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THE APPLICATION OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE TO CREATE PROMOTIONAL CONTENT IN DIGITAL MARKETING TRAINING

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ABSTRACT

Currently, social media has become an important platform in the world of business and Digital Marketing. Participants in the entrepreneurship training program are provided with knowledge and skills in the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to create promotional text content for social media posts. The purpose of this research is to analyze the application of AI in creating promotional content in Digital Marketing training within the Entrepreneurial Skills Education Program organized at SKB Jepara. The research method used is qualitative research with a case study approach. The researcher selected 5 (five) training participants as data sources using purposive sampling technique. The data collection method used was interviews. The research results show that the success of applying AI to create promotional message content is using a hybrid method, namely composing the promotional message concept using AI and then manually modifying the content by humans. In conclusion, the researchers suggest that the duration of this AI-based Digital Marketing training be extended. For future research, it is recommended to further explore how the combination of AI and human creativity in content creation can be optimized, as well as the long-term impact of such training on the improvement of participants' skills and promotional success.

KEYWORDS: - Artificial Intelligence, Digital Marketing, Promotion, Training.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Entrepreneurship Skills Education Program (PKW) is one of the priorities of the national medium-term plan in Indonesia for 2020-2024, focusing on improving human resources (HR) with quality and competitiveness. The PKW program is an educational service conducted through courses and training to provide knowledge, skills, and foster an entrepreneurial attitude in managing personal and environmental potential that can be used as a foundation for entrepreneurship.

SKB Jepara, as one of the educational institutions that offers course and training services, organizes the PKW program every year. Based on the data held by the institution, at least 25 participants complete the training each year. Based on the Technical Guidelines for Banper PKW, it is stated that the implementation of PKW learning must collaborate with digital platforms. Thus, in the PKW curriculum with the chosen type of Pastry and Bakery Skills (Boga), SKB Jepara includes material on Digital Marketing as one of the minimum requirements that must be covered related to Marketing in the program curriculum.

Currently, social media has become an important platform in the world of business and Digital Marketing. Based on data from We are Social released in January 2024, there are 139 million social media user identities in Indonesia. This figure is equivalent to 49.9% of the total population in Indonesia. This makes social media a quite promising market. If most customers are engaged with social media, entrepreneurs must also engage with social media (Tiago & Veríssimo, 2014).

Social media, as one of the tools in content marketing management, also aims to bring customers closer and even engage them to follow a brand or a company (Saraswati & Hastasari, 2020). Digital marketing on social media is inseparable from the engagement between captions or text content presented in a post and the interests of users on social media. The presence of AI (Artificial Intelligence) can assist in processing the creation of promotional text content on social media. AI also enables the creation of content and more effective communication (Lusch et al., 2009). AI plays an increasingly important role in digital marketing (Vlačić et al., 2021).

Participants in the entrepreneurship training program are provided with knowledge and skills in using AI to create promotional text content for social media posts. It is necessary to conduct a more in-depth study regarding the application of AI for creating promotional content in the Digital Marketing training within the Entrepreneurial Skills Education Program held at SKB Jepara.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Skills are very important to become and succeed in entrepreneurship, and developing students' entrepreneurial skills is the main goal of entrepreneurship education programs (Steira, 2024). Development of a theoretical model to explain the short-term and long-term effects of entrepreneurship training on entrepreneurial self-efficacy, passion, and business creation. The results of the field experiment show that the post-training process is always changing, and that effective entrepreneurship is key to maintaining high motivation after training. In the end, business creation occurs due to high spirits after training (Gielnik et al., 2017).

Digital marketing and social media have become essential tools for spreading awareness, promoting products and services, connecting with customers, and stimulating new business. These platforms create opportunities for both existing and upcoming businesses. Social media is the cheapest way to promote products and services because it helps identify customer needs and assists in tailoring products and services to meet those needs. Aspiring entrepreneurs can build their businesses and develop their skills through various social media platforms (Kataria & Phukan, 2022). Identification of strategies and tactics for digital engagement in developing social media marketing capabilities, resulting in various digital engagement strategies (total of 8) and tactics (total of 15) for the four layers of social media marketing capability definitions, namely, connecting, engaging, coordinating, and collaborating (Drummond et al., 2020).

The use of the internet and social media has changed consumer behavior and the way companies conduct their business (Dwivedi et al., 2021). The ability of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to analyze large amounts of data and make predictions allows companies to target their ads and content more effectively to specific audiences (Gupta, 2023). Valuable insights for businesses and researchers, enhancing understanding of the evolving role of AI in digital marketing strategies (Ziakis & Vlachopoulou, 2023). AI-generated content shows significant advantages in enhancing user satisfaction and interaction, and this conclusion provides empirical support for the optimization of social media platform content (Zhe & Srijinda, 2024). Teknologi AI tidak menggantikan pencipta manusia, tetapi bekerja bersama mereka, membuka kemungkinan baru untuk penciptaan konten media (Song, 2023).

3. METHODS

In this study, a qualitative research approach was used. Qualitative research is essentially a systematic process for discovering theories, not for testing hypotheses or theories. The case study approach was chosen because the activity of utilizing AI to create promotional text content was provided in the Digital Marketing training, applied in product promotion activities by the trainees in the Culinary Entrepreneurship Skills Program at SKB Jepara. The researcher collected data from 5 (five) training participants. The data source in the form of informants is expected to represent the overall condition of the training participants' population. The researcher selects informants who are considered still active in entrepreneurial activities, promoting through social media, and utilizing AI to create promotional text content. In addition, the researcher considers the educational background of the training participants. The type of data to be explored includes a description of the condition of training participants after completing the training and investigating the application of Digital Marketing and AI in product promotion through interviews with informants.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

With the development of digital technology, social media has become the main platform for many companies to market their products and services. Some AI applications now offer various features to create more engaging and efficient promotional content. However, based on interviews and data that have been collected, it was found that not all training participants were able to utilize this technology even though its great potential was conveyed during the training.

From the interview with NA, it was revealed that the use of AI in creating promotional content on social media has not yet been practiced sustainably. NA emphasized that:

"Never made promotions using AI."

Although aware of the existence of this technology, NA feels the need to further improve understanding and skills in using AI effectively. This indicates a gap between the understanding of training materials related to the potential of technology and its adoption in the field.

In a further interview, NA added that one of the main reasons for the obstacles in using AI is the lack of adequate knowledge and skills. NA complained that:

"I need help to be able to use AI."

NA feels that they still need guidance to understand how AI can be applied in creating content that meets the needs and preferences of social media audiences.

Interview with another source (NF), who actively uses social media to promote their products, revealed that:

"First Instagram, then WhatsApp, and Facebook too."

The statement indicates that AI is often used to help compose promotional texts. This is especially true when preparing content to be posted on social media platforms such as Instagram, WhatsApp, and Facebook. The use of AI is felt to expedite the process of finding ideas and attractive text formats, although it does not always yield completely satisfying results.

NF mentioned that before posting, she often uses AI applications, such as ChatGPT and Gemini, to get inspiration and draft promotional texts. Although MetaAI has started to be introduced in WhatsApp, NF admitted that she has not yet used the application to create promotional content. As mentioned by NF:

"ChatGPT and Gemini. Yesterday I had a chance to try MetaAI, it just became available on WhatsApp, but it has never been used to create promotional text content."

Although it provides many benefits, NF also faces several challenges when using AI to compose promotional texts.

"Sometimes the words that come out do not match the results we want. Yes, the answer is correct, but I don't like it, I don't like the sentences generated by the AI, so I corrected them."

This illustrates that while AI can provide a good initial framework for promotional text, the final human touch is still necessary to adjust and refine it to meet specific preferences and needs.

Another source (AK), who was interviewed regarding social media platforms frequently used for product promotion using AI to create promotional text content, firmly stated that the Instagram platform is the most frequently used social media. In the conversation that took place, AK revealed that almost every time she is about to promote, she first prepares the content using AI. In this case, various AI applications such as Canva and ChatGPT often become the primary choices. AK revealed that:

"I prefer using Canva for visual design, and ChatGPT for crafting engaging text."

Furthermore, AK explained that the frequency of AI usage in promotional activities is very high, almost in every activity. AK explained that:

"Almost every time I am going to do a promotion, I first draft it using AI."

This shows that AI has played a significant role in the effectiveness of business communication in the current digital era.

However, behind the ease offered, AK also faces several obstacles. One of the difficulties she faces is editing the AI results to match the desired promotional style. AK added that:

"Sometimes there are difficulties in editing, and also difficulties when just starting to create content using ChatGPT."

The existence of AI indeed brings many advantages, but full dependence without any human touch remains a challenge.

From the results of the interview conducted with the source UA, it was found that the use of AI in creating promotional content on social media is not always a top priority. During the interview, UA mentioned that although there are various AI applications available, such as Gemini, their usage frequency is relatively low. UA mentioned that:

"It seems like it's not that often."

This shows that there is a tendency to be more selective in using AI according to the specific needs of the promotional campaign. This acknowledgment implies that although AI technology brings convenience, the decision to utilize it routinely still depends on the specific context of the campaign being conducted.

Talking about the main obstacle faced by UA regarding the use of AI for promotional content, which is the lack of necessity or urgency to conduct promotions regularly. In the interview, UA revealed that:

"Because there is no need to create something, there is rarely any promotion either."

From the statement, it is known that the use of AI in that context is not always consistent. The frequency of AI usage is influenced by various factors, including promotional needs and the availability of resources to create engaging and relevant content for the audience.

Interview with another source (IA), which discusses the frequency of AI usage in promotional activities on social media, mentioned that:

"Instagram, but not too often."

This describes how AI has become a significant tool in designing promotional content, particularly in the context of relevant social media such as Instagram. However, its use is not continuous, but selectively chosen depending on the promotional needs and the specific context of the content being created.

Expanding on the explanation above, AI, especially applications like Gemini and ChatGPT, provides users with the facility to create well-structured promotional texts. These two applications were mentioned by IA in their statement:

"I have used Gemini before, and I have also used ChatGPT."

Furthermore, IA revealed that:

"Usually use AI to mix your own words before promotion."

This quote reflects the adaptation and integration of AI usage in daily practices where AI does not fully replace manual creativity, but rather complements it by providing an initial framework.

The frequency of AI usage in promotional activities depends on the characteristics and operational needs of individuals or organizations. This frequency is influenced by personal preferences and the AI's ability to handle specific tasks. The AI source also explained the challenges faced, saying that:

"The words are still too stiff, but they are quite helpful for finding inspiration."

From this perspective, it is evident that despite some challenges in creating dynamic and natural language, AI still offers great potential in facilitating the creative process and enhancing the operational efficiency of promotions.

Therefore, although AI has been widely adopted in promotional activities on social media, there is a general acknowledgment of the need for a combination of AI output and human creativity to achieve the most effective results. This integration depicts a hybrid future, where AI enables efficiency and innovation, while the human touch provides authenticity and emotional engagement in promotional content. In conclusion, although not yet perfect, the use of AI in social media

promotion is becoming increasingly important and will continue to evolve with technological advancements.

This research has presented comprehensive data on the success of implementing artificial intelligence (AI) in promotional activities on social media by training participants. In this research, the researchers will delve into the formulated problem, focusing on the application of AI in promotional activities on social media conducted by the training participants.

Based on the findings of the research conducted, it was found that the frequency of product promotion through social media such as WhatsApp has become an effective alternative for small business operators to introduce their products widely without requiring a large financial investment like in paid advertisements. On the other hand, this research also highlights significant challenges in managing time and promotional activities, which require careful planning and adaptive strategies to ensure communication with the audience remains smooth and continuous.

The results of the above study are similar to the findings of the research conducted by Jose (2018) which stated that all expatriate women interviewed in that study used social media and chat applications to promote their businesses. Facebook is used for brand creation and WhatsApp is used as a direct marketing tool to elicit purchase responses. Although traditional promotional tools are far from obsolete, their role is more complementary. The increasing trend is the combination of traditional tools and digital tools. Digital tools seem to have an advantage in promoting their businesses.

Furthermore, it is concluded that social media promotion strategies have the potential to increase initial interactions with the audience, although further development is needed to deepen audience engagement and conversion to actual purchases.

The results of this study are similar to the findings of research related to the use of social media for product marketing conducted by Drummond et al. (2020) where the findings in the study are organized based on four layers of Social Media (SM) marketing capabilities: connect, engage, coordinate, and collaborate. The explanation related to "connect" is that the company in this case demonstrates the use of both social media platforms (in this study, Facebook and Twitter) to strategically target messages by considering reciprocal engagement and to connect with sought-after business actors outside its local network. The explanation related to "engage" is that the content of the messages in this category depends on feedback and is created through interactions between the case company and network actors. The content of the message involves social communication and resources in bilateral engagement primarily at the dyadic level but also at the multi-actor level. The explanation related to "coordinate" is that the company in this case uses both SM platforms to quickly respond to the needs of its Business to Business (B2B) partners, to act and create activities with its partners. The company is also able to use SM to share knowledge and information that enhances the products and services exchanged within the network. In the collaboration category, the case company demonstrates the ability to use its SM platform as an activity integrator between one too many partners and to create new resources between one or many partners.

Another finding highlight the importance of combining AI output with human creativity to achieve optimal promotional results, and emphasize the need for more personalized and responsive strategies to audience needs as a potential solution.

The results of this study are similar to the findings of the research conducted by Zhang & Gosline (2023) who studies the use of large language models and generative AI to create marketing content, where there are four main paradigms for human-AI collaboration: "only humans," "generative AI" (ChatGPT-4), "human-augmented" (where humans make the final decision with AI output as a reference), or "AI-augmented" (where AI makes the final decision with human output as a reference). Zhang found that, contrary to the expectations of some literature rejecting existing algorithms about conventional predictive AI, the content generated by "generative AI" and "augmented AI" was considered to be of higher quality than that produced by human experts and human experts augmented by AI.

5. CONCLUSION

This research has been conducted to analyze the application of AI in creating promotional content in the Digital Marketing training within the Entrepreneurial Skills Education Program organized at SKB Jepara. Through this research, it is hoped that a deeper understanding can be gained on how the use of AI in creating promotional content on social media, which is part of measuring participants' promotional skills, can be achieved.

The use of AI in promotional activities on social media by training participants shows success in its implementation. The hybrid method is key in optimizing AI, where the initial concept is created using AI and then manually modified by humans. This strategy helps in generating promotional messages that are more personal and relevant to the target audience.

From a practical standpoint, the use of AI combined with a human touch in crafting promotional messages makes the content more engaging and relevant to the audience. Therefore, for training organizers, it is important to develop the use of hybrid methods to create this promotional content in training programs, so that training participants can be more competitive in running their businesses. From a theoretical perspective, this research contributes to the literature related to digital marketing and the use of AI in promotional activities. The results of this study affirm that the success of AI in digital marketing does not only depend on the technology itself but also on how AI is integrated with human creativity. This could encourage further research in the development of effective training models to maximize the collaboration between humans and technology in various digital marketing contexts.

In conducting this research, there are several shortcomings that need to be acknowledged and considered for future studies. One of the main shortcomings of this research is the relatively short duration of the study. This limited duration may affect the depth of analysis and understanding obtained regarding the process and impact of AI-based digital marketing training on promotional skills.

Based on the research results that have been conducted, the researchers suggest that the duration of this Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based Digital Marketing training be extended, so that participants have more time to delve into the material and refine their skills, especially in using AI tools and adjusting promotional strategies. For future research, it is recommended to further explore how the combination of AI and human creativity in content creation can be optimized, as well as the long-term impact of such training on the improvement of participants' skills and promotional success.

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