

USE OF SMARTPHONE CAMERAS AS AN IMPLEMENTATION OF PRODUCT PHOTOGRAPHY FOR MSMEs

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to understand how the use of smartphones is implemented in product photography by MSME actors in 26 Ilir, Palembang City. The type of research conducted is qualitative. Qualitative research is a strategy chosen by the researcher to observe or describe a phenomenon, gather information, and present the results of this study. Data collection techniques used to obtain data aligned with the research objectives include in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. This research involved five informants from MSMEs in 26 Ilir, Palembang City. The findings include: MSME actors in 26 Ilir, Palembang City, use smartphones for product photography; however, one MSME actor does not implement product photography due to the lack of social media usage. The impact of photography on the promotions of MSMEs in 26 Ilir, Palembang City, on Instagram is significant, as the use of attractive and creative product photography enhances consumer appeal on each MSME's Instagram page in 26 Ilir, Palembang City.

Keywords: Product Photography, Camera Smartphone, MSMEs.

INTRODUCTION

The main driver of economic growth in Indonesia is the growth of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs). The growth of MSMEs is a strategy used in Indonesia to combat poverty and improve income distribution. Currently, MSMEs are facing various crises, including competition in product ideas, competitive pricing, and diverse marketing strategies. Social media has become one of the marketing channels for MSME products due to its low cost (free) and personal development potential (Nugraheny et al., 2021).

In the Indonesian economy, MSMEs play the largest role among business groups. The presence of MSMEs increases job opportunities, thereby reducing unemployment. The advancement of MSMEs aligns with the rapid development of information and communication technology, where one key to business success is effective and targeted technological support. MSMEs are even considered to contribute the most to job absorption compared to larger business sectors (Putri et al., 2024).

In the era of visual-driven social media, product images play a crucial role as a key factor in attracting consumers. Engaging visual content can enhance brand exposure

and broaden reach. Additionally, modern customers seek not only delicious products but also appealing visual experiences. Based on this, the role of product photography becomes vital in attracting customer interest in products. Product photography can be defined as the art and practice of capturing images of products for marketing and promotional purposes. It plays a very important role in promoting and marketing products. Trends in aesthetics and creativity in product photography tend to reflect the brand's excellence and innovation. The primary goal of product photography is to highlight and present products in an aesthetically pleasing, attractive, and informative manner. Product photography can be applied to various types of products, ranging from clothing, jewelry, electronics, food, and more.

Product photography is one of the branches and techniques in photography typically used for marketing or advertising media. In product photography, many determining factors contribute to creating attractive and visually appealing photos, such as lighting, composition, and props. In the modern era, creating photographic works does not necessarily require professional cameras or digital cameras; instead, technological advancements have shifted towards wireless devices or smartphones.

While digital cameras are technically capable of capturing better images under certain conditions, such as low light, they also have the drawback of higher operational costs compared to smartphones. However, under optimal lighting conditions, photos taken with smartphones can match those taken with digital cameras. Based on this, the purpose of this research is to investigate how smartphones are used as an implementation of product photography among MSME actors in 26 Ilir, Palembang.

A LITERATURE STUDY

Product Photography

Product photography is a part of advertising. In a single frame, it must convey the image of a product. The key to product photography is how a photographer can create an image of the product through angles and concepts. However, the most important aspect of product photography is how the photo can enhance sales. This starts with making the product look appealing and having an interesting concept, so buyers become intrigued and curious about the item.

Product photos are images that display or highlight the product object. Product photography is considered one of the more challenging categories in terms of

lighting setup, as it demands perfection in details, from texture to object angles. Therefore, lighting must be arranged perfectly to produce an equally perfect photo (Putri, 2024).

Product photography is a branch of photography. It is a method of how we capture images of a product. Product photography is crucial for branding a creation. The reason product photography is essential in branding is that the frame must tell the image of a product (Dinata, 2022).

Digital Marketing

According to Lane (2008) in (Smith, 2011), digital marketing is the practice of promoting products and services using digital distribution channels. Digital marketing is also referred to as e-marketing and includes digital or online advertising, which delivers marketing messages to customers.

Furthermore, according to Coviello et al. in (Fawaid, 2017), digital marketing is the use of the internet and other interactive technologies to create and connect dialogues between companies and identified consumers. They also argue that e-marketing is a part of e-commerce.

Lastly, according to Sanjaya and Tarigan (2009:47), digital marketing is marketing activities, including branding, that utilize various media, such as blogs,

websites, emails, AdWords, and various social media networks.

Previous research in this study includes:

1. The Use of Product Photos as Digital Marketing Content for Tercabaikan Micro Business

Research conducted by Hayfa Rafa Ashari Nugraha in 2023. Based on the results, digital marketing through product photos by Tercabaikan micro business focuses on marketing goals that include sell, serve, speak, save, and sizzle, and establishes components in food photography such as food styling, concept, composition, and lighting. The researcher used two theories as units of analysis in this study. To increase sales, Tercabaikan promotes through social media like Instagram and e-commerce platforms such as Gofood, Grabfood, and Shopeefood. Additionally, to enhance service and add value to the brand using the internet, Tercabaikan provides responsive customer service, as evidenced by their handling of customer complaints. Tercabaikan has also engaged in interactive two-way communication with customers or followers on social media, supported by statements from informants indicating effective communication

with consumers.

In terms of cost savings, Tercabaikan utilizes free applications for cash registers and leverages merchant rewards for free shipping. With this strategy, Tercabaikan claims to have reduced expenses. Regarding brand strengthening, Tercabaikan consistently mentions the brand name in every message sent to customers, effectively keeping the brand in consumers' minds. However, the product photos used for digital marketing of baso aci still exhibit some weaknesses in concept and composition. According to statements from expert informant 2, the product photos from Tercabaikan require improvement in areas such as underdeveloped concepts and inconsistent photo composition. Supporting informants also noted that some photos lacked clarity and appeared blurred. Nevertheless, regarding food styling and lighting, Tercabaikan's product photos exhibit good angles and adequate lighting.

The Effect of Product Photos and Customer Ratings on Purchase Decisions through GoFood Application

Research conducted by Sipa Paujiah in 2022 found that product photos and customer ratings significantly

influence purchasing decisions on the GoFood app. Specifically, product photos have a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions, as do customer ratings. Additionally, both product photos and customer ratings collectively impact purchasing decisions..

2. Analysis of Food Packaging Photography Using the Exposure Triangle Technique

The research conducted by Aidil Syahputra in 2023 concludes that the exposure triangle technique in photography can produce attractive packaging food product photos, aimed at making a business's branding more appealing. This method indicates that the technique is intended for promoting or advertising a product on social media or online stores through photography. The exposure triangle method can be learned by everyone, as photography offers opportunities in various fields, including promotion and advertising. In Indonesia, photography has become a source of income for many people. With photography, individuals can implement their desires into a job or business venture.

In summary, mastering the exposure triangle in photography can aid

in branding marketed products. This research provides insights into photography knowledge, allowing the application of basic photography principles in any field, including product photography. Ultimately, this understanding can serve as shared knowledge to be applied and enhance skills in the future.

RESEARCH METHODS

The type of research used in this study is qualitative research. Qualitative research is a strategy chosen by the researcher to observe or describe a phenomenon, gather information, and present the findings. This approach employs a naturalistic method to seek and understand a phenomenon. Data collection uses qualitative approaches to understand the experiences of research subjects descriptively through words and language within a specific natural context, utilizing various scientific methods (Moleong, 2017:6).

The focus of the qualitative research method also limits the study to select relevant data. This research will focus on the use of smartphone cameras as an implementation of product photography among MSME actors in 26 Ilir, Palembang. The data sources in this study consist of two types: primary and secondary. Primary data comes from firsthand sources, obtained

through interviews with informants who have information about the research object. The selection of informants is done through purposive sampling. Secondary data consists of data gathered from readings and various other sources, such as observations and documentation (from other literature).

To gather data that aligns with the objective of the study, the researcher employs in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation methods. According to Moleong (20017:186), interviews are a process of deeply exploring information in an open and free manner focused on the research topic. Observations, according to Sugiyono (2014:145), are complex processes involving various biological and psychological processes. Riyanto (2010:96) describes observation as a data collection method using direct and indirect observation.

Finally, documentation techniques aim to gather historical data, meaning records of past events. Document studies complement the use of observation and interview methods. According to Sugiyono (2014:145), the findings from observations or interviews become more credible as evidence when supported by documentation techniques.

Data analysis is an effort to break down problems or focal studies into parts

(decomposition) so that the structure or arrangement of the dissected elements becomes clear, allowing for a more transparent understanding of the situation (Satori and Aan, 2014:200). The data analysis technique used in this research is the Miles and Huberman model analysis as cited in Pujileksono (2015:152), which includes:

Data Collection, The phase of gathering data from interviews, observations, literature research, documentation, and other secondary data obtained.

Data Reduction, This stage summarizes, selects key points, focuses on important aspects, and looks for patterns and themes (Pujileksono, 2015:152).

Data Display, Presenting data in a logically and systematically arranged manner for easy understanding. Human capacity is limited in processing biased field notes, which can reach thousands of pages; therefore, clear and systematic data presentation is necessary to assist the researcher in completing their work (Satori and Aan, 2014:219).

Conclusion Drawing or Verification, Conclusions in research may address the research problem, as these problems are often provisional and develop as the researcher is in the field. Qualitative

research conclusions are new findings presented descriptively, clarifying previously unclear relationships, causal links, or hypotheses and theories. Conclusions and verifications occur after fieldwork (Pujileksono, 2015:152). Drawing conclusions is an activity in the configuration of a complete study. Conclusions are verified throughout the research process, with verification being a review of field notes aimed at placing findings within another set of data..

RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study involved 5 informants from MSMEs in 26 Ilir, Palembang City. Below is the list of informants in this research :

Table 1. Informants of MSME

No	MSME Name
1.	Pecel Lele Lambidaro
2.	Mie Ayam Fran 88
3.	Pempek Cek Nur 26 Ilir
4.	Arimaya Steak & Pasta
5.	Jajanan Pak Jee

Source: Research Data, 2024

Furthermore, the use of online applications such as GoFood, GrabFood, and ShopeeFood is utilized by MSME actors in 26 Ilir, Palembang. The details of the use of these online applications by MSME actors in 26 Ilir, Palembang, are as follows:

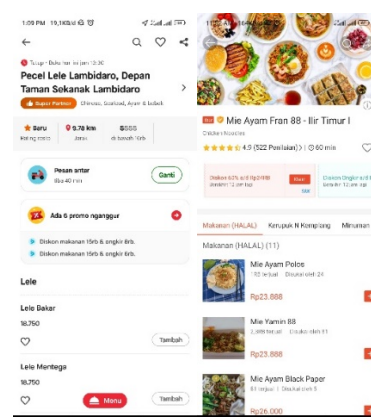
Table 2. Online Applications of MSME

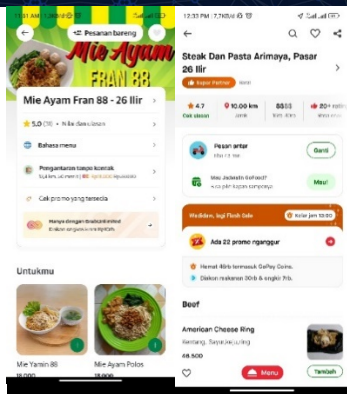
MSME	Online Applications		
	Gofood	Grabfood	Shopeefood
Pecel Lele Lambidaro	Pecellele Lambidaro	Pecel Lele Seafood Lambidaro	-

Mie Ayam Fran 88	Mie Ayam Fran 88	Mie Ayam Fran 88-26 Ilir	Mie Ayam Fran 88-Ilir Timur 1
Pempek Cek Nur 26 Ilir	-	-	-
Arimaya Steak dan Pasta	Steak dan Pasta Arimaya, 26 Ilir	Steak dan Pasta Arimaya, Bukit Baru	Steak dan Pasta Arimaya Radial
Jajanan Pak Jee	-	Martabak 5000 Jajanan Pak Jee 26 Ilir	Martabak 5000 Jajanan Pak Jee 26 Ilir

Source : Research Data, 2024

Based on Table 2 above, there are two (2) MSMEs in 26 Ilir, Palembang, that use all three (3) online applications for sales: Mie Ayam Fran 88 and Arimaya Steak and Pasta. Additionally, two (2) MSMEs in 26 Ilir, Palembang, use two (2) online applications for sales: Pecel Lele Lambidaro uses GoFood and GrabFood, while Jajanan Pak Jee uses GrabFood and ShopeeFood. Lastly, the culinary MSME Pempek Cek Nur 26 Ilir does not use any of the three online applications for sales.





Source: Research Data, 2024

Gambar 3. Aplikasi Online Pelaku UMKM

The utilization of social media by UMKM actors in 26 Ilir, Palembang, based on interviews and observations, reveals that there is one (1) culinary UMKM actor, Sekanak Lambidaro, who is currently not using social media:

1. Pempek Cek Nur 26 Ilir

This actor primarily sells to resellers and has previously used Instagram to inform about promotions like free shipping and endorsements.

2. Pecel Lele Lambidaro

This MSME uses Instagram and TikTok for social media marketing, promoting time-limited offers such as “Promo waktu lapar: Nasi Pecel Lele and Nasi Ayam Geprek only 10k (valid from 12:00 – 15:00 every day).”

3. Mie Ayam Fran 88

The Instagram account @mie_ayam_fran_88 is managed by this UMKM actor, but they do not create any content, leading to the account becoming inactive.

4. Arimaya Steak dan Pasta

This UMKM uses the Instagram account

@arimayasteakdanpasta_26_ilir to inform about their products through photos and videos.

5. Jajanan Pak Jee

This UMKM uses the social media account @jajanan_pakjee, creating various promotional content such as guessing games with prizes, special deals, behind-the-scenes production processes of martabak, product information, and endorsements..

Tabel 3. MSME Social Media

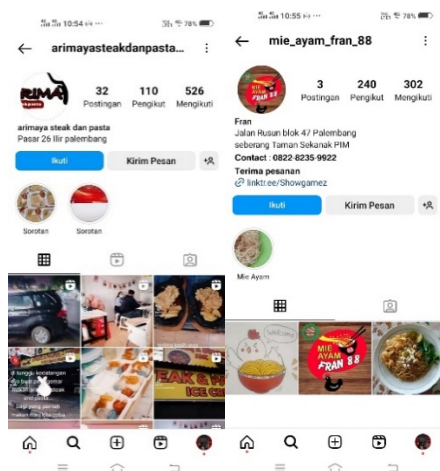
MSME	Social Media	
	Instagram	Tiktok
Pecel Lele Lambidaro	@pecellelelam bidaro	@pecellelelambid aro
Mie Ayam Fran 88	@mie_ayam_f ran_88	-
Pempek Cek Nur 26 Ilir	-	-
Arimaya Steak dan Pasta	@arimayastea kdanpasta_26_ ilir	-
Jajanan Pak Jee	@jajanan_pak jee	-

Source: Research Data, 2024

Utilizing photography as a means to promote a product through social media, particularly Instagram, has been in practice since two years after the emergence of the platform. This has been leveraged by MSMEs in 26 Ilir, Palembang, to expand their reach by creating appealing presentations through photography, resulting in highly attractive promotional content. Based on interviews and observations in this study regarding the implementation of product photography

using smartphones, it was found that MSMEs in 26 Ilir use smartphones for product photos, except for Pempek Cek Nur 26 Ilir, which does not use social media. The impact of photography on the promotions of MSMEs in 26 Ilir on Instagram is significant, as attractive and creative product photography enhances consumer appeal on their respective Instagram pages.

The presentation of engaging and creative images created by MSMEs in 26 Ilir using smartphones can lead to increased insights on their Instagram accounts, which can boost follower numbers. However, a notable challenge is the competition in content presentation and image concepts from other MSME accounts in 26 Ilir. Therefore, delivering engaging and creative images is the key focus for MSMEs in 26 Ilir, Palembang..



Sumber: Data Penelitian, 2024

Gambar 4. Sosial Media Pelaku

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research above, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. The actors of MSMEs in 26 Ilir, Palembang, use smartphones for product photography, except for Pempek Cek Nur 26 Ilir, as this MSME does not utilize social media.
2. The effect of photography usage on the promotion of MSMEs in 26 Ilir, Palembang, on Instagram is significant, due to the attractive and creative product photography that enhances consumer appeal on each MSME's Instagram page. The presentation of engaging and creative images created by the MSMEs in 26 Ilir, using smartphones, can impact the insights of their Instagram accounts, potentially increasing their followers.
3. A definite challenge encountered is the competition in content presentation and the visual concepts of product images from other MSME accounts in 26 Ilir, Palembang.

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