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Branding and Social Media Marketing to Increase Sales of Banana Chips Products through the use of Whatsapp Business and TikTok

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ABSTRACT
Bu Umi's banana chips MSME, located in Pedan Sub-district, Klaten Regency, produces a range of real food-based snacks, including banana chips, breadfruit chips, peyek, and rambak. However, the enterprise continues to face major constraints in marketing, brand identity, and the utilisation of digital technology, which has contributed to relatively stagnant sales performance. This community engagement programme aimed to strengthen product branding and enhance digital marketing capabilities through WhatsApp Business and TikTok. The programme employed a participatory approach involving discussion, training, and direct mentoring with the MSME owner. Key activities included the development of a logo and mascot, packaging refinement, the establishment of WhatsApp Business and TikTok accounts, and the preparation of promotional content. The results indicate that the partner was able to operate WhatsApp Business effectively for customer communication, product catalogue management, and pre-order-based transactions. The partner was also able to utilise TikTok as a promotional platform, leading to increased product visibility. Overall, the programme produced tangible outputs in the form of an online marketing module and strengthened digital marketing competencies, thereby supporting broader market reach and the potential for increased sales.

Keywords: branding; MSMEs; WhatsApp Business; TikTok; digital marketing

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INTRODUCTION

MSMEs play a critical role in Indonesia's economy due to their contribution to economic growth, employment creation, and post-crisis recovery (Rosyidiana and Narsa 2024; Suryanti, Ahadiat, and Hayati 2022). In the post-pandemic period, MSMEs also function as local economic stabilisers. However, many MSMEs continue to experience persistent constraints in marketing capability, technology access, and digital competencies, which weaken competitiveness and limit scaling (Dwijayanti et al. 2022; Fajri et al. 2025; Nengsih, Orinaldi, and Nurwahid 2022).

This condition is evident in Bu Umi's banana chips MSME in Pedan Sub-district, Klaten Regency. The enterprise produces real food-based snack products such as banana chips, breadfruit chips, peyek, and rambak. The partner represents a micro-scale business with limited human resources, where the owner must manage production, packaging, and marketing simultaneously. In micro-enterprises, this structure often creates a trade-off between operational continuity and market expansion because marketing requires time, skills, and consistent routines.

From an opportunity perspective, lifestyle changes and growing awareness of healthier food consumption represent substantial market potential. However, consumers still pay limited attention to nutritional value and food processing practices in daily snack consumption (Setiawan 2024). At the same time, rising non-communicable diseases have encouraged government and stakeholders to intensify campaigns promoting healthier dietary patterns (Husriadi 2024). This context provides market space for real food-based MSME products. Yet, opportunity alone does not guarantee sales. MSMEs still need a credible brand identity and an effective marketing system that can build awareness, trust, and conversion in a competitive digital environment (Heidari et al. 2023).

Despite Bu Umi's relatively strong product quality, sales performance remained stagnant due to conventional marketing practices, weak brand identity, and limited utilisation of digital technology. Marketing challenges for MSMEs have become increasingly complex in the era of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, which affects not only marketing activities but also broader aspects of business management, including customer relationship practices and sales processes (Fauziyah 2020; Sanbella, Versie, and Audiah 2024). Many micro-scale MSMEs still rely on offline word-of-mouth and local networks. This structure limits reach and reduces scalability, especially when consumers increasingly discover products through social media and short-form content (Dolega, Rowe, and Branagan 2021; Sharabati et al. 2022).

Digital platforms such as WhatsApp Business and TikTok provide significant opportunities for MSMEs to expand market reach, strengthen customer interaction, and improve sales conversion. WhatsApp Business supports direct communication, catalogue management, and ordering systems, making it suitable for micro-scale businesses with limited resources (Handijono, Gunarto, and Sutrisna 2024; Jannah 2023). TikTok, in contrast, is strong for reach, awareness, and engagement through short-form video content that can increase purchase intention, particularly when content is entertaining, informative, and authentic (Fan and Zhang 2025; Rosyidani et al. 2024; Sharabati et al. 2022). Empirical evidence in snack MSMEs also indicates that TikTok and WhatsApp can significantly increase sales performance compared with other social media platforms in specific contexts (Balenggon et al. 2025; Seingo et al. 2025).

However, many community engagement programmes still treat digital adoption as partial and fragmented. Prior community engagement initiatives commonly emphasise

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marketplace onboarding such as Shopee and Facebook Marketplace, or focus on website development and generic social media promotion (Apriadi and Saputra 2017; Purnomo et al. 2024; Sfenrianto et al. 2017). These approaches can be useful, but they often underperform for micro-scale food MSMEs because micro-enterprises face production-capacity constraints, limited human resources, and low digital readiness. These constraints reduce the effectiveness of multi-platform interventions that require high content production intensity and complex order management (Fajri et al. 2025; Mawaddah et al. 2025). In addition, awareness generated by social media does not automatically convert into sales if the business lacks a clear brand identity dan strong packaging presentation for visual selling (Husriadi 2024; Sanbella et al. 2024).

Therefore, there remains limited evidence from community engagement settings that integrates visual branding outputs (logo and packaging refinement) with two low-friction and widely adopted channels for non-digital entrepreneurs, namely WhatsApp Business and TikTok, while simultaneously restructuring the sales process into a pre-order-based ordering system that fits micro-scale production. This programme addresses the gap by delivering an integrated, low-cost, and scalable intervention that links brand identity, visual selling readiness, and conversational commerce ordering to support market reach and sales potential.

Based on these conditions, this programme aimed to: (1) Strengthen Bu Umi's product brand identity to enhance commercial appeal; (2) Improve digital marketing through WhatsApp Business and TikTok; (3) Support the partner in developing consistent promotional content; (4) Increase sales potential through the implementation of a pre-order system.

IMPLEMENTATION METHOD

Community Engagement Site

The programme was implemented at Bu Umi's Banana Chips MSME, located in Pedan Sub-district, Klaten Regency, Central Java, Indonesia. The partner operates as a micro-scale home industry producing real food-based snack products, including banana chips, breadfruit chips, peyek, and rambak. The MSME is categorised as a micro enterprise based on its limited production scale, minimal labour involvement, and reliance on owner-managed operations. The owner is responsible for almost all activities, ranging from raw material procurement, production, packaging, and order fulfilment to marketing and customer communication.

This site was selected because it represents a typical condition of micro-scale snack MSMEs in Indonesia, which commonly face three interrelated constraints. First, the business tends to rely on conventional marketing channels, such as offline selling and local distribution networks. Second, the enterprise often lacks a structured brand identity, resulting in low product recognition and weak differentiation. Third, limited digital skills reduce ability of the owner to adopt social media marketing and structured customer communication (Dwijayanti et al. 2022; Fajri et al. 2025; Fauziyah 2020).

The programme therefore focused on strengthening branding and digital marketing capabilities as practical entry points for improving market reach and increasing sales potential. This intervention is relevant because studies in MSME development consistently show that digital marketing adoption improves competitiveness and supports business resilience, especially in the post-pandemic environment (Rosyidiana and Narsa 2024; Wirianda 2025).

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Activity Approach

The community engagement team applied a participatory education-based approach, combining capacity building and direct mentoring. This approach emphasises active partner involvement in each activity stage, rather than positioning the MSME as a passive recipient of training. Participatory approaches are widely recommended in community engagement programmes because they encourage stronger ownership, higher adoption rates, and more sustainable behavioural change (Anggoro and Dwiastanti 2025; Mawaddah et al. 2025). The programme consisted of four integrated activity components:

1. Discussion sessions to map the partner's constraints, expectations, and readiness;
2. Technical training on the use of digital platforms,
3. Mentoring during implementation to ensure that the partner could independently operate the platforms,
4. Evaluation of effectiveness to measure changes in knowledge, skills, and marketing practices.

This approach was selected because micro-scale MSMEs often face limitations in digital readiness. Many owners have low confidence in using digital tools, and they tend to stop adoption when they face errors or confusion during implementation. Therefore, mentoring becomes critical because it provides direct feedback, repetition, and correction during practice, which increases the probability of successful adoption (Handijono et al. 2024; Ismawanti 2025). In addition, the approach aligns with evidence that social media marketing effectiveness in MSMEs depends not only on platform access but also on the owner's ability to maintain consistent routines in content creation, customer communication, and sales follow-up (Dolega et al. 2021; Heidari et al. 2023).

Stages of Implementation

The implementation stages were structured into six sequential stages. The stages were designed to ensure that branding readiness was completed before platform activation. This sequencing is important because digital marketing on TikTok and WhatsApp requires strong visual identity and product presentation, especially for food products that rely on perceived quality and trust (Faisal and Ekawanto 2022; Husriadi 2024).

Stage 1. Partner problem identification

The team conducted an initial assessment through observation and direct interviews with the MSME owner. The assessment aimed to confirm the partner's main issues, which included conventional marketing practices, the absence of a formalised brand identity, and limited utilisation of digital technology. At this stage, the team also mapped production capacity, peak production days, and order fulfilment constraints. This mapping was important because the programme introduced a pre-order system. Pre-order systems are recommended for micro-enterprises because they reduce the risk of overproduction, control cash flow, and match demand with limited production capacity (Balenggon et al. 2025; Sanbella et al. 2024).

Stage 2. Branding development

The team designed a logo, a mascot, and a consistent visual product identity. The mascot was developed based on Bu Umi's signature pose, so that the branding remained authentic and personal. Branding development aimed to strengthen product recognition

and differentiate Bu Umi's products from similar snack competitors. This stage is supported by evidence that branding strengthens brand awareness and brand image, which subsequently increases purchase intention and trust in MSME products (Faisal and Ekawanto 2022; Heidari et al. 2023; Husriadi 2024).

Stage 3. Packaging refinement

The team supported improvements in packaging presentation to increase commercial appeal and suitability for digital promotion. The packaging refinement focused on neatness, visual clarity, and the addition of identity elements such as stickers and labels. Packaging was prioritised because TikTok is a visually driven platform. Poor packaging reduces perceived quality and weakens content aesthetics, which may reduce engagement and purchase intention (Sharabati et al. 2022; Shen and Prompanyo 2025). In micro-food MSMEs, packaging also functions as a signal of hygiene and professionalism, which is essential when consumers cannot physically inspect the product.

Stage 4. WhatsApp Business training

The team delivered training on WhatsApp Business setup, profile optimisation, catalogue creation, customer communication, quick replies, and ordering flow management. The partner was trained to structure orders through a pre-order-based system. WhatsApp Business was selected because it is the most accessible digital platform for micro-scale MSMEs in Indonesia. It requires minimal cost, is familiar to most customers, and supports conversational commerce. Previous studies also confirm that WhatsApp Business increases sales through direct interaction, faster response time, and easier transaction closing (Handijono et al. 2024; Jannah 2023).

Stage 5. TikTok training

The team supported the partner in creating and operating a TikTok account. Training focused on content planning, recording techniques, editing basics, posting routines, and the use of captions and hashtags in a practical manner (Seingo et al. 2025; Sharabati et al. 2022; Yadav 2025).

Stage 6. Implementation, monitoring, and evaluation

The team mentored the partner during the adoption process and monitored changes in marketing practices. Monitoring was conducted by reviewing the partner's WhatsApp Business catalogue completeness, response routines, and TikTok posting activity. Evaluation was conducted through direct interviews and observation of the partner's ability to independently operate the platforms. This evaluation approach is commonly used in community engagement programmes where output measurement focuses on competency improvement and behavioural change rather than experimental designs (Anggoro and Dwiastanti 2025; Ismawanti 2025).

Timeline and Duration

Initial coordination began in March 2025, while field implementation was completed in July 2025. The programme was conducted through several visits and mentoring sessions. The schedule was adjusted to the partner's production routines to avoid disruption to daily operations. The implementation timeline consisted of:

1. March 2025: initial coordination and partner assessment.
2. April 2025: branding and packaging preparation

3. May 2025: WhatsApp Business training and catalogue development
4. June 2025: TikTok training and content development
5. July 2025: monitoring, evaluation, and final output completion

This staged timeline ensured that the partner adopted the intervention gradually. Gradual adoption is recommended for micro-scale MSMEs because it reduces cognitive overload and increases sustainability of behavioural change (Mawaddah et al. 2025; Wirianda 2025).

Instruments and Tools

The instruments and tools utilised in this programme included:

1. An online marketing module that contained practical steps for branding, WhatsApp Business use, TikTok content planning, and pre-order ordering flow;
2. WhatsApp Business and TikTok applications;
3. Branding design outputs, including logo and mascot files;
4. Packaging tools, such as labels, stickers, and jar packaging.

The module functioned as a sustainability instrument. It ensured that the partner could repeat the steps independently after the programme ended. This is consistent with community engagement literature suggesting that modules and standard operating guidelines improve the continuity of MSME assistance programmes (Susilawati et al. 2025; Utomo et al. 2025).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Results of Partner Problem Identification

The identification stage confirmed that Bu Umi's MSME produces snack products with good taste quality and consistent texture, which is an important baseline for market expansion. However, the enterprise lacked a clear and consistent brand identity. Before the programme, the partner did not have a logo and standardised visual elements that could be used across packaging, online profiles, and promotional content. This condition reduced product recognisability and made it difficult for customers to recall the product for repeat purchases.

Marketing activities still relied primarily on conventional methods such as offline selling and local networks. As a result, market reach remained limited, and sales performance tended to stagnate. This condition aligns with prior studies showing that micro-scale MSMEs often face structural constraints in marketing capability, restricted technology adoption, and inadequate digital skills (Dwijayanti et al. 2022; Fauziyah 2020; Nengsih et al. 2022). Another issue identified was the absence of a structured ordering workflow. Customers who wanted to order often had to ask repeatedly about product availability, price, and delivery. This created inefficiency and discouraged potential buyers, especially when the owner was busy with production. This finding is consistent with evidence that social media exposure may increase interest, but conversion will remain low if the business does not provide a clear transaction flow and fast response routines (Dolega et al. 2021; Sanbella et al. 2024).

In addition, the partner's production capacity was limited because the business is owner-managed. The owner could not produce large volumes daily, particularly when orders increased. Therefore, the programme concluded that a pre-order system was more appropriate than an "always ready stock" approach. This strategy fits micro-scale enterprises because it reduces overproduction risk, stabilises cash flow, and allows the owner to plan production based on confirmed demand (Balenggon et al. 2025; Wirianda 2025).

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Product Branding Development

After confirming the partner's constraints, the programme prioritised branding development in a simple and realistic format suitable for a micro-scale MSME. The team developed a logo and a consistent visual identity that could be applied directly to product packaging, WhatsApp Business profile, and TikTok content.

Figure 1. Logo and visual identity developed for Bu Umi's product.

The branding strategy aimed to achieve three practical outcomes. First, it improved product recognition in both offline and online contexts. Second, it created consistency in product presentation across platforms. Third, it strengthened customer trust, especially for first-time buyers who discover the product online.

This outcome aligns with branding literature which indicates that branding strengthens brand awareness and brand image, which then influences purchase intention through trust and perceived value (Faisal and Ekawanto 2022; Heidari et al. 2023). For micro-enterprises, branding also functions as a differentiation tool because many snack products compete in the same price range and product category (Husriadi 2024). From the partner's perspective, the branding process also created a psychological impact. The owner reported higher confidence in promoting the product after having a clear logo and more professional packaging appearance. This behavioural change is consistent with community engagement studies which show that branding support increases confidence and marketing willingness among micro-entrepreneurs (Ismawanti 2025; Mawaddah et al. 2025).

Packaging Improvement

The programme refined product packaging to achieve a neater and more commercially appealing appearance. Packaging refinement included the use of standing pouches for chips, clearer labels, and the addition of stickers that displayed the logo and product identity.

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Figure 2. Improved packaging and product presentation

Packaging improvement was prioritised because packaging is a key signal of hygiene and quality for food products. In digital marketing contexts, packaging also functions as a visual marketing asset. Consumers often interpret neat packaging as a signal of professionalism and consistent product quality. This is particularly relevant when customers purchase online without physical inspection. Research supports packaging influences perceived value and purchase intention through design attractiveness and information clarity (Sanbella et al. 2024; Shen and Prompanyo 2025).

In this programme, packaging refinement also improved the partner's ability to create more attractive content. Before refinement, the packaging appeared inconsistent across products, making photos and videos less professional. After refinement, packaging became more standardised, which improved the visual coherence of TikTok videos and WhatsApp catalogue images. This result aligns with digital branding evidence that visual consistency increases brand recall and strengthens perceived credibility (Heidari et al. 2023).

WhatsApp Business Implementation for Promotion and Pre-Order

After branding and packaging were improved, the programme implemented WhatsApp Business as the main conversion and ordering channel. Following training and mentoring, the partner was able to utilise WhatsApp Business effectively for:

1. Customer communication;
2. Product promotion;
3. Pre-order management;
4. Product catalogue development;
5. Quick replies for frequently asked questions.

The programme found that WhatsApp Business was highly suitable for the partner because it reduced the owner's communication burden. Previously, the owner had to answer repeated questions manually. After implementation, the partner used catalogue features and saved messages to provide standardised information. This increased response speed and reduced customer waiting time.

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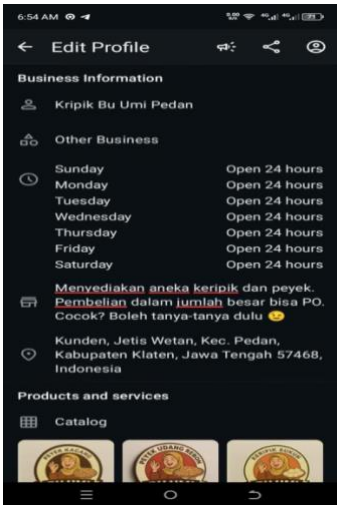

Figure 3. WhatsApp Business profile and catalogue features.

This result supports evidence that WhatsApp Business improves communication efficiency, accelerates customer response, and facilitates transactions through direct interaction (Handijono et al. 2024; Jannah 2023). WhatsApp Business is also recommended for micro-scale enterprises because it is low-cost, widely adopted by customers, and does not require complex technological infrastructure (Fajri et al. 2025; Saida Aprilia and Manah Tarman 2025).

A key practical innovation in this programme was the integration of a pre-order system through WhatsApp Business. The partner applied a simple pre-order workflow: customers order via chat, confirm product variant and quantity, receive payment details, and then receive delivery information after production. This system fits micro-scale MSMEs because it aligns marketing with production capacity constraints. Research indicates that pre-order systems reduce inventory risk and stabilise production planning for small enterprises (Balenggon et al. 2025; Sanbella et al. 2024).

TikTok Implementation for Promotional Content

The programme supported the creation of a TikTok account and delivered training on content production.

Figure 4. TikTok account and initial promotional content

The partner was able to utilise TikTok as a promotional platform to expand reach, given TikTok's short-video format and algorithm-based distribution. The programme adopted a simple and realistic content strategy tailored to the partner's limited capacity.

The partner was trained to create short videos focusing on:

1. Behind-the-scenes production processes,
2. Product demonstrations (texture and crispness),
3. Packaging presentation,
4. Simple customer feedback screenshots
5. Limited-time promotions.

This approach is consistent with evidence that TikTok influences purchase intention through authenticity, informativeness, and engagement. TikTok users often respond positively to real and simple content, particularly for food products, where process videos and product demonstrations strengthen perceived quality (Seingo et al. 2025; Sharabati et al. 2022). From a theoretical perspective, TikTok functions as an awareness and exposure channel. Social media exposure strengthens brand awareness and brand image, which then increases purchase intention and brand trust (Faisal and Ekawanto 2022; Heidari et al. 2023). This is relevant because many customers discover MSME products through short-video recommendations and algorithm-driven distribution (Sharabati et al. 2022; Zhang, Wang, and Zhao 2022).

The team supported the creation of a TikTok account and delivered training on content production. The partner was able to utilise TikTok to expand promotional reach, given TikTok's short-video format and high potential for viral content dissemination. From a theoretical perspective, content-based social media marketing strengthens product awareness and expands MSME market reach. This finding aligns with prior evidence indicating that digital marketing enhances the competitiveness of small businesses.

Programme Impact and Evaluation

The evaluation results indicate improvements in:

1. Understanding the strategic importance of branding;
2. Improving packaging for digital promotion;
3. Implementing online promotional activities;
4. Managing orders through a pre-order system;
5. Utilising WhatsApp Business and TikTok as marketing channels.

The programme produced tangible outputs in the form of:

1. Logo and product identity elements,
2. Refined packaging with supporting labels and stickers,
3. WhatsApp Business catalogue and order workflow,
4. TikTok account with initial promotional content,
5. Online marketing module for sustainability.

From an impact perspective, the most important result was behavioural change. The partner shifted from passive marketing to structured digital promotion. The partner also developed the ability to manage customer communication more efficiently through WhatsApp Business features. Community engagement studies show that these competency improvements represent the strongest immediate outcome of MSME digitalisation programmes, even before large sales increases can be measured quantitatively (Anggoro and Dwiastanti 2025; Ismawanti 2025; Mawaddah et al. 2025).

This programme reinforces the argument that integrated but simple interventions are more effective for micro-scale MSMEs. Branding and packaging refinement improved readiness for digital marketing. WhatsApp Business improved conversion and transaction management. TikTok expanded awareness and reach. The synergy between these elements supports the partner's potential for sales growth through low-cost

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strategies aligned with micro-enterprise operational conditions (Balenggon et al. 2025; Sanbella et al. 2024; Seingo et al. 2025).

CONCLUSION

This community engagement programme at Bu Umi's banana chips MSME in Pedan Sub-district, Klaten Regency successfully strengthened the partner's branding readiness and improved digital marketing capability through practical and low-cost interventions. The programme confirmed that the main constraints faced by the partner were not product quality, but weak brand identity, limited packaging attractiveness for digital promotion, and the absence of structured marketing and ordering workflows.

The programme demonstrated that branding support for micro-enterprises does not require complex strategies. Simple branding outputs such as a clear logo and consistent visual identity already provide meaningful impact. Branding improved product recognition and increased the partner's confidence in promoting the products online.

Packaging improvement also played an important role. Neater packaging with clearer labels and stickers increased the partner's readiness for online promotion. Packaging refinement strengthened perceived professionalism and improved the visual quality of product photos and videos, which is essential for promotion through digital platforms. In terms of digital marketing adoption, the programme found that WhatsApp Business was highly effective as the main conversion channel. The partner was able to create a product catalogue, respond faster through quick replies, and implement a pre-order ordering workflow.

WhatsApp Business reduced communication burden and strengthened customer interaction, which is essential for micro-enterprises where the owner must manage multiple tasks simultaneously. The TikTok implementation contributed mainly to market exposure and awareness expansion. The programme showed that TikTok can be adopted in a simple and realistic manner by micro-scale MSMEs without requiring paid advertising. Short videos that show production processes, product demonstrations, and packaging presentation can increase visibility and stimulate consumer interest.

Overall, the programme produced tangible outputs in the form of a logo and product identity elements, refined packaging, an active WhatsApp Business account with catalogue and pre-order workflow, a TikTok account with initial promotional content, and an online marketing module for sustainability. The most important programme impact was behavioural change, namely the shift from passive conventional selling to structured digital promotion.

For future development, the programme recommends that the partner maintains consistent posting routines on TikTok, regularly updates the WhatsApp Business catalogue, and strengthens customer trust through testimonials and repeat purchase documentation. The partner may also gradually expand distribution outside the local area through a controlled pre-order system to ensure production capacity remains aligned with demand

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