

Fostering the Entrepreneurial Spirit of Students through Digital Marketing in the Sharia Banking Study Program at STAIN Teungku Dirundeng Meulaboh

Muliza^{1*}, M. Rezki Andhika², Mikhral Rinaldi³, Hijrah⁴, Annisa Qadrunnada⁵

^{1*234}STAIN Teungku Dirundeng in Meulaboh

⁵Ubudiyah University of Indonesia

*email: muliza@staindirundeng.ac.id

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Abstract

The Indonesian government has set a target of achieving an entrepreneurship ratio of 8% by 2045. This ambitious goal represents a considerable challenge that requires effective strategies to cultivate resilient entrepreneurs who are prepared to compete in the digital and global era. This community service program was conducted at STAIN Teungku Dirundeng Meulaboh, West Aceh Regency, Aceh, with the aim of fostering entrepreneurial spirit and enhancing digital marketing competence among students of the Sharia Banking Study Program. The program was initiated in response to students' low interest and awareness of entrepreneurial opportunities, as well as their limited digital literacy. The methods applied included interactive lectures, workshops, case studies, hands-on practice, and intensive mentoring over the course of one month. A total of 25 students participated and demonstrated significant improvement, as reflected in the increase of their average scores from 62.4 (pre-test) to 89.7 (post-test). Furthermore, 100% of participants successfully created business accounts on Instagram and WhatsApp, 80% were able to design promotional content independently, and 10 students had already started small-scale online businesses. The impact of this program extended beyond individual skill development, as it also led to the establishment of a student digital entrepreneurship community to serve as a sustainable platform for collaboration and growth. These results indicate that participatory digital marketing training is an effective strategy for preparing young entrepreneurs in Islamic higher education to adapt and remain competitive in the digital economy.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship; digital marketing; Sharia Banking

Abstrak

Pemerintah Indonesia menargetkan rasio kewirausahaan sebesar 8% pada tahun 2045. Target ini merupakan tantangan besar yang membutuhkan strategi efektif untuk melahirkan wirausaha tangguh dan siap bersaing di era digital dan globalisasi. Kegiatan pengabdian masyarakat ini dilaksanakan Kampus STAIN Teungku Dirundeng Meulaboh Kabupaten Aceh Barat, Aceh, dengan tujuan menumbuhkan jiwa kewirausahaan serta kompetensi pemasaran digital pada mahasiswa Program Studi Perbankan Syariah STAIN Teungku Dirundeng Meulaboh. Program ini dilatarbelakangi oleh rendahnya minat dan kesadaran mahasiswa terhadap peluang wirausaha serta keterbatasan literasi digital pada mahasiswa. Metode yang digunakan dalam kegiatan ini meliputi ceramah interaktif, lokakarya, studi kasus, praktik, dan pendampingan intensif selama satu bulan. Sebanyak 25 mahasiswa berpartisipasi dan menunjukkan peningkatan signifikan berdasarkan hasil pre-test dan post-test (rata-rata nilai meningkat dari 62,4 menjadi 89,7). Selain itu, 100% peserta berhasil membuat akun bisnis di Instagram/WhatsApp, 80% mahasiswa mampu mendesain konten promosi secara mandiri, dan 10 mahasiswa sudah memulai usaha online berskala kecil. Dampak kegiatan ini tidak hanya pada peningkatan keterampilan, tetapi juga

terbentuknya Komunitas kewirausahaan digital di kalangan mahasiswa sebagai wadah berkelanjutan. Hasil ini menunjukkan bahwa pelatihan pemasaran digital berbasis partisipatif merupakan pendekatan efektif untuk menyiapkan wirausaha muda di perguruan tinggi Islam yang adaptif terhadap ekonomi digital.

Kata Kunci: Kewirausahaan; pemasaran digital; Perbankan Syariah

INTRODUCTION

The rapid growth of information and communication technology led to substantial transformations in many aspects of life, particularly within the corporate sector. Digital transformation has shifted the conventional corporate paradigm to be more dynamic, transparent, and technology-oriented. A significant consequence of this growth is the appearance of new prospects in digital entrepreneurship. This business paradigm requires that entrepreneurs, including the youth, acquire proficiency in technology use, especially in digital marketing (Dewi & Novita, 2025). Kotler (2016) states that digital marketing is a contemporary strategy that incorporates digital technologies to efficiently engage and communicate with consumers. Digital marketing has emerged as essential for brand development, product sales, and market expansion. Students need this ability because it is both an essential component for starting their own businesses and an additional skill in a complex global economy.

A report from the Ministry of Cooperatives and SMEs of the Republic of Indonesia (2024) indicates that MSMEs contribute approximately 61% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and employ nearly 97% of the national workforce. It is projected that the number of MSMEs will reach 66 million by 2023. Presently, almost 83% of MSMEs have used digital technology and have observed a rise in turnover following the implementation of digital marketing strategies using social media, e-commerce, and instant messaging applications. However, a survey performed by INDEF (2023) indicated that numerous young entrepreneurs, including students, remain unfamiliar with or fail to maximize the potential of digital marketing, particularly in rural regions. Within the Sharia Banking Study Program at STAIN Teungku Dirundeng Meulaboh in West Aceh Regency, Aceh Province, students' entrepreneurial spirit faces many obstacles, including insufficient digital literacy, limited business management experience, and restricted access to technology-based entrepreneurship training. Entrepreneurship is significantly important to Islamic banking, as sharia principles in Islamic economics promote the establishment of productive, equitable, and ethical economic activities rooted in the ideals of integrity and accountability (Antonio, 2001).

According to the preliminary results, students enrolled in the Islamic Banking Study Program now show a comparatively low level of entrepreneurial enthusiasm. This is because, despite the digital economy's extremely promising future, many students are still focused on becoming public officials or employees and have not yet given entrepreneurship any thought as a potential future occupation. Students also lack fundamental understanding and competencies in digital entrepreneurship, including digital marketing, leveraging social media as a promotional platform, and utilizing marketplaces for sales. There is a lack of training or practical activities that enable students to learn directly how to establish and operate basic, technology-driven digital enterprises that align with contemporary demands. The swift transformations in the employment landscape resulting from digitization necessitate that students become increasingly adaptable and imaginative. Graduates who lack digital entrepreneurial abilities may find themselves uncompetitive in the job market.

Hidayat's (2023) research published in the Journal of Management, Economics, and Entrepreneur Research showed that students who experience digital entrepreneurship training are more likely to initiate and expand online enterprises. The result emphasizes the significance of educational and practical strategies in building entrepreneurial spirit and competence among students. Moreover, student empowerment within the framework of the digital economy influences both individuals and local economic development. Students possessing an entrepreneurial mindset and proficiency in digital technology can serve as catalysts for economic development in their communities (Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan RI, 2021). A structured attempt is essential to provide students with entrepreneurial skills based on digital marketing. The goal of this community service project is to use digital marketing to encourage the entrepreneurial spirit of the Sharia Banking Study Program students at STAIN Teungku Dirundeng Meulaboh. In addition to strengthening student capabilities, this activity will hopefully promote a technology-based young entrepreneurial ecosystem on campus, which will aid in the growth of a sustainable sharia economy in the West Aceh region.

METHOD

The implementation technique for this activity is intentionally developed using a participative, instructional, and practical approach to achieve optimal knowledge and skill transfer to the program's target students. The activity is implemented in four stages: (1) preparation and identification of needs, (2) execution of training and practice, (3) intense assistance and mentoring, and (4) evaluation and follow-up plans. Each phase is intended to facilitate the enhancement of entrepreneurial spirit and competencies established in digital marketing.

1. Preparation and Needs Identification Stage

In the initial stage, the service team carried out the following activities:

- Conducted an initial survey and mapping of the needs of students in the Islamic Banking Study Program who had an interest in entrepreneurship, using questionnaires and open interviews.
- Analyzed students' digital literacy levels and entrepreneurial interests, including their understanding of the use of social media, marketplaces, and other digital applications for business purposes.
- Coordinated internally within the team and prepared training modules, covering basic digital marketing materials, branding strategies, copywriting, social media usage, and small business management.
- Prepared logistics and online/offline training platforms to ensure maximum participation.

2. Training and Practice Implementation Stage

The training was conducted over two days in the form of an interactive workshop, which included the following activities:

- Motivated and developed an entrepreneurial mindset: This session presented material on the importance of becoming a young entrepreneur in the digital era, supported by case studies of successful young entrepreneurs in the field of digital marketing.
- Introduced and practiced digital marketing concepts, with materials that included:
 - Creating business accounts on Instagram and WhatsApp Business.
 - Developing content strategies (product photos, short videos, engaging captions).
 - Optimizing social media algorithms.
 - Using Canva and simple design applications.

- Conducted a digital business simulation: Students were asked to choose a real or virtual product to simulate in online sales, including content creation, promotion, and online customer service

The learning method used is andragogy, which focuses on the active involvement of participants through discussions, case studies, sales *roleplays*, and *group work*.

3. Intensive Mentoring and Assistance Stage

After the training, the following activities were carried out:

- Two weeks of small group mentoring sessions were conducted to guide students in:
 - Creating a simple digital-based mini business plan.
 - Designing and managing digital business accounts.
 - Analyzing the market and developing promotional strategies.
- The mentoring was provided by a team of service providers with backgrounds in economics, Islamic banking, entrepreneurship, and digital technology.
- Mentoring was conducted in a hybrid format (a combination of face-to-face and online sessions via WhatsApp/Telegram groups), allowing students to access the support flexibly at any time

4. Evaluation and Follow-up Plan Stage

Evaluation is conducted to measure the effectiveness of activities and their impact on:

- Improving digital entrepreneurship knowledge and skills (through pre-test and post-test).
- Direct application of knowledge by participants in starting a small business or developing an existing business.
- Participant satisfaction and recommendations for further activities were collected through evaluation questionnaires and open discussions.

As a follow-up, the following will be carried out:

- Video documentation of testimonials and showcases of student work.
- Establishment of *the Digital Student Entrepreneurship Community* as a forum for collaboration and ongoing development.
- Plans to integrate training into the curriculum or routine activities of study programs through digital-based student business incubation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Twenty-five students from the Islamic Banking Study Program at STAIN Teungku Dirundeng Meulaboh participated in this community service project. The community service program was effectively executed over the course of one month, including training, practice, mentoring, and assessment stages. The outcomes of the activity can be categorized into three primary facets: (1) enhanced comprehension and enthusiasm for entrepreneurship, (2) competency in digital marketing abilities, and (3) preliminary implementation of digital-based enterprises by students.

1. Enhanced comprehension and enthusiasm for entrepreneurship

Based on the results of the pre-test and post-test taken by 25 participating students, there was an increase in the average comprehension score from **62.4 (pre-test)** to **89.7 (post-test)**, or an increase of **27.3%**. The aspects tested included:

- Understanding the concept of digital entrepreneurship
- Online marketing strategies
- The importance of personal branding and digital content
- Utilizing social media as a business platform



Figure 1. Implementation of Pre-test Activities

This increase indicated that community service activities had successfully built entrepreneurial awareness and motivation among students, particularly in utilizing digital platforms as a business tool. This aligned with the findings of Suhardi et al. (2023), who stated that the use of digital technology was a catalyst for the growth of entrepreneurial spirit among the younger generation. A testimonial from one participant stated, *"I felt very motivated after participating in this training. It turned out that selling online could start from small things, even from my own cell phone."*

2. Competency in digital marketing abilities

The training and workshop activities successfully equipped students with basic digital marketing skills.

- **100% of participants** successfully created business accounts on Instagram and WhatsApp Business
- **80% of participants** were able to design promotional content using Canva independently.
- **70% of** active participants posted at least 3 promotional content during the mentoring period
- The most appreciated skills were copywriting, visual content creation, and simple digital analytics (Instagram Insights, Google Trends).

The skills most appreciated by participants were *copywriting and visual marketing techniques*, as they have a direct impact on attracting potential buyers. Participants also demonstrated their ability to analyze digital trends simply using Instagram's insights feature and Google Trends.

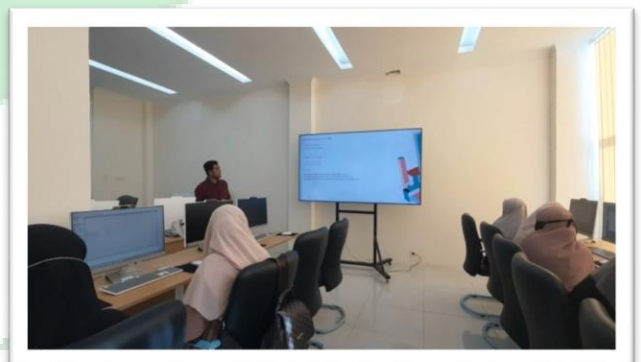
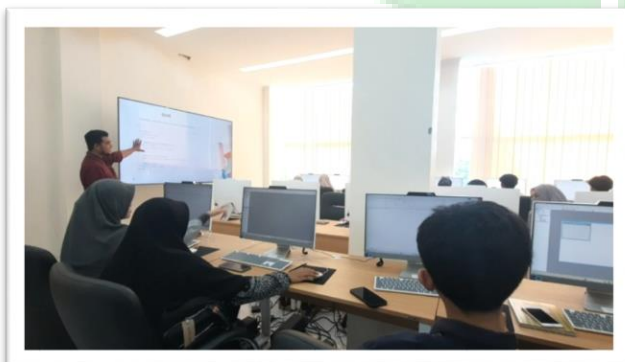


Figure 2. Implementation of training activities

These results support research by Santoso (2025), which showed that practical digital marketing training can improve students' entrepreneurial skills and build affordable and flexible online businesses.

3. Implementation of Digital Enterprises and Community Formation

Ten **of the 25 students** have applied their knowledge by starting small digital-based businesses. Products sold include snacks (local snacks), clothing, headscarves, and graphic design services. Some participants manage their own businesses, while others form small collaborative groups. Real implementation example:

- **@cemilan_meulaboh**: An Instagram-based Acehnese snack business, managed by three participants.
- **Digital Islamic preaching design services**: Providing visual Islamic preaching content creation for communities and mosques in West Aceh



Figure 3. Implementation of the post-test and closing of activities

Furthermore, this activity has led to the establishment of an initial community, namely the STAIN TDM Digital Entrepreneurship Student Community, which is intended to serve as a platform for collaborative learning as well as for the promotion of products developed by its members. In addition, the community service team has facilitated the integration of this community with the campus business incubator to ensure the continuity and formal sustainability of its development.

4. Discussion

This community service activity showed that *digital marketing training* which is packaged in a practical and participatory manner was able to provide the following results:

- Building a *digital marketing entrepreneurial spirit*
- Growing concrete skills in the field of digital marketing
- Activating students' economic potential even from very limited resources

A participatory approach has demonstrated greater efficacy since participants engage not just in listening but also in the direct application of the instruction provided. The course helps students' doubts regarding entrepreneurship by providing guidance throughout each phase, from idea to content development to sales. This finding aligns with the results of a study by Ukrowiyah et al. (2024), which stressed the significance of technology-based entrepreneurship training for students to adapt to digital transformation throughout the industrial revolution. 4.0

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

This community service program has successfully generated a positive impact on enhancing the entrepreneurial spirit and skills of students in the Sharia Banking Study Program at STAIN Teungku Dirundeng Meulaboh. Through a participatory approach in digital marketing training, students not only gained theoretical knowledge but also acquired practical skills that can be directly applied in developing businesses based on digital platforms. The results of this activity

indicate a 27.3% increase in students' understanding of digital entrepreneurship. All 25 participants created business accounts, 80% produced promotional content, and 10 students successfully initiated online business ventures. Furthermore, this activity has also led to the establishment of the STAIN Teungku Dirundeng Meulaboh Student Digital Entrepreneurship Community as a sustainable outcome.

This initiative also demonstrates that digital marketing represents a strategic and relevant approach to fostering young entrepreneurs in the era of digital transformation, particularly among students of Islamic higher education institutions. Moving forward, the sustainability of this activity requires support through campus-based business incubation programs, continued mentoring, and the integration of technology-based entrepreneurship curricula within the academic environment. Thus, this activity not only contributes to strengthening the individual capacities of students but also forms part of a broader effort to build an innovative and competitive youth entrepreneurial ecosystem in West Aceh

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