

Digital Marketing Improvement of iCatGroomer MSMEs Through Optimization of Social Media and Online Platforms

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Abstract

Purpose: This study aims to address the limited digital marketing capabilities of iCatGroomer, an MSME in Salatiga, which struggles with insufficient human resources for content creation and the absence of an official website. The research highlights the importance of strengthening digital presence to enhance competitiveness and support MSME growth in the digital era.

Method: A Participatory Assistance approach was used, involving observations, interviews, needs analysis, content strategy development, photo and video production, caption writing, scheduled content posting, and the creation of a simple website.

Practical Applications: The findings support MSMEs in improving online visibility, increasing audience engagement, and establishing professional digital platforms. These improvements can enhance marketing effectiveness, customer communication, and long-term business sustainability.

Conclusion: The project resulted in improved social media activity, higher engagement, and a functional website, demonstrating significant contributions to iCatGroomer's digital presence and marketing strategy.



Introduction

According to the Coordinating Ministry for Economic Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia (2022), MSMEs account for approximately 99% of all business units in Indonesia and contribute around 60.5% to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). In addition, MSMEs absorb about 96.9% of the national workforce, making them the backbone of the country's economy and the primary provider of employment opportunities. Research by Piliang (2024) further reinforces the role of MSMEs as the backbone of the national economy through their contribution to GDP, employment absorption, and their role in driving local economic growth, including the adoption of digital technology as a business development strategy.

At the Salatiga City level, the development of creative economy MSMEs has become a priority of the local government as an effort to reduce poverty, absorb labor, create a conducive business climate, and generate positive impacts on related sectors (DPRD Kota Salatiga 2023). One MSME sector that has shown significant growth is the pet care industry, in line with the rising number of pet owners, particularly cat owners. Founded in 2013, iCatGroomer is one of the MSMEs in Salatiga dedicated entirely to cat care services. Its business philosophy is rooted in the understanding of the unique needs of cats and the desire to provide a comfortable grooming environment separate from dogs, which is especially relevant for the Muslim community. iCatGroomer offers comprehensive services ranging from grooming, cat shop, basic health services, and boarding to VIP home grooming, making it an integrated solution for cat owners.

Although iCatGroomer provides high-quality, integrated services and uses social media such as Instagram and WhatsApp to communicate with customers, its broader digital market potential remains underutilized. Initial observations and interviews with the owner revealed that iCatGroomer is currently experiencing limitations in managing its social media because the staff responsible for content creation is undergoing an internship. As a result, the content strategy has been disrupted, with plans to re-upload old content that may no longer align with current trends. Furthermore, iCatGroomer does not yet have an official website that can serve as a central hub for information and service promotion, including high-value services such as home grooming and cat boarding. These limitations hinder the optimization of digital reach, customer interaction, and sales conversion.

Therefore, this practicum project is designed to help iCatGroomer optimize its digital media utilization through the development of a more relevant content strategy and the creation of a website as an information and promotional platform. To achieve these goals, practical solutions are provided, including the creation of new ready-to-upload digital content and the development of an easy-to-use website.

In an era where digitalization is key to competitiveness, the ability of MSMEs to optimize digital marketing has become essential (Hidayati, Pungkasanti, & Wakhidah, 2020). Effective marketing through social media is not only cost-efficient but also highly impactful in strengthening the competitive advantage of MSMEs (Sari et al., 2025). Digital marketing helps MSMEs like iCatGroomer strengthen their brand, expand their market reach, and present their products more attractively at a lower cost. The internet and social media serve as primary platforms for creatively communicating products in line with market trends (Mardiah et al., 2024). Thus, strategic interventions are needed to develop and implement a structured content strategy and optimize iCatGroomer's online platforms.

Based on the identified problems, this practicum report is prepared with the main objective of Enhancing the Digital Marketing of iCatGroomer MSME Through the Optimization of Social Media and Online Platforms. This practicum focuses on designing more professional visual and narrative content strategies, improving posting consistency, and utilizing modern digital marketing features to ensure that iCatGroomer can fully leverage its digital potential, expand its customer base, and support its business targets. It is expected that this practicum project will have a sustainable impact. This collaborative method will help iCatGroomer overcome current content shortages and establish a proper website.

Method

This community service activity was carried out using a participatory assistance approach. Unlike other approaches that position the community merely as an object, Participatory Assistance (PAR) is a participatory empowerment method that places the community as an active partner in designing and implementing empowerment programs (Yulian, Adi, and Rachmi 2022). This approach is relevant to the context of MSME empowerment, as it aims to address problems sustainably and optimize each stage of the strategies to be implemented.

The community service activities were conducted from 23 September to 1 December 2025, centered at the iCatGroomer location at Jln. Tritis Langgeng No.1c, RT.01/RW.09, Sidorejo Kidul, Tingkir District, Salatiga City, Central Java. Chronologically, on 23 September 2025, observations and interviews were conducted with the business owner to identify digital marketing challenges faced by iCatGroomer. After the in-depth interviews and observations, the process continued with the development of a content strategy and the creation of a website. On the scheduled dates, content production—both photos and videos—was carried out at the iCatGroomer location. All content was complemented with engaging captions and hooks (copywriting) to increase audience engagement. The process concluded with uploading the content to iCatGroomer's social media platforms, such as Instagram and Youtube.

Result

The implementation of the community service project at iCatGroomer resulted in several measurable outputs and meaningful impacts on the business's digital marketing performance. The project began with observation, interviews, and needs analysis, which identified key challenges related to inconsistent content production and the absence of an official website. Throughout the practicum period, the team produced various promotional materials, including photos, videos, captions, and weekly content schedules designed to enhance Instagram engagement.

The tangible outputs include a full set of 15 Instagram contents, a structured content calendar, and a simple website containing service information, pricing, operational hours, and contact details. Documentation from the project shows increased social media activity, improved visual quality, and a notable rise in views, reaching up to 1008 views on certain posts. Additionally, testimonials and activity photos validate that the intervention enhanced brand awareness and improved the digital presence of iCatGroomer, enabling customers to access information more easily and efficiently.

Discussion

This Course Practicum Activity began with an observation and needs analysis process to identify operational issues faced by the iCatGroomer MSME in Salatiga. The observation was conducted directly at the business location and supported by in-depth interviews with the owner. In addition, the team conducted an analysis of the performance of the existing social media account, particularly Instagram, to understand posting patterns and the effectiveness of the content already available.

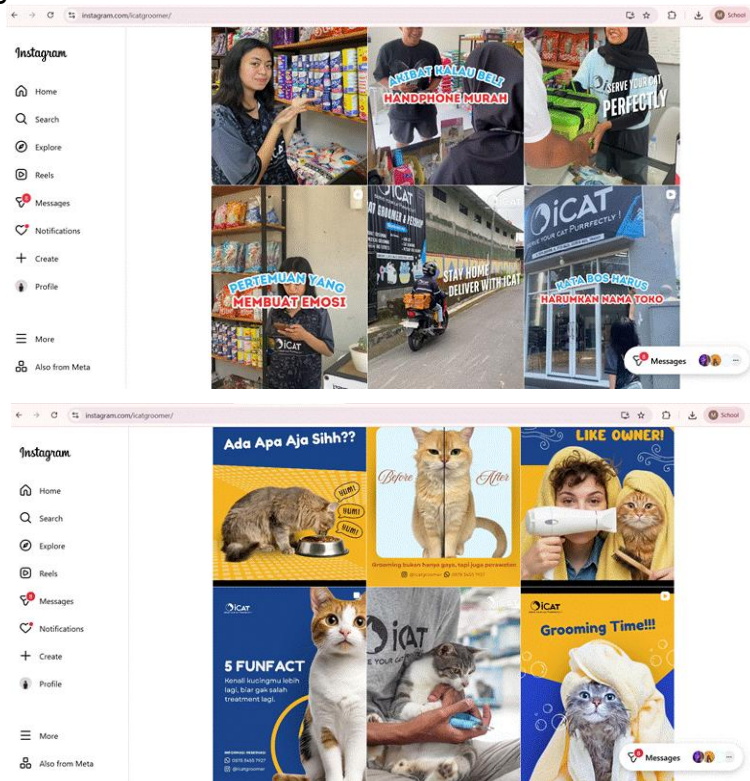
The results of the analysis indicated that the main challenge faced by iCatGroomer did not lie in the lack of digital media, but rather in its reliance on a single human resource responsible for content creation. This individual is currently participating in an internship program outside the city, resulting in the absence of anyone to continue producing new content. Consequently, social media activity became inconsistent, and the business owner often had to re-upload old content to keep the account active. Additionally, it was found that iCatGroomer did not yet have an official website that could serve as a promotional platform and provide more professional information, such as a list of services, prices, or business profile.

The next stage involved planning and implementing content production as a concrete

action. The course practicum team actively participated in designing content concepts that highlight the uniqueness of iCatGroomer’s services while aligning them with current visual trends. This activity included capturing high-quality photos and videos of grooming services and products, followed by editing and preparing engaging captions. In addition to producing content for social media, the team also assisted in designing a simple website for iCatGroomer, functioning as an additional promotional and informational medium to make the business more easily discoverable online.

The results of this activity show that iCatGroomer’s social media account appears more active, refreshed, and organized than before. The newly produced content successfully maintained posting consistency during the practicum period, minimizing the risk of decreased reach due to repeated use of old content. Meanwhile, the website provides added value to the MSME as a more professional and structured promotional channel. Although the main focus of this activity was not on achieving an instant increase in follower count, there was a noticeable rise in interactions and moderate growth in social media followers. This indicates that the newly developed digital media and content have strengthened the existing brand awareness while providing opportunities for the business owner to continue implementing sustainable digital marketing strategies.

Figure 1. Before and After of iCatGroomer’s Social Media Feeds



Source: Author’s Work, 2025.

Table 1. Content Calendar

Date / Day	Platform	Type of Content
Saturday, 1 November 2025	Instagram feeds	Meme content to attract attention and encourage engagement. Alerts owners that when a cat starts to smell or become matted, it is a sign that grooming is needed at iCatGroomer.
Monday, 3 November	Instagram reels and	Educational + soft selling content. Shows

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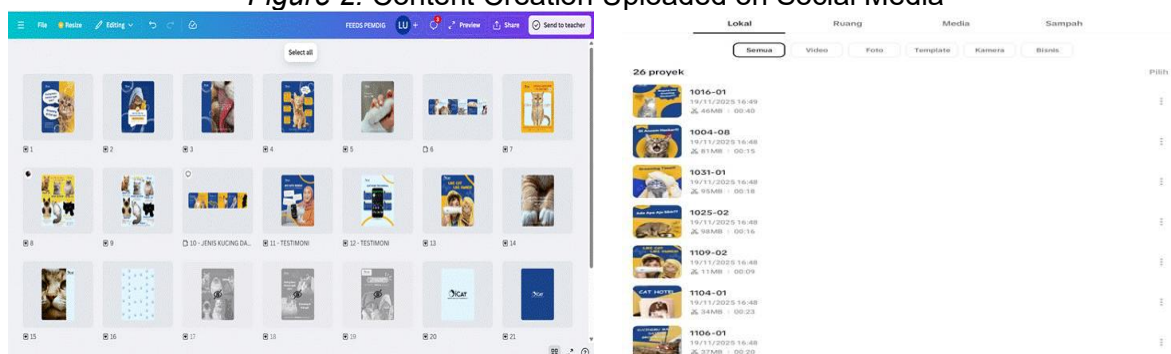
Date / Day	Platform	Type of Content
2025	Youtube shorts	the process from “not sure where to groom” and directs customers to iCatGroomer as a safe and comfortable cat-only grooming place. Highlights the atmosphere to reassure the audience.
Tuesday, 4 November 2025	Instagram feeds	Chat simulation content to educate that booking at iCatGroomer is easy and fast. Encourages customers to directly chat with the admin for grooming reservations.
Wednesday, 5 November 2025	Instagram reels	Emotional bonding content. Highlights the sweet side and personality of cats to create an emotional connection between the audience and the iCatGroomer brand.
Friday, 7 November 2025	Instagram feeds	Viral humor content. Shows that the customer gallery is full of photos of cats and activities at iCatGroomer (after grooming, products, store atmosphere). Aim: increase engagement and exposure.
Saturday, 8 November 2025	Instagram reels	Grooming process showcase. Displays gentle, detailed, and attentive grooming. Educates owners that iCatGroomer focuses on comfort, not just the end result.
Monday, 10 November 2025	Instagram feeds	Light educational content to increase shareability. Helps the audience learn something new about cats and build trust in the brand.
Tuesday, 11 November 2025	Instagram reels	Humor content showing a cat being blow-dried after grooming with a funny expression, then “cut” to the talent/owner also being blow-dried for a humorous comparison.
Thursday, 13 November 2025	Instagram feeds	Visual educational content & grooming results proof in a 50:50 split poster format: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Left half: before grooming (matted, dull, untidy fur) ● Right half: after grooming (cleaner, neat, glowing)
Friday, 14 November 2025	Instagram reels and Youtube shorts	Product introduction content for various iCatGroomer items (food, litter, toys,

Date / Day	Platform	Type of Content
		treats, etc.). Purpose: raise awareness that grooming and shopping can be done in one place.
Sunday, 16 November 2025	Instagram feeds	Educational content to explain essential cat grooming tips. Aims to motivate owners to groom their cats regularly.
Monday, 17 November 2025	Instagram reels and Youtube shorts	Highlighting cat boarding services (Cat Hotel). Shows a safe, comfortable, clean, and stress-free environment.
Tuesday, 18 November 2025	Instagram feeds	Educational content about cat breeds and their specific grooming needs. Helps customers understand why grooming is important for each breed.
Thursday, 20 November 2025	Instagram reels	Home grooming service introduction. Offers a solution for busy owners or cats that are difficult to take outside.
Friday, 21 November 2025	Instagram feeds	Testimonial screenshot content. Aims to build trust and convince potential new customers.

Source: Author's Work, 2025.

In an effort to enhance the appeal and consistency of promotional activities on social media, the course practicum team prepared a structured schedule for creating and uploading content on the iCatGroomer Instagram and Youtube account (several contents). The preparation of this schedule aims to help the owner manage the content production flow more efficiently, especially since the human resource who usually creates the content is currently undergoing an internship. With a clear schedule, the process of producing and publishing content can run more systematically and sustainably, ensuring that iCatGroomer's promotional activities on Instagram remain consistent and effective.

Figure 2. Content Creation Uploaded on Social Media



Source: Author's Work, 2025.

Digital marketing assistance can be implemented through the creation of social media content. The next stage continued with producing promotional content and introducing iCatGroomer's services by the course practicum team, which was then uploaded to the iCatGroomer Instagram account. This activity aimed to help increase service visibility, attract customers online, and maintain the continuity of promotional activities despite the limited human resources typically responsible for content creation.

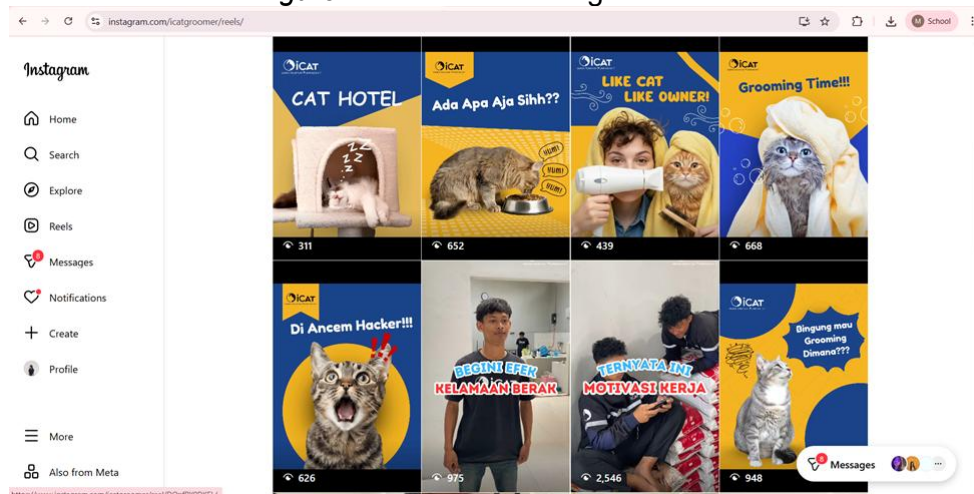
Figure 3. Product Photo Display



Source: Author's Work, 2025.

After the content creation was completed by the team, the activity continued with taking photos of iCatGroomer's products and services, such as the grooming process and cat shop products, which were then uploaded to the iCatGroomer Instagram and Youtube account (several contents).. This activity aimed to introduce iCatGroomer's services and products to social media users and enhance visual appeal in online promotion.

Figure 4. Number of Instagram Views



Source: Author's Work, 2025.

After implementing a content creation strategy that aligns with current trends and uploading it consistently, the image evidence shows a significant increase in the number of views, reaching 1,008 views. This number indicates that the video content produced successfully captured attention and reached a wider audience through the iCatGroomer Instagram platform.

Figure 5. Website Display



Source: Author's Work, 2025.

The broad reach of digital marketing enables MSMEs to reach more customers (Mardiah et al., 2024). Through social media platforms such as Instagram, business owners can interact directly with potential customers online (Suprpto & Vivianii, 2024). This practical activity was then continued with the creation of a website for iCatGroomer, which contains service information, pricing, operating hours, as well as business contact details and location. The purpose of developing this website is to make it easier for customers and potential customers to obtain information, communicate, and place service bookings online (Febriyantoro et al., 2018). This information was also included in the iCatGroomer Instagram account to help customers access services more easily and efficiently.

Figure 6. Evidence of Digital Marketing



Source: Author's Work, 2025.

The optimal implementation of digital marketing allows MSMEs not only to increase sales but also to maintain business sustainability amid increasingly competitive digital market conditions (Sugiyanti, Rabbil, & Oktavia, 2022). In addition to utilizing WhatsApp and Instagram as the primary communication and promotional platforms, iCatGroomer has also

begun developing its digital strategy through the creation of a website that is directly linked in its Instagram bio. A similar approach has been adopted by most MSME players in the Special Region of Yogyakarta, and evidence shows that using high-quality content and well-managed marketing data helps MSMEs improve competitiveness and expand their market reach (Rudianto, 2023).

Conclusion

This practicum project successfully contributed to optimizing the digital marketing of iCatGroomer MSME through two main focuses: improving the quality and consistency of social media content and developing a website as a central service information platform. Based on observations, interviews, and assistance conducted throughout the activity, it can be concluded that the main challenge faced by iCatGroomer lies in limited human resources for content creation, which has affected the consistency of postings and the effectiveness of previous digital strategies.

Through a participatory assistance approach, the practicum team was able to help iCatGroomer overcome these challenges by producing a series of new, relevant, engaging, and professional content. This content not only enhanced the visual appearance of the Instagram account but also helped maintain engagement and expand audience reach. Supporting evidence such as increased views and interactions indicates that the implemented content strategy produced positive results during the practicum period.

Furthermore, the development of a simple website for iCatGroomer provided significant added value for the business by offering more structured, professional, and easily accessible information for customers. The website functions as an additional promotional channel and supports a more efficient service booking process. Integrating the website into the Instagram bio further strengthened iCatGroomer's digital presence and opened opportunities to expand its market reach.

Overall, this practicum project successfully addressed the short-term issue of limited content while also providing a stronger digital foundation for iCatGroomer's long-term marketing strategy development. It is expected that these efforts will continue to be maintained by the business owner so that the use of social media and the website remains consistent, effective, and able to enhance the competitiveness of the MSME amid the rapidly growing digital landscape.

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