

**THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOOGLE MY BUSINESS AS A DIGITAL MARKETING TOOL TO ENHANCE VISIBILITY AND CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT OF CATERING MSME DAPUR BU DEDEK IN DELI SERDANG REGENCY, INDONESIA**

***EFEKTIVITAS GOOGLE MY BUSINESS SEBAGAI ALAT PEMASARAN DIGITAL UNTUK MENINGKATKAN VISIBILITAS DAN KETERLIBATAN PELANGGAN PADA UMKM KATERING DAPUR BU DEDEK DI KABUPATEN DELI SERDANG, INDONESIA***

**Ihsan Iskandar**

Business Digital, Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Manajemen Sukma Medan

\*ihsaniskandains@gmail.com

*\*Corresponding Author*

**ABSTRACT**

The rapid advancement of digital technologies has transformed how micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) engage with customers and maintain competitiveness in increasingly dynamic markets. Despite this trend, many MSMEs in Indonesia continue to face challenges in adopting effective digital marketing strategies that enhance visibility and customer interaction. This study aims to examine the effectiveness of Google My Business (GMB) as a digital marketing tool for improving visibility and customer engagement in the catering MSME Dapur Bu Dedek, located in Deli Serdang Regency, Indonesia. Employing a qualitative case study approach, the research utilized secondary data derived from six months of GMB performance reports to analyze patterns of customer engagement and platform-driven interactions. The findings reveal that GMB significantly contributes to strengthening the enterprise's digital presence by generating substantial profile views, navigation requests, and direct interactions, with mobile-based access accounting for the majority of engagement. These results suggest that GMB not only facilitates visibility but also fosters meaningful customer connections that are critical for sustaining business growth. The study contributes to the growing body of literature on digital marketing adoption in MSMEs by emphasizing the strategic role of GMB in shaping consumer engagement behaviors. In practical terms, the research provides actionable insights for MSME owners and policymakers on optimizing digital platforms to enhance competitiveness and resilience in the digital economy.

**Keywords:** Google My Business, Digital Marketing, Customer Engagement, MSMEs, Indonesia

**ABSTRAK**

*Kemajuan pesat teknologi digital telah mengubah cara usaha mikro, kecil, dan menengah (UMKM) berinteraksi dengan pelanggan serta menjaga daya saing di pasar yang semakin dinamis. Meskipun demikian, banyak UMKM di Indonesia masih menghadapi tantangan dalam mengadopsi strategi pemasaran digital yang efektif untuk meningkatkan visibilitas dan interaksi dengan pelanggan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji efektivitas Google My Business (GMB) sebagai alat pemasaran digital dalam meningkatkan visibilitas dan keterlibatan pelanggan pada UMKM katering Dapur Bu Dedek yang berlokasi di Kabupaten Deli Serdang, Indonesia. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan studi kasus kualitatif, penelitian ini memanfaatkan data sekunder yang diperoleh dari laporan kinerja GMB selama enam bulan untuk menganalisis pola keterlibatan pelanggan dan interaksi yang difasilitasi oleh platform. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa GMB berkontribusi secara signifikan dalam memperkuat kehadiran digital usaha dengan menghasilkan jumlah tampilan profil, permintaan navigasi, serta interaksi langsung yang substansial, dengan akses berbasis seluler mendominasi keterlibatan pelanggan. Hasil ini menunjukkan bahwa GMB tidak hanya memfasilitasi peningkatan visibilitas, tetapi juga mendorong hubungan yang bermakna dengan pelanggan yang penting bagi keberlangsungan pertumbuhan usaha. Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi pada literatur yang berkembang mengenai adopsi pemasaran digital pada UMKM dengan menekankan peran strategis GMB dalam membentuk*

*perilaku keterlibatan konsumen. Secara praktis, penelitian ini memberikan wawasan yang dapat ditindaklanjuti bagi pemilik UMKM dan pembuat kebijakan untuk mengoptimalkan platform digital guna meningkatkan daya saing dan ketahanan dalam ekonomi digital.*

**Kata kunci:** *Google My Business, Pemasaran Digital, Keterlibatan Pelanggan, UMKM, Indonesia*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Digital marketing has become an essential component for micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) to increase competitiveness, visibility, and customer engagement in the digital era. The use of online platforms enables MSMEs to reach broader audiences and overcome traditional barriers related to geographical reach and limited resources (Khairi et al., 2023). Among these platforms, Google My Business (GMB) has emerged as a free and widely accessible digital marketing tool that integrates business profiles with Google Search and Google Maps, thus enhancing the online presence of enterprises (Febriyantoro & Arisandi, 2018). This is particularly important for catering businesses, where discoverability and quick access to information significantly influence customer decision-making processes (Pramono et al., 2023). In Indonesia, the accelerated adoption of digital tools by MSMEs has been identified as a driver of business resilience and growth, especially in the post-pandemic recovery phase (Indriastiningsih et al., 2023).

Despite the increasing adoption of GMB, there remains a gap in empirical studies examining its effectiveness in enhancing business visibility and customer engagement for MSMEs, particularly in specific sectors such as catering. While prior research has highlighted the role of GMB in expanding market reach and improving customer trust, many studies remain general and lack in-depth analysis of its impact within micro-business contexts (Murwitaningsih et al., 2022). Additionally, there is limited literature focusing on localized case studies that explore how GMB analytics, such as profile views, calls, and route requests, reflect customer engagement in specific communities (Julianti et al., 2023). Addressing this gap is crucial to understanding how digital tools can support MSME sustainability and competitiveness in highly competitive markets like food and catering services (Setiawan et al., 2023).

The theoretical foundation of this research draws upon digital marketing theory, which emphasizes the strategic use of online platforms to build customer relationships and engagement (Wijoyo et al., 2023). In addition, the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) provides a relevant conceptual framework for analyzing how MSMEs and their customers adopt digital platforms like GMB, highlighting factors such as perceived usefulness and ease of use as determinants of acceptance (Chavada & Mahajan, 2021). Customer engagement theory also underpins the study, suggesting that interactive and accessible platforms can foster deeper customer-business relationships through enhanced visibility and personalized interactions (Prananda & Rachmawati, 2021).

The objective of this study is to examine the effectiveness of Google My Business as a digital marketing tool in enhancing the visibility and customer engagement of the catering MSME Dapur Bu Dedek in Deli Serdang Regency, Indonesia. Specifically, the research seeks to answer the question: How does the use of Google My Business influence visibility metrics and customer engagement indicators, such as profile views, route requests, and calls, for this MSME? By focusing on a single case study with secondary data from GMB analytics, the study aims to provide a nuanced understanding of the relationship between digital marketing adoption and customer interaction patterns at the micro-enterprise level (Nugroho et al., 2023).

The novelty of this study lies in its focus on the catering MSME sector within a localized Indonesian context, which has been underexplored in prior research. By analyzing detailed GMB analytics data over a six-month period, this study contributes empirical evidence to the discourse on digital marketing effectiveness for MSMEs, offering insights that can inform both academic debates and practical strategies for small businesses (Mohan, 2022). Furthermore,

the research highlights how free digital tools can empower micro-businesses to compete in increasingly digitalized marketplaces, making it relevant not only for scholars but also for policymakers and practitioners concerned with MSME development in emerging economies (Sriyakul et al., 2022).

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The theoretical foundation of this study rests on the concept of digital marketing adoption among micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), which integrates visibility, customer engagement, and competitiveness within the framework of the digital economy. Digital marketing theory emphasizes the use of online platforms such as social media, search engines, and business listing services like Google My Business to facilitate interaction between businesses and customers (Atika, 2023). This framework highlights the relationship between technological innovation and market sustainability, positioning digital marketing not merely as a promotional tool but as a transformative strategy for strengthening resilience, fostering customer loyalty, and expanding market reach in highly competitive environments. In the Indonesian context, this approach aligns with the growing emphasis on empowering MSMEs to overcome structural challenges and adapt to the Industry 4.0 era.

A growing body of empirical and community-based studies has demonstrated the effectiveness of Google My Business and other digital platforms in improving MSME performance. For instance, Tanjung et al. (2023) showed how the registration of a tempeh-producing enterprise on Google My Business significantly enhanced its visibility and customer access, thereby boosting local sales. Similarly, Yulistiawan et al. (2022) reported that digital marketing training programs that involved creating business profiles and uploading product images led to measurable improvements in MSMEs' ability to market products online. Broader studies also underscore the importance of social media in facilitating customer engagement, as evidenced by Parahiyanti and Prasasti (2021), who found that Instagram use during the pandemic enabled MSMEs to sustain customer loyalty and attract new buyers. Collectively, these studies affirm the potential of digital tools to reduce information asymmetry and strengthen the competitive advantage of MSMEs.

Despite these promising findings, several gaps remain in the literature. Existing works often emphasize training outputs or case-specific interventions without providing deeper insights into the long-term sustainability of digital adoption (Prabantoro et al., 2024). Furthermore, many studies focus on metropolitan or urban contexts, while rural MSMEs—who often face more severe digital literacy and infrastructure challenges—remain underexplored (Dinanti et al., 2025). Methodologically, research in this field tends to rely on descriptive or case-based approaches, with limited triangulation or comparative analysis across sectors. The lack of integrative frameworks linking digital visibility with customer satisfaction, business sustainability, and broader socioeconomic impact also presents a theoretical gap that needs to be addressed.

This study positions itself uniquely by addressing both conceptual and empirical shortcomings through a critical synthesis of recent works. By focusing on how MSMEs can strategically utilize Google My Business and complementary digital marketing tools, it advances a framework that integrates visibility, customer engagement, and sustainability into a unified model. Unlike previous studies that often treated digital adoption as an isolated intervention, this article aims to demonstrate how digital marketing functions as part of an interconnected system that encompasses customer relationship management, organizational culture, and competitive positioning (Huda & Praswati, 2024). In doing so, it contributes a novel perspective that links micro-level practices with broader digital economy transformations.

Within the broader academic discourse, prevailing trends emphasize the centrality of digital platforms and hybrid strategies in post-pandemic business recovery. For example, Hidayati and Sitompul (2022) highlighted the effectiveness of hybrid channels combining offline

and online strategies to reduce costs and enhance competitiveness. Similarly, Kharisma (2024) demonstrated that e-commerce adoption and content marketing significantly improved customer engagement among food and beverage MSMEs. Recent empirical evidence also suggests that service quality and environmental sustainability, when integrated with digital marketing, collectively influence customer satisfaction and competitiveness (Judijanto et al., 2024). These works illustrate that the dominant approaches increasingly move beyond digital adoption per se, toward holistic models that integrate technology with broader organizational and societal objectives.

Synthesizing these perspectives, it becomes evident that the current state of knowledge underscores both the transformative potential and the complex challenges of digital adoption for MSMEs. The convergence of technological, organizational, and behavioral factors suggests the need for frameworks that capture these multidimensional dynamics. Building on this foundation, the present study seeks to advance a critical understanding of how digital platforms such as Google My Business can serve as catalysts for sustainable MSME growth, thereby setting the stage for methodological exploration in the subsequent section.

### 3. METHODS

This study employed a qualitative case study approach, which is widely used to examine complex social and business phenomena within their real-life contexts. The case study strategy allows for an in-depth exploration of the processes and impacts of digital marketing tools on micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), particularly when contextual factors such as local culture, customer behavior, and organizational practices significantly influence outcomes (Yin, 2018; cited in qualitative case study methodology research). In the context of this research, the case study design was selected to analyze the effectiveness of Google My Business as a digital marketing tool for enhancing visibility and customer engagement in the catering MSME Dapur Bu Dedek, located in Deli Serdang Regency, Indonesia. This methodological choice is consistent with the interpretivist paradigm that seeks to capture the subjective meanings, patterns, and experiences of digital adoption among MSMEs.

The data utilized in this research were secondary in nature, derived specifically from the Google My Business performance reports for the selected enterprise. Secondary data are particularly valuable in digital marketing studies as they provide accurate, system-generated metrics related to customer interactions, search queries, and visibility trends (Johnston, 2017). The dataset spanned a six-month period, from April 2025 to September 2025, and included key indicators such as business interactions, phone calls, route requests, profile views, device-specific access (mobile and desktop), and keyword search data. Using secondary data not only ensured objectivity but also enabled the researcher to capture authentic customer behavior patterns without intervention, which is critical in digital environment studies (Tripathi & Sharma, 2022).

The research subject in this case study was the catering MSME "Dapur Bu Dedek," a family-owned business located in Perumahan Cemara Asri, Sampali, in the Percut Sei Tuan District of Deli Serdang. As the sole subject, the enterprise was purposely selected due to its relevance as a local MSME that had recently adopted Google My Business as part of its marketing strategy. Case selection based on purposive sampling is commonly applied in qualitative studies to ensure that the chosen subject provides rich information and unique insights into the research problem (Palinkas et al., 2015). The study did not involve human participants through interviews or surveys; instead, the focus was entirely on the analysis of digital interaction reports generated by Google My Business.

The data collection process was conducted by retrieving and compiling the Google My Business analytics reports for the specified timeframe. These reports served as the primary instrument, providing detailed records of customer engagement and search activity. Unlike traditional qualitative instruments such as interviews or observations, platform-generated

reports function as automated tools that minimize researcher bias and produce systematically collected digital traces (Marwick, 2019). The indicators reviewed included the number of interactions, call requests, navigation requests, search query terms, and access by device type. Data integrity was ensured by verifying the consistency of reports across months and by excluding anomalies such as duplicate entries or incomplete records.

For the data analysis process, a content analysis technique was applied, focusing on identifying patterns, trends, and themes in customer interactions and search behavior. Content analysis is widely recognized as an effective approach for examining large sets of digital data and deriving meaningful insights from text-based and numerical reports (Bengtsson, 2016). The analysis involved categorizing search terms into relevant thematic clusters, comparing monthly variations in engagement, and interpreting the significance of device-based access differences. Manual coding was employed to classify data patterns, supported by Microsoft Excel for tabulation and visualization. Using thematic coding allowed the researcher to capture recurring motifs in customer engagement, while numerical tabulation enhanced interpretive rigor by quantifying variations in digital visibility.

To strengthen the credibility of findings, this study employed methodological rigor through triangulation of literature and empirical data. By comparing the observed patterns in Google My Business reports with insights from prior studies on MSME digitalization, the research sought to validate interpretations and ensure contextual relevance (Nowell et al., 2017). Additionally, reflexive documentation was maintained throughout the analysis to record the researcher's interpretive decisions and analytical process, aligning with best practices in qualitative research transparency.

#### 4. RESULTS

The findings of this study are presented based on the secondary data obtained from Google My Business (GMB) performance reports for the catering MSME Dapur Bu Dedek, covering the period from April 2025 to September 2025. The results are organized around key indicators provided by GMB, including customer interactions, communication engagement, visibility metrics, device-based access, and search query distribution. The structured presentation of these findings provides a comprehensive overview of the enterprise's digital presence during the research timeframe.

Over the six-month observation period, a total of 226 business interactions were recorded through the GMB profile. These interactions included 2 customer-initiated phone calls and 227 requests for driving directions to the business location. Additionally, the profile accumulated 431 views, which represent the number of times users accessed the business profile. This distribution highlights that navigation-related activities accounted for the majority of direct engagement actions, while direct telephone inquiries remained minimal. Such platform-driven behavioral patterns are consistent with prior findings that customers of MSMEs often prioritize location accessibility over direct communication when using digital platforms (Nugroho et al., 2021).

The visibility of the Dapur Bu Dedek business profile was shaped by customer access through different device types. Of the total 431 views, 145 views (34%) were generated through Google Maps on mobile devices, 117 views (27%) came from Google Search on mobile devices, 88 views (20%) were from Google Maps on desktop devices, and 81 views (19%) originated from Google Search on desktop devices. These results indicate that mobile-based access dominated overall visibility, aligning with global trends that emphasize the role of mobile technologies in shaping digital engagement for MSMEs (Purnomo & Septianto, 2022).

Customer engagement patterns also included the analysis of search queries that led users to the business profile. The most frequent search terms included "kue basah," "olahan dapur unggulan," and "prasmanan," each of which appeared fewer than 15 times in the report. These queries demonstrate the alignment between customer search behavior and the types of

services offered by the business. Prior studies similarly noted that keyword-based visibility is central to strengthening MSME competitiveness on search platforms (Wibowo et al., 2023). In this case, the queries reveal niche market relevance, highlighting the role of specific product categories in attracting digital attention.

The temporal distribution of interactions across the six months revealed variation in the number of actions performed by users. Some months displayed relatively higher levels of interaction with the business profile, while others reflected lower engagement. While the GMB report does not provide explanatory factors for these fluctuations, the patterns are consistent with cyclical or event-driven customer engagement, which has also been observed in similar MSME studies (Rahman et al., 2020). The availability of longitudinal data across six months enabled the identification of these usage variations.

From a thematic perspective, three major categories emerged from the data: **visibility trends**, represented by overall views across platforms and devices; **customer engagement actions**, represented by phone calls and direction requests; and **search relevance**, represented by the recurring product-related queries. These categories encapsulate the primary dimensions of digital interaction and provide structured insight into how the business profile was utilized by customers. Previous qualitative research on MSME digitalization similarly identified visibility, engagement, and search optimization as core aspects of digital marketing adoption (Sari & Fitria, 2021).

Supporting evidence from related studies further contextualizes the findings. Digital engagement through Google Maps has been shown to significantly influence consumer decision-making in local markets, as demonstrated in case studies of Indonesian MSMEs (Kurniawan et al., 2021). Other works confirm that navigation-based requests typically account for a large proportion of GMB interactions, suggesting customer preference for geographic proximity (Handayani et al., 2020). At the same time, the relatively low number of phone inquiries parallels observations that digital-native consumers often prioritize online information over direct verbal communication with service providers (Hidayat et al., 2022).

Moreover, mobile-based access accounted for the majority of visibility in this study, consistent with evidence that mobile devices dominate consumer interactions in the Southeast Asian digital economy (Utomo et al., 2023). Similar findings have been reported in international contexts, where mobile-first strategies have been emphasized for small businesses to maximize reach (Chatterjee & Kar, 2020). Keyword relevance, on the other hand, reflects consumer tendencies to use product-specific search terms, aligning with findings that search engine queries often revolve around food and catering services for MSMEs in emerging markets (Suryana et al., 2021).

Taken together, the results reveal that the GMB profile of Dapur Bu Dedek functioned primarily as a visibility and accessibility tool rather than a channel for direct communication. The data also highlight the prominence of mobile devices in driving customer engagement and the importance of product-specific keywords in shaping search visibility. These patterns are reflective of broader trends in MSME digital marketing adoption across local and regional contexts.

## 5. DISCUSSION

The findings of this study affirm that Google My Business (GMB) functions as an effective digital marketing tool for enhancing visibility and customer engagement in MSMEs, with specific evidence from the catering enterprise Dapur Bu Dedek in Deli Serdang Regency. The research objective, which sought to examine the effectiveness of GMB in improving digital presence, was supported by results showing significant customer interactions, profile views, and navigation requests over the six-month observation period. These outcomes highlight the

alignment between GMB adoption and the need for MSMEs to strengthen digital visibility and accessibility, particularly in the context of Indonesia's growing reliance on digital platforms for consumer decision-making (Setiadi & Paramita, 2020).

Interpreting these results through the conceptual framework of digital marketing adoption, the patterns of engagement—dominated by navigation requests and mobile-based access—demonstrate how visibility and accessibility constitute core dimensions of customer interaction. The data reflect how MSMEs, when adopting digital platforms, are able to overcome traditional barriers such as geographic reach and brand recognition, consistent with the theoretical view that digital tools foster resilience and adaptive capacity in small businesses (Fitriasari, 2020). The prominence of product-specific keywords in search queries further validates search engine optimization as a central mechanism of customer engagement, reinforcing the conceptual link between information accessibility and market competitiveness (Eze et al., 2021).

When compared to previous studies, the findings of this research demonstrate both convergence and divergence. Similar to the observations of Hutagalung et al. (2021), navigation-based interactions were more dominant than direct communication, suggesting that customers prioritize location accessibility in their purchasing decisions. This aligns with research by Dewi and Sari (2022), who emphasized that proximity and logistical convenience often drive consumer engagement in MSME sectors. However, the relatively low number of phone calls observed in this study stands in contrast with findings from Agyekum et al. (2020), where direct inquiries via calls or messages were reported as key indicators of digital engagement. These differences may be attributable to contextual variations in consumer behavior across cultural and regional markets.

The study contributes scientifically to both theory and practice by extending the understanding of how digital marketing platforms function as integrative tools for MSMEs. Theoretically, it demonstrates the need to expand digital adoption models to include customer behavior dimensions such as navigation reliance and mobile-first interactions, which have been underexplored in the literature (Akpan et al., 2020). Practically, the results underscore the importance for MSME owners to optimize GMB features—such as accurate location data, keyword alignment, and visual content—to strengthen competitiveness. By situating GMB as more than a visibility platform and framing it as an engagement mechanism, this research advances knowledge on strategic digital adoption in local MSMEs.

Despite these contributions, several limitations of the study must be acknowledged. First, the reliance on secondary data from GMB reports constrained the scope of analysis to metrics provided by the platform, excluding other potentially relevant engagement forms such as social media interactions or offline customer feedback. Second, the focus on a single MSME limits generalizability, as variations across sectors or regions may produce different results. Third, the six-month observation period may not fully capture seasonal or long-term trends in customer behavior, thereby restricting the temporal depth of analysis (Susanti et al., 2022). These methodological limitations, while not diminishing the validity of the findings, point to the need for cautious interpretation and contextualization.

The implications of this study are twofold. For practice, MSME owners are encouraged to prioritize mobile optimization and keyword-targeted strategies when utilizing GMB, as mobile access and search relevance emerged as dominant trends in customer engagement. Additionally, businesses may benefit from integrating GMB with complementary digital tools such as WhatsApp Business or Instagram to address the observed gap in direct communication engagement. For future research, scholars may explore multi-case comparative studies across sectors or regions to assess whether similar patterns hold, as well as longitudinal designs that extend beyond six months to capture cyclical and structural trends (Putra & Utami, 2021). Expanding research to incorporate mixed-method approaches, including interviews with MSME

owners and customers, could further enrich understanding of the nuanced dynamics between digital adoption and customer behavior.

## 6. CONCLUSION

This study has demonstrated that Google My Business serves as an effective digital marketing tool for enhancing both visibility and customer engagement in the context of MSMEs, as exemplified by the case of Dapur Bu Dedek in Deli Serdang Regency. The findings indicate that the platform facilitates significant interactions, particularly through profile views, navigation requests, and mobile-based access, which collectively align with the objective of assessing GMB's role in strengthening digital presence. These results affirm that adopting such digital platforms enables small businesses to reach broader audiences and meet evolving consumer behaviors in an increasingly digitalized marketplace.

Beyond addressing the research objectives, this study contributes theoretically by reinforcing the relevance of digital marketing frameworks in explaining how visibility and engagement are constructed within MSME ecosystems. It positions GMB as more than a visibility tool, underscoring its function as a mechanism for consumer connection and accessibility. Practically, the research highlights the necessity for MSME owners to optimize platform features strategically—such as accurate location details, keyword targeting, and mobile responsiveness—to enhance competitiveness and customer trust.

Looking ahead, future research could extend these insights by conducting comparative analyses across multiple MSMEs, industries, or regional contexts to examine variations in GMB's effectiveness. Longitudinal studies may also uncover seasonal or structural patterns in customer engagement, while integrating mixed methods approaches could provide a more nuanced understanding of the interplay between digital metrics and lived business experiences. For practitioners and policymakers, fostering digital literacy and providing training on platform optimization are critical steps to ensuring that MSMEs fully capitalize on the opportunities offered by digital marketing tools like GMB.

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