



stipulated in Government Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 7 Year 2021 Concerning Convenience, Protection and Empowerment of Cooperatives and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises which is the implementing regulation for the Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 11 of 2020 concerning Job Creation.

The growth of MSMEs in the past few decades has been relatively good, this reflects that people's resources and innovation and creativity have continued to develop from time to time. Various types of products, both goods and services produced by MSMEs with certain characteristics, both those born from local cultural wisdom and innovation from ideas developed in society, have provided various cultural treasures and intellectual property that are very important for the Indonesian nation. MSMEs continue to grow and develop along with the increasing of ideas, creativity and ideas from MSME actors and the growing demand or market for MSME products, even in difficult or crisis conditions like today.

Before being hit by the Covid-19 pandemic, MSMEs were always faced with various problems : the aspect of raw material issues, innovation and technology, marketing of MSME products, even to capital problems. The Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated the problems faced by MSMEs. As we know that the Covid-19 pandemic has had a negative impact on multi-sector businesses including MSMEs, especially when implementing the Community Activity Restrictions (PPKM) policy where people's mobility is very limited, causing a decrease in sales turnover of MSME products. This restriction on people's mobility has narrowed the space for both MSME players to produce products or services as well as narrowed the movement space for consumers of MSME products.

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced MSMEs to be able to change their marketing strategies so they can survive this pandemic. The marketing strategy during the Covid-19 pandemic and in the New Normal era had fundamental differences from the marketing strategy before the COVID-19 era. The difference lies in how to interact between businesses and customers (customers). If in the pre-COVID-19 era, every business could more easily carry out marketing activities both offline, such as attending in crowded and crowded locations, launching events, using tester promotions or distributing flyers on streets and entertainment venues, then in the New Normal era this marketing strategy with the use of social media applications is a very applicable alternative solution. Changes in the customer landscape, where we must be able to focus more on customer trust in our business. Many consider that returning to the current digital marketing strategy is one of the best ways to take advantage and opportunities and to rearrange by developing short-term and long-term strategies.

Conventional marketing strategies are certainly one of the obstacles in marketing MSME products. With all the limitations that exist during the current Covid 19 pandemic, changes in MSME marketing strategies must inevitably change, one of which is by utilizing technology and social media applications. In the current digital era, the use of technology has provided convenience for both MSME actors and consumers.

In his study, Nielsen in CPG, FMCG & Retail 04-14-2020 said that "Following the country's stay-at-home policy to prevent the spread of COVID-19, 30% of respondents planned to shop online more often". So since the imposition of the stay-at-home order to prevent the spread of Covid-19, around 30% of consumers plan to shop online. Meanwhile, consumers who spend more time using websites get 19.7% (Nielsen, 2020).

Digital marketing includes all marketing efforts using electronic devices or the internet. Businesses leverage digital channels such as search engines, social media, email and other websites to connect with current and potential customers. Social media is still an integral medium for communicating with customers or potential audiences. Customers not only interact with the content posted but also treat it as a medium to express their concerns. In fact, 34% of customers have used social media to ask service-related questions. Forty seven percent of them even consider it an effective channel for customer service. Thus digital marketing, one of which is through social media, can be used as a marketing tool in the New Normal era during the Covid 19 pandemic (Dewi, Wijayanti, Titisari, & Istiatin, 2021).

Seeing the problems faced by MSMEs during the Covid-19 pandemic and the New Normal period, all parties, including the government, associations, academics and

stakeholders, should work hand-in-hand to lighten the burden on MSMEs by continuing to provide assistance, technical guidance and also training that following training technology development. Related to this role, we are as students of Master of Management Study Program at Pamulang University try to take on the role of trying to understand and analyze marketing problems faced by MSMEs and provide concrete and applicable solutions for MSMEs, especially food MSMEs through Community Service activities. Beside that, the other main objective of the activity is training on the use of the whatsapp business application which is carried out in a series of community service activities is to provide counseling, assistance and training regarding effective and applicable marketing strategies for MSME food products to be implemented during the Covid-19 pandemic. The specific goal is to explore the real problems faced by Food MSMEs that are members of the MSMEs of Jabar Juara Depok City during the Covid-19 pandemic and to conduct training and direct assistance to Food MSMEs in order to optimize marketing and sales through implementing the use of the whatsapp business application.

## LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

Rosita Hafni and Ahmad Rozali in the Journal of Economics and Development Studies said that MSMEs have a strategic role in national economic development, it is proven that when the Indonesian nation experienced a crisis that occurred some time ago, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) were more resilient in dealing with this reality, while large-scale businesses experience stagnation and even stop their activities. History has proven that MSMEs are able to survive in the midst of an economic crisis (Hafni & Gozali, 2006).

MSMEs are proven to absorb a larger workforce in the national economy. With so many workers absorbed, the MSME sector is able to increase people's income. Therefore, MSMEs have a strategic role in reducing unemployment and poverty. For the contribution and role of MSMEs, it is important for the government to continue to support MSMEs through strengthening so that their role as a pillar in building the nation's economy can run optimally (Nur Sarfiah, Atmaja, & Verawati, 2019).

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In relation to food needs, there are creations from basic food ingredients, how to process them and the planned results. The basic ingredients of this food, if traced, are from plants which are commonly called vegetable and some are from animals. Plant-based ingredients can also be developed with various specializations such as medicinal plants, fruits and vegetables. Likewise with how to process it such as what tools are used, what technology is used, what chemicals are used. All these human needs give rise to various types of branches of knowledge and business and job opportunities (Syarif, 2021).

## METHODS

The steps taken to achieve the objectives of this activity are by taking a direct approach to MSME actors, provide counseling, assistance and training on the use of the WhatsApp



business application in relation to the marketing of MSME products. The implementation methods carried out are :

1. Observation and Interview

This method is carried out with the community and MSME actors who are members of the Jabar Juara in the Depok City area to see the extent of their understanding and knowledge of various business opportunities during a crisis and marketing activities that can be carried out by MSME during a crisis.

2. Lectures and Discussions

This method was chosen so that the writer as well as the speaker can easily present important concepts so that they can be understood and the socialization participants can easily master them. The lecture method through the delivery of presentations by displaying pictures and displays that are attractive and relatively compact, fast and easy can attract the attention of participants so that they are active in discussions. Lecture and discussion materials in the form of knowledge about the New Normal era, various business opportunities during the pandemic crisis, creative economy, and marketing strategies.

3. Demonstrations and Practices

This method shows the marketing process that can be carried out by MSMEs to support product marketing in the New Normal era, where there are various restrictions on space such as the use of digital technology as an easy and free marketing medium, via the smartphone used. With this, the participants are also invited to actively carry out the program directly from the concept being taught.

The socialization materials and discussions focused more on various business opportunities during the crisis and marketing strategies to develop business during the Covid 19 pandemic and the New Normal era. Participants are given knowledge and understanding of the New Normal era and the policies within it, strategies to maintain business during a pandemic crisis, marketing strategies in the New Normal era and motivation to continue developing MSMEs with a creative economy and marketing by utilizing social media so they can continue to survive in the New Normal era so that the economy continues to run. Participants can also learn more about various MSME business opportunities in the crisis era.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

One of the advantages of the WhatsApp application is that it is tied directly to a single phone number and provides a business profile of the brand, not in the form of a series of digits. Thus, consumers immediately know who they are talking to or having a dialogue with. Simply put, WhatsApp Business allows companies to send messages to their customers privately safely and conveniently via the WhatsApp messaging platform. WhatsApp also gives companies another added benefit of knowing what messages have been sent and in the end, read them in real time. A growing trend today, sales teams answer product or customer service questions with rich contextual messages for business messaging purposes so that customers are comfortable and happy.

Along with technological developments towards the 4.0 revolution, the WhatsApp application has been installed on many smartphone phones around the world. The number of users continues to grow. Here are the advantages that can be obtained from WhatsApp Business:

1. Real Time Two Ways Communication

WhatsApp Business associates companies with business numbers by only being tied to one phone number. This application is very familiar to everyday chat conversations by offering businesses that convenient and direct to a variety of personal communications and customer campaigns. By providing the information and support customers are looking for, WhatsApp Business helps increase customer loyalty and trust by reducing customer service time and time because messaging activities can be done in real time.

2. Conversation as well as Branding





In the WhatsApp app, a unique business identity can be included in WhatsApp Profile conversations as an element of brand equity. Companies can add contact numbers, website URLs, store locations, promotion details, and more. WhatsApp Business also allows adding multimedia to messages, including images, videos and documents.

### 3. Global Reach

WhatsApp is currently the most popular messaging app in over 100 countries, with a global customer base exceeding 2 billion. This makes it a relatively perfect channel for businesses to reach a general audience.

### 4. Able to Insert Automation

The messaging app WhatsApp Business provides template messages that tell customers to take the next step and start a conversation. By enforcing strict policies for content quality and response time, WhatsApp ensures users don't receive spam or other irrelevant communications. WhatsApp also requires business users to respond to incoming customer messages within 24 hours using non-template messages.

### 5. Additional Security With Subscriber Message Opt-in

WhatsApp incorporates security features such as end-to-end encryption and two-factor authentication to keep consumers and businesses safe and to manage various regulatory and statutory compliances. WhatsApp Business will also verify business accounts after registration, confirming the identity of customers when they choose to receive texts and communications.

### 6. Increase Profit

WhatsApp is an alternative chat platform to increase business profits. However, since WhatsApp is more personal, there are many things to consider when using it as a business strategy.

Apart from these advantages, the advantages of whatsapp business are related to its features. The common features of whatsapp business include:

#### 1. One to one chat

According to Nielsen's Facebook Messaging Survey, 67% of mobile messaging app users have had no problem using it when communicating with business people in the last two years. We can use this for the one to one chat feature with customers. Moreover, from this data it is also proven that 53% of mobile messaging users admit that they prefer businesses that have chat features on WhatsApp.

#### 2. Labels for organizing customers

WhatsApp Business can label your customers to make them easier to identify. This label usually consists of new customers, new orders, payments that have not been completed, payments that have been completed and existing customers. This label can also be given to differentiate old, new customers, and also customers who make frequent purchases.

#### 3. Taking advantage of message statistics from WhatsApp Business

By using the WhatsApp Business application, access to important data can be done easily in an easy-to-understand graphic form. The things that can be accessed include what percentage of messages were successfully sent, received, and read by the user. So what better strategy can be done in the future to serve them and optimize engagement.

#### 4. Automation for effective replies

Automation can be used for greeting messages or replies from customers. Some questions can be answered quickly without having to type them first.

After knowing the advantages and disadvantages of the whatsapp business application, business actors, including MSMEs, can apply whatsapp business on their smartphones. How it works and how to install WhatsApp Business is quite easy, considering that this application has a friendly interface so it doesn't bother users to understand how to use it. The way to work/install whatsapp business is as follows:

1. If the company already has a business number used for WhatsApp, we have to backup chat data to cloud storage first. To do so, go to Chats > Chat backup > then hit the Back Up button. Make sure the upload to the cloud is complete.
2. Next, download the WhatsApp Business application from the Google Play Store, then install it, and then launch it by tapping on the new icon on the smart phone's home screen.
3. After opening the app, first verify the business phone number. This will be a channel of communication with customers. Once the number is verified, we can choose to restore the previous chats associated with the mobile number which will be backed up in step 1.
4. Set your company business name and then in the chat area, tap the menu button and go to Settings > Business settings > Profile. Here we will get many fields similar to a contact card and we can fill in all the details that we want to share with the customer.
5. After doing the things mentioned above, the basic setup is done. Then we can connect with people from our contact list and use messaging tools via WhatsApp Business to keep in touch with them.

Through this activity, MSMEs of Jabar Juara Depok City business actors said they were very happy to be able to find out more about the WhatsApp Business application. It is their great hope that the business they are running can further grow and develop through various means, especially through the WhatsApp Business application.

## CONCLUSIONS

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced MSMEs to change their marketing strategies in order to survive during this pandemic. The marketing strategy by using social media applications is a very applicable alternative solution. This digital marketing strategy is one of the best ways to take the benefits and opportunities and rearrange them by developing short-term and long-term strategies.

1. The advantage of the WhatsApp application is that it is tied directly to one phone number and provides a business profile of the brand. The Whatsapp application provides two-way communication in real time, carries out conversations as well as branding, has a wide (global) reach, can insert automation, security and customer message participation, and increase profits.
2. The Whatsapp Bussines application has advantages of features such as one to one chat, labels for organizing customers, access to data in graphic form, automation for more effective replies.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This study was conducted based on descriptive qualitative analysis and references using the Mandeley application.

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