

Improving Branding in Namu Mbelin Village UMKM

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ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT

Keywords

Branding, Digitalization,
Msmes, Community
Empowerment

Article history

Received: October 10, 2025

Revised: October 30, 2025

Accepted: November 10,
2025

Available online: November
24, 2025

The main problem faced by MSMEs in Namu Mbelin Village is a lack of understanding of the importance of branding and low digital marketing implementation. This program aims to improve the ability of MSMEs to strengthen their brand identity through innovative promotional media and business digitalization. These activities include observation, interviews, outreach, and hands-on practice related to banner creation, business location registration on Google Maps, and digital marketing assistance. These activities have increased the visibility of three fostered MSMEs (Tina Catering, Fotocopy De'Odi, and Toko Munthe), which now have visual identities and digital exposure. Furthermore, these activities, ecoprint tote bags, used cooking oil candle making, and financial literacy, have also strengthened the socio-economic impact of the community. The resulting contribution is seen in the increased competitiveness of MSMEs through branding and sustainable digital innovation.

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Introduction

Branding enhancement is crucial for the sustainability of MSMEs because a strong brand enhances product recognition and consumer trust in both local and online markets. In Namu Mbelin Village, many MSMEs possess superior products but face limited marketing capabilities (Widyastuti et al. 2025) and market access, preventing local economic potential from being fully tapped. Branding enhancement interventions through brand identity training, product storytelling, and the use of digital platforms can help MSMEs build competitive advantages (Hutabarat et al. 2024) and support more sustainable business growth. Empirical research shows that the adoption of digital marketing (Risdiyanto et al. 2025) and the use of online channels significantly contribute to the sustainable growth of MSMEs (Hutabarat, Wulandari, et al. 2025) by expanding customer reach and improving consumer-business relationships (Andriani et al. 2023). Therefore, this community service program is designed to strengthen the branding capacity of MSMEs in Namu Mbelin Village, enabling them to capitalize on digital opportunities to increase revenue (Hutabarat 2021) and enhance business resilience (Bruce et al. 2023).

The branding enhancement approach extends beyond visual elements like logos to internal brand orientation, customer engagement, and shared value creation, all of which support long-term brand performance. By empowering MSMEs through internal branding practices and co-creation with consumers, MSMEs can strengthen their product reputations and increase customer loyalty at the village and surrounding levels. Community service activities such as brand identity workshops, mentoring in creating simple digital content, and facilitating local marketing platforms will encourage MSMEs to implement the principles of brand orientation and co-creation, which have been proven to improve brand performance (Riza, Martiano, and Arianty 2025). Research evidence suggests that internal branding and customer engagement mediate the relationship between brand orientation and brand performance, suggesting that interventions involving both aspects tend to be more effective. Therefore, this program emphasizes a combination of technical training and a collaborative approach to foster strong and sustainable MSME branding (Yu 2022).

Namu Mbelin Village, located in Namorambe District, Deli Serdang Regency, is one of the villages with promising economic potential. Most of the residents here run micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in the culinary, trade, and service sectors. MSMEs are the backbone of the village economy (Hutabarat, Harahap, et al., 2025), but they still face various complex obstacles (Arianty and Masyhura 2019). One of the main problems faced is weak branding capabilities and minimal implementation of digital marketing strategies (Nurhayaty, Farman, and Wahyono 2025). Many businesses still rely on conventional promotional methods such as word of mouth and have not yet optimally utilized digital platforms (Arda, Andriany, and Manurung 2021).

In fact, in the era of the Industrial Revolution 4.0, digital marketing and branding are crucial factors in business development. Through branding, a product can have a strong identity and be easily remembered by consumers, while digital marketing provides broader reach at a relatively affordable cost. By utilizing social media, marketplaces, and other digital applications, MSMEs can introduce their products to a wider market, even beyond their local area. However, low digital literacy among rural communities is often a major obstacle to implementing these modern marketing strategies.

The activities carried out in this activity are :

a. Creating branding media for MSMEs.

This activity includes creating business banners for each MSME, developing visual identity elements such as a simple logo, colors, and tagline, and aligning product visuals (Agustini and Widarti 2025) to create a more professional and recognizable brand image for consumers.

b. MSME Registration on Google Maps

This activity includes creating a Google Business Profile for MSMEs, verifying the business location, adding photos, operating hours, contact numbers, and product categories.

c. Social Media Promotion Training

This activity includes training on creating simple content using a mobile phone, how to upload products to Facebook/Instagram/WhatsApp Business, and basic digital promotion strategies to increase engagement (Tampubolon et al. 2025).

d. Creative Empowerment: Ecoprint Tote Bag Making

This activity involves training in creating ecoprint products using leaves or other natural materials, transforming these products into the brand identity of Namo Mbelin Village's MSMEs, developing environmentally friendly products with high sales value.

This activity is expected to improve the ability of MSMEs to understand the basic concepts of branding. This activity is expected to enhance MSMEs' understanding of what branding is, why it is important, and how to build a strong brand identity (Wahyono et al. 2023). With this understanding, business owners can determine product characteristics, unique values, and how they want to be recognized by consumers. This provides a crucial foundation before entering a broader marketing strategy (Noor, Till, and Hafeez 2025). The creation of basic branding elements for MSMEs through banner creation, visual identity design, and business location registration on Google Maps provides MSMEs with a clear starting point for branding. Visual identity helps consumers easily recognize products, while Google Maps makes it easier for potential buyers to find business locations. These elements are crucial initial steps to enhancing the professionalism of MSMEs (Turyandi et al., 2025).

Increasing digital literacy among MSMEs. Digital training activities are expected to make MSMEs more familiar with and skilled in using technology, particularly social media and digital applications. With increased digital literacy, MSMEs will no longer rely on conventional marketing methods and can leverage technology to expand their market (Ibrahim & Aduah, 2025). MSMEs are able to implement basic digital marketing strategies (Risdiyanto et al. 2025). After receiving training, MSMEs are expected to be able to create simple promotional content, upload products consistently, utilize marketplace features, and interact with customers effectively. The right digital marketing strategy will increase consumer interest and increase sales opportunities (Shi et al., 2025)

The creation of innovative creative economy products (ecoprint tote bags). This activity also encourages the creation of innovative products such as ecoprint tote bags, environmentally friendly products with artistic value and high sales value. This innovation could become a new flagship product for Namo Mbelin Village, while also opening up additional business opportunities for the community (Tanjung et al., 2024). Developing a modern and adaptive entrepreneurial mindset. Through learning, practice, and mentoring, MSMEs and students are expected to develop a modern, creative, and responsive entrepreneurial mindset to technological change. This mindset is crucial for their survival and growth in the digital age (Abd Rahim et al., 2025)

Increasing the confidence and professionalism of MSMEs in Namo Mbelin Village. Good branding will make MSMEs more confident in promoting their products, interacting with consumers, and keeping up with market developments. Increased professionalism will improve their business image and increase their chances of attracting more customers (Suriadi et al., 2022)

Method

The implementation method used a participatory approach, directly involving MSMEs as the primary subjects in each stage of the activity. The first step was to conduct initial observations and brief interviews (Hutabarat et al. 2022) to map the branding needs and digital literacy levels of village MSMEs. Next, a program socialization was conducted to introduce the objectives, benefits, and flow of the community service activities. The implementation team then developed branding and digital marketing training modules tailored to the participants' abilities. The training took the form of interactive workshops so participants could directly put the material into practice.

Technical assistance included creating business banners, registering business locations on Google Maps, and training on using social media for digital promotion. Each MSME was guided in creating simple content, determining a visual identity, and implementing appropriate digital marketing strategies. Furthermore, training was provided on ecoprint tote bag production, an innovative, marketable product based on the creative economy. Evaluation was

conducted through assessing participants' abilities before and after the activity (Hutabarat et al. 2023) and monitoring the implementation of branding in their respective businesses. The results of the mentoring were then summarized as recommendations for the sustainable development of Namo Mbelin Village MSMEs.

Results and Discussion

The results obtained from this activity are :

- a. The implementation of branding enhancement activities for MSMEs in Namo Mbelin Village has yielded significant results, particularly in enhancing business actors' understanding of the importance of brand identity. Through workshops and direct mentoring, participants were able to recognize branding elements such as logos, colors, slogans, and product characteristics. Most MSMEs that previously lacked a visual identity now have more professional business banners. Creating banners helps MSMEs become more easily recognized by customers around the village. This change demonstrates an increased awareness of the importance of brand image for business sustainability (Sholikha et al., 2025).



Figure 1. Group Photo with the Children of Namo Mbelin Village and the Results of the Ecoprint Bags

- b. Improving visual identity, another success is the increase in digital literacy among MSMEs in using social media as a promotional tool. The training provided enabled participants to understand how to create simple content, upload products attractively, and utilize basic promotional features on digital platforms. Some MSMEs have even begun regularly posting business activities and product promotions. Registering business locations on Google Maps also makes it easier for customers to accurately find MSME addresses.

This is an important first step in expanding market reach online (Dendi et al. 2024).



Figure 2. UMKM Socialization and Creation of Google Maps UMKM De'odi Fotocopy



Figure 3. UMKM Socialization and Creation of Google Maps for Munthe Shop UMKM



Figure 4. UMKM Socialization and Creation of Google Maps for Tina Catering UMKM

- c. This activity also resulted in a product innovation in the form of ecoprint tote bags, which serve as a form of empowerment for the village community's creative economy. The ecoprint training process successfully attracted participants' enthusiasm because the product was not only environmentally friendly but also had a high sales value. MSMEs were able to produce tote bags with unique motifs that reflect the village's local character. This product has the potential to become a new commodity that can be marketed both offline and online. This innovation is expected to increase income while strengthening Namo Mbelin Village's image as a creative village (Asriati, Wardani, and Thoharudin 2025).



Figure 5. Ecoprint Bag Making Process

- d. Overall, the results of the activity show that improved branding has a significant impact on the self-confidence and professionalism of MSMEs.

Participants feel better prepared to promote their products and develop their businesses independently through the use of digital technology. The mentoring provided also fosters a more modern (Hutabarat et al. 2023) and adaptive entrepreneurial mindset to technological developments. This activity encourages positive collaboration between the community, students, and educational institutions. Thus, this program provides a sustainable contribution to strengthening the local economy of Namu Mbelin Village (Hazudin et al. 2025).



Figure 6. De'odi Fotocopy UMKM Banner Installation Process

- e. The marketing communication skills of MSMEs have improved in explaining their product advantages to consumers. Prior to the training, most businesses were unable to convey product value compellingly. After the training, they were able to create clearer, more informative, and customer-focused product descriptions. This ability was evident in their product presentations during the final evaluation session. This improvement is a crucial asset for MSMEs in building strong relationships with consumers. (Phokwane and Makhitha 2023)



Figure 7. Process of Installing the Munthe Shop UMKM Banner

- f. This activity also has a social impact in the form of a growing sense of togetherness and collaboration among MSMEs in Namo Mbelin Village. Through interactions during the training, participants shared their business experiences and marketing strategies. This gave rise to new networks that enabled them to create joint promotions or product collaborations. This collaborative atmosphere strengthened local economic solidarity as a foundation for creative village development. The sustainability of this collaboration is expected to be a long-term strength for the village's MSMEs (Emmywati 2025)



Figure 8. Tina Catering UMKM Banner Installation Process

Conclusion

Branding enhancement activities for MSMEs in Namo Mbelin Village have successfully increased business owners' understanding of the importance of brand identity in building competitiveness. The training and mentoring provided helped participants identify brand elements that need to be developed. Through this understanding, business owners were able to identify product characteristics that differentiate them from competitors. This change laid the foundation for MSMEs to improve their business image. Thus, branding has become a key aspect that village MSMEs are beginning to pay attention to. This program also improves the digital literacy of MSMEs, particularly in utilizing social media for business promotion. Businesses are able to create simple, engaging content and upload it consistently. Registering business locations on Google Maps has made it easier for customers to find rural MSMEs. This demonstrates that digitalization can expand marketing reach in a practical way. This increase in digital literacy is crucial for future business development.

The ecoprint tote bag product innovation has successfully added a new dimension to the development of the community's creative economy. This product boasts a unique visual appeal and a selling point that can increase the variety of village products. The participants' active participation demonstrated high enthusiasm for environmentally friendly production methods. This innovation has the potential to become a new flagship product for Namo Mbelin Village. Thus, this activity supports the development of a creative economy based on local potential. This activity successfully increased the professionalism and confidence of MSMEs in running their businesses. Business owners demonstrated greater awareness of maintaining the quality of their product displays and how they promote them. Their marketing communication skills also improved after participating in the training. They were able to explain product advantages in a more structured and convincing manner. These changes positively impacted the overall image of MSMEs.

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