



Digital Era for Entrepreneurs: The Role of Social Media and Business Opportunities

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Abstract. Internet users in Indonesia are experiencing growth along with the entry of the 4.0 industrial revolution because of the many benefits that are felt by using the internet network. Social media is one of the platforms that is widely used, reaching 68 percent of the total population in Indonesia. The emergence of Covid-19 which has an impact on the economic slowdown and restrictions on social activities has made social media users increase. Then what are the benefits of social media in generating the economy and what opportunities does it provide? This study aims to identify the role of social media and business opportunities in the digital era for entrepreneurs. The study used a descriptive qualitative approach with a literature study method. The data examined in this study can be in the form of scientific articles and journals that are relevant to the research objectives. The results show that social media provides many changes in the marketing paradigm, namely traditional marketing (offline) to modern marketing (online). In addition, the existence of social media provides online business opportunities for entrepreneurs to increase sales of existing products.

Keywords: —social media · online business · digitalization · entrepreneurs

1 Introduction

The world community, especially the Indonesian people, now feel the benefits and convenience of the presence of the digital era [1]. This can be seen by the growth in the number of internet users in Indonesia. Chairman of the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII), Muhammad Arif, said that 77 percent of Indonesia's population already uses the internet network, which is 210 million people in 2022. This means that there is an addition of 30 million internet users from the previous year [2]. Users of this internet network have increased since the emergence of the Covid-19 Pandemic. Meanwhile, the number of social media users in Indonesia has reached 68 percent of the total population in 2022. This shows an increase of 12.6 percent in the previous year [3].

Since the beginning of the emergence of the Covid-19 virus at the end of 2019, the impact has been enormous on the entire existing sector. Not only Indonesia, but the plague disaster also shook all corners of the world. A massive economic slowdown had occurred globally which of course was also felt domestically [4]. The existence of Large-Scale Social Restrictions (PSBB) regulations has made many conventional activities turn into

online activities. The government's policy is to minimize direct contact that can increase the spread of Covid-19. The impact given is a change in behavior in the community in their activities, especially in the shopping process. People can make transactions easily without having to meet face-to-face with the seller. This digitization process is considered very effective because it plays a role in minimizing physical contact during the pandemic [5].

This change in consumption behavior has an impact on the sustainability of MSMEs that still sell conventionally. The market share that they have gained through conventional buying and selling activities has begun to switch to using social media as a platform for transactions. Instagram, Tiktok, Facebook, and Twitter are some of the social media used by consumers to facilitate their purchasing activities [6]. In a study conducted by Hernikawati the results showed that there was an increase in the intensity of visits on e-commerce platforms in Indonesia. With this new phenomenon, MSME actors as the spearhead of the national economy must begin to adapt by exploring social media to facilitate the sales process. Digitization is a process of managing and analyzing all business activities with the aim of changing an organization's business system so that it can run digitally in order to achieve the goal of being effective and efficient [7]. The digitization process must be immediately mastered by MSME actors because of the shift in consumption behavior that is increasingly leading to the effectiveness desired by consumers.

Economic recovery is an effort made by the government to increase demand and supply from markets affected by Covid-19. Francesca Battistin [8] Economic recovery seeks to provide endogenous conditions for the local economy to revive the economy and provide jobs in the long term. When viewed from the convenience offered in the digitization process, job opportunities and business opportunities are very broad and diverse. Business opportunities are no longer tied to one field. There are many new offers that have never even been encountered in conventional businesses, service businesses can also be done digitally instead of having to meet face to face. Businesses in the form of products no longer have difficulty in the delivery process where currently there are many shipping companies that can distribute our products to all corners of Indonesia and even the world. The ease of entrepreneurship through digitalization is expected to have an impact on reducing the number of unemployed and decreasing poverty rates in Indonesia. However, there are still many young people who are not aware of this opportunity. Thus, in order to know the role of digitization through the use of social media and business opportunities in the digital era, a more in-depth analysis of various existing sources is needed.

Previous research was conducted by Dellia Mila Vernia with the title "Optimizing Social Media as a Means of Online Business Promotion for Housewives to Improve the Family Economy" [9]. The results of the study explain a shift in the marketing paradigm, from traditional marketing (offline) to modern marketing (online). Social media has brought changes to the social community and even the business community in Indonesia. Social media plays a big role in online business marketing, such as the benefits of building brand or brand awareness, a means of finding potential buyers, getting closer to consumers, effective and targeted promotional media, and social media can dig up information from consumers through polls and surveys.

Research conducted by Dinda Sekar Pusparini and Reni Nuraeni with the title “Utilization of Social Media as Promotional Media (Descriptive Study on Happy Go Lucky House)” explains that business people need effective marketing media with the aim of expanding market reach [10]. Instagram social media has many advantages in promotional activities because it can convey information to consumers without the need for cost and effort in a relatively short time. Instagram users who are growing from time to time provide great potential to spread Happy Go Lucky house to be known by many people.

Various benefits are felt by entrepreneurs who use social media as a means of promotion so as to bring up business ideas for other people. As stated by Rini Astuti, et al. In his research entitled “Social Media Literacy as an Online Business Opportunity for Housewives Supporting Household Income” explains that there is a change in people’s mindset towards the use and opportunities of social media that are beneficial in increasing household [11]. Social media is the right means to build an online business so that it can support the family economy.

Based on the explanation of the phenomena described above, researchers are interested in further researching the role of social media and business opportunities in the current digital era. Therefore, this study explains how the role of social media and what business opportunities are available in the digital era to build the Indonesian economy? The research aims to identify the role of social media in developing a business and identify business opportunities available in the digital era.

2 Method

This study uses a qualitative approach using the literature study method. The literature study method is carried out by collecting and analyzing various data sources, both primary data and secondary data [12]. The data examined in this study are articles from scientific journals that are relevant to the research objectives. The research procedure carried out in this study refers to the stages of qualitative research described by Creswel (2008) [13]. Which consists of several stages which include: (1) Identification of the problem, where the researcher starts with what is the target in research based on specifications, current phenomenon or issue to be studied. (2) Literature review, in this stage the researcher searches for and examines various reading sources related to the phenomenon or problem that is the research material, where the researcher must find a novelty idea from previous research. (3) Determining the research objectives, after conducting a literature study the researcher will identify the main objectives of the research. (4) Data collection, researchers collect information from various library sources through articles and scientific journals which are then reviewed and collected according to research needs. (5) Data analysis and interpretation, the data that has been collected in the previous stage is then analyzed so as to produce a novelty that is in accordance with the research objectives. (6) Reporting, the researcher compiles the research results in the form of a described research report, where in this qualitative method the data must be described in depth.

3 Result and Discussion

Internet users in Indonesia are increasing over time. The internet is a solution to problems related to distance and time in interacting with certain goals. Social media, as part of the internet, has brought changes to society in Indonesia, including in business matters. With the existence of social media, information can spread widely in a very short time so that entrepreneurs can market their products with a wider reach compared to marketing their products conventionally. Entrepreneurship by utilizing social media is one way to develop a good career and business strategy [14]. As for the social media that entrepreneurs can use to run a business, namely Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, and so on.

The majority of entrepreneurs in this digital era have used social media to launch their business activities. Social media in business can act as a means of promoting goods or services, providing access to consumers, facilitating transactions between consumers and suppliers, and increasing sales of goods or services [15]. The use of social media as a means of promotion is considered profitable because the costs incurred are cheaper than conventional media, such as advertisements, posters, banners, and so on. With the suppression of production costs and a wider reach of consumers, this is a distinct advantage for entrepreneurs who are willing to develop ideas and take advantage of opportunities by entering the world of digital business today. The use of social media in entrepreneurship is also considered attractive by entrepreneurs because product information can be shared in the form of interesting infographics, images, and videos. In addition, the use of social media as a medium for doing business currently has a high opportunity because of the intensity of the community, such as teenagers who often use social media in their daily lives. However, in the current situation of digital business opportunities, entrepreneurs must balance the development of different digital promotional content ideas and make their products attractive with other products in order to get the attention of digital consumers.

- The role of social media in online business marketing includes:
- Build brand awareness through social media so as to make people more familiar with the product. Brand awareness of the product can be seen from the number of fans or followers and mentions in a period on social media.
- Social media provides potential buyers, through social media can be a means of friendship as well as business (business relationship). Social media helps in determining targets based on area, age, gender to occupation to target the right target market, making it easier for online businesses to find the right market as a target for selling their products.
- Social media is a medium for approaching consumers, meaning that social media provides an opportunity to communicate with consumers.
- Social media is one of the effective and targeted promotional media so that consumers will get extensive information. By providing extensive information, consumers will feel helped by the new knowledge of a product so as to provide added value from the business being run.

- Social media is able to dig up information from consumers and potential consumers through polls or surveys about how aware consumers are of the products they have, how interested the market is, and seeking information about competitors [9].

Another role of social media in entrepreneurial activities is to enable entrepreneurs to gain access to consumers. Entrepreneurs realize that through social media any information can be widely disseminated to consumers until it becomes viral. With the information that is currently viral, entrepreneurs can reach consumers who come from areas that are far away and difficult to reach with conventional media. In addition, social media makes it easier for entrepreneurs to transact with consumers and suppliers. Consumers can easily order products by taking advantage of the features provided in social media applications.

The efficiency and effectiveness of social media is believed by entrepreneurs to increase the quantity of sales of goods or services offered. The logical reason that can explain this statement is because entrepreneurs do not incur costs that are too high so that the costs incurred are limited to internet access costs. In addition, the reach of information and access to consumers is not limited so that entrepreneurs can reach consumers who cannot be reached through conventional media. With savings and an increase in the number of consumers, entrepreneurs believe that through social media product sales will increase.

Digital technology provides entrepreneurship opportunities for the community. Before the entry of digitalization in the world of entrepreneurship, people thought that to run a business one had to have a large capital, a place of business, equipment, and a business network to get consumers so that they were afraid to start a business. However, after knowing that digital technology can be used to carry out business activities, they try to take opportunities and know that with only digital tools they can promote products sold through social media to the wider community so that business activities will be built more easily and more widely.. As for examples of business opportunities that can be utilized by the community in this digital era, such as becoming a reseller or producing their own [16]. Technological developments in the digital era have brought the business world to development as well. The existence of the internet in the digital era can facilitate entrepreneurs in developing their products with a variety of information in it. Entrepreneurs can save business capital because selling via the internet does not require business actors to own buildings or shops [17]. Developments in the business world cannot be separated from entrepreneurs who provide many creative innovations to various forms of business. In addition to the internet, the spread of creative businesses in this digital era is also related to changes in people's shopping patterns who are happy to shop online from those previously shopping offline. Several types of creative businesses in the digital era that can become promising business opportunities for now are being content creators, opening online shops, graphic design, becoming a Youtuber, blogger, dropshipper, photographer, and web developer [18].

4 Conclusion

Social media, as part of the internet, has brought changes to society in Indonesia, including in business matters. With the existence of social media, information can spread widely in a very short time so that entrepreneurs can market their products with a wider reach compared to marketing their products conventionally. Entrepreneurship by utilizing social media is one way to develop a good career and business strategy. Another role of social media in entrepreneurial activities is to enable entrepreneurs to gain access to consumers. Entrepreneurs realize that through social media any information can be widely disseminated to consumers until it becomes viral.

Technological developments in the digital era have brought the business world to development as well. The existence of the internet in the digital era can facilitate entrepreneurs in developing their products with a variety of information in it. Entrepreneurs can save business capital because selling via the internet does not require business actors to own buildings or shops.

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