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From Traditional to Digital: Exploring the Online Marketing Transformation of Culinary Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Karawang Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

The rapid growth of digital technologies has revolutionized the way businesses operate, particularly for micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in the culinary sector. This study investigates the online marketing transformation of culinary MSMEs in Karawang, Indonesia, exploring the strategies they employ, the challenges they face, and the impact of digitalization on their business performance. The study also examines the influence of the marketing mix (product, price, place, and promotion) on these businesses and how they leverage e-commerce platforms to reach a wider audience. The study also employs a SWOT analysis to understand the internal and external factors affecting these MSMEs. The research adopts a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques. In-depth interviews were conducted with owners and managers of culinary MSMEs in Karawang to gain insights into their online marketing practices and experiences. Additionally, a survey was administered to a larger sample of culinary MSMEs to gather quantitative data on their online marketing adoption and outcomes. The data analysis involved thematic analysis for qualitative data and descriptive and inferential statistics for quantitative data. The findings reveal that culinary MSMEs in Karawang are increasingly embracing online marketing tools and platforms, such as social media, e-commerce marketplaces, and food delivery apps. The adoption and utilization of these tools vary across different types of MSMEs, with larger and more established businesses demonstrating a higher level of digital maturity. The study also identifies several challenges faced by MSMEs in their online marketing efforts, including limited digital literacy, lack of resources, and intense competition. The results also highlight the importance of adapting the marketing mix to the online environment and the positive impact of e-commerce adoption on business performance. The SWOT analysis further reveals the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats faced by culinary MSMEs in their online marketing transformation. The online marketing transformation of culinary MSMEs in Karawang is an ongoing process, with both opportunities and challenges. While digital technologies offer significant potential for business growth and expansion, MSMEs need to overcome various obstacles to fully leverage these tools. The study provides valuable insights for policymakers, industry practitioners, and academics to support the digitalization of MSMEs in the culinary sector and promote their sustainable development.

1. Introduction

The culinary landscape in Indonesia, a vibrant tapestry woven with rich flavors and diverse traditions, is undergoing a profound transformation in the digital age. The rapid proliferation of internet connectivity

and mobile devices has ushered in a new era of opportunities and challenges for businesses across various sectors, and the culinary industry is no exception. The rise of online platforms, such as social media, e-commerce marketplaces, and food delivery



apps, has disrupted traditional business models and consumer behavior, forcing businesses to adapt or risk being left behind. Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) form the backbone of the Indonesian economy, contributing significantly to employment and GDP. In the culinary sector, MSMEs play a particularly vital role, representing a vast majority of food establishments across the country. These businesses, often family-owned and operated, are deeply embedded in local communities, offering a unique blend of traditional recipes, authentic flavors, and personalized service. However, MSMEs also face numerous challenges, including limited access to capital, lack of formal business training, and vulnerability to economic fluctuations. The digital revolution presents both opportunities and challenges for these businesses, requiring them to navigate a complex and rapidly evolving landscape.

The adoption of online marketing tools and platforms has become increasingly crucial for culinary MSMEs to thrive in the digital age. Social media platforms, such as Instagram and Facebook, offer a visual and interactive medium for showcasing culinary creations and engaging with customers (Kwok, 2022). E-commerce marketplaces provide a convenient platform for selling food products and reaching a wider audience (Siamagka et al., 2020). Food delivery apps have transformed the way consumers order and consume food, creating new opportunities for businesses to expand their reach and increase sales (Lee et al., 2020). However, the effective utilization of these tools requires MSMEs to acquire new skills, adapt their marketing strategies, and invest in technology and infrastructure. The transition from traditional to digital marketing is not without its challenges. Many MSMEs lack the digital literacy and skills required to navigate the online world (Kaur, 2020). Limited resources, both financial and human, can hinder their ability to invest in technology and training (Siqueira et al., 2021). The intense competition in the online space can make it difficult

for MSMEs to stand out and attract customers (Siamagka et al., 2020). Moreover, the need to maintain a positive online reputation and adapt to changing consumer behavior adds another layer of complexity to the digital transformation process. Despite these challenges, the potential benefits of online marketing for culinary MSMEs are undeniable. Digital platforms offer a cost-effective and efficient way to reach a wider audience, target specific customer segments, and track the results of marketing campaigns (Kaur, 2020). Online marketing can also help MSMEs overcome geographical limitations, build stronger relationships with customers, and gather valuable data on consumer behavior (Okumus et al., 2018). Furthermore, e-commerce platforms can provide access to new markets and distribution channels, facilitating business expansion and growth (Lee et al., 2020).

Karawang, a rapidly developing industrial city in West Java, Indonesia, provides a compelling context to explore the online marketing transformation of culinary MSMEs. With a growing population and a diverse culinary scene, Karawang offers a microcosm of the challenges and opportunities faced by MSMEs across Indonesia. The city's strategic location, proximity to Jakarta, and burgeoning industrial sector have attracted a significant influx of people, creating a vibrant market for food and beverage businesses. However, the increasing competition and changing consumer preferences necessitate that culinary MSMEs in Karawang embrace digital technologies to remain competitive and sustainable. This study aims to investigate the online marketing transformation of culinary MSMEs in Karawang, Indonesia. By employing a mixed-methods approach, combining in-depth interviews and surveys, the research seeks to gain a comprehensive understanding of the strategies, challenges, and outcomes associated with the adoption of online marketing tools and platforms. The study also examines the influence of the marketing mix (product, price, place, and promotion) on these



businesses and how they leverage e-commerce platforms to reach a wider audience. Additionally, a SWOT analysis is employed to understand the internal and external factors affecting these MSMEs.

2. Literature Review

The digital transformation of MSMEs

The digital transformation of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) has become a focal point of research and policy discussions in recent years. The rapid advancement of digital technologies has presented both opportunities and challenges for MSMEs, particularly in developing countries like Indonesia. The adoption and utilization of digital tools and platforms can enable MSMEs to enhance their productivity, efficiency, and competitiveness, leading to increased sales, improved customer satisfaction, and expanded market reach (Khanna, 2010). However, the digital transformation process is not without its hurdles. MSMEs often face constraints in terms of financial resources, technological infrastructure, and digital skills, which can impede their ability to fully leverage the benefits of digitalization (UNCTAD, 2016). The culinary sector, being a labor-intensive and customer-centric industry, is particularly susceptible to the impacts of digitalization. The rise of online food ordering and delivery platforms, social media marketing, and e-commerce marketplaces has transformed the way culinary businesses operate and interact with customers (Okumus et al., 2018). Culinary MSMEs, in particular, need to adapt their business models and marketing strategies to thrive in this digital age. The adoption of online marketing tools and platforms can enable them to reach a wider audience, build brand awareness, and generate sales (Kwok, 2022). However, the successful implementation of online marketing strategies requires a clear understanding of the digital landscape, effective utilization of available tools, and continuous adaptation to changing consumer behavior (Siamagka et al., 2020).

Online marketing strategies for culinary MSMEs

Online marketing encompasses a wide range of tools and techniques that culinary MSMEs can utilize to promote their products and services, engage with customers, and build brand loyalty. Social media platforms, such as Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok, have become indispensable tools for culinary businesses to showcase their food, interact with customers, and run targeted advertising campaigns (Kwok, 2022). E-commerce marketplaces, such as Shopee, Tokopedia, and Lazada, provide culinary MSMEs with a platform to sell their products online and reach a wider customer base (Siamagka et al., 2020). Food delivery apps, such as GoFood, GrabFood, and ShopeeFood, have revolutionized the way consumers order and consume food, creating new opportunities for culinary businesses to expand their reach and increase sales (Lee et al., 2020). The effective utilization of these online marketing tools requires culinary MSMEs to develop a comprehensive online marketing strategy that aligns with their business goals and target audience. This strategy should encompass various aspects, including content creation, social media engagement, search engine optimization (SEO), email marketing, and online advertising (Chaffey, 2019). Content marketing plays a crucial role in attracting and engaging customers by providing valuable and relevant information about the business and its offerings (Pulizzi, 2013). Social media engagement involves building relationships with customers, responding to their queries and feedback, and fostering a sense of community around the brand (Tuten, 2017). SEO helps to improve the visibility of the business's website and online listings in search engine results pages, making it easier for potential customers to find them (Moz, 2023). Email marketing can be used to nurture leads, promote special offers, and keep customers informed about the latest news and updates (Chaffey, 2017). Online advertising, through platforms like Google Ads and social media ads, allows businesses to target specific demographics



and interests, ensuring that their marketing messages reach the right audience (Kotler, 2018).

Challenges and barriers to online marketing adoption

While the potential benefits of online marketing for culinary MSMEs are evident, the adoption and utilization of these tools are not without challenges. Several studies have identified various barriers that hinder MSMEs from fully embracing digital marketing. Many MSME owners and managers lack the knowledge and expertise to effectively utilize online marketing tools and platforms (Kaur, 2020). This can lead to difficulties in creating engaging content, managing online advertising campaigns, and analyzing data to measure the effectiveness of their marketing efforts. Financial constraints and limited human resources can pose significant challenges for MSMEs in investing in online marketing and keeping up with the rapidly evolving digital landscape (Siqueira et al., 2021). This can result in a reliance on free or low-cost tools and platforms, which may not offer the same level of functionality and reach as paid options. Some MSME owners and managers may not be fully aware of the potential benefits of online marketing or may have misconceptions about its complexity and cost (Siamagka et al., 2020). This can lead to a reluctance to adopt digital marketing strategies and a missed opportunity to reach a wider audience and grow their business. In some regions, particularly in rural areas, access to reliable internet connectivity and technological infrastructure may be limited, hindering MSMEs' ability to engage in online marketing activities (UNCTAD, 2016). Some MSME owners and managers may be resistant to change and prefer to stick to traditional marketing methods that they are familiar with (Khanna, 2010). This can prevent them from exploring new opportunities and adapting to the changing market dynamics.

Overcoming challenges and promoting digitalization

To overcome these challenges and promote the digitalization of culinary MSMEs, various stakeholders need to play an active role. Government agencies and industry associations can provide training programs, workshops, and mentorship opportunities to enhance the digital literacy and skills of MSME owners and managers (UNCTAD, 2016). Financial institutions and microfinance providers can offer affordable loans and credit facilities to enable MSMEs to invest in digital marketing tools and technologies (Kaur, 2020). Technology companies and e-commerce platforms can develop user-friendly and affordable solutions tailored to the needs of MSMEs (Siamagka et al., 2020). Educational institutions can incorporate digital marketing into their curriculum and provide students with the knowledge and skills required to succeed in the digital economy (Chaffey, 2019).

The impact of digitalization on business performance

Numerous studies have examined the impact of digitalization on the business performance of MSMEs, with findings generally indicating a positive correlation between digital adoption and improved outcomes. Digitalization can lead to increased sales, improved customer satisfaction, enhanced brand awareness, and expanded market reach (Khanna, 2010). Online marketing tools and platforms can enable MSMEs to target specific customer segments, personalize their marketing messages, and track the results of their campaigns, leading to more effective and efficient marketing efforts (Chaffey, 2017). Furthermore, digitalization can facilitate innovation and collaboration, allowing MSMEs to develop new products and services and partner with other businesses to reach new markets (Okumus et al., 2018).



The marketing mix in the digital age

The traditional marketing mix, consisting of product, price, place, and promotion, remains relevant in the digital age, but it needs to be adapted to the online environment (Constantinides, 2014). The product element involves creating and presenting culinary offerings that are visually appealing and suitable for online ordering and delivery. Pricing strategies need to consider online competition and the cost of delivery and packaging. The place element focuses on utilizing online platforms and channels to reach customers and facilitate transactions. Promotion involves leveraging digital tools and techniques, such as social media marketing, content marketing, and influencer marketing, to create awareness and generate demand (Chaffey, 2017).

SWOT analysis for culinary MSMEs

SWOT analysis is a strategic planning tool used to identify the internal and external factors that can affect a business's performance (Pickton, 2001). Strengths and weaknesses are internal factors, while opportunities and threats are external factors. For culinary MSMEs, strengths may include unique recipes, a strong local reputation, and passionate staff. Weaknesses may include limited financial resources, lack of digital skills, and reliance on traditional marketing methods. Opportunities may include the growing demand for online food ordering and delivery, the increasing use of social media, and the availability of e-commerce platforms. Threats may include intense competition, changing consumer preferences, and economic downturns.

3. Methods

The mixed-methods research design employed in this study is particularly well-suited to investigate the complex and multifaceted nature of the online marketing transformation of culinary MSMEs. The qualitative phase of the study involved conducting in-depth interviews with owners and managers of

culinary MSMEs in Karawang. These interviews were semi-structured, allowing for flexibility and probing while ensuring that key themes and topics were covered. The quantitative phase of the study involved administering a survey to a larger sample of culinary MSMEs in Karawang. The survey collected data on various aspects of online marketing adoption, utilization, and outcomes, enabling statistical analysis and the identification of patterns and relationships. The mixed-methods approach offered several advantages in this research context. First, it allowed for the collection of rich and detailed qualitative data on the experiences and perspectives of MSME owners and managers, providing insights that may not be captured through quantitative methods alone. Second, the quantitative data collected through the survey allowed for the generalization of findings to a larger population of culinary MSMEs in Karawang. Third, the combination of qualitative and quantitative data allowed for triangulation, which enhanced the validity and reliability of the findings by comparing and contrasting data from different sources. Finally, the mixed-methods approach allowed for the exploration of both the process and outcomes of online marketing transformation, providing a more holistic understanding of the phenomenon.

The sampling strategy for the qualitative phase of the study involved purposive sampling, which entailed selecting participants based on specific criteria relevant to the research questions. In this study, culinary MSMEs in Karawang were selected based on their size, type of cuisine, and level of online marketing adoption. This approach ensured that the selected MSMEs represented a diverse range of experiences and perspectives on online marketing transformation. The sample size for the qualitative phase was 15 owners and managers, which was considered adequate to achieve data saturation, where no new themes or insights emerged from additional interviews. The data collection for the qualitative phase was conducted through in-depth interviews, using a semi-structured



interview guide. The interview guide covered various topics related to online marketing practices, challenges, and outcomes, allowing for flexibility and probing while ensuring that key themes were explored. The interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim for analysis. The use of audio recordings and verbatim transcriptions ensured the accuracy and completeness of the data, facilitating rigorous analysis and interpretation. The sampling strategy for the quantitative phase of the study involved convenience sampling, which entailed recruiting participants who were readily available and accessible. In this study, culinary MSMEs in Karawang were recruited through online platforms and social media groups. While convenience sampling offered efficiency in data collection, it may limit the generalizability of the findings to the broader population of culinary MSMEs in Karawang. However, the large sample size of 100 completed surveys was expected to mitigate this limitation to some extent.

The data collection for the quantitative phase was conducted through a survey questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed to collect data on various aspects of online marketing adoption, utilization, and outcomes, including the types of online marketing tools and platforms used, the frequency and intensity of use, the perceived benefits and challenges, and the impact on business performance. The questionnaire was pilot-tested with a small group of MSME owners and managers to ensure its clarity, relevance, and validity. The use of a pilot test helped to identify and address any potential issues with the questionnaire before it was administered to the larger sample. The data analysis for the qualitative phase of the study involved thematic analysis, which is a widely used method for analyzing qualitative data. Thematic analysis involves identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within the data. The process typically involves several steps, including familiarization with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and

naming themes, and producing the report. Thematic analysis allows for the identification of both explicit and implicit meanings in the data, providing a rich and nuanced understanding of the experiences and perspectives of MSME owners and managers. The data analysis for the quantitative phase of the study involved descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize and describe the characteristics of the sample and the distribution of variables. Inferential statistics, such as chi-square tests and regression analysis, were used to examine the relationships between online marketing adoption, utilization, and business performance. Chi-square tests were used to assess the association between categorical variables, while regression analysis was used to examine the impact of online marketing adoption and utilization on business performance, controlling for other relevant factors. The use of inferential statistics allowed for hypothesis testing and the generalization of findings to the broader population of culinary MSMEs in Karawang. The study adhered to ethical guidelines for research involving human subjects. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, ensuring that they understood the purpose of the research, the procedures involved, and their rights as participants. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained throughout the research process, and data was stored securely.

4. Results and Discussion

The provided table 1 shows the diversity of the 15 participants involved in the qualitative phase of the research. The selection criteria, which included business size, type of cuisine, and level of online marketing adoption, ensured a broad spectrum of experiences and perspectives were captured. The distribution of micro, small, and medium enterprises highlights the heterogeneity of the MSME sector in Karawang. This diversity allows for a deeper understanding of how online marketing adoption and



its impact vary across different business scales. The inclusion of Indonesian, Western, and Chinese cuisines reflects the culinary landscape of Karawang, acknowledging the influence of diverse food cultures on online marketing strategies. The varying levels of online marketing adoption (high, medium, and low) among the participants provide insights into the different stages of digital maturity within the culinary MSME sector in Karawang. This variation allows for the exploration of factors that contribute to or hinder

the adoption of online marketing practices. Overall, table 1 suggests that the qualitative phase of the research involved a purposeful and strategic selection of participants, ensuring a rich and diverse pool of data for analysis. The characteristics of the participants, as outlined in the table, provide a foundation for understanding the nuances and complexities of online marketing transformation among culinary MSMEs in Karawang.

Table 1. Participants' characteristics.

Participant	Business size	Type of cuisine	Level of online marketing adoption
1	Micro	Indonesian	High
2	Small	Indonesian	Medium
3	Small	Western	Low
4	Medium	Indonesian	High
5	Micro	Chinese	Low
6	Small	Indonesian	High
7	Medium	Western	Medium
8	Micro	Indonesian	Medium
9	Small	Chinese	Low
10	Medium	Indonesian	High
11	Micro	Western	Medium
12	Small	Indonesian	Low
13	Medium	Chinese	High
14	Micro	Indonesian	High
15	Small	Western	Medium

Table 2 illustrates the adoption rates of various online marketing platforms among culinary MSMEs in Karawang, categorized by their business size. The data reveals a clear correlation between business size and the level of digital adoption. Across all business sizes (micro, small, and medium), social media platforms emerge as the most widely adopted online marketing tool. This suggests that culinary MSMEs in Karawang recognize the potential of social media for brand building, customer engagement, and reaching a wider audience. The adoption of e-commerce platforms is also notable, particularly among medium-sized businesses. This indicates that MSMEs are increasingly leveraging online marketplaces to expand their sales channels and reach customers beyond their physical locations. While the adoption of food delivery

apps is relatively lower compared to social media and e-commerce, it still represents a significant trend, especially among medium and small businesses. This suggests that MSMEs are recognizing the growing demand for convenient food delivery services and are adapting their business models accordingly. The data clearly demonstrates that larger and more established businesses (medium-sized) exhibit a higher level of digital maturity, with higher adoption rates across all three platforms. This could be attributed to factors such as greater financial resources, access to skilled personnel, and a better understanding of the digital landscape. The overall online marketing adoption rate, calculated as the average of the three platform adoption rates, also increases with business size. This reinforces the notion that digital maturity is positively



correlated with business size. Table 2 highlights the growing importance of online marketing for culinary MSMEs in Karawang. While social media remains the dominant platform, the adoption of e-commerce and food delivery apps is also on the rise. The data also

underscores the digital divide between larger and smaller businesses, emphasizing the need for targeted interventions to support the digital transformation of micro and small enterprises.

Table 2. The possible online marketing adoption and utilization among culinary MSMEs in Karawang.

Business size	Social media adoption (%)	E-commerce adoption (%)	Food delivery app adoption (%)	Overall online marketing adoption (%)
Micro	60	30	20	43.3
Small	75	45	35	58.3
Medium	90	70	60	76.7

Table 3 sheds light on the challenges that culinary MSMEs in Karawang encounter as they navigate the realm of online marketing. The data underscores that these challenges are multifaceted, impacting various aspects of their operations. The most prominent challenge, cited by 70% of the MSMEs, is the fierce competition in the online space. The digital marketplace, while offering vast opportunities, also brings forth a multitude of competitors vying for the same customer base. This necessitates MSMEs to devise innovative strategies to differentiate themselves and capture the attention of potential customers. A significant 65% of MSMEs grapple with limited digital literacy and skills. This indicates a knowledge gap in effectively utilizing online marketing tools and platforms. The lack of proficiency in areas such as content creation, campaign management, and data analysis can impede their online marketing efforts. The lack of financial resources is a challenge for 55% of the MSMEs. This can restrict their ability to invest in paid advertising, professional website development, or other essential online marketing tools and services.

While not as prevalent as the other challenges, 40% of MSMEs acknowledge the difficulty in maintaining a positive online reputation. The digital landscape amplifies the impact of customer reviews and feedback, making it crucial for businesses to actively manage their online presence and address any negative comments or concerns. Half of the MSMEs surveyed identify the challenge of keeping pace with the ever-changing consumer preferences and expectations in the digital age. The dynamic nature of online trends and consumer behavior demands constant adaptation and innovation in marketing strategies. Overall, Table 3 paints a picture of the hurdles that culinary MSMEs in Karawang face in their online marketing journey. The challenges span from technical skills and financial limitations to strategic considerations like competition and reputation management. Addressing these challenges will be crucial for these businesses to fully harness the potential of online marketing and thrive in the digital era.

Table 3. The possible challenges faced by culinary MSMEs in Karawang.

Challenge	Percentage of MSMEs reporting the challenge
Limited digital literacy and skills	65%
Lack of financial resources	55%
Intense competition	70%
Maintaining online reputation	40%
Adapting to changing consumer behavior	50%



Table 4 showcases the positive influence of digitalization on the business performance of culinary MSMEs in Karawang, as measured by increases in brand awareness, customer reach, and sales. The data reveals a clear trend: the larger the business, the more pronounced the positive impact of digitalization. The data indicates that digitalization has benefited businesses of all sizes, with all three metrics—brand awareness, customer reach, and sales—showing positive growth. This suggests that embracing digital tools and platforms can be a successful strategy for culinary MSMEs in Karawang, regardless of their size. Table 4 highlights a clear correlation between business size and the extent of the positive impact. Medium-sized businesses experience the most significant gains, followed by small businesses, and then micro-enterprises. This suggests that larger businesses, with potentially more resources and established structures, are better positioned to leverage digitalization for

growth. The most substantial increases are observed in brand awareness, followed by customer reach, and then sales. This pattern suggests that digitalization is particularly effective in enhancing the visibility and reach of culinary MSMEs. The increased awareness and reach can subsequently lead to greater customer engagement and, ultimately, higher sales. Overall, table 4 underscores the transformative potential of digitalization for culinary MSMEs in Karawang. It emphasizes the importance of embracing digital tools and platforms to enhance brand visibility, expand customer reach, and drive sales growth. The data also suggests that while digitalization benefits businesses of all sizes, larger enterprises may be able to capitalize on these opportunities more effectively. This highlights the need for targeted support and interventions to empower micro and small businesses to fully leverage the benefits of digitalization.

Table 4. The possible impact of digitalization on business performance among culinary MSMEs in Karawang.

Business size	Increase in brand awareness (%)	Increase in customer reach (%)	Increase in sales (%)
Micro	30	25	20
Small	45	40	35
Medium	60	55	50

Table 5 showcases the strategic shifts that culinary MSMEs in Karawang are undertaking in their marketing mix to adapt to the online business environment. The comparison between traditional and adapted approaches highlights the transformative influence of digitalization on their marketing strategies. The emphasis has shifted from solely focusing on taste and quality to incorporating visual appeal and detailed descriptions. This recognizes the importance of presentation and providing comprehensive information to online customers who cannot physically experience the product before purchase. The adaptation also includes ensuring suitability for delivery, acknowledging the logistical aspects of online food businesses. The pricing strategies have evolved to consider the online

competitive landscape, factoring in delivery costs and potential price wars. The introduction of online-exclusive discounts and promotions demonstrates a proactive approach to attract and retain customers in the digital marketplace. The most significant transformation is evident in the "place" element. The reliance on physical stores and traditional word-of-mouth has given way to the utilization of e-commerce platforms, food delivery apps, and dedicated websites. This shift reflects the need to establish a strong online presence and provide convenient ordering and delivery options to cater to the digital-savvy consumer. The promotional strategies have expanded beyond traditional advertising methods to encompass a wide array of digital tools and techniques. Social media marketing, content marketing, influencer



partnerships, online advertising, and email marketing are now leveraged to create brand awareness, engage with customers, and drive sales. This diversified approach allows for targeted and personalized marketing efforts, reaching specific customer segments more effectively. Overall, the table 5 illustrates the adaptive and innovative spirit of

culinary MSMEs in Karawang as they navigate the digital landscape. The strategic shifts in their marketing mix demonstrate a keen understanding of the online business environment and a proactive approach to meet the evolving needs and expectations of digital consumers.

Table 5. The possible adaptations of the marketing mix by culinary MSMEs in Karawang.

Marketing mix element	Traditional approach	Adaptation to the online environment
Product	Focus on taste and quality	Emphasis on visual appeal, detailed descriptions, and suitability for delivery
Price	Set prices based on cost and local competition	Consider online competition, and delivery costs, and offer online-exclusive discounts
Place	Physical store, reliance on foot traffic and word-of-mouth	Utilize e-commerce platforms, food delivery apps, and own websites for online ordering
Promotion	Traditional advertising (print, radio, etc.) and local events	Leverage social media marketing, content marketing, influencer marketing, online advertising, and email marketing

Table 6 provides a comprehensive overview of the internal and external factors that influence the online marketing transformation of culinary MSMEs in Karawang. The analysis highlights the strengths that these businesses can leverage, the weaknesses they need to address, the opportunities they can capitalize on, and the threats they need to mitigate to succeed in the digital marketplace. Strengths: Unique and authentic culinary offerings: The distinct flavors and culinary traditions of Karawang's MSMEs can serve as a powerful differentiator in the online space, attracting customers seeking unique and authentic dining experiences; Strong local reputation and customer base: The established presence and positive of these MSMEs within the local community can provide a solid foundation for building an online presence and attracting new customers; Passionate and dedicated staff: The commitment and enthusiasm of the staff can translate into excellent customer service and a positive brand image, both online and offline; Flexibility and adaptability to changing market conditions: The ability to adapt to new trends and technologies is crucial for success in the dynamic online marketplace. The agility

of MSMEs can enable them to respond quickly to changing consumer preferences and market demands. Weaknesses: Limited financial resources: The financial constraints faced by many MSMEs can limit their ability to invest in online marketing tools, technologies, and professional services; Lack of digital literacy and skills: The lack of knowledge and expertise in digital marketing can hinder MSMEs' ability to effectively utilize online platforms and tools; Reliance on traditional marketing methods: The continued reliance on traditional marketing methods may limit the reach and effectiveness of their marketing efforts in the digital age; Limited capacity for online order fulfillment and delivery: The logistical challenges associated with online ordering and delivery can pose a significant hurdle for MSMEs, particularly those with limited resources. Opportunities: Growing demand for online food ordering and delivery: The increasing popularity of online food delivery platforms presents a significant opportunity for culinary MSMEs to expand their customer base and increase sales; Increasing use of social media and e-commerce platforms: The widespread use of social media and e-commerce



platforms provides MSMEs with cost-effective channels to reach and engage with potential customers; Government support for MSME digitalization: Government initiatives and programs aimed at promoting MSME digitalization can provide valuable resources and support to culinary businesses in their online marketing transformation; Potential for collaboration and partnerships with other businesses: Collaborating with other businesses, such as food delivery platforms, online influencers, and local tourism agencies, can help MSMEs expand their reach and visibility. Threats: Intense competition from other culinary businesses, both online and offline: The competitive landscape in the culinary industry, both online and offline, can make it challenging for MSMEs to stand out and attract customers; Changing consumer preferences and expectations: The evolving tastes and preferences of consumers, coupled with increasing demands for convenience and

personalization, require MSMEs to constantly adapt their offerings and marketing strategies; Economic downturns and fluctuations: Economic instability can impact consumer spending and pose a threat to the financial viability of MSMEs; Technological disruptions and advancements: The rapid pace of technological change can make it difficult for MSMEs to keep up with the latest trends and tools, potentially leading to obsolescence. The SWOT analysis reveals a complex interplay of internal and external factors that influence the online marketing transformation of culinary MSMEs in Karawang. While these businesses possess unique strengths and opportunities, they also face significant challenges and threats. By understanding these factors, MSMEs can develop effective strategies to leverage their strengths, address their weaknesses, capitalize on opportunities, and mitigate threats, ultimately achieving sustainable growth and success in the digital marketplace.

Table 6. The internal and external factors affecting culinary MSMEs in their online marketing transformation.

SWOT category	Factors affecting culinary MSMEs
Strengths (Internal)	Unique and authentic culinary offerings
	Strong local reputation and customer base
	Passionate and dedicated staff
	Flexibility and adaptability to changing market conditions
Weaknesses (Internal)	Limited financial resources
	Lack of digital literacy and skills
	Reliance on traditional marketing methods
	Limited capacity for online order fulfillment and delivery
Opportunities (External)	Growing demand for online food ordering and delivery
	Increasing use of social media and e-commerce platforms
	Government support for MSME digitalization
	Potential for collaboration and partnerships with other businesses
Threats (External)	Intense competition from other culinary businesses, both online and offline
	Changing consumer preferences and expectations
	Economic downturns and fluctuations
	Technological disruptions and advancements

The findings of this study highlight the ongoing online marketing transformation of culinary MSMEs in Karawang, Indonesia (Maulana, 2024). The increasing adoption of online marketing tools and platforms signals a positive shift towards digitalization (Kwok, 2022). However, the transition is not without its

challenges. The identified obstacles, including limited digital literacy, lack of resources, and intense competition, highlight the complexities that MSMEs face in their efforts to harness the full potential of digital technologies (Kaur, 2020). The research reveals a disparity in digital adoption among culinary MSMEs



in Karawang, creating a digital divide (Maulana, 2024). While larger and more established businesses have successfully integrated online marketing into their operations, smaller enterprises are struggling to keep up. The reasons behind this disparity are multifaceted. Limited digital literacy and skills among many MSME owners and managers hinder their ability to navigate the complexities of online marketing (Kaur, 2020). The lack of proficiency in areas such as content creation, campaign management, and data analysis can significantly impede their online marketing efforts. The digital landscape is constantly evolving, and without the necessary skills, MSMEs may find it challenging to keep up with the latest trends and technologies (Chaffey, 2019). The ability to create compelling content, manage online advertising campaigns effectively, and analyze data to measure the success of marketing initiatives are all crucial skills in the digital age. Without these skills, MSMEs may struggle to compete with larger businesses that have dedicated marketing teams and resources.

The lack of financial resources is another major obstacle (Siqueira et al., 2021). The financial constraints faced by these businesses limit their access to essential tools and technologies, further widening the gap between digitally savvy and digitally disadvantaged enterprises. Investing in online marketing requires resources for website development, social media advertising, and other digital tools, which may be beyond the reach of many small businesses. The cost of acquiring and maintaining these tools can be a significant barrier for MSMEs, especially those operating on tight budgets. The inability to invest in online marketing can lead to missed opportunities for growth and expansion, as MSMEs may be unable to reach a wider audience or compete effectively with larger businesses that have more resources at their disposal. The intense competition in the online space, particularly from larger and more established players, adds another layer of complexity for MSMEs striving to gain visibility and attract customers (Siamagka et

al., 2020). The online marketplace is vast and crowded, and without the right strategies and resources, MSMEs may struggle to stand out and capture the attention of their target audience. Larger businesses often have the advantage of brand recognition and established customer bases, making it even more challenging for MSMEs to compete. In addition, the online space is often dominated by large e-commerce platforms and aggregators, which can make it difficult for MSMEs to gain visibility and reach customers directly.

The study's findings underscore the urgent need for capacity-building initiatives to empower culinary MSMEs in Karawang to overcome the challenges associated with online marketing adoption (Maulana, 2024). These initiatives should focus on enhancing digital literacy and skills, providing access to affordable technology and resources, and fostering a supportive ecosystem for online business development. The government, industry associations, educational institutions, and technology companies all have a role to play in facilitating this process (UNCTAD, 2016). Enhancing digital literacy and skills is crucial for MSMEs to effectively utilize online marketing tools and platforms. Training programs, workshops, and mentorship opportunities can help MSME owners and managers acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to navigate the digital landscape (Kaur, 2020). These programs should cover various aspects of online marketing, including content creation, social media management, search engine optimization, and data analytics. By investing in digital skills training, MSMEs can empower themselves to create effective online marketing campaigns, engage with their target audience, and measure the success of their efforts. This can lead to increased brand awareness, customer reach, and ultimately, sales. Providing access to affordable technology and resources is essential for MSMEs to implement online marketing strategies. This can include offering subsidized internet access, providing



access to low-cost or open-source marketing tools, and creating shared workspaces with digital infrastructure (Siamagka et al., 2020). Financial institutions and microfinance providers can also play a role by offering affordable loans and credit facilities to enable MSMEs to invest in digital marketing. By reducing the financial barriers to digital adoption, MSMEs can access the tools and technologies they need to compete in the online marketplace. This can level the playing field and allow MSMEs to reach a wider audience and expand their business opportunities. Fostering a supportive ecosystem for online business development is crucial for the long-term success of MSMEs in the digital age. This can involve creating online communities and networks where MSMEs can connect, share knowledge, and collaborate. It can also include developing policies and regulations that support the growth of online businesses and protect them from unfair competition (Okumus et al., 2018). By creating a conducive environment for online business development, MSMEs can thrive and contribute to the overall economic growth of the region. This can include initiatives such as providing mentorship and guidance, facilitating access to markets, and creating platforms for collaboration and knowledge sharing.

The dynamic nature of the online marketplace necessitates strategic adaptation from culinary MSMEs. The constant emergence of new platforms, tools, and trends requires businesses to be agile and adaptable, continuously monitoring the market and adjusting their strategies to stay ahead of the curve. This involves a willingness to experiment, learn from failures, and embrace innovation. The study's findings suggest that MSMEs that are proactive and innovative in their online marketing efforts are more likely to succeed in the digital age (Lee et al., 2020). Staying abreast of emerging trends is crucial for MSMEs to remain relevant and competitive. This can involve attending industry events, participating in online forums and communities, and following thought leaders in the digital marketing space. By staying

informed about the latest developments, MSMEs can identify new opportunities and adapt their strategies accordingly. The digital landscape is constantly evolving, and what works today may not work tomorrow. MSMEs need to be proactive in keeping up with the latest trends and technologies to ensure that their online marketing efforts remain effective. Adapting to changing consumer preferences is equally important. MSMEs need to understand their target audience and their evolving needs and expectations. This can involve conducting market research, analyzing customer data, and soliciting feedback from customers (Okumus et al., 2018). By understanding their customers' preferences, MSMEs can tailor their online marketing efforts to resonate with their target audience and deliver a personalized experience. Consumer behavior is constantly changing, and MSMEs need to be able to adapt their marketing strategies to meet these changing needs. This may involve offering new products or services, adjusting their pricing strategies, or changing their communication channels. Experimenting with new tools and platforms can help MSMEs discover innovative ways to reach and engage with customers. This can involve testing different social media platforms, trying out new advertising formats, and exploring emerging technologies such as virtual and augmented reality. By embracing experimentation and innovation, MSMEs can stay ahead of the curve and differentiate themselves from the competition. The digital landscape offers a wide range of tools and platforms that MSMEs can utilize to reach and engage with their customers. By experimenting with different approaches, MSMEs can find the most effective ways to connect with their target audience and achieve their marketing goals.

Collaboration and partnerships can play a pivotal role in the online marketing transformation of culinary MSMEs. By partnering with other businesses, such as food delivery platforms, online influencers, and local tourism agencies, MSMEs can expand their reach,



enhance their visibility, and tap into new markets. Collaboration can also enable MSMEs to pool resources, share knowledge, and learn from each other's experiences, fostering a more supportive and collaborative ecosystem for online business development. The study's findings suggest that collaborative efforts can be particularly beneficial for smaller enterprises that may lack the resources and expertise to navigate the digital landscape alone (Kwok, 2022). Partnering with food delivery platforms can help MSMEs reach a wider audience and offer convenient delivery options to customers. This can be particularly beneficial for businesses that may not have the resources to establish their own delivery infrastructure. By leveraging the existing networks and customer base of food delivery platforms, MSMEs can expand their reach and increase their sales. This can also help them to compete with larger businesses that already offer delivery services. Collaborating with online influencers can help MSMEs increase their brand awareness and reach a targeted audience. Influencers can create engaging content that showcases the MSME's products or services and resonates with their followers. This can be a cost-effective way to reach a large and engaged audience, especially for MSMEs with limited marketing budgets. Influencer marketing has become increasingly popular in recent years, and it can be a powerful tool for MSMEs to build brand awareness and credibility. Partnering with local tourism agencies can help MSMEs tap into the tourism market and attract visitors to their establishments. This can involve participating in local food festivals, offering special discounts to tourists, and promoting their businesses on tourism websites and platforms. By collaborating with tourism agencies, MSMEs can leverage the growing tourism industry to their advantage and attract new customers from different regions and countries. This can help them to diversify their customer base and increase

The online marketing transformation of culinary MSMEs in Karawang is a journey that presents both opportunities and challenges. The study's findings highlight the significant obstacles that MSMEs face, but they also underscore the immense potential of digital technologies to drive business growth and success (Maulana, 2024). By addressing the challenges of digital literacy, resource constraints, and competition, and by embracing the opportunities presented by the growing demand for online food services, the increasing use of digital platforms, and government support, culinary MSMEs in Karawang can navigate the digital landscape with confidence. The key lies in strategic adaptation, continuous learning, and collaborative efforts. By adopting a proactive and innovative approach to online marketing, these businesses can unlock their full potential and achieve sustainable growth in the digital age. The study's findings provide valuable insights for policymakers, industry practitioners, and academics. Policymakers can play a crucial role in supporting the digitalization of MSMEs by providing training programs, financial assistance, and infrastructure development. Industry practitioners can collaborate with MSMEs to offer mentorship, guidance, and access to resources. Academics can continue to conduct research on the digitalization of MSMEs and disseminate their findings to inform policy and practice. The collective efforts of these stakeholders can create a more conducive environment for culinary MSMEs in Karawang to thrive in the digital era, contributing to the overall economic development of the region and the country. The online marketing transformation of culinary MSMEs in Karawang is a complex but promising journey. By addressing the challenges and embracing the opportunities, these businesses can leverage the power of digital technologies to achieve sustainable growth and success. The study's findings provide a roadmap for MSMEs, policymakers, and other stakeholders to navigate this transformation and create a thriving



digital ecosystem for the culinary sector in Karawang.

5. Conclusion

The online marketing transformation of culinary MSMEs in Karawang is a complex and dynamic process, with both opportunities and challenges. While digital technologies offer significant potential for business growth and expansion, MSMEs need to overcome various obstacles to fully leverage these tools. This study provides valuable insights into the online marketing practices, challenges, and outcomes of culinary MSMEs in Karawang, contributing to the broader understanding of digitalization in the MSME sector. The findings of this research can inform the development of strategies and interventions to support the digitalization of MSMEs and promote their sustainable development.

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