

STRENGTHENING THE CAPACITY OF MSMEs THROUGH PRODUCT PHOTOGRAPHY AND VISUAL CONTENT TRAINING AS A DIGITAL MARKETING STRATEGY

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ABSTRACT

This community service activity aims to increase the capacity of MSMEs through training and workshops on product photography and visual content as a digital marketing strategy. The activity was held on August 6–7, 2025, in Menteng Dalam Village, involving 15 MSME actors, the majority of whom were members of the Family Welfare Movement (PKK) and engaged in the culinary business. The methods used included pre-tests and post-tests, training on basic product photography techniques and social media publication strategies, as well as a hands-on workshop on product photography using provided photo props. The results of the activity showed a significant increase in participant understanding, with an average pre-test score of 48.8 increasing to 87 in the post-test, representing a 38.2-point increase. Photos of participants' work were uploaded to the Padlet platform as a medium for sharing and appreciation, which also served as a means of documentation and reflection on learning. This activity demonstrated that improving visual skills can be an effective strategy in strengthening the competitiveness of MSMEs in the digital era. Recommendations from this activity are the need for ongoing mentoring, advanced training related to digital content editing, and collaboration with various parties to expand the marketing network for MSME products.

Keywords: Product Photography, Visual Content, Digital Marketing, Storytelling, Social Media.

1. INTRODUCTION

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) are a crucial pillar of the Indonesian economy, playing a significant role in employment creation, poverty alleviation, and improving public welfare. However, in the increasingly competitive digital era, MSMEs face significant challenges, particularly in product marketing. Jakarta, Indonesia's capital, is not only the centre of government but also the centre of economic and business activity, serving as a barometer of national economic development, with a high concentration of various industrial, trade, and service sectors. One of Jakarta's key strengths is the presence of a significant number of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), which contribute significantly to the regional and national economies. MSMEs in Jakarta operate in various sectors, from culinary and fashion to creative services. Their presence not only contributes to the Gross Regional Domestic Product (GRDP) but also plays a vital role in absorbing labour, increasing family incomes, and strengthening the economic structure of urban communities.

However, amidst the rapid digital transformation and changing consumer behaviour, Jakarta's MSMEs face serious challenges. One major challenge is their limited ability to utilise digital marketing strategies, particularly related to product visualisation. In the context of an increasingly competitive digital market, the appearance of product photos is a crucial factor influencing consumer decisions (Mahendra & Utami, 2024; Ningsih et al., 2024; Wahyuningrum et al., 2025). One sub-district in Jakarta that faces the challenge of limited ability to create visual product photo content is Menteng Dalam.

Menteng Dalam, South Jakarta, has the potential for MSMEs run by women from the Family Welfare Movement (PKK) with various culinary businesses, such as grilled chicken, wet cakes, mustopa potatoes, cireng, cimol, catering, and various local snacks. These products have good taste but remain weak in digital competitiveness because they cannot be displayed visually attractively on social media or marketplaces. Several previous activities have shown that creative and professional product photos can increase consumer purchasing interest because consumers judge product quality first from visual appearance (Utami et al., 2024; Susanti et al., 2024; Utami et al., 2023; Veranita et al., 2024; Widiati et al., 2024).

Previous activities have demonstrated that product photography training can help MSMEs produce high-quality visual content to support digital marketing strategies (Nurlaily et al., 2021; Pamungkas et al., 2024; Susanti et al., 2024; Wahyuningrum et al., 2025). Furthermore, product photography can improve skills and the quality of visual content, which in turn leads to increased sales (Fetrianggi et al., 2024; Utami et al., 2025; Widiati et al., 2024). A strong visual strategy, including product photography and social media design, can significantly increase MSME competitiveness in the online marketplace, particularly on visual-based platforms like Instagram (Mahendra & Utami, 2024; Utami et al., 2023; Widiati et al., 2024). This is reinforced by Ningsih et al. (2024); in developing a visual communication

model, it can be done with "3P" (Preparation, Photography, Publication), which has been proven to be effective in increasing MSMEs' visual literacy, social media engagement, and brand awareness through the use of product photos.

In line with previous studies, community service activities that strengthen the capacity of MSMEs through product photography training and visual content creation can be used as a digital marketing strategy in Menteng Dalam Village, making it relevant. This activity aims to equip 15 MSME entrepreneurs who are PKK mothers with practical skills in product photography using smartphones. This includes teaching product photography using simple lighting techniques, composition settings, and basic editing. It is hoped that after the training, the resulting culinary products can be presented more professionally, attractively, and in accordance with digital marketing standards.

By improving product photography skills, MSMEs are not only able to expand their market through social media and digital platforms but can also strengthen local product branding and provide socio-economic impacts in the form of increased family income and women's empowerment in the Menteng Dalam community. The purpose of this activity is to improve the skills of MSME actors, especially PKK mothers in Menteng Dalam Village, in utilising digital technology to support product promotion and marketing by producing attractive product photos with simple photography techniques using smartphones, mastering the basics of photo editing, and understanding strategies for compiling effective visual content on social media and marketplaces. With these skills, MSMEs' products have professional, attractive, and consistent product photos, thereby strengthening brand awareness, increasing competitiveness in the digital market, and ultimately encouraging increased family income and empowering the local economy.

1. METHOD

The implementation method for this activity was designed in a participatory manner, involving 15 MSME entrepreneurs who are members of the Family Welfare Movement (PKK) in Menteng Dalam Village. The activity began with a pretest to measure participants' initial knowledge of product photography techniques, simple editing skills, and their understanding of digital marketing strategies through social media and marketplaces. After that, the activity continued with a training session that included a presentation of basic material on the importance of visual content in digital marketing, product photography techniques using smartphones, lighting, composition, and the use of backgrounds that support product images.

Next, participants participated in a workshop that emphasised hands-on skills, namely the practice of photographing their business products equipped with provided photo props such as photo mats, simple lighting equipment (mini lights/softboxes), and supporting decorations (e.g., plates, wooden bases, or leaf garnishes). The provision of these props aims to enable participants to understand how the use of additional elements can enhance visual aesthetics, strengthen product image, and create a professional impression in the resulting photos. Thus, participants not only practised basic photography techniques but also learnt about visual storytelling through product arrangement and the use of appropriate props.

The next stage involves photo editing assistance using simple smartphone apps to ensure product photos appear brighter, sharper, and more consistent with digital promotional needs. Participants are then guided to create visual content in the form of social media posts or digital catalogues that combine product photos with targeted promotional captions.

At the end of the program, a post-test was conducted to evaluate the participants' knowledge and skills improvement after the training and workshop. The post-test results were compared with the pre-test to assess the program's effectiveness. The final stage involved evaluation and discussion to identify obstacles, provide feedback, and develop a follow-up plan to ensure the skills acquired could be applied sustainably in their businesses. The following is an illustration of the activity stages:



Figure 1. Stages of Activity Implementation

2. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The MSME Capacity Building Activity through Product Photography and Visual Content Training as a Digital Marketing Strategy was held for two days, namely on August 6, 2025, for the training session and August 7, 2025, for the workshop session, each taking place from 09.00 to 12.00 WIB at RPTRA Flamboyan, Menteng Dalam Village, South Jakarta. This activity was attended by 15 MSME business actors who are PKK mothers with types of home culinary businesses such as grilled chicken, wet cakes, mustopa potatoes, cireng, cimol, to catering.

The activity began with a pretest to determine participants' initial understanding of product photography and digital marketing strategies. The pre-test and post-test measured indicators included conceptual understanding of photography, practical skills, product visual creativity, social media utilisation, and storytelling & captioning. The following are the results of the pre-test and post-test measurements administered to participants in this activity:

Table 1. Pre-test and Post-test Results

No	Assessment Indicators	Average Pretest	Average Posttest	Increased Understanding
1	Understanding the Concept of Photography	50	90	+40
2	Practical Skills	43	80	+37
3	Product Visual Creativity	49	85	+36
4	Utilization of social media	53	90	+37
5	Storytelling & Caption	49	90	+41
Overall Average		48,8	87	+38,2

The evaluation results of the training and workshop activities showed a significant increase in understanding across all assessment indicators. In the aspect of understanding photography concepts, the average score of participants increased from 50 in the pre-test to 90 in the post-test, or an increase of +40 points. This indicates that participants were able to understand the basics of photography well after being given the material and direct practice. The practical skills indicator also experienced a significant increase, from an average score of 43 to 80, with an increase in understanding of +37 points, indicating that the direct photography practice activities had successfully improved the technical skills of the participants. In the aspect of product visual creativity, the average score increased from 49 to 85, with an increase of +36 points. This shows that participants are not only able to take pictures but also more creative in arranging the composition and photo properties.

Furthermore, an improvement was seen in the social media utilisation indicator, with an initial score of 53 increasing to 90, with an increase in understanding of +37 points. This indicates that participants are increasingly understanding strategies for distributing visual content to expand digital marketing reach. The final indicator, namely storytelling & captions, experienced the largest increase, from 49 to 90, with an increase of +41 points, indicating that participants have become more skilled in composing visual supporting narratives so that promotional messages become more attractive. Overall, the average understanding of participants increased from 48.8 in the pre-test to 87 in the post-test, with an average increase of +38.2 points. These results confirm that the training and workshop activities implemented are effective in increasing the capacity of MSMEs, especially PKK mothers in Menteng Dalam Village, both in the technical aspects of photography and digital marketing strategies through visual content.

On the first day of the activity, the training session was delivered by two speakers: Annisa, a lecturer at the Faculty of Economics and Business, Sahid University, who provided material on basic techniques for taking product photos, including the use of natural lighting, background selection, and how to optimise smartphone cameras. Meanwhile, Euis, a lecturer from the Faculty of Economics and Business, Sahid University, provided material on strategies for publishing product photos on social media, emphasising the importance of composing captions and applying storytelling to strengthen promotional appeal. The participants appeared very enthusiastic about participating in this activity because they gained new insights that they had never previously applied in their businesses. This enthusiasm was evident from the many questions asked and their seriousness in paying attention to each material. The training process was also supported by students who were tasked with assisting with technical activities, such as preparing presentation equipment, accompanying participants during initial practice, and ensuring the training was more interactive and conducive. The presence of students not only lightened the resource person's workload but also provided added value because participants could learn more personally through direct mentoring.

On the second day, a workshop focused on hands-on skills was held. Participants brought their own business products to be photographed using smartphones, supported by simple props provided, such as wooden bases, plain fabric, mini lighting, and supporting decorations. This exercise aimed to demonstrate how simple props can enhance the aesthetics of photos and create a professional impression of products. The photos taken were then uploaded by participants to the padlet.com platform so that all participants could view, compare, and provide comments on each other's work. Figure 2 shows a participant practicing taking photos of a product he owns.

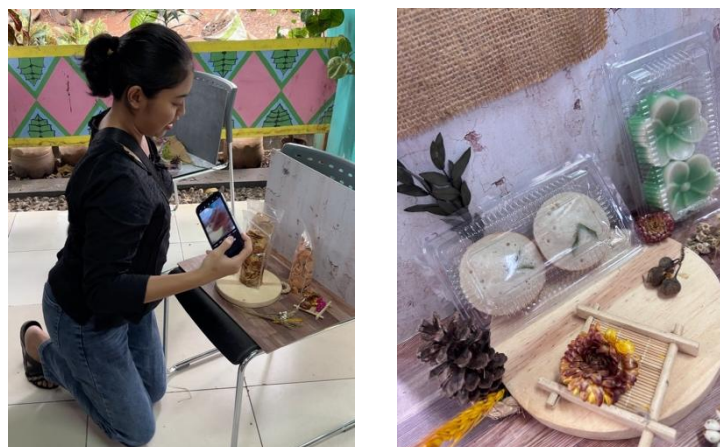


Figure 2. Product Photography Practice

Each participant who has completed the product photography practice is asked to practice writing captions for their photos. The ability to write promotional narratives and product descriptions is also required. This will ensure that when promoting on social media, participants are equipped with digital marketing skills. This activity not only provided a practice space but also a forum for sharing experiences and collective evaluation. Here are some of the participants' works uploaded to Padlet.com.

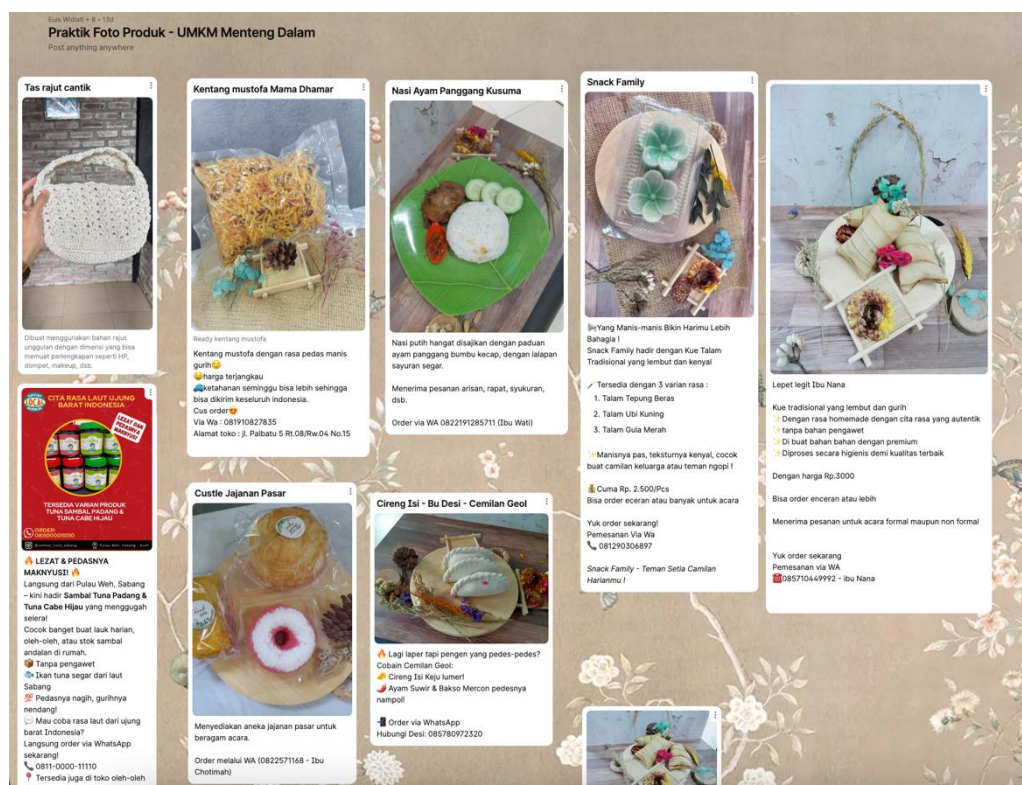


Figure 3. Results of Participants' Product Photography Work

Womenpreneurs are typically small business owners who work more in the trade and service industries than in manufacturing. Additionally, gender norms prevent women from being proficient in technology. The current pandemic condition and the digital age can motivate female entrepreneurs to keep growing their firms and businesses that can be advertised online (Utami, et al., 2022). The shift toward digital platforms provides new opportunities for womenpreneurs to overcome limitations in physical market access, reduce operational costs, and reach wider audiences without being constrained by geographical boundaries. This transformation also encourages them to adapt by enhancing their digital literacy and using technology as a tool for business resilience and competitiveness.

Strategic steps in efforts to improve digital marketing activities include creating an Instagram social media calendar so that content posting schedules are more regular (Widiati, et al., 2024). Besides Instagram, womenpreneurs can also leverage other digital platforms such as TikTok, Facebook, and e-commerce marketplaces to diversify marketing channels and strengthen brand presence. By utilizing analytics features provided by these platforms, they can better understand consumer behavior, tailor content to market needs, and build stronger engagement with customers. In the long term, the ability to maximize digital marketing strategies will play a crucial role in ensuring sustainability and growth of women-led businesses in an increasingly competitive digital economy.

The work of the training and product photography workshop participants was then published through the Padlet platform as a form of documentation and a sharing medium between MSMEs. The resulting products reflect the diversity of the PKK mothers' businesses in Menteng Dalam Village. The product photography results include Mama Dhamar's mustofa potatoes, which are neatly arranged with additional decorative properties, as well as Kusuma's grilled chicken rice, which is displayed with simple but attractive plating. In addition, there are also snack products such as custom-made snacks, Bu Desi's spicy-filled cireng, and Bu Nana's tape lepet, which are created with a woven background and bamboo properties to look more traditional and aesthetic.

Padlet was chosen as the upload medium because it is interactive, accessible, and visually friendly. Participants can directly upload their work independently, adding product descriptions, ordering contact information, and adding storytelling narratives learned in the training. Padlet also allows all work to be displayed in a single collaborative display, allowing each participant to view, learn from, and be inspired by each other's work. In this way, Padlet serves not only as a means of documenting activity results but also as a digital collaboration tool that encourages sharing, expands networks, and trains participants in online platform-based digital marketing practices.

After the workshop concluded, a post-test was conducted to measure the extent to which participants' understanding had improved. The results showed significant improvement, with an average score of 87 out of 100. This 38.2-point increase from the pre-test indicates that participants had progressed in understanding basic product photography techniques, simple editing, and strategies for creating visual content for social media. Furthermore, the discussion and reflections indicated that participants recognised the importance of visual consistency in digital promotion and began to understand that engaging product photos can enhance their business image and expand their market reach.

Thus, this activity is effective in increasing the capacity of MSMEs, especially in the aspects of visual branding and digital marketing. The ability to produce attractive product photos and compelling visual content provides added value for MSME products, making them more competitive in the digital market. These results are also in line with activities carried out by Pamungkas et al. (2024), Susanti et al. (2024), Utami et al. (2023), and Wahyuningrum et al. (2025), which emphasize that attractive product photos greatly influence consumer attraction and purchase decisions. In addition, studies from Kartika et al. (2024), Ningsih et al. (2024), Veranita et al. (2024), and Wahyuningrum et al. (2025) reinforce the importance of good visual strategies in improving the professionalism of MSME promotions on social media, which ultimately increases trust and customer engagements

This skill improvement is expected to be not only beneficial in the short term but also sustainable in the long run. By mastering visual branding and digital marketing, MSMEs—especially those managed by PKK mothers—can continuously adapt to changes in consumer behavior and market dynamics in the digital era. Moreover, the application of these skills can strengthen the contribution of PKK mothers in the local economy, not only by increasing household income but also by encouraging community-based economic independence. In the broader perspective, this empowerment process is an important step in creating resilient MSMEs that are able to compete at the regional and even national level.

3. CONCLUSION

The MSME Capacity Building Activity Through Product Photography and Visual Content Training as a Digital Marketing Strategy held in Menteng Dalam Village has had a positive impact and succeeded in increasing participants' knowledge and skills in photographing products, managing visual content, and utilising social media for business promotion. Through a series of training on August 6 and a practical workshop on August 7, 2025, participants not only gained insight into basic product photography techniques, the use of props, lighting, and smartphone camera

optimisation, but also skills in publishing the results of photos to social media by adding captions and interesting storytelling.

The pre-test and posttest results showed a significant increase in participants' understanding, indicating that interactive training methods and hands-on practice are effective in building the digital capacity of MSMEs. Documenting work through Padlet further strengthened the learning experience because participants could view their work collectively, inspire each other, and increase their motivation to continue improving the quality of their product marketing. Furthermore, hands-on practice with the work published on Padlet was a valuable experience because participants could view the results collectively, provide feedback, and learn from each other's creativity. This fostered motivation to be more serious in developing their product's digital marketing.

Thus, this activity not only achieved its goal of knowledge transfer but also provided tangible skills that can be directly implemented in participants' daily businesses. Going forward, ongoing mentoring and broader use of digital technology are expected to further strengthen the competitiveness of MSMEs and contribute to the local economy.

As a follow-up to this activity, it is recommended that ongoing mentoring through digital marketing be provided so that participants can continue to hone their acquired skills. Furthermore, collaboration with external stakeholders such as e-commerce platforms, photography communities, and digital marketing practitioners needs to be enhanced to expand the marketing network for MSME products. Participants are also recommended to take advanced training on simple photo and video editing to produce more professional content, accompanied by regular evaluations to assess the training's impact on business development, both in terms of increasing turnover and marketing reach. With these steps, similar activities will not only be a short-term transfer of knowledge but also a sustainable strategy to strengthen MSME competitiveness and support the economic empowerment of local communities.

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