

Social Media Visual Marketing Strategy for MSMEs Based on Manager Skills Analysis

Puteri Salsabila¹, Fajar Ciptandi¹, Lira Anindita Utami²

¹Program Studi Magister Desain, Fakultas Industri Kreatif, Universitas Telkom, Indonesia

²Program Studi Desain Komunikasi Visual, Fakultas Industri Kreatif, Universitas Telkom, Indonesia

*Corresponding Author: Puteri Salsabila

E-mail: puteriisalsabila@student.telkomuniversity.ac.id



Article Info

Article history:

Received 13 January 2026

Received in revised 20 April 2026

Accepted 10 May 2026

Keywords:

Visual Marketing

MSMEs

Social Media

Digital Competence

Design Driven Work

Abstract

Despite the advantages offered by digital platforms, fashion MSMEs in the southern part of Bengkulu are still struggling with the adoption of social media for visual marketing, creating a new demand for their businesses. The use of social media for visual marketing is still a challenge for fashion MSMEs in South Bengkulu, even though digital platforms offer a great opportunity for expanding market reach and improving customer engagement. The issue is not the availability of social media platforms, but rather limited visual, technical and strategic skills of the managers of MSME in creating and managing good digital content. The purpose of this study is to find the visual marketing competence level of the managers of fashion MSMEs and to create an effective stage by stage approach that is appropriate to their current competence and business environment. The data collection was carried out using a qualitative approach with the social media observation method, in-depth interviews with MSME managers and consumers in Pasar Manna District, amounting to 74 MSME and 8 consumers, and literature study. The results indicated that majority of MSME managers are at Level 1, which involves basic use of social media, less quality of product photos, lack of information about the business and its products, infrequent posting, poor quality of captions, and inadequate customer interaction. Consumer interviews suggest that clear product pictures, full information, and a responsive communication have a significant impact on the level of consumer trust and purchase interest, whereas manager interviews highlight issues such as limited knowledge, time, cost and mentoring availability.

Introduction

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) play a crucial role in Indonesia's economy, especially in regions like South Bengkulu (Aprilia et al., 2025; Delfira et al., 2025; Ramadani et al., 2025). MSMEs not only make a significant contribution to job creation but also play a vital role in the improvement of the regional Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Malau & Ekananda, 2025; Lestari & Bariyah, 2025; Martinravi & Krishnasamy, 2025). In South Bengkulu, the trade sector, particularly fashion products, is one of the dominant contributors, accounting for around 15.91% of the regional GDP (BPS, 2025). However, this sector faces challenges, particularly in expanding its market and improving its competitiveness.

One of the main challenges faced is the low level of knowledge and understanding among MSME managers in utilizing social media as an effective marketing tool, especially in harnessing its potential (Fajri et al., 2025; Heri et al., 2025; Sulasih et al., 2024). Social media offers significant opportunities for MSMEs to reach a broader audience (Sutrisno et al., 2024; Scheers, 2016). According to the National Social Economic Survey (BPS, 2025), 81.23% of

the population in Bengkulu accesses social media, showing a huge untapped potential. This limitation is particularly evident in the inability to create and manage strategic visual content for marketing, with many MSMEs using social media reactively and limiting themselves to basic features (Rashid & Abdullah, 2025).

This issue is compounded by the absence of a marketing approach tailored to the diverse skill levels among MSME actors. Each MSME has different digital capabilities and expertise, necessitating different models of approach, rather than a one-size-fits-all strategy (Cuijten et al., 2024; Retnowati, 2025). With the increasing use of the internet by consumers transitioning to the digital world, MSMEs in South Bengkulu must adapt to these changes to remain competitive. Social media becomes one of the essential tools, where MSME actors are expected to maximize existing features to enhance visual marketing and provide a positive customer experience (Ciptandi et al., 2023; Safitri et al., 2026; Ernestivita & Suhendra, 2026).

Therefore, a targeted visual marketing strategy on social media, tailored to the competency level, is key (McCorry et al., 2026; Rolando, 2025; Othman et al., 2025). Visual marketing is not just limited to content creation but encompasses an entire strategic approach to creating, distributing, and optimizing visual content that can capture the audience's attention and build the brand (Affonso & Janiszewski, 2023). For beginner-level MSMEs, the strategy focuses on strengthening organic visual content and building a consistent visual brand foundation, while more advanced MSMEs can develop more complex and integrated content strategies to increase audience engagement. Good visual design in this marketing strategy is crucial for building brand awareness and driving audience engagement (Himawati et al., 2025; Pandiri et al., 2025; Ratih et al., 2025).

Based on these challenges, this research is designed to address three core issues: the level of MSME managers' knowledge about visual marketing, the visual marketing approach suitable for their competency levels, and effective visual marketing strategies. Therefore, this study aims to provide a specific and practical visual marketing strategy tailored to the selected level of MSMEs, which will not only help MSMEs in South Bengkulu survive but also thrive in the digital era.

Methods

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative approach to examine how fashion MSMEs in South Bengkulu use social media as a visual marketing tool. This approach was selected because the study focused on interpreting actual practices, limitations, and competency levels of MSME managers in managing visual content, rather than statistically measuring social media performance. The research was conducted in Pasar Manna District, South Bengkulu, which was selected because it is one of the main economic centers in the region and has a visible concentration of fashion MSMEs.

Research Participants and Sampling

The population of this study consisted of fashion MSMEs operating in South Bengkulu, with the research focus limited to Pasar Manna District. A purposive sampling technique was used to select the units of analysis and interview informants. For social media observation, MSMEs were selected based on two criteria, namely having an identifiable business presence in the fashion sector and actively using social media, particularly Facebook, to promote or display products.

Based on these criteria, 74 fashion MSME social media accounts were observed. In addition, 16 informants were interviewed, consisting of 8 consumers and 8 MSME managers. Consumer

informants were selected based on their experience in viewing, interacting with, or purchasing fashion products through local MSME social media accounts, while manager informants were selected based on their direct involvement in managing business social media accounts.

Data Collection Techniques

Data were collected through social media observation, in depth interviews, and literature study. The observation of 74 accounts focused on account identity, profile completeness, product photo quality, background consistency, caption structure, posting frequency, use of social media features, and customer interaction.

Interviews with consumers explored how visual content influenced trust, purchase interest, product evaluation, and perceptions of seller professionalism. Interviews with MSME managers explored their knowledge of visual marketing, content production routines, use of social media features, and practical constraints such as limited time, cost, skills, and mentoring access. The literature study was used to strengthen the conceptual basis for digital competency mapping and the formulation of the visual marketing framework.

Operational Indicators of Visual Marketing Competence

Visual marketing competence was operationalized into three main indicators. The first was technical production, which included lighting, image clarity, background consistency, product arrangement, and basic photo quality. The second was platform mastery, which included profile completeness, business information, posting frequency, and product content organization. The third was interaction strategy, which included caption structure, product information, hashtag relevance, response to comments or direct messages, and use of interactive features such as stories, reels, highlights, and live sessions.

These indicators were used to classify MSME managers into four levels. Level 1 refers to basic knowledge, where managers use social media but without clear visual strategy or content consistency. Level 2 refers to functional use, where managers begin to provide product information and interact with customers, although the practice remains limited and irregular. Level 3 refers to structured management, where accounts show more consistent visual identity, planned content, and better interaction. Level 4 refers to strategic visual marketing, where visual branding, customer engagement, feature optimization, and evaluation are integrated into marketing practice.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed thematically using the Miles and Huberman model, which consists of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Observation notes and interview transcripts were reduced and organized according to key themes, including visual content quality, account management, customer perception, managerial constraints, and strategy formulation.

The observation data were used to map the competence level of the 74 MSME accounts, while interview data were used to explain consumer perceptions and the practical constraints behind the observed weaknesses. The results from observation, interviews, and literature were then synthesized to formulate the Design Driven Work framework as a staged strategy for MSME visual marketing development.

Results and Discussion

Mapping of MSME Visual Marketing Competence

This study used a social media observation method which involved 74 fashion MSME accounts on social media in Pasar Manna District, an in-depth interview method for 8 consumers, and an in-depth interview method for 8 MSME managers. The study aimed to determine the level of competence in visual marketing of MSME managers, to find the shortcomings in the use of social media and to develop a progressive visual marketing strategy appropriate to their current digital competence. The findings shows that most of the fashion MSMEs in South Bengkulu have already utilized social media as a marketing media, particularly Facebook. But their social media use is still elementary, haphazard and underutilized. The lack of digital access is not the core issue here, but that many MSME managers still struggle to convert social media into a formalized visual marketing tool.

The analysis of 74 fashion MSME accounts indicates that most MSME managers are at the basic level (Level 1) of social media knowledge and their use of social media for product promotion. Managers can upload product photos, share product information, and interact with prospective customers via comments or direct messages at this level. Yet, most of these activities are unplanned and are not done using visual marketing. The quality of the photos is not consistent across many accounts, and the information about businesses is not complete, posting frequency is irregular, the structure of the captions is not consistent, and few interactive features are used. This result indicates that the presence of fashion MSMEs in digital space is already happening in south Bengkulu, but they have not yet reached the level of developing visual, technologic and strategic competence to gain consumer trust and boost market penetrability.

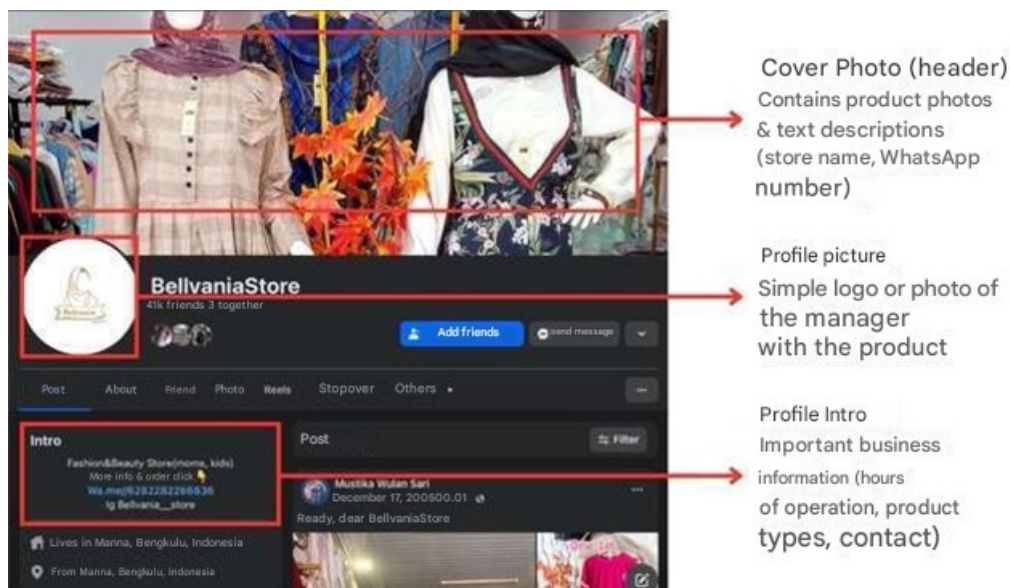


Figure 1. Account Management

Source: BellvaniaStore Facebook

Table 1. Mapping of MSME Visual Marketing Competence

Competence level	Description	Main characteristics found in the accounts	General finding
------------------	-------------	--	-----------------

Level 1	Basic knowledge	Product photos are uploaded, but image quality, captions, profile information, and posting schedules are inconsistent	Dominant among observed MSMEs
Level 2	Functional use	Managers begin to use captions, product details, and simple interaction, but content is not yet systematically planned	Found in a smaller number of accounts
Level 3	Structured management	Accounts show more consistent visual identity, planned content, and better interaction with customers	Limited presence
Level 4	Strategic visual marketing	Visual branding, engagement strategy, feature optimization, and evaluation are integrated into marketing practice	Rare or not yet strongly visible

The dominance of Level 1 indicates that most MSME managers require foundational intervention before being introduced to advanced digital marketing practices. Strategies such as paid advertising, influencer campaigns, live selling, and integrated brand storytelling may not produce strong results if basic digital credibility has not yet been established. Therefore, the proposed strategy must begin with practical and achievable improvements, particularly in account identity, product photography, caption structure, content consistency, and customer response.

Visual Weaknesses in MSME Social Media Accounts

The first obvious problem with the accounts observed is that not all products have consistent photo quality. Lots of product photos were captured without proper lighting, background, sharpness and photo composition. A number of products were exhibited in dark environments, in dense background, or in informal environments, which did not facilitate the attractiveness of the product. This situation dampens the persuasive effect of product images and conveys a less professional look to the account. It is important to consider the visual quality in fashion marketing as consumers are not able to physically touch, try and check the product in person before buying. Unclear or unclear photos of products can make the sale difficult for customers to make a decision, so they may lose trust in the product.

The second one is that there is no consistent visual identity. Most accounts are not consistently styled, that is they do not have a unique visual style, including a consistent background, photo angle, color tone, product arrangement, or layout pattern. This makes uploaded content look scattered and doesn't create a good impression of a brand. This indicates that most of the managers of MSMEs are still concentrating on presenting the products in the store, but not creating a visual identity that can make a difference between their store and that of their competitors. The consistency is also crucial in visual marketing, both from an aesthetic standpoint as well as an awareness and remembering standpoint.

The third weakness is inadequate information about the product and business. Product images from several accounts do not have sufficient captions, price information, size information, material description, contact number, location or order instructions. This adds to the buyer's uncertainty and can be a real deterrent to him or her from finalizing the transaction. If the consumer continually has to ask questions to get basic information he or she might get bored, particularly if the information is given by someone else. Thus, the lack of product details and

weak structure of a caption become significant obstacles towards the effectiveness of social media marketing.

The fourth point is that they do not post regularly. Many MSME managers upload content only when they have received new stock into their system, when they are free of other work, or when they are in need of quick sales. This means that the creation of content is not yet seen as a regular marketing tool. When posts are irregular, the visibility is reduced, the audience gets less familiar with the account, and it looks like it is not active. So it is best for Level 1 MSMEs to have a simple (and realistic) content calendar rather than a more complex content plan that will be hard to keep up.

The 5th weakness is limited interaction strategy. Although some managers respond to comments and messages, the responses are mostly transactional and reactive. Little captions are used to invite engagement, little testimonials and little interactive features like stories, highlights, reels, Facebook Live and Facebook Groups. This indicates that customer interaction has not yet been planned as part of an engagement approach. In many instances, social media marketing is not being used as a method for establishing a relationship with consumers, and is merely being utilized to showcase products.

Consumer Perceptions of MSME Visual Marketing

To strengthen the interpretation of the observation results, interview data from consumers were used to explain how visual marketing practices are perceived by potential buyers. The interviews with consumers indicate that visual presentation strongly influences their perception of trust, product quality, and purchase interest. Consumers tend to feel more confident when an MSME account displays clear product photos, complete product descriptions, and responsive communication. Conversely, accounts with blurry photos, incomplete captions, and unclear contact information are perceived as less reliable.

One consumer explained that product photos are the first element considered before deciding whether to ask further questions or make a purchase.

“When I see clothes on Facebook, the first thing I notice is the photo. If the photo is dark or unclear, I usually skip it because I cannot really imagine the color, material, or shape of the product. But if the photo is bright and the product is shown clearly, I feel more interested to ask about the size and price.”

This statement shows that visual quality is not merely an aesthetic issue, but also a factor that shapes consumer confidence. For fashion products, the product image functions as the main source of evaluation because consumers cannot directly examine the product. Clear and well arranged photos can increase purchase interest, while unclear photos can weaken trust.

Consumers also stated that they prefer accounts that provide practical information without requiring them to ask too many basic questions. Information such as price, size, material, available color, location, and ordering method is considered important because it helps consumers make faster decisions. In this sense, caption structure is not merely a writing issue, but part of the customer experience.

“Sometimes the product looks good, but the caption only says ready stock or new arrival. There is no price, no size, and no explanation about the material. As a buyer, I have to ask everything again. If another seller gives complete information, I usually choose the one that is clearer.”

The quotation indicates that incomplete information can create friction in the purchasing process. Consumers do not only assess the product, but also the professionalism of the seller.

When basic information is missing, the account may be perceived as less organized, even when the product itself is attractive. This reinforces the need for MSME managers to use structured captions containing product details, practical benefits, and clear order instructions.

Another important finding is that consumers are more attracted to content that shows the product in real use. Product photos, short videos, customer testimonials, and behind the scenes content are considered more convincing than repetitive product uploads without context. This indicates that visual marketing for MSMEs should not only focus on showing products, but also on presenting the value, usability, and everyday relevance of the products.

“I like it more when the clothes are shown on a model or at least displayed in a way that looks real. If it is only folded on the floor or photographed randomly, I cannot imagine whether it will look good when worn. A short video or a photo from a customer usually makes me more convinced.”

This response demonstrates that consumers need contextual visual information. For fashion MSMEs, showing how products are worn, how the material falls, or how the product can be styled for daily use can strengthen perceived value. This finding becomes one of the reasons why the proposed framework includes photo improvement, short videos, testimonials, and content variation as part of gradual visual marketing development.

MSME Managers’ Constraints in Managing Social Media

Interview data from MSME managers were used to identify the practical constraints behind the weaknesses found in the social media observation. The interviews show that the limited visual marketing practices of MSME managers are closely related to knowledge, time, financial, and mentoring constraints. Many managers do not have formal knowledge of digital marketing, visual design, or content planning. Their social media practices are mostly learned through trial and error, imitation of other sellers, or personal experience. This explains why social media use is active but not yet strategic. The managers know that social media is important, but they do not always know how to manage it professionally.

“I usually upload product photos whenever new stock arrives. I do not really have a special schedule. If I have time, I take the photo and post it. I know that good photos are important, but I do not really understand how to make the photo look more professional.”

This statement reflects the condition of Level 1 competence found in the observation results. The manager has already used social media for promotion, but the practice remains spontaneous and unstructured. This supports the finding that most MSME managers are not disconnected from digital platforms, but they still lack systematic knowledge of visual content planning.

Time limitation is another major constraint. MSME managers often handle many business activities at once, including purchasing stock, serving customers, arranging products, managing offline stores, and responding to online inquiries. Because of this workload, content creation is often treated as an additional task rather than a core marketing activity. This condition makes complex marketing strategies difficult to apply at the early stage.

“The difficulty is that I manage the shop myself. I have to serve buyers, arrange the goods, reply to chats, and sometimes go to buy stock. So, making content is usually done quickly. I just take a photo and upload it because I do not have much time to prepare the background or edit the photo.”

The quotation shows that the weakness of visual marketing is not only caused by lack of awareness, but also by the everyday operational burden of MSME management. Therefore, the proposed strategy must be realistic and not overly complicated. Training should focus on simple routines, such as using natural lighting, preparing one plain background, applying basic editing, and creating a manageable posting schedule.

Financial limitation also affects visual marketing practice. Many managers cannot afford professional photography, paid design services, or advanced advertising. However, this does not mean that visual improvement is impossible. The findings suggest that Level 1 MSMEs need low cost and practical solutions, such as using natural lighting, simple backgrounds, smartphone photography, basic editing, and structured captions.

“For small businesses like ours, hiring a photographer or paying for promotion is not always possible. We usually use our own phone. If there is a simple way to make the photo better without spending much money, that would be more useful for us.”

This response strengthens the relevance of a staged and low cost framework. For Level 1 MSMEs, the most appropriate intervention is not sophisticated marketing technology, but practical visual literacy that can be applied using resources already available to the managers. This is why the Design Driven Work framework begins with foundational visual credibility before moving to advanced engagement strategies.

The interviews also show that managers need continuous assistance rather than one time training. Some managers may understand the importance of better photos or captions during training, but they may struggle to apply the strategy consistently without guidance. This indicates that visual marketing development should be understood as a learning process.

“If we are only taught once, maybe we understand during the training, but after that we often forget or return to the old habit. It is better if there is follow up assistance, so we can ask when we face difficulties while applying it.”

This statement supports the need for continuous mentoring as part of the framework. Assistance is necessary to ensure that MSME managers do not only receive knowledge, but are also able to transform that knowledge into repeated practice. Therefore, mentoring, practice based training, and periodic evaluation become important components of the proposed strategy.

Formulation of the Design Driven Work Framework

Based on the observation and interview findings, this study formulates the Design Driven Work framework as a staged visual marketing strategy for Level 1 MSME managers. The framework is designed to respond to the actual condition of fashion MSMEs in South Bengkulu, where social media use is already present but not yet supported by adequate visual literacy, content planning, and interaction management. The framework prioritizes gradual capability development rather than immediate adoption of complex digital marketing techniques.

The framework consists of three main phases. The first phase focuses on foundational training and visual credibility. This phase is considered the most urgent because Level 1 MSMEs need to establish a professional business identity before developing more advanced strategies. The key activities include improving profile information, replacing informal profile pictures with business oriented visuals, using clear product photos, applying consistent backgrounds, improving lighting, and writing complete product captions. These basic improvements are expected to increase consumer trust and make the account appear more reliable.

The second phase focuses on operational engagement and tool optimization. After the basic visual and informational elements are improved, MSME managers can begin to use social

media features more strategically. This includes using stories for daily product updates, creating highlights for important information, organizing photo albums as a digital catalogue, and responding to customer inquiries more quickly. This phase helps managers move from passive product display to more active customer interaction.

The third phase focuses on strategic growth and community building. At this stage, MSME managers can begin using more advanced features such as short videos, Facebook Live, Facebook Groups, and collaboration with local micro influencers. However, this phase should only be implemented after the foundational elements are stable. If an MSME account still has unclear product photos, incomplete captions, or slow responses, advanced strategies may not produce optimal results. Therefore, the framework emphasizes sequence and readiness.

Table 2. Design Driven Work Framework for Level 1 MSMEs

Phase	Strategic focus	Main activities	Expected outcome
Phase 1	Foundational training and visual credibility	Profile improvement, product photo protocol, simple editing, caption structure, and basic content calendar	More professional and trustworthy social media presence
Phase 2	Operational engagement and feature optimization	Stories, highlights, photo albums, direct message response, and comment management	Better customer interaction and easier product access
Phase 3	Strategic growth and community building	Reels, Facebook Live, Facebook Groups, micro influencer collaboration, and content evaluation	Wider reach, stronger engagement, and stronger brand visibility

Phase 1. Foundational Training and Visual Credibility

The first phase deals with the most fundamental issues identified in the observed accounts - lack of business identity, inconsistent visual quality, and missing product information. The first step is to make MSME managers realize that Facebook is more than just a personal communication platform, but it is also a business platform. To do this managers will need to fill out business information in their profile, such as the store name, product types, operating hours, location, contact number, and ordering method. Complete profiles allow consumers to instantly get at critical information and reduce uncertainty.

The next step is to enhance the product images with the existing tools for MSME managers. Most managers use their smart phones so the training needs to be geared towards simple but effective methods, i.e. using natural light, taking a picture near a window or an open door, using plain fabric or walls and using a consistent background. These techniques can be used by Level 1 MSMEs as they do not require the use of expensive equipment. It isn't about creating studio quality images it's about making products visible, appealing and believable.

Simple editing should also be gradually given in a limited and practical manner. Adjust brightness, crop images into an appropriate ratio for mobile viewing and slightly sharpen the image to get the details across. But editing should not alter the actual look of the product, otherwise the consumers may be disappointed due to excessive editing. It's meant to make it clearer, but not alter the authenticity of the product.

Part of this is also the time to develop structured caption writing. Product posts should have engaging opening sentences, product name, material, size, colors available, price, benefit, and ordering instructions. Simple structure of the caption can help the MSME managers to communicate professionally and also will minimize repetitive queries from the consumers. You

can also use hashtags, but make sure they are relevant and not too many. There are local hashtags, niche product hashtags and brand hashtags which can help to boost discoverability.

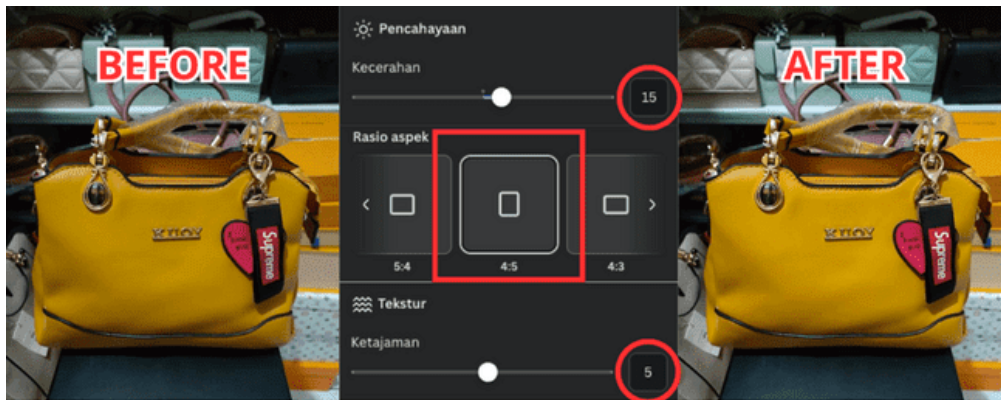


Figure 2. Example of Product Photo Improvement through Basic Editing

Source: Aiko Ameyzha Facebook

Phase 2. Operational Engagement and Tool Optimization

The second phase concentrates on the improvement of daily interaction and organization of information with the available features in Facebook. After structuring the product images and captions, the owner of the MSME should make sure that it is easy for the customers to get information and communicate with the seller. Facebook Stories can be used to post quick updates, product teasers, limited promotions and interactive content. This feature is perfect for MSMEs as it is easy, informal and not a complex production.

Highlights and photo albums are also essential as they can serve as a basic digital catalogue. For many MSME accounts, the only source for information is on their timelines, making it challenging to find older products. Consumers can browse products easily by arranging them into albums according to their category, e.g. dresses, hijab, work clothes or promotional items. This not only enhances the customer experience but also adds to the appearance of a well-structured account.

There also needs to be a more systematic handling of customer responses. The results show that interaction tends to be reactive and unstructured. Thus, it is important for managers to create an easy response plan. The answers to questions regarding price, stock, size and/or ordering process should be very quick and to WhatsApp/Direct Messaging if required. The time it takes to respond is critical as consumers might be looking at multiple sellers simultaneously. In the case of delayed responses, they may miss out on buying opportunities.

Phase 3. Strategic Growth and Community Building

The third phase is meant for MSMEs who have already enhanced their basic visual credibility and operational interaction. At this point, managers can create more engaging content including Facebook Live, community interaction, reels, and short videos. Short videos are better at communicating product information than a static photo, allowing consumers to see texture, movement, fit, and styling options. This format can be helpful for fashion MSMEs to demonstrate the appearance of a product when in use or paired with other products.

Facebook Live can be used for introducing new arrivals, answering your customer's questions, or holding real-time selling sessions. But this approach does need preparation, such as arranging the products, having a reliable internet connection, effective lighting and good communication. It therefore shouldn't be pushed into the arms of managers in Level 1 who do not yet know how to deal with basic content quality.

Partnering with local micro influencers can also help with visibility and trust-building. Product barter is more achievable than paid collaboration in the case of Level 1 MSMEs who have less budget. Visuals and local relevance as well as engagement should be the criteria used in choosing the partner, not necessarily the number of followers. The cooperation should involve basic visual guidelines that ensure that the content produced is understandable, light and consistent with the identity of the product. Local partners can then provide the content, which the MSME can share as proof.

Ongoing support is needed throughout all stages. The findings indicate that the managers of MSMEs must not only acquire knowledge but repeated practice and feedback. Training that is not mentored will yield awareness only in the short term, and not behavior. Thus, the application of the Design Driven Work framework should contain practice sessions, and be evaluated periodically, as well as practical support in technical problems.

Conclusion

The conclusion of this study is that the use of social media as a promotional tool is adopted by fashion MSMEs in South Bengkulu, but the application of the visual marketing technique in the MSMEs is still basic. 74 MSME accounts have been observed with the following major gaps: Photo quality in product posts is inconsistent, information and business about the products are incomplete, product posts are irregular, the structure of the caption is weak and there is not sufficient customer interaction. These results suggest that problems are not with access to digital but with the lack of visual, technical and strategic skills of MSME managers.

The interviews also reveal that consumers depend on transparent product pictures, detailed information, and prompt communication in assessing MSME accounts, and that MSME managers have limited knowledge, time, financial resources, and mentoring opportunities. From this result, the authors propose the Design Driven Work as a visual marketing plan which consists of several stages for the Level 1 MSME managers. The framework has 3 stages: training for foundational skills and visual credibility, engagement during operation and optimization of the tools, and development and construction of the community and strategic growth.

Based on the study, it is proposed that the assistance of MSME in the field of visual marketing should be done gradually, practically, with little cost, and competent. To maximize the extent of impact, local government, business mentors, and training institutions should focus on basic interventions that have high impacts, including profile improvement, smartphone based product photography, structured captions, consistent posting, and quick customer response. The research conducted in this study is limited to the fashion MSMEs in Pasar Manna District, and uses qualitative observation and interviews. Future studies are encouraged to assess the Design Driven Work framework via implementation research which quantifies its influence on engagement, trust of customers, market reach, and sales performance.

References

- Affonso, F. M., & Janiszewski, C. (2023). Marketing by Design: The Influence of Perceptual Structure on Brand Performance. *Journal of Marketing*, 87(5), 736–754. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00222429221142281>
- Agrawal, A. K. (2025). “Visual Content as a Strategic Tool in LinkedIn Marketing: An Analytical Study.” *International Scientific Journal of Engineering and Management*, 04(06), 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.55041/ISJEM04361>
- Aprilia, N., Subroto, W. T., & Sakti, N. C. (2025). The Role of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Supporting the People’s Economy in Indonesia. *International Journal of*

- Research and Scientific Innovation, XI(XII), 368–376.
<https://doi.org/10.51244/IJRSI.2024.11120036>
- BPS. (2025, February 5). Ekonomi Indonesia tahun 2024 tumbuh 5,03 persen (C-to-C). Ekonomi Indonesia triwulan IV-2024 tumbuh 5,02 persen (Y-on-Y).
- Ciptandi, F. (2020). New Identity in Local Community-owned Woven Fabrics in Tuban, East Java, Indonesia. *Journal of Visual Art and Design*, 12(2), 109–119.
<https://doi.org/10.5614/j.vad.2020.12.2.2>
- Ciptandi, F., & Sachari, A. (2018). “Mancapat” Concept on Traditional Cloth Cosmology of Tuban Community, East Java, Indonesia. *Advanced Science Letters*, 24(4), 2243–2246. <https://doi.org/10.1166/asl.2018.10926>
- Ciptandi, F., Razak, R. A., Pratiwi, D. S., Putra, G. M., Budi, S. M., & Ramadhan, M. S. (2023). Peningkatan Desain Layanan dan Customer Experience Sosial Media Komunitas Perajin Tenun Tradisional (Studi Kasus: Gedog Lowo). *ANDHARUPA: Jurnal Desain Komunikasi Visual & Multimedia*, 9(03), 438–449.
<https://doi.org/10.33633/andharupa.v9i03.7073>
- Cuijten, N., Wongpun, S., Buaprommee, N., Suwannahong, R., & Inmor, S. (2024). Exploring The Digital Marketing Potential and Needs for Digital Marketing Capabilities of Service Sector MSMEs In Thailand. *Journal of Business Economics and Management*, 25(5), 1052–1074. <https://doi.org/10.3846/jbem.2024.22470>
- Dai, X., & Wang, J. (2023). Effect of Online Video Infotainment on Audience Attention. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, 10(1), 421.
<https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-023-01921-6>
- Delfira, A. F., Yuliarman, P., Baihaqi, M., & Baihaqi, M. (2025). Analisis Permasalahan Perkembangan UMKM Terhadap Perekonomian di Indonesia. *Jurnal Ekonomi, Bisnis Dan Manajemen*, 4(1), 167–180. <https://doi.org/10.58192/ebismen.v4i1.3184>
- Ernestivita, G., & Suhendra, E. S. (2026). The Role of Social Media Marketing, Brand Awareness, and Customer Engagement in Enhancing MSME Competitiveness. *Journal Management & Economics Review (JUMPER)*, 3(10. 1), 433-448.
<https://doi.org/10.59971/jumper.v3i10.%201.1042>
- Fajri, Q. C., Safitri, D., Kartika, W., & Budiman, V. M. (2025). Effectiveness of Using Social Media as Digital Marketing Media for UMKM Deandra Batik Lampung. *Jurnal Economic Resource*, 8(1), 473–479. <https://doi.org/10.57178/jer.v8i1.1483>
- Fan, X. (2023). Social Media Marketing Strategies. *Advances in Economics, Management and Political Sciences*, 23(1), 59–64. <https://doi.org/10.54254/2754-1169/23/20230353>
- Fang, C.-Y., Chang, Y.-P., Yang, T.-N., & Lo, Y.-C. (2025). Using the Elaboration Likelihood Model to Identify the Optimum Facebook Video Marketing Strategy for Travel Agencies. *SAGE Open*, 15(3). <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440251358323>
- Fitri, N. D. (2021). Pemanfaatan Cahaya Alami Untuk Pemotretan Produk Bertekstur dan Transparan. *AKSA: Jurnal Desain Komunikasi Visual*, 5(1), 702–718.
<https://doi.org/10.37505/aksa.v5i1.58>
- Heri, M., Hayati, M., & Susanto, I. (2025). Optimizing MSME Marketing through Social Media: A Maqashid asy-Sharia Perspective. *Nizham Journal of Islamic Studies*, 13(01), 38–51. <https://doi.org/10.32332/nizham.v13i02.10051>

- Himawati, D., Riswanti, S., Sitanggang, P. B., Apriyanti, R., & Akhirson, A. (2025). Integration of Creative Design and Visual Branding in Digital Marketing Strategy: Analysis of Innovation to Increase Brand Awareness and Market Identity of MSMEs. *International Journal of Integrative Research*, 3(10), 717–730. <https://doi.org/10.59890/ijir.v3i10.77>
- Islam, J. U., & Rahman, Z. (2016). Linking Customer Engagement to Trust and Word-of-Mouth on Facebook Brand Communities: An Empirical Study. *Journal of Internet Commerce*, 15(1), 40–58. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15332861.2015.1124008>
- Lestari, S., & Bariyah, N. (2025). DETERMINANTS OF LABOR ABSORPTION IN THE MSME SECTOR IN REGENCIES AND CITIES OF WEST JAVA PROVINCE. *Jurnal Ilmu Ekonomi Terapan Vol*, 10(1), 93-111.
- Malau, A. G., & Ekananda, M. (2025). The Impact of MSME's on Employment, Investment, and Income. *Economics Development Analysis Journal*, 14(2), 238-254.
- Martinravi, C. P., & Krishnasamy, K. (2025). Unleashing the potential of MSMEs in India: A strategic analysis. *Journal of the International Council for Small Business*, 6(1), 123-143. <https://doi.org/10.1080/26437015.2024.2397664>
- McCorry, K., Maniatopoulos, G., Errington, L., Land, E., Craig, M., Vijaykumar, S., ... & O'Brien, N. (2026). Recognizing the Importance of Design, Content, and Delivery Features of Health Animations for Preventive Health Behaviors: Realist Review. *Journal of Medical Internet Research*, 28, e79769. <https://doi.org/10.2196/79769>
- Othman, N. H. N., Awang, N., Salleh, M., Ambak, A., Alwi, A., & Ibrahim, W. N. W. (2025). Optimizing Digital Promotion Strategies in Higher Education: A Theoretical Review and Framework. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 15(7).
- Pandiri, R., Nandhini, T. J., Velmurugan, R., Menaga, A., Karpagam, J., & Vinothkumar, K. (2025, March). Advancing Visual Marketing Strategies Through Deep Learning-Based Image Recognition for Improved Customer Engagement and Brand Visibility. In *2025 International Conference on Automation and Computation (AUTOCOM)* (pp. 1202-1206). IEEE. <https://doi.org/10.1109/AUTOCOM64127.2025.10956392>
- Putri, I. G. A. A. A., & Yulianto, A. (2025). Perancangan Branding Visual untuk Meningkatkan Brand Awareness Gerbang Taru Bali. *Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat Dan Riset Pendidikan*, 3(4), 4301–4308. <https://doi.org/10.31004/jerkin.v3i4.1251>
- Rahman, M. S., Fajar, M. R. Al, & Firdaus, T. (2025). Analisis Pengaruh Aplikasi Facebook Sebagai Strategi Pemasaran dalam Menjangkau Konsemen di Era Ekonomi Digital. *El-Mal: Jurnal Kajian Ekonomi & Bisnis Islam*, 6(7). <https://doi.org/10.47467/elmal.v6i7.8821>
- Ramadani, S., Ramadhani, D. A., Ikrom, M., & Harahap, L. M. (2025). Peran Strategis UMKM dalam Mendorong Pertumbuhan Ekonomi Berkelanjutan di Indonesia. *Jurnal Ekonomi, Bisnis Dan Manajemen*, 4(1), 158–166. <https://doi.org/10.58192/ebismen.v4i1.3183>
- Rashid, F. R., & Abdullah, A. D. A. (2026). Exploring the influence of social media utilization on strategic objectives and profitability in micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs): a preliminary empirical study. *Journal of Science and Technology Policy Management*, 17(2), 391-416.

- Ratih, N. K. P. A., Putra, K. D. C., & Wajdi, M. (2025). Optimizing instagram for strategic communication: A study on engagement, branding, and digital audience connection. *Journal of Commerce, Management, and Tourism Studies*, 4(2), 249-363. <https://doi.org/10.58881/jcmnts.v4i2.373>
- Retnowati, N. (2025). Stratifikasi Pemahaman Dan Praktik Digital Marketing Pada Umkm: Studi Kualitatif Terhadap Perbedaan Tingkat Kemampuan Usaha Pemula, Mikro, Dan Menengah. *Growth*, 23(1), 308. <https://doi.org/10.36841/growth-journal.v23i1.6860>
- Rolando, B. (2025). CONTENT MARKETING STRATEGY OF SHOPEE ON SOCIAL MEDIA: AN ANALYSIS OF BRAND AWARENESS ENHANCEMENT. *International Journal of Economics And Business Studies*, 2(2), 54-66. <https://doi.org/10.1234/ijebs.v2i2.114>
- Safitri, H., Audiah, S., & Edmond, D. (2026). Digital Marketing Strategy in Digital Business to Enhance MSME Competitiveness. *Startupreneur Business Digital (SABDA Journal)*, 5(1), 78-87. <https://doi.org/10.31004/jerkin.v4i4.6076>
- Sari, S. A. I., Hidayah, N., Asyiqina, F. D., Safhira, G. M., Sholehah, N. U., Putri, F. B. A., Naima, A. P., & Afandi, A. J. (2025). Asistensi Bisnis UMKM Melalui Produksi Konten Media Sosial pada Aledeal Corner. *Welfare : Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat*, 3(1), 70–75. <https://doi.org/10.30762/welfare.v3i1.1890>
- Scheers, L. Van. (2016). SMEs And Social Media Opportunities: An Organizational Outlook. *Corporate Ownership and Control*, 13(4), 640–648. <https://doi.org/10.22495/cocv13i4c4p13>
- Sulasih, S., Novandari, W., Suroso, A., & Setyanto, R. P. (2024). Use of Social Media Marketing among MSMEs: Driving and Inhibiting Factors. *Jurnal Manajemen Indonesia*, 24(1), 21–29. <https://doi.org/10.25124/jmi.v24i1.5475>
- Sutrisno, S., Yani, A., & Diawati, P. (2024). The Strategic Role of Social Media as a Marketing Communication Tool to Enhance the Competitiveness and Sales of MSMEs. *Indo-Fintech Intellectuals: Journal of Economics and Business*, 4(2), 295–307. <https://doi.org/10.54373/ifijeb.v4i2.1235>
- Yang, M., Ren, Y., & Adomavicius, G. (2019). Understanding User-Generated Content and Customer Engagement on Facebook Business Pages. *Information Systems Research*, 30(3), 839–855. <https://doi.org/10.1287/isre.2019.0834>