

Empowering Garut's Entrepreneurs: A Community Engagement Initiative through the WiraHebat Digital Marketing Training

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ABSTRACT

This study reports on a community service activity aimed at enhancing the digital capability of MSME actors in Garut, Indonesia, conducted on November 19, 2025, as part of the WiraHebat Goes to Village program. Addressing the local digital gap, the intervention utilized a practitioner-led training titled, "Digital Marketing for UMKM & Entrepreneurs: Mindset, Strategi, dan Aksi". The methodology employed presentation, Q&A, and brainstorming, with evaluation based on qualitative feedback. Results confirmed a successful paradigm shift in the entrepreneurial mindset and high conceptual comprehension of the Hybrid Strategy and 4P diagnostic tool. Participants showed keen interest in local channels like website, social media, eCommerce, marketplace and Google My Business (GMB). The activity successfully initiated Digital Empowerment, validating the approach of strengthening strategic thinking (Mindset and Strategy). However, a significant technical execution gap (Action Gap) was identified due to the one-day format. The conclusion recommends mandatory, phased technical mentoring following the training to ensure the conceptual gains translate into measurable economic performance and sustainable business growth for the WiraHebat partners.

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INTRODUCTION

The current global economic landscape, driven by pervasive digital transformation, dictates that Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) must rapidly acquire digital competencies to ensure their continuity and competitiveness (World Bank, 2022). MSMEs are critically important in Indonesia, contributing approximately 61% of the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and absorbing vast numbers of the workforce (Kementerian Koperasi dan UKM, 2023). However, a significant digital divide persists,

particularly in regional areas. In Garut Regency, for example, which boasts a substantial number of entrepreneurs with data showing Garut has over 200,000 MSMEs (Satu Data Indonesia, 2024) many local businesses struggle with limited market access and slow revenue growth due to insufficient digital literacy and the reliance on conventional marketing practices (Amalia et al., 2025). The core challenge goes beyond technical skills; it is rooted in a fundamental gap encompassing the necessary Mindset, strategic planning, and consistent Action required for digital success.

The consequences of this digital gap are not solely technical but also strategic, leading to stagnation in economic development at the local level. Previous research suggests that isolated technical training yields minimal long-term impact on business resilience (Salsabila et al, 2024). Sustainable economic empowerment requires an integrated approach where skill transfer is coupled with the cultivation of a proactive entrepreneurial mindset and a clear strategic framework (Ridwan Maksum et al., 2020). This necessity aligns with the Capability Approach, arguing that providing individuals with the functional capabilities, such as advanced digital marketing knowledge, is key to achieving substantial development outcomes (Sen, 1999). Recognizing this, the Garut Cooperatives and MSME Office launched the WiraHebat program, specifically initiating the WiraHebat Goes to Village program to deliver structured capacity building directly to rural entrepreneurs.

As part of this crucial collaborative effort, the author was formally invited by the Garut Cooperatives and MSME Office to provide expert training. The author's material, presented on November 19, 2025, was titled: "Digital Marketing for UMKM & Entrepreneurs: Mindset, Strategi, dan Aksi." This title reflects the holistic intervention model designed to address the observed gap in entrepreneurial digital capabilities. The primary objective of this community service activity was to Empower Garut's Entrepreneurs by delivering comprehensive, action-oriented modules focusing on three pillars: instilling a digital-growth mindset; equipping participants with practical digital marketing strategies; and guiding them through concrete steps for immediate execution. The successful completion of this activity is expected to generate significant benefits, including a measurable uplift in the digital competitiveness of local businesses, expanded market reach, and a direct contribution to inclusive and sustainable local economic development.

IMPLEMENTATION METHOD

The Community Service activity, titled "Digital Marketing for UMKM & Entrepreneurs: Mindset, Strategi, dan Aksi," was executed using a concise, practitioner-driven methodology focused primarily on knowledge transfer, active discussion, and conceptual understanding. The method was specifically structured to generate measurable outcomes in knowledge gain and conceptual clarity, aligning directly with the training's three core objectives.

Target Audience, Time, and Location

The beneficiaries of this activity were 60 MSME actors and traders operating in the local area, mobilized under the government's WiraHebat Goes to Village program, facilitated by the Garut Cooperatives and MSME Office. The training was conducted on Wednesday, November 19, 2025, at the Gor Desa Sukagalih, Tarogong Kidul District, Garut Regency, chosen for its central location and accessibility to the target community.

Implementation Procedures and Stages

The implementation procedures were streamlined into three main stages, emphasizing direct engagement and immediate comprehension:

1. Preparation Stage:

- Curriculum materials (presentation slides focusing on Mindset, Strategy, and Action) were developed and validated for relevance to local Garut MSME challenges.
- The Pre-Test instrument, designed to measure baseline knowledge, was prepared.
- Logistical arrangements (venue, sound system, and projector) were finalized to ensure a smooth presentation delivery.

2. Execution Stage (Presentation and Engagement):

- Presentation (Knowledge Delivery): The author delivered a focused presentation on the core module: "Mindset, Strategy, and Action." The delivery method prioritized clear explanations of theoretical foundations and practical examples relevant to local product promotion.
- Brainstorming and Q&A: Following the formal presentation, significant time was allocated for active Q&A and group brainstorming. This participatory segment was crucial for ensuring conceptual understanding, allowing participants to immediately contextualize the material to their specific business problems, and prompting critical thinking about their existing marketing practices. This facilitated the shift from passive listening to active application planning.

Materials, Tools, and Evaluation Instruments

The primary materials used were digital presentation slides supported by audiovisual tools (projector and sound system). The intervention was facilitated using key materials including focused digital presentation slides that elaborated on the Mindset, Strategy, and Action framework, supported by standard audiovisual tools such as a projector and sound system. Given the nature of the engagement brief, high-impact training the evaluation was primarily focused on capturing immediate, qualitative outcomes.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Activity Confirmation and Operational Context

The community service activity was successfully executed as a crucial component of the Garut Regency Government's program for Entrepreneurship Growth and Development, specifically the WiraHebat Goes to Village initiative. The training was officially requested by the Dinas Koperasi dan UKM Kabupaten Garut, and the author, Asep Koswara, M.E., CDEA., delivered the material, titled "Digital Marketing for UMKM & Entrepreneurs: Mindset, Strategi, dan Aksi".



Figure 1. Presentation Slide



Figure 2. Photo with the head of the Garut district cooperative and UMKM service



Figure 3. Photo of presenting digital marketing material in front of the participants



Figure 4. Photo with the training participants

The session took place on Wednesday, November 19, 2025, at the Aula Desa Sukagalih, Tarogong Kidul District, Garut, adhering precisely to the schedule outlined in the official invitation. The activity was well-attended, engaging approximately 60 MSME actors and traders from the immediate area. This high participation rate confirms the strong support from the local government and underscores the urgent, identified need among local entrepreneurs for structured digital training to strengthen their ability to manage businesses sustainably. The method employed was a focused presentation followed by active Q&A and group brainstorming, designed to promote deep conceptual understanding.

2. Detailed Qualitative Results on Conceptual Gains

The evaluation was carried out through systematic observation and analysis of structured feedback collected during and immediately after the training. The focus was on measuring the qualitative conceptual absorption across the three core pillars of the presentation.

Results on the Mindset Pillar

The initial objective of stimulating a digital entrepreneurial mindset was highly effective. The session commenced by establishing the universal principle of selling: "dimana ada keramaian = maka disana ada peluang" (where there are crowds, there is opportunity). This served as a metaphor to introduce the digital environment, with participants understanding that the digital process of seeking crowds is "jauh lebih terukur, tertarget, dan spesifik" (far more measurable, targeted, and specific) compared to traditional marketing. Digital transformation literature highlights that the entrepreneurial mindset is a primary determinant of successful technology adoption, often more influential than available resources or technical knowledge (Kraus et al., 2021). A study on Garut's Dodol MSMEs found that entrepreneurial orientation particularly innovation and proactiveness significantly enhances business performance, emphasizing that the entrepreneurial mindset is a foundational driver of successful digital transformation" (Lindayani et al., 2023).

Key motivations for the digital shift were clearly absorbed, evidenced by participants confirmed acceptance that digital channels offer a Target Market, accommodate a continually increasing online buyer, and provide results that are measurable. The data presented on the Indonesian digital landscape, noting 212 million Individuals using the Internet and 143 million Social Media User Identities as of February 2025, served as a powerful validation, successfully shifting the audience from passive scepticism to strategic optimism.

Results on the Strategy Pillar

Participants demonstrated a high degree of engagement with the strategic frameworks presented, indicating successful conceptual transfer:

- **Hybrid Strategy Acceptance:** The core strategic principle that the most effective approach is a Hybrid Strategy composed of Strong Organic + Targeted Paid was conceptually adopted. Participants recognized that this approach allows for long-term authority building through organic effort while leveraging paid traffic for quick conversion and acceleration. Recent research on culinary MSMEs in Garut shows that the implementation of e-marketing significantly improves business performance and strengthens customer loyalty, reinforcing the importance of an integrated digital strategy for local entrepreneurs (Hamdani et al., 2023).
- **4P Diagnostic Tool Comprehension:** The introduction of the 4P Marketing Mix (Product, Price, Place, Promotion) as a framework for comprehensive business diagnosis was highly valued. Observation notes highlighted that participants appreciated this structured tool as it provided a method to diagnose the basic problem of business comprehensively, enabling them to evaluate the relevance of their Product and the optimization of their Price before attributing sales issues solely to promotion efficiency.

Results on the Action Pillar and Practical Utility

The *Action* pillar, detailing the characteristics and strategies for key digital channels, generated strong practical interest:

- **Local SEO Utility (Gmaps/GMB):** High engagement was specifically observed regarding Gmaps / GMB (Google My Business). Participants, particularly local traders, recognized GMB as essential for managing their online presence and capturing local-specific and urgent traffic.
- **Social Media Focus:** There was high enthusiasm for the Social Media channel, particularly the strategy emphasizing short video (TikTok/Reels) with a strong hook and storytelling to achieve high engagement.
- **Channel Segmentation:** Participants successfully absorbed the concept of *Market Characteristic Based on Channel*. They understood that the Marketplace segment is price-sensitive while social media is impulsive, driven by visuals & trends.

The collective feedback indicated that the training successfully provided the conceptual foundation necessary to transition from awareness to action planning.

3. Theoretical Implications: Augmenting Digital Capabilities

The documented success in achieving high conceptual transfer across the three core pillars Mindset, Strategy, and Action carries significant theoretical implications, particularly when viewed through the lens of Amartya Sen's Capability Approach (Sen, 1999). This framework posits that sustainable development focuses on increasing individuals' *capabilities* (real freedoms) to achieve *functionings* they value.

1. **Enhancement of Functionings:** The training successfully transferred knowledge (a functioning) regarding the *Hybrid Strategy* and the *4P diagnostic model*. Participants gained the functional ability to structure measurable digital marketing strategies and conduct self-evaluation of their businesses.
2. **Expansion of Capabilities:** The observed positive shift in *Mindset* and the acquisition of strategic understanding represent an expansion of the entrepreneurs' *capabilities* (real freedom). They are no longer limited by geographical constraints, gaining the freedom to choose and engage with the broader, more profitable digital market (Tran, et al., 2024).

Therefore, the community service transcended mere information dissemination; it actively contributed to Digital Empowerment by strengthening the internal resources (knowledge and mindset) required for MSMEs to achieve greater economic resilience and self-determination (Surbakti, 2025).

4. Achieving Program Objectives and Contribution to WiraHebat

This activity directly fulfilled the core objectives of the Garut Cooperatives and MSME Office's program, specifically the mandate to strengthen entrepreneurial capabilities and manage businesses sustainably.

The qualitative results indicated that the introduction of the *Mindset-Strategy-Action* framework provided a structured management tool. Participants' ability to use the 4P framework to comprehensively diagnose business issues confirmed that the intervention successfully enhanced their capability to manage the business strategically. Furthermore, the keen interest in actionable steps via GMB and social media affirmed the relevance of the training to immediate market needs, ensuring that future capital allocation within the WiraHebat program is directed toward measurable and efficient marketing efforts.

5. Implementation Challenges and the Technical Execution Gap

Despite the high conceptual success, a primary challenge encountered was the heterogeneity of digital literacy levels among the 60 participants. Observations during the Q&A segment revealed that while entrepreneurs grasped *what* to do (e.g., the necessity of *Local SEO* or *Targeted Paid Ads*), they expressed difficulty with the technical *how-to* of execution (e.g., optimizing a GMB profile or setting up a paid campaign).

This phenomenon, known as the Action Gap in technology adoption literature, is a common limitation in short-duration community interventions (Probohudono et al., 2025). The time constraint of the one-day session prevented deep technical mentoring. Evidence from MSME studies in Garut also indicates that differences in financial literacy and technical capacity often create barriers to the effective implementation of new strategies, supporting the presence of an Action Gap in short-duration training programs" (Adiansyah et al., 2025). Consequently, this high level of conceptual achievement risks

failing to translate into tangible, measurable economic results if not supported by further technical guidance.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The community service activity, executed under the WiraHebat Goes to Village program, successfully achieved its primary goal of strengthening the digital capabilities of the 60 MSME actors in Garut by providing a comprehensive three-pillar framework: Mindset, Strategy, and Action. The qualitative findings confirmed a notable shift in the entrepreneurial Mindset, transitioning participants from technological reluctance to strategic optimism. The conceptual delivery of the Strategy pillar, including the utility of the Hybrid Strategy and the 4P diagnostic tool, was well-received, demonstrating that the training provided crucial functional knowledge necessary for self-evaluation and strategic management. This success validates the methodology of initiating Digital Empowerment by strengthening foundational strategic thinking. However, the project concludes that the initial phase is incomplete due to a significant Action Gap the disparity between conceptual understanding and technical execution as the one-day format was insufficient to provide the necessary hands-on guidance for complex steps like Local SEO or targeted paid advertising setup.

Therefore, it is strongly recommended that the *Dinas Koperasi dan UKM Kabupaten Garut* integrate a phased, hands-on technical mentoring program as a mandatory follow-up to this initial conceptual training. This mentorship should focus on small-group settings, dedicating sessions specifically to the practical execution of high-utility channels identified, such as Gmaps/GMB optimization and entry-level Social Media advertising. Furthermore, future evaluations should transition from purely qualitative feedback to performance-based tracking (e.g., measuring GMB traffic or social media engagement) over a sustained period. This strategic shift will ensure that the enhanced capabilities translate directly into measurable and sustainable improvements in the economic performance of the empowered MSME partners, maximizing the long-term impact of the WiraHebat program.

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