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TikTok-Based Digital Marketing Mentoring for Shafa Katering, a Micro and Small Culinary Enterprise

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Abstract

Shafa Katering, a home-based micro and small culinary enterprise in Sunggal Kanan, Medan City, relied primarily on word-of-mouth promotion despite its established boxed-meal and snack-box production activities. This community outreach program aimed to strengthen the enterprise's digital marketing capabilities through participatory TikTok mentoring. A participatory action approach was implemented in five stages: observation and problem identification, digital literacy education, account-management training, supervised product-content production, and evaluation with sustainability planning. Initial assessment identified the absence of a business logo, a TikTok account, and routine digital promotional practices. Mentoring activities included logo development, creation of the public @shafa.katering account, profile optimization, and preparation of product photographs and short videos. The partner practiced uploading content, preparing captions, using relevant hashtags and background music, and maintaining an informative biography with ordering details. A weekly posting schedule was established to facilitate continued account management alongside catering production. The documented outcomes indicate improved introductory digital literacy, promotional infrastructure, and practical content-production capabilities. Limited followers and video views, together with competing production responsibilities, remained constraints on sustained promotion. The program established digital marketing readiness but did not measure changes in customer acquisition or sales, indicating the need for continued guidance and longitudinal performance evaluation of marketing outcomes.

Keywords: *Culinary Enterprises, Digital Marketing, Mentoring, Micro and Small Enterprises, Tiktok.*

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INTRODUCTION

Short-video platforms have become an increasingly consequential channel for micro and small enterprises seeking market visibility beyond established offline customer networks. For resource-constrained businesses, however, the adoption of digital marketing depends on organizational capabilities and the effective utilization of available technologies rather than platform accessibility alone (Sharabati et al., 2024). Studies of social media marketing among Indonesian micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) identify enabling and constraining factors that complicate the transition from conventional promotional practices to sustained digital engagement (Sulasih et al., 2024). TikTok presents particular opportunities and operational challenges because promotional messages must be communicated through concise audiovisual content capable of attracting attention within competitive digital environments. Research on short-video marketing associates consumer purchase intentions with perceived user characteristics, shared values, and individual-level considerations, indicating that promotional effectiveness cannot be explained exclusively by content distribution frequency (Shen & Wang, 2024). Within the food service industry, the credibility of TikTok content creators has also been examined in relation to social media engagement and consumer purchasing intentions, emphasizing the significance of trustworthy and relevant promotional communication (Kumsawat et al., 2025). These developments position digital content creation and platform management as practical capabilities for home-based culinary enterprises whose production activities may be more established than their online marketing practices.

Recent research on TikTok marketing for culinary enterprises has developed through interconnected approaches involving digital branding, content development, customer engagement, and

practical entrepreneurial training. Research concerning authentic storytelling among Indonesian food and beverage enterprises positions content authenticity as an element of digital brand communication, particularly in establishing a recognizable business identity within competitive social media environments (Alim et al., 2025). The examination of TikTok marketing strategies at Nura Catering provides sector-specific evidence concerning the application of social media promotion to catering businesses, extending discussions of digital marketing beyond conventional retail products (Salsilah et al., 2025). Community engagement programs involving catering MSMEs in South Tangerang have similarly addressed TikTok optimization through practical training intended to strengthen the promotional capabilities of small business operators (Setiawati et al., 2025). Creative-content training for culinary MSMEs represents a complementary approach that emphasizes the development of practical competencies in producing and presenting promotional materials through visual social media platforms (Abdullah et al., 2025). These research directions collectively distinguish the marketing potential of TikTok from the operational competencies required to establish digital business identities, communicate product characteristics, and maintain promotional activities independently.

Despite increasing attention to TikTok-based digital marketing, the selected literature provides limited direct evidence concerning how mentoring should be adapted to home-based catering enterprises that have not established their initial digital promotional infrastructure. Community assistance involving a home-based doughnut business demonstrates the relevance of practical TikTok training, although differences in product characteristics and customer ordering requirements limit its direct applicability to enterprises specializing in catering for events and celebrations (Pratiwi Putri et al., 2024). TikTok-based mentoring undertaken with Kopi Wakanda provides another intervention-oriented reference, but its business characteristics and branding requirements differ from those of a catering enterprise without an established TikTok business account (Hamid et al., 2026). These contextual differences are analytically relevant because creating an account, developing a recognizable identity, preparing product-specific content, and establishing consistent posting practices involve related but distinct competencies. Existing studies of TikTok marketing in catering businesses establish the relevance of the platform to the sector, yet they do not directly explain the initial digital capability requirements of Shafa Katering (Salsilah et al., 2025). Broader research on digital marketing and SME performance also cannot establish that introducing a social media platform will independently generate measurable business improvements without considering implementation capabilities and organizational conditions (Sharabati et al., 2024). The research gap therefore concerns the limited context-specific explanation of how an initial digital marketing mentoring process can address the operational and competency constraints of a home-based catering enterprise with established production capabilities but limited digital promotional infrastructure.

Shafa Katering is a home-based micro and small culinary enterprise located on Jalan Setia Bangun, Sunggal Kanan, Medan City, offering boxed meals and snack boxes for events and celebrations. Its principal products include boxed meals containing beef rendang, chicken, eggs with chili sauce, spicy potatoes, crackers, and vegetables, alongside snack selections such as risoles and rolled pancakes. Although the enterprise possesses sufficient production capacity to fulfill catering orders, its promotional development has been constrained by the absence of a brand logo, an established TikTok business account, and adequate familiarity with digital marketing management. Practical training in creative-content development is relevant to such conditions because promotional photographs, short videos, and consistent product presentation require competencies that cannot be obtained through account registration alone (Abdullah et al., 2025). Research on the credibility of food-related TikTok content further establishes the relevance of trustworthy promotional communication to consumer engagement, although these relationships cannot be assumed to produce identical outcomes for an individual catering enterprise (Kumsawat et al., 2025). Continued reliance on conventional promotional channels without sufficient digital management capabilities may restrict opportunities for organized product communication and wider market exposure, particularly where technological adoption barriers remain unresolved among smaller enterprises (Sulasih et al., 2024).

The proposed community outreach initiative is positioned as a partner-specific digital capability development intervention that connects the establishment of an online business identity with practical content-production and account-management competencies. Whereas research on TikTok marketing strategies in catering enterprises principally addresses the utilization of the platform as a promotional instrument, the Shafa Katering initiative begins with the more fundamental requirement of establishing

its digital promotional presence (Salsilah et al., 2025). Compared with community engagement programs involving groups of catering MSMEs, the single-enterprise orientation permits mentoring activities to be aligned more closely with Shafa Katering's existing product offerings, operational resources, and initial digital literacy limitations (Setiawati et al., 2025). The intended contribution lies in integrating introductory digital marketing education, TikTok business profile development, product-content preparation, and independent account management into a coordinated mentoring process rather than treating these activities as unrelated technical exercises. Previous TikTok-based entrepreneurship mentoring provides a relevant foundation for designing practical assistance, while the specific requirements of home-based catering operations justify adaptation to the partner's production and promotional characteristics (Hamid et al., 2026). Research on authentic TikTok storytelling among food and beverage enterprises also supports incorporating recognizable and credible product communication into the mentoring orientation rather than emphasizing the quantity of published promotional content alone (Alim et al., 2025). The anticipated novelty is therefore situated in the contextual integration of initial digital infrastructure development and practical marketing competencies for a catering enterprise whose principal limitation concerns the transition from established offline operations toward manageable digital promotional practices.

This community outreach initiative aims to strengthen Shafa Katering's digital marketing capabilities through structured mentoring focused on the practical utilization of TikTok as a promotional channel for its culinary products. The activities are directed toward introducing essential digital marketing concepts, supporting the establishment and optimization of a TikTok business profile, and developing a recognizable online identity appropriate to the enterprise's product characteristics. The mentoring also seeks to improve practical competencies in preparing product photographs, producing short promotional videos, developing relevant captions, and organizing consistent content publication according to available operational resources. A further objective is to encourage independent management of the business account so that TikTok-based promotional activities can complement existing customer relationships and conventional marketing practices. The expected practical contribution concerns the development of an accessible mentoring approach that connects initial capability assessment with directly applicable digital marketing activities for a home-based culinary enterprise. Its contribution to community engagement scholarship lies in documenting a context-specific model of digital capacity development, with any subsequent changes in promotional capabilities, audience engagement, or business outcomes requiring assessment through evidence obtained during program implementation.

RESEARCH METHODS

The community outreach program employed a participatory action approach in which the outreach team and Shafa Katering collaborated in planning, implementing, and evaluating TikTok-based digital marketing mentoring, consistent with the practical orientation of digital capacity-building initiatives for micro and small enterprises (Hamid et al., 2026). The participants were the owner and managers of Shafa Katering, a home-based micro and small culinary enterprise located on Jalan Setia Bangun, Sunggal Kanan, Medan City. Preliminary data were collected through direct observation of boxed-meal and snack-box production activities and an interview with the business owner to identify existing promotional practices, digital marketing capabilities, and operational constraints. The initial assessment focused on the enterprise's reliance on word-of-mouth promotion and the absence of a brand logo and TikTok account, reflecting the types of digital marketing adoption barriers examined among Indonesian MSMEs (Sulasih et al., 2024). The intervention was organized into five sequential stages comprising observation and problem identification, digital literacy education, technical training in account management, product content production mentoring, and evaluation and sustainability planning, as illustrated in Figure 1. Digital literacy education was delivered interactively to the owner and family members involved in business operations, covering fundamental marketing concepts, TikTok content distribution, posting consistency, and customer trust, with instructional content aligned with the practical competencies emphasized in culinary MSME digital training (Abdullah et al., 2025).

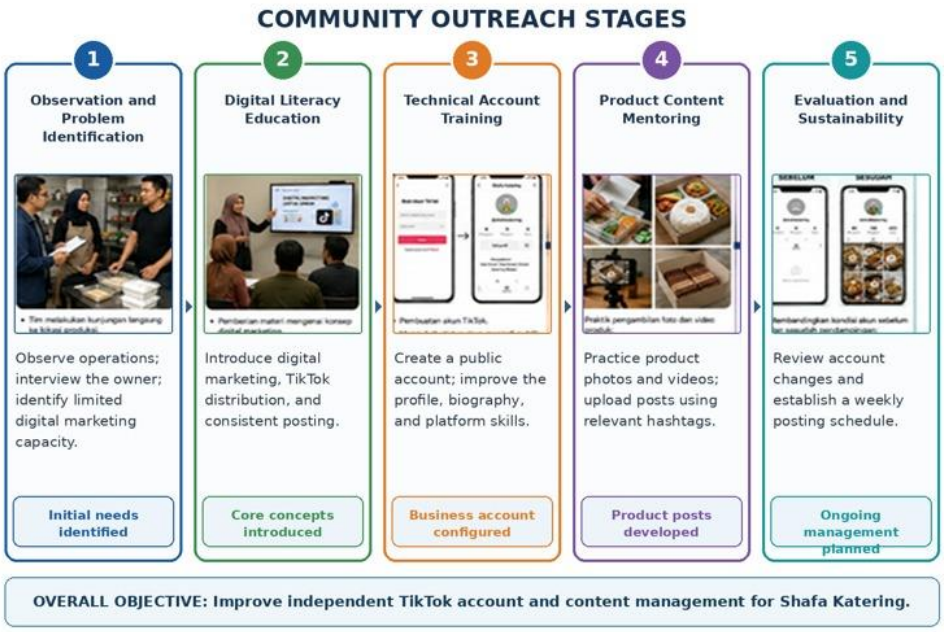

Figure 1. Stages of the Community Outreach Program

Technical training involved creating a TikTok account, changing its visibility settings to public, optimizing the username and profile photograph, and preparing an informative business biography describing the available catering products. The partner received practical instruction in video uploading, background music selection, on-screen text, and hashtag utilization, reflecting the operational competencies addressed in TikTok-based marketing assistance for home-based culinary enterprises (Pratiwi Putri et al., 2024). Product content production mentoring involved photographing and recording boxed-meal packaging, meal-component arrangements, and snack-box products, with attention to visual composition and camera angles, consistent with the relevance of authentic visual presentation in TikTok marketing (Alim et al., 2025). The resulting photographs and videos were uploaded progressively using product- and location-related hashtags, including #shafakatering, #nasikotakmedan, #kateringmedan, and #kuekotak. Evaluation was conducted by comparing the TikTok account's condition before and after mentoring, focusing on profile completeness, the number and quality of uploaded posts, and the partner's ability to manage account functions independently. The outreach team and business partner also established a weekly content-posting schedule to support continued account management following the intervention, reflecting the sustainability-oriented objectives of practical TikTok marketing assistance for catering enterprises (Setiawati et al., 2025).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Partner Profile and Initial Conditions

Shafa Katering operates as a home-based culinary enterprise located on Jalan Setia Bangun, Sunggal Kanan, Medan City, producing boxed meals and snack boxes for organized events and celebrations. The initial observation identified an established food preparation and packaging operation supported by the participation of family members and other individuals involved in daily business activities. The enterprise offered boxed meals containing beef rendang, fried noodles, eggs with chili sauce, spicy potatoes, crackers, and vegetables, alongside snack products including risoles and rolled pancakes. These product categories represented distinct catering offerings that required appropriate visual presentation to communicate their composition, packaging characteristics, and suitability for different customer requirements. Research on digital marketing strategies among culinary micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) emphasizes the relevance of adapting promotional practices to business characteristics and the communication requirements of food products (Widodo & Hapsari, 2023). The preliminary assessment indicated that Shafa Katering possessed an identifiable product portfolio and established production activities, although these operational characteristics had not been accompanied by a dedicated digital promotional channel.

Production observations documented the enterprise's capacity to prepare orders involving tens to hundreds of boxed meals, indicating the existence of organized food preparation and packaging activities. Individual meal packages carried the label "Selamat Menikmati" ("Enjoy Your Meal"), reflecting an established practice of presenting food products in prepared packaging before delivery. Several family or business members participated in assembling boxes, arranging food components, and adding supplementary items such as fruit and bottled water according to the requirements of particular orders. The preparation process involved coordinating different food components within individual packages, demonstrating the practical organization of labor and materials despite the enterprise's home-based operating structure. These operational characteristics provided potential material for digital promotion because food preparation, packaging arrangements, and completed orders could be documented through photographs and short videos. Research on TikTok promotion among culinary MSMEs identifies product presentation and digital communication as relevant considerations for developing marketing strategies through short-form audiovisual content (Ajuj & Nurhadi, 2026). The findings suggest that the initial marketing limitation was not attributable to an absence of products or observable production activities but to the lack of an established mechanism for presenting these existing capabilities to digital audiences.

The diversity of Shafa Katering's products introduced specific requirements for developing an identifiable and coherent promotional identity. Boxed meals combined several prepared dishes within individual packages, making the visibility of food components, packaging arrangements, and completed orders relevant to communicating product characteristics. Snack boxes presented different product compositions and required promotional materials capable of distinguishing their characteristics from those of the main catering menu. These differences indicated that product documentation could not be restricted to generic food photographs without considering the information prospective customers might require when evaluating catering services. Research on authentic TikTok storytelling among Indonesian food and beverage enterprises examines how recognizable and credible content contributes to the development of digital brand communication (Alim et al., 2025). The initial product portfolio therefore offered several opportunities for visual marketing development, although the preliminary observation did not provide evidence concerning consumer preferences, audience engagement, or the effectiveness of particular promotional formats.

A substantial difference was identified between the enterprise's existing production activities and its capacity to conduct structured digital marketing. The business owner reported that promotion remained dependent primarily on word-of-mouth recommendations, with customer information communicated through established interpersonal relationships rather than a dedicated social media business channel. Shafa Katering had not developed a formal brand logo or established a TikTok account, limiting its ability to present products through a consistent online business identity. The absence of these elements represented a promotional infrastructure limitation rather than evidence of inadequate food production or declining customer demand. Research examining social media marketing among Indonesian MSMEs identifies organizational capabilities, available resources, and operational constraints as factors influencing the adoption and utilization of digital promotional channels (Sulasih et al., 2024). Studies addressing digital marketing and SME performance also distinguish technological adoption from the organizational capabilities required to translate digital activities into business development opportunities (Sharabati et al., 2024). These conditions identified brand identity development, account establishment, and introductory platform training as immediate mentoring priorities.

The initial assessment distinguished promotional infrastructure limitations from the technical competencies required for independent digital marketing activities. The absence of a business logo concerned visual identification, whereas the absence of a TikTok account restricted the availability of a dedicated platform for organizing product information and promotional communication. Limited familiarity with account management and content production introduced an additional competency gap that could not be resolved through account registration alone. Community assistance involving a home-based culinary enterprise has similarly addressed digital marketing development through practical TikTok training and direct guidance in preparing promotional materials (Pratiwi Putri et al., 2024). Related outreach activities involving culinary MSMEs illustrate the relevance of combining technical assistance with digital marketing education according to the operating conditions of participating businesses (Asizah et al., 2025). For Shafa Katering, these conditions justified a mentoring arrangement

connecting brand identity development, platform establishment, and content-production instruction rather than treating the introduction of TikTok as an isolated technological intervention.

The initial assessment also identified differences between the partner's competence in managing catering production and its familiarity with digital promotional activities. Although the owner and participating family members were accustomed to preparing and packaging customer orders, the interview indicated limited understanding of TikTok account administration and promotional content publication. Specific learning requirements concerned business profile preparation, account visibility, video uploading, caption writing, hashtag utilization, and the incorporation of appropriate audiovisual elements into promotional materials. The absence of an established posting schedule also indicated that digital marketing had not been incorporated into routine business management before the mentoring intervention. Research on entrepreneurship-oriented digital learning emphasizes the relevance of practical instruction in developing MSME capabilities to utilize social media platforms for product marketing (Shofwan et al., 2025). TikTok-based mentoring for microenterprises provides a related community outreach approach focused on developing digital marketing competencies through guided activities, although training arrangements require adaptation to the characteristics of participating businesses (Hamid et al., 2026). These observations indicated that introductory instruction needed to precede independent promotional activities, particularly because the partner had not previously developed a structured process for managing TikTok content.

The compatibility between routine catering operations and future content-production activities constituted another consideration in identifying the partner's mentoring requirements. Food preparation and packaging already generated visually identifiable products, but the development of promotional content required additional decisions regarding image composition, recording angles, product descriptions, and publication timing. The participation of family or business members in production suggested opportunities for collaborative content documentation, although the observation did not establish the availability of dedicated personnel for continuous digital account management. Research on social media marketing adoption among MSMEs identifies time availability and organizational resources as relevant constraints affecting the consistency of digital promotional practices (Sulasih et al., 2024). Studies concerning creative-content training for culinary MSMEs further support the relevance of developing practical production skills rather than assuming that account availability is sufficient to establish effective promotional communication (Abdullah et al., 2025). The mentoring requirements therefore extended beyond introductory digital literacy to include practical procedures that could be incorporated into existing business activities without presuming additional staffing or specialized production equipment.

The initial assessment established a mismatch between Shafa Katering's operational readiness and its limited capacity to communicate its products through digital marketing channels. The enterprise possessed an established catering product portfolio, documented packaging activities, and participation from family or business members, yet lacked the digital identity and platform management competencies required for independent TikTok promotion. These circumstances defined the principal intervention requirement as the development of digital marketing capabilities rather than the restructuring of production activities or expansion of physical business facilities. Previous community outreach involving catering enterprises has examined TikTok optimization through practical assistance, providing a relevant sector-specific foundation for designing mentoring activities while recognizing differences in initial digital capabilities (Setiawati et al., 2025). Research concerning authentic content development in food and beverage businesses also supports attention to recognizable product presentation when establishing an enterprise's digital promotional identity (Alim et al., 2025). The preliminary evidence remained limited to observable operational conditions and information obtained from the business owner, without quantitative measurements of baseline sales, digital audience engagement, or changes in customer acquisition. These findings informed the subsequent participatory mentoring activities involving logo development, TikTok account creation, profile optimization, product photography, video production, and the establishment of practices for independent account management.

Implementation of the Mentoring Program

The implementation of the mentoring program followed five sequential stages specified in the participatory action design, connecting the initial identification of marketing constraints with practical

training and subsequent evaluation. The outreach team collaborated with the owner and family members involved in Shafa Katering's operations, allowing the activities to address the circumstances of an established home-based culinary enterprise. Preliminary observations had identified the absence of a business logo, a dedicated TikTok account, and sufficient familiarity with digital promotional activities despite the availability of established catering products. The intervention therefore prioritized digital literacy education, visual identity development, account establishment, content production, and preparation for independent platform management. Community-based TikTok mentoring has been examined as an approach to developing practical digital marketing competencies among micro and small enterprises through guided participation (Hamid et al., 2026). Research on community assistance in digital business transformation similarly emphasizes the relevance of developing operational capabilities alongside the introduction of digital technologies (Nizar et al., 2023). The implementation at Shafa Katering reflected this capability-oriented approach, although the available documentation supported an assessment of completed activities rather than direct measurement of their effects on sales or customer acquisition.

The initial educational session introduced digital marketing concepts and the potential application of TikTok as a promotional channel for catering products. Instruction covered the importance of recognizable business identity, the characteristics of short-video communication, content distribution, and consistency in maintaining customer-oriented promotional information. The business owner and participating family members were involved in interactive discussions intended to connect these concepts with the enterprise's existing products and conventional marketing practices. Digital capacity-building programs for culinary MSMEs have similarly incorporated creative-content education to strengthen business owners' practical understanding of social media promotion (Abdullah et al., 2025). Entrepreneurship-oriented digital learning also emphasizes the importance of connecting platform-related knowledge with the activities that small business operators must perform independently (Shofwan et al., 2025). The educational activities established a conceptual basis for subsequent technical instruction, particularly because the partner's previous promotional practices had not involved systematic management of a TikTok business account.

The development of Shafa Katering's business logo constituted an early practical activity intended to establish a recognizable visual identity for digital promotion. Before the intervention, the enterprise had operated without a dedicated logo, limiting the availability of a consistent visual element for business identification across promotional materials. The outreach team and business partner participated in developing the Shafa Katering logo, which was subsequently incorporated into the account development process. This activity connected visual branding with the existing business identity rather than requiring changes to the enterprise's product portfolio or production arrangements. Research on authentic storytelling among Indonesian food and beverage enterprises identifies recognizable brand communication as a relevant consideration in the development of promotional content through TikTok (Alim et al., 2025). Studies of personal branding and social media marketing in Indonesian culinary markets also provide a conceptual basis for considering visual identity within consumer-oriented promotional strategies (Sunjaya et al., 2024). Figure 2 documents the logo development activity, representing an observable branding output without independently demonstrating increased brand recognition or changes in consumer purchasing behavior.



Figure 2. Shafa Katering Logo Development

Technical account development followed the branding activity and resulted in the establishment of the TikTok account @shafa.katering as a dedicated promotional channel for the enterprise. The outreach team assisted the partner in changing account visibility from private to public, improving the username and profile photograph, and preparing a concise biography containing product information and ordering contact details. These adjustments addressed the absence of an accessible digital business profile and enabled potential customers to obtain basic information about Shafa Katering through the platform. Previous community engagement involving catering enterprises has similarly addressed TikTok account optimization as part of practical digital marketing assistance (Setiawati et al., 2025). Research concerning TikTok mentoring for home-based culinary businesses also supports the relevance of guided account preparation and introductory platform management (Pratiwi Putri et al., 2024). The resulting account configuration, presented in Figure 3, established the technical conditions for publishing promotional materials without providing evidence that public accessibility had already generated additional customer orders.

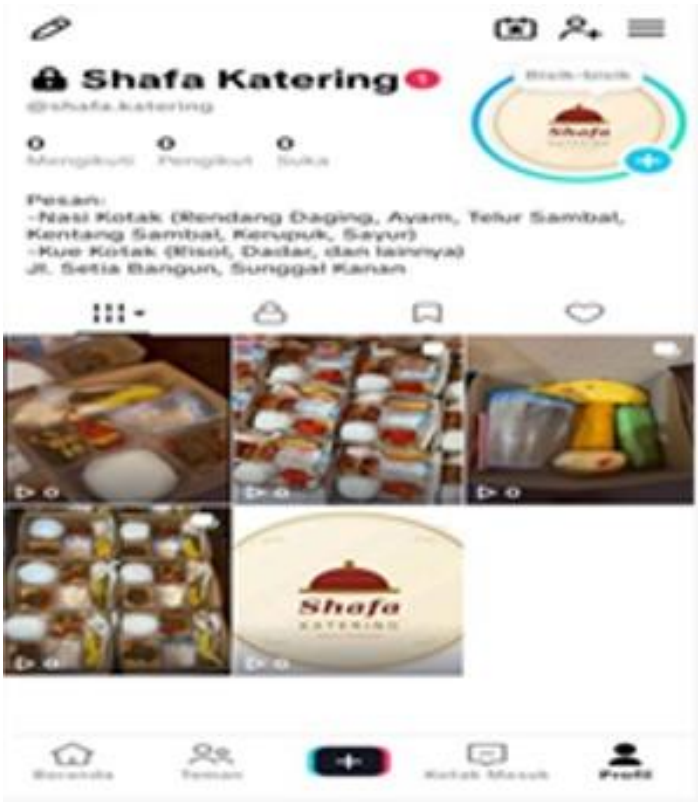

Figure 3. TikTok Account (@shafa.katering)

Following account establishment, the mentoring activities concentrated on the practical operation of TikTok features required for routine promotional communication. The partner received instruction in uploading videos, selecting background music, adding on-screen text, composing captions, and incorporating hashtags related to the business and its products. These activities were conducted through direct practice, allowing the owner and participating family members to become familiar with the procedures necessary to prepare and publish promotional content. Research on TikTok optimization training among MSMEs has emphasized the practical relevance of familiarizing business operators with platform functions that support product presentation and digital communication (Handayanna et al., 2025). Community assistance involving the utilization of TikTok for MSME product marketing similarly provides a basis for integrating technical instruction with the actual promotional requirements of participating enterprises (Prasetyo et al., 2025). The instruction also introduced the distinction between uploading content and communicating product information effectively, since audiovisual presentation, message characteristics, and audience perceptions can influence consumer responses to short-video marketing (Shen & Wang, 2024). The documented activity

demonstrated the provision of introductory technical competencies, although it did not establish an independently measured improvement in the quality or commercial effectiveness of the resulting promotional materials.

Practical content-production mentoring used Shafa Katering's existing products and packaging activities as material for photographic and audiovisual promotion. The outreach team and partner practiced documenting boxed-meal packaging, the arrangement of prepared food components, and snack-box products, with attention to visual composition, camera angles, and the clarity of product presentation. These activities allowed the partner to develop promotional materials from routine production processes without requiring the introduction of additional product categories. Research on TikTok storytelling in food and beverage enterprises emphasizes the relevance of authentic product communication in constructing recognizable digital business identities (Alim et al., 2025). Studies examining food-related content on TikTok also identify credibility as a consideration in consumer engagement and purchasing intentions, although such relationships were not directly measured during the Shafa Katering intervention (Kumsawat et al., 2025). Figure 4 presents the product packaging documentation used as material for TikTok promotion, illustrating the connection between existing catering activities and practical content-development instruction.



Figure 4. Product Packaging as Material for TikTok Content

The content-production activities continued through the progressive uploading of photographs and short videos prepared during the mentoring process. Promotional posts incorporated product- and location-related hashtags, including #shafakatering, #nasikotakmedan, #kateringmedan, and #kuekotak, to connect the enterprise's identity with its catering products and geographical market. The use of these hashtags formed part of the partner's introductory account-management training rather than an independently evaluated strategy for improving algorithmic distribution or audience reach. Research on TikTok marketing in catering enterprises provides a relevant sector-specific comparison for understanding the use of short-form promotional content in communicating food service offerings (Salsilah et al., 2025). Studies of TikTok-based purchasing intentions distinguish potential customers from repeat customers, indicating that audience responses may differ according to existing relationships and consumer characteristics (Zhao & Wagner, 2024). The Shafa Katering activities did not include sufficiently documented engagement or conversion data to determine whether particular hashtags, audiovisual elements, or publication formats generated superior promotional outcomes. Nevertheless, the practical uploading process represented a transition from introductory platform education toward direct participation in publishing business-related content.

The final implementation stage addressed the evaluation of completed activities and the continuity of TikTok account management after the formal mentoring period. The outreach team compared the account's condition before and after the intervention, particularly regarding logo availability, account accessibility, profile completeness, published content, and the partner's familiarity with basic platform functions. The partner also participated in establishing a weekly content-posting schedule intended to accommodate promotional activities alongside routine catering production.

Community mentoring programs concerning TikTok marketing have similarly emphasized practical account management and continued promotional activities as considerations in developing digital capabilities among small business operators (Pradipta Rahayu et al., 2025). Research on social media marketing among Indonesian MSMEs identifies organizational resources and adoption constraints as factors that may influence the sustainability of digital promotional practices (Sulasih et al., 2024). The five-stage implementation established an identifiable business account, introduced practical content-production competencies, and provided an initial arrangement for continued promotional activity without demonstrating long-term behavioral consistency or measurable financial outcomes.

Outcomes of the Mentoring Program

The evaluation of the five-stage mentoring program documented observable changes in Shafa Katering's digital business identity, TikTok account management, promotional content-production capabilities, and readiness to undertake independent digital marketing activities. The assessment compared conditions before and after mentoring, using the availability of promotional infrastructure and the partner's ability to perform basic platform-related tasks as principal indicators. Before the intervention, the enterprise relied predominantly on word-of-mouth promotion and lacked a dedicated business logo, TikTok account, and established procedures for preparing digital promotional materials. Following the activities, the partner had developed a recognizable visual identity, established an accessible TikTok profile, and acquired introductory competencies in producing and publishing product-related content. Community outreach research concerning culinary MSMEs identifies practical digital marketing assistance as a relevant approach to addressing operational limitations in promotional capability development (Hakim et al., 2025). Studies reviewing social media marketing strategies among MSMEs similarly emphasize the relationship between technological utilization and organizational marketing practices, although the presence of digital infrastructure alone cannot establish improved commercial performance (Ariyati et al., 2024).

Changes in business identification and platform accessibility represented the most immediately observable outcomes of the mentoring intervention. The development of a Shafa Katering logo provided a dedicated visual element for identifying the enterprise, whereas the establishment of the TikTok account @shafa.katering created a platform for presenting its catering products to online audiences. Account visibility was changed to public, allowing the business profile and published promotional materials to be accessed without the restrictions associated with private account settings. The profile photograph, username, and biography were also improved to provide clearer identification of the enterprise and more informative product descriptions and ordering contact details. Research concerning authentic storytelling among Indonesian food and beverage enterprises emphasizes the relevance of recognizable business identity and credible communication in TikTok-based brand presentation (Alim et al., 2025). Digital communication studies involving culinary MSMEs further identify platform visibility as a relevant consideration in establishing an online promotional presence, although visibility should not be equated with confirmed customer acquisition (Syaputra et al., 2026). The observed account improvements established a functional promotional channel for Shafa Katering without providing quantitative evidence of increased brand awareness or expanded market penetration.

Practical content-production competencies constituted another identifiable outcome, particularly because the partner had initially lacked experience in preparing promotional materials for TikTok. Through direct mentoring, the owner and participating family members practiced photographing boxed meals and snack products, recording short videos, and arranging visual compositions that communicated product characteristics. The activities introduced the use of camera angles, lighting considerations, background music, on-screen text, captions, and hashtags as components of digital product presentation. The resulting promotional materials were uploaded progressively, demonstrating the partner's developing ability to translate existing catering activities into content suitable for social media publication. Community assistance involving TikTok utilization among MSMEs has similarly addressed practical product documentation and platform familiarity as components of digital promotional development (Rasmuin et al., 2023). Research on optimizing TikTok and Instagram for culinary enterprises also provides a relevant comparison for understanding the integration of content preparation with routine social media management (Istiyani et al., 2025). Nevertheless, the available documentation did not include standardized content-quality scores,

independently assessed audience responses, or comparative engagement statistics sufficient to establish the promotional superiority of the materials produced during mentoring.

The evaluation also considered changes in the partner's understanding of digital marketing and capacity to manage TikTok-related activities beyond direct assistance from the outreach team. Before mentoring, the absence of an account and limited familiarity with platform functions prevented Shafa Katering from organizing promotional content through a dedicated digital channel. Following technical training, the partner demonstrated familiarity with account administration, content uploading, caption preparation, hashtag utilization, and the basic procedures required for maintaining its business profile. Comparable TikTok optimization programs have incorporated technical training to develop MSME operators' familiarity with promotional platform functions and practical content-management activities (Handayanna et al., 2025). Community assistance concerning digital business transformation likewise identifies capability development as a central component of introducing digital practices to local enterprises (Nizar et al., 2023). The documented changes across business identity, platform availability, content-production skills, promotional planning, and marketing readiness are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Outcomes of Digital Marketing Mentoring

Aspect	Before Mentoring	After Mentoring	Status
Brand	No logo	Logo developed	✓
TikTok account	No account	@shafa.katering created	✓
Account visibility	No account	Public	✓
Profile/biography	Not available	Complete and informative	✓
Content	Unable to produce content	Able to produce content	✓
Platform features	Not understood	Captions, hashtags, and music understood	✓
Posting schedule	Not available	Weekly schedule established	✓
Digital literacy	Word-of-mouth promotion	Understands digital marketing	✓
Marketing readiness	Not yet optimized	Ready for digital marketing	✓

Table 1 records positive completion status across nine evaluated aspects, indicating that the mentoring activities addressed the principal digital marketing limitations identified during the preliminary assessment. The development of a logo and publicly accessible TikTok account represented observable infrastructure outputs, whereas familiarity with content production and platform functions reflected changes in the partner's practical capabilities. Establishing a weekly posting schedule introduced a basic organizational arrangement for maintaining promotional activities beyond the initial training period. Research examining entrepreneurial competence, market orientation, and digital literacy in Indonesian culinary MSMEs supports the analytical distinction between business capabilities and subsequent marketing performance outcomes (Ramdan et al., 2025). Studies of digital marketing utilization among Indonesian MSMEs also indicate the relevance of digital promotional practices to business development, although changes in platform readiness cannot independently demonstrate increased sales (Khairunisa & Misidawati, 2024). The evaluation therefore provides evidence of introductory capability development and completion of planned activities rather than a quantified estimate of marketing effectiveness, customer acquisition, or financial improvement.

The participatory character of the mentoring activities contributed to the interpretation of these outcomes because the partner was directly involved in performing the technical procedures introduced during training. Instead of limiting the intervention to explanations of digital marketing concepts, the outreach team involved the owner and participating family members in logo development, account configuration, product documentation, and the publication of promotional materials. This arrangement enabled the partner to practice procedures associated with its existing products and operating conditions, supporting the transfer of introductory knowledge into observable account-management activities. Research concerning digital marketing strategies among village-based MSMEs identifies technological opportunities and operational challenges that require consideration when adapting promotional practices to smaller enterprises (Kiromah & Nuryami, 2024). Studies investigating social media marketing and MSME performance in Indonesia provide a broader basis for examining the relationship

between marketing capabilities and enterprise outcomes, although such relationships were not statistically tested during the Shafa Katering intervention (Tatik & Setiawan, 2025). The observed ability to perform basic TikTok functions suggests that practical participation supported the development of initial operational competencies rather than dependence on conceptual instruction alone. These findings remain limited to the documented mentoring period because independent account management was not assessed through a prolonged post-intervention observation.

Several operational constraints remained after the completion of the mentoring activities, particularly those associated with consistent content production and the demands of daily catering operations. The preparation of boxed meals and snack products required the continued attention of the owner and participating family members, creating potential competition between routine production responsibilities and promotional account management. Although the partner had acquired basic content-production capabilities, the number of followers and video views on the @shafa.katering account remained limited, with no documented numerical series available for evaluating audience growth. Research examining the adoption of social media marketing among MSMEs identifies time availability, operational resources, and organizational capabilities as factors that may constrain sustained promotional activities (Sulasih et al., 2024). Studies investigating social media engagement and SME operating revenue also demonstrate the importance of distinguishing engagement-related indicators from financial outcomes rather than assuming that account activity directly reflects business performance (Matosas-López, 2024). These limitations indicate that the mentoring outcomes should be interpreted as an improvement in digital marketing readiness, while evidence of sustained promotional engagement and measurable commercial benefits remains unavailable.

Sustainability planning concentrated on maintaining the promotional practices introduced during mentoring through a weekly content-posting schedule compatible with the enterprise's existing production activities. Continued account management requires the partner to organize product documentation, prepare promotional captions, select relevant hashtags, and publish content without relying exclusively on the outreach team. Research examining social media marketing and MSME performance suggests that digital promotional capabilities warrant continued evaluation against business-related outcomes rather than being assessed solely through initial platform adoption (Tatik & Setiawan, 2025). More advanced promotional approaches, including TikTok live shopping, have been examined in relation to word-of-mouth communication, but these activities were not implemented or evaluated during the Shafa Katering program (Sonda & Balqiah, 2023). Research concerning food influencers and purchasing intentions introduces another possible direction for subsequent promotional development, although its findings cannot establish the effectiveness of influencer-based strategies for this enterprise (Tran, 2025). Evidence concerning short-video marketing and purchasing intentions in other product sectors further reinforces the need for context-specific evaluation before attributing consumer responses or commercial outcomes to TikTok promotion (Rizomyliotis et al., 2024). The documented contribution of the intervention lies in establishing a functional TikTok promotional presence and introductory digital marketing competencies, while future assessment would be required to determine whether continued implementation improves content consistency, audience engagement, customer inquiries, and catering sales.

CONCLUSION

The TikTok-based digital marketing mentoring program at Shafa Katering addressed the disparity between the enterprise's established catering production activities and its initially limited digital promotional capabilities. Through participatory activities involving observation, digital literacy education, technical training, content production, and evaluation, the program established a practical foundation for digital marketing management. The intervention resulted in the development of a business logo and the establishment of the @shafa.katering TikTok account, with public accessibility, an informative profile, and ordering contact information. Practical mentoring strengthened the partner's ability to produce promotional photographs and videos, prepare captions, incorporate background music, and utilize relevant hashtags for product communication. A weekly content-posting schedule was also established to support the integration of digital promotional activities into routine business operations. The partner's participation in account configuration and content publication demonstrated a transition from dependence on word-of-mouth promotion toward introductory competencies in managing an online promotional channel. These documented outcomes indicate improvements in digital

marketing literacy, technical capabilities, and independent account-management readiness, although measurable increases in customer engagement, orders, and revenue were not established.

The principal contribution of the program lies in demonstrating how participatory, practice-oriented mentoring can support the transition of a home-based culinary enterprise from conventional promotion toward structured digital marketing activities. The direct involvement of the business owner and family members enabled technical instruction to be connected with existing production processes, product characteristics, and available operational resources. This approach offers a potentially transferable model for similar culinary micro and small enterprises experiencing limitations in digital literacy, promotional infrastructure, and content-production capabilities. Nevertheless, limited follower and video-view activity, competing production responsibilities, and the need for consistent content development remain constraints on the sustainability of digital promotion. The evaluation was restricted to observable changes in business identity, account configuration, content-production capabilities, and promotional readiness, preventing conclusions concerning long-term marketing effectiveness or financial performance. Continued assistance should prioritize content planning, periodic performance evaluation, and assessment of additional promotional facilities, including TikTok Shop and paid advertising, according to the partner's operational capacity. Future community outreach evaluations should incorporate longitudinal observations of posting consistency, audience engagement, customer inquiries, and sales outcomes to establish whether the acquired digital competencies contribute to sustained business development.

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