

WhatsApp Story as a Medium of Digital Marketing Communication for MSME in Bogor Regency

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Abstract

A number of studies have proven that in this era, traditional marketing has been abandoned by many business people. This is inseparable from a number of weaknesses of traditional marketing such as high costs and one way communication. As the backbone of the community's economy, many MSMEs are now leaving traditional marketing and switching to digital marketing. WhatsApp is an instant messaging application that is widely used by MSMEs as a digital marketing medium. The purpose of this study is to identify the benefit of WhatsApp Story as a digital marketing communication medium for MSMEs in Bogor Regency. The research using qualitative methods by interviewing and online observations. Based on the results, MSMEs in Bogor Regency have implemented the 4 Dimensions of Social Media Marketing in marketing their products through their WhatsApp Story. The reasons MSME members in Bogor Regency prefer to use WhatsApp Story for marketing are because it is simple, practical, fast, low cost and helps increase turnover. They only need to take a photo of their product, create a photo description, upload it and then just wait for the response from the netizen. However, nowadays mostly MSME members in Bogor Regency still share their own personal life, then using it for promoting or selling products.

Keywords: Bogor Regency, digital marketing communication, MSME, WhatsApp Story

Introduction

Developments in technology that take place today have indulged people in various things, one of which is in communicating. In this era, communication has become increasingly popular as there are so many types of social media, ranging from social media networking, discussion forums, and social media chatting. Nowadays, social media is becoming a favorite due to its simplicity of use. By simply being able to connect to the internet, people are able to have conversations. WhatsApp is the most widely used social media chat in the world. According to data from Business of Apps, as quoted from data indonesia.id, in the first quarter of 2023 the number of WhatsApp users in the world was 2.45 billion. Indonesia is the third largest country of WhatsApp users in the world, with 112 million people.

WhatsApp is present to replace the role of SMS (Short Message Service) by providing more interesting services. Through WhatsApp, the users not only can deliver messages but are also able to send photos, videos, voice messages, documents and user location information (Kurniawan 2012). Other interesting offers from WhatsApp are low costs. There is no need for users to buy credit like sending SMS. They only need to find an internet connection so that they can immediately send messages through their WhatsApp application (Hartanto 2020).

Practically, WhatsApp is not only used to exchange messages between individuals, but also used to support other activities, namely as an online learning media (Ardiani & Pujirianto 2022), information and learning media for students (Sari 2018), communication media by community leaders (Trisnani 2017), and marketing media (Hendriyani et al 2020; Dwiantari & Slahanti 2022). Various businesses have chosen WhatsApp as a marketing medium to market their products, including MSME entrepreneurs (Mawadati et al 2022).

The decision to use digital marketing, such as WhatsApp, has become a good choice. As stated by Smith & Ze Zook (2011), social media, including WhatsApp, can help marketing activities because it makes it easier for businesses to interact with customers. They can easily receive a wide range of feedback from their customers or other stakeholders. Some of this feedback can be realized in new products, new concepts, or new brands. During the process of turning feedback into new ideas, business owners can involve customers or make customers brand ambassadors. This strengthens customer loyalty to the business.

There are several supporting features of WhatsApp, including signs of successful message delivery (received and read); sending photos, videos, audio, location, and contacts; view contact; avatar; adding conversation shortcut; email conversation; forward; emoticons, call; video call; block (to block other people's numbers); story; group chat; and end to end encryption to secure messages and calls so that they can be seen by the closest people (Angela et al 2023). One of the features contained in the WhatsApp application is WhatsApp Story. As well as being used as a medium for self-expression (Huaida 2021; Pratiwi & Amelasasih 2022); self-expression, curiosity, and entertainment (Mukit & Sa'diyah 2019); WhatsApp Story is also used as a product marketing medium for MSME entrepreneurs. MSME entrepreneurs found it easy to promote their products on WhatsApp Status. Moreover, WhatsApp Story has also helped MSME actors in increasing their sales (Andamisari 2021). For example, MSME entrepreneurs who are using WhatsApp Story as a marketing medium are MSMEs in Bogor Regency. These MSME entrepreneurs named themselves the Teras Ciapus community. The Teras Ciapus members use WhatsApp Story to engage their target market starting from teenagers, and tweens to adults. Each day the members of Teras Ciapus spread photos of their selling products with the hope that some of their acquaintances or friends will buy the products they offer (Pratiwi et al 2023).

The 4 Dimensions of Social Media Marketing Use by Hauer (Solis 2010) will be used to analyze how context, communication, collaboration and connection are being implemented by MSME entrepreneurs in Bogor Regency through their WhatsApp Story. Context is a method to build a message that you want to convey by using sentences, and the contents of the right message with a certain format. There are indicators contained in the context consisting of the way of presentation, the design created, the time, and the type of content shared. Dimension communication is how to deliver messages or share messages and listen to messages. Includes how to properly respond and create messages so that they can be well received by other social media users. Several indicators contained in Communication are the response of marketers, the type of message delivery, and the effectiveness of a message. Collaboration requires marketers to work together with other marketers to obtain a much more effective marketing strategy. Collaboration indicators are involvement and cooperation. Last, Connection is one of the ways that marketing does after providing a message or delivering information about a product. Then it is how to maintain relationships with social media users

that have been well established which aims to create effective relationships. The Indicators in this Connection are sustainability and reciprocity.

There are several existing research that have examined WhatsApp Story as a marketing medium for MSMEs. Some of them were studied with a broader scope, namely digital and social media marketing, and did not specify WhatsApp Status (Pratiwi et al 2023; Mujayana & Santoso 2022; Pramawati et al 2020; Fatimah et al 2019). There is only one research so far that focuses on examining the use of WhatsApp Story as a marketing medium for MSMEs (Andamisari 2021). That research used a qualitative approach with interview data collection techniques. Considering this opportunity, the aim of this research is to analyze the use of WhatsApp Story as a marketing medium for MSMEs in Bogor Regency. This research does not only interview Bogor Regency MSME entrepreneurs but also conducts observations of the WhatsApp Stories they use.

Method

The research is descriptive qualitative research. Qualitative research is a study that seeks to find a meaning of a phenomenon based on the perspective of participants or informants (Creswell, John W., 2017). The techniques used for data collection are interviews and observations. During this research, interviews were conducted with three MSME entrepreneurs who live in Ciapus District, Bogor Regency. The three are the members of the community in Ciapus Subdistrict, which are DD, CC, and WW. The reason for selecting these three informants is due to the fact that all three are members of MSMEs in Ciapus District who actively use WhatsApp Story to market their products. Observations were also conducted on the WhatsApp Stories of the three informants in this research. The purpose of this observation is to complement the interview data and ensure that the interview data is confirmed. The time span of observation is 30 days, starting on 12 June-11 July 2023.

Results and Discussion

WhatsApp Story, easy and efficient

WhatsApp is an application that is widely used by members of the Teras Ciapus UMKM Community. Members of the UMKM Community Teras Ciapus stated that WhatsApp is simpler when compared to other applications or social media (Pratiwi et al 2023). More or less the same response was also conveyed by DD and WW regarding WhatsApp Story as a promotional medium. DD stated that the reason he used WhatsApp Story as a medium for promoting his product was because it was easier to use and the response was faster. DD only needs to take a photo of the product he wants to promote. After that, he opened the WhatsApp application and then headed to the WhatsApp Story feature. Then he selects the product photo he took earlier, creates a photo caption and then uploads it. Next, he is just waiting for responses from people who have seen the WhatsApp Story that he has made.

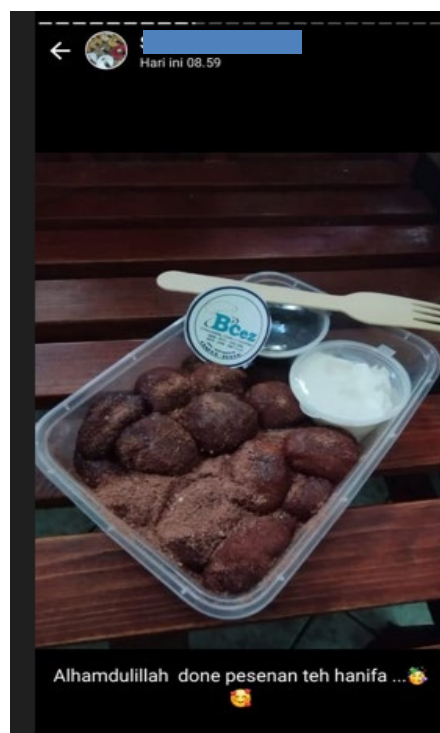
Apart from offering convenience, WhatsApp Story also offers time efficiency. Time efficiency is needed when WW is getting lots of cake orders. Moreover, in carrying out the role as an MSME actor, he does everything himself, from buying raw materials, making them

to delivering them to customers. For this reason, using WhatsApp Story as a medium for promoting their selling products is very helpful. WhatsApp Story makes WW save time in the promotion process. Apart from providing convenience and time efficiency, WhatsApp Story also offers other things. CC stated that he used WhatsApp Story as a medium for promoting his product because he was more active in using WhatsApp than other applications or other social media. For him as an MSME actor, actively using WhatsApp Story provides its own advantages. He has become more frequent in uploading photos of the products he wants to promote. He added that on the other hand, from the customer's point of view, WhatsApp Story is an easy-to-see feature. So the potential for potential customers to see the WhatsApp Story that CC has uploaded is quite large.

These three Bogor Regency MSME actors still use Personal WhatsApp as a promotional medium. This is in accordance with the findings of previous research which found that only a small proportion of MSMEs in the Teras Ciapus Community use WhatsApp Business. Others still use personal WhatsApp to promote their products (Pratiwi et al 2023).

Uploads by members of the Teras Ciapus Community on WhatsApp Story

For MSME actors who use WhatsApp as a promotional medium, WhatsApp Story is like a window. DD admits that he only uploads the products he sells every day such as es kul kul, seblak baso aci, and so on. Besides that, other products uploaded by DD are products that must be ordered in advance, such as Bolen, Tarts, and other wet cakes. Online observations were made of the WhatsApp Story uploads of the three MSME actors. DD is seen frequently uploading photos of food and cakes that have been ordered by his customers. As shown in Figure 1 below.



Source: Research results in

Figure 1. WhatsApp Story DD

In Figure 1 you can see DD's WhatsApp Story upload showing the mochi bits he arranged in the container. The upload also contains a caption that reads: *'Alhamdulillah done Hanifah's tea order..'*. In addition to writing, the upload caption also contains two emoticons, namely a face emoticon surrounded by a heart and a party face emoticon. Both mean happy expressions from DD for orders from customers. Apart from being happy that his customers have ordered his products, he is also happy because he has finished making orders from his customers. DD often shares similar uploads on his WhatsApp Story. Every time there is an order from a customer, he will definitely upload it on his WhatsApp Story. Through the upload on his WhatsApp Story, it can be concluded that the WhatsApp Story displayed by DD is a form of gratitude to God and his gratitude to customers who have ordered their products.

CC wants to show different things through his WhatsApp Stories. Based on interview data, CC stated that apart from uploading photos and videos of his merchandise, he also uploaded activities with the MSME community and personal matters. Based on digital observation data, it is known that for the past month (from June to July 2023), CC has uploaded merchandise, activities with the community, and personal matters. CC itself is an MSME player that focuses on selling wet cakes such as Mochi Rolls, Bolen Cakes, and various other cakes. But he is also seen uploading other types of food such as Cireng, as well as drinks produced by his colleagues in the community.

Based on digital observations made, CC seems to be more likely to upload photos of his activities with the community, family problems, and the contents of his outpourings. This is as shown in Figure 2.

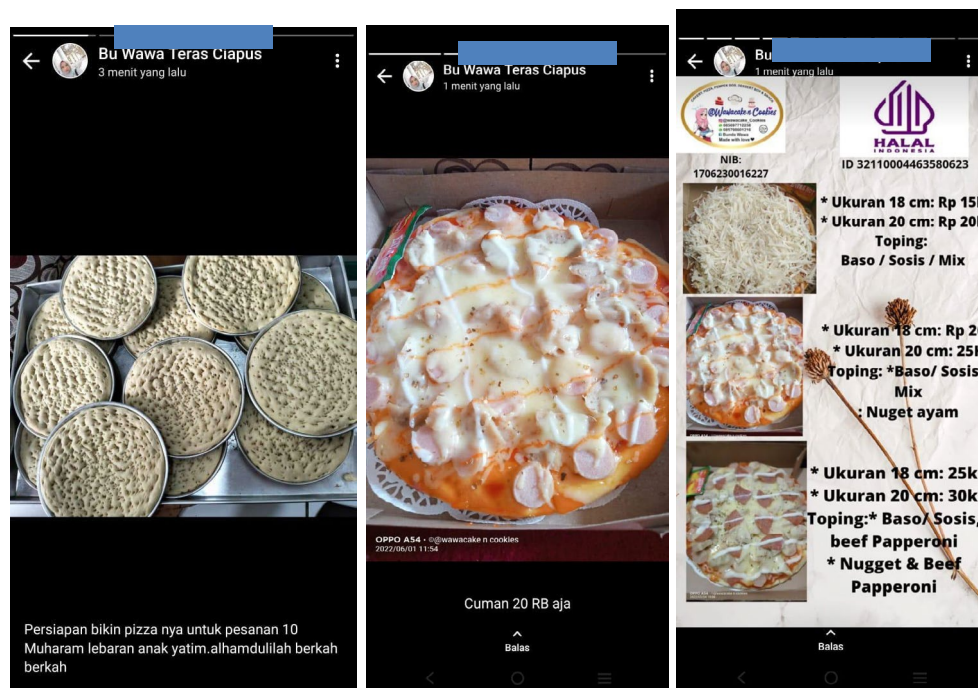


Source: Research results in

Figure 2. WhatsApp Story CC

Figure 2 shows a photo of CC together with his colleagues in the community in a bazaar activity. On the picture, there is a caption with the caption: *"Still can't get away from responsibility for the KUITCM stand, you have to stop by even for a moment to check and check everything, good luck everyone, hope the event goes smoothly"*. The caption ends with a muscular arm emoticon. CC is seen quite often uploading photos of his activities with the MSME community on his WhatsApp Status. This is not surprising because CC is one of the administrators of a UMKM. Through a number of his uploads, he wants to give the impression of being an active and responsible MSME administrator.

WW also has another point of view that he wants to impress on his WhatsApp Story. WW admits that apart from uploading his selling cake products, he also uploads family events and activities he does with the MSME community. Based on online observations made, WW displays the process of making its merchandise more often. This can be seen in Figures 3a, b, and c.



Source: Research results in

Figure 3a, b and c. WhatsApp Story CC

In Figure 3a, WW displays photos of a number of pizza pans that have been filled with pizza dough ready for topping and baking. On the image, there is a caption that reads: *"Preparation to make pizza for orders for 10 Muharram Eid orphans. Thank God, blessings and blessings."* Shortly after the upload, WW uploaded another photo (Figure 3b). In the photo, there is a cooked pizza served in a box. The caption contained in the upload reads: *"Just 20 RB"*. Then, WW uploads a photo (Figure 3c) which is a catalog of the pizzas he sells. In the photo catalog, there are photos of various pizza variants, descriptions of pizza sizes, pizza prices, and pizza toppings.

Based on the photos WW uploaded, it can be seen that WW is the type of businessman who values process. He wants to tell you that the pizza he sells is his own creation. The catalog he has impresses WW as a detailed and neat person. This can be seen from the contents of the catalog which displays photos of the food he sells, sizes, prices, and toppings. What is shown in the three informants in Figures 1, 2, and 3 is the application of the context dimension in the 4 Dimensions of Social Media Marketing Use according to Hauer (Solis 2010). In the context dimension, Hauer explains how a business person constructs a story or message. The three MSME members in Bogor Regency have different ways of forming stories in their WhatsApp Stories. DD who really appreciates his customers, CC is an MSME activist and WW is very detailed and neat.

In the visual aspect, the photos uploaded by UMKM members in Bogor Regency are quite good. But there are still some shortcomings. For example, the photo in Figure 1. The photo shows chocolate-flavored mochi bites cookies. Viewed from the aspect of the arrangement, the photo is good enough. However, when viewed from the lighting side, the photo is still lacking. Though lighting is a mandatory element in photography. Good lighting or lightning will produce good photos. Light can produce photos that look like the original (Giwanda 2003).

In each upload, the three MSME members in Bogor Regency have similarities in terms of language style. All three use everyday language to write their respective WhatsApp Story captions. It was even known several times that they used the Sundanese regional language in the WhatsApp Story caption. On the one hand, the use of everyday language or regional language has the advantage of being closer to customers in the area. However, on the other hand, the use of everyday language and regional languages can make it difficult for customers who do not understand them to understand them. According to Kasali (1995) information conveyed in advertisements must use language that is easy to understand so that consumers are interested in buying.

When asked whether there was a specific schedule for uploading content on their respective WhatsApp Stories, two informants, WW and CC, both answered that there was no specific schedule. WW admits that the reason he doesn't have a specific schedule for uploading product photos on WhatsApp Story is because the device he uses is often used by his children. CC reasoned that he would upload product photos on his WhatsApp Story if a desire arose. It's different with DD who stated that he has a special schedule for uploading product photos on his WhatsApp Story. He will upload photos or products on his WhatsApp Story when he is free, namely at night. On that night he will upload photos and videos of the products he will sell the next day. In one day, the three informants unanimously answered that they had uploaded more than two product content on their respective WhatsApp Stories. Even based on digital observations made, WhatsApp Story CC and DD can upload more than five product content per day.

Many responses and sales increased after uploading product photos via WhatsApp Story

The three informants agreed that shortly after they uploaded product photos via their respective WhatsApp Stories, there were immediate responses from their customers. WW and DD admit that the majority of the responses they get are orders from existing or repeat

customers. Even DD had a unique experience. Shortly after he uploaded his mango ice wares on WhatsApp Story, at that time his customers bought all the mango ice. Even though the mango ice was not ready to serve or it was still runny.

A slightly different story is told by CC. CC admitted that shortly after he uploaded a product photo on WhatsApp Story, he received lots of responses. But sometimes the response is just asking questions about the product. However, CC still consistently uses WhatsApp Story to promote its products. What's more, what he promotes is not just his own merchandise. It turned out that CC also helped promote the products of his friends in the Teras Ciapus community by using his WhatsApp Story.

WhatsApp Story is believed to be able to help increase the turnover of MSME actors. This was acknowledged by the three informants in this study. CC admits that since using WhatsApp Story as a medium for promoting its sales products, its turnover can reach 50%. More or less the same confession was conveyed by WW. He stated that WhatsApp Story helped increase his turnover by up to 30%. Different again with DD. Even though he doesn't know for sure what percentage of his turnover has increased, he believes that since using WhatsApp Story he has felt an increase in sales. DD said that before using WhatsApp Story, in a day he only used up 10 items. However, since promoting his merchandise on WhatsApp Story, in a day his merchandise can run out of 20. WhatsApp Story has indeed been proven to help increase the turnover of MSMEs. This is as found in Andamisari's research (2021). Through WhatsApp Status, residents of Medan Satria Bekasi can also increase the number of product sales and grow the businesses they run. In addition to increasing turnover, WW also admits that after using WhatsApp Story as a promotional medium, he has gained many new customers. This new customer has more or less added to WW's turnover. He believes that his old customers play a role in promoting the cakes he sells.

The bustling customer response and increased turnover cannot be separated from the style of message delivery adopted by these MSME actors. Based on the results of online observations, it is known that the three informants were very fast and seemed friendly in responding to potential customers and customers. Even though they were just asking questions about the products they uploaded, they still responded. This is as experienced directly by researchers. In the second week of July, the writer saw a pizza photo uploaded on WW's WhatsApp Story. The author responded by sending a drooling emoticon. Then the writer asked about the price of the pizza. Quickly, WW responded by sending a catalog of the pizzas he was selling. Even though in the end the researcher did not order because the distance was too far, WW still gave a positive response. He even invited researchers to come to his shop to taste the pizza he made. This action taken by WW made the researcher feel comfortable and interested in visiting his shop in person.

The methods used by WW in responding to researchers as potential customers have implemented the communication dimension in the 4 Dimensions of Social Media Marketing Use according to Hauer (Solis 2010). Huer explained that the communication dimension is an effort made by businesses to listen and respond so that messages are conveyed properly and a sense of comfort grows from prospective customers. Moreover, WW has a catalog that explains in detail the products it sells. This finding is in accordance with the findings in the research of Ramadiansyah & Chaerowati (2021) who found that a complete catalog is an important assessment element in the dimensions of using social media marketing.

Connected with Other Social Media

The three informants stated that they had social media accounts. However, there are informants who do not use social media accounts for promotion. CC for example. His only social media account is Facebook. Even though he never uses his Facebook account to promote products, he writes his WhatsApp number on the bio of the Facebook account. CC's purpose in writing down his WhatsApp number on his Facebook account is so that people who only know him on Facebook and intend to order his sales products can contact him via WhatsApp.

Similar recognition was also stated by WW. He admits that he has Facebook, Instagram, and Tiktok accounts. However, he did not use these three accounts for promotion. He admits that he is not very good at using the three social media. Moreover, she feels that promotion through the three social media will take a lot of time, and she has to save time so she can complete orders from her customers and carry out her obligations as a housewife.

Another thing stated by DD. He admits that now DD is starting to learn how to promote through his social media accounts. DD stated that apart from Facebook and Instagram, which he has had for a long time, he now has Tiktok and Snack Video accounts. Even though he feels a little inconvenient when he has to upload photos and videos of his products on a number of social media accounts that he has, he still tries to get used to them.

Based on digital observations made, among the three informants, only CC implemented the collaboration dimension in the 4 Dimensions of Using Social Media Marketing according to Hauer (Solis 2010). As explained by Hauer, collaboration is one way to work together between marketers and other marketers to obtain a much more effective marketing strategy. The indicators in this Collaboration are involvement and cooperation. CC doesn't only upload merchandise on its WhatsApp Story. But he is also seen frequently uploading merchandise belonging to his friends in the MSME community. This is as shown in Figure 4 below.



Source: Research results in

Figure 4. WhatsApp Story CC

Feature 4 is a photo uploaded by CC in the fourth week of July 2023. This photo shows the Peanuts and Seek Snacks packaged in a small pouch. The upload contains the caption: "Cangput and mini pastels, guys... only 5,000 per pack". After being confirmed, the two types of snacks were not food products produced by CC. These two products are the result of production from friends in the MSME community. CC admits that he often uploads photos of products his friends sell in the community. He feels happy to be able to help spread the merchandise of his friends to a wider market share. A number of previous studies have explained the importance of the collaboration variable in social media marketing. For example, research conducted by Theandra (2022) explains that the Porkita brand has collaborated with the Masterpork brand. This is done so that marketing is done more effectively. Even Sanjaya (2020) states that the collaboration variable is closely related to consumer buying interest.

Always maintain a relationship with customers

The last dimension applied by MSME actors in Bogor Regency according to Hauer (Solis 2010) is connection. Connection is an effort made by business people to maintain relationships with social media users, especially their customers. WW admits that to always build relationships with his customers, he often gives promos. The promos that he gives are usually in the form of price discounts, especially for purchasing products in large quantities. For example, to purchase Pempek with a minimum quantity of 15 packs, the price per pack, which was originally Rp. 12,000, becomes Rp. 11,000. Apart from providing special prices for purchasing products in large quantities, WW also provides promos on special days. Last year, for example, he held a special Mother's Day promo by selling simple tarts for Rp. 60,000. If it's a normal day, he will sell the simple cake with a diameter of 18cm for IDR 85,000



Source: Research results

Figure 5. Tart Mother's Day promo program made by WW

DD also made a similar effort. DD has a weekly program to please its customers. One of them is the Barokah Friday promo. Every Friday, DD will give a discount of IDR 2,000 to customers who buy their fruit salad. Another promotion that DD gives to its customers is free iced orange juice for every purchase of Korean food. Like WW, DD's goal in making this promotion is to pamper its customers. He hopes that his customers will remain loyal by continuing to buy the food or products he sells.

Apart from providing discounts and discounts for their customers, another effort made by WW and DD in implementing the connection dimension is uploading customer testimonials that have made purchases on their respective WhatsApp Stories. Ramadiansyah & Chaerowati (2021) state that applying connections or ways of maintaining pre-existing relationships with consumers is very important so that consumers trust and do not turn away. Even Ariesandy and Zuleastina (2019) found that connection is closely related to customer buying interest. Based on the data description above, it can be concluded that the three informants who are members of MSMEs in Bogor Regency have implemented 4 dimensions of social media marketing:

Table 1. Implementation of the 4 Dimensions of Social Media Marketing
by SMEs in Bogor Regency

No.	Dimensions of Social Media Marketing	Application
1	Context	Displays a positive impression of products sold on each WhatsApp status
2	Communication	Respond and respond to customers quickly and well
3	Collaboration	Promote friends' products via WhatsApp Story
4	Connection	- Give discounts and discounts on special days. - Upload customer testimonials

Source: Research results

Conclusion

MSME entrepreneurs in Bogor Regency have also implemented the 4 Dimensions of Social Media Marketing in marketing products through their WhatsApp Stories. The four dimensions of Social Media Marketing consist of context, communication, collaboration, and connection. The context dimension applied by Bogor Regency MSMEs on WhatsApp Story as a marketing medium is how business owners show a positive impression of the products they sell. The application of the communication dimension carried out by Bogor Regency MSMEs on their WhatsApp Story is how they respond to customers promptly and properly. The collaboration dimension is seen in how to promote the products of friends through

WhatsApp Stories. The connection dimension is expressed by providing discounts and price cuts on special days and uploading customer testimonials.

MSME entrepreneurs in Bogor Regency have chosen to use WhatsApp Story for marketing purposes because the process is easy, practical, efficient, and affordable. All they need to do is take a photo of the product to be promoted, make a description of the photo, and then upload it. Buyer responses will be seen after the photo is uploaded. The MSME entrepreneurs in Bogor Regency also admitted that promotions made through WhatsApp Story were helping to increase their sales as well. However, Bogor Regency MSME players still often make consumers confused because the information is mixed with personal problems on their WhatsApp Stories. This happens because they need to use a dedicated contact number and use the WhatsApp Business application to promote their products.

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