

## Improving Digital Promotion of MSMEs Through Personal Mentoring-Based Canva Training in Mata Air Village

Gidion Juanri Toding<sup>1\*</sup>, Mukhibatul Hikmah<sup>2</sup>

<sup>12</sup>Mulawarman University

Corresponding Author e-mail: [juangidion@gmail.com](mailto:juangidion@gmail.com)

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**Abstract:** Indonesian rural Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) face intense digital competition due to limited promotional skills and low content marketing literacy, particularly in Mata Air Village, East Kutai. This community service program aims to improve MSME digital promotion through personalized Canva training within the Village Development Program. A qualitative ABCD approach was applied, encompassing problem mapping, program design, and direct mentoring for 10 purposive sample MSMEs from a population of 20-30 active businesses. Data instruments included participant observation, in-depth interviews, and Canva template documentation, analyzed descriptively using SWOT and triangulation. Results showed participants mastered the drag-and-drop feature for product packaging and social media content design, despite internet connection constraints. In conclusion, the Canva training successfully developed independent design skills, increased promotional efficiency, and increased competitiveness against e-commerce platforms.

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## Introduction

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) play a vital role in the Indonesian economy as the main driver of local and national growth, with their resilience proven during the 1998 monetary crisis.(M. Son Aghni & Luthfy Purnanta Anzie, 2025).Amidst the rapid development of digital businesses, MSMEs face fierce competition from adaptive competitors, with many businesses failing to survive due to a lack of innovative promotional strategies. Social media and digital platforms are now integral to consumer behavior, enabling broad market reach without geographical boundaries, enabling MSMEs that utilize them to strengthen their brand image and increase sales.(Aditya, 2025)

The main problem arises from the low understanding of MSME actors regarding digital marketing, including content marketing and quality content creation, which results in minimal product visibility and dependence on conventional methods.(Sahri et al., 2025).In Mata Air Village, Kaubun District, East Kutai Regency, the high potential of MSMEs in various fields has not been optimally

developed due to simple promotions without digital support, limiting market access and competitiveness.(Sudarynianto Nurathaya Sutarto & Hwihanus Hwihanus, 2025)The use of creative graphic design through technologies like Canva is crucial for creating engaging content, but low literacy rates hinder its adoption.

Limited digital infrastructure and skills further exacerbate MSMEs' reliance on traditional promotions, where the lack of professional visual content reduces consumer appeal in the era of digital transformation.(Sahri et al., 2025).This not only suppresses sales, but also hinders cost efficiency and customer interaction, as seen in many MSMEs that are unable to compete with large e-commerce platforms.(Tindi & Silaban, 2025).

This research aims to provide training on the use of Canva for digital promotional graphic design for MSMEs in Mata Air Village through the Village Development Program, in order to improve their independent content marketing skills. Its urgency lies in the urgent need for digital transformation of rural MSMEs for post-pandemic economic resilience, while its novelty lies in the integration of Canva as a user-friendly tool within the ABCD (Asset-Based Community Development) approach that focuses on local potential, different from general training, thus supporting university-village synergy for national scalability.(Sahri et al., 2025).

## **Research Methods**

This study applies a qualitative approach to community service with the ABCD (Asset-Based Community Development) strategy to empower MSMEs in Mata Air Village through Canva graphic design training, in line with the preliminary objective of increasing digital promotion amidst tight competition.(Afifah, 2025).The main methods include problem mapping, program design, and direct mentoring, which focuses on identifying visual content difficulties and implementing user-friendly tools for marketing efficiency. This approach emphasizes active community participation, ensuring relevance to the local potential of MSMEs as identified in the introduction. Mapping, The mapping method is a method implemented to identify problems faced by MSME actors in a region. Some of the MSME actors in Mata Air Village experience difficulties in creating image content for promotions on social media, so the implementation of digital marketing is still ineffective and inefficient. The implementation of this stage is carried out by holding discussions with village officials and also several MSMEs directly002E

Data collection instruments included participant observation, in-depth interviews with MSMEs and village officials, and documentation of training results, such as Canva templates created by participants. This was validated through source triangulation for reliability. Data analysis techniques were descriptive qualitative, using data reduction, pattern presentation, and conclusion drawing, supported by a SWOT analysis to evaluate the effectiveness of pre- and post-training promotions using the Canva application.(Afifah, 2025). No in-depth statistical analysis is required because the focus is on practical outcomes, but rather qualitative evaluation through participant feedback.

The research population consisted of all active MSMEs in Mata Air Village, Kaubun District, East Kutai Regency, operating in various sectors with high potential but minimal digital promotion, estimated at 20-30 business units based on the data. The sample was taken purposively with a convenience sampling technique of 15 MSMEs representing diverse business sectors and willing to participate, according to limited rural access, which is adequate for village-scale community

service.(Tindi & Silaban, 2025).

The research procedure followed a systematic sequence: an initial mapping stage through discussions with village officials and direct observation to identify promotional content challenges; designing a Canva training module based on ready-to-use templates; implementing face-to-face mentoring with theoretical presentations, drag-and-drop demonstrations, personal practice, and a Q&A session; and a final evaluation via feedback and monitoring of post-training social media posts. This approach ensures sustainable knowledge transfer, aligning with the Village Development Program for academic-community synergy.

## Results and Discussion

The activity was carried out by providing direct assistance to 10 MSMEs, in the implementation of the assistance began with providing material on the importance of utilizing digital media to increase value in promotions. Then continued with the introduction of the Canva application, starting from the registration stage, introduction of existing features and continued with the application of Canva. And after carrying out the practice, a discussion session was also held where MSMEs were given the opportunity to convey their responses regarding the practice carried out and the team provided input and suggestions related to what was conveyed by the MSMEs. However, there were also obstacles that occurred during the practice, namely, inadequate network so that they experienced difficulties in carrying out the practice.

With the rapid development of technology and information in today's era, many positive impacts have been felt by society. Launched applications are also very helpful and simplify our work, which previously took up time, becoming faster and easier. For example, the Canva application, in terms of using features and designs are more attractive and easier to operate, especially since the site is free. Templates and features in the Canva application are also accessible by users via smartphone. In operating the Canva application, we as users simply need to develop creativity in design. From the activities that have been carried out by the Bina Desa team in Mata Air village, several MSMEs have been able to create product packaging designs, as well as regarding how to use features for product marketing promotions, and also understand the importance of utilizing technological developments in increasing promotional value. This can be seen from the ongoing mentoring process and also during discussions.

## Conclusion and Recommendation

A Canva training program based on personal mentoring successfully improved the skills of 10 MSMEs in Mata Air Village in creating engaging promotional visual content, as evidenced by their proficiency in using the drag-and-drop feature for product packaging and social media content design, as well as their in-depth understanding of the importance of digital marketing in increasing visibility (Dwiantari et al., 2025; Yuliana et al., 2024). The main obstacle faced was the limited rural internet network that hampered real-time practice, but the enthusiasm of the participants and the ease of using Canva as a free tool successfully overcame low initial design literacy, resulting in independent skill transfer that aligns with the ABCD approach to empowering local potential (Shandy et al., 2025; Fahminnansih et al., 2021).

MSMEs can now produce professional content independently without designer costs, increasing promotional efficiency and competitiveness against large e-commerce platforms. Research

limitations include the small sample size (10 actors) and short duration, which does not yet measure the long-term impact on actual sales (Sugiyono, 2023; Sono et al., 2025). Further research is recommended to adopt a longitudinal design by monitoring social media engagement and economic indicators for 6-12 months, as well as expanding to other villages with hybrid infrastructure (online-offline) for national scalability, ensuring the sustainability of rural MSME digital transformation (Muttaqin et al., 2025; Rabbil et al., 2023).

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