, Brand image, Digital marketing, Customer engagement.

INTRODUCTION

In the rapidly evolving digital era, the presence of social media has significantly changed the marketing landscape. In addition, developments in this digital era have driven changes in consumer behavior, where they increasingly rely on digital platforms to find information, interact with brands, and make purchasing decisions. Digital marketing refers to a series of marketing strategies and actions implemented through digital platforms such

as social media, online advertising, email marketing, search engine optimization (SEO), and the like. (Astuti and Nugraeni, 2024) In the face of changing trends that continue to follow the flow of time from year to year, businesspeople must be able to adapt quickly. Currently, the digital platform that is often used is social media. The advantage of social media lies in its ability to reach consumers without being limited by distance and time. Social media makes it easy to reach

consumers in various regions. Currently, the most popular social media used are TikTok, Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter (Wjaya and Yulita, 2022).

Social media has emerged as the main digital platform in facilitating interaction without any distance and time limitations. According to Anwar in (Komaling, 2023), with the nature of social media that is already online tools, social media can facilitate its users to be able to interact in terms of information exchange as well as demand and supply. Social media platforms now offer various ways to share multimedia content. The features offered by social media are increasingly diverse and sophisticated, not only limited to text sharing, but also include the process of exchanging high-quality photos, videos of various durations and formats, live broadcasting that allows real-time interaction with the audience, to virtual reality that further enriches the user's interaction experience. The sophistication of these features has significantly enriched the user experience of interacting on social media platforms. Social media can also have seven potential functions in business, namely identifying customers, conducting mutual communication, sharing information to find out objects that customers like, customer presence, relationships between customers based on location and interaction patterns, company reputation in the eyes of customers and forming groups between customers (Achmad *et al.*, 2024).

Indonesia has recorded impressive achievements in social media usage, as revealed in a recent study conducted by Wearesocial Hootsuite in 2024. The data shows that the number of social media users in Indonesia has reached a very significant

penetration rate. With the total number of social media users in Indonesia reaching 191 million users, equivalent to 73% of the country's total population. This figure confirms that social media is no longer just an option, but has become an important part of the daily lives of Indonesians. In terms of age, social media users are dominated by the 18-34 age group, reflecting the high adoption of technology among the younger generation (Wearesocial, 2024). The most popular social media platform at the moment is TikTok because it offers a variety of interesting features. Features such as music, visual effects, filters, and text that make it easy for users to create a variety of interesting content. The presence of live streaming and tiktokshop features allows business people to interact directly or indirectly through the comments column, promote products, and hold direct question and answer sessions. These features are what make a new breakthrough for UMKM businesses to market products, especially for Bakso Gajah Bang Ucok UMKM which make TikTok the main marketing place for their products.

The diversity of activities offered by social media, ranging from various videos or photos, communication, news, to entertainment, has opened great opportunities for UMKM (Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises) players to utilize this platform as an effective marketing tool. UMKM not only serve as major contributors to economic growth, but also have a strategic role in creating jobs, reducing poverty, and promoting economic inclusiveness in the country (Jesica Naftali, Herlina Kusumaningrum, 2024). Social media makes it possible to reach a wider audience at a relatively affordable cost, opening opportunities for businesses to compete in

markets that may have previously been difficult to access. In addition, the digital marketing approach allows UMKM players to bridge the distance between customers and their products, building direct interactions that can strengthen customer relationships and provide opportunities to receive constructive feedback (Pitaloka and Kardoyo, 2023).

There are various aspects to consider in developing UMKM business strategies using digital media, including the selection of the right digital platform, effective online marketing strategies, reputation and brand image management, and the integration of digital technology with overall business operations (Audina *et al.*, 2024). Brand image is defined as the beliefs embedded in consumers towards a brand. Forming a brand image through social media is done by building personal branding. This helps umkm business actors in reaching the target audience by adjusting to changes in trends that continue to grow rapidly. According to Kotler and Armstrong, brand image is what consumers think and feel when they hear or see a brand name (Noor and Hendratmoko, 2022). UMKM businesses that actively respond to feedback provided by consumers through social media can build a strong image as a brand that cares and tries to improve their quality and services. To build a quality brand image in the eyes of consumers, umkm can utilize the various advanced features provided by social media to market effective products.

Previous research shows that the influence of social media on the brand image of UMKM products is very significant. First, research by (Billy Surya Hanjaya, Bayu Setyo Budihardjo, 2023) with the title "The Effect

of Social Media Marketing on Consumer Purchasing Decisions in UMKM" states that social media has a significant effect in building communication to customers or potential customers. Second, research by (Waliyudin Azhar *et al.*, 2023) with the title "The Effect of Social Media and Search Engines on Increasing UMKM Sales" states that social media has a positive effect in reaching a wider market in seeking profits. Finally, research by (Suhita, Rosyada and Rifani, 2022) with the title "The Effect of Social Media in Product Marketing Strategies in Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (UMKM)" states that social media has a major effect in increasing sales by UMKM players. All of these studies highlight that the use of social media has a significant effect on the development of UMKM.

To build a quality brand image in the eyes of consumers, umkm can utilize the various advanced features provided by social media to market effective products. Previous research shows that the influence of social media on the brand image of UMKM products is very significant. First, research by (Billy Surya Hanjaya, Bayu Setyo Budihardjo, 2023) with the title "The Effect of Social Media Marketing on Consumer Purchasing Decisions in UMKM" states that social media has a significant effect in building communication to customers or potential customers. Second, research by (Waliyudin Azhar *et al.*, 2023) with the title "The Effect of Social Media and Search Engines on Increasing UMKM Sales" states that social media has a positive effect in reaching a wider market in seeking profits. Finally, research by (Suhita, Rosyada and Rifani, 2022) with the title "The Effect of Social Media in Product Marketing Strategies in Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises

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Therefore, this study aims to identify the influence of social media on the brand image of similar UMKM products, but with different locations. The research was conducted at the Bakso Goreng Gajah Bang Ucok business located in Tuasan, Tempuling, Medan. The research examines how social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok can influence consumer perceptions and increase consumer interest in local UMKM products through interesting content by building emotional appeal through content such as the struggle to build a business. In addition, through personal selling and soft selling content, business owners show a friendly and inspiring personality that creates closeness with consumers. By analyzing the digital marketing strategy used by Bakso Goreng Gajah Bang Ucok, this research aims to identify key factors that contribute to the success of UMKM product marketing in the digital era. This research will compare the effectiveness of social media usage between Bakso Goreng Gajah Bang Ucok and its competitors in different locations to identify practical digital marketing strategies.

RESEARCH METHODS

The essence of research is an activity to find valid things in the form of knowledge and knowledge mastered by an individual. Bungin in (Adlini et al., 2022) elaborates that research places the most urgent position in science, meaning to develop and protect it from extinction. The research method used in writing this journal uses descriptive

qualitative research methods to examine in depth the matter being studied. Which is where qualitative descriptive research data can be obtained from observation, interviews, or documentation. Researchers chose to use qualitative descriptive research methods because qualitative descriptive methods can enable researchers to obtain a comprehensive and in-depth understanding through an inductive process that builds theories and conclusions based on field data in the form of interview observations obtained when conducting research not only from hypotheses that have been found previously as in quantitative research. The research data consists of primary data obtained through direct interviews with the owner of the elephant fried meatball stall and data sourced from books, journals, the internet, and other relevant sources.

According to Bogdan and Taylor in (Waruwu, 2023) define qualitative research as a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from people and observed behavior. Using descriptive qualitative research methods can examine in depth what is being studied because of its ability to comprehensively describe and interpret social reality regarding the influence of social media on the brand image of UMKM products at Bakso Gajah Bang Ucok. The data collection technique was carried out through in-depth interviews with 12 workers for the main informants in the study and the interview session lasted 60 minutes. The things interviewed include various aspects such as how social media content strategies, customer interactions through digital platforms, changes in consumer perceptions, challenges and opportunities in building

brand image through social media faced by Bakso Gajah Bang Ucok.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study aims to determine how much influence social media has on brand image at Bakso Gajah UMKM located on Jalan Tuasan Simpang Tempuling. This research was conducted by direct observation with UMKM business actors who are the owners of Bakso Gajah Bang Ucok as the main producer of meatball sales.

1) Profile of Bakso Gajah Bang Ucok UMKM

Business Name: Bakso Gajah Bang Ucok

Founder: Jespin Fenta

Year Established: 2023

Location: Jalan Tuasan Simpang Tempuling No.163, Kec. Medan Tembung, Medan City, North Sumatera.

Zip Code: 20222

Products: Bakso Gajah and Pisang Lebah

2) Overview of Bakso Gajah Bang Ucok UMKM

Bakso Gajah Bang Ucok is a business engaged in culinary food. This UMKM is located on Jalan Tuasan Simpang Tempuling No.163, Kec. Medan Tembung, Medan City, North Sumatra. The location of this UMKM is very strategic because it is very often passed by many people. This business has become one of the culinary icons that tempt tastes, especially for meatball lovers in North Sumatra. The main uniqueness of the Bakso Gajah Bang Ucok UMKM product lies in the size of the meatballs which are large or are much larger than meatballs in general. Bakso Gajah Bang Ucok products are cooked until

savory. In its presentation, Bakso Gajah Bang Ucok is also accompanied by a spicy and sweet chili sauce so that it incorporates deep elements creating the main characteristics in the main attraction for customers. Bakso Gajah Bang Ucok products are shown to various target markets ranging from culinary lovers, meatball fans, spicy food lovers to tourists who are interested in this meatball culinary.

The quality of raw materials used is fresh and processed in a homemade manner, so that the quality and safety of ingredients are more guaranteed than factory products. This product can be enjoyed directly on the spot with a crowded shop atmosphere, but the service provided is still friendly, besides that it can also be taken home to be enjoyed with family. This offers a memorable atmosphere for customers to be interested in remaining loyal to this business. In addition, this UMKM accepts criticism and suggestions from customers for product development over time. The success of Bakso Gajah Bang Ucok does not escape the openness to product innovation obtained through openness to customer input. So that this creates customer comfort with the products provided because they are in accordance with customer desires.

3) Logo of Bakso Gajah Bang Ucok UMKM



4) Research Results

Based on the results of research that has been conducted with direct observation of the informant as the owner of Bakso Gajah Bang Ucok UMKM regarding Social Media Analysis of the Brand Image of Bakso Gajah Bang Ucok Products in Tuasan Tempuling Medan, it states that the use of Social Media by Bakso Gajah UMKM is to use TikTok social media to create content related to product promotion where the owner of Bakso Gajah Bang Ucok regularly creates and uploads creative content in the form of short videos featuring daily sales activities. This digital promotion strategy, Bakso Gajah has not only succeeded in increasing brand awareness among TikTok users, but also creating closer interactions with customers through commenting and video sharing features.

Through consistent and interesting content, the owner of Bakso Gajah has succeeded in building good communication with customers. This can be seen from the high engagement rate on each of the owner's uploads, ranging from likes, positive comments, to shares made by his followers on social media. In addition, the use of relevant trends and hashtags in Bakso Gajah's TikTok content also helps increase brand visibility on the platform. Meanwhile on Instagram, the owner of Bakso Gajah focuses more on creating interesting videos and photos to be uploaded on feeds, stories and reels and is equipped with the Highlight feature to store important information such as menus and locations. Similar to TikTok and Instagram, YouTube is also utilized to upload interesting videos on reels in order to reach a wider target market.

The existence of social media helps in attracting customer attention and increasing customer interest in the products to be sold. This research begins with observing through TikTok social media related to the Bakso Gajah Bang Ucok business which has experienced a rise in popularity after interesting content about the products to be traded. After observation, it was continued by conducting an interview session with the owner and workers of the Bakso Gajah Bang Ucok business. There are 5 questions asked by researchers to the owner of Bakso Gajah UMKM related to the use of social media on product brand image, including when the interview was conducted, it was found that the owner of Bakso Gajah Bang Ucok UMKM employed workers with a total of 12 workers. In addition, the owner of Bakso Gajah Bang Ucok UMKM is not limited to owning only one business.

Instead, they have another business, namely honey banana, which is right next to the Bakso Gajah Bang Ucok business. UMKM Bakso Gajah Bang Ucok utilizes the existing media very well. This business is not only limited to sales to meet customers directly on the spot but also utilizes application media such as Grabfood to expand the sales range, this certainly supports the sales of Bakso Gajah Bang Ucok UMKM products. Through Grabfood, customers can easily order Bakso Gajah products from anywhere and anytime, without having to come directly to the location. Excellent features such as estimated delivery time, easy-to-access payment methods, and promos and discounts that make many buyers interested in using this application.

The owner of Bakso Gajah Bang Ucok stated that before the use of social media in marketing this business product was less recognized by customers. However, when the owner actively utilizes the use of social media in marketing this business product begins to experience significant changes. More and more customers are interested in trying the products being marketed.

Therefore, the owner uses social media such as Instagram, TikTok, and also YouTube Videoshort as promotional media in attracting customer attention. Instagram with features such as uploading photos, videos, and stories is used by the business owner of Bakso Gajah Bang Ucok to upload interesting video content about the owner's daily life while selling products. The Youtube Videoshort feature is used to build personal branding to attract consumer attention by providing creative, funny, and interesting content so as to entice customers to find out more about the products being traded. In the choice of social media, TikTok is the main choice used by the owner of Bakso Gajah Bang Ucok to market products. This is because the owner of the Bakso Gajah Bang Ucok business thinks that on the TikTok social media platform, performance is not only seen from the number of followers. This is because TikTok has a unique algorithm that allows content to still reach a wide audience even though the account has a relatively small number of followers. This is in line with the function of TikTok's algorithm, which prioritizes quality content with high levels of interaction (engagement) such as comments, likes, shares, and longer viewing time. In addition, TikTok also provides easy-to-use

video editing features that can be accessed anytime and anywhere.

In line with this understanding, the owner of Bakso Gajah Bang Ucok actively interacts with customers every day through social media. The interaction model used is to create content around business activities. The interaction model is designed to strengthen relationships with customers and increase engagement. However, the owner of Bakso Gajah Bang Ucok admitted that he experienced problems when uploading content, where the editing process took quite a long time, so it could only be done during free time when the business owner had completed every business related to his sales. Such as the provision of raw materials, preparation of time-consuming seasonings, and the cleanliness of the sales place. The presentation of the content displayed by the business owner of Bakso Gajah Bang Ucok is very diverse, such as personal selling (communicating directly with potential buyers) and soft selling (a subtle approach in promoting a product). The strategy used by the owner of Bakso Gajah Bang Ucok in promoting his product is by creating content that triggers emotions from the audience.

Sales of Bakso Gajah Bang Ucok products before recognizing social media initially only relied on customers around the sales area. However, after using social media such as TikTok, this business experienced a very significant increase in sales. The creative content uploaded to TikTok attracted the attention of many people, so the video went viral, which directly increased public awareness of the meatball product. This success not only attracted

new customers, but also caught the attention of major media outlets, such as TransTv and Kompas TV. Famous influencers also visited and gave interesting positive reviews, further increasing the popularity and brand image of Bakso Gajah Bang Ucok on social media. However, it is not uncommon for there to be bad reviews or criticism related to this business, both regarding the image of the taste that is lacking on the tongue, or other aspects. Not a few customers also provide suggestions regarding this business. Every complaint submitted by customers is responded to professionally, through evaluation of the criticism received by the owner of this business making a more mature strategy to support business sustainability in the future. The owner of Bakso Gajah Bang Ucok UMKM considers criticism not as an obstacle to his business but a reflection or motivation to build his business so that it can continue to develop and innovate.

This research shows that the use of social media is very influential on the development of product brand image. The product marketing strategy on the TikTok platform is the key to increasing product sales. This can be seen at the beginning of the opening of the Bakso Gajah Bang Ucok business, only a few customers knew about this business. Due to the low level of customer awareness about Bakso Gajah Bang Ucok products. However, when the Bakso Gajah Bang Ucok business uses the features of the social media platform well, there is a significant increase in product sales every day. This step proved to be a turning point in determining the development of the business for the better. Through social media platforms,

information about Bakso Gajah Bang Ucok products can reach customers much more freely in a relatively short time. Due to this significant spike in sales, it shows that marketing strategies using social media platforms have proven effective in improving the brand image of a product and attracting new customers to the products being traded. This phenomenon emphasizes the importance of digital technology adaptation in the marketing strategy of UMKM in the modern era.

CONCLUSIONS

This research shows that the use of social media such as TikTok, Instagram, Facebook, and Youtube Videshort can improve brand image and customer interest through good branding on these social media for UMKM products such as Bakso Gajah Bang Ucok. Creative marketing strategies, such as content that triggers emotional appeal or builds personal branding in the eyes of customers, successfully attracts the attention of audiences everywhere. However, this study has limitations, namely the focus of the research only focuses on one location, one type of business, and only on one social media, namely the use of TikTok. So the results may not fully reflect the effectiveness of this strategy in other UMKM with different contexts or target audiences and target markets.

Therefore, further research is recommended to explore the impact of social media on different types of UMKM with different target markets to understand more specific strategy needs. It is important to conduct an in-depth comparison of the effectiveness of various social media platforms, given that each platform is unique and not all platforms are suitable for all types of businesses. In addition, research is needed that explores strategies to optimally manage

time and resources in producing quality and consistent social media content. In addition, further research opens up opportunities to understand more deeply how elements such as personalized branding, the dynamics of social media trends, and the use of digital technology can help UMKM grow, while still paying attention to the unique needs and characteristics of each business. With this opportunity, it is hoped that a deeper insight into strategies for effective use of social media for the development of UMKM in today's digital era can be gained.

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