

Social Media Marketing Strategies For Smes In Indonesia: A Systematic Literature Review

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ABSTRACT. The rapid digital transformation in Indonesia has established social media marketing as a key tool for enhancing the competitiveness and performance of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). This study conducts a systematic literature review using Scopus-indexed articles published from 2016 to 2025, with an exclusive focus on Indonesian SMEs. The objective is to synthesize empirical evidence, highlighting strategic patterns that contribute to the success of social media marketing. This review follows the PRISMA protocol, which encompasses article selection, screening, eligibility assessment, and thematic synthesis. The 7 studies reviewed cover various sectors such as food and beverages, retail, and the creative industries. Findings indicate that social media marketing significantly enhances brand awareness, customer engagement, and innovation capacity, particularly when integrated with an entrepreneurial orientation and digital literacy. Studies consistently show that SMEs utilizing social media for content marketing, crowdsourcing, and customer relationship management achieve higher marketing performance and sustainable growth. However, this review also identifies persistent barriers, including limited financial resources, inadequate technological skills, and strategic misalignment between digital initiatives and organizational goals. Practitioners are advised to design targeted training programs, financial incentives, and collaborative ecosystems that strengthen SMEs' digital competitiveness. Future empirical studies are expected to integrate cross-sector and regional comparisons to capture Indonesia's diverse SME landscape and support evidence-based policy development.

Keyword: Strategies; Social media marketing; SMEs

JEL Classification: M31; L26

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INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of the digital economy has encouraged Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Indonesia to adopt social media-based marketing strategies as a primary means of expanding market reach and improving business performance. The synergy between innovation, digitalization, and marketing strategy is key to competitive advantage for SMEs (Novandari et al., 2025). The effectiveness of digital marketing through digital platforms has a positive impact on business outcomes (Novandari et al., 2026). Furthermore, the adoption of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has also been shown to increase the success of social media marketing implementation (Yuwono et al., 2025). Practical interventions such as digital marketing training and legal assistance also strengthen the capacity of SMEs to utilize social media effectively, particularly in the context of improving market access and local regulatory compliance (Yuwono, Tajudin, et al., 2024).

A systematic literature review on social media marketing strategies for SMEs in Indonesia is crucial for improving competitiveness and business performance amidst the accelerating digitalization of the economy (Furkan & Yuwono, 2025). Studies show that financial capability and digital adoption influence online shopping behavior and impulsive buying, which in turn opens up new market opportunities for SMEs if utilized appropriately through social media (Furkan et al., 2025). Practical interventions such as digital marketing training and packaging coaching have also been shown to increase sales of agricultural SME products, indicating that skills transfer and technical support are crucial components in implementing digital marketing strategies (Rahmadani et al., 2025). A creative design thinking approach and strengthening SMEs' unique capabilities (Yuwono et al., 2022) help SMEs design strategies that not only attract customers but also create sustainable value for them (Yuwono et al., 2026). Given the heterogeneity of SMEs in Indonesia and the diverse practices and outcomes of social media marketing implementation, this systematic literature review is necessary to summarize empirical evidence, identify effective practices and implementation barriers, and formulate contextual policy recommendations and training programs for SME decision-makers and practitioners.

While previous literature reviews have been sector-specific or international in scope, this study fills an important gap by conducting a systematic literature review specifically for SMEs in Indonesia, using the Scopus database for the period 2016 to 2025. While de Vries et al. (2018) examined social media use among SMEs in the food sector, and Karawgoda & Kavirathna (2025) presented a systematic review of barriers and strategies for social media use by SMEs more generally, neither of which mapped empirical evidence focused on the Indonesian national context over a more recent timeframe. This focused approach allows for the identification of contextual strategic patterns, methodological gaps, and policy implications that are often overlooked in cross-country or sectoral reviews. The scope was limited to Scopus-indexed articles from 2016 to 2025, to answer the following Research Questions (RQs):

RQ1: How has research on social media marketing for SMEs developed over the past 10 years?

RQ2: What factors hinder social media marketing among SMEs?

RQ3: What steps have been taken to improve the success of social media marketing among SMEs?

METHODS

The primary objective of this study is to investigate the factors hinder social media marketing among SMEs. This study conducted a systematic literature review (SLR) of previous research on social media marketing among SMEs (Yuwono, Suroso, et al., 2024). The PRISMA statement form was used to describe the comprehensive procedures for selecting and excluding relevant articles in the SLR (Haddaway et al., 2022). This review was conducted using Scopus research publications from 2016 to 2025. A search for relevant publications was conducted on May 29, 2026, using the keyword social media marketing SMEs. The search yielded 609 articles from the past 10 years. By limiting the search to articles published between 2016 and 2025 in the fields of business and management, a total of 347 articles were retained. After selecting the document type article and english a total of 238 articles were selected. We removed 75 articles that were not social media keywords and 28 articles whose objects were not from Indonesia. This SLR utilized 7 articles open-access articles only, with the keywords social media and limited country to Indonesia. Figure 1 provides a brief overview of the screening process and the exclusion of certain elements.

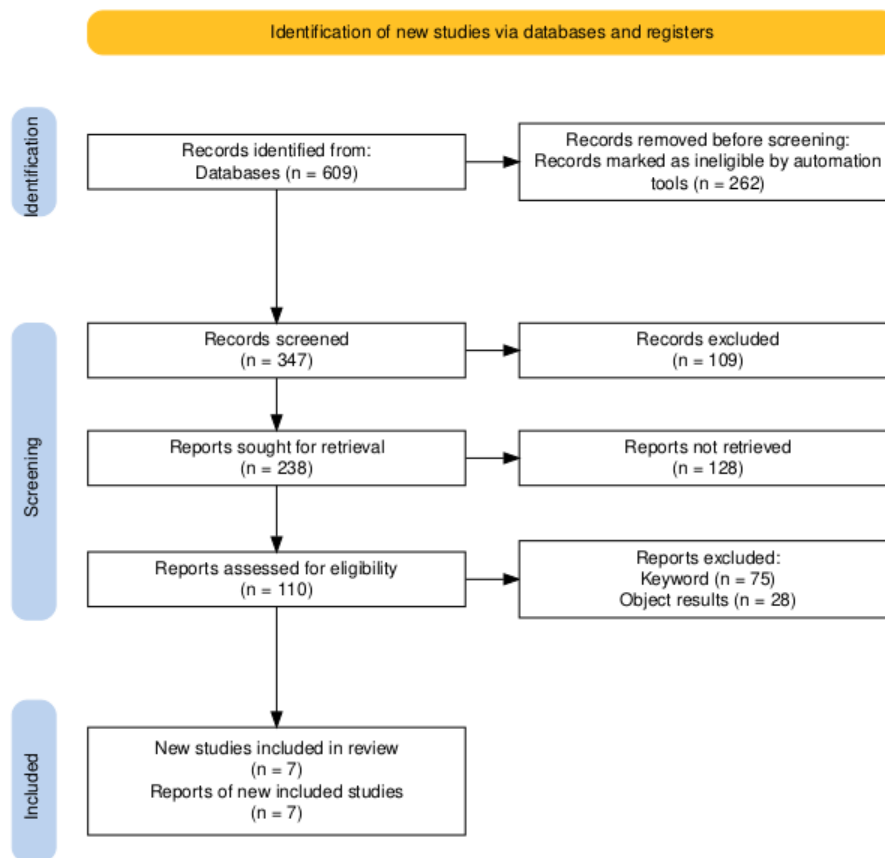


Figure 1. Prism Diagram

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Research trends on social media marketing for SMEs in Indonesia from 2016 to 2025 in the Scopus database, based on citation counts, indicate that the case study and marketing performance analysis by Wibawa et al. (2022) received the most citations, with 16 citations. This is followed by a study

on the benefits of social media on competitive behavior in the food and beverage sector by Nurliza & Oktoriana (2021), with 11 citations. Research on increasing brand awareness through Instagram from the perspective of signaling theory by Suryani et al. (2022) also received 10 citations. A more recent study by Nasution et al. (2023) was found to have received 4 citations, expanding the focus to crowdsourcing-based product innovation. The relationship between innovation strategies and marketing performance in an urban context in the study by Winarso et al. (2023) received 4 citations, while the study on sustainable performance and innovation capabilities by Muchtar et al. (2024) received 3 citations. The latest research on social media-based lead generation capabilities in the culinary sector by Santoso & Rahayu (2025) received 1 citation. These findings indicate that the expansion of topics toward sustainability and entrepreneurial marketing capabilities, along with this citation pattern, suggests growing interest, particularly since 2021.

Table 1. The five most-cited articles

Authors	Source Title	Cited by
Wibawa et al. (2022)	International Journal of Business and Society	16
Nurliza and Oktoriana (2021)	Economics and Sociology	11
Suryani et al. (2022)	Asian Journal of Business and Accounting	10
Nasution et al. (2023)	Cogent Business and Management	4
Winarso et al. (2023)	International Journal of Professional Business Review (coverage discontinued in Scopus)	4
Muchtar et al. (2024)		3
Santoso and Rahayu (2025)	Quality - Access to Success	1

Despite the potential benefits of social media for improving SME marketing performance, several factors hinder its effectiveness in enhancing marketing performance among SMEs in Indonesia show on Figure 1. The main challenge is a lack of understanding among many SMEs regarding the importance of social media and its ability to improve their overall performance (Santoso & Rahayu, 2025).

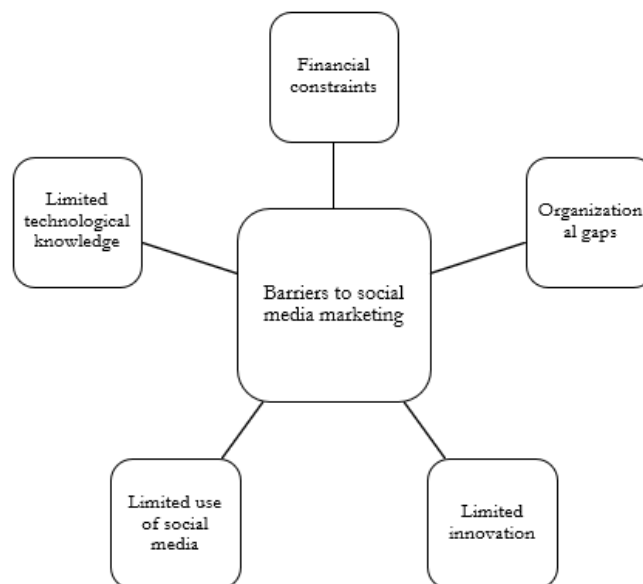


Figure 1. Barriers to social media marketing

SMEs recognize the importance of social media marketing strategies, but generally face broader issues such as limited human and financial resources (Muchtar et al., 2024). Limited technological knowledge is highlighted as one of the most significant obstacles to their development (Wibawa et al., 2022). Although social media adoption has proven to have a positive and significant impact on marketing performance, limited social media usage and limited innovation will remain the primary barriers preventing SMEs from maximizing their marketing results (Winarso et al., 2023). The competitive behavior of SMEs is also influenced by their organizational characteristics and performance variations, indicating that many SMEs lack the ability to align their digital marketing strategies with a focus on building consumer relationships and ensuring quality (Nurliza & Oktoriana, 2021).

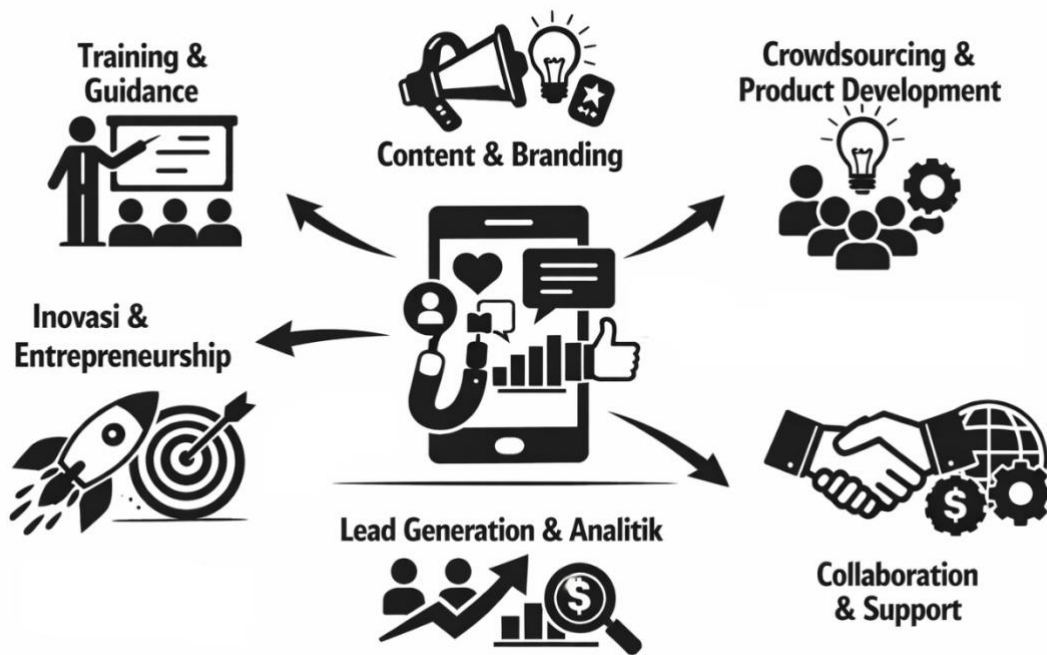


Figure 2. Steps for social media marketing

The steps that can be taken to improve the success of social media marketing among Indonesian SMEs are shown in Figure 2. First, SMEs need to build capacity through practical training and technical assistance to improve digital literacy and content management skills (Wibawa et al., 2022). Second, there is a need for the development of structured content and brand signaling strategies, including positioning, storytelling, and the use of Instagram to build brand awareness (Suryani et al., 2022). Third, SMEs need to utilize social media for crowdsourcing ideas and integrating knowledge into the new product development process to ensure responsiveness to market needs (Nasution et al., 2023). Fourth, SMEs need to strengthen their innovation capabilities and entrepreneurial orientation to transform digital interactions into sustainable marketing performance ((Muchtar et al., 2024; Winarso et al., 2023). Fifth, SMEs should implement lead generation and entrepreneurial marketing techniques that combine simple analytics, audience segmentation, and a relational approach to boost conversion rates in the food and retail sectors (Santoso & Rahayu, 2025). Finally, SMEs engage in synergy and collaboration with local stakeholders to ensure the sustainability and scalability of digital marketing practices (Muchtar et

al., 2024; Wibawa et al., 2022). This combination of steps emphasizes the integration of practical training, evidence-based content strategies, product innovation, and organizational capacity building as the key to maximizing the benefits of social media for SMEs in Indonesia.

CONCLUSION

A systematic literature review on social media marketing strategies for SMEs in Indonesia, based on Scopus data from 2016 to 2025, concludes that social media has become a key driver of marketing performance, innovation, and brand awareness among Indonesian SMEs. A synthesis of Scopus-indexed studies reveals consistent evidence that digital engagement through platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok increases market reach, customer interaction, and product innovation. However, the success of these strategies is highly dependent on digital literacy, financial capacity, and organizational readiness, which remain uneven across various sectors and regions. A limitation of this research is its scope, which is restricted to Scopus-indexed publications, potentially excluding relevant studies indexed in local databases in Indonesia.

Recommendations for SMEs emphasize the need for structured digital training programs, financial incentives for technology adoption, and a collaborative ecosystem connecting SMEs with universities and stakeholders. Policymakers must also develop inclusive digital infrastructure and a regulatory framework supporting sustainable online business practices. Future research is encouraged to utilize local databases such as the Science and Technology Index (Sinta). Future research is also encouraged to conduct empirical studies to examine the dynamic effects of social media marketing on SME growth, explore mediating variables such as innovation capacity and customer engagement, and integrate cross-sector comparisons to capture the diverse landscape of Indonesian SMEs.

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