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## **Marketing Strategies to Increase Consumer Purchase Interest at Nao-Mi UMKM in Gorontalo**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This community service activity aims to increase consumer purchasing interest by providing marketing strategy assistance to Nao-Mi MSMEs in Gorontalo. The main problem faced by partners is the suboptimal implementation of marketing strategies that are adaptable to changes in consumer behavior and the development of marketing media. The service method uses a participatory approach that places MSME actors as active subjects in all stages of the activity, from problem identification, planning, implementation of marketing assistance, to evaluation. The mentoring focused on strengthening understanding of marketing concepts, marketing strategy planning, and improving consumer-oriented marketing communication skills. The results of the activity show an increase in the understanding and awareness of MSME actors regarding the importance of planned and sustainable marketing strategies in attracting consumer purchasing interest. Additionally, the participatory approach encourages business owners to be more reflective and responsive to market dynamics, enabling them to manage marketing more independently. This activity makes a practical contribution to the development of MSMEs and strengthens the role of community service in supporting the improvement of local business competitiveness.

**Keywords:** *Marketing Strategy, Consumer Buying Interest, Msmes, Marketing Assistance*

### **INTRODUCTION**

This discussion begins by situating community service activities within a strategic framework for dynamic SME marketing in the modern era. Marketing strategy is not just a tactical approach but an adaptive process continually updated in response to changes in consumer behavior and developments in communication technology. Contemporary research shows that a comprehensive marketing strategy, which includes both classic and digital marketing mixes, plays a significant role in shaping consumer perceptions and increasing purchase interest in SME products. (Sulaeman & Purnawati, 2023).

In the literature review, the 4P marketing mix (product, price, promotion, and place) remains a fundamental basis for developing effective marketing strategies (Nusi et al., 2025). Research on Lezato Dessert SMEs shows that implementing the marketing mix with product

innovation, creative promotion, attractive pricing policies, and strategic location can significantly sustain and increase consumer purchasing interest. These findings align with the objectives of marketing assistance for community service activities, namely helping Nao-Mi SMEs implement relevant and context-specific marketing practices.

However, the development of digitalization has broadened the horizons of MSME marketing strategies, moving from traditional practices to the extensive use of digital marketing. Recent literature shows that effectively managed digital marketing can increase consumer engagement and attraction to MSME products, as reflected in the growth of followers and user interactions on social media, which, in turn, positively impacts purchase interest (Lihawa, 2025). This is important in the context of Nao-Mi MSMEs, which need to adopt digital marketing approaches as an integral part of their strategy.

Furthermore, the literature also explains that online marketing not only increases product visibility but also strengthens the relationship between consumers and SMEs through continuous digital interaction (Sari et al., 2023). This reinforces the statement that digital marketing strategies are not merely promotional tools, but also a medium for building long-term relationships with consumers through relevant content and two-way communication. This change becomes an important aspect in fostering consumer loyalty and purchase interest.

In another context, an analysis of MSME marketing strategies in Bogor City found that factors such as product quality, online transaction security, and competitive pricing also influence consumers' decisions to make online purchases. This finding is important because it shows that digital marketing is effective when supported by other marketing variables that reinforce one another. This aligns with marketing assistance focused on optimizing the marketing mix in community service activities.

Marketing approaches that empower consumers, such as integrating brand storytelling and engaging visual content, have been shown to create an emotional connection between consumers and brands. Modern literature emphasizes the importance of authentic narratives and resonant content in influencing consumer purchase decisions. Therefore, Nao-Mi SMEs are encouraged not only to focus on product offerings but also to build strong product value stories..

As part of a holistic marketing strategy, recent literature highlights the importance of harnessing strong electronic word of mouth (eWOM) to enhance social media's influence on purchase intention (Suleman et al., 2025). Information shared digitally by other consumers can accelerate trust in MSME products, making it an effective strategy to adopt and promote in mentoring programs.

Speaking of consumer loyalty, studies indicate that consumer engagement with social media activities that involve interaction, entertainment, and interesting content can support repeat purchases in MSMEs. Field mentoring that teaches MSME actors how to create interactive content will have a stronger impact on repurchase intention, which is a crucial component in building a loyal customer base.

In addition, the literature also emphasizes the importance of building a strong brand image as part of a marketing strategy. Studies on bakery SMEs show that integrating local cultural values into product branding can increase consumer trust and loyalty. This approach is relevant for local SMEs like Nao-Mi in their efforts to strengthen their product identity in the Gorontalo local market.

In the context of MSME development, modern literature also highlights the importance of a sustainable, value-based marketing approach, such as sustainable marketing, to foster growth that is not only economic but also social and environmental. Although the main focus of community service activities is to increase purchasing interest, this approach also provides MSMEs with room to incorporate sustainability values into their long-term marketing strategy.

In addition to digital aspects and values, recent studies show that MSME marketing transformation is also influenced by MSMEs' ability to understand consumer behavior deeply. This behavior includes needs, preferences, and psychological factors that affect purchasing decisions. Therefore, the mentoring activities carried out are aimed at helping MSME actors understand these dynamics, rather than merely providing technical marketing solutions.

Participatory marketing assistance provides benefits beyond mere knowledge transfer. Through this approach, MSME actors are also helped to reflect on their marketing practices, enabling them to identify areas for improvement, including promotion, pricing, and product presentation. This aligns with the literature, which emphasizes the need to evaluate marketing strategies to maintain relevance to consumer needs continuously.

Furthermore, several empirical case studies of MSMEs show that the success of marketing strategies is not determined by a single factor but by the synergy of well-coordinated marketing elements. A study on Tas Zamano MSMEs found that combining product innovation with digital marketing increases sales, so such a holistic approach needs to be part of MSME Nao-Mi's strategy.

In community service, the mentoring process focused on digital content development, social media optimization, and consumer-oriented marketing concepts, serving as a strategic step to enhance the appeal of MSME products. This aligns with contemporary literature that emphasizes the importance of digital marketing strategies for expanding MSMEs' market reach in the digital era.

On the other hand, the literature also shows that product quality remains an important factor that should not be overlooked in marketing strategies. Studies on rendang SMEs in Indonesia found that product quality has a significant impact on sales performance, whereas price itself does not always directly affect consumer decisions. These findings indicate that, in addition to marketing strategies, consistent product quality is an important asset in enhancing consumer trust and purchase interest.

A participatory and sustainable marketing approach in the context of SMEs will encourage business actors to continuously improve their marketing practices while building deeper relationships with consumers. This becomes an important foundation for sustainably building long-term loyalty and purchase interest.

This study also highlights the role of marketing communication as a key factor in fostering purchase interest. Social media, as one of the marketing communication channels, can create an emotional connection between consumers and SMEs, so that a successful marketing strategy can utilize these media creatively and responsively to consumer feedback.

In addition, contemporary literature also highlights the need to balance digital and traditional marketing strategies. Although the digital era plays an important role, traditional approaches, such as direct interaction and service experiences, remain relevant for building consumer trust at the local level. Therefore, Nao-Mi SMEs need to adopt marketing strategies that are adaptive and flexible to the local market's characteristics.

To develop an effective marketing strategy, Nao-Mi MSMEs need to adopt a holistic, integrative, and consumer-oriented approach. This reflects the understanding that consumer behavior is not static but constantly changing, so marketing strategies must continually adapt to address the challenges and opportunities that arise in a competitive market.

Finally, the results of the marketing assistance carried out in this community service activity show that with a participatory approach, SMEs are not only helped in the technical aspects of marketing but are also empowered to become business actors capable of adapting to market changes. This aligns with the literature, which states that empowering business actors through relevant and applicable marketing strategies can positively impact consumer purchase interest in the long term.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### ***Marketing Strategy***

A marketing strategy is a set of plans and actions designed to achieve marketing goals by effectively fulfilling consumer needs and desires. Kotler dan Keller (2020) define marketing strategy as the logic companies use to create value for customers and build profitable relationships. Marketing strategy is not only oriented to product sales but also to the continuous process of value creation through understanding the target market, product positioning, and integrated management of the marketing mix.

In the context of SMEs, marketing strategy plays a very important role because the limited resources available require business actors to be more creative and adaptive in reaching consumers. Recent studies show that SMEs that can formulate a planned marketing strategy aligned with market characteristics have a greater opportunity to increase competitiveness and attract consumer purchasing interest. Effective marketing strategies for SMEs generally include product adjustments, competitive pricing, selecting appropriate distribution channels, and using promotional media relevant to current consumer behavior.

### ***Consumer Purchase Interest***

Consumer buying interest is a psychological tendency that drives a person to purchase a product or service. According to Schiffman dan Kanuk (2019), buying interest is a consumer attitude that reflects the desire to purchase after evaluating the offered product. Buying interest arises from the interaction among consumer perceptions, the information received, and their experiences with a product or brand.

In marketing studies, purchase intention is often used as an early indicator in predicting consumer buying behavior. Recent research shows that various factors, including product quality, brand image, price, promotion, and marketing communications by business actors, influence consumer purchase intention. For SMEs, increasing consumer purchase intent is a unique challenge because they must compete with products from larger businesses. Therefore, a good understanding of the factors that influence consumer purchase intention is an important basis for formulating effective marketing strategies.

### ***SME Marketing Strategies and Their Relationship with Purchase Interest***

The marketing strategies implemented by MSMEs are closely related to consumer purchasing interest. Recent literature indicates that MSMEs that manage marketing strategies effectively,

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especially by leveraging digital marketing channels and consumer-oriented approaches, tend to be more successful in attracting market attention and purchase interest. Adaptive marketing strategies enable MSMEs to align product offerings with the constantly changing needs and preferences of consumers.

In practice, implementing marketing strategies in SMEs not only increases sales but also builds long-term relationships with consumers. A marketing approach that is communicative, participatory, and sustainable can build trust and consumer loyalty, ultimately driving increased purchasing interest. Therefore, an integrated marketing strategy grounded in an understanding of consumer behavior is key to enhancing consumer purchasing interest in SMEs, including Nao-Mi SMEs in Gorontalo.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This community service activity was carried out using a qualitative approach that positioned MSME actors as the main subjects throughout the series of activities. This approach was chosen because it emphasizes the active involvement of the service partners, in this case, Nao-Mi MSMEs in Gorontalo, from the planning stage to the evaluation of activities. Through a participatory approach, the service process is not only oriented towards knowledge transfer but also towards empowering business actors to identify the marketing problems they face and formulate solutions appropriate to their business conditions and capacities.

The initial stage of service activities began with the identification of needs and mapping of marketing problems experienced by Nao-Mi MSMEs. This process is carried out through direct observation, interactive discussions, and interviews with owners and parties involved in business operations. This activity aims to obtain a clear picture of the marketing practices implemented, the level of understanding among business actors of marketing strategies, and the obstacles encountered in efforts to increase consumer buying interest. The results of this identification are the basis for designing relevant and contextual mentoring programs.

Next, the community service activities continued with the marketing mentoring process, which is practical and sustainable. The mentoring focuses on strengthening SMEs' marketing strategies, including planning, implementing, and evaluating marketing efforts. At this stage, the community service team collaborates with partners to design marketing strategies that align with product characteristics, target markets, and local opportunities. The mentoring process is conducted dialogically so that business actors can fully understand marketing concepts and implement them independently.

The mentoring approach is also aimed at enhancing the capacity of MSME actors in managing more effective marketing communications. Through direct guidance and simple practice, partners are encouraged to optimize available marketing media and build more intensive interactions with consumers. This mentoring is not merely instructive but also provides space for business actors to reflect on each marketing step taken and to adjust it based on market responses.

The final stage of the community service activity involves a participatory evaluation to assess the effectiveness of the mentoring process. This evaluation is done together with partners by reviewing changes in understanding, attitudes, and marketing practices that occurred during the activity. Through this evaluation, it is hoped that MSME actors not only gain improved marketing skills but also develop an awareness of the importance of planned and sustainable

marketing strategies in increasing consumer purchasing interest. This approach is expected to create a long-term impact on the development of Nao-Mi MSMEs in Gorontalo.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on interviews with the owner of the Nao-Mi MSME, it was found that the marketing strategies applied so far still focus on conventional marketing approaches and relatively simple use of social media. Nao-Mi MSME has implemented several basic elements of marketing strategies, including defining target markets, introducing products through social media content, leveraging digital platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and WhatsApp, and planning collaborations with business partners or influencers (Pitaloka & Lukitasari, 2024). In addition, discount and promotional strategies are used to attract consumers and increase purchase interest. Although social media has been utilized, TikTok as a digital marketing tool has not yet been optimally implemented. This is evident in the condition of the Nao-Mi SME TikTok account, which remains private and has not been used for product promotion (Mokoginta et al., 2024). The main reason given by the SME owner is the lack of human resources specifically assigned as an admin to manage the TikTok account. This shortage of management personnel has become the main obstacle to using TikTok as a marketing tool, so the platform's potential for wider market reach has not been fully realized.

Furthermore, the interview results also showed that the owner of the Nao-Mi MSME actually already had a basic understanding of the importance of digital marketing and the role of social media in introducing products to consumers. However, this understanding has not been accompanied by the technical skills and operational readiness to manage content-based platforms like TikTok (Rahman & Mardiana, 2024). The lack of an admin with skills in content creation, account management, and audience interaction has become the main obstacle for MSMEs in developing more intensive digital marketing. This situation has led MSME owners to focus their promotion on social media, which is considered easier to manage and requires less content intensity, such as WhatsApp and Instagram. Nevertheless, Nao-Mi MSME owners have a positive view of TikTok's future potential as a digital marketing platform. TikTok is seen as having great potential to increase consumer buying interest because it can reach a wider audience, showcase products in a visually appealing way, and stay up to date with emerging trends in digital marketing. Thus, it can be concluded that the limitations of human resources and management are the main factors hindering the optimization of TikTok as a marketing strategy for Nao-Mi SMEs, rather than a lack of awareness of the platform's benefits. This discussion indicates that strengthening HR capacity and social media management are important for enhancing the effectiveness of SME marketing strategies to increase consumer purchasing interest (Hula et al., 2025).

## CONCLUSION

Based on the findings described, marketing strategies applied in a targeted, contextual manner play a significant role in increasing consumer interest in buying Nao-Mi MSMEs in Gorontalo. A marketing approach that integrates an understanding of consumer behavior, the use of relevant marketing media, and consistent marketing communication can strengthen consumers' positive perception of products. Through a participatory marketing mentoring process, MSME



actors gain a more comprehensive understanding of the importance of planning and evaluating marketing strategies to sustainably build competitiveness and attract consumer buying interest.

In addition, the community service activities carried out demonstrate that the active involvement of MSME actors in every stage of mentoring encourages improvements in capacity and independence in managing marketing activities. This process not only affects technical changes in marketing practices but also shifts the attitudes and mindsets of business actors toward viewing marketing as a long-term investment. Thus, a participatory approach and marketing mentoring are effective strategies for strengthening the resilience and sustainability of Nao-Mi MSMEs in Gorontalo amid evolving market dynamics and competition.

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