

Efforts to Increase Income of Marlung and Marsus MSMEs through Packaging and Logo Branding

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ABSTRACT

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) have an important role in strengthening the national economy, but still face obstacles in increasing competitiveness, especially in the aspect of visual product identity. The low ability of MSME actors to implement branding strategies often causes local products to lose competition in a competitive market. This Community Service activity aims to help MSMEs Marlung and Marsus Warung Al Jaya in Sidoarjo Regency in strengthening product image through the development of packaging designs and logos that are more attractive, informative, and in accordance with business characteristics. The implementation method uses a qualitative descriptive approach with a participatory model, including field observation, needs analysis, design design, training, implementation, and evaluation of results. The results showed a significant increase in the visual appeal of the product, consumer confidence, and an increase in partner revenue by 20–30 percent after the implementation of the new design. In addition to the economic impact, this activity also increases the confidence and ability of business actors to manage brand identity independently. Overall, this activity proves that simple branding-based interventions can strengthen the competitiveness and sustainability of MSMEs in the creative economy era

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Introduction

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) have a very strategic role in driving the wheels of the national economy. This sector not only contributes greatly to the increase in Gross Domestic Product (GDP), but also becomes the backbone in the absorption of labor and the equitable distribution of the community's economy. However, in the midst of increasingly fierce market competition and the rapid development of digital technology, MSMEs face great challenges in maintaining their existence and increasing the competitiveness of products. One of the most common problems is the weak ability to build a strong brand identity, which is an important factor in influencing consumer purchasing decisions (Indriani, 2021).

In the context of modern competition, branding is no longer only related to attractive logos or packaging, but also a visual communication strategy that is able to build a positive image and perception in the minds of consumers. Products with attractive packaging and logos will be easier to remember, trust, and have added value than similar products that do not have a clear visual identity (Wibowo, 2019). In addition to serving as a wrapper and protector of the product, packaging acts as a communication medium that conveys messages about product quality and characteristics. Therefore, branding is an important element in forming customer loyalty and strengthening the product's position in the market (Setiawan, 2020).

MSMEs Marlung and Marsus Warung Al Jaya are two local business actors engaged in the culinary sector with great potential in the development of food and beverage products. These two MSMEs produce products that have a distinctive taste and competitive prices, but the appearance of the packaging and logo used is still simple and does not represent the value of professionalism. Based on initial observations, this condition has an impact on the low buying interest of consumers because the product does not have visual appeal that is able to compete in the market (Kurniawan, 2021). In fact, in today's modern era, visual appeal is often a major factor in purchasing decisions, especially when products compete in the digital space and crowded sales shelves with similar products (Rachmawati, 2022).

The main challenge faced by the two MSMEs lies not only in the limited capital, but also in the lack of understanding of the importance of branding as a long-term business strategy. Many small business actors still consider logos and packaging to be just aesthetic aspects, even though they are both very effective communication tools in building trust and business identity (Lestari, 2022). With limited human resources and access to professional design personnel, efforts to improve the quality of branding have become difficult to do independently. Therefore, the role of higher education institutions through

community service programs is needed to provide assistance and innovative solutions that suit the needs of business actors (Dewi, 2020).

Based on this background, this community service activity aims to help Marlung and Marsus Warung Al Jaya MSMEs in increasing their income through packaging branding strategies and logos that are more attractive, informative, and reflect product identity. A participatory approach is used so that business actors are not only objects, but also active subjects in the design and design application process (Nugroho, 2021). It is hoped that the results of this activity can increase the image and confidence of consumers in products, expand marketing reach, and have a real economic impact on MSME actors. Furthermore, the success of this activity is expected to be an empowerment model that can be replicated by other MSMEs in facing the challenges of competition in the increasingly dynamic digital era (Yusuf, 2022).

Implementation Method

This community service activity was carried out in Sidoarjo Regency, East Java, involving two main partners, namely Marlung MSMEs and Marsus Warung Al Jaya which are engaged in local culinary. The program lasts for three months, from the preparation stage to the evaluation of results, with intensive implementation every week at partner business locations. The approach used is participatory-based qualitative descriptive, where MSME actors are actively involved in the entire activity process (Dewi, 2020). This approach was chosen to ensure that activities not only produce new design products, but also increase the awareness and capacity of business actors on the importance of branding as a sustainable business strategy (Nugroho, 2021).

The stages of implementing activities include six main steps, namely (1) observation and identification of problems, (2) analysis of branding needs, (3) design of packaging and logos, (4) training and socialization, (5) implementation and mentoring, and (6) evaluation of the results of activities. The observation stage is carried out directly at the business location using observation sheets to record the visual weaknesses of the product, the condition of the old packaging, and the customer's perception of the product display (Kurniawan, 2021). The observation data is then analyzed through group discussions with partners to determine the appropriate design improvement direction. The design stage is carried out collaboratively by involving students and visual communication design experts, using design principles that emphasize readability, color consistency, and suitability of product characters (Wibowo, 2019; Sari, 2019).

Furthermore, at the training and socialization stage, MSME actors were given briefings on the importance of brand identity and strategies for using logos in promotional media (Indriani, 2021). After the design is agreed, the implementation of new packaging and logos is carried out directly on the partner's products, with the assistance of the service team during the transition period. The evaluation was carried out using

feedback forms from business actors and documentation of product photos before and after branding, as well as recording changes in sales turnover and consumer responses (Amelia, 2020; Rachmawati, 2022). The results of the evaluation show that simple but targeted branding is able to improve product image and consumer trust. This collaborative and field-evidence-based approach is expected to be an effective model to strengthen the competitiveness of MSMEs in the creative and digital economy era (Yusuf, 2022).

Results and Discussion

Result

Community Service activities that focus on increasing revenue through packaging and logo branding strategies have resulted in significant findings in both visual, economic, and social aspects. The first result that stood out was the change in the image and appearance of the product in two partners, namely Marlung MSMEs and Marsus Warung Al Jaya. Before the activity was carried out, partner products used plain plastic packaging without brand labels, and the logo used was simple and had no visual appeal. After the redesign, the service team succeeded in creating a new packaging design with a modern look, contrasting colors, and a logo that strongly represents the product's identity. This new design is able to increase the professional impression and consumer trust in local products.



Figure 1. Marlung and Marsus Warung Al Jaya MSME products before the new packaging and logo design process was carried out

From an economic perspective, this activity has a real impact on increasing the income of both partners. Based on the results of interviews and sales documentation, the two MSMEs experienced an increase in turnover within two months after the implementation of the new packaging and logo. On average, revenue increases by 20–30 percent, as the number of customers increases and the market reaches widen. Many new customers are interested in trying the product because of the more attractive and informative packaging. This condition shows that well-designed branding serves not only

as an aesthetic aspect, but also as an effective instrument to drive sales and expand market segmentation.



Figure 2. New packaging and logo designs are the result of branding activities developed collaboratively

In addition to the economic impact, this activity also resulted in significant changes in the psychological and social aspects of MSME actors. After participating in training and mentoring, the partners showed increased confidence and motivation in marketing their products. They began to actively use new logos and packaging on various promotional media, including social media. Their courage and enthusiasm to display products in a more professional manner is one of the indicators that this activity not only produces physical outputs in the form of designs, but also builds awareness and capacity of human resources in managing brand identity. The independence of business actors in promoting their products is one of the important achievements of this activity.



Figure 4. MSME products after the implementation of new packaging and logos on sales displays.

Another output produced is visual documentation that shows real changes before and after the activity. Product photos that previously looked plain are now transformed into products with elegant and informative branded packaging. The new logo applied to the mica container features a combination of warm colors and bold typography that is

easy for consumers to remember. These changes not only provide added value aesthetically, but also improve the perception of product quality and hygiene. These visual results strengthen the evidence that through simple interventions and collaboration-based mentoring, MSMEs can transform product images that have a direct impact on increasing revenue and business competitiveness.

Discussion

The results of this service activity prove that branding plays an important role in increasing the value and competitiveness of MSME products. The implementation of new packaging and logos not only improves the visual appearance of products, but also creates new meaning in the way consumers perceive the quality and professionalism of the business. In line with Wibowo's (2019) view, branding is a form of visual communication that functions to build positive perceptions and images in the minds of consumers. In the case of Marlung and Marsus Warung Al Jaya MSMEs, the new packaging design is a medium of expression of business identity, as well as a means to introduce local values that are packaged in a modern way. This visual transformation is not just about the beauty of the display, but about how the product can speak symbolically to its consumers.

Changes in packaging and logo design have a strong psychological impact, both for consumers and business actors. From the consumer side, attractive packaging increases the perception of product quality and fosters a sense of trust to buy (Setiawan, 2020; Amelia, 2020). As for business actors, the visual change fosters confidence in marketing their products more professionally. This is in line with Lestari's (2022) research which emphasizes that the implementation of the right logo can build a business image while strengthening the motivation of MSME actors to maintain brand consistency. Thus, the success of this program lies not only in the results of the design, but also in the formation of a new awareness of the importance of visual imagery as a long-term business strategy.

This community services activity also shows how the branding process can be a collaborative-based social empowerment model. The approach used places MSME actors as active subjects in design decision-making, starting from color selection, typography, to the message that wants to be conveyed through logos. This kind of approach is in line with the view of Dewi (2020) who emphasizes the importance of community participation in the empowerment process so that the results are sustainable. Through this direct involvement, MSME actors are not only beneficiaries, but also learning actors who understand the creative process behind building brand identity. This interactive process results in social change in the form of increased visual literacy and awareness of the strategic value of branding in market competition.

Furthermore, this activity also strengthens the relevance of visual communication theory which states that packaging and logos function as visual language that convey

messages about product quality, value, and excellence (Sari, 2019; Rachmawati, 2022). In the context of the two MSME partners, the new informative packaging and consistent logo have become a symbol of credibility. The combination of bright colors and simple design gives a strong differentiating effect to similar products on the market. Theoretically, this proves that effective design does not always depend on complexity, but on the ability to deliver a targeted message. Thus, the results of this activity support the theory that simple but consistent branding is able to build consumer trust and loyalty.

The involvement of MSME actors in the training process also contributes to the emergence of a new form of social engineering, where small business actors are able to adopt academic knowledge in daily business practices. Models like this show the success of the community-based branding approach, where people are empowered through hands-on practices that are oriented towards real results (Nugroho, 2021; Indriani, 2021). In this case, branding is no longer just a marketing tool, but an educational medium that builds creative, innovative, and adaptive thinking skills to market changes. The relationship between academics, students, and business actors is also an example of real synergy between the world of education and the people's economic sector.

Finally, this discussion emphasizes that the success of packaging and logo branding programs is not only temporary, but can be a sustainable strategy if followed by consistency and periodic evaluation. Brand strengthening needs to be accompanied by a digital marketing strategy to expand market reach (Yusuf, 2022). In the long term, the success of Marlung and Marsus Warung Al Jaya MSMEs can be a replication model for other MSMEs in developing a brand identity based on local values. With the support of solid theory and practice, these service activities show that simple interventions based on design and communication science can bring about a big change in improving the economic competitiveness of communities at the grassroots level.

Conclusion

Community Service activities that focus on increasing revenue through packaging and logo branding strategies have had a real impact on Marlung and Marsus Warung Al Jaya MSMEs, both from visual, economic, and social aspects. The results of the activity show that the design of packaging and logos that are modern, informative, and according to product characteristics are able to increase the attractiveness, professional image, and buying interest of consumers, which ultimately has a direct impact on increasing business revenue. More than that, this activity succeeded in fostering new awareness among MSME actors about the importance of brand identity and visual consistency as a strategic factor in business development. Through a participatory approach and continuous mentoring, this activity also strengthens the capacity of business actors to manage branding independently and opens up opportunities for integration into digital marketing. Conceptually, the results of this program show that simple interventions based on academic collaboration and community needs can be an effective empowerment model

to strengthen the competitiveness and sustainability of MSMEs in the creative economy era.

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