

# **Redefining Surabaya's MSMEs Landscape: Unleashing Digital Virality for Sustainable Growth**

**Sutama Wisnu Dyatmika<sup>1</sup>, Bagong Suyanto<sup>2</sup>, Erna Setijaningrum<sup>3</sup>, Widhayani Puri Setioningtyas<sup>4</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Postgraduate School, Universitas Airlangga, Surabaya, Indonesia

<sup>2</sup>Faculty of Social and Political Science, Universitas Airlangga, Surabaya, Indonesia

<sup>3</sup>Department of Public Administration, Universitas Airlangga, Surabaya, Indonesia

<sup>4</sup>Doctoral School of Economic and Regional Sciences, Hungarian University of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Hungary.

\*Corresponding author: *Sutama Wisnu Dyatmika*

Corresponding email: *sutama.wisnu.dyatmika-2022@pasca.unair.ac.id*

## **ARTICLE INFO**

### **Article history:**

Received 14 May 2024

Revised 06 July 2024

Accepted 20 September 2024

Available Online 03 December 2024

### **Keywords:**

Digital Marketing, Viral Content, MSMEs, Surabaya City, Digitalized Business

### **Cite as:**

Dyatmika, S. W., Suyanto, B., Setijaningrum, E., & Setioningtyas, W. P. (2024). Redefining Surabaya's MSMEs Landscape: Unleashing Digital Virality for Sustainable Growth. *Economics, Business, Accounting & Society Review*, 3(3), 197–207.

<https://doi.org/10.55980/ebasr.v3i3.137>

## **ABSTRACT**

This study explores the effectiveness of digital marketing strategies, particularly viral content, in enhancing the visibility and sustainability of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in Surabaya City. This research utilizes a descriptive qualitative approach, combining literature review and stakeholder interviews as key data collection methods. Interviews were conducted with key MSME stakeholders in Surabaya to assess the implementation and impact of digital marketing strategies on business performance. The findings indicate that digital marketing, especially through viral content, is crucial in improving MSME visibility and long-term sustainability. Viral content effectively captures consumer attention, fosters online engagement, and strengthens brand recognition, ultimately contributing to business growth. This study offers valuable insights for MSME owners, policymakers, and support institutions seeking to optimize digital marketing strategies. Practical recommendations include enhancing content creation skills, fostering collaborations with local influencers, and leveraging social media platforms for broader market reach. These findings underscore the importance of strategic digital marketing in ensuring the competitiveness and resilience of MSMEs in an increasingly digitalized business environment.

© 2024 The Author(s). Published by International Ecsis Association. This is an open access article under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.



## **1. Introduction**

In the current era of globalization and rapidly developing information technology, the Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) sector plays a crucial role in the local and national economy. Micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) represent a significant portion of the global economy, contributing substantially to employment and economic growth. The COVID-19 pandemic presented unprecedented challenges to MSMEs worldwide, forcing many to adapt rapidly to survive (Gao et al., 2023). Through online channels, MSMEs can scale operations and enhance revenue (Purba et al., 2021). Digital marketing enhances MSME growth by boosting turnover, expanding

business size, and strengthening managerial competencies (Hossain et al., 2022; Sumarlinah et al., 2022; Ulkhair et al., 2023). Small businesses utilize digital marketing to enhance growth, leveraging technology acceptance and strategic engagement (Basri et al., 2023; Ritz et al., 2019). Digital marketing strategy, innovation, and leadership drive SME competitiveness and sustainability in developing markets (Chinakidzwa & Phiri, 2020).

Surabaya has shown positive digital infrastructure. The rapid adoption of information technology, the availability of adequate internet access, and the active participation of the community in digital platforms provide opportunities for MSMEs to utilize digital marketing strategies. As an integral part of the city's diverse economy, MSMEs in Surabaya face significant challenges and opportunities. Surabaya fosters MSME growth, enhancing economic activities, community empowerment, and quality of life in housing developments (Rahmawati et al., 2018). Surabaya MSMEs transform digital engagement through mobile commerce and process innovation, reshaping global market access and competitive advantage while competitive strategies further enhance performance in the culinary sector (Nayati Utami et al., 2019; Pusung et al., 2023). Surabaya SMEs thrive through entrepreneurial leadership, good governance, and effective business process management (Usman et al., 2020).

Since the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, the city of Surabaya has witnessed a dramatic transformation in its business ecosystem, particularly in the growth rate of MSMEs and sales through digital platforms. This transformation provides a positive boost to MSMEs and significantly impacts the city's economic growth rate from 2020 to the end of 2021. According to the head of the Surabaya City Trade and Industry Office (Disdagin). Surabaya City's economic growth rate reached 3.5 percent due to increased online product purchases. This increase was highlighted in a focus group discussion (FGD) event entitled "Survey of Consumer Needs for the Security and Convenience of E-commerce Systems" (Benoni et al., 2024)

A notable increase was observed in the MSME sector, with new business growth reaching 180,000 by 2022. Additionally, online trade transaction activity experienced a significant surge, increasing 150 percent. Products that dominate in e-commerce transactions in Surabaya City demonstrate the diversity of consumer interest (Adi & Riwayat, 2024). The three product categories with the highest sales figures are fashion, food and beverages, and health products. This phenomenon reflects a shift in consumer behavior towards online purchasing, creating a significant opportunity for MSMEs to expand their coverage and increase their sales through the implementation of an effective digital marketing strategy, mainly through the use of viral content that can attract the attention of a large consumer base (Liu et al., 2024). MSMEs that can adapt rapidly through the implementation of digital marketing strategies have a greater likelihood of survival and growth in the face of economic challenges precipitated by the pandemic (Kawane et al., 2024) A deep understanding of the changing business environment and consumer needs is essential for MSMEs in Surabaya to succeed. Digital marketing strategies with a focus on viral content are expected to be the key to success for these businesses. As defined by (C. L. Wang, 2021), digital marketing is a series of marketing strategies that utilize digital platforms and channels to interact with audiences, promote products or services, and build brand awareness. It encompasses many facets, including using social media for marketing purposes, creating digital content, deploying digital advertising, and applying search engine optimization (SEO) techniques. Digital marketing offers a distinctive capacity to personalize messages, monitor real-time campaign performance, and measure results in greater detail. This enables companies, including MSMEs, to more effectively communicate with their target markets in this digital age (Sundaram et al., 2020).

In marketing, visibility refers to the extent to which a product, brand, or business is recognizable and visible to its target audience (Sedalo et al., 2022). In the digital environment, visibility encompasses a robust online presence, enhanced search engine optimization (SEO) rankings, and active engagement on various social media platforms. By maintaining a high level of visibility, MSMEs can attract the attention of potential customers, foster trust, and create opportunities for business growth (Denisova, 2023). Furthermore, increased visibility is frequently quantified through metrics such as the number of website visitors, the extent of social media engagement, and online search rankings (Malesev & Cherry, 2021). MSMEs are defined as small or medium-scale businesses in terms of revenue, number of employees, or assets. MSMEs play a pivotal role in local and national economies, contributing to job creation, innovation, and economic

sustainability (Parida, 2021). In the context of digital marketing, micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) frequently encounter difficulties in competing with large-scale businesses. Consequently, the implementation of an appropriate digital marketing strategy can be an efficacious instrument for MSMEs to enhance visibility and surmount market access impediments that are frequently a significant challenge for them.

Viral content is defined as online materials, such as articles, images, videos, or memes, that are rapidly and extensively disseminated across various digital platforms due to users' mass sharing of content. Viral content has tremendous appeal in attracting online attention (Y. Wang, 2024). Viral strategy is essential as it efficiently leverages social connections to amplify marketing reach and engagement (Hinz et al., 2011). A viral strategy optimizes marketing impact by enhancing information diffusion, audience engagement, and network-driven trust dynamics (Karczmarczyk et al., 2018). MSMEs can create buzz on digital platforms, increase brand awareness, and expand market share through engaging informative, and entertaining content. The appeal of viral content lies in its capacity to attract attention, facilitate interaction, and often convey messages originally and creatively (Astari, 2021). In the context of digital marketing strategies, viral content represents a crucial element in creating a buzz among target audiences, enhancing brand awareness, and generating potential virality, which can provide a significant degree of exposure for MSMEs. A comprehensive grasp of the attributes of content apt to go viral is pivotal to attaining optimal outcomes in enhancing business visibility (Zeng & Kaye, 2022). However, digital marketing is not uniform across all industries or geographical locations (Sumarlinah et al., 2022). Digital marketing adoption in SMEs faces barriers, requiring tailored strategies for effective industry-specific implementation (Setkute & Dibb, 2022). Therefore, MSMEs in Surabaya need to adjust their marketing strategies to respond to this consumer paradigm shift. This research aims to explore and develop a strategic framework that can guide MSMEs in implementing digital marketing strategies to increase the visibility and sustainability of their business in the digital era (Hurdawaty & Tukiran, 2024).

## **2. Methods**

The research method employed in this study is descriptive qualitative, with a literature study approach. The qualitative approach explains complex phenomena, such as implementing digital marketing strategies to increase the visibility and sustainability of MSMEs in Surabaya through viral content (Sugiyono, 2017). The research will be conducted through a literature study, which will examine various sources of information, including academic journals, books, articles, and related documents. A comprehensive examination of the literature will facilitate the identification of prevailing trends and exemplary practices and the comparison of successful digital marketing strategies employed by MSMEs. This approach also allows researchers to comprehensively understand the factors that influence the success of such strategies, thereby providing a solid basis for formulating practical recommendations for MSMEs in Surabaya. The descriptive qualitative method is the optimal choice for this research because it allows for a comprehensive and detailed examination of the challenges, opportunities, and impacts of implementing digital marketing strategies on MSMEs in Surabaya. A comprehensive literature study analysis will be conducted to describe various aspects of digital marketing strategies, including planning and implementation, and their impact on the visibility and sustainability of MSMEs. The findings of this study are anticipated to offer valuable insights for a range of stakeholders, including MSMEs themselves, local governments, and academics, concerning the development and enhancement of the business ecosystem of MSMEs in Surabaya through the utilization of digital marketing potential, particularly concerning viral content (Sugiyono, 2018).

### **1. Data Collection Technique**

Data collection techniques represent methods to gather information or facts pertinent to a specific study. This technique encompasses specific methodologies designed to procure the data necessary to answer research questions or achieve research objectives accurately and systematically. The following data collection techniques will be employed in the research on digital marketing strategies for MSMEs in Surabaya:

#### **1. Literature Study Analysis**

This technique involves in-depth research, reading, and understanding of various sources of information relevant to the research topic. In the context of this research, the literature study analysis will include academic journals, books, articles, and documents related to digital marketing, viral content, and MSME sustainability.

## 2. Interview

Interviews are an interactive method whereby researchers communicate directly with respondents to gain in-depth insights and qualitative information about the research topic. In this research, interviews will be conducted with small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) owners, digital marketing practitioners, and relevant stakeholders in Surabaya.

## 3. Digital Content Analysis

This method involves collecting and analyzing digital content published by MSMEs on social media, websites, or other online platforms. The data may include information regarding the type of content utilized, the level of interaction, and its impact on business visibility.

## **2. Data Analysis Technique**

Data analysis techniques are a systematic approach to compiling, organizing, and presenting data in a way that enables drawing conclusions relevant to the research being conducted. In this research, data analysis techniques will be employed to gain a deeper understanding of implementing digital marketing strategies to increase the visibility and sustainability of MSMEs in Surabaya through viral content.

### 1. Qualitative Analysis

Qualitative analysis is a process of interpreting and deeply understanding qualitative data, such as interviews and digital content. This approach allows researchers to identify patterns, thematic findings, and meaning from the data.

### 2. Comparative Analysis

Comparative analysis is comparing different factors or groups of data to identify significant differences or similarities. Results from the qualitative analysis were compared to identify correlations or differences between digital marketing strategies implemented by MSMEs and their impact on visibility.

## **3. Results**

The literature review on digital marketing strategies to increase the visibility and sustainability of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in Surabaya through viral content provides a comprehensive analysis of the digital marketing landscape and the challenges MSMEs face in the local context. It was determined that implementing digital marketing strategies is becoming increasingly crucial, in conjunction with shifts in consumer behavior that tend to rely on digital platforms for product and service research, comparison, and purchase (Rizvanović et al., 2023). As posited by (Cuevas-Molano et al., 2021), the viral content approach represents a promising strategy for enhancing visibility, given its capacity to disseminate rapidly and extensively within the digital domain.

The findings of (Ling et al., 2022) indicate that the success of viral content is not solely contingent upon creativity but also a profound comprehension of the target audience and the local context. (Himmelboim & Golan, 2019) posit that personalizing content to align with local preferences and values can enhance its resonance among local consumers. A review of digital marketing trends indicates that the sustainability of MSME businesses can be improved through the integration of viral content strategies with other marketing elements, such as the utilization of social media, search engine optimization (SEO), and data analysis for more informed decision-making (Saura, 2021).

As indicated by (Rosário & Cruz, 2019), MSMEs are constrained by limited resources and a lack of understanding of digital marketing strategies. Several studies have indicated that MSMEs frequently encounter difficulties in measuring the effectiveness of their digital marketing campaigns, identifying the most appropriate target audience, and maintaining content consistency. In order for MSMEs to fully optimize the potential of digital marketing strategies, they must adopt technology and increase their digital literacy (Philip et al., 2023). In conclusion, the findings of this

literature review provide a robust basis for further research on digital marketing strategies that can be implemented by MSMEs in Surabaya. Integrating viral content with other digital marketing elements, such as social media presence and search engine optimization, was essential in increasing the visibility and sustainability of MSMEs in this digital era. Despite the challenges that remain to be overcome, the literature review findings offer a promising outlook for the potential growth of MSMEs in Surabaya through the implementation of strategic and targeted digital marketing strategies.

Interviews with several MSME owners in Surabaya, who we will identify by their initials, provide a comprehensive understanding of digital marketing strategies, particularly those involving viral content, in increasing the visibility and sustainability of their businesses. One of the respondents, Mr. A, underscored the significance of developing innovative content to capture consumer attention. He posits that "creative and unique content can be a key differentiator that sets his MSME apart from competitors." Mr. A also underscored the importance of collaboration with local creators to produce more authentic content relevant to Surabaya's market tastes. Conversely, Ms. R, another MSME proprietor, disclosed that "Viral content on social media has facilitated an increase in followers and customer interactions." Nevertheless, Ms. R also acknowledged that the primary challenge is comprehending the algorithms of digital platforms and adjusting to the constant changes. For Ms. R, digital literacy is a crucial factor in optimizing the potential of digital marketing strategies.

Mr. B, another business owner, emphasized the positive impact of digital marketing strategies, particularly in maintaining business sustainability during the pandemic. He posits that being online presents new opportunities for MSMEs to remain relevant to consumers increasingly relying on online transactions. Nevertheless, some respondents also indicated difficulties in measuring the effectiveness of their digital marketing campaigns. For instance, Ms. S indicated that measuring return on investment (ROI) is a significant obstacle. According to her, there is a need for further support, such as training or practical guides, to help MSMEs understand and measure the results of digital marketing strategies. The interviews with Mr. A, Ms. R, Mr. B, and Ms. S collectively provide a multifaceted representation of the experiences and perspectives of MSMEs in Surabaya regarding digital marketing strategies through viral content. This comprehensive understanding will serve as the foundation for the formulation of more targeted and practical recommendations for MSMEs seeking to optimize their digital marketing strategies to enhance their visibility and sustainability in the digital age.

The results of this study provide an in-depth understanding of the implementation of digital marketing strategies to increase the visibility and sustainability of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Surabaya through viral content. By detailing the key findings, this research provides a strong foundation for developing practical recommendations that can enrich the MSME ecosystem in this digital era. One of the key findings of this research is that viral content plays a crucial role in increasing the visibility of MSMEs. Analysis of literature studies shows that viral content has the potential to spread quickly and widely on social media, create positive buzz, and increase brand awareness (Sakas et al., 2021). (Sakas et al., 2021). However, the interviews also revealed that creativity in creating content is important, and collaboration with local creators can provide a deeper touch of authenticity.

The challenges and obstacles MSMEs face in implementing digital marketing strategies also emerged in this study. Most respondents acknowledged a limited technical understanding of digital platforms and algorithms that are constantly changing. Digital literacy is important, and this research highlights the need for technology adoption and digital upskilling among MSMEs so that they can make the most of the potential of digital marketing strategies. Digital marketing strategies help MSMEs remain competitive, especially amid the COVID-19 pandemic that is accelerating consumers' shift to the digital realm. (Panchal et al., 2021). The research also highlights that the presence of local e-commerce platforms is a positive factor in supporting the sustainability of MSMEs, making it easier for them to reach a broader market.

A comparative analysis of qualitative data from interviews and digital content suggests that the success of viral content depends not only on the number of interactions but also on its alignment with local values and audience characteristics. However, measuring the effectiveness of digital marketing campaigns remains a challenge due to limited data literacy and analytics skills among

MSMEs. This study recommends additional support, such as training, to help MSMEs understand and optimize their digital marketing strategies.

In conclusion, this study significantly enhances our understanding of how viral content in digital marketing can increase the visibility and sustainability of Surabaya's MSMEs. Practical recommendations include improving digital literacy, collaborating with local creators, integrating e-commerce platforms, and developing campaign measurement resources. Surabaya's MSMEs can effectively leverage digital marketing and ensure business sustainability in a dynamic digital landscape by implementing these measures.

#### **4. Discussion**

##### **a) Viral Content as the Main Pillar of Digital Marketing Strategy**

In the ever-evolving digital era, digital marketing strategies have become crucial in the success of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs). A key element of this strategy is the use of viral content. Viral content has the potential to create a cascading effect, spreading rapidly and extensively in the digital domain, generating positive sentiment among audiences, and ultimately enhancing brand awareness. This article will examine the role and impact of viral content as a key pillar of digital marketing strategy, focusing on how MSMEs in Surabaya can utilize it to increase their visibility and business sustainability (Aydin et al., 2021).

Viral content, defined as content that spreads rapidly across various social media platforms, including videos, images, or text, transcending geographical and cultural boundaries, has the potential to generate positive sentiment and foster engagement, making it a powerful tool for brand promotion (Sadchenko et al., 2020). To create unique content that stands out, it is essential to exercise creativity. Collaborating with local creators can add authenticity to attract consumers (Kujur & Singh, 2020).

In the digital landscape of Surabaya, the ability to increase brand awareness is paramount for micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) to thrive. Viral content represents a dynamic avenue for achieving this goal. Successful campaigns can result in the exposure of businesses to thousands or even millions of previously unaware individuals. Local creativity is paramount in ensuring relevance, as it extends beyond content's visual and narrative aspects to encompass an understanding of local values and customs. Content that celebrates the distinctive identity of Surabaya is more likely to resonate with the local audience and be widely shared. The principal advantage of viral content is its ability to directly engage with the target audience, enabling MSMEs to cultivate intimate and meaningful relationships with Surabaya's consumers through pervasive messaging and style.

Implementing viral content is challenging for many MSMEs in Surabaya due to a lack of technical understanding and data literacy. Success depends on digital literacy and a deep understanding of creativity and local context. Measuring the ROI of viral campaigns is difficult without adequate analytical skills. Despite these barriers, MSMEs can improve sustainability by leveraging engaging content to remain relevant and competitive. With initiatives to improve digital literacy and creativity, MSMEs can leverage the long-term impact of viral content to effectively navigate digital competition and thrive in Surabaya's evolving market landscape.

##### **b) Challenges and Barriers in Implementing Digital Marketing Strategies**

Along with the rapid development of technology, implementing a digital marketing strategy has become crucial to business success. However, behind the great potential offered by digital marketing, many challenges and obstacles need to be overcome. This article will take an in-depth look at the challenges faced by companies, especially Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), in implementing digital marketing strategies. One of the main challenges many MSMEs face in implementing digital marketing strategies is limited technical understanding. In a world haunted by complex algorithms and ever-evolving digital platforms, business owners often face difficulties understanding how to utilize best such technologies (Dafonte-Gómez et al., 2020)

Recognizing that digital marketing requires creativity and analytics, maintaining creativity is challenging for MSMEs (Gray et al., 2020). Consistently producing engaging content across multiple platforms while maintaining a consistent brand message can be difficult. Rapid changes in digital

consumer behavior require constant analysis and adjustment of strategies to stay relevant. Increasing digital competition makes it even harder for MSMEs with limited budgets to stand out. Investment in training and collaborative partnerships with digital experts can address resource constraints. Simplified analytics tools and focusing on relevant metrics can help measure ROI effectively.

Overcoming challenges related to creativity and content requires a deep understanding of the audience. MSMEs can conduct regular market research and listen to consumer feedback to understand their wants and needs. Dealing with changing consumer behavior and intensifying competition requires adaptation and continuous innovation. Businesses must constantly monitor trends, keep up with market developments, and dare to try new strategies. To overcome barriers related to relevant content, content personalization can be a solution. Understanding consumers' preferences and serving content tailored to their needs can increase engagement. (Tomas, 2020).

Readiness for local and global challenges can be done through a deep understanding of the markets and regulations in each region. Having a local team or partner can help navigate local dynamics more effectively. Challenges in the digital age are ever-changing. Hence, continuity in evaluation and strategy adjustment is key. MSMEs must continuously monitor campaign performance, update strategies according to changing trends, and remain responsive to consumer feedback. (Ciasullo et al., 2020). Challenges and obstacles in implementing digital marketing strategies do exist, but with the right approach, MSMEs can overcome them and even turn them into opportunities. Investing in technical understanding, digital literacy, continuous creativity, and rapid adaptation will help MSMEs to succeed in the face of the evolving dynamics of the digital era. By addressing these challenges, MSMEs can maximize the potential of digital marketing strategies to increase visibility, consumer engagement, and, ultimately, the sustainability of their business.

### **c) Contribution of Digital Marketing Strategy to MSME Sustainability**

Digital Marketing strategies have become a key driver for the growth and sustainability of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in this digital era. By engaging digital platforms, social media, and advanced technologies, these strategies not only open the doors of access to global markets but also create unlimited opportunities for innovation and growth. This article will discuss in detail the contribution of digital marketing strategies to MSME sustainability, highlighting the business paradigm shift, positive influence on visibility and sales, and challenges that must be overcome. One of the most striking contributions of digital marketing strategies is transforming the business paradigm from a traditional model to a digital one. MSMEs implementing this strategy utilize the internet, social media, and digital technology to reach a wider audience, open doors to new opportunities, and adapt their business to modern consumer trends. Digital marketing strategies bring significant changes in the way MSMEs interact with consumers. Through social media platforms and email marketing, MSMEs can build closer customer relationships, respond directly to feedback, and create a more personalized experience. This increases consumer trust and opens up opportunities for long-term business growth. Positive Effect on Visibility and Sales (Duffy et al., 2021) :

#### **1. Increasing Visibility Through Digital Presence**

Digital marketing strategies give MSMEs a strong online presence, increasing their visibility in the eyes of consumers. By having a responsive website, actively participating in social media, and using the right SEO techniques, MSMEs can appear in search results and expand their audience coverage.

#### **2. Sales Optimization Through E-commerce**

Implementing a digital marketing strategy is about increasing visibility and optimizing sales, especially through e-commerce platforms. MSMEs can open their online stores or partner with e-commerce platforms to reach a larger market, reduce geographical boundaries, and increase sales volume.

Digital marketing strategies provide MSMEs with opportunities to innovate their products and services. MSMEs can identify new innovation opportunities, respond to market needs, and improve their competitiveness by understanding consumer data and market trends obtained through digital analytics. Digital marketing provides the flexibility to diversify product portfolios. MSMEs can introduce new products or product variations tailored to consumer preferences. This helps businesses to remain dynamic and responsive to changes in market demand. (Lee & Yoon, 2020).

Digital marketing strategies, especially through valuable and relevant content, help MSMEs build strong brand awareness. Engaging and high-quality content on social media, blogs, and other platforms helps MSMEs position themselves as thought leaders in their industry. Digital marketing allows MSMEs to continue engaging with consumers beyond the first transaction. Loyalty programs, email marketing, and regular communication through social media help build customer loyalty. (Alonso-López et al., 2021). Retaining existing customers is often more cost-effective than finding new ones. The contribution of digital marketing strategies to MSME sustainability cannot be ignored. From increasing visibility to creating opportunities for innovation, these strategies have brought about a major transformation in how MSMEs operate. Despite the challenges, investment and commitment to understanding and effectively implementing digital marketing strategies can open the door to greater business sustainability, enabling MSMEs to compete and thrive in this dynamic digital age.

## 5. Conclusion

From the preceding discussion, it can be concluded that the digital revolution has opened the door for MSMEs to change how they understand, interact, and grow in an increasingly connected business ecosystem. Through digital marketing strategies, MSMEs in Surabaya can weave their stories, showcase local uniqueness, and transcend geographical boundaries to reach a wider audience. As a key pillar, viral content is a powerful tool to create positive buzz, increase visibility, and showcase MSMEs on a global stage. Limited resources, technical challenges, and the need for digital literacy are issues that must be addressed with determination and initiative. It is evident that for Surabaya's MSMEs, a digital marketing strategy is necessary and an opportunity to propel the business into a promising future. By continuously honing their skills, innovating their content, and forging strategic partnerships, MSMEs can demonstrate that sustainability is not an unattainable goal but a tangible and achievable outcome. Surabaya's MSMEs establish an indelible digital footprint with each click, like, and share, extending a web of sustainability that drives local economic growth. Therefore, it is imperative that we work together, continue to create, share stories, and achieve success through dazzling digital breakthroughs. The bright future of Surabaya's MSMEs lies in the hands of those who dare to be different and innovate in the dynamic digital world.

## 6. References

- Adi, A., & Riwayat, P. (2024). Purchasing Patterns Analysis in E-commerce : Big Approach and Methodological. *International Journal Software Engineering and Computer Science (IJSECS)*, 4(April), 148–164.
- Alonso-López, N., Sidorenko-Bautista, P., & Giacomelli, F. (2021). Beyond Challenges and Viral Dance Moves: TikTok as a Vehicle for Disinformation and Fact-Checking in Spain, Portugal, Brazil, and the USA. *Analisi*, 64, 65–84. <https://doi.org/10.5565/REV/ANALISI.3411>
- Astari, N. (2021). A Literature Review: Digital Marketing Trends in Indonesia During the COVID-19 Pandemic. *CHANNEL: Jurnal Komunikasi*, 9(2), 125. <https://doi.org/10.12928/channel.v9i2.20836>
- Aydin, G., Uray, N., & Silahtaroglu, G. (2021). How to engage consumers through effective social media use-guidelines for consumer goods companies from an emerging market. *Journal of Theoretical and Applied Electronic Commerce Research*, 16(4), 768–790. <https://doi.org/10.3390/jtaer16040044>
- Basri, M. A., Siradjuddin, S., & Sudirman, S. (2023). Utilization of Digital Technology-Based Marketing For the Development of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises. *Economics, Business, Accounting & Society Review*, 2(2), 145–151. <https://doi.org/10.55980/ebasr.v2i2.71>
- Benoni, R., Giacomelli, C., Vegro, G., Hamo, F., Avesani, R., Albi, P., Gatta, M., & Moretti, F. (2024). Assessing the mental health needs of Yazidi adolescents and young adults in an Iraqi Kurdi IDP Camp: a focus group study. *International Journal for Equity in Health*, 23(1), 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12939-024-02182-8>
- Chinakidzwa, M., & Phiri, M. (2020). Impact of digital marketing capabilities on market performance of small to medium enterprise agro-processors in Harare, Zimbabwe. *Business: Theory and Practice*, 21(2), 746–757. <https://doi.org/10.3846/btp.2020.12149>

- Ciasullo, M. V., Montera, R., & Palumbo, R. (2020). Online content responsiveness strategies in the hospitality context: exploratory insights and a research agenda. *TQM Journal*.  
<https://doi.org/10.1108/TQM-12-2019-0299>
- Cuevas-Molano, E., Matosas-Lopez, L., & Bernal-Bravo, C. (2021). Factors Increasing Consumer Engagement of Branded Content in Instagram. *IEEE Access*, 9, 143531–143548.  
<https://doi.org/10.1109/ACCESS.2021.3121186>
- Dafonte-Gómez, A., Míguez-González, M. I., & Corbacho-Valencia, J. M. (2020). Viral dissemination of content in advertising: Emotional factors to reach consumers. *Communication and Society*, 33(1), 107–120. <https://doi.org/10.15581/003.33.1.107-120>
- Denisova, A. (2023). Viral journalism. Strategy, tactics and limitations of the fast spread of content on social media: Case study of the United Kingdom quality publications. *Journalism*, 24(9), 1919–1937. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14648849221077749>
- Duffy, B. E., Pinch, A., Sannon, S., & Sawey, M. (2021). The Nested Precarities of Creative Labor on Social Media. *Social Media and Society*, 7(2).  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/20563051211021368>
- Gao, J., Siddik, A. B., Abbas, S. K., & Hamayun, M. (2023). *Impact of E-Commerce and Digital Marketing Adoption on the Financial and Sustainability Performance of MSMEs during the COVID-19 Pandemic: An Empirical Study*.
- Gray, J., Bounegru, L., & Venturini, T. (2020). ‘Fake news’ as infrastructural uncanny. *New Media and Society*, 22(2), 317–341. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444819856912>
- Himmelboim, I., & Golan, G. J. (2019). A Social Networks Approach to Viral Advertising: The Role of Primary, Contextual, and Low Influencers. *Social Media and Society*, 5(3).  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305119847516>
- Hinz, O., Skiera, B., Barrot, C., & Becker, J. U. (2011). Seeding strategies for viral marketing: An empirical comparison. *Journal of Marketing*, 75(6), 55–71.  
<https://doi.org/10.1509/jm.10.0088>
- Hossain, M. R., Akhter, F., & Sultana, M. M. (2022). SMEs in Covid-19 Crisis and Combating Strategies: A Systematic Literature Review (SLR) and A Case from Emerging Economy. *Operations Research Perspectives*, 9, 100222. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.orp.2022.100222>
- Hurdawaty, R., & Tukiran, M. (2024). Strategies to Increase the Competitiveness of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs): A Narrative Literature Review. *South Asian Journal of Social Studies and Economics*, 21(1), 112–125.  
<https://doi.org/10.9734/sajsse/2024/v21i1768>
- Karczmarczyk, A., Jankowski, J., & Wątróbski, J. (2018). Multi-criteria decision support for planning and evaluation of performance of viral marketing campaigns in social networks. In *PLoS ONE* (Vol. 13, Issue 12). <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0209372>
- Kawane, T., Adu-Gyamfi, B., Cao, Y., Zhang, Y., Yamazawa, N., He, Z., & Shaw, R. (2024). Digitization as an Adaptation and Resilience Measure for MSMEs amid the COVID-19 Pandemic in Japan: Lessons from the Food Service Industry for Collaborative Future Engagements. *Sustainability (Switzerland)*, 16(4). <https://doi.org/10.3390/su16041550>
- Kujur, F., & Singh, S. (2020). Visual communication and Consumer-Brand relationship on Social Networking Sites - Uses & Gratifications Theory Perspective. *Journal of Theoretical and Applied Electronic Commerce Research*, 15(1), 30–47. <https://doi.org/10.4067/S0718-18762020000100104>
- Lee, M., & Yoon, H. J. (2020). When Brand Activism Advertising Campaign Goes Viral: An Analysis of Always #LikeAGirl Video Networks on YouTube. *International Journal of Advanced Culture Technology*, 8(2), 146–158.
- Ling, C., Blackburn, J., De Cristofaro, E., & Stringhini, G. (2022). Slapping Cats, Bopping Heads, and Oreo Shakes: Understanding Indicators of Virality in TikTok Short Videos. *ACM International Conference Proceeding Series*, 164–173.  
<https://doi.org/10.1145/3501247.3531551>
- Liu, H., Jayawardhena, C., Shukla, P., Osburg, V. S., & Yoganathan, V. (2024). Electronic word of

mouth 2.0 (eWOM 2.0) – The evolution of eWOM research in the new age. *Journal of Business Research*, 176(February). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2024.114587>

- Malesev, S., & Cherry, M. (2021). Digital and social media marketing-growing market share for construction smes. *Construction Economics and Building*, 21(1), 65–82. <https://doi.org/10.5130/AJCEB.v21i1.7521>
- Nayati Utami, H., Siti Astuti, E., Maulani Ramadhan, H., Trialih, R., & Alief Aprilian, Y. (2019). The interests of small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) actor in using mobile commerce in effort to expand business network. *Journal of Science and Technology Policy Management*, 10(3), 493–508. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JSTPM-08-2018-0081>
- Panchal, A., Shah, A., & Kansara, K. (2021). Digital Marketing - Search Engine Optimization (SEO) and Search Engine Marketing (SEM). *International Research Journal of Innovations in Engineering and Technology*, 5(12), 17–21.
- Parida, D. K. (2021). An empirical study on social media conversation to increase brand awareness: startup organization context. *Academy of Marketing Studies Journal*, 25(4), 1–8.
- Philip, L., Pradiani, T., & Fathorrahman. (2023). Influence Brand Experience, Viral Marketing and Brand Image to Brand Loyalty to Service Users Streaming Spotify in Indonesia. *ADI Journal on Recent Innovation (AJRI)*, 5(2), 127–135. <https://doi.org/10.34306/ajri.v5i2.992>
- Purba, M. I., Simanjutak, D. C. Y., Malau, Y. N., Sholihat, W., & Ahmadi, E. A. (2021). The effect of digital marketing and e-commerce on financial performance and business sustainability of MSMEs during COVID-19 pandemic in Indonesia. *International Journal of Data and Network Science*, 275–282. <https://doi.org/10.5267/j.ijdns.2021.6.006>
- Pusung, C. S., Narsa, N. P. D. R. H., & Wardhaningrum, O. A. (2023). Innovation, Competitive Strategy and Msme Performance: a Survey Study on Culinary Smes in Indonesia During the Covid-19 Pandemic. *Business: Theory and Practice*, 24(1), 160–172. <https://doi.org/10.3846/btp.2023.16676>
- Rahmawati, D., Sulistyarso, H., Ariastita, P. G., Yusuf, M., & Paramasatya, D. A. (2018). Smart kampung for Surabaya smart city: Criteria redefined. *IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science*, 202(1). <https://doi.org/10.1088/1755-1315/202/1/012068>
- Ritz, W., Wolf, M., & McQuitty, S. (2019). Digital marketing adoption and success for small businesses. *Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing*, 13(2), 179–203. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JRIM-04-2018-0062>
- Rizvanović, B., Zutshi, A., Grilo, A., & Nodehi, T. (2023). Linking the potentials of extended digital marketing impact and start-up growth: Developing a macro-dynamic framework of start-up growth drivers supported by digital marketing. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, 186(February 2022). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2022.122128>
- Rosário, A. M. F. T., & Cruz, R. N. (2019). Determinants of Innovation in Digital Marketing. *Journal of Reviews on Global Economics*, 8(June), 1722–1731. <https://doi.org/10.6000/1929-7092.2019.08.154>
- Sadchenko, O., Lagodiienko, V., Novykova, I., Feshchenko, O., Ruzhynska, N., & Bogdanov, O. (2020). Marketing Tools in Stimulating Innovative Activity of Enterprises. *International Journal of Management*, 11(6), 241–251. <https://doi.org/10.34218/IJM.11.6.2020.023>
- Sakas, D. P., Giannakopoulos, N. T., Reklitis, D. P., & Dasaklis, T. K. (2021). The effects of cryptocurrency trading websites on airlines' advertisement campaigns. *Journal of Theoretical and Applied Electronic Commerce Research*, 16(7), 3099–3119. <https://doi.org/10.3390/jtaer16070169>
- Saura, J. R. (2021). Using Data Sciences in Digital Marketing: Framework, methods, and performance metrics. *Journal of Innovation and Knowledge*, 6(2), 92–102. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jik.2020.08.001>
- Sedalo, G., Boateng, H., & Kosiba, J. P. (2022). Exploring social media affordance in relationship marketing practices in SMEs. *Digital Business*, 2(1), 100017. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.digbus.2021.100017>
- Setkute, J., & Dibb, S. (2022). “Old boys” club”: Barriers to digital marketing in small B2B firms.”

*Industrial Marketing Management*, 102(January 2021), 266–279.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.indmarman.2022.01.022>

Sugiyono. (2017). *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, dan R&D*. Alfabeta.

Sugiyono. (2018). *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif*. Alfabeta.

Sumarlinah, Y., Sukei, S., & Sugiyanto, S. (2022). The Role of Digital Marketing, Service Quality, Product Quality on Purchasing Power through the Satisfaction of Probolinggo MSME Followers during the Covid-19 Pandemic. *International Journal of Applied Business and International Management*, 7(1). <https://doi.org/10.32535/ijabim.v7i1.1444>

Sundaram, R., Sharma, R., & Shakya, A. (2020). Power of digital marketing in building brands: A review of social media advertisement. *International Journal of Management*, 11(4), 244–254. <https://doi.org/10.34218/IJM.11.4.2020.025>

Tomas, D. (2020). Title: 130 Trends and, Predictions for Digital Marketing. *Journal of the Association of Researchers Vol.*, 25(2), 475–492.

Ulkhair, N., Eka Siskawati, Almunawar, M. N., Kumari, S., & Handayani, D. (2023). The Effect of Financial Literacy, Financial Technology and Income on Small and Medium Enterprise Financial Behaviour. *Economics, Business, Accounting & Society Review*, 2(2), 134–144. <https://doi.org/10.55980/ebasr.v2i2.80>

Usman, I., Hartani, N. H., & Sroka, M. (2020). Operational performance of sme: The impact of entrepreneurial leadership, good governance and business process management. *Polish Journal of Management Studies*, 21(1), 408–418. <https://doi.org/10.17512/pjms.2020.21.1.30>

Wang, C. L. (2021). New frontiers and future directions in interactive marketing: Inaugural Editorial. *Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing*, 15(1), 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JRIM-03-2021-270>

Wang, Y. (2024). From “online star city” to “long-term famous city”: Research on the strategy of city image communication in the new media era — Taking Harbin, the “online star city”, as an example. *Advances in Education, Humanities and Social Science Research*, 10(5), 136–144.

Zeng, J., & Kaye, D. B. V. (2022). From content moderation to visibility moderation: A case study of platform governance on TikTok. *Policy and Internet*, 14(1), 79–95. <https://doi.org/10.1002/poi3.287>