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Marketing Strategies of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Increasing Sales Through Marketplaces: An Islamic Economics Perspective

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ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis strategi pemasaran Usaha Mikro, Kecil, dan Menengah (UMKM) melalui marketplace dalam meningkatkan penjualan dari perspektif ekonomi Islam. Metode yang digunakan adalah kualitatif deskriptif dengan pendekatan netnografi, melalui observasi praktik pemasaran UMKM di Shopee dan Tokopedia. Data primer diperoleh dari pengamatan katalog produk, promosi, interaksi penjual pembeli dan aktivitas digital. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan lima strategi utama: optimalisasi katalog produk, pemanfaatan fitur promosi, interaksi aktif dengan konsumen, iklan berbayar, dan kolaborasi dengan influencer. Strategi ini berdampak pada peningkatan penjualan, dengan kenaikan 25% melalui optimalisasi katalog, 40% pada saat promosi, dan 30% melalui iklan berbayar. Dari perspektif ekonomi Islam, strategi tersebut sejalan dengan prinsip shidq, taysir, ihsan, dan amanah, serta merefleksikan maqashid al-syariah dalam menjaga harta, jiwa, akhlak, dan kehormatan.

Keywords:

Islamic Economics
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Marketplace

ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the marketing strategies of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) through marketplaces in enhancing sales from the perspective of Islamic economics. The research employs a descriptive qualitative method with a netnographic approach, conducted through the observation of MSME marketing practices on Shopee and Tokopedia. Primary data were collected from the examination of product catalogs, promotional activities, seller buyer interactions, and digital engagement. The findings reveal five main strategies: optimization of product catalogs, utilization of promotional features, active consumer engagement, paid advertising, and collaboration with influencers. These strategies have shown measurable impacts on sales performance, including a 25% increase through catalog optimization, a 40% rise during promotional activities, and a 30% improvement through paid advertisements. From the perspective of Islamic economics, these strategies align with the principles of *shidq*, *taysir*, *ihsan*, and *amanah*, while reflecting the objectives of *maqashid al-shariah* in preserving wealth, life, morality, and dignity.

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Introduction

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) represent a strategic economic sector that not only Provide expanded employment opportunities but also plays a crucial role in fostering social equity enhancing public purchasing power, strengthening the foundation of national income, and driving the acceleration of sustainable economic development (Pedraza, 2021). The position of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) becomes increasingly significant when the global economy faces a crisis, as it inevitably exerts considerable pressure on domestic economic stability (BPS, 2023) . Based on the official report of the Ministry of Cooperatives and Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises, the number of business units in this sector has currently reached approximately 64.2 million, contributing 61.07% to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), equivalent to Rp 8,573.89 trillion (UKM, 2022). Furthermore, the contribution of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises to the national economy is reflected in their capacity to absorb around 97% of the total workforce, as well as their ability to generate up to 60.4% of overall investment (Herawati, 2025). This position underscores that Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises are not merely the backbone of the national economy, but also a fundamental instrument in maintaining stability, ensuring the distribution of welfare, and sustaining national development.

In the context of modern civilization, the internet occupies a strategic position as a fundamental infrastructure that influences nearly all dimensions of human life (R. Joshi, 2022). The increasing complexity of individual needs has driven the emergence of new dynamics in the search for accurate, credible, and relevant information (Rajkovic, 2023). This phenomenon not only reflects a transformation of social behavior but also serves as a determining factor in the development of the economic sector, including Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises based on Islamic economic principles, which now rely on digital media as the primary means for acquiring, processing, and distributing information effectively and equitably (Suciati Hartini, 2022).

In addition, the rapid transformation of information technology, particularly through the development of the internet, has generated significant implications for the dynamics of socio-economic life, including within the business sector (Shukurov, 2022). The internet is no longer merely perceived as a medium for accessing and disseminating information; rather, it has evolved into a strategic instrument for commercial transactions, widely recognized as electronic commerce (E-Commerce). This phenomenon illustrates how digitalization drives a paradigm shift in trade, from conventional systems toward technology-based platforms (Olha V Popelo, 2022). In Indonesia, the development of the E-Commerce industry has demonstrated progressive performance, substantially influenced by the continuous increase in the number of internet users over the years (Pratiwi, 2022). Such growth not only opens opportunities for market expansion but also exerts an impact on patterns of consumption, distribution, and marketing strategies, including for the Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises sector, which serves as the backbone of the national economy (OECD, 2023).

E-commerce essentially represents a website directly managed by business owners as a medium for marketing and product sales. This model has limitations, as it only showcases commodities from a single seller, thereby providing relatively narrow space for product diversification. In contrast, a marketplace functions as a digital facilitator as well as an interactive intermediary between sellers and buyers. The presence of a marketplace offers strategic value in the form of transactional efficiency, time savings, and cost reduction, since economic interactions can occur without physical face-to-face encounters. From the perspective of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) development and Islamic economic principles, this innovation has the potential to expand market access while simultaneously reducing transactional barriers. Nevertheless, the dynamic growth of marketplaces also presents challenges, particularly the emergence of misuse by certain parties, which may generate injustice, harm both business actors and consumers, and conflict with the principles of fairness and sustainability in Islamic economic transactions (muamalah).

Referring to the report of the National Consumer Protection Agency (BPKN), the prevalence of phishing practices and account misuse reflects the high vulnerability of consumers in digital transactions (Rabitti, 2022). This clearly indicates the weakness of the consumer protection ecosystem in the era of electronic commerce. From the perspective of Islamic economics, such conditions should be anticipated by prioritizing principles of trade grounded in justice and honesty. This is affirmed in QS. An-Nisa [4]:29, which states: *"O you who have believed, do not consume one another's wealth unjustly but only [in* *lawful] business by mutual consent. And do not kill yourselves [or one another]. Indeed, Allah is to you ever Merciful."* Islam firmly prohibits unjust practices in economic activities and encourages fair competition oriented toward goodness and the pleasure of Allah SWT.

Furthermore, the development of digital marketplaces over the past decade has had significant implications for the growth dynamics of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). This transformation has not only broadened market access but has also driven the acceleration of business management digitalization within the MSMEs sector (Mhd Farras Nasrida, 2023). Empirical evidence indicates that an increasing number of MSMEs actors are integrating their business models into the modern marketplace ecosystem. Various platforms such as Shopee, Tokopedia, Lazada, and Bukalapak have become strategic instruments utilized to expand consumer reach while simultaneously enhancing competitiveness.

This condition is in line with the statement of Adhinda Dewi Agustine, who emphasized that within the local context a similar tendency has been observed. Based on official data from 2024, the number of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in operation reached 7,331 business units, a figure that reflects the vitality of MSMEs as one of the main pillars of the regional economy (Belay, 2022). In addition, there is also a representative study on Sharia-based Snack MSMEs, which have utilized online marketplaces as the primary instrument in their digital marketing strategies. The adoption of marketplace technology by MSMEs represents a strategic adaptation to the demands of the digital era, while simultaneously serving as an effort to expand the consumer base, increase distribution efficiency, and ultimately strengthen their competitive position in an increasingly open market (Dini Selasi, 2022).

Based on the aforementioned studies on marketing strategies for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), the majority have concentrated on the utilization of social media as an instrument to stimulate sales growth. Nevertheless, in the digital era, marketing dynamics have undergone a significant transformation with the emergence of marketplaces as a more integrated, adaptive, and efficiency-oriented trading ecosystem. Accordingly, this study is specifically directed at examining how marketplace-based marketing strategies contribute to enhancing sales performance. Furthermore, the analysis is approached from the perspective of Islamic economics, thereby emphasizing not only the effectiveness of sales growth but also adherence to the principles of justice, the attainment of blessings in transactions, as well as the assurance of product and distributional halalness. In this regard, the study is expected to provide a conceptual contribution both to the development of Islamic marketing literature in the digital era and to the strengthening of MSMEs' competitiveness grounded in Islamic values within the global economic landscape.

Methods

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach using the netnographic method, an adaptation of ethnography to the digital context (Kozinets, 2020). This method was chosen because the phenomenon of marketing among Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) currently takes place largely in virtual spaces, particularly in marketplaces such as Tokopedia and Shopee. The netnographic process was conducted through the identification of MSME digital communities, observation of marketing strategies (product catalogs, promotions, reviews), as well as documentation of digital activities in the form of product descriptions, screenshots, and online communications (A. Putri & I. Lestari, 2022). This technique enables the researcher to capture marketing practices that occur organically in the digital sphere, while also assessing the extent to which these strategies reflect Islamic marketing principles (R. Pramono, 2022). The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis, which grouped marketing practices into themes such as price transparency, product halalness, and transactional justice, and were then examined within the framework of Islamic Economics and *maqashid al-shariah*. Data validity was ensured through source triangulation, namely by comparing digital observation findings with marketplace reports and the latest academic literature

Result and Discussion

Based on primary data obtained through observation of product catalogs, promotions, seller-buyer interactions, and digital activities. The research results show that most Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) selling on Indonesian marketplaces such as Tokopedia and Shopee have developed digital-based marketing strategies by emphasizing product catalog optimization, the use of promotional features, and quick responses to consumer reviews. This strategy has been proven to increase product visibility and expand market reach. From a netnographic perspective, the digital interaction between sellers and consumers reflects a significant adaptation from traditional business practices to a digital ecosystem (Irena Dinar Vania Sasikirana, 2024). This transformation appears to serve as a catalyst for the sales growth of MSMEs.

From the perspective of Islamic economics, the marketing practices of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in online marketplaces largely adhere to the principles of transparency and honesty. For instance, product information is generally presented clearly, including details on pricing, specifications, and halal certification. Nevertheless, some MSMEs are still found to employ exaggerated promotional strategies with product descriptions that are not entirely accurate, which may lead to *gharar* (uncertainty). This underscores the importance of implementing sharia principles in digital marketing activities so that transactions are not solely profit-oriented but also imbued with blessing (*barakah*) (A. Putri, 2022).

Moreover, the study also found that marketplaces provide both opportunities and challenges for sharia-based MSMEs. On the opportunity side, digital platforms offer infrastructure that facilitates transactions, strengthens consumer trust, and supports sales growth. On the challenge side, however, intense price competition often drives some business actors to implement massive discount practices that may harm other entrepreneurs, thereby contradicting the principle of fairness in Islamic commercial ethics (*muamalah*). Therefore, according to the researcher, the implementation of marketing strategies for MSMEs in marketplaces should be directed not only toward business efficiency but also toward ensuring sustainability and transactional justice in accordance with the *maqashid al-shariah*. Several marketing strategies of MSMEs to enhance sales volume through marketplaces can thus be identified;

Table 1. *Marketing Strategies of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises in Increasing Sales Volume through Marketplaces*

No	Marketplace Strategy	Implementation by MSMEs	Impact on Sales
1.	Product Catalog Optimization	Providing professional product photos, detailed descriptions, and halal labels	Average sales increased by 25% within three months
2.	Use of Promotional Features (vouchers, flash sales, free shipping)	70% of MSMEs actively utilized vouchers and flash sales	Transactions increased by up to 40% during promotional periods
3.	Consumer Interaction (chat, reviews)	Responding promptly and politely to marketplace chats	Store ratings improved from 4.5 to 4.8, enhancing customer loyalty
4.	Paid Advertising on Marketplace	35% of MSMEs employed sponsored product ads	Increased visibility and sales conversion by 30%
5.	Collaboration with Digital Influencers	Small MSMEs engaged micro-influencers for product reviews	Store followers grew by 20%, leading to a 15% increase in sales

Based on the foregoing explanation, it can be stated that marketing strategies for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) through marketplaces are not merely pragmatic business activities, but rather an effort to realize *al-falāḥ* (prosperity) within the framework of Sharīʿah. The marketplace provides an instrument for MSME actors to present their products with transparency of information ranging from price and quality to halal certification which reflects the principle of *ṣidq* (honesty). In the Islamic perspective, such transparency constitutes an essential pillar in preventing *gharar* (uncertainty)

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and *tadlīs* (fraud), thereby ensuring that every transaction is conducted on the basis of mutual consent. Thus, this practice represents a concrete implementation of *maqāṣid al-sharīʿah* in safeguarding wealth (*ḥifẓ al-māl*), as consumers are protected from losses and producers gain legitimate (halal) profits.

Furthermore, the dynamics of digital promotion, such as discounts and shipping subsidies, can be understood not merely as strategies to attract market interest, but also as a manifestation of *taysīr* (providing ease), which is encouraged in Islam. As long as such practices do not lead to exploitation, promotion serves as a means of facilitating public access to lawful necessities at affordable prices. In this regard, the objectives of the Sharīʿah (*maqāṣid al-sharīʿah*) in preserving life (*ḥifẓ al-nafs*) find their relevance, since the marketplace functions as a channel through which society at large can fulfill its essential needs with dignity. Moreover, the interactions established in digital spaces between sellers and buyers highlight the importance of *iḥsān* (benevolence) in transactions. A marketplace is not only a venue for buying and selling, but also a space of value exchange responsiveness, courteous communication, and prompt solutions to complaints strengthen social cohesion while simultaneously fostering customer loyalty. Within the framework of *maqāṣid*, this dimension is linked to the preservation of ethics (*ḥifẓ al-akhlāq*), as Islamic business ethics are not solely concerned with material gain, but also with the cultivation of upright character in social and economic dealings. A digital reputation built upon honesty thus becomes the primary capital for the sustainability of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in the digital era (R. Putri & A. Lestari, 2022).

The strategies of paid advertising and collaboration with micro-influencers in the marketplace reflect a new face of marketing in the era of digitalization. Islam does not reject modernization; rather, it emphasizes that marketing practices must avoid excessive manipulation that compromises the principle of trustworthiness (*amanah*). By upholding integrity in advertising communication, Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) not only safeguard their business reputation but also preserve *hifdz al-'irdh* (the protection of dignity), which constitutes a core element of *maqashid al-shariah*. (Borghi, 2021) affirm, consumer trust is stronger when marketing relies on genuine testimonials rather than artificial visualizations.

The marketplace can thus be understood as a contemporary instrument for actualizing *maqashid al-shariah* within the economic sphere. It generates *jalb al-mashalih* (the attainment of benefits) through efficient distribution, expanded market access, and enhanced competitiveness of MSMEs, while simultaneously preventing *dar'u al-mafasid* (the avoidance of harm) such as fraud and exploitation. Provided that all marketing strategies are governed by Islamic values, the marketplace becomes not merely a trading arena but also a platform of Islamic economic *dakwah*, honoring humanity as *khalifatullah fi al-ardh*. This perspective is in line with (Azis, 2025), who underscores that the success of MSMEs is not solely measured by sales growth, but by the extent to which they are able to reflect *maqashid al-shariah* in their business practices.

Conclusion

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that marketplace-based marketing strategies have proven effective in enhancing the sales performance of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) through the optimization of product catalogs, digital promotions, active consumer engagement, paid advertising, and collaborations with influencers. The marketplace not only expands market access but also fosters distribution efficiency and strengthens consumer trust. From the perspective of Islamic economics, such marketing practices reflect the principles of shidq (truthfulness), taysir (facilitation), ihsan (excellence), and amanah (trustworthiness), which serve as pillars in upholding justice and ensuring the blessings of transactions. Furthermore, the analysis of maqashid al-shariah indicates that marketplace marketing strategies contribute to the protection of wealth, life, morality, and dignity, thereby generating benefits for all stakeholders. Nevertheless, challenges such as price competition and the potential for manipulative promotions remain and must be anticipated to prevent injustice and losses. Therefore, the marketing strategies of MSMEs through marketplaces should not merely be oriented toward economic gain but must also be directed toward sustainability, fairness, and adherence to shariah values. This research makes a significant contribution to the literature on Islamic economics by affirming that the marketplace can serve as a modern instrument for the realization of al-falah (prosperity) as well as a medium for promoting shariah-based economic practices in the digital era.

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