

Content Marketing, Social Media Marketing And Search Engine Optimization (Seo) On Successful Business Performance In Msmes In Cirebon City With Digital Literacy As An Intervening Variable

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ABSTRACT. In the digital era that continues to develop, the role of information technology and the internet increasingly dominates various aspects of life, including the business world. In particular, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Cirebon City need to continue to adapt to these changes in order to maintain and improve their business performance. The three main strategies to focus on in this context are Content Marketing, Social Media Marketing, and Search Engine Optimization (SEO). The aim of this research is to examine the influence of content marketing on digital literacy, social media marketing on digital literacy, search engine optimization (SEO) on digital literacy and digital literacy on business performance among MSMEs in the city of Cirebon. This research was conducted on micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in the Cirebon City area by giving questionnaires to business owners and MSME managers. The West Java Cooperatives and UMKM Service said that there were 21,939 MSMEs in Cirebon City. The Slovin formula was used to determine the sample size for this study. The sampling limit percentage that can still be tolerated is (0.1). So there were at least 96 people who answered the survey. Partial Least Square (PLS) model analysis was used in this research. The results of this research are that content marketing has no effect on MSME business performance, digital literacy has an effect on MSME business performance, social media marketing has an effect on MSME business performance and search engine optimization has an effect on MSME business performance.

Keyword: Content Marketing; Digital Literacy; Social Media Marketing; Search Engine Optimization and Business Performance

JEL Classification: O10, O15

INTRODUCTION

In the digital era that continues to develop, the role of information technology and the internet increasingly dominates various aspects of life, including the business world. In particular, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Cirebon City need to continue to adapt to these changes in order to maintain and improve their business performance. The three main strategies to focus on in this context are Content Marketing, Social Media Marketing, and Search Engine Optimization (SEO). Content Marketing is an important approach in creating and distributing valuable content for the target market (Bhandari & Bansal, 2019). Through relevant and quality content, MSMEs can build customer trust, increase brand awareness, and create deeper connections with consumers. Meanwhile, Social Media Marketing has become a very effective channel for interacting directly with the audience (Setiawan & Santosa, 2021). By utilizing social platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, MSMEs can expand market reach, build loyal communities, and increase engagement with customers. Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is the key to increasing the online visibility of MSMEs in Cirebon City. By understanding search engine algorithms and optimizing their websites, MSMEs can improve their rankings in search results, increase organic traffic, and thus, gain greater opportunities to gain new customers (Citra Melati Khairunnisa et al., 2023).

In facing digital transformation, MSMEs in Cirebon City are faced with a number of problems that can affect the success of their business performance. One of the main challenges faced is the lack of digital understanding and skills among MSME entrepreneurs (Syukri & Sunrawali, 2022). Many of them may not fully understand the need and potential of Content Marketing, Social Media Marketing and Search Engine Optimization (SEO) strategies in developing their business. Apart from that, limited resources, especially in terms of time and finances, are also significant obstacles for MSMEs. Implementing a digital strategy requires an investment of time and funds which perhaps not all MSMEs can carry out optimally (Arfan & Hasan, 2022). This can limit their ability to keep up with technological developments and utilize them effectively. Relatedly, there are special challenges in managing and understanding search engine algorithms to increase online visibility. Some MSMEs may find it difficult to carry out SEO optimization due to a lack of technical knowledge or access to supporting resources. In order to improve the performance of MSME businesses in Cirebon City, there needs to be a deeper understanding of this problem and solutions that can be implemented to overcome these obstacles in the context of implementing Content Marketing, Social Media Marketing and SEO (Khairunnisa & Ariyanto, 2023).

Digital literacy has a crucial role in helping MSMEs in Cirebon City overcome the problems faced in implementing Content Marketing, Social Media Marketing and Search Engine Optimization (SEO) strategies. In this context, digital understanding and skills are the main foundation that supports the smooth implementation of these strategies. Digital literacy increases MSMEs' understanding of the needs and potential of Content Marketing strategies (Hendro & Arlinda, 2023). With good understanding, they can create relevant and quality content, strengthen brand presence, and increase interaction with consumers through various digital platforms. Then, digital literacy also plays an important role in social platform management skills for Social Media Marketing. MSMEs that have good digital literacy can effectively manage social media accounts, build online communities, and increase interaction with customers through posts, comments, and various other features (Artanto & Nurdiyansyah, 2017). In addition, digital literacy is key in overcoming challenges related to search engine optimization (SEO). MSME entrepreneurs who understand the basic principles of SEO can more effectively manage their websites, optimize their content, and improve rankings in search results, thereby expanding the reach and competitiveness of their businesses online (Setiawan & Santosa, 2021).

Content Marketing is a strategic approach to marketing that focuses on creating, distributing and promoting content that has added value for the target audience. The main goal of Content Marketing is not only to market products or services directly, but also to build relationships, provide useful information, and create a positive impression of the brand (Dewanto et al., 2023). Effective content in the context of Content Marketing has a number of key characteristics. First, the content must be relevant to the needs and interests of the target audience. Second, the content must be informative, providing solutions or answers to questions the audience may have. Apart from that, creativity and originality in conveying information are also important factors for attracting attention and differentiating a brand from competitors (Wardhani & Romas, 2022).

Social Media Marketing (SMM) is a marketing strategy that utilizes social media platforms to promote products, services or brands. In this context, companies interact directly with their audiences, build brand awareness, and increase engagement through various platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn. The existence of social media platforms has changed the marketing paradigm, providing opportunities for companies, including MSMEs in Cirebon City, to communicate directly with consumers. The variety of features offered by social media, such as image posts, videos, stories and paid advertising, provide various ways to convey marketing messages in an interesting and relevant way (Syukri & Sunrawali, 2022).

One important aspect of Social Media Marketing is its ability to build an online community around a brand or product. By interacting directly with followers, providing feedback, and responding to comments, companies can increase user engagement and build stronger relationships. Visual content such as images and videos are key elements in Social Media Marketing. Visual quality not only increases the attractiveness of content, but can also help convey messages more effectively (Prasetyaningrum & Sudalyo, 2024). Research shows that posts with interesting visual content tend to get more interaction from users. Social Media Marketing is not only limited to posting and interaction activities, but also involves analysis and performance measurement. Through analytical tools provided by social media platforms, companies can measure campaign effectiveness, understand user behavior, and adjust marketing strategies based on the data obtained (Syarif et al., n.d.).

Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is a set of techniques and strategies used to improve the ranking of a website on search engine results pages. The main goal of SEO is to gain better visibility in organic search results, thereby increasing the number of visitors and potential conversions (Hasibuan, 2021). Keywords have a central role in SEO. Researching, selecting, and integrating keywords that are relevant to your business or content are key steps in improving rankings. Proper use of keywords in content, titles, and meta descriptions helps search engines understand the relevance of a page to a user's search question. Unique, informative and high-quality content is an important factor in SEO (Budiono & Agustin, 2024). Search engines place a high value on content that provides comprehensive answers to user questions. Additionally, good content structure, including the use of structured headings and paragraphs, makes it easier for readers and search engines to understand the content better. Backlinks, or backlinks, also play an important role in SEO. Backlinks are links from other websites that lead to your site pages. Search engines view backlinks as an indicator of a site's trustworthiness and authority. The quality of backlinks takes precedence over quantity, and backlinks from authoritative sites can increase your site's ranking (Hayaty & Meylasari, 2018).

Digital Literacy refers to an individual's or organization's ability to understand, use, and participate effectively in an increasingly digitalized world. In the context of digital business and marketing, digital literacy includes an understanding of information technology, skills in using digital software and platforms, and the ability to analyze and manage information online. Digital

literacy is an important foundation in implementing Content Marketing strategies (Bhandari & Bansal, 2019). The ability to understand and utilize various digital platforms, use analytical tools, and have online writing and design skills helps companies, including MSMEs in Cirebon City, in creating and distributing relevant and effective content. In Social Media Marketing, digital literacy plays a key role. The ability to manage social media accounts, understand platform features, and utilize analytical data from social media becomes essential. Digital literacy helps companies to interact effectively with audiences and build a strong online presence. In the context of Search Engine Optimization (SEO), digital literacy helps in understanding search engine algorithms, identifying effective keywords, and optimizing website structure and content. This technical understanding is important for increasing online visibility and getting better rankings in search results (Erfin et al., 2022).

Business performance is a measure of the success and growth of a business. In measuring performance, several key metrics come into focus, including revenue and net profit as financial indicators, market share as a reflection of competitiveness in the industry, and customer satisfaction levels which reflect positive relationships with consumers. Continuously increasing income and stable net profit are markers of the financial success of a business (Citra Melati Khairunnisa et al., 2023). Along with that, monitoring market share provides an idea of the extent to which a business can dominate an industry segment, identify growth potential, and understand its position in market competition. Customer satisfaction has a major impact on business performance (Setyanugraha & Hasibuan, 2020). Customer feedback, retention rates, and brand reputation are important indicators in assessing the extent to which a business can maintain and expand its customer base. Satisfied customers not only create consistent revenue but also have the potential to become valuable brand advocates (Sandi, et.al, 2023). Operational efficiency, which includes resource management and internal processes, is also an important aspect in evaluating business performance. Good efficiency can optimize costs, increase productivity and provide a competitive advantage (Pramadyanto, 2022).

The aim of this research is to examine the influence of content marketing on digital literacy, social media marketing on digital literacy, search engine optimization (SEO) on digital literacy and digital literacy on business performance in MSMEs in the city of Cirebon. The benefit of this research is to develop MSMEs in Cirebon City related to marketing digitalization, so that MSME players understand how to compete in their business.

METHODS

This research aims to examine the influence of content marketing on digital literacy, social media marketing on digital literacy, search engine optimization (SEO) on digital literacy, and digital literacy on business performance in MSMEs in the city of Cirebon. Where the independent variables are content marketing, social media marketing and search engine optimization (SEO), then the intervening variable is digital literacy and the dependent variable is business performance. This research was conducted on micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in the Cirebon City area by giving questionnaires to business owners and MSME managers. The West Java Cooperatives and MSMEs Service stated that there are 21,939 MSMEs in Cirebon City. The sampling technique uses simple random sampling, this is because the population is large so it is taken based on the convenience found. The Slovin formula is used to determine the sample size for this study. The sampling limit percentage that can still be tolerated is (0.1). So at least 96 people answered the survey. Sampling was carried out by distributing questionnaires to MSMEs in Cirebon City by providing a Google form link which was distributed to respondents. The planned time for sampling is 1 month, this is because when sampling, researchers carry out observations of MSMEs run by MSME owners.

Partial Least Square (PLS) model analysis was used in this research. A questionnaire with a Likert scale and five possible answers was then given to business actors in the MSME sector in Cirebon City. Validity test with loading factor and Average variance Extracted (AVE) > 0.5 as a measure of success. Composite reliability parameters > 0.6 are used to measure how well the reliability test works (Ghozali, 2015). The PLS SEM method was used to test this idea. Inner models, R-Square values, and path coefficients are used to test the relationship between latent variables. Testing continues with statistical bootstrapping tests. After the data is processed, the results appear to answer all research questions.

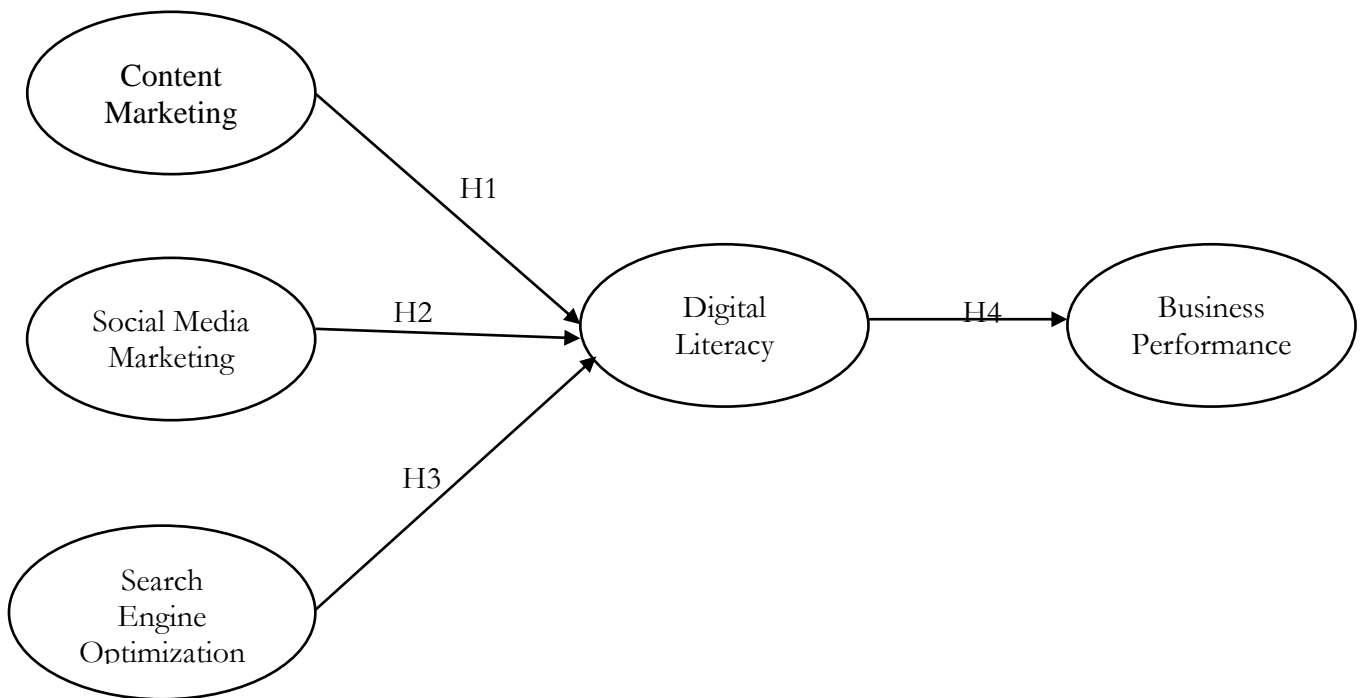
Table 1. Variables Conceptual and Indicators

Variable	Difinition	Indicator
Content Marketing	Content marketing is a strategic marketing approach focused on creating and distributing valuable, relevant, and consistent content to attract and retain a clearly defined audience. The primary goal of content marketing is to drive profitable customer action by providing informative, engaging, and shareable content that addresses the needs and interests of the target audience. Unlike traditional advertising, content marketing aims to build trust and credibility with the audience by delivering useful information rather than directly promoting products or services.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Traffic Metrics 2. Engagement Metrics 3. Conversion Metrics 4. Audience Insights 5. Content Performance 6. Behavior Analysis (Syukri & Sunrawali, 2022)
Social Media Marketing	Social media marketing is a digital marketing strategy that utilizes social media platforms to promote products or services, build brand awareness, engage with the target audience, and drive website traffic or conversions. It involves creating and sharing content on social media networks such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, and Pinterest to reach and connect with potential customers.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reach and Impressions 2. Engagement Metrics 3. Conversion Metrics 4. Follower Growth 5. Brand Sentiment and Awareness (Syukri & Sunrawali, 2022)
Search Engine Optimization	Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is a digital marketing strategy aimed at improving a website's visibility and ranking in search engine results pages (SERPs). The goal of SEO is to increase organic (non-paid) traffic to a website by optimizing various aspects of the site to align with	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Organic Traffic 2. Keyword Rankings 3. Click-Through Rate (CTR) 4. Organic Conversions 5. Backlink Profile (Syukri & Sunrawali, 2022)

Digital Literacy	<p>search engine algorithms and user intent.</p> <p>Digital literacy refers to the ability to effectively navigate, comprehend, evaluate, and create digital information and media in various forms, including text, images, videos, and interactive content. It encompasses a range of skills and competencies necessary for individuals to function effectively and responsibly in a digital world.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Basic Digital Skills 2. Information Literacy 3. Communication and Collaboration 4. Digital Safety and Security <p>(Syukri & Sunrawali, 2022)</p>
Business Performance	<p>Business performance refers to the effectiveness and efficiency with which a company achieves its strategic objectives and operational goals over a certain period of time. It is a multidimensional concept that encompasses various aspects of organizational functioning and success.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Revenue 2. Production Output 3. Customer Retention Rate 4. Employee Satisfaction <p>(Syukri & Sunrawali, 2022)</p>

Source : Processed by author

Figure 1. Theoretical Model



Source : Processed by author

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The first step taken is to measure the outer model to find out how valid and reliable the indicators are. The loading factor value must be greater than 0.7, and if the correlation value is less than 0.7 then the indicator is removed. The results of the test, all indicators are greater than 0.7. This means that the construct has good convergent validity.

Table 2. Variables, Indicators, Loading Factor, AVEs and Composite Reliability

Variables	Indicators	Loading Factors Running	Cronbach 's Alpha	AVE	Composite Reliability
CM	CM1	0,740	0,910	0,693	0,931
	CM2	0,908			
	CM3	0,870			
	CM4	0,868			
	CM5	0,860			
	CM6	0,734			
SMM	SMM1	0,815	0,901	0,717	0,927
	SMM2	0,811			
	SMM3	0,850			
	SMM4	0,886			
	SMM5	0,870			
SEO	SEO1	0,737	0,872	0,663	0,907
	SEO2	0,853			
	SEO3	0,849			
	SEO4	0,838			
	SEO5	0,787			
DL	DL1	0,814	0,876	0,730	0,915
	DL2	0,885			
	DL3	0,846			
	DL4	0,871			
BP	BP1	0,840	0,880	0,735	0,917
	BP2	0,850			
	BP3	0,844			
	BP4	0,894			

Source : Processed by author

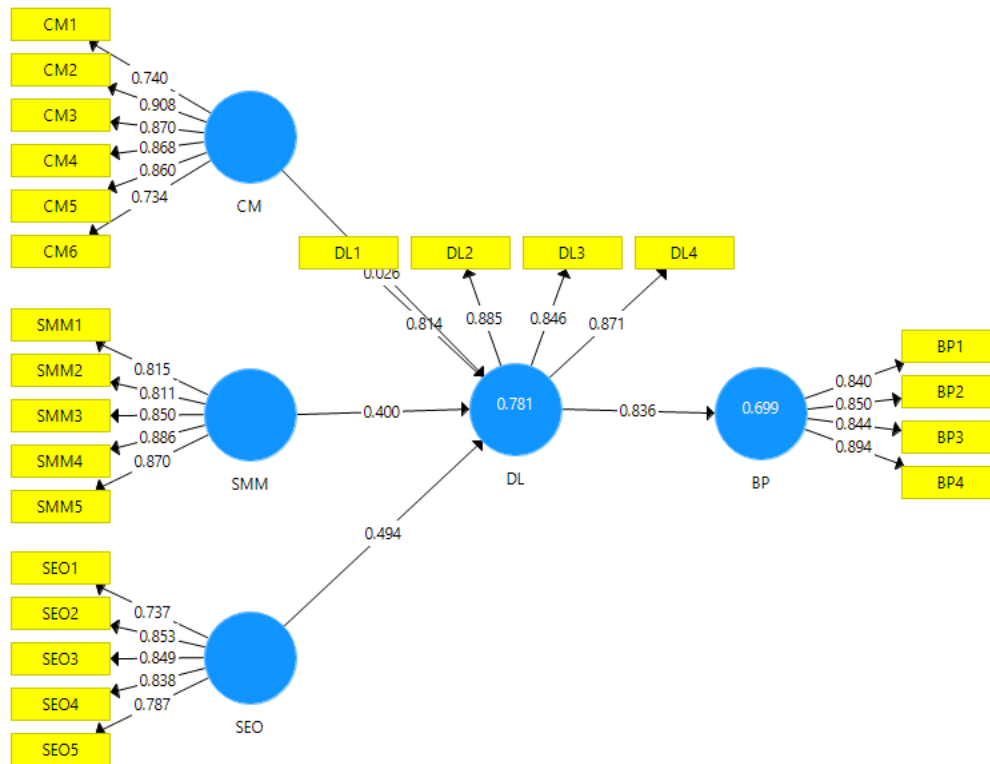
The next step is to look at R-square to test the predicted relationship between hidden variables or structural models. Figure 2 shows the structural model, and Table 2 shows the R-square values. The R-square value of business performance is 0.699, which means that the content marketing, social media marketing and search engine optimization variables are able to explain 69.9% of the digital literacy variable is able to explain 78.1% of business performance.

Table 3. Value of R Square

	R Square	Adjusted R Square
BP	0,699	0,696
DL	0,781	0,774

Source : Processed by author

Figure 2. Structural Equation Model



Source : Processed by author

Table 4. Variables, Indicators, Loading Factors, AVEs, and Composite Reliability

Hypothesis	Relationships	Original Sample	T.Statistics	P-Value	Result
1	CM -> DL	0,454	3,768	0,000	Accepted
2	SMM -> DL	0,335	3,214	0,001	Accepted
3	SEO -> DL	0,413	4,203	0,000	Accepted
4	DL -> BP	0,836	18,745	0,000	Accepted

Source : Processed by author

DISCUSSION

Content Marketing Influences Digital Literacy

The hypothesis which states that content marketing has an effect digital literacy, is proven, this is because the P-Value value is 0.000 which is smaller than the alpha value of 0.05, which means the hypothesis is accepted. This research supports research conducted by (Pramadyanto, 2022) which explains that content marketing has a positive and significant effect on digital literacy in the use of Instagram and Facebook social media.

Content marketing plays a pivotal role in influencing the performance of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Cirebon City. With its strategic use of valuable, relevant, and consistent content, content marketing enables MSMEs to engage and attract their target audience effectively, thereby enhancing brand awareness and visibility. By creating informative and engaging content that addresses the needs and interests of their target market, MSMEs can establish themselves as authoritative and trustworthy sources within their respective industries. Moreover, content marketing provides MSMEs in Cirebon City with the opportunity to showcase their unique

value propositions and differentiate themselves from competitors. Through various content formats such as blogs, social media posts, videos, and infographics, MSMEs can effectively communicate their brand message and highlight the benefits of their products or services. This helps in building stronger connections with customers and fostering brand loyalty over time. Furthermore, content marketing serves as a cost-effective strategy for MSMEs in Cirebon City to reach a wider audience and generate leads. By leveraging digital platforms and channels, such as social media, websites, and email newsletters, MSMEs can distribute their content to a larger pool of potential customers, regardless of geographical boundaries. This enables them to increase their online presence, attract new customers, and drive conversions without incurring significant advertising costs.

Social Media Marketing Influences Digital Literacy

The second hypothesis which states that social media marketing has an effect on digital literacy, is proven, this is because the P-Value value is 0.000 which is smaller than the alpha value of 0.05, which means the hypothesis is accepted. This research supports research conducted by (Pramadyanto, 2022) which explains that social media marketing has a positive and significant effect on digital literacy in the use of Instagram and Facebook social media.

In the midst of changing business paradigms driven by the digital revolution, the use of social media as a marketing tool has opened up new opportunities for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Cirebon City. In the narrative of their business journey, the positive effects of marketing strategies via social media become increasingly striking and significant. As a city rich in cultural diversity and local business potential, MSMEs in Cirebon City can feel the positive impact of social media penetration in building brand awareness and image. Through platforms such as Instagram, Facebook and Twitter, MSMEs can express their unique identity and communicate brand values to potential consumers. The close relationship between MSMEs and customers becomes even closer through social media. Through direct interaction, comments and feedback, MSMEs can build deeper relationships with consumers. This is the first step in building a loyal community, where customers are not just consumers, but also become part of the MSME business journey and story. Product marketing and promotions via social media provide additional advantages for MSMEs in Cirebon City. With interesting content and captivating visuals, they can reach a wider market, not only at the local level, but also reach consumers outside the region. This opens the door to significant expansion opportunities.

Not only as a means of promotion, social media is also a forum for MSMEs to listen to customer aspirations and needs. MSMEs can respond quickly to changes in market trends or customer desires, providing the flexibility needed in managing their business. Through data analysis from social media activity, MSMEs in Cirebon City can measure the effectiveness of their marketing campaigns, identify consumer trends, and make data-based decisions. This is one of the important advantages of implementing a measurable and effective marketing strategy. As a reflection of success, the success story of MSMEs in Cirebon City which was formed through the use of social media is clear evidence of the positive impact that creativity, perseverance and understanding of the power of social media can have in improving their business performance.

Search Engine Optimization Influences Digital Literacy

The third hypothesis which states that search engine optimization has an effect on digital literacy, is proven, this is because the P-Value value is 0.001 which is smaller than the alpha value of 0.05, which means the hypothesis is accepted. This study supports research conducted by (Erfin et al., 2022) which explains that search engine optimization has a positive and significant effect on digital literacy.

In the midst of rapid technological developments, MSMEs that adopt SEO practices as an integral part of their marketing strategy are finding the doors to success increasingly open. With increased rankings in search engine results such as Google, MSMEs in Cirebon City have become more visible among the fierce competition. SEO success is not only limited to increasing online visibility, but also paving the way for MSME business growth. By optimizing keywords that are relevant to their products or services, MSMEs can ensure that they appear before the eyes of potential consumers when searching for the products they offer. Not only that, SEO strategies provide a competitive advantage by reaching a wider market. Optimized MSME products and services can be found by potential customers throughout Indonesia or even internationally. This opens up expansion opportunities that were previously difficult for MSMEs to access with limited resources. In their business journey, MSMEs in Cirebon City who implement SEO correctly also feel the benefits of building a positive image and consumer trust. A good position in search results creates the impression that the business is a reliable and reputable choice in their industry.

However, the SEO journey is not just about capturing the attention of search engines. Successful MSMEs also understand the importance of providing valuable content to their site visitors. Informative, relevant, and useful content not only maintains SEO rankings, but also builds stronger relationships with consumers. As a reflection of digital transformation, the success of MSMEs in Cirebon City achieved through SEO strategies is a silent witness to the positive impact that can be generated by planned efforts, in-depth knowledge of consumer search behavior, and intelligent adaptation to changes in search engine algorithms.

Digital Literacy Influences MSME Business Performance

The fourth hypothesis which states that digital literacy has an effect on MSME business performance, is proven, this is because the P-Value value is 0.000 which is smaller than the alpha value of 0.05, which means the hypothesis is accepted. This study supports research conducted by (Erfin et al., 2022) which explains that digital literacy has a positive and significant effect on business performance.

In the midst of the rapid development of digital technology, digital literacy has emerged as the main key that opens the door to success for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Cirebon City. In their journey towards sustainable growth and existence, digital literacy is not just an additional tool, but a significant foundation in understanding the dynamics of modern business. Digital literacy skills give MSMEs the ability to explore the world of online markets. Through the use of e-commerce platforms and digital marketing strategies, MSMEs can expand their business reach beyond the geographical boundaries of Cirebon City. Sales potential is not only limited to local areas, but opens up opportunities for national and even international market access. Not only limited to marketing, digital literacy is also the key to optimizing business operations. By understanding and implementing digital tools and software, MSMEs can increase efficiency in inventory management, transactions and various other operational aspects. It's not just about following trends, it's also about creating a strong foundation for sustainable growth.

Another important aspect of digital literacy is the ability to communicate effectively with customers. MSMEs can take advantage of social media, email and other digital platforms to build closer interactions with customers. Product information can be delivered more efficiently, and customer feedback can be received directly, enabling improved service and customer satisfaction. In a data-driven world, digital literacy gives MSMEs the ability to analyze information better. With data analysis tools, MSMEs can identify consumer trends, measure product performance, and make data-based decisions that support business growth. Digital literacy also includes security aspects. MSMEs need to understand digital security practices to protect their customer data and business information from potential risks such as data theft or cyber attacks.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research that has been carried out, the conclusions and suggestions in this research specifically are that content marketing has an effect on digital literacy, is proven, social media marketing has an effect on digital literacy, is proven, search engine optimization has an effect on digital literacy, is proven, digital literacy has an effect on MSME business performance, is proven.

Theoretically, these findings confirm that the effective use of content marketing, social media marketing and search engine optimization strategies can increase individual digital literacy levels. This is understandable because these three strategies directly utilize digital platforms to communicate information, content or messages to the target audience. By strengthening digital literacy, individuals can be better able to access, evaluate and utilize information effectively in the digital era. Practically, this research provides important implications for practitioners and business people, especially MSMEs, in planning and implementing digital marketing strategies. These findings show that the use of content marketing, social media marketing, and search engine optimization can help MSMEs increase the digital literacy of their potential customers, which in turn can have a positive impact on their business performance. By understanding how digital marketing influences digital literacy and business performance, MSMEs can allocate their resources more efficiently and optimize their marketing strategies to achieve better business goals. However, the finding that content marketing indirectly has no effect on MSME business performance through digital marketing shows that there are other factors that need to be considered in understanding the relationship between content marketing strategies and business results. This may inspire further research to explore these factors and provide additional insights for practitioners in designing more effective and measurable marketing strategies.

The limitation of this research is that the research was conducted in Cirebon City only, it was not homogeneous, it is hoped that further research can examine generalizations to a wider area, not just in one area, and other variables are still needed that have an influence on the performance of the business world, especially MSMEs. These variables include competitive advantage and increased turnover in MSMEs. The managerial implication of this research is that MSMEs should provide training related to marketing digitalization to their employees and MSMEs themselves, this will have a good impact on improving MSMEs.

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