

UTILIZING SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING: FOR ORANG ULU'S HANDICRAFT PRODUCTS PROMOTION

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Abstract : This paper deliberates on references of digital marketing strategies by utilizing social media marketing to promote Orang Ulu's Handicraft products. The findings of this paper can significantly enhance the visibility and market reach of Orang Ulu's handicraft products. This research involved 200 respondents who answered the research questionnaires. The data collected from the fieldwork were analyzed using SPSS version 26. The measures used in this article are methodically descriptive frequency analysis. The results of the descriptive means of all the analyzed items highlight and summarize the significance of social media platforms in marketing Orang Ulu's handicraft products.

Keywords: Handicraft Products, Social Media, Marketing, Promotion, indigenous, Orang Ulu

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 *The Orang Ulu*

One of the ethnic groups living in Sarawak is the Orang Ulu. This ethnic group comprises 20 various sub-ethnic groups that are known as the Orang Ulu community. These sub-ethnic groups are from Krayan-Kelabit, Apo Duat, and Apo Kayan (Sim, 2019). But then, in 2015, it was reported that there are 26 distinct sub-ethnic groups, including Kenyah, Kayan, Kajang, Kelabit, Murut, Saban, Penan, Ukit, Punan, Sian, and others. (Wan, Renganathan, & Philip, 2015).

Most Orang Ulu live longhouses with a distinct culture, such as intricate beadworks, detailed tattoos, rattan weaving, and unique music with distinctive sounds from the sape. The Orang Ulu are distinct and culturally rich groups of indigenous peoples in Sarawak. Their unique traditions and artistic expressions significantly contribute to the cultural diversity of the region.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 *Handicrafts Products*

Handicrafts are a crucial part of intangible cultural heritage, as an image and expression of a nation's symbol and identity. They are formulated with lofty concepts and ingenuity (Farreira et al., 2019; Mokhtar, 2018). It is a work that requires precise and consistent planning to produce something of high quality. Additionally, they are frequently involved with producing clothes, decorations, handicraft products, and other products. Handicrafts represent the intellectual ideas from previous societies passed down to the present generation. Handicrafts and other forms of intangible cultural heritage possess significant heritage value, turning them into art objects that require sustainable (Kamaruddin, 2020). Like other cultural components, handicrafts play an essential role in representing the identity of a country and its society. Thus, it is crucial to maintain the continuous preservation of handicrafts as it is closely associated with preserving a nation's traditions and culture.

2.2 *Digital Marketing*

A digital marketing channel works like a traditional marketing channel, delivering products and services from their source to the customer through a specific type of supply chain. As one of the most effective marketing methods, digital marketing offers cost-effective online sales and low search costs, with easy price comparisons, spreading of user reviews, brand differentiation, and more effective customer relationships. Furthermore, leveraging social media channels such as broadcasts can

further enhance the value of your brand. Businesses significantly benefit from digital marketing tools because they target value chain intermediaries, create focused valued propositions, and have less extensive personal interactions. Digital channels make it convenient for business customers to engage with content and technology (Venkateswaran et al.,2022).

2.3 Social Media Marketing

Social Media platforms can be utilized for marketing purposes in several forms. The conventional Facebook approach entails substituting the notion of a human “friend” with a brand or actual goods or establishing a page or group (Facebook,2022). When a user chooses to express their approval or affinity towards a product or brand, they effectively promote this association throughout their personal network of contacts. This Principle can also be applied to other forms of social media.

i. Facebook

Facebook is a social media company owned by Mark Zuckerberg that has features for its business account. The Facebook marketplace is also increasingly open and accessible for buying and selling transactions. It has an AdSense feature that helps business people sell their products (Kusumo Bintaro et al., 2022), or marketing purposes can manifest in several forms.

ii. Instagram

Instagram is a popular social media platform that shares photos and videos online. Many online shops use it for promotion, and it has an AdSense feature. Influencers also use Instagram to promote products, making it a popular platform for enthusiasts. Instagram's hashtags help users find products based on their interests. The platform offers exciting features like filters, making it attractive for businesses. Users can upload various product photos to engage consumers and encourage them to buy. Instagram attracts attention from all circles, especially teenagers, and despite new trends like TikTok, it remains a popular platform for marketing. The AdSense feature on Instagram is also helpful for reaching customers and increasing sales of products or services. Therefore, Instagram is a crucial social media for businesses looking to grow (Kusumo Bintaro et al., 2022). Facebook is a social media company owned by Mark Zuckerberg that has features for its business account. The Facebook marketplace is also increasingly open, and it is easy to make buying and selling transactions. It has an AdSense feature that helps business people sell their products (Kusumo Bintaro et al., 2022)




iii. Tiktok

TikTok has emerged as a contemporary phenomenon within the adolescent demographic of the present era. Since the onset of the epidemic, this particular social media platform has garnered a substantial following. Nevertheless, comprehending the complexity of the TikTok algorithm remains challenging, as it operates according to its own set of regulations for business activities. Using social media as a business strategy has demonstrated notable effectiveness and efficiency. One of the most notable advantages is facilitating communication between vendors and consumers. Social media has revolutionized how individuals communicate, enabling them to engage in interpersonal interactions regardless of geographical constraints and temporal limitations. Within digital marketing, sales promotion activities serve as a means for customers to effectively entice a larger audience to purchase items or services offered by a given corporate entity. The promotions in this context facilitate direct connections between sellers and product segments and enable two-way communication (Kusumo Bintaro et al., 2022).

2.4 Case Study On Social Media Marketing

current digital landscape important to incorporate social media marketing into the promotion of Orang Ulu's handicraft products. In addition to increasing visibility, this strategies also encourages interaction with contemporary consumers. From the benefit contribution of previous study that give deeper understanding on social media marketing activities among local entrepreneur definitely motivate them to have a strong social media presence on various platforms for promoting their products across Malaysia and international market. The researcher find the related previous study on Social media Marketing of Handicraft products by Guha et al., (2021) have been conducted a study on The social media marketing strategies and its implementation in promoting handicrafts products: a study with special reference to Eastern India. The study examined Social Media Marketing activities related to handicraft products by four dimensions which is interactivity, informativeness, trendiness, and Word of Mouth. The outcome indicated that all four constructs contribution to the Social Media Marketing activities of handicraft products on a various of social media platforms. Therefore, This study also contributes to the existing literature on Social Media Marketing by establishing a connection between Social Media Marketing activities on handicraft products and branding objectives (Yadav and Rahman's , 2017).

Table1. Orang Ulu's Handicraft Products

Products	Description
1. Beads Accessories	
	Orang ulu beads have certain motifs according to the pattern of the ulu people and become a symbol of luxury, symbolizing the status of the wearer and a treasure for handicraft arts.
Sources: Google Image	
2. Weaving & Basketry	
	Orang Ulu rattan bag, traditionally known as 'Ajat.' Ajat has various types according to the local river flow; some have patterns and no motifs. Usually, the patterns used are inspired by woven mats, which are "fruits and flowers" patterns.
Sources: Sarawak Craft Council Image	
3. Traditional Music	
	Sape is made from wood, usually softwood, such as Meranti wood. Ropes used to be made from the Sago tree but are now replaced with nylon rope. Sape is played in festive ceremonies and regular shows.
Sources: Google Image	

4. **Woven Rattan Mat** Local Name: Bat or Pat



Mats are handicrafts made from woven rattan, bemoan, bamboo or pandan among the Ulu people. Mats refer to rectangular woven rattan. They are usually used for bedding and seating.

Sources: Google Image

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research was conducted using quantitative methods, such as developing questionnaires based on the research objectives and distributing them to 200 respondents via random sampling. The Cronbach's Alpha value for items in the questionnaire overall is 0.7, which is 12, which is good and acceptable. The data were analyzed using SPSS Version 26, using descriptive statistics of percentages and frequency.

4. DATA FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

There are 148 Females (74.0%) and 52 (26.0%) males involved, and most of the 101 (50.5%) are from the Youth group, which is 18 to 25 years old. Then, there was a group aged 36 and above: 69 people (34.5%), 26 years to 36 years old, a total of 30 persons (15.0%), and 36 to 40 years old, a total of 44 persons (11.7%).

Based on the data analyzed, the researchers discussed the highlighted effectiveness and preferences for social media platforms in marketing handicraft products.

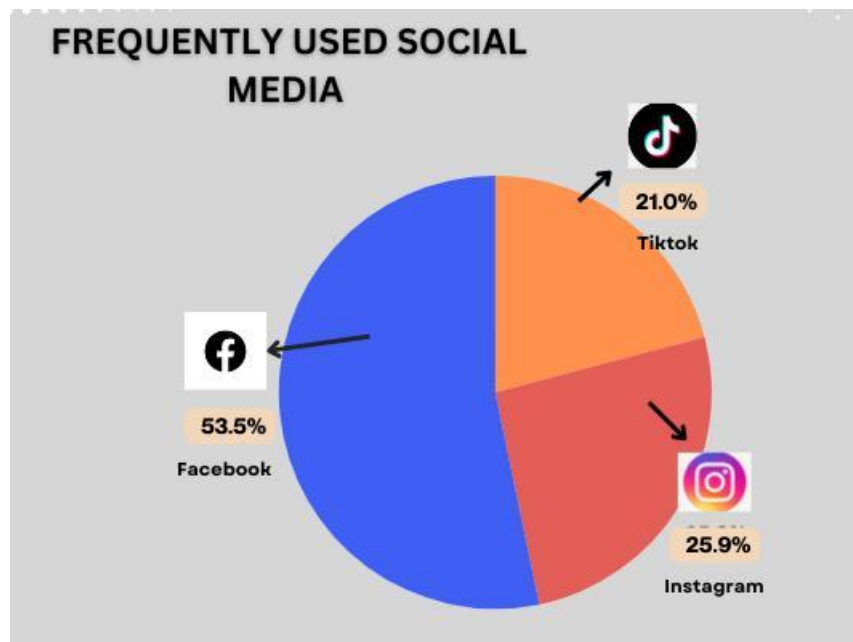


Figure 1. Frequently Used Social Media

Facebook is the most frequently used social media platform among the respondents. 53.5% of the participants reported using Facebook regularly. This indicates a significant preference for Facebook, highlighting its dominance in the social media landscape. Instagram ranks as the second most popular social media platform; 25.9% of the respondents said that they use Instagram frequently. Instagram's visual-centric approach and engagement features make it popular, especially among younger demographics. While TikTok is also a notable platform among users, mainly known for its short-form video content. 21.0% of the participants reported frequent use of TikTok. (Kalinová & Kovaříková, 2023), Businesses identified Instagram as the most commonly used social network, primarily for promoting their company. Following Instagram, companies utilize Facebook to sell products or attract new employees. Social networks were also used as communication channels with employees or customers in business activities.

Factors that encourage customers using social Media



Figure 2. Factors that encourage customer's using social media

Figure 2 shows that the primary reason customers use social media is online mobile facilities, accounting for 47.5% of the responses. Additionally, 28.0% of customers use social media to find information, while entertainment purposes drive 22.5%. This data highlighted the significant role of mobile accessibility and information obtained in social media engagement, with entertainment also an essential factor. (Cutshall et al., 2020), explain that social networking websites play a significant role in marketing by allowing users to share information about products and connect with other users and their interests. For instance, the multifaceted nature of consumer behaviour in social commerce emphasizes the importance of trust, perceived usefulness, social influence, and ease of use in shaping consumers' participation in online shopping activities.

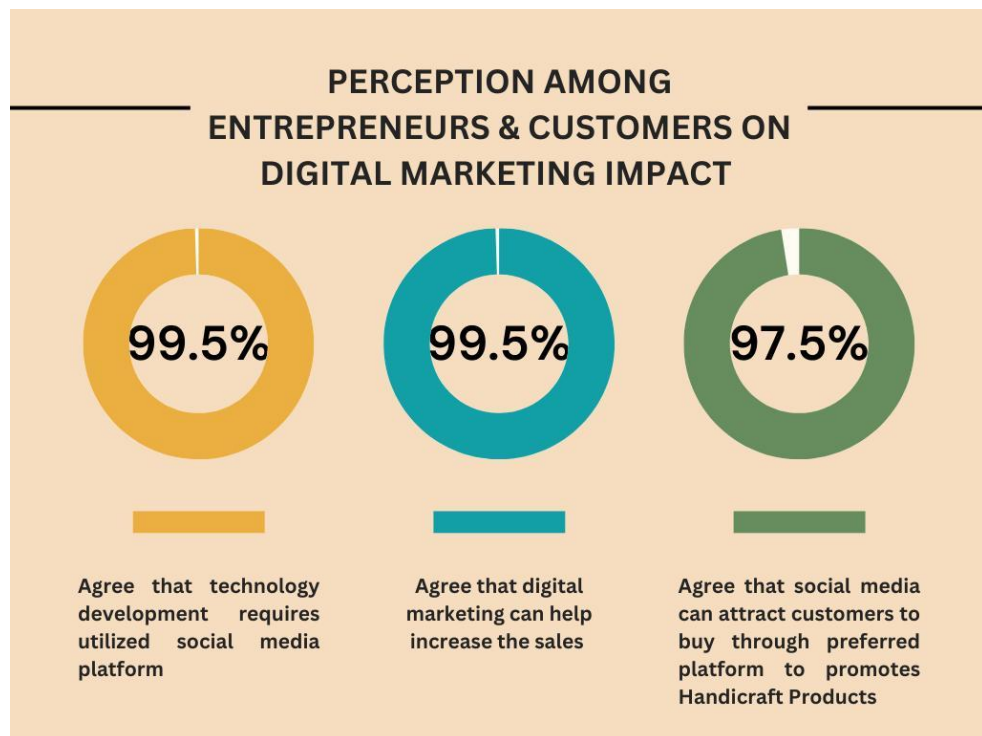


Figure 3. Perceptions among Entrepreneurs & Customers on Digital Marketing Impact

Figure 3 illustrates a high level of agreement among entrepreneurs and customers on three critical perceptions of digital marketing. Nearly all respondents (99.5%) agree that technology development is necessary for using social media platforms. Similarly, 99.5% of the participants agree that digital marketing can significantly enhance sales. A slightly lower percentage, but still a majority (97.5%), agree that social media platforms are effective in attracting customers to buy handicraft products through preferred social media platforms. According to (Conti et al., 2023), digitalization has significantly impacted marketing, increasing productivity and customer engagement, emphasizing the importance of technology and skills for competitiveness.

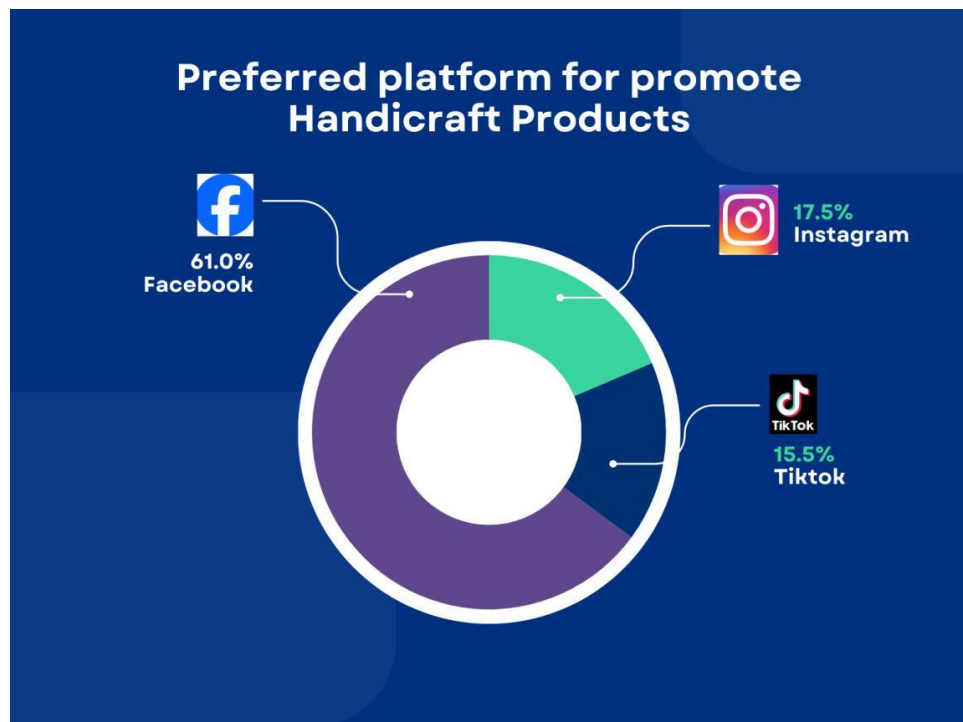


Figure 4. Preferred Platform for Promote handicrafts Products

Figure 4 displays that Facebook is the most frequently used platform, with a significant majority of respondents (61.0%) saying they use it regularly. This shows that Facebook remains the dominant platform for social media engagement, likely due to its wide range of features, user-friendly interface, and extensive network of users. In contrast, Instagram, which is the second most popular platform among the respondents, is used regularly by 17.5% of the participants. With 15.5% of respondents using it frequently, TikTok ranks third in preferred social media platforms. Facebook was identified as a potent platform for carrying out promotional activities, leading to a noticeable boost in product sales, and particularly those implemented on Facebook have the potential to directly reach target audiences efficiently and effectively (Jain, 2021).

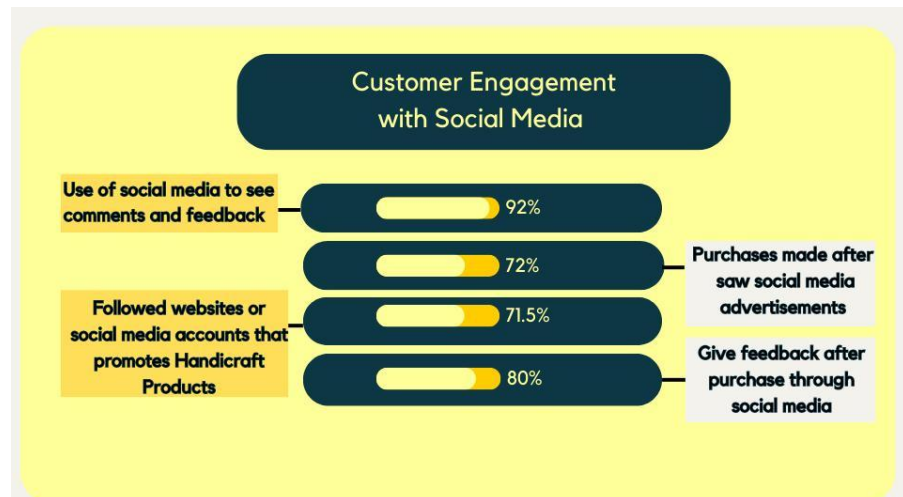


Figure 5. Customer engagement with social media

Figure 5 displays that the use of social media to see comments and feedback is the highest, 92.0% of the significant majority of customers who use social media platforms to view comments and feedback on products or services. Meanwhile, purchases made after seeing social media advertisements represent 80.0% of many customers who are influenced by social media advertisements when making purchases. Followed websites or social media accounts that promote handicraft products 72.0%, and some customers follow specific websites or social media accounts that focus on promoting handicraft products. Giving feedback after purchase through social media represents the lowest at 71.5% in customer engagement in social media. Social media platforms are essential tools for customer engagement, showcasing how customers interact with brands online. Monitoring and analyzing customer engagement on social media enhances marketing strategies, improves brand perception, and builds stronger customer relationships. By understanding and leveraging social media interactions, businesses can tailor their content and communication to understand their target audience better, ultimately bringing up engagement and loyalty (Jayasingh & Venkatesh, 2015).

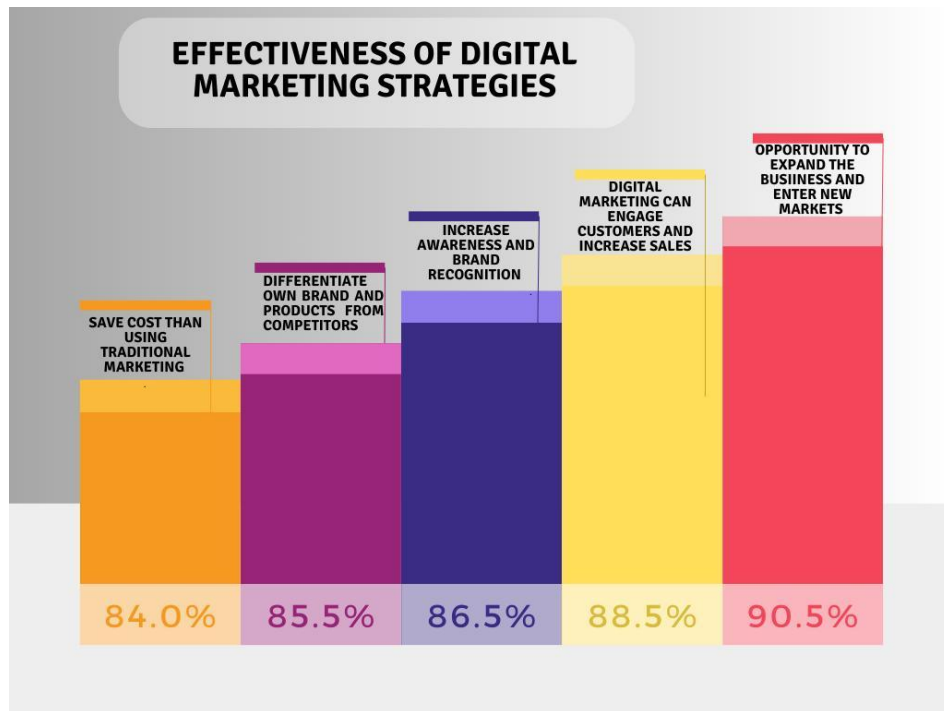


Figure 6. Effectiveness of digital marketing strategies

Figure 6 displays that the opportunity to expand the business and enter new markets records the highest of the respondents agree, which is 90.5%. The second highest is 88.5%, who agree that digital marketing can engage customers and increase sales. Then, 86.5% of respondents agree digital marketing increases awareness and brand recognition. 85.5% agreed that they can differentiate their brands and products from their competitors. Then, The least respondents who are 84.0% of respondents agree with saving costs using traditional marketing. Digital marketing provides unparalleled opportunities for businesses to expand their reach and enter new markets. According to Tiago and Veríssimo (2014), digital marketing allows firms to overcome geographical barriers, making it easier to target global audiences with tailored marketing campaigns. The scalability of digital platforms enables businesses to test new markets with minimal risk and investment, facilitating international expansion and market diversification (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019).

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Social media platforms, particularly Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok, are indispensable for promoting Orang Ulu handicraft products. Entrepreneurs can establish connections with a broad audience that would be challenging to reach through conventional marketing channels due to the broad reach of these platforms. A sense of community and loyalty is fostered by the capacity to engage directly with customers through comments, messages, and posts, which improve customer satisfaction and

relationships. Social media marketing is cost-effective, making it accessible to small businesses and individual artists who may have limited marketing budgets. The strategic significance of digital marketing in fostering business growth and establishing a competitive advantage was shown by the high engagement rates on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok. Leveraging these platforms is essential for the success of Orang Ulu handicraft businesses, as most individuals in numerous regions have social media accounts and are active on various social media platforms. The essential influence of digital marketing social media on promoting Orang Ulu's handicraft products. Social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok are crucial for enhancing visibility, engaging consumers, and broadening the market reach. The data-driven approach improves entrepreneurs' overall effectiveness, helping them customize marketing strategies better to meet the requirements and desires of their target audience.

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