

EMPOWERING ENTREPRENEURS WITH DISABILITIES BY ENHANCING DIGITAL MARKETING SKILLS THROUGH E- MARKETPLACE DESIGN AND CONTENT MARKETING TRAINING

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ABSTRACT

The empowerment of entrepreneurs with disabilities is frequently hindered by physical mobility constraints and limited marketing literacy. This community service initiative aimed to build the digital marketing skills of the VirageAwie community in Cimareme Village, West Bandung. The program involved 50 participants (20 individuals with disabilities and 30 non-disabled members) focusing on their bamboo speaker innovation known as "Awietronix". We utilized a Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach carried out across four cycles, using pre-test and post-test instruments to measure cognitive progress. Based on the results, there was a substantial growth in digital marketing literacy. The average cognitive score of the disabled participants rose sharply from 46.9 to 82.8. Practically speaking, the hands-on training in setting up a Shopee storefront and creating video content created a direct operational impact. It successfully ended a production standstill of zero units, driving the output up to 93 units by October. This digital transition also led to massive financial benefits, recording a total revenue of IDR 42,000,000 over a four-month period. To conclude, combining e-commerce platforms with visual content marketing is an effective way to overcome physical barriers, expand digital literacy, and establish an inclusive economic independence model for entrepreneurs with disabilities.

Keywords: disabilities entrepreneurs; content marketing; e-commerce; participatory action research

INTRODUCTION

Empowering Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) represents a primary pathway to realizing the entrepreneurial aspirations outlined in President Prabowo Subianto's Asta Cita vision (Korniawan, 2024; Prasetyo et al., 2025). The success of this empowerment relies heavily on marketing capabilities to identify and fulfill market demands, which

in a conventional landscape typically rests on the marketing mix (Kotler et al., 2022). Although the traditional model can influence customer loyalty (Danapriatna et al., 2024), micro-entrepreneurs with disabilities still struggle to expand their market and increase sales due to mobility barriers, lack of information access, and limited strategic knowledge regarding

physical distribution chains (Rosen & Selengia, 2019).

The emergence of digital marketing offers a transformative solution to these physical and mobility limitations, allowing entrepreneurs with disabilities to scale their businesses without relying on conventional distribution channels (Downey, 2025). In practice, this transition shifts the "Place" element (distribution channel) in the marketing mix into e-marketplaces, breaking geographical barriers by providing both a virtual storefront and a transaction center (Turban et al., 2018; Paranoan et al., 2022). The potential of utilizing this channel is highly promising for micro-entrepreneurs, considering that 2025 data from the Association of Indonesian Internet Service Providers (APJII) indicates that e-marketplaces like Shopee continue to dominate as the primary online shopping platforms for Indonesians (Widodo, 2025).

However, the massive market potential of these digital marketplaces has not been fully utilized by disability groups. This phenomenon is evident in VirageAwie, a community of entrepreneurs with disabilities located in Cimareme Village, West Bandung Regency. Even though this community has successfully innovated by processing

local bamboo resources into a high-value active speaker product named "Awietronix" (Jaya et al., 2026), this innovative creation still struggles to reach a broader market due to low brand awareness and limited marketing strategies.

To maximize these opportunities amid rapid digital infrastructure growth, mastering virtual store design integrated with content marketing strategies serves as an effective solution for entrepreneurs with disabilities to overcome technological lag and regain competitiveness. Aligning with findings that digital content creation strategies by individuals with disabilities are effective in breaking physical boundaries to educate the public and reduce stigma, mastering content marketing becomes a crucial instrument for these entrepreneurs to compellingly communicate their product value in online marketplaces (Kisyono & Fiaji, 2023).

Based on this urgency, the current study focuses on providing digital marketing mentorship for entrepreneurs with disabilities in VirageAwie. Despite having commercially viable products, the community's potential is actively hindered by a lack of digital marketing literacy. Therefore, this study designs a "Marketplace Design and Content

Marketing Training" program while simultaneously evaluating its effectiveness in enhancing participants' competencies. Through empirical evaluation of both cognitive and practical aspects, this research aims to validate that digital capacity building is a crucial foundation toward market expansion and economic independence for entrepreneurs with disabilities.

IMPLEMENTATION METHOD

The methodology applied in this community service initiative is Participatory Action Research (PAR), an approach that integrates in-depth observation with direct involvement in activities (De Oliveira, 2023; Sugiyono, 2021). The adoption of the PAR method is based on its proven effectiveness in studies emphasizing capacity-building elements. The efficacy of this approach is supported by Matos et al. (2023) regarding the integration of evidence-based practices in complex operational environments. Furthermore, Tremblay-Wragg et al. (2025) identified PAR as a valuable paradigm for transforming practical skills and producing measurable improvements in participants' digital literacy and collaboration through intensive mentorship. Nevertheless, this methodology is constrained by the limited

duration of its observation phase Rossi et al. (2025), making it more suitable for finite, project-based applications rather than continuous policy refinement. This durational constraint can be appropriately addressed by implementing a pre-test and post-test assessment structure, which facilitates a faster, empirical, and objective method for measuring outcomes in a training context Yigletu et al. (2023).

Program implementation for the VirageAwie disabled entrepreneurs' community in Cimoreme Village was carried out through four continuous cyclical stages. These stages began with the planning phase (Plan), initiated by a needs assessment via field observations and structured discussions with community members to map out the barriers and marketing potentials of the "Awietronix" bamboo speaker innovation. Next, the action phase (Act) was realized through the execution of the Marketplace Design and Content Marketing Training. The third phase was observation (Observe), which systematically documented participation dynamics, enthusiasm, and the participants' technology adoption process during the activities. The cycle concluded with the reflection phase (Reflect), involving a collaborative evaluation of the achieved outcomes, where the research specifically

evaluated the success of the participants' skill adoption in mastering digital marketing as the primary analytical metric. Within this reflection phase, the

study also evaluated the cognitive effectiveness of the organized training program.

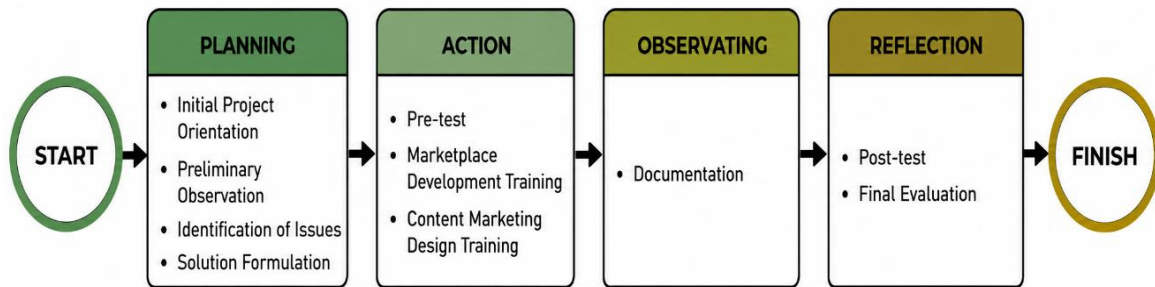


Figure 1. Implementation Flow of the Marketplace Design and Content Marketing Training Program.

Rather than relying on theoretical testing, the success evaluation of this program was measured directly through performance and practical outputs generated by participants during the mentorship. The assessment focused on two main domains of program implementation: marketplace design capabilities (technical success in registering accounts, managing digital storefronts, and designing virtual store layouts for Awietronix products) and content marketing practices (skills in producing inclusive visual materials and composing promotional narratives to increase brand awareness). The assessment was conducted participatively by directly observing the participants' capabilities in transforming conceptual knowledge into concrete practices within the e-commerce ecosystem. The

achievement of these technical outputs served as the primary indicator of the program's success in validating the capacity building and digital independence of entrepreneurs with disabilities.

To quantitatively measure cognitive shifts, a pre-test was administered prior to the mentorship to determine the participants' baseline knowledge regarding fundamental marketplace concepts and content marketing design. A post-test was subsequently conducted after the training to measure cognitive knowledge acquisition. Both assessments utilized a multiple-choice questionnaire format consisting of demographic questions and cognitive questions mapped directly to the targeted digital training materials. This assessment reflects established protocols in capacity-building

research. For instance, Prasetyo & Nugroho (2022) successfully applied cognitive questionnaires following a catfish floss production training, while Handayani et al. (2024) utilized an identical pre-test and post-test methodology to evaluate an arrowroot product development program.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Planning Phase

Following the initial preparation period, this community service program was implemented in Cimareme Village, Ngamprah Subdistrict, West Bandung Regency (with the partner's address at Jl. Raya Cimareme, Cimareme Village, Ngamprah Subdistrict, West Bandung Regency, West Java). The entire series of activities was comprehensively executed from July to December 2025. Demographic data from the 50 program participants indicated a cohort aged 18–45 years. Specifically, this group comprised the main target population: 20 members of the Virageawie community who are individuals with disabilities (including physical, intellectual, and hearing impairments), supported by 30 non-disabled individuals. The participant profile strongly aligns with the program's focus on inclusive empowerment. The selection of this location and the specific

group involvement were primarily based on the area's abundant natural bamboo resources and the active engagement of the disabled community in producing crafts through the Virageawie group.

Action and Observation Phase

The material presentation was divided into two main stages. The first session, lasting 15 minutes and guided by Ridho Riadi Akbar, S.E., MBA., a digital marketing practitioner, focused on building a foundational understanding of Indonesia's marketplace landscape. During this session, the speaker reviewed general marketplace concepts, introduced the Shopee platform specifically, and explained its various advantages. The process of creating a virtual store on Shopee begins with registering a basic user account, accessible via the mobile application or the official website. The initial step requires prospective sellers to register using an active phone number, email address, or third-party account integration, followed by an authentication stage using a One-Time Password (OTP) to validate account security. Once the buyer account is successfully registered, users must activate the merchant feature by navigating to the "Me" menu and clicking the "Start Selling" option on the app, or by accessing the Shopee Seller

Centre portal via a desktop web browser for a more comprehensive interface. In this initiation phase, sellers are required to configure the basic store profile, which involves determining a representative store name, uploading visual identity assets such as a logo, and drafting a store description containing operational information and business commodities. To legitimize store operations and facilitate fund withdrawals, sellers must verify their identity by uploading a National Identity Card (KTP) and linking the official bank account details of the business operator.

After establishing the basic store infrastructure, the operational stage continued with logistics configuration and product inventory digitization. Sellers first had to configure shipping options by selecting courier partners integrated within the Shopee ecosystem, while accurately setting the point of origin for goods delivery (pick-up/drop-off point). Entering the product listing stage, sellers were directed to the "Add New Product" menu to upload visual assets in the form of high-resolution photos or supporting videos. Optimizing the digital storefront demands comprehensive filling of product attributes; this includes formulating SEO-friendly product names based on search keywords, determining specific

categories, setting selling prices, drafting detailed descriptions (specifications, advantages, and materials), and configuring product variations such as size or color. This listing process concludes by entering available stock quantity data and individual logistical details (package weight and dimensions) to activate the automated shipping cost calculation system, before the seller finally clicks the "Save & Publish" button, signifying that the virtual store is actively expanding and ready to process consumer transactions.



Figure 2. The Speaker (Ridho Riadi Akbar, S.E., MBA.) Explaining Marketplace Creation and Content Marketing Design Techniques.

Subsequently, the second session was allocated as an applicative stage featuring a 15-minute guide and training on content marketing design for social media needs, also led by Ridho Riadi Akbar, S.E., MBA. In this training, the initial design steps emphasized establishing the video's conceptual foundation, where each piece of content must strategically contain a

message, a purpose, and a story to build an emotional connection with the target audience. Recognizing that promotional videos offer broader space to educate customers about complex products, participants were guided to understand basic technical specifications such as frame rate (fps); a higher fps value generates smoother visual movement illusions. Furthermore, this stage required content creators to integrate five essential factors into every shot: the human factor as an integral element, the spatial factor (using natural or non-natural backgrounds like green screens), the time factor, the dramatic event factor, and the sound factor to support visual completeness.

Once the conceptual elements and visual factors were organized, the next systematic step focused on technical cinematography execution to direct the viewers' psychological perception. Participants were trained to specifically determine shot sizes, ranging from Extreme Long Shots to capture the entire background, to Extreme Close Ups detailing product specifications, all aligned with the camera's height level. More specifically, this technical stage explored the crucial nature of determining camera angles; applying a Bird Eye or High Angle gives the impression of a powerless object, whereas utilizing a Low

Angle or Frog Eye (placing the camera touching the ground) is strategically applied to manipulate product visualization to appear much stronger, larger, solid, and dominant. Through this combination of narrative steps and angle manipulation tactics, participants were encouraged to produce visual marketing content, such as promotions and tutorials, which are both comprehensive and visually captivating.

The speaker then explained the practical steps for creating content marketing derived from market segmentation, beginning with identifying Persona Data to deeply understand audience profiles, behaviors, and preferences. This profile mapping became the crucial foundation for the STP (Segmenting, Targeting, and Positioning) stage, where the mentor guided the strategy formulation for market segmentation, determining the most potential target audience, and positioning the product specifically in consumers' minds. To ensure the offer aligned with the target market's needs, the next step involved designing a Value Proposition Canvas, a strategic evaluation instrument to ensure the product's value, advantages, or solutions genuinely address customer problems. This conceptual formulation was subsequently translated into a Macro

5W + 1H Framework, serving as a broad blueprint for designing the main communication narrative; explicitly defining the message, the target, the

distribution time, and platform, why the message is essential, and the visual approach to be applied

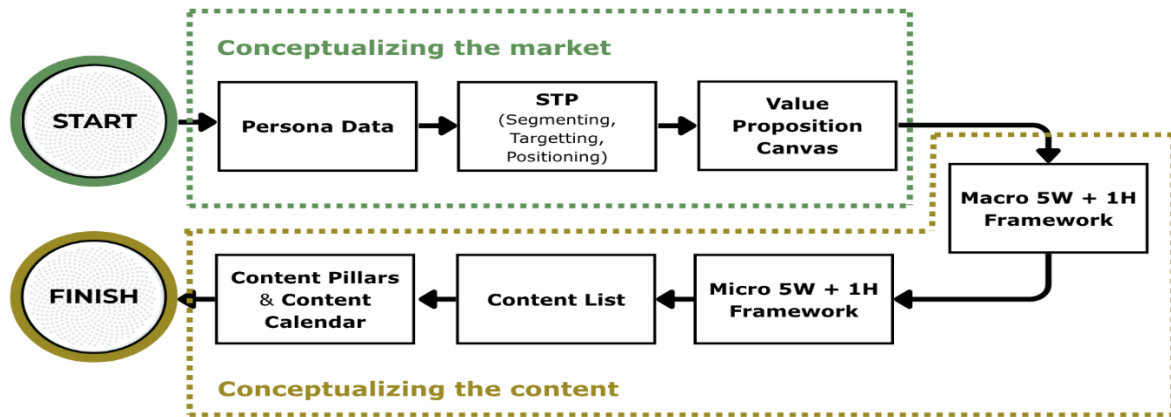


Figure 3. Content Marketing Design Steps.

After arranging the macro strategic framework, the design cycle entered the tactical execution phase by compiling a Micro 5W + 1H Framework, a derivative applicative step to break down broad concepts into more detailed, specific, and measurable content production units. The operational details of this micro-framework were then extracted into a Content List, where all derivative ideas, script concepts, and design formats were inventoried into a comprehensive resource pool ready for production. To accelerate the realization of this material list, the speaker then demonstrated the hands-on practice of generating video-format content marketing by integrating Generative Artificial Intelligence (Generative AI) technology. Concluding this methodological sequence, the

operational stage focused on Optimization via Content Pillars & Content Calendars. In this final phase, all compiled materials and produced videos were classified into specific thematic pillars to maintain brand message consistency, while their publication flow was systematically scheduled using an editorial calendar. This structured scheduling guarantees that all content marketing distribution is executed consistently, purposefully, and can generate maximum digital interaction according to the program's initial objectives.



Figure 4. Video Content Generation Results.

Reflection Phase

This empowerment program demonstrated measurable success in accelerating participants' fundamental competencies, particularly regarding digital marketing aspects. Comprehensive evaluation proved a drastic escalation in the target group's digital marketing comprehension, reflected in the assessment results before and after the training intervention. Statistically, the disabled group's average score surged significantly from 46.9 in the pre-test stage to 82.8 in the post-test phase. This substantial score improvement not only indicates the success of the applied knowledge transfer method but also proves that the training program effectively built a strong cognitive foundation regarding online marketing strategies among disabled participants, supporting the sustainability of their craft businesses (Divyasree & Devimaya, 2025).

This theoretical educational success was actualized through the practical implementation of Shopee marketplace design, culminating in the establishment of a dedicated digital store for the partners. The integration between e-commerce platform operations and the optimization of promotional video content subsequently yielded quantifiable success impacts, validated by an exponential surge in the partner's innovative bamboo speaker production capacity. Production, which previously experienced an absolute stagnation at 0 units from January to June, skyrocketed to reach a peak demand of 93 units in October, with order absorption proportionally diversified across the Mini, Medium, and Custom Speaker variants (Jaya et al., 2026).

From a financial evaluation perspective, this digital transformation via e-commerce channel opening and visual optimization proved to be a primary catalyst in boosting the partners' profitability and economic independence. Stemming from empirical conditions early in the year where absolutely no revenue was generated in the first half, market penetration through digital sales successfully accumulated a highly significant total income of IDR 42,000,000 within just four effective operational months, spanning from July to

October (Jaya et al., 2026). This economic growth momentum continuously displayed a constant positive trend until it hit its highest record in October, with peak monthly earnings touching IDR 14,375,000 (Jaya et al., 2026). These financial achievements confirm that marketplace utilization can construct an inclusive, measurable, and sustainable economic empowerment model for the disabled community.

CONCLUSION

The Marketplace Design and Content Marketing Training has empirically proven its effectiveness in empowering entrepreneurs with disabilities within the VirageAwie community. This success is validated by a significant enhancement in the participants' cognitive capacities, alongside a notable financial transformation characterized by a substantial surge in orders and accumulated revenue. By integrating visual content strategies within the Shopee e-commerce ecosystem, the initiative successfully generated a viable, inclusive model for economic independence.

Despite these positive outcomes, this study acknowledges several constraints. These include the restricted observation duration inherent to the Participatory Action Research method, a market

penetration focus confined to a single platform, and a highly specific demographic and commodity scope.

To maximize the impact of this empowerment, future initiatives are strongly advised to implement longitudinal evaluation studies to measure long-term business resilience. Furthermore, expanding the mentorship scope toward omnichannel marketing strategies, conducting advanced training in financial management and data analytics, and comprehensively replicating this intervention framework across various other disability-inclusive MSME sectors are highly recommended.

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