

Beyond the Basics: E-Marketing and Rebranding Strategies for MSME Advancement

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Abstract

Purpose: MSMEs often struggle to establish a strong brand identity due to inconsistent product naming within their offerings. This lack of brand cohesion can hinder customer recognition and engagement. Consequently, consumers may have difficulty associating various products with a single manufacturer. To address this challenge, e-marketing and rebranding strategies can be implemented to create a unified and memorable brand image. By effectively employing these tactics, MSMEs can enhance brand awareness and foster customer loyalty, ultimately expanding their market reach and driving business success.

Method: This article examines the branding challenges faced by MSMEs and introduces e-marketing and rebranding as effective solutions. It analyzes common obstacles, explains the strategies, and highlights their benefits for MSME success.

Practical Applications: 1) Improved brand awareness, 2) Increased brand engagement; 3) Building a strong brand identity; 4) Increase customer loyalty; 5) Diversify sales.

Conclusion: This article emphasizes the significance of branding for MSMEs and proposes e-marketing and rebranding as effective strategies to address common challenges. By adopting these approaches, MSMEs can enhance brand awareness, foster customer engagement, and cultivate loyalty, ultimately solidifying their market presence.



Introduction

Marketing is a critical factor for the success of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) (Nugroho, 2023). While many MSMEs recognize the importance of marketing, they often struggle to implement effective strategies due to limited resources and expertise (Ira, 2023; Andri, 2019). A significant challenge for many MSMEs is building brand awareness and finding reliable marketing partners (Batubara et al., 2022; Mucharomah, 2023).

Kota Malang, home to a substantial number of MSMEs, highlights the economic importance of this sector. MSME Aselabar, a local MSME specializing in frozen foods and beverages, exemplifies the challenges and opportunities faced by many in the industry. Despite offering a diverse product range, Aselabar faces the challenge of effectively marketing its products.

This case study presents an opportunity to explore how marketing strategies can help Aselabar leverage its product diversity and increase sales potential. By addressing branding and marketing challenges, Aselabar can enhance its visibility, attract customers, and contribute to the growth of the local economy.

MSME Aselabar faces challenges in branding its diverse product range. The use of multiple brand names for products from the same manufacturer can confuse customers and hinder brand recognition. This lack of brand consistency limits market reach and makes it difficult to establish a strong brand identity (Handojo, 2020). Additionally, Aselabar's online marketing efforts are limited. Its Instagram account, @omahsingkong_, is not actively used for marketing purposes, which can erode customer trust and hinder brand awareness.

Key challenges facing MSME Aselabar include:

- a. Limited market reach: The lack of a marketing partner restricts Aselabar's ability to reach new customers and markets, hindering its growth potential.
- b. Insufficient resources: Constraints in time, money, and marketing expertise hinder the development and implementation of effective marketing strategies.
- c. Low visibility and brand awareness: The diverse product range and inconsistent branding make it difficult for customers to recognize Aselabar's products, leading to reduced visibility and market penetration.
- d. Limited market access: Aselabar lacks access to market insights, customer needs, and effective marketing strategies, which can hinder its ability to tailor its offerings and messaging to meet consumer preferences.

Addressing these challenges will be crucial for MSME Aselabar to enhance its brand visibility, attract new customers, and increase sales. By implementing effective branding and marketing strategies, Aselabar can overcome its current limitations and achieve sustainable growth.

Method

This project involved a comprehensive approach to supporting MSME Aselabar in enhancing its branding and marketing efforts. The process included the following key steps:

- a. Collaborative Planning: Close coordination with MSME Aselabar facilitated the scheduling of group discussions and training sessions on e-marketing and rebranding. This ensured that the training content was tailored to the specific needs and circumstances of the company.
- b. Expert-Led Training: Experienced marketing professionals conducted the training sessions, providing in-depth knowledge and practical guidance on e-marketing and rebranding strategies. The training was designed to equip MSME Aselabar with the tools and skills necessary to effectively implement these initiatives.
- c. Customized Rebranding Plan: Branding experts worked closely with MSME Aselabar to develop a tailored rebranding plan. This included creating a new brand identity, designing a consistent visual language, and defining the company's messaging and positioning. The rebranding plan was aligned with Aselabar's overall business objectives and target market.

- d. Ongoing Support and Mentorship: The project provided ongoing support and mentorship to MSME Aselabar, assisting the company in applying the learned strategies and navigating the challenges of digital marketing. This included guidance on content creation, social media management, and online advertising.
- e. Comprehensive Evaluation: A thorough evaluation was conducted to assess the effectiveness of the training and support provided. Feedback from MSME Aselabar was gathered to identify areas of success, areas for improvement, and potential future needs.

By following this structured approach, the project aimed to equip MSME Aselabar with the knowledge, skills, and resources necessary to enhance its brand visibility, attract new customers, and drive business growth. The combination of expert training, tailored support, and ongoing evaluation ensured that the project delivered maximum value to the MSME.

Result

During the analysis of field conditions, several activities were conducted. First, there was observation and coordination to identify the issues faced by MSME Aselabar, particularly concerning e-marketing and product branding, which were not having a significant impact on consumers. This was followed by benchmarking sessions between the owner of MSME Aselabar and e-marketing as well as rebranding experts to gain insights and solutions for the challenges encountered. Additionally, preparations were made internally for materials and equipment needed to support these activities. The benchmarking results with e-marketing and rebranding experts led to several recommended changes for MSME Aselabar, including improvements in e-marketing strategies, modifications to the brand name, and enhancements in product packaging and design.

Table 1. E-Marketing and Rebranding Benchmarking Results with Experts

Before	After	Description
		<p>MSME Aselabar's original brand name, "Omah Singkong," was deemed inappropriate for its beverage products. The name "Omah Singkong" (literally "Cassava House") was misleading as not all products were cassava-based. To create a more accurate and inclusive brand identity, the team renamed the business "Bhiragam," which is a Javanese word meaning "varied." This new name better reflects the diversity of products offered by Aselabar.</p>

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The packaging for Rambak Kulit Lele previously lacked essential information, such as the manufacturer's brand, expiration date, flavor options, production address, and ingredient list. To enhance product clarity and consumer confidence, the team redesigned the packaging to include these key details.



The packaging for Aselabar's Frozen Food Singkong Keju previously used the brand name "Meletus," which had limited impact on consumers. Additionally, the packaging lacked essential information such as expiration dates, production addresses, and ingredient lists. To address these shortcomings, the team redesigned the packaging to be more informative and visually appealing.



Kencur Latte's fresh beverage products previously lacked a distinctive brand identity. The packaging was plain and uninformative, which may have deterred consumers. To address this, the team redesigned the packaging to be more visually appealing and include essential product information.



The packaging for Frozen Food Pempek Jambi previously lacked a strong brand identity, which may have limited its appeal to consumers. Additionally, the packaging lacked essential information such as expiration dates, production addresses, and ingredient lists. To enhance product clarity and consumer confidence, the team redesigned the packaging to be more informative and visually appealing.

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The packaging for Frozen Food Onde-onde previously lacked a brand identity, which may have made consumers hesitant to purchase the product. To increase consumer confidence and provide essential product information, the team redesigned the packaging to be more informative and visually appealing.



Kunyit Asam fresh beverage products previously lacked a distinctive brand identity. The packaging was plain and uninformative, which may have deterred consumers. To address this, the team redesigned the packaging to be more visually appealing and include essential product information.



The packaging for Frozen Food Gethuk Krispi previously used the brand "Conan," which had limited impact on consumers. Additionally, the packaging lacked essential information such as expiration dates, production addresses, and ingredient lists. To enhance product clarity and consumer confidence, the team redesigned the packaging to be more informative and visually appealing.



The packaging for Frozen Food Jemblem Coklat previously lacked a strong brand identity, which may have limited its appeal to consumers. Additionally, the packaging lacked essential information such as expiration dates, production addresses, and ingredient lists. To enhance product clarity and consumer confidence, the team redesigned the packaging to be more informative and visually appealing.



The packaging for Sereh Telang fresh beverages previously lacked a strong brand identity. To enhance its appeal, the team introduced a new brand name, "Lega Rasa" and redesigned the packaging to be more informative and visually engaging.



For product packaging Frozen Food Stick Ubi Crispy, previously used brands that are believed to have less impact on consumers. Besides, the packaging is only stuck with a sticker without being accompanied by an expired, production address and composition. So, the team gives changes to the packaging so it's more informative and interesting.

Beyond expert benchmarking, the community service team conducted outreach activities to educate MSMEs in Malang City about e-marketing and rebranding. A socialization workshop was held on June 1st, attracting 25 local MSMEs. The event included expert presentations, packaging tool assistance for MSME Aselabar, and insights from benchmarking activities related to product redesign and rebranding.

Figure 1. Distribution of E-Marketing and Rebranding Resources by Experts



The socialization session began with a showcase of products brought by local MSMEs in Malang City. Through this showcase, the team identified common challenges faced by these businesses. E-marketing is a digital marketing strategy that leverages online platforms and tools to promote products and services (Vedhitya, 2022). It encompasses various tactics such as social media marketing, content marketing, email marketing, SEO, and PPC advertising.

Table 2. Differences between E-Marketing and Traditional Marketing

Feature	E-Marketing	Traditional Marketing
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Media	Internet, social media, email	Television, radio, newspaper, billboard
Target Audiences	More specific and measured	Wider and general
Measurement	Data more detailed and accurate	Measuring more difficult and less accurate
Interaction	More interactive and personal	Less interactive
Costs	More affordable to get started	Initial costs can be higher

E-marketing has become a cornerstone for many businesses, particularly MSMEs, due to its numerous benefits (Widhoroso & Suryo, 2022). Its ability to reach a global audience at a lower cost than traditional methods is a key advantage. Additionally, e-marketing enables real-time tracking of campaign performance, fostering data-driven decision-making. The flexibility to personalize messages allows for targeted outreach, enhancing relevance and conversion rates. Finally, the interactive nature of e-marketing facilitates stronger customer relationships, fostering loyalty and positive word-of-mouth (Rania, 2023).

E-marketing empowers MSMEs to compete with larger businesses by enhancing their online visibility and reaching new customers in broader markets (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019). Moreover, e-marketing effectively converts potential customers into paying clients, boosting sales and revenue for MSMEs.

E-marketing, while advantageous, also presents challenges for MSMEs. The competitive digital landscape necessitates continuous innovation to capture customer attention (Kotler & Armstrong, 2017). Furthermore, the rapidly evolving digital landscape requires MSMEs to stay updated with the latest trends. Lastly, limited resources, including budget and workforce, can hinder the effective implementation of digital marketing campaigns.

To overcome the challenges of e-marketing, MSMEs should develop a clear marketing strategy, utilize appropriate tools and platforms, stay updated with digital trends, and measure and analyze campaign performance. Building strong relationships with customers is also essential (Ryan, 2016). By effectively implementing these strategies, MSMEs can leverage e-marketing to achieve their business objectives.

Figure 2. The participants of the E-Marketing and Rebranding socialization



Figure 3: Presentation of Redesigned Packaging to MSME Aselabar Owner



Figure 4. The provision of packaging equipment for Aselabar MSME owners



Discussion

Rebranding offers substantial advantages for MSMEs. By creating a more professional and modern brand image, MSMEs can enhance their competitiveness. A unique brand identity helps differentiate MSMEs from competitors, leaving a lasting impression on consumers. Moreover, rebranding can elevate consumer perception of the brand's offerings and foster stronger emotional connections with customers (Tyasno & Anggalih, 2023).

Rebranding, while beneficial, presents several challenges. It requires significant financial investment, especially for resource-constrained MSMEs. There's also a risk of consumer resistance to change. Furthermore, maintaining consistency in the new brand identity across all touchpoints is essential, and the rebranding process may take time to yield tangible results (Stuart & Muzellec, 2004). To effectively rebrand, MSMEs should conduct a comprehensive analysis of their existing brand, set clear goals for the rebranding process, develop a unique brand identity, ensure consistent implementation across all touchpoints, and continuously monitor and adjust their strategy to achieve desired outcomes (Spence & Essoussi, 2008).

To enhance the rebranding process, MSMEs should consider involving employees, utilizing social media for outreach, and conducting a pilot test before full-scale implementation (Kapferer, 2012). By following these additional strategies, MSMEs can increase the effectiveness of their rebranding efforts and drive significant growth and success.

To assess the effectiveness of e-marketing and rebranding efforts, MSMEs should regularly conduct evaluations using key metrics and specific questions. For e-marketing, quantitative metrics such as website traffic, conversion rates, social media engagement, organic traffic, and return on investment (ROI) are essential. Additionally, qualitative metrics like customer reviews, satisfaction rates, brand awareness, and brand perception should be considered. In terms of rebranding, quantitative metrics include changes in sales, brand awareness, brand perception, and product pricing, while qualitative metrics involve customer

feedback, competitor analysis, and employee engagement. By tracking these metrics and gathering qualitative insights, MSMEs can gain valuable information regarding the impact of their e-marketing and rebranding strategies.

Conclusion

This community service initiative underscores the significant challenges facing MSMEs, particularly in the realm of marketing. Despite their immense potential, many MSMEs, including MSME Aselabar in Malang City, grapple with limited resources, marketing expertise, and brand awareness issues.

E-marketing and rebranding have emerged as promising solutions to these challenges. E-marketing offers a broader market reach, personalized messaging, and enhanced performance measurement. Rebranding, on the other hand, can help MSMEs establish a strong brand identity and differentiate themselves from competitors.

However, implementing e-marketing and rebranding strategies is not without its hurdles. MSMEs often face constraints in terms of resources, knowledge, and time. To address these challenges, this community engagement team recommends several steps: developing clear strategies, utilizing appropriate tools, and conducting regular evaluations.

Further research is essential to gain a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing MSMEs in the digital age. Through in-depth studies, we can provide more tailored recommendations to help MSMEs improve their marketing performance and achieve sustainable growth.

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