

Transformation of Digital Marketing Strategies through Re-Branding in Social-Media Based Culinary MSMEs

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ABSTRACT

The transformation of digital marketing strategies has become an important step for culinary SMEs in facing increasingly tight competition in the digital economy era. This research aims to analyze the role of re-branding in strengthening the digital marketing strategies of culinary SMEs based on social media. Changes in consumer behavior, which are more actively seeking information, comparing products, and conducting transactions through digital platforms, encourage businesses to adjust their brand identities to remain relevant and appealing. Through a descriptive qualitative approach with literature studies and case analyses, this research finds that re-branding not only serves to update visual images such as logos, packaging, and taglines, but also includes communication strategies, storytelling, and consistency in conveying product values across various digital channels. Social media acts as a catalyst in accelerating interactions between brands and consumers, building brand engagement, and expanding market reach at relatively efficient costs. Research results show that culinary SMEs that conduct social media-based re-branding are able to increase brand awareness, improve positioning, and strengthen customer loyalty. Additionally, re-branding has proven to drive innovation in content strategies, ranging from the use of creative visuals, collaborations with influencers, to the use of interactive features such as live streaming and user-generated content. Thus, the transformation of digital marketing strategies through re-branding becomes a key factor for the sustainability and competitiveness of culinary SMEs amid the changing global business landscape

INTRODUCTION

Culinary MSMEs are one of the business sectors that play an important role in supporting the national economy, both through their contributions to job creation, increasing people's income, and providing products that are close to consumers' daily needs (Lubis, 2024; Janah, 2024; Wati, 2024). This sector has unique characteristics because culinary products are not only related to functional aspects of meeting food needs, but also have cultural, social, and emotional values attached to each product offered. The existence of culinary MSMEs often represents local identity that has great potential to be developed into a creative economic attraction (Yusri, 2025). In the era of digitalization, the challenges faced by culinary MSMEs are becoming increasingly complex and layered. Competition comes not only from similar business actors at the local level but also from large brands that use digital technology massively to expand their markets. This situation demands culinary MSMEs to not only focus on product quality but also on brand management strategies to remain relevant to the dynamic needs of consumers. Changes in modern lifestyle, increasingly massive internet penetration, and a shift in consumption patterns towards online have driven a transformation in shopping behavior from traditional to digital. In this context, digital marketing becomes an important instrument that cannot be ignored by culinary MSMEs. The presence of social media, instant messaging applications, and marketplace platforms has changed the way consumers discover, choose, and interact with culinary products (Kulkarni, 2025). This provides a great opportunity for MSMEs to expand market reach at relatively lower costs compared to conventional marketing methods. Adopting digital marketing strategies also requires adaptability, creativity, and a deep understanding of consumer trends so that the efforts made are not just limited to online existence, but can also generate sustainable added value.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The transformation of digital marketing strategies is no longer just an option, but has become an urgent strategic necessity for SMEs, especially in the culinary sector that heavily relies on interaction with consumers and market trends (Humaira, 2025; Sawunggaling, 2025; Nofus, 2025). Social media platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook now serve not only as promotional channels but also as interactive spaces that allow business actors to introduce products, build brand image, and establish a closer emotional connection with the audience (Hidayani, 2025; Roosinda, 2025; Sitanggang, 2024). The speed of information dissemination, visual power, and high levels of user participation make social media an effective means to expand the market in a more cost-effective way compared to conventional methods (Thapliyal, 2024). In this framework, re-branding emerges as an important strategy to update the business identity to remain relevant to the development of trends, consumer preferences, and the constantly changing dynamics of the digital market. More than just changing visual appearances such as logos, packaging design, or identity colors, re-branding should be seen as a comprehensive effort that encompasses brand repositioning, renewal of communication strategies, and affirmation of the core values that business actors want to highlight. By re-

branding, culinary SMEs can assert their product differentiation, showcasing the uniqueness that sets them apart from competitors, simultaneously building a positive perception in the minds of consumers. This process also provides space for MSMEs to conduct strategic reflections on the direction of business development, including how they want to be perceived by consumers in the digital era. Additionally, rebranding that is integrated with digital marketing strategies can open up broader innovation opportunities. For example, through creative storytelling, collaboration with influencers, or the utilization of user-generated content, culinary MSMEs can strengthen emotional connections with customers and create a loyal digital community around their brand. This shows that rebranding is not only focused on aesthetic aspects but also on creating a strong, adaptive, and sustainable brand identity. Thus, digital-based rebranding can serve as a strategic foundation that helps culinary MSMEs survive while also growing in an increasingly competitive business ecosystem.

Previous research has shown that digital marketing has great potential in increasing brand awareness, expanding market reach, and strengthening consumer loyalty through more intensive interactions in the digital space (Rochefort, 2024; Listiorini, 2025; Zao, 2025). Social media-based strategies, such as the use of visual content, short videos, interactive campaigns, and collaborations with influencers, have proven capable of capturing consumer attention and creating stronger emotional connections compared to conventional approaches. Most existing studies tend to focus on the use of social media in general as a tool for promotion and communication, without deeply linking it to the aspect of brand identity transformation. For example, several studies emphasize the role of creative content in building interactions with audiences, the effectiveness of social media algorithms in enhancing message reach, or the analysis of consumer behavior on digital platforms. Although these findings are important, discussions about re-branding as an adaptive strategy integrated with digital marketing are still relatively limited, especially in the context of SMEs. However, changes in brand identity designed through re-branding not only affect the visual appearance but also the brand's repositioning in the market, the formation of consumer perceptions, and the creation of clearer differentiation in competition.

Thus, there is a research gap that needs to be bridged regarding how re-branding can be optimized to support the transformation of digital marketing strategies in MSMEs, particularly in the culinary sector. A deeper study on the integration of these two aspects is important because the culinary sector has unique dynamics, where image, identity, and consumer experience play a significant role in determining business success. Research exploring the synergy between digital marketing and re-branding is expected to provide both theoretical and practical contributions, enriching academic literature and providing applicable strategic recommendations for culinary MSME actors in the digital era. Most of the research on re-branding has been conducted on large companies that already have established brands and strong resources to support their brand transformation strategies. The studies generally highlight aspects of changes in visual identity, market repositioning, or corporate image

restructuring on a large scale, which of course have different dynamics in the context of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs). Meanwhile, research on rebranding in MSMEs is still relatively limited, even though MSMEs face limitations in financial resources, market reach, and a high dependence on changes in consumer trends. These limitations mean that rebranding strategies for MSMEs cannot be equated with those of large companies, but rather require a more flexible, creative approach based on community consumer engagement.

In this case, the culinary MSMEs have unique characteristics that distinguish them from other business sectors. Culinary products are very quickly influenced by fluctuating market tastes, have a relatively short product life cycle, and often depend on popular seasonal trends on social media. Product differentiation in culinary MSMEs is generally still simple, for example through distinct flavors, packaging concepts, or local nuances offered. Therefore, rebranding strategies are not only aimed at creating an attractive visual identity but also at building emotional closeness with consumers through a more authentic and personal brand experience. Direct interaction with consumers on social media, for instance, can be an important asset in strengthening identity and increasing customer loyalty. The gap in this research is important to explore further because re-branding strategies in culinary SMEs are likely to require a different approach compared to large companies. While in large companies rebranding emphasizes the consolidation of image and corporate repositioning, in culinary SMEs this strategy is more directed towards creating added value that is close to consumers, strengthening relevant brand narratives, and utilizing digital media as the main communication channel. Therefore, research on rebranding in culinary SMEs not only has the potential to enrich academic literature, but can also provide practical contributions in the form of strategic guidelines that are appropriate to the real conditions of SMEs in facing competition in the digital era.

Previous studies also tend to emphasize re-branding solely on visual aesthetic aspects, such as logo changes, the creation of new taglines, or redesigning packaging, without deeply linking it to a broader communication strategy. Such a perspective is indeed important to strengthen visual identity, but often inadequate to address market challenges in an increasingly competitive digital era. Amid the dominance of social media as the main channel of interaction between brands and consumers, re-branding needs to be understood not just as cosmetic changes, but as a strategic process that touches on communication, narrative, and the consumer experience as a whole. In the context of social media, re-branding demands a more creative and participatory approach. This process includes building consistent storytelling to strengthen brand image, consumer engagement in content creation through user-generated content that can enhance the sense of having towards the brand, up to the utilization of interactive features such as live streaming, stories, and collaboration with influencers to expand audience reach. This strategy enables the creation of a closer emotional bond while increasing consumer trust in the new identity being built. In other words, there is a gap in the literature that needs to be bridged, namely regarding how re-branding can be strategically integrated

with social media-based digital marketing. A more comprehensive study in this field is highly relevant, especially for culinary SMEs that have a high dependence on consumer trends and social media dynamics in building and maintaining competitiveness. Such research is expected to provide theoretical contributions in expanding the understanding of digital re-branding, as well as practical contributions in the form of applicable strategy recommendations to support business sustainability in the culinary sector.

The novelty of this research lies in its focus on combining re-branding with digital marketing strategies in the context of culinary SMEs. This study offers the perspective that re-branding is not just a visual update, but also a repositioning of the brand that is consistently communicated through various digital platforms. This approach enables culinary SMEs to not only enhance brand awareness, but also strengthen emotional ties with consumers, which ultimately impacts the increase in customer loyalty and business sustainability. This research contributes to the literature by presenting an analysis of how social media functions as a catalyst in the brand transformation process of culinary SMEs. Social media allows the re-branding process to be more interactive, participatory, and community-based, thus providing opportunities for SMEs to create a more personal brand experience. This is an important novelty, considering that most previous studies have still focused on one-way communication strategies and have not extensively discussed how consumers can actively engage in shaping brand identity. Thus, this research is expected to contribute both theoretically and practically. From an academic perspective, this study adds to the understanding of the integration of re-branding in digital marketing strategies for culinary SMEs. From a practical side, the research results can serve as a reference for SME actors to develop more relevant, effective, and competitive re-branding strategies, particularly by utilizing the potential of social media. Ultimately, the transformation of digital marketing strategies through re-branding is expected to enhance the competitiveness of culinary SMEs not just in the local market, but also in facing competition at the global level.

METHODOLOGY

This research uses the literature study method as the main approach. A literature study was chosen because the purpose of the research focuses more on exploring concepts, theories, and previous research findings related to the transformation of digital marketing strategies, re-branding, and the use of social media in culinary SMEs. This approach allows researchers to identify trends, research gaps, and find relationships between relevant concepts to build a comprehensive analytical framework.

The first stage in this literature study is the collection of data from various credible scientific sources, such as national and international journal articles, conference proceedings, academic books, research reports, and official publications from government agencies and organizations related to MSMEs. The literature search is conducted through online databases such as Google Scholar, Scopus, ResearchGate, and ScienceDirect using keywords "digital

marketing strategy", "re-branding", "social media marketing", "culinary MSMEs", and "brand transformation".

The second stage is literature selection with specific inclusion criteria, namely: research relevant to the themes of digital marketing, re-branding, and social media; literature published within the last ten years to align with the context of the latest digital developments; and research specifically discussing SMEs or small businesses in the culinary sector. Exclusion criteria are established to avoid literature that is popular or non-academic in nature, such as blog articles or personal opinions lacking scientific validity.

The third stage is content analysis of the selected literature. The analysis is conducted by examining in depth the research objectives, the methods used, the findings, and the contributions of each piece of literature. This process also includes identifying research gaps, which are areas that have not been extensively studied or still require strengthening, particularly regarding the relationship between rebranding and social media-based digital marketing strategies in culinary SMEs.

The final stage is literature synthesis, which involves integrating various findings to build a more comprehensive conceptual framework. Synthesis is conducted by comparing the results of previous studies, identifying patterns and differences, and formulating new understandings of how re-branding can serve as a strategic instrument in digital marketing transformation. The results of this synthesis serve as a foundation for researchers to develop discussions, draw conclusions, and provide theoretical and practical recommendations for the development of culinary SMEs based on social media. By using the literature study method, this research is expected to make a strong conceptual and practical contribution, even though it does not involve empirical field data. This approach remains relevant for examining the dynamic phenomenon of digital marketing, as the latest scientific literature can represent the trends, challenges, and opportunities faced by SMEs in conducting digital marketing.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the literature review indicate that the transformation of digital marketing strategies has had a significant impact on the development of culinary SMEs in the modern era. The use of social media is no longer just an option, but has become a strategic necessity to enhance brand visibility while also expanding market reach (Sularno, 2025; Ratnasari, 2025; Ratnasari, 2025). The presence of digital platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook not only serves as a one-way promotional tool but has also evolved into an interactive medium that allows business actors to engage in more intensive and personal two-way communication with consumers. This interaction fosters a closer relationship, builds trust, and strengthens consumer loyalty to the culinary products offered. Social media provides opportunities for culinary SMEs to showcase their brand identity in a more creative and authentic way through various forms of digital content. The use of high-quality photos and videos, brand storytelling, and the exploration of specific visual communication styles can emphasize the uniqueness of a product and differentiate it from competitors.

The utilization of interactive features such as stories, polling, live streaming, and collaboration with influencers further enriches the consumer experience in interacting with the brand, so that the brand is not only seen as a provider of products but also as a part of lifestyle and social identity for consumers. The success of culinary MSMEs in competing in the digital era greatly depends on how well they can manage their brand identity through digital channels. A strong and consistent brand identity will make it easier for consumers to recognize and remember, and ultimately choosing the product over other brands. This emphasizes that digital marketing is not just about increasing viewership or followers on social media, but also about building a continuous brand narrative that is relevant to trends and capable of addressing both the emotional and functional needs of consumers. The transformation of digital marketing strategies through social media has become one of the important pillars in strengthening competitiveness and sustainability of culinary SMEs (Sholihin, 2024; Krisna, 2024; Sifwah, 2024).

In this context, re-branding plays an important role as an adaptive strategy that can enhance brand relevance to keep up with the highly dynamic consumer trends. Consumers in the digital era tend to demand brands that not only offer product quality but also possess values, identity, and imagery that align with their lifestyles. Re-branding can no longer be understood narrowly as merely changing visual elements such as logos, packaging designs, or taglines, but rather as a more comprehensive strategic process. This process includes brand repositioning, updating communication narratives, and systematic efforts to shape new perceptions in consumers' minds so that the brand remains relevant, competitive, and memorable. Literature studies show that properly managed re-branding can significantly increase brand awareness, improving brand positioning in the market, as well as strengthening customer loyalty in the long term. Culinary SMEs that engage in social media-based rebranding, for example, can more quickly introduce their new identity through creative content, digital campaigns, or collaborations with influencers. These efforts make consumers feel more connected to the brand, thus increasing the chances of creating a strong emotional relationship. Rebranding also provides an opportunity for SMEs to improve an ineffective old image, adapt to visual trends and consumer tastes, and present clearer differentiation compared to competitors (Sopwan, 2025; Nugroho, 2024). Thus, rebranding is not just about changing the outward appearance, but more about how culinary SMEs can redefine meaning, value, and brand experience in the eyes of consumers. This is very important because in the culinary industry, consumer perception is often influenced by the image built through social media. Therefore, consistent rebranding integrated with digital marketing strategies will provide a competitive advantage that is hard to imitate, as well as increase the opportunity for business sustainability amid increasingly fierce competition.

Social media acts as a key catalyst that accelerates and expands the rebranding process in culinary SMEs. Digital platforms allow a brand's new identity to be communicated more quickly, massively, and interactively to a wide audience, even at a relatively low cost compared to conventional media. The new

identity displayed through digital strategy not only consists of visual elements but also includes brand narratives built through creative storytelling, collaborations with influencers, and the use of user-generated content. Such strategies have proven to be more effective in creating deep emotional experiences, as consumers feel directly involved in the brand journey. Social media provides a flexible space for SMEs to experiment with various content formats, ranging from photos, short videos, live streaming, to interactive features like polls or question boxes (Tatasari, 2025; Fandini, 2025). These features enable intensive two-way communication, allowing consumers to not only be passive message recipients but also part of the brand image formation process. Thus, social media is not just a platform for information dissemination, but a dynamic participatory arena where consumers can provide input, respond, and even influence the direction of brand development itself.

This condition emphasizes that the success of re-branding in culinary SMEs is largely determined by how well they can strategically and consistently utilize social media. Proper use of social media not only accelerates the introduction of a new identity but also strengthens brand legitimacy through social validation from engaged consumers. Therefore, social media can be viewed as an important instrument that changes the re-branding paradigm from a top-down, one-way process to a collaborative, community-based process, ultimately adding value to the competitiveness of culinary SMEs in the digital era. The literature also highlights several challenges faced by SMEs in implementing digital-based re-branding strategies, which in practice is not as simple as just changing the visual appearance of the brand. The limitations of resources, both financial and creative, become the main obstacles that often affect consistency in managing brand communications. Many small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the culinary sector can only make changes on a limited scale due to capital constraints for producing high-quality content or increasingly competitive digital advertising costs. This situation leads to rebranding efforts often being inconsistent and difficult to generate long-term impact.

The low level of digital literacy among some SME players also poses a significant challenge (Sucipto, 2025; Damayanti, 2025; Amal, 2025). Many business actors understand rebranding in a narrow sense, merely as changing logos, packaging designs, or slogans, without being supported by a comprehensive brand communication strategy. As a result, the change in brand identity is not integrated with a strong narrative, thus failing to build a new perception in the minds of consumers. The low understanding of social media algorithms, content management, and digital analytics also makes SMEs struggle to measure the effectiveness of their re-branding efforts. Another crucial challenge is the rapid change in trends on social media. Each platform has dynamics and audience preferences that are constantly changing, both in terms of content format and communication style. This demands SMEs to always be adaptive, creative, and responsive to avoid losing relevance in the eyes of consumers. However, for most SMEs, this demand becomes a burden due to limitations in time, energy, and the ability to consistently keep up with digital trend developments. Consequently, it can be concluded that although digital-

based re-branding offers significant opportunities to strengthen competitiveness, the success of such strategies It is highly dependent on the capacity of SMEs to overcome internal and external obstacles that exist.

Despite facing various challenges, strategic re-branding carried out through social media has proven to have a significant positive impact on the competitiveness and sustainability of culinary SMEs. A well-designed brand transformation allows business actors to expand their market reach, not only to local consumers but also to a broader new segment, including the younger generation that tends to be responsive to digital trends. In addition, re-branding has been proven to improve consumer loyalty by presenting a fresher, more relevant brand identity that resonates with audience preferences (Rimbawan, 2024; Wijayanti, 2025). This loyalty becomes an important asset because satisfied consumers not only make repeat purchases, but also act as promotion agents through word of mouth and user-generated content on social media. Re-branding also encourages the creation of clearer product differentiation compared to competitors. Culinary SMEs that reposition their brands by highlighting unique values such as recipe authenticity, sustainability concepts, or distinctive presentation styles can build competitive advantages that are difficult to imitate. The rebranding process often triggers innovation across various lines of business, ranging from the development of new products that are more in line with market trends, to improving consumer service quality that is more personal, and designing digital content strategies that are more adaptive and interactive. In this way, rebranding not only becomes a communication strategy, but also a driving force for innovation that strengthens business sustainability.

This indicates that the integration between re-branding and digital marketing is a very relevant strategic step for culinary SMEs in facing increasingly tight competition in the digital era. The collaboration of both makes re-branding not just a cosmetic change, but a transformation strategy that positions the brand in a more competitive, adaptive, and consumer-oriented position. With consistency and optimal use of social media, culinary SMEs are not only able to survive but also have the potential to grow into important players in the increasingly integrated creative and culinary industry with digital technology. Overall, this discussion emphasizes that re-branding in culinary SMEs needs to be understood as a holistic process that does not only focus on visual changes such as logo or packaging design, but also includes brand repositioning and the development of consistent communication strategies across various digital channels. This process requires alignment between visual identity, brand values, and the messages intended to be conveyed to consumers, thereby forming a strong and sustainable image. Social media has become a very effective medium in strengthening this transformation due to its interactive, participatory nature, and its wide reach that can penetrate various market segments.

To maximize the results of re-branding, culinary SMEs need to emphasize consistency in delivering brand messages, both in terms of visual elements and communication narratives, so that consumers can easily recognize and remember the new identity. In addition, the ability to adapt to rapidly changing digital trends is also an important factor, given that consumer preferences on social media change very quickly. SMEs that can integrate creativity in content creation with an understanding of trend dynamics will find it easier to maintain relevance in the eyes of the audience. Equally important, culinary SMEs also need to leverage the potential of consumer communities to build an authentic brand experience. Consumers who feel involved, for instance through user-generated content, collaborative campaigns, or direct interactions on digital platforms, will tend to have a stronger emotional attachment to the brand. This consumer participation not only strengthens the brand image but also creates a networking effect through organic spread on social media. Thus, the transformation of digital marketing strategies through re-branding can be a key factor for culinary SMEs in reinforcing brand identity, enhancing competitiveness, and creating business sustainability amid the tight competition in the culinary industry in the digital economy era. If conducted in a planned, consistent, and innovative manner, digital-based re-branding functions not only as a marketing tool but also as a fundamental strategy to build long-term competitive advantage.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of the literature review, it can be concluded that the transformation of digital marketing strategies through re-branding is a highly relevant strategic step for culinary SMEs in facing competitive challenges in the digital era. Social media has proven to play a key role as the main catalyst that allows the re-branding process to occur more quickly, interactively, and participatively. Platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook provide ample space for SMEs to introduce a new identity, strengthen their image, and engage in two-way communication with consumers. This makes social media not just a promotional channel, but also a digital ecosystem that can accelerate brand repositioning and expand its influence in the market. In the context of culinary SMEs, Rebranding cannot be understood merely as a visual change in the logo, packaging, or tagline, but rather as a holistic strategy that includes brand repositioning, renewal of communication narratives, and the development of deeper emotional relationships with consumers. This effort can be realized through creative storytelling, active consumer engagement in digital spaces, and leveraging collaborations with influencers to create social legitimacy. With this approach, culinary SMEs can showcase the uniqueness and authentic value of their products, thereby creating a clear differentiation compared to competitors.

The limitations of financial resources, low digital literacy, and the rapid changes in trends remain major challenges faced by most SMEs. Many business actors struggle to maintain consistency in brand communication or are unable to design integrated digital strategies. However, literature shows that culinary SMEs that successfully re-brand consistently through social media have proven capable of increasing brand awareness, improving positioning, strengthening customer loyalty, and even expanding market share to new segments. This

affirms that the success of re-branding is more determined by consistency, creativity, and the ability to adapt to digital dynamics rather than the amount of capital they possess. Integrated re-branding with digital marketing strategies can be viewed as an important instrument to strengthen the competitiveness and sustainability of culinary SMEs, both at the local level and in facing global competition. This integration is not only relevant as a short-term communication strategy, but also as a long-term strategic investment to ensure that brands remain relevant, competitive, and able to adapt to the rapidly changing market. In other words, digital-based re-branding can serve as a crucial foundation for culinary SMEs to build a strong identity while also expanding growth opportunities in the digital economy era.

FURTHER STUDY

This research still has limitations, so it is necessary to conduct further research related to the topic of Transformation of Digital Marketing Strategies through Re-Branding in Social-Media Based Culinary MSMEs in order to perfect this research and increase insight for readers.

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