

Unleashing Potential, Embracing Innovation: Technology-Based MSME Development Strategy in Ngadirejo Village

¹Muhammad Fathur Roziq*, ²Tri Utami, ³Indah Ainus Sofa, ⁴Yusi Miftakhul Jannah, ⁵Farah Fadhilatur Rahman, ⁶Sayyidah Hafshah Az Zahratul Yaqin, ⁷Kharirrotus Sa'diyah, ⁸Ikfi Khouлита

^{1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8}Universitas Islam Negeri Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah, Tulungagung, Indonesia

*Current author

Email: fathurroziq@gmail.com

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Abstract

Purpose: The Community Service Program (Kuliah Kerja Nyata/KKN) is an implementation of the Tri Dharma of Higher Education that emphasizes community empowerment. This activity aimed to strengthen micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in Ngadirejo Village, Pogalan District, Trenggalek Regency, by improving digitalization and business identity to enhance visibility and competitiveness.

Method: The program was implemented using a participatory approach. Activities included identifying MSME needs, assisting business owners in registering their businesses on Google Maps, creating business name plaques, and providing basic training on online marketing through the Shopee marketplace platform for selected MSME actors.

Results: The program improved MSME owners' understanding of digital technology and branding. Participants showed increased confidence in promoting their businesses and were able to reach wider markets through digital platforms.

Conclusion: This community service activity demonstrates that technology-based empowerment aligned with local needs can effectively support rural MSMEs. Digital assistance and simple training contribute to stronger business identity, increased market access, and sustainable economic development at the village level.

Introduction

Ngadirejo Village, located in Pogalan District, Trenggalek Regency, is a rural area rich in untapped local economic potential, particularly through its Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). The vibrancy of local entrepreneurship is evident in various forms, ranging from traditional jenang production and fish smoking to value-added agricultural products. These enterprises hold the promise of becoming key drivers of village economic growth (Dewangga, 2025). However, field observations reveal that this potential remains vastly underutilized. Most MSME actors in Ngadirejo continue to manage their businesses using conventional methods, lacking promotional strategies, financial record-keeping, and clear business identities. As a result, these enterprises struggle to grow and compete in broader markets.

A significant barrier lies in the limited awareness of the importance of visual identity, digital marketing strategies, and the use of information technology (Sahri, 2025). Many business owners still operate without signage, product labels, or any digital presence. Their operations are driven by daily routines, with little focus on business development or expansion. In today's digital era, access to information technology is increasingly available and can serve as a powerful bridge to expand market reach and enhance the competitiveness of local products. Addressing these gaps is essential to unlock the full potential of Ngadirejo's MSMEs and foster inclusive, technology-driven rural development.

Research conducted by Rahayu and Widiastuti highlights the significant role of digital literacy in advancing MSME development, particularly in the post-pandemic context (Rahayu, 2020). However, field observations by the 2025 KKN student group from UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung in Ngadirejo Village reveal a contrasting reality: the majority of MSMEs remain untouched by digital technology. None of the business owners had registered their locations on Google Maps, nor were they utilizing social media or marketplace platforms for promotional purposes. This digital absence presents a critical barrier to growth. In fact, with a strong digital presence, even small-scale enterprises can reach consumers beyond the village, extending into regional and national markets (Samosir, 2023).

This issue is further compounded by the absence of basic elements such as business signage or name plaques, which serve as tangible markers of a business's physical presence. The lack of visual identity contributes to the perception of MSMEs as informal and unprofessional, thereby diminishing their visibility and eroding

consumer trust. Moreover, the limited access to mentorship and training in online marketing remains a significant obstacle for MSME actors seeking to transition into the digital sphere. Without adequate support, many business owners struggle to adopt digital tools and strategies that are increasingly essential for growth and competitiveness in today's marketplace (Indiarma, 2023).

In response to these challenges, the 2025 KKN team from UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung, assigned to Ngadirejo Village, initiated a flagship program to enhance the visibility and competitiveness of MSMEs through simple technological approaches. The program included assistance in creating Google Maps accounts for each business owner, guidance in online marketing training, and the Design and installation of informative and visually appealing business plaques. These business identities were crafted to be memorable to consumers and to reflect the unique characteristics of the products being offered (Nuha, n.d.).

As part of the flagship program, KKN students also conducted hands-on training sessions in online marketing for local MSME actors. The training introduced participants to marketplace platforms such as Shopee. During these sessions, business owners were guided through the process of creating accounts, developing simple promotional content, and understanding basic digital marketing strategies—including the use of hashtags, optimal posting times, and customer engagement techniques. The goal was to enable MSME actors to actively promote their products independently by leveraging both free and paid digital platforms.

Through this series of activities, it is hoped that a collective awareness will emerge among local business actors regarding the importance of business identity and the use of digital technology (Rahayu, 2020). These simple steps not only introduce MSMEs to broader markets but also lay the foundation for digital self-reliance at the village level. With a sustainable approach, MSMEs in Ngadirejo Village have the potential to grow into more professional, highly competitive enterprises that are well-prepared to face the challenges of the modern marketplace.

Method

The implementation of MSME development activities in Ngadirejo Village employed a participatory approach based on the Assets-Based Community Driven Development (ABCD) method (Rahmawati, 2024). This approach emphasizes the identification and strengthening of existing community assets, rather than starting from deficiencies or problems. Historically, ABCD is not a new concept, but it offers a

distinct perspective compared to traditional approaches that tend to focus on needs and issues (Parmitasari, 2016). Through this method, community service activities are designed around the strengths, capabilities, and local resources of the community, positioning them as the primary drivers of change.

In the context of this initiative, the process began with observations and interviews with MSME actors in Ngadirejo Village to identify the strengths of their businesses and the challenges hindering their growth. One of the key findings was the absence of clear visual identities and limited capacity to reach consumers through digital channels. To address this, the proposed solutions included technical assistance in creating Google Maps accounts to enhance business location visibility, guidance in online marketing training, and the design of business plaques to strengthen visual identity. These plaques featured the business name, type of product or service offered, and contact information, and were installed directly at the business premises (Firdaus, 2025).

Throughout the implementation of the program, MSME actors were actively involved in every stage—from data collection to technical execution. This approach ensured that they were not merely objects of service, but rather the central subjects in building local economic self-reliance (Sujatmiko, 2022). Evaluation was conducted informally through direct feedback from business owners and field observations of the impact felt after the activities were carried out.

Result

The initiative to enhance MSME visibility through digital mapping, visual identity strengthening, and online marketing assistance in Ngadirejo Village successfully engaged five local business owners as primary beneficiaries. Of these five MSME participants, four were supported in creating Google Maps accounts and received custom-designed business plaques to reinforce their visual identity. Meanwhile, one MSME received intensive guidance focused on online marketing training through the Shopee platform (Sahri, 2025).

The four MSME actors who received support in digital mapping successfully created Google Maps accounts and accurately marked their business locations (Nuha, n.d.). This step has made it easier for consumers to find their businesses through online searches, while also strengthening their digital presence both locally and beyond. In addition, each business owner now has a custom plaque that serves as a physical visual identity, conveying a more professional image and reinforcing their

brand.

Meanwhile, one MSME actor who received focused assistance in online marketing training was intensively guided in using the Shopee marketplace as a platform for product promotion. The support included the process of setting up a store account, uploading products with engaging descriptions, developing pricing strategies, and learning how to respond to customers effectively. The business owner successfully completed the account setup, uploaded several products, and gained a foundational understanding of how to leverage e-commerce to expand market reach (Eureka Media Aksara, n.d.).

Based on post-activity observations, all participating business owners reported an increase in confidence when promoting their products, both directly and online. This outcome aligns with the government's MSME digitalization initiative, which aims to enhance business competitiveness through the use of technology (UKM, 2023). The program also broadened participants' understanding of the importance of brand image and digital visibility. Although not all participants have reached the stage of actively managing social media or online catalogs, this initiative has laid a foundational step toward broader digital transformation.

The implementation of this program demonstrates that technology-based interventions and direct mentoring can effectively drive changes in attitudes and business practices at the local level (Sitanggang, 2024). This initial success provides a solid foundation for the development of more comprehensive programs that can reach a broader range of MSME actors in the future. These modest efforts are expected to spark wider awareness of the importance of business identity and digital accessibility in supporting the sustainability of MSMEs in the modern era.

Conclusion

The flagship program aimed at enhancing MSME visibility through digital mapping, visual identity strengthening, and online marketing training in Ngadirejo Village has had a positive impact on the presence and confidence of local business owners. Four MSME actors now have registered business locations on Google Maps, along with physical business plaques that support a more professional brand image. Meanwhile, one business owner received intensive mentoring in product marketing through the Shopee platform—marking an initial step toward e-commerce adoption at the village level (Febi, 2023).

This initiative not only provided direct benefits to MSME actors, but also

broadened the perspectives of KKN students regarding the vital role of technology in empowering the local economy. The field experience demonstrated that simple yet well-targeted approaches can serve as catalysts for positive change within the community.

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