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# International Journal of Industrial Engineering, Technology & Operations Management

Journal homepage: [ejournals.indoacademia-society.com/ijetom](http://ejournals.indoacademia-society.com/ijetom)

Original Article



## Maximizing Sales with Social Media and Email Marketing: Lessons from MSMEs in Sumenep Regency, Indonesia

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### Article History

Received 22 February 2024  
 Revised 9 May 2024  
 Accepted 16 June 2024  
 Available Online 30 June 2024

### Keywords:

Media Social  
 Email Marketing  
 Sales Growth  
 Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises

### Abstract

In the modern digital landscape, micro, small, and medium enterprises face significant challenges in reaching and engaging their target customers. This quantitative research study examines the impact of social media and email marketing strategies on sales growth in Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises in Sumenep District. It focuses on the effectiveness of social media and email marketing in the current digital era, where digital marketing strategies have become crucial for improving MSME performance and sustainability. MSME managers in the Sumenep district were surveyed using a specially designed questionnaire, and the data were analyzed using statistical methods to identify the relationships between social media use, email marketing, and MSME sales growth. The results reveal that social media strategies substantially influence MSME sales growth by increasing visibility, customer engagement, and brand awareness. However, email marketing has not significantly impacted MSME sales in the district, possibly due to limited adoption among MSME managers. This lack of adoption may be attributed to factors such as limited knowledge, resources, or the perceived effectiveness of email marketing among MSME owners in the region. The findings suggest that investing in social media marketing can be a viable strategy for MSMEs in Sumenep District to drive sales growth. Besides that, email marketing may require further education and support to increase adoption and effectiveness. This study provides insights that can help MSME owners and policymakers in Sumenep District develop more effective digital marketing strategies to enhance the performance and competitiveness of local businesses.



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## 1. Introduction

Along with technological advances, trends in the business world are becoming increasingly varied. One of them is the digital marketing trend. Digital marketing is an activity of marketing or promoting a brand or product using digital media or the internet (Bruce et al., 2023). Digital marketing aims to attract potential consumers quickly (Jumarni et al., 2023). As we know, the acceptance of technology and the internet in society is very broad, so it is not surprising that digital marketing activities are the main choice by companies (Radini et al., 2021). As a result, companies compete with each other to create interesting content to be displayed in their marketing in cyberspace.

Social media has become part of people's daily lives, along with increased ownership of mobile phones or other devices (Nasution & Nobelson, 2022). This phenomenon is an opportunity for MSMEs to increase

sales by using social media to increase sales of products and services (Megandaru & Oktafani, 2019). This mentoring activity aims to provide an understanding and mastery of information technology, especially social media marketing (Taiminen & Karjaluoto, 2015). In this digital era (Industry 4.0), businesses must keep up with the times to survive.

Social media users are rapidly increasing by 2023, totalling 4.76 billion, equivalent to 60% of the world's population. People are also spending more and more time on social media, with the average person spending 2 hours and 31 minutes daily on these platforms. According to Data Reports, Facebook is the social media with the most active users by 2023, reaching 2.958 billion. Facebook has maintained its position as champion since 2021, with a total of 2.91 billion users. YouTube is second, with more than 2.5 billion users in 2023. Third place goes to WhatsApp and Instagram,

each with 2 billion users worldwide. We Chat is in fifth place with 1.3 billion Users. TikTok, a social media platform that has recently gone viral worldwide, will take sixth place with 1.05 billion active users by 2023. However, TikTok recorded the longest usage time in 2023, with the average user spending more than 23 hours monthly on the app.

The rapid growth of internet and telephone users is a potential for the national digital economy. This is an opportunity and challenge for the business world to compete and gain market share in each segment (Alverina & Syarif, 2022). Market share is one of the business strategies that every business must carry out because market share can also be used as a benchmark in determining the success of a business in controlling the market. Ineffective business strategies will bring losses to business people (Mukherjee, 2018); (Bametha et al., 2015). This is a big challenge for MSME players who sell products only from physical stores. The impact of the Industrial Revolution 4.0 will greatly affect MSME players who are not yet technological literate (Husain et al., 2016). MSMEs that are still selling manually will certainly be crushed by the existence of e-commerce that actively attracts customers to shop online, especially during the current digital trend (Abalos, 2020).

A Social Media Strategy is a detailed plan designed to achieve specific business or communication objectives through social media platforms (Syadhana et al., 2020). It involves identifying the target audience, selecting the right platform, relevant content, and metrics to measure success. A Social Media Strategy is a plan of action designed to utilize social media platforms to achieve specific communication or business objectives by engaging with target audiences through relevant content (Ni Made Mila Rosa Desmayani et al., 2023). This strategy incorporates a deep understanding of the audience, selecting appropriate platforms, creating and disseminating relevant content, and performance measurement to improve results continuously (Maria Nila Anggia & Muhammad Rifki Shihab, 2019).

Social media strategy is the communication between individuals and social influence in describing how information spreads through social media, how people interact, and how messages can influence behaviour and attitudes (Adinugroho & Hidayati, 2021). In identifying target audiences with appropriate demographic, psychographic, and behaviour characteristics for a successful social media strategy and understanding user behaviour on social media, such as why they interact with certain content, how users make decisions, and what drives engagement (Lady et al., 2023).

Social Media Strategy Indicators, e.g., Number of Followers/Fans: This indicator measures your social media accounts' long-term growth and popularity. Engagement Rate: Engagement rate measures the

extent to which your audience interacts with your content through likes, comments, and shares, clicks and Conversions: Tracks the number of clicks on links and conversions such as purchases, signups, or subscriptions that come from social media posts, Reach: This measures how many people see your content. The number of views or organic reach can measure this. Audience sentiment: Through analysing comments and feedback, you can measure the positive or negative sentiment of the audience towards your brand or product; increased Brand Awareness: Measures whether there is an increase in brand or product awareness based on research and surveys (Indriyani & Suri, 2020).

Email Marketing is a digital marketing strategy that uses email to communicate with potential customers or prospects (Rachmawati Harum et al., 2021). It involves sending email messages containing promotional information, news, useful content, or other communications to build relationships with audiences, increase sales, and achieve specific business goals (Araújo et al., 2022). Email marketing involves sending email messages to a list of potential customers or prospects to promote products or services, provide valuable information, build relationships, and achieve specific business goals (Garbani-Nerini et al., 2022). In the context of email marketing, understanding consumer behaviour and the factors that influence their decisions, helps in designing messages that match the needs and interests of customers.

Email marketing indicators: (Open Rate: measures how often the recipient opens an email sent. It reflects the recipient's initial interest in the subject or content of the email. Click-Through Rate: measures how many recipients click on a link in the email, directing them to a destination website or page. It measures the level of engagement and further interest of the recipient. Conversion Rate: Conversion rate measures how many email recipients take the desired action after reading the email, such as making a purchase, filling out a form, or subscribing to a newsletter. Unsubscribe Rate: measures the number of people who stop receiving your emails. It reflects how much your emails may be irrelevant or annoying to recipients. ROI (Return on Investment): Email marketing ROI measures how effectively an email campaign generates net profit compared to the cost incurred to send the email). Effective email marketing involves knowledge of the audience, relevant content, attractive email design, and measurement and analysis of campaign results to improve performance continuously (Thomas et al., 2022).

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) sales growth significantly increases the sales volume of products or services MSMEs provide (Ranti et al., 2022). This sales growth aims to increase MSMEs' revenue and business sustainability (Mellinia & Hati, 2022). MSME sales growth is a significant increase in

the sales volume of products or services offered by Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), which aims to increase revenue, expand markets, and improve business performance and sustainability.

Indicators of MSME sales growth: (Increase in revenue: Sales growth is usually reflected in the increase in revenue generated by MSMEs from selling their products or services. Increase in Number of Customers: Sales growth of MSMEs can be seen from an increase in the number of customers or clients utilizing their products or services. Increase in Sales Volume: An increase in the number of units of products or services sold is an important indicator of sales growth, Market Expansion: If MSMEs can sell their products or services in a wider market, this indicates successful sales growth, Customer Satisfaction Level: If customers are satisfied with the products or services provided, this can support long-term sales growth through repeat purchases and recommendations to others (Hendiana et al., 2022).

In the context of MSMEs, sales growth can be achieved through various strategies, such as increased marketing, new product or service development, geographic expansion, and product diversification (Hendiana et al., 2022). Careful measurement and analysis of sales growth indicators help MSMEs understand their performance and take the necessary steps to achieve sustainable growth (Ayu Okta Putri, 2022). MSMEs have a very important role in a national or regional economy. This important role is shown in various aspects, such as increasing employment opportunities, equitable distribution of regional income, and the level of local communities in the aspect of employment, which plays a role in suppressing the rate of urbanization and equitable regional economic development (Kusumawardani et al., 2023).

The MSME sector can show more resilient profits in facing critical times during the economic crisis. MSMEs are flexible and easily adapt to market demand, flow, and direction (Anggadani et al., 2023). They also create jobs faster than other business sectors, and they are also quite diversified and make an important contribution to exports and trade. MSMEs are one of the business sectors that are most vulnerable to the increasingly fierce market competition. Social media, email marketing, and optimization have become popular tools in digital marketing strategies for MSMEs (Anatan & Nur, 2023). Social media allows MSMEs to build customer connections, introduce products or services, and increase brand awareness. Email marketing allows MSMEs to retain customers, provide special offers, and provide relevant information.

Taiminen & Karjaluoto (2015) stated that most MSMEs do not keep up with digital developments, mainly due to a lack of knowledge about digital marketing. This is not in line with Megandaru & Oktafani (2019) said that by utilizing the development of social media marketing, sales are more effective and

influence sales growth. This is aligned with the research results of Aulia Nanda Pratiwi (2022), who found that by applying the concept of digital marketing, product sales will increase because the marketing concept has entered the digital era, and the target coverage is greater.

Sumenep district, located in East Java province, Indonesia, is one of the areas full of diverse MSME potential. MSMEs in Sumenep district cover many sectors, including trade, handicrafts, agriculture, and services. Along with technological advancements and changes in consumer behaviour, MSMEs in Sumenep district have also started to leverage digital marketing as an important tool in achieving the growth and sustainability of their businesses based on data obtained from 2017 to 2021.

Table 1. Number of MSMEs in 2017-2021

Year	Number of MSME (Unit)
2017	226
2018	254
2019	287
2020	316
2021	291

Source: Dinas Koperasi dan UMKM (MSME) Sumenep

Table 1 explains that the number of MSMEs in Sumenep from 2017 to 2021 showed a positive increase. 2017 there were 226 MSME units, which increased to 254 units in 2018, 287 units in 2019, and 316 units in 2020. However, in 2021, there was a significant decline of 291 units due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, which caused a decrease in sales turnover.

Minister of Cooperatives and MSMEs, Teten Masduki emphasized that MSMEs must fully utilize the internet in their marketing strategy and product branding. Teten Masduki believes that the Internet can increase sales of MSME products, followed by increased production and productivity of MSMEs. If faced properly, continuity and product quality challenges will make MSMEs successful and grow quickly.

Entering era 4.0, micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) are expected to increase competitiveness through digital platforms, including MSME players in Sumenep District. However, unfortunately, only 10% of the MSME ecosystem in the new segment has adopted technology in its business activities. Limited resources for digital-based capacity building are a major obstacle, including capital, promotion, and strengthening the quality of competitive products.

Based on data from the Sumenep District Cooperative and MSME Office, the number of MSME players reaches 1,374 people engaged in various sectors. The criteria for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), according to Law Number 20 of

2008, are classified based on the amount of assets and turnover owned by a business. According to the source of the Ministry of Cooperatives and MSMEs in 2013-2015, MSMEs are still the majority actors in the business sector, increasing from 54,114,821 business units in 2013 to 56,534,592 business units in 2015.

Digital marketing strategies commonly used by MSMEs in Sumenep district involve social media and email marketing (L.-Y. Li et al., 2023). Social media has become an effective platform for interacting with customers, introducing products or services, and building brand awareness (Kilay et al., 2022). Email marketing allows MSMEs to maintain customer relationships, provide special offers, and send the latest information (L. Li et al., 2023).

However, although digital marketing has great potential to increase the sales growth of MSMEs, there has not been much adequate research on the impact of using social media strategies and email marketing on MSMEs in Sumenep District. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the effect of social media strategies on MSME sales growth and how email marketing affects MSME sales growth.

The research framework is a visual representation that describes the picture of the research to be carried out. The research framework is presented in the form of a figure.

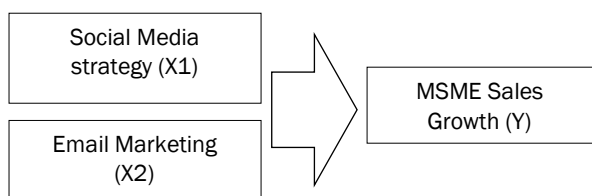


Figure 1. Research Framework

Source: Adopted from Megandaru & Oktafani (2019) and Bruce et al. (2023).

## 2. Material and Methods

This research adopts a quantitative method with a descriptive statistical approach and hypothesis test analysis for each independent and dependent variable. Data was collected by distributing questionnaires online using Google Forms using a Likert scale from 1 to 5. The questionnaire was distributed to MSME players in Sumenep Regency. The statement items in the questionnaire are designed to describe the effect of social media strategies and email marketing on sales growth of MSMEs in Sumenep Regency.

### 2.1. Population and Sample

In this study, the population of focus is MSMEs in Sumenep Regency that use social media as a marketing tool. Because the population of MSMEs using social media and email marketing strategies in Sumenep District is uncertain, the number of samples is determined by referring to the Roscoe formula in Sugiyono (2010). If the research will carry out multivariate analysis, for example, correlation or multiple regressions, then the number of sample members is a minimum of 10 times the number of variables studied. This study multiplied the variables by 25 (3×25 = 75). The calculation results show that the number of samples in this study was 75 respondents.

The sample withdrawal in this study used a non-probability sampling method with a purposive sampling technique. In applying purposive sampling, researchers set specific criteria for sample selection. In this context, the sample was selected based on the criteria as Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) actors in Sumenep District who actively use social media as a marketing tool in running their business.

### 2.2. Definition of Operational Variables

Variable operationalization aims to describe each indicator of each variable used in the study.

Table 2. Summary of Operational Definition of Variables

Variable Independent	Definition	Indicator	Scale	Source(s)
Social Media Strategy (X1)	A Social Media Strategy is a plan of action designed to utilize social media platforms to achieve specific communication or business goals by engaging with the target audiences through relevant content	Number of followers Level of engagement Click and convert Reach Audience sentiment Increased brand awareness	Likert	Indriyani & Suri (2020)
Email Marketing (X2)	Email marketing involves sending email messages to a list of potential customers or prospects to promote products or services, providing valuable information, building relationships, and achieving business goals.	Opening level Click rate Conversion rate Unsubscribe rate Return on investment	Likert	Thomas et al. (2022)
Dependent Variable				
MSME Sales Growth (Y)	MSME sales growth is a significant increase in the sales volume of products or services offered by Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), which aims to increase revenue and expand markets,	Increased income Increased number of customers Volume increase Market expansion Customer satisfaction level	Likert	Hendiana et al. (2022)



Variable Independent	Definition	Indicator	Scale	Source(s)
	along with improving business performance and Sustainability.	(Hendiana et al., 2022)		

### 2.3. Data Analysis

The data was analyzed using regression analysis, which examines the relationship between two or more variables, especially to discover patterns of relationships that may not yet be known or to identify how variations of several independent variables affect the dependent variable in the context of a complex phenomenon.

## 3. Results

### 3.1. Validity

Validity is an instrument to measure the extent of the ability and accuracy of the measuring instrument used and can be answered under its role and function.

Table 3. Result of validity test for social media strategy

Indicator(s)	Coefficient(s)	Decision
X1.1	0.852	Valid
X1.2	0.661	Valid
X1.3	0.739	Valid
X1.4	0.661	Valid
X1.5	0.722	Valid
X1.6	0.695	Valid

Table 3 shows that the X1 variable can answer all questions without a wrong answer. So the respondent answered according to his function. So conclude that variable X1 is said to be valid by looking at the results of R count (0.852-0.661) > R table (0.227). Thus, the respondent's awareness is good by answering and filling in what should be filled in according to experience so that there is no wrong answer.

Table 4. Result of validity test for email marketing

Indicator(s)	Coefficient(s)	Decision
X2.1	0.569	Valid
X2.2	0.819	Valid
X2.3	0.794	Valid
X2.4	0.596	Valid
X2.5	0.64	Valid

Table 4 shows that the X2 variable can answer all questions without a wrong answer. So, the respondent answered according to his function. Then conclude that the X2 variable is said to be valid by looking at the results of R count (0.819-0.569) > R table (0.227). Thus, the respondent's awareness is good by answering and filling in what should be filled in according to experience so there is no wrong answer.

Table 5. Result of validity test for Sales growth strategy

Indicator(s)	Coefficient(s)	Decision
Y1.1	0.674	Valid
Y1.2	0.769	Valid
Y1.3	0.78	Valid
Y1.4	0.539	Valid
Y1.5	0.283	Valid

Table 5 indicates that the Y1 variable can answer all questions without a wrong answer. So the respondent answered according to his function. Then conclude that variable Y1 is said to be valid by looking at the results of R count (0.780-0.283) > R count (0.227). Thus the respondent's awareness is good by being able to answer and fill in what should be filled in according to experience so that there is no wrong answer.

### 3.2. Reliability

Reliability describes how a measuring instrument answers information from data to reveal information in the field.

Table 6. Result of reliability testing

Variable(s)	Cronbach Alpha	Threshold	Decision
X1	0.774	0.6	Reliable
X2	0.771	0.6	Reliable
Y1	0.747	0.6	Reliable

Table 6 shows that the value of the coefficient of all items after meeting the standard and the value is greater than 0.6. Then, each answer to each item can be answered and does not experience errors. So, it is reliable or reliable.

### 3.3. Hypothesis Testing

Multiple regression is a way to measure the extent of the relationship between the independent variables, social media strategy (X1), and email marketing (X2), to the dependent variable, namely sales growth (Y). Then, it will be explained in the following Table:

Table 7. Result of hypothesis testing

	Unstandardized Coefficient		Standardized Coefficient	t	Sig.
	B	Error	Beta		
Constant	8.158	1.041	-	4.952	0.00
X1	365	102	370	3.573	0.01
X2	280	159	306	1.754	0.84

Dependent: Sales MSMEs

Table 7 indicates that the value of the constant 8.158 from the independent variables, namely social media strategy = 365, email marketing = 280, then a regression value can be obtained as follows:  $Y = 8.158 \text{ social media strategy} + 0.365 \text{ email marketing} + 0.280 + e$ . The regression analysis reveals significant relationships between the dependent variable, MSME sales growth (Y), and the independent variables, social media strategy (X1) and email marketing (X2). The regression equation's constant value of 8.158 represents the baseline sales growth without the influence of the independent variables.

The social media strategy (X1) positively impacts MSME sales growth, with a coefficient of 0.365. This indicates that a one-point increase in social media strategy corresponds to a 0.365-point increase in sales growth, while a one-point decrease would result in a proportional decline. Similarly, email marketing (X2) positively influences MSME sales growth, with a coefficient of 0.280. A one-point increase in email marketing efforts would lead to a 0.280-point increase in sales growth, and conversely, a one-point decrease would result in a corresponding reduction in sales growth.

### 3.4. Partial Test

A partial test is a test to see the difference after a two-way analysis to see the extent of the influence of independent variables, including social media strategies and email marketing, on MSMEs sales growth—determination of the decision based on the hypothesis test results using the t-test. In Table 7 indicates the results of the statistical analysis reveal contrasting effects of different digital marketing strategies on MSMEs sales growth. The social media strategy (X1) significantly impacted sales growth (Y), as evidenced by a t-test result of 3.573 with a significance level of 0.001, below the threshold of 0.05. It indicates that the social media strategy is crucial in driving sales growth for MSMEs. In contrast, email marketing (X2) did not significantly affect sales growth. The t-test result for email marketing was 1.754 with a significance level of 0.084, which exceeds the 0.05 threshold. This suggests that, in the context of this study, email marketing strategies did not contribute significantly to the growth of MSME sales.

## 4. Discussion

### 4.1. Social Media Strategy and MSME Sales Growth

This study found that variable X1 significantly influences variable Y so that social media strategies can determine the profitability level in sales growth in MSMEs in Sumenep district. The results of the research state that the better the social media strategy implemented by MSMEs, the higher the level of sales growth in the products sold. The results of this study

align with (Aulia Nanda Pratiwi, 2022) said that the more social media strategies are carried out by following the development of trends, it will be under the expectations of the MSME. This also aligns with Bruce et al. (2023), who said that to increase sales in the realm of MSME must be able to optimize the increasingly massive development of social media so that people will know more about what activities and products are being sold.

### 4.2. Email Marketing and MSME Sales Growth

This study found that the X2 variable does not affect variable Y. This is inversely proportional to the results of Rachmawati Harum et al. (2021), who explain that email marketing is an approach that permits marketers to communicate with prospects via email. Email marketing influences various determinants of online shopping, such as perceived usefulness (perceived benefits), ease of use (ease of use), perceived enjoyment (enjoyment gained from online shopping), and perceived risk (perceived risk). This will ultimately increase consumers' intention to do online shopping (online shopping intentions). Therefore, it can be concluded that email marketing based on permission effectively achieves marketing goals. In this case, some MSME managers have less adopted email marketing as a marketing tool.

## 5. Conclusions

On the basis of research findings, two key conclusions can be drawn regarding the impact of digital marketing strategies on MSME sales growth in Sumenep Regency. Firstly, social media strategies have demonstrated a significant positive influence on sales growth. MSME managers who effectively implement marketing strategies through social media platforms tend to experience increased sales. This underscores the importance of leveraging social media as a powerful tool for enhancing MSME performance. Secondly, contrary to expectations, email marketing did not significantly impact sales growth. This unexpected result may be attributed to the region's limited utilization of email marketing by MSME managers. These conclusions highlight the critical role of social media strategies in driving MSME sales growth while revealing untapped email marketing potential that MSMEs have yet to exploit fully.

**Author Contributions:** Conceptualization, A.G. and L.A.; methodology, A.G.; software, A.G.; validation, L.A. and A.P.M.; formal analysis, A.G.; investigation, A.G.; resources, A.G.; data curation, L.A. and A.P.M.; writing—original draft preparation, A.G. and L.A.; writing—review and editing, A.G., L.A. and A.P.M.; visualization, A.G.; supervision, L.A. and A.P.M.; project administration, A.G.; funding acquisition, A.G. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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**Funding:** This research received no external funding.

**Institutional Review Board Statement:** Not applicable.

**Inform Consent Statement:** Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

**Data Availability Statement:** Not applicable.

**Acknowledgments:** The authors would like to thank the School of Economics of Indonesia for supporting this research and publication. We also thank the reviewers for their constructive comments and suggestions.

**Conflicts of Interest:** The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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