

The Influence of Digital Storytelling, Local Cultural Authenticity, And Social Media Content Quality On Umkm Product Purchase Decisions In Sampit City

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Abstract.

This study aims to analyze the influence of Digital Storytelling, Local Cultural Authenticity, and Social Media Content Quality on MSME Product Purchasing Decisions in Sampit City, East Kotawaringin Regency, Central Kalimantan Province. The background of this study is based on the phenomenon of the increasing role of digital media in marketing local products, amidst the strong current of globalization and penetration of information technology. Although studies on digital marketing have developed, the integration of local cultural aspects in MSME digital storytelling strategies in the region is still rarely discussed. This study uses a quantitative approach with a survey method of 150 respondents or consumers of MSME products in Sampit City. Data were collected through a Likert scale questionnaire (1–4) and analyzed using multiple linear regression using SPSS 26. The results show that digital storytelling, local cultural authenticity, and social media content quality have a significant influence on consumer purchasing decisions. The contribution of this study lies in the integration of local culture in digital marketing strategies that are still rarely studied. Therefore, these findings provide theoretical contributions by strengthening the integration of digital marketing concepts based on local wisdom, as well as practical implications for MSMEs in designing more effective marketing strategies.

Keywords: Digital Storytelling, Local Culture, Content Quality, Decisions Purchasing and MSMEs.

I. INTRODUCTION

The digital transformation of the past two decades has brought fundamental changes to global and local marketing dynamics. The presence of the internet and social media has become not only a communication channel but also a new arena for building interactions between businesses and consumers (Kotler & Keller, 2016). In Indonesia, data from the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII, 2022) shows that internet penetration has reached over 77% of the population, with the majority of users actively engaging in digital content consumption. This phenomenon indicates that traditional marketing strategies are increasingly shifting towards digital-based strategies, where narrative, visuals, and interaction are key elements in influencing consumer behavior. In the local context, MSMEs, as the backbone of the Indonesian economy, face challenges adapting to these developments. According to a 2023 report by the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), MSMEs contribute more than 60% to the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP), but most still face limitations in adopting modern marketing technologies. Sampit City, a trading center in East Kotawaringin Regency, Central Kalimantan Province, has significant potential for developing MSMEs based on local culture. However, limited access to digital marketing knowledge and relevant strategies hinders the competitiveness of MSMEs in this region, particularly when competing with products from outside the region and imports. One strategy gaining increasing attention in digital marketing is digital storytelling. This concept emphasizes conveying brand messages through engaging and emotional narratives, so consumers feel closer to the products offered (Herskovitz & Crystal, 2010).

In the context of MSMEs, storytelling goes beyond simply showcasing products; it also conveys the business journey, values, and struggles of MSME actors, which can increase consumer engagement. Research by Lundqvist et al. (2013) shows that storytelling can strengthen brand experiences and increase consumer loyalty. However, research on the application of digital storytelling in the context of regional MSMEs in Indonesia is still very limited. Besides storytelling, the authenticity of local culture also plays a

crucial role in creating marketing appeal. According to Beverland (2005), brand authenticity can create higher perceptions of quality and foster consumer trust. Digital storytelling has been shown to increase consumer engagement through emotional and authentic narratives (Herskovitz & Crystal, 2010; Lundqvist et al., 2013). Local cultural authenticity also strengthens a product's unique image (Beverland, 2005; Wang & Lin, 2021). Meanwhile, the quality of social media content has been shown to be a key factor in driving purchase intention (Ashley & Tuten, 2015; Kim & Lee, 2022).

However, the integration of these three aspects is rarely studied in the context of regional MSMEs. In Sampit City, the unique cultures of the Dayak, Banjar, and Malay can provide added value in MSME product differentiation. Integrating local culture into marketing strategies not only maintains product identity but also strengthens consumer pride in their own regional products. However, most marketing research in Indonesia focuses more on general variables such as price, product quality, and promotion, so research on the role of local culture in digital marketing is still rare. On the other hand, the quality of social media content is a crucial factor in influencing purchasing decisions. Ashley and Tuten (2015) emphasized that relevant, consistent, interactive, and visually appealing content can build brand credibility and increase purchase intention. For MSMEs in Sampit, social media is the most affordable channel to introduce products to a wider market. However, not all MSMEs understand the importance of content quality in creating a positive consumer experience. Therefore, this study is relevant because it integrates three important aspects: digital storytelling, local cultural authenticity, and social media content quality, to analyze their influence on MSME product purchasing decisions in Sampit City. Thus, this study attempts to fill the gap by empirically testing the influence of digital storytelling, local cultural authenticity, and the quality of social media content on purchasing decisions of MSME products in Sampit City.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Purchasing Decision

A purchase decision is the final stage in the consumer decision-making process after evaluating product alternatives. Kotler and Keller (2016) define a purchase decision as the process of choosing among available options, where factors such as perceptions, attitudes, and past experiences play a significant role. In the modern marketing context, purchasing decisions are influenced not only by rational factors such as price and quality, but also by emotional and social factors related to brand image. Previous research shows that purchasing decisions are closely related to the effectiveness of marketing communications. Consumers exposed to relevant and compelling brand information tend to have higher purchase intentions (Solomon, 2017). Furthermore, rational and emotional factors, including brand image and cultural identity, influence this process (Solomon, 2017). Recent research confirms that cultural identity can increase consumer loyalty to local products (Susanti & Hidayat, 2024). Therefore, companies, including MSMEs, need to understand the factors that can shape consumer intentions into concrete actions in purchasing products. Aspects of digital narrative, local cultural identity, and the quality of information delivery are increasingly determining elements. In the context of MSMEs in areas like Sampit, purchasing decisions are influenced not only by consumer needs but also by emotional attachment to products that reflect local identity. Products with authentic cultural values can strengthen consumer preferences, thereby increasing the likelihood of purchase. Therefore, this study positions purchasing decisions as the primary dependent variable influenced by digital and cultural factors.

2.2 Digital Storytelling

Digital storytelling is a marketing communications strategy that combines brand narrative with digital media to create an emotional experience for consumers. Herskovitz and Crystal (2010) stated that strong storytelling can build a more personal brand identity and differentiate products in a competitive market. Digital storytelling leverages brand narratives to create emotional engagement (Herskovitz & Crystal, 2010). Studies by Lundqvist et al. (2013) and Rahman & Dewi (2023) show that storytelling increases engagement and purchase intention, especially when linked to local values. In practice, this narrative typically includes the founder's story, the business's journey, the values, and the product's meaning.

In marketing literature, digital storytelling has been shown to increase consumer engagement. Lundqvist et al. (2013) emphasize that authentic and relevant narratives strengthen brand perception and foster loyalty. This is relevant for MSMEs in Sampit, which can use stories about traditional production processes or local cultural values to enhance product appeal. Thus, digital storytelling is not just a promotional tool but also an instrument for building emotional bonds. Previous research has largely focused on the implementation of digital storytelling by large brands or multinational corporations. Few studies have examined the role of storytelling in regional MSMEs, particularly those that integrate narratives with local culture. Therefore, this study offers novelty by examining the influence of digital storytelling on MSME product purchasing decisions in Sampit City.

2.3 Local Cultural Authenticity

Local cultural authenticity represents the traditional values, symbols, and identity inherent in a product. Beverland (2005) argues that authenticity is an important attribute in creating a brand image, as consumers increasingly seek products with cultural meaning and value. Cultural authenticity enhances product differentiation (Beverland, 2005). Products that display cultural identity are more valued by consumers (Napoli et al., 2014). Recent studies confirm that consumers are more loyal to products with authentic cultural values (Wang & Lin, 2021; Susanti & Hidayat, 2024). Products with authentic local cultural elements are generally more valued and trusted by consumers because they are perceived as unique. In a marketing context, local cultural authenticity can enhance product differentiation. According to Napoli et al. (2014), consumers often evaluate products based on how well they reflect the identity of their community of origin. In Sampit, incorporating Dayak, Banjar, or Malay cultural elements into MSME products can boost consumer pride and enhance perceptions of quality. This is a crucial strategy for navigating an increasingly homogenous market. However, most marketing research in Indonesia focuses more on price, product quality, or promotion factors, and has not yet integrated the dimension of local cultural authenticity. Therefore, this study offers a novel contribution by examining how local cultural authenticity can influence consumer purchasing decisions for MSME products, particularly in the context of a non-metropolitan area like Sampit.

2.4 Quality of Social Media Content

Social media content quality is defined as the extent to which content published on digital platforms provides relevant, engaging, consistent, and interactive information. Ashley and Tuten (2015) stated that high-quality content will increase brand credibility and create positive relationships with consumers. Content quality is defined as relevance, consistency, and interactivity (Ashley & Tuten, 2015). Kim & Lee (2022) demonstrated that content quality improves purchasing decisions, particularly among digital MSMEs. In other words, content quality is a factor influencing purchasing decisions in the digital era. Previous research has found that consumers are more attracted to content with compelling visuals, a clear message, and consistent posting frequency (De Vries et al., 2012). For MSMEs, social media is an affordable and effective marketing channel for reaching a wider market. However, MSMEs' lack of understanding of the importance of content quality often leads to suboptimal digital strategies. In the Sampit context, social media use by MSMEs is increasing, but significant variation in content quality remains apparent. Some MSMEs have begun to display modern visual designs, while others use minimal content. Therefore, this research is relevant to examine how social media content quality can influence purchasing decisions, thus providing strategic input for MSME development in the region.

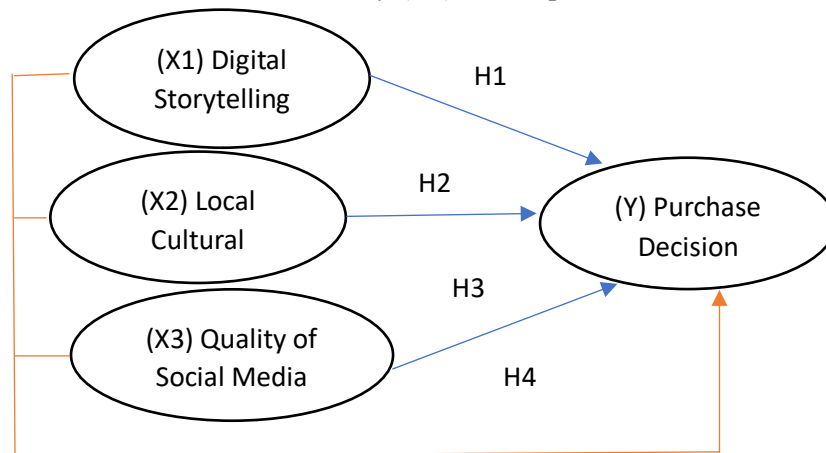
2.5 Research Hypothesis

Based on the literature review and the indicators that have been described, the hypothesis in this study is:

1. H1: Digital storytelling has a positive influence on purchasing decisions of MSME products in Sampit City.
2. H2: Local cultural authenticity has a positive influence on the purchasing decisions of MSME products in Sampit City.
3. H3: The quality of social media content has a positive influence on the purchasing decisions of MSME products in Sampit City.

4. H4: Digital storytelling, authenticity of local culture, and quality of social media content simultaneously have a positive influence on purchasing decisions of MSME products in Sampit City.

The conceptual framework of this study describes the relationship between independent and dependent variables. The independent variables include Digital Storytelling (X1), Local Cultural Authenticity (X2), and Social Media Content Quality (X3). The dependent variable is Purchase Decision (Y).



III. METHODS

3.1 Research Design

This study uses a quantitative approach with a survey method, because the main objective is to analyze the influence of digital storytelling, local cultural authenticity, and the quality of social media content on purchasing decisions of MSME products in Sampit City. The quantitative design was chosen to obtain measurable, objective, and statistically testable data, allowing researchers to generalize the research results to a wider population (Creswell, 2018). The survey method is considered appropriate because it allows for direct data collection from MSME consumers with an instrument in the form of a structured questionnaire based on a Likert scale. This study uses a quantitative approach with an explanatory survey method (Creswell, 2018). The population is MSME consumers in Sampit City who actively use social media. The purposive sampling technique was chosen with the following criteria: age ≥ 17 years, having purchased local MSME products, and being active on social media. The sample size was determined using the Slovin formula, resulting in 150 respondents. Furthermore, this research design is explanatory, focusing on testing hypotheses regarding the relationships between variables.

Using an explanatory design, this study is able to explain the influence of independent variables on the dependent variable through regression analysis. This aligns with Sugiyono's (2019) opinion, which asserts that explanatory research is highly suitable for testing theories and proving the influence between variables formulated in the conceptual framework. The instrument was a Likert scale questionnaire (1–4). The research variables included: digital storytelling (X1), local cultural authenticity (X2), social media content quality (X3), and purchasing decisions (Y). Data analysis was conducted using validity, reliability, classical assumptions, and multiple linear regression tests using SPSS 26. The significance value was set at $p < 0.05$. All respondents provided informed consent, thus the research complied with social research ethics (Sekaran & Bougie, 2020). Furthermore, the quantitative approach used in this study also provides a basis for measuring research variables in a more standardized manner. Through the use of a questionnaire instrument with a Likert scale, the resulting data can be processed using statistical software, resulting in valid, reliable, and tested findings (Sekaran & Bougie, 2020). Therefore, the research design used is believed to be capable of providing empirical answers to the research questions.

3.2 Population and Sample

The population in this study was all MSME consumers in Sampit City who actively use social media for information and interaction with MSMEs. This population was selected because these consumers have a high tendency to be exposed to digital storytelling content, local cultural values, and the quality of social media content created by MSMEs. According to Hair et al. (2019), selecting a relevant population is crucial

to ensure the data aligns with the research objectives. The sampling technique used purposive sampling, with the respondent criteria being MSME consumers aged at least 17 years, having purchased local MSME products in Sampit City, and actively using social media. Purposive sampling was chosen because it gives researchers the flexibility to select samples according to specific research criteria (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016). The sample size was determined using the Slovin formula with a 5% margin of error. Based on the estimated population of MSME consumers in Sampit City, a minimum of 100 representative respondents was obtained. However, to increase accuracy and avoid sampling bias, this study used 150 respondents. According to Sekaran & Bougie (2020), this sample size meets the minimum requirements for quantitative research for multiple linear regression analysis.

3.3 Variables and Indicators

The selection of indicators in this study was based on a review of relevant literature to ensure each variable has a strong theoretical basis. The indicators for digital storytelling, local cultural authenticity, social media content quality, and purchasing decisions were selected from various sources because each literature provides complementary perspectives. First, the Digital Storytelling indicator is taken from Herskovitz and Crystal (2010) and Lundqvist et al. (2013), which emphasize the importance of the founder's narrative and brand journey in creating emotional engagement with consumers. Escalas (2004) adds that product narratives help consumers build psychological connections with brands, while Kotler and Keller (2016) reinforce that emotional engagement influences the purchasing process. Thus, the indicators of the founder's story, business values, product journey, and emotional engagement are appropriate representations. Second, the Local Cultural Authenticity indicator is referenced from Beverland (2005) and Napoli et al. (2014), which emphasizes the authenticity of symbols as a product differentiator. Wang and Lin (2021) emphasize that cultural values strengthen brand identity, while Liu, Li, and Cheng (2020) demonstrate the importance of tradition in building consumer trust. Susanti and Hidayat (2024) add that community ties increase consumer loyalty to local products.

Therefore, the indicators of local symbols, cultural values, traditional identity, and community ties are considered appropriate in the context of local wisdom-based MSMEs. Third, the Social Media Content Quality indicator was adopted from Ashley and Tuten (2015), who emphasized information relevance in increasing engagement. De Vries et al. (2012) demonstrated that visual design influences content popularity, while Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) highlighted the importance of post consistency in building brand image. Kim and Lee (2022) confirmed that content interactivity significantly influences purchasing decisions. Thus, the indicators of information relevance, visual design, post consistency, and interactivity comprehensively represent content quality. Fourth, the Purchase Decision indicators are taken from Kotler and Keller (2016), who emphasize the information search stage; Solomon (2017), who highlights alternative evaluation; and Susanti and Hidayat (2024), who emphasize cultural identity-based purchase intention. Hair et al. (2019) added that purchase realization is the final stage of the consumer decision process. Thus, the indicators of information search, alternative evaluation, purchase intention, and purchase realization align with consumer behavior models in the marketing literature. The use of various reference sources demonstrates that the research indicators are not only normative but also have a strong theoretical and empirical basis, and are relevant to the context of MSMEs in the digital era. The following table shows the variables and indicators in this study:

Variables	Indicator	Reference Source
Digital Storytelling (X1)	Founder's story	Herskovitz & Crystal (2010); Lundqvist et al. (2013)
	Business value	Rahman & Dewi (2023)
	Product journey	Escalas (2004)
	Emotional involvement	Kotler & Keller (2016); Herskovitz & Crystal (2010)
Local Cultural Authenticity (X2)	Local symbols	Beverland (2005); Napoli et al. (2014)
	Cultural values	Wang & Lin (2021)
	Traditional identity	Liu, Li, & Cheng (2020)
	Community connectedness	Ashley & Tuten (2015)

Social Media Content Quality (X3)	Relevance of information	Ashley & Tuten (2015)
	Visual design	De Vries et al. (2012)
	Upload consistency	Kaplan & Haenlein (2010)
	Interactivity	Kim & Lee (2022)
Purchase Decision (Y)	Information search	Kotler & Keller (2016)
	Evaluation of alternatives	Solomon (2017)
	Purchase intention	Susanti & Hidayat (2024)
	Purchase realization	Hair et al. (2019)

Source: Data created, 2025

3.4 Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis was conducted in stages using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26 software. The initial stage was a data quality test, which included validity and reliability tests for the research instruments. Validity was tested using Pearson correlation analysis, while reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha. According to Ghazali (2021), an instrument is considered reliable if the Cronbach's Alpha value is greater than 0.70. The next stage is the classical assumption test, including normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity. This is crucial to ensure that the data meets the requirements for multiple linear regression. The analysis then continues with multiple linear regression to examine the influence of digital storytelling, local cultural authenticity, and social media content quality on purchasing decisions. The regression model is used to measure the contribution of independent variables to the dependent variable, either simultaneously or partially (Gujarati & Porter, 2009). Further testing results are determined based on a significance value (p-value) < 0.05 at a 95% confidence level. If this value is met, the research hypothesis is accepted. Thus, the data analysis technique used can provide comprehensive and scientific empirical evidence regarding the influence of the research variables (Hair et al., 2019).

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Instrument Test Results

The validity test results showed that all questions in the questionnaire had a Pearson correlation value greater than 0.30 and were significant at the 95% confidence level. This means that each question item can be declared valid for measuring the construct under study. According to Sugiyono (2019), a research instrument is considered valid if each indicator accurately represents the variable. Therefore, the questionnaire used in this study can be confirmed to be consistent with the concept of the variables studied. Furthermore, the reliability test results showed that all variables had Cronbach's Alpha values above 0.70. Digital storytelling obtained a value of 0.873, local cultural authenticity 0.861, social media content quality 0.889, and purchasing decisions 0.902. These values are above the minimum threshold of 0.70 as recommended by Hair et al. (2019). This indicates that the research instrument has a high level of internal consistency, so the data obtained can be relied upon for further analysis.

4.2 Results of Regression Analysis

Multiple linear regression analysis was conducted to determine the influence of digital storytelling, local cultural authenticity, and social media content quality on purchasing decisions. The F-test results showed a significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$, thus concluding that all three independent variables simultaneously had a significant influence on purchasing decisions. This demonstrates the research model's fit in explaining the purchasing decisions of MSMEs in Sampit City. The t-test results show that the digital storytelling variable has a t-count value of 4.732 with a significance of 0.000, the local cultural authenticity variable has a t-count value of 3.981 with a significance of 0.000, and the social media content quality variable obtains a t-count value of 5.216 with a significance of 0.000. These three variables have a significant influence on purchasing decisions. Thus, the research hypothesis stating that digital storytelling, local cultural authenticity, and social media content quality have a positive influence on purchasing decisions, is empirically proven.

4.3 Digital Storytelling and Purchase Decisions

The results of the study indicate that digital storytelling has a significant influence on purchasing decisions. This aligns with research by Kotler & Keller (2016), which asserts that stories in digital marketing can create emotional closeness with consumers. Authentic narratives relevant to consumers' daily lives make MSME products more memorable and increase purchase intentions. Digital storytelling increases consumers' emotional closeness to MSME products. These results support Rahman & Dewi (2023), who assert that digital storytelling strengthens engagement and expands the literature to the context of local MSMEs. For MSMEs in Sampit City, the use of storytelling that emphasizes local business struggles and cultural wisdom values can strengthen brand identity in the eyes of consumers. Furthermore, storytelling, packaged in the form of visual content, short videos, or narrative posts on social media, has been shown to increase consumer engagement. This aligns with Escalas's (2004) finding that consumers more easily internalize brand messages through narratives than through purely rational information. Therefore, a digital storytelling strategy can be an effective tool for strengthening MSME product differentiation amidst increasingly competitive digital markets.

4.4 Local Cultural Authenticity and Purchasing Decisions

Local cultural authenticity has also been shown to positively influence purchasing decisions. Consumers tend to value MSME products that showcase indigenous regional cultural values because they provide an emotional experience and unique identity not found in mass-produced industrial products (Liu et al., 2020). Cultural authenticity strengthens the image of local products. Consumers value cultural values as a differentiating factor, in line with Wang & Lin (2021). This study reinforces these findings with empirical evidence from MSMEs in Sampit. For MSMEs in Sampit City, the use of symbols, folklore, and local traditions in product promotion creates the perception that the product is not just an item, but a representation of regional culture. This research aligns with the findings of Wang & Lin (2021), who stated that local cultural values strengthen consumers' psychological bonds with products. This also enhances the value of authenticity, which is considered important in purchasing decisions. Therefore, MSMEs in Sampit can enhance the appeal of their products by emphasizing local cultural characteristics, including design, storytelling, and traditional symbols.

4.5 Social Media Content Quality and Purchasing Decisions

The quality of social media content has been shown to be the most dominant variable influencing purchasing decisions. These results align with the theory proposed by Kaplan & Haenlein (2010), which states that social media platforms that provide high-quality content can increase engagement, build trust, and strengthen purchase intentions. Content that is informative, visually appealing, and consistent with brand identity creates a positive experience for consumers. Content quality is a dominant factor. Informative, visual, consistent, and interactive content drives purchasing decisions (Kim & Lee, 2022). These results emphasize the importance of a professional social media strategy for MSMEs. Furthermore, the research findings support Ashley & Tuten's (2015) finding that consumers are more attracted to content that not only conveys information but also entertains and provides emotional value. MSMEs in Sampit City that are able to effectively manage the quality of their social media content will more easily influence consumer perceptions, strengthen their brand image, and ultimately drive purchasing decisions. Therefore, content quality is a crucial aspect of a social media-based digital marketing strategy.

V. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

5.1 Conclusion

This study proves that digital storytelling, local cultural authenticity, and social media content quality significantly influence purchasing decisions for MSME products in Sampit City. Content quality is the dominant variable. The theoretical contribution of this study is to strengthen the literature on local culture-based digital marketing, which has not been widely studied in Indonesia. This study aims to analyze the influence of digital storytelling, local cultural authenticity, and social media content quality on purchasing decisions for MSME products in Sampit City. The results show that all three independent variables have a significant influence, both partially and simultaneously. This finding strengthens the

argument that digital marketing strategies based on narratives, cultural values, and content quality are important determinants in shaping consumer behavior in the digital era. More specifically, digital storytelling has been shown to increase consumers' emotional connection to MSME products. The authenticity of local culture strengthens the product's unique image, while the quality of social media content is a dominant factor influencing purchasing decisions. This confirms that the integration of these three aspects can strengthen the competitiveness of MSMEs in Sampit City, while simultaneously encouraging regional economic growth based on local potential. Thus, this research provides theoretical and practical contributions to the development of digital marketing science based on local wisdom.

5.2 Practical Implications

The results of this study have important implications for MSMEs in Sampit City. First, businesses need to develop digital storytelling strategies that depict their business journey, struggles, and values, thereby creating an emotional connection with consumers. Second, integrating local cultural authenticity into products and marketing narratives can increase consumer pride in regional identity and create differentiation that is difficult for competitors to imitate. Third, MSMEs must invest in improving the quality of their social media content, focusing on visual aspects, message consistency, and interactivity. This is crucial given that social media is the most affordable and effective primary digital marketing channel. By implementing this strategy, MSMEs in Sampit City have the opportunity to expand their market, increase consumer loyalty, and strengthen their position in the increasingly competitive digital commerce ecosystem. MSMEs are advised to develop digital storytelling strategies that depict their business journey and local cultural values. Investing in the quality of social media content (visual design, message consistency, interactivity) is crucial for increasing competitiveness.

5.3 Suggestions for Further Research

While this research provides theoretical and practical contributions, it has several limitations that should be considered. First, the study focused only on MSMEs in Sampit City, so the results cannot be generalized to all MSMEs in Central Kalimantan Province. Second, the use of a quantitative survey method with a perception-based questionnaire has limitations in capturing the dynamics of consumer behavior in greater depth. Therefore, further research is recommended to expand the scope of the study, for example by comparing several cities in Central Kalimantan or even at the national level. Furthermore, mixed methods can be used to explore in more detail how consumers respond to digital storytelling, local culture, and content quality in real-world settings. Longitudinal research can also be conducted to examine changes in consumer behavior toward MSMEs over the long term.

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