

Communication Branding Strategy Local Brand 'Ruaya' To Develop Public Awareness

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Abstract

Ruaya is Indonesia's a local company (MSME) which operates in the field of printing souvenirs or merchandise for various purposes such as corporate gifts, weddings, communities, and political campaigns. In this research, we assisted Ruaya in running a digital campaign to create a good branding strategy and develop new customers awareness, including the marketing activities. The novelty of this research lies in its exploration of unidentified areas for Ruaya as it transitions from traditional offline marketing methods to embrace the digital landscape. The problem statement of this research is how does Ruaya effectively leverage social media to create branding strategies to enhance brand awareness and attract new customers/or consumers. The objective that we try to illustrate is to develop actionable strategies for Ruaya to effectively leverage social media to create branding strategies to enhance brand awareness and attract new customers/or consumers. The theory used in this research is Cognitive Dissonance Theory. The tactics we applied are creating contents in the form of video with storytelling and involving influencers. This research is qualitative, utilizing primary data from field observations and secondary data from literature studies. The research findings are that the digital campaign performed has achieved its main objective of increasing new customers' awareness of the Ruaya brand, as well as increasing customer engagement by measuring it using metrics in Instagram and TikTok Insight. The result was that Instagram became the best platform to run the campaign, having achieved 6,964 total likes, 102 comments, and 16 shares for a total of 3 photos and 18 videos (reels). This campaign also succeeded in gaining 1,055 followers since the campaign was launched..

Keywords: local brand; branding strategy; cognitive dissonance theory; Instagram dan Tiktok Insight.

Abstrak

Ruaya adalah perusahaan lokal (UMKM) Indonesia yang bergerak di bidang percetakan souvenir atau merchandise untuk berbagai keperluan seperti hadiah perusahaan, pernikahan, komunitas, dan kampanye politik. Dalam penelitian ini, kami membantu Ruaya menjalankan kampanye digital untuk menciptakan strategi branding yang baik dan membangun kesadaran merek kepada para pelanggan baru, termasuk juga cara pemasaran digital bagi Ruaya. Unsur kebaruan dari penelitian ini terletak pada eksplorasi pada transisi dari metode pemasaran secara tradisional untuk ekspansi ke metode digital. Rumusan masalah dalam penelitian ini adalah bagaimana Ruaya secara efektif memanfaatkan media sosial untuk menciptakan strategi branding guna meningkatkan kesadaran merek dan menarik pelanggan/atau konsumen baru. Tujuan penelitian adalah untuk mengetahui strategi-strategi yang digunakan Ruaya dalam memanfaatkan media sosial secara efektif untuk menciptakan strategi branding agar meningkatnya kesadaran merek dan menarik pelanggan/atau konsumen baru. Teori yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah Cognitive Dissonance Theory. Taktik yang diterapkan adalah membuat konten dalam bentuk video dengan suara latar dan melibatkan influencer. Penelitian ini bersifat kualitatif, memanfaatkan data primer dari pengamatan lapangan dan data sekunder dari studi literatur. Temuan penelitian adalah kampanye digital yang dijalankan telah mencapai tujuan utamanya dalam meningkatkan kesadaran para pelanggan baru terhadap merek Ruaya, sekaligus menaikkan keterlibatan pelanggan dengan mengukurnya menggunakan metrik dalam Instagram dan TikTok Insight. Hasilnya adalah bahwa Instagram menjadi platform terbaik untuk menjalankan kampanye tersebut, dengan telah mencapai 6,964 total disukai, 102 komentar, dan 16 kali dibagikan untuk jumlah 3 foto dan 18 video (reels). Kampanye ini juga berhasil meraih 1,055 jumlah pengikut sejak kampanye dijalankan.

Kata Kunci: brand lokal; strategi brand; teori cognitive dissonance; Instagram dan Tiktok Insight.

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INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a country rich in potential in terms of tourism, agriculture, mining, and other natural resources that can boost the economy if continuously developed and managed well by Local brands (Putri, 2020). According to Undang-Undang Nomor 20 Tahun 2008 (in LPPI and Bank Indonesia, 2015), the term 'local brand' is defined as: "businesses or enterprises conducted by individuals, groups, small business entities, or households with a certain amount of wealth and income" (p.13). For the government, local brands have been recognized as business activities capable of contributing to job creation in society and increasing community income.

Local brands themselves are relatively more accessible to the community compared to large businesses. The growth in the number of local brands in Indonesia is quite rapid, as evidenced by Kementerian Koperasi dan Usaha Kecil dan Menengah, which states that the prevalence of local brands in Indonesia has increased from 61,651,177 million in 2016 to 65,465,497 million in 2019. This indicates that the growth of local brands in Indonesia has shown consistent annual increases (Munandar et al., 2022). Currently, many people also have the creativity to create local brands (Syafitri et al., 2023).

Not only does it equalize the economic level of the small people, it turns out that UMKM can also generate foreign exchange income for the country. According to data from Kementerian Koperasi dan Usaha Kecil dan Menengah, data obtained from UMKM for state foreign exchange increased compared to 2016, reaching Rp. 88.4 Billion. The good news are, according to the data from Kementerian Koperasi dan Usaha Kecil dan Menengah which is obtained from the website Kemenkopukm, that the data found in 2018, there were more than 64 million UMKM units capable of absorbing around 116 million people. This figure increased to around 65.4 million UMKM units with a workforce reaching 119 million people in 2019 or an increase of 2.2% every year.

An example of a local brand as the object of this research which the field is in the printing or screen printing, named Ruaya. Ruaya is a local company UMKM or MSME (Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises) in Indonesia which operates in the field of printing souvenirs or merchandise for various purposes such as corporate gifts, weddings, communities, political campaigns, etc. This company was established by two people who has been friends for long time, they are Yadi and Sudiarno, around the year of 2002. They built the company using their personal savings and a loan from bank with a total of 15 million rupiah at that time.

When it first started, Ruaya focused on selling three products, such as coffee, skincare and souvenirs and merchandise. They also had three branches in three different cities in Depok, Bekasi and Jakarta (Petojo). Each branch focuses on managing one type of product. Depok and Bekasi branches are for coffee and skincare and for their workspace in Petojo as a place to produce souvenirs and merchandise. After several years selling them, Ruaya then decided to stop selling coffee and skincare because the business didn't run well. They also had to close the branches in Depok and Bekasi and decided to continue the business on souvenir and merchandise production in Jakarta. Turned out, the orders for souvenir and merchandise skyrocketed. Since that, the owners are committed to put their focus on souvenirs and merchandises only until now.

After years of existence, Ruaya has partnered with many companies from various sectors ranging from small, medium scale to large and well-known companies. Apart from that, Ruaya has also been partnering with a major vendor to provide Tumblr water bottle as souvenirs to many companies, that basically a company that specializes in the manufacturing of a wide range of plastic products, particularly food storage containers. The product line includes various kitchenware and storage solutions, such as containers, lunch boxes, water bottles, and cookware.

In establishing effective communication branding strategies for local brand, especially Ruaya, it is important to identify the gap analysis or phenomenon on the disparity between Ruaya's current branding efforts and the potential opportunities by digital presence. After conducting interviews with

the owners of Ruaya, it is informed that Ruaya has primarily focused on traditional offline marketing approaches and relied on word-of-mouth tactics to promote its business since the business was started. They also said that they did not have an official website for their company and any social media business account. As a result, any information about Ruaya is only known by a small circle, which are by their families, colleagues, and relatives.

To get to know the branding strategies of Ruaya, we learned to identify the value of the company through their sales and aftersales service to customer/consumers and its product models and quality. One of the functions of branding is as a means of embedding a positive image in the minds of consumers (Oktaviani, 2018). A good branding strategy helps a company stand out from competitors, build trust with customer/consumers, and create strong connections that keep customer/consumers coming back in the future time. Branding is more than just giving a name to the product, it encompasses the entire idea of putting emotional appeals, embodies a whole set of physical and social psychological attributes and beliefs as well (Tock and Baharun, 2013, p. 193). Technically, Ruaya has carried out a branding strategy for its company by proving the good quality of its services and products.

Yet, still, the online branding strategy is required because it is related to the brand visibility and awareness, brand engagement and relationship with customer/consumers, and brand perception and image. At the end, it influences the sales and revenue growth. In these days, it is common to find and buy anything online via official website and marketplaces. The growth of digital marketing platforms and user dynamics have greatly impacted how consumer–brand engagement is created, enhanced, and sustained (Barreto and Ramalho, 2019, in Schee, 2020, p. 239). In this research, we identify the company's major need, and it is to develop new customers' awareness. To reach the need, the company employs emotional branding as a way to engage their customers, appealing to their needs, aspirations, dreams, and ego (Acharya, 2018, in Sullivan, 2019, p. 1).

In this research, we took on the role of PR consultants for Ruaya, guiding them in the development of effective branding strategies. Our involvement included conducting thorough analyses of their current brand positioning, identifying key areas for improvement, and providing expert advice on digital marketing techniques. We designed comprehensive training sessions to educate Ruaya's team on the importance of consistent and engaging content creation, leveraging social media platforms, and implementing targeted advertising campaigns. Through our consultancy, we aimed to empower Ruaya to build a strong and cohesive brand presence that resonates with their target audience and drives business growth.

Communication is a form of interaction that influences an individual's process to achieve a goal. In the context of this research, we aimed to influence a person's attitude and thinking, so that the person we are targeting, which is the customer/consumer, can change their behaviour towards the brand. To reach the goal, it requires a persuasive communication skill with a clear persuasive message. According to Schwartz in the book (Griffin, Ledbetter, & Sparks, G., 2019) an effective persuasive message is a message that can evoke past experiences and can create resonance between the content of the message and a person's thoughts or feelings so that it can move the heart and awaken a person's self-awareness. This persuasive message will be contained in the strategies and tactics we proposed to Ruaya.

In this research, we fill the lack of knowledge of the integration of online and offline branding efforts to create a cohesive brand experience for customer/consumers. We also want to explore the phenomenon of digital transformation the industry and analyse how digital technologies can be leveraged to enhance brand awareness and customer engagement.

The novelty of this research lies in its exploration of unidentified areas for Ruaya as it transitions from traditional offline marketing methods to embrace the digital landscape. By specifically researching into the realm of online marketing and branding strategies, this study seeks to uncover new insights and pioneering approaches tailored specifically to Ruaya's needs. Moreover, this research aims

to contribute to the advancement of knowledge in the field and provide actionable recommendations for Ruaya and similar businesses transforming into the digital sphere for the first time.

The problem statement of this research emphasised on how Ruaya effectively leverages social media to create branding strategies to enhance brand awareness and attract new customers/consumers. The objective that we try to illustrate is to develop actionable strategies for Ruaya to effectively leverage social media to create branding strategies to enhance brand awareness and attract new customers/consumers.

RESEARCH METHODS

The research method used is a descriptive method with a qualitative approach. The qualitative research approach is used to capture facts, conditions, variables, and phenomena that occur during the research and present them as they are (Subakti & Prasetya, 2021). The descriptive method is employed to depict, describe, or present the objective state being studied by the research conditions (Sugiyono, 2017). This research was conducted by directly visiting the Ruaya production house located at Jl. Tanah Abang V No. 27D, Petojo Selatan, Gambir, Central Jakarta, DKI Jakarta. The place is in front of SD Petojo Selatan Gambir. This research was conducted from November to February of the year 2023/2024.

This research utilises two data collection techniques: primary data, which is sourced from observation and interviews, and secondary data, which is sourced from document data. In this study, primary data is obtained or collected directly by the researcher from the field where the research will be conducted, and the data collection technique using secondary data is sourced from document data. The document data referred here are the data sourced from books, research reports, journals, and others (Kaharuddin, 2021). The following are the steps for collecting data in this study:

1. Interview

The interview is a communication process to obtain information through question and answer between the researcher and the research subjects (Subakti & Prasetya, 2021). Another opinion according to Sugiyono (2017) suggests that interviews are used as a data collection technique to identify issues that need to be studied and also if the researcher wants to understand deeper insights from the informant. In this research, in-depth interviews were conducted with several informants such as the Owner of Ruaya Yadi and Sudiarno, as well as several other employees to gather additional information.

To collect information and data to support this research, we conducted more than one interviews with the owners of Ruaya and their employees. The first interview was performed to gather comprehensive information about Ruaya's history, values, daily operations, products, target market, current marketing techniques, and their employees' activities. Following this interview, we arranged the coaching session to assist the owners of Ruaya to develop and implement a digitalised marketing and branding strategy. This session focused not only on expanding Ruaya's reach through digital channels but also on enhancing their branding strategy. Specific branding techniques discussed included leveraging social media platforms, creating compelling brand narratives, and optimizing their online presence to increase brand visibility and engagement. The goal of this comprehensive approach was to train Ruaya with the necessary knowledge and tools to effectively reach a broader market and strengthen their brand identity in the digital landscape.

The second interview was conducted to evaluate the results of the coaching session and the implementation of the digitalised marketing and branding strategy. This follow-up interview assessed the effectiveness of the new strategies, gathered feedback on the implementation process, and identified any challenges or areas for further improvement. The insights gained from this evaluation

were used to refine and enhance Ruaya's digital marketing and branding efforts, ensuring continuous growth and adaptation in an evolving market.

1) Interview with Ruaya's owners

Interviews with Ruaya's owners were conducted to uncover insights regarding the company's operational and strategic challenges. One of the primary issues identified was the overwhelming responsibility borne by the two owners, who manage every aspect of Ruaya's operations. This situation severely limits their ability to focus on developing and implementing a comprehensive branding strategy. The owners admitted that their extensive workload leaves little time for strategic initiatives, particularly in the areas of online and digital branding.

Additionally, the owners expressed that they cannot push their employees to engage in online branding strategies, as it is not their area of expertise, and their duties are primarily focused on production. The employees' roles and responsibilities are centred around maintaining the quality and efficiency of production, leaving them neither the time nor the skills to handle digital branding tasks effectively.

Despite these constraints, the owners demonstrated a clear understanding of the importance of a strong online presence and expressed a keen interest in enhancing their digital branding efforts. They acknowledged the potential benefits that a well-executed online branding strategy could bring, such as increased market reach and stronger customer engagement. Oktaviani (2018) stated that brand is not just a name and logo, but promise by an organisation to customer/consumers to provide the brand's principles and play an important role in selling the products at a time (p. 354). This means that the brand, as a valuable asset, influences the direction of business strategy and impacts overall performance.



Figure 1. The Example of The Content Before the Coaching Session

The owners also recognised the need for specialised resources and expertise to effectively manage and execute these strategies. Although, they have an admin staff whose responsibilities include creating content. However, the quality of the content produced by the admin can be said to be far from adequate and has so far been limited to be posted on Ruaya's e-commerce site, their

WhatsApp status, and the owners' personal social media accounts. This approach has not leveraged the full potential of broader social media platforms for effective branding.

To address these challenges, we, playing a role as PR practitioner from LSPR, assisted them by proposing several actionable steps, including the coaching session or training programs to equip the owners and employees with the necessary knowledge and skills for digital branding. For instance, we instructed them on the process of content creation, from developing content that aligns with scheduled plans to posting on social media. This included taking high-quality photos and video clips, adding some edits with music and voiceovers, and crafting engaging captions.

Additionally, we suggested hiring a dedicated team or appointing a specialist to oversee online branding activities, which would allow them to focus on other critical areas of the business.

We also suggested Ruaya's owners to provide targeted and sustainable training programs for employees, including the admin, to enhance their skills in digital branding and marketing. This could include workshops on social media management, content creation, and the use of digital marketing tools. It's crucial that these training sessions are continuous and regularly updated to keep pace with current trends and technological advancements. By staying informed about the latest developments in digital marketing, employees can adapt their strategies to meet the evolving needs of the market effectively.

2) Interview with Ruaya's employees

Interviews with employees were conducted to see Ruaya more deeply from another perspective. As a result, the findings from these interviews revealed several key issues (1) a lack of education for Ruaya's employees regarding online/or digital company branding strategies, (2) insufficient guidance from the Ruaya's owners on online/or digital matters, which certainly supports this situation, (3) the absence of dedicated resources with specific responsibilities in this area, which poses a significant obstacle for Ruaya in building an effective online and digital branding strategy.



Figure 1. The Example of The Content After the Coaching Session

Furthermore, employees expressed a strong willingness to learn and adapt to new digital marketing tools and techniques if provided with proper training and support. They also highlighted the potential benefits of adopting a more structured approach to digital branding, such as improved market reach, enhanced customer engagement, and increased competitiveness. Employees suggested that clear communication from leadership, and the establishment of a specialised online branding team could significantly improve Ruaya's digital presence and overall brand strategy. These insights underline the need for a strategic investment in online branding education and resources to empower employees and align the company's efforts towards a cohesive and effective digital branding initiative.

Employees also expressed their enthusiasm about Ruaya finally having its own social media platforms to showcase their work and products. They believe that these platforms will not only help in promoting the brand but also allow them to share their craftsmanship and creativity with a wider audience. These insights underline the need for a strategic investment in online branding education and resources to empower employees and align the company's efforts towards a cohesive and effective digital branding initiative.

Through this interview, the researcher will gain deeper insights into strategies for Ruaya to effectively leverage social media to create branding strategies to enhance brand awareness and attract new customers or consumers. According to Sugiyono (2017), it is stated that through interviews, researchers will gain a deeper understanding of participants in interpreting situations and phenomena that occur, which cannot be found through observation.

2. Literature Study

A literature study is a method involving data collection by understanding and studying theories from various literature related to the research (Adlini et al., 2022). Another opinion according to Nazir (2013 in Utami, 2021) suggests that a literature study is a data collection technique involving a reviewer's study of books, literature, notes, and reports related to the problem being addressed. This technique is used to obtain the foundations and written opinions by studying various literature related to the researched problem. It is also done to obtain secondary data that will be used as a basis for comparison between theory and its practice in the field.

In this study, the main theory used is the 'Cognitive Dissonance Theory'. This theory was first proposed by Leon Festinger (1957) and was obtained from the book titled "Introducing Communication Theory: Analysis and Application" written by West and Turner in 2018. Other supporting theories include The Ringelmann Effect and Social Loafing proposed by Maximilien Ringelmann, obtained from the Forbes website in 2015, and concepts presented by Anne Gregory in the book titled "Planning and Managing Public Relations Campaigns" in 2010.

3. Observation

Observation is a data collection technique involving direct observation of the researched object in the field. Another opinion, according to Marshall (in Sugiyono, 2017), states that "through observation, the researcher learns behavior and the meaning attached to those behaviors." Through observation, researchers learn about behavior and the meaning behind it (Utami et al., 2021).

Our first observation was by visiting the Ruaya office a week after coaching and training-time, it was in January 2024 when we observed the mini studio usage that we facilitated as a background for photos and videos when content was created for social media. We also observed the owner's and staff's behavior and abilities after coaching is given.

The utilization of the mini studio is quite good by looking at the number of tumblers and cutlery that are prepared to be used as content. When we asked whether there were any malfunctions in the equipment in the mini studio such as lights, panels, materials and also whether there were any

problems when using it, the owner answered that there were no problems, it was safe, it's just that the owner was very busy so he hadn't had time to upload previously created content. Owners of Ruaya also informed that there are admin support staff who usually create content, but at the other times the other admin support can take turns, any staff who can create content will be assigned to creating and uploading. The items are also selected directly by the owner and those selected are those the most demanded or best sellers and also the newest ones.

Apart from observing the owner of Ruaya, the researcher then made observation of Ruaya employees, same with the owner observation, we also met a week after coaching, the authors met around 15-20 employees with different tasks, some whose job was to handle printing, some whose job was to sort goods and even pack the goods. During observations, we randomly checked with employees regarding their impressions of the social media pages they currently have together, it is Ruaya account is now available on Instagram and TikTok. We discovered that almost all employees are very enthusiastic about the social media that Ruaya now owns, because, according to them, they can show links on social media pages for customer/consumers who ask about the detail materials and their specifications, and they are very enthusiastic about creating more content with ideas like viral content with video and image transitions, with interesting music. They revealed that good branding can be formed with videos that are watched by many people.

We also observed from the customer's point of view, that we found the Ruaya owners and employees felt helped, both from the customer side who could see more choices for souvenirs and the employees who could have a better promotion the goods even without sending the 'original' items. Employees and owners give opinion that items that are properly recorded in the mini studio have a good appearance, they are bright, and appear to be real pics or clearly depict the item and the content describes its function.

After the researchers observed and reviewed through in-depth interviews with owners and employees, there was a gap regarding strategies for optimised the automatic digital communication to develop content on social media, without communicating in two directions, it is called utilising the social media 'algorithms'. This gap exists in digital communication from employees which can be built without realising it to form algorithms in social media which require the content creator's perseverance in present their promotions through digital media. By consistently creating and distributing content, the algorithm will automatically process and recognise the content we produce and engage with. This increases the likelihood of our content appearing on the 'For You' pages or homepages of other users, thereby enhancing its visibility and reach. Quoting from the web (Binus, 2021), algorithms not only filter the content that appears on our social media homepage but can also surface relevant topics for potential customers to buy the products offered.

However, the Ruaya employees and owners are not actively reposting the content or just being creative on social media and creating new content so that the algorithm on social media is not running well, so we assume that it is unfortunate, knowing that we just need to use it and facilitate by the modern technology in this digital era, automatically and no need more effort like two ways communications to customers.

Therefore, as a PR consultant, we will conduct training on how communication branding strategy builds public trust through digital marketing, to ease the customers' or consumers' needs to see the details of the materials through the real photos and videos available on social media content, which Ruaya had never done before. With this campaign, we expected that the customers or consumers will no longer need samples or send couriers to take samples from the Ruaya workshop. This strategy provides convenience for the customers or consumers and aims to expand market reach beyond its physical location or traditional distribution channels. This allows the brand to tap into new markets and attract customers or consumers who may not otherwise have access to Ruaya's products.

The data processing in this research is focused on describing how communication branding strategies can build public trust in the design and printing of products created by Ruaya through digital marketing on platforms such as Instagram and TikTok. In this research, we developed communication branding strategies to build public trust through digital marketing, such as on Instagram. We suggest Ruaya to posted a total of 3 photos and 18 videos or reels from December 30, 2023, to January 18. During this period, Ruaya received a total of 6,964 likes, 102 comments, and 16 shares on Instagram. Additionally, on TikTok, Ruaya also posted the same number of videos since January 3 and received 381 total likes, 9 shares, and 4 comments.

After the research data has been collected, validity testing is conducted to measure whether the data and its collection process are correct or valid. To test the validity of the data, researchers use the triangulation technique. Triangulation is a technique of validating data that utilizes something outside the data for checking purposes or as a comparison to the data. The data triangulation techniques used in this study are source triangulation and method triangulation. In this case, the researchers compared the data obtained from interviews with the Owner with the data obtained from interviews with the employees. Additionally, the author also compares the data obtained from interviews with data obtained from observations, and documentation data, to determine the consistency of interview data with field facts (Nisa & Fatmawati, 2020).

4. Analysis Data

The analysis of the collected data provides crucial insights into the current branding strategies of Ruaya and the effectiveness of their digital marketing efforts. By examining the responses from interviews with the owners and employees, along with the performance metrics from their existing online activities, we can identify key patterns, strengths, and areas needing improvement. This section will systematically explore these findings, offering a detailed understanding of how 'Ruaya' can enhance its brand awareness and engagement in the digital marketplace.

According to a research by Meltareza & Tawaqal (2023), companies must develop brand values by communicating the brand value to customers to suit their needs. Involving social and digital media is the tool to promote the products and branding them to reach customer's need. An effective marketing communications strategy requires good planning which aims to inform, influence, and retain customers to continue ordering from Ruaya. The main goal of digital marketing communications is to introduce customers to various types of souvenirs that customer/consumers can choose from which can also be adjusted to meet their budget.

We developed several communication strategies, including (1) face to face selling or directly meeting customers in retailing their products, (2) online selling, to promote and sell their products through digital platform like social media and e-commerce. The face-to-face communication strategy could strengthen relationships through simple communication, however, in Ruaya, it includes buyer and seller made an agreement through phone calling. This typical circumstance is often experienced by the owner of Ruaya and usually, the customers ask to be sent the samples of the products they want to order, as they require to directly touch and feel the products. Then, Ruaya sends a courier to customer/consumers' place to collect the samples. The problem is that the majority of the samples were never returned to Ruaya.

Assuming the problems, we submitted a proposal to Ruaya through a digital campaign, by being a PR consultant to run a social media campaign, in order to ease the customer/consumers' needs to see or view the details of the materials through the real photos and videos that available on the social media content, which Ruaya had never done before. With this campaign, we expected that the customer/consumers will not need samples and send the courier to take the samples from Ruaya workshop anymore. This strategy provides a convenience from the customer/consumers and aims to expand the market reach beyond its physical location or traditional distribution channels. This allows

the brand to tap into new markets and attract customer/consumers who may not have access to Ruaya's products otherwise.

Beside a persuasive approach, we also use 'Cognitive Dissonance Theory', to communicate the advantages of using Ruaya's products when facing any less comfortable condition that they may face in everyday life, such as weather and traffic jams. Seeing of what products Ruaya has produced, it would influence the customer/consumers to attract customer/consumers' need on their merchandises to help them tolerate with the bad situation and understand more about the usages. For example:

- Umbrellas' printed content: We create a content which has the story telling about current weather conditions that are uncertain. The goal is to awaken the interest of preparing umbrellas before it rains, then the customer/consumers are interested in buying umbrellas,
- Lunch Box printed content: Our other content is a story telling lunch box started with a challenge mindset to the audience, to tell that if they don't have a lunch box with aluminium foil, the food will get cold quickly. This forces the audience to have a lunch box with aluminium foil that can keep food warm for up to 4 hours to their lunch time. Besides, the point is, we can add more values to the products with the great printing quality which in line with the service Ruaya offers.

Ruaya as a souvenir corporate vendor can also take advantage of the cognitive dissonance theory by creating advertisements that emphasizes the advantages of new goods according to customer needs, such as their usefulness. Through this advertisement, our campaign tries to make the potential customer/consumers aware of how to prepare themselves with the products Ruaya sells, so they don't get caught in an uncomfortable situation. For example, a single hot water tumblers, which are out of trend and only available without a glass, then, the situation and the feeling would encourage them to be more efficient by buying a tumbler in a complete set with a set of mugs.

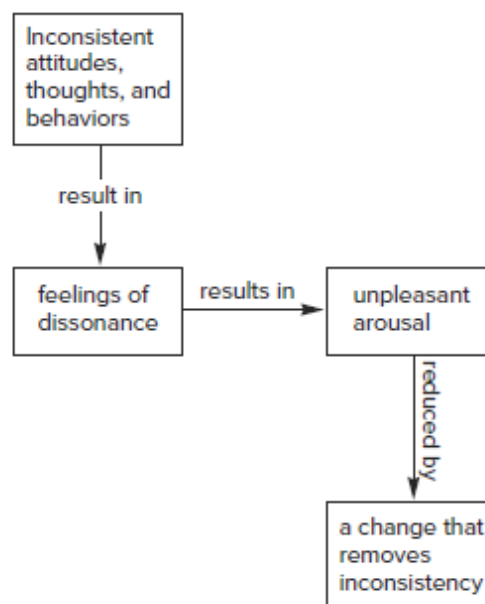


Figure 3. Cognitive Dissonance Theory

(Source: West Turner, 2018)

According to West & Turner (2018), 'Cognitive Dissonance Theory' also looks at a person's ability to manage meaning and the discomfort people feel when their beliefs conflict with each other. This 'CDT' theory was initiated by Leon Festinger (1957) as a theory that argues that dissonance is an uncomfortable feeling that motivates people to take steps to reduce it. (p.105).

By highlighting the benefits of the product to buyers, this can strengthen consumers' confidence that they have made the right decision. This theory can also measure the extent to which consumers feel the benefits of the product, whether later buyers can provide feedback in the form of satisfaction or vice versa, so that companies can develop creativity and improve services according to consumer needs.

As mentioned previously, Ruaya did not have digital marketing channels and seeing that, we offered a coaching or training session to Ruaya's owners to run their digital campaign and they can run their own marketing activities through social media accounts like Instagram and Tik Tok, which is strengthening the possibility of Ruaya to be available through Google search engines.

Meanwhile, we provided several inputs for E-Commerce that have been developed by Ruaya owners such as Tokopedia, Shopee and Lazada, and the inputs including consistently upload the supplies. Many entrepreneurs also use various methods for campaigns to market their products so that they are effective and on track with their business target, but the campaign methods and programs that Ruaya carries out are in line with the strategies discussed in Anne Gregory's book in helping PR Practitioners achieve their objectives, through the stages of awareness, attitudes and opinion and behaviour.

(i) Awareness

Ruaya brings awareness by introducing Ruaya branding in campaigns on social media. Another thing that we built is the audience's trust in the safety of product packaging and the transparency of the workshops conditions where Ruaya's employees operates, clearly shows to the audiences.

(ii) Attitudes and opinions

We also analysed the audiences' comments in Instagram, which most of them as feedback from the application of our varied content methods. In addition to employing dissonant cognitive persuasive communication, we also incorporated relatable everyday themes that resonate with the audience's daily experiences. These themes, such as cherished memories from the past and the warmth of family love, are commonly encountered by many individuals. Our aim is to evoke a desire among the audience to engage further by eliciting their comments.

(iii) Behaviour

After the audiences give comments, we could see that several potential buyers are interested in our contents. They would want to believe in the safety of the packaging of goods and also familiar with the place of production, then the audiences will be influenced to purchase products from Ruaya. (p. 90-91)

These strategies are implemented into the campaign tactics, and we use methods to make this campaign a 'remarkable campaign' with the goal is focused on existing customers and would reach new buyers. Our goal is not only to promote the goods for selling only, but the aim is to win the hearts of the audience and make it meaningful for anyone who sees the Ruaya as a company. Ruaya, as a local MSME, will be able to compete with foreign markets that are well-known to have a good quality product. We committed the goals by strategy and work it on tactics to achieve a 'remarkable campaign' are :

1. Right on target

Ruaya's intended audience comprises procurement teams within companies, organisational contacts, community representatives, and HR departments. Hence, the social media and e-commerce profiles consistently feature keywords related to large-scale procurement, such as 'Corporate Gifts & Wedding Souvenirs'.

2. Public awareness through social media content

Establishing a strong brand presence holds significant importance. We organise Ruaya's content starting from branding first, then showing workshops and ending with product content that can be purchased at Ruaya. Meanwhile, we develop the campaign tactics to be more structure:

- We focus on 3-5 types of storylines to be used as storytelling content (content niches). We chose the life and working conditions, romance, and good memories. This content is related to many people's experiences and occurs in everyday life.
- The duration of the videos exposing Ruaya content is only 15-40 seconds to visually show the products. The videos shown are equipped with interesting captions and trending music.
- We broadcasted the content regularly according to a schedule tailored to people's habits, such as the times they typically access social media. For example, we discovered that after 7 pm, when workers are done with work or have reached home, is an optimal time. Posting content at this time attracts more attention than doing so before 7 pm. Additionally, content must be consistent, continuously displayed, and always updated to prevent the audience from becoming inactive or bored with repetitive pages and content on Ruaya's social media.

3. Influencer Marketing

Quoting from Seitel (2017) regarding the importance of influencers, PR practitioners can build relationships with influencers as the key to successful campaigns in today's media and can reach certain groups according to the scope of the influencers (p. 222).

Aware of that, we continued to approach some verified influencers that are from entertainment industry to promote Ruaya campaign. They created a short video than uploaded them into their verified personal Instagram account to boost customers engagement through social media.

One of the influencers is Romi Kartiko, known as Romi AFI. We appreciated that Romi AFI is willing to promote Ruaya without being paid to help local UMKMs. Romi AFI, who was the 7th winner of Indonesian Fantasy Academy (AFI). He is now working as an actor, model, singer, and MC's. Romi handles his Instagram verified account: @romikartiko04 who has 54.7k followers on Instagram. Romi AFI shared a promotion for Ruaya's product, its Ruaya tumblers, with a communication style focused on the use of tumblers that are practical for use during sports.



Figure 4. The Influencer Support for Ruaya's Digital Branding

Romi, in his promotion through *Instagram Reels* post, gained 186 likes and 1000 viewers on his *Instagram Story* in 24 hours. After Romi AFI promoted Ruaya, many of Romi's followers liked to Ruaya's posts on Ruaya's Instagram account and even commented on the products Ruaya posted, but until this research was completed, Romi's promotion as an influencer had not an impact on Ruaya's purchases rate. This study to use influencer as a part of digital strategy marketing is in line with the quotes from Smith (2017)

“Celebrities often are used because they are charismatic and familiar. Celebrity endorsement doesn't automatically translate into money or votes, but it can garner media attention and public interest” (p.259).

As a PR practitioners, we are glad to introduce Ruaya as a local UMKM through various strategies to increase the branding of a business brand, including using influencers as for us, influencers also act as PR practitioners in their own position. In today's digital era, it is very common for entrepreneurs to use influencers on social media to increase their branding or even increase their sales rates.

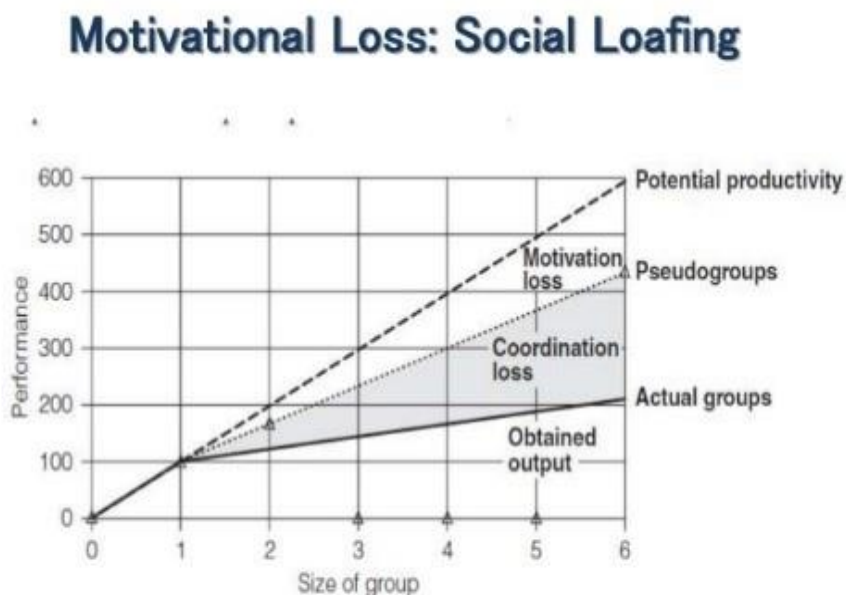


Figure 4. The Ringelmann Effect and Social Loafing Theory
(Source: Tope, nd From Website Todoist)

In the business realm, it's commonly observed a phenomenon pertains the correlation between the number of people in a team and their performance. Related to Ruaya, the company is built with limited size of teams and positions with specific aims and objectives.

As was said, Ruaya does not have a formal hierarchy or structured position within the company. The day-to-day operation, administrative position and customer relation are filled only by Mr. Yadi and Mr. Sudiyarno, the owners of the business. It means, all aspects and matters related to the company/or manufacture operations are carried out and commanded by them two. Meaning is, it is only a small team in the body of Ruaya. The benefit is the communication is more direct and efficient. In doing coordination in day to day operations and decision-making, the process can be faster and can lessen the possibility of information being lost in the hierarchy. According to Forbes (2015), it is said that more people mean more communication, more bureaucracy, more chaos, and more of things that could slow things down. Forbes also cites from Jeff Bezos when he said that if a team can't be fed by

two pizzas, then that team is too large. A report titled 'The State of the American Workplace', released by Gallup in 2013, it is found that smaller companies had more engaged employees where 42% of employees working at companies of 10 or fewer were engaged at work (Forbes, 2015).

Quoted from the web (Todoist, nd) which explains the benefits of having smaller number of people on a team. They are:

- (1) more effective communication, means that it will be easier to keep in touch, exchange information and keep on track with fewer people.
- (2) more innovation and more productive, where employees are likely easier to voice their opinions.
- (3) stronger support network and collaboration, means that the support and attention given from the managers to each employee can be more efficient.
- (4) flexibility, means that the team can be more adaptable to sudden demands or unexpected challenges (Todoist, nd).

As Ruaya having a small team in a company, they are unwittingly preventing the effects of The Ringelmann Effect and Social Loafing concepts. As cited in Forbes, The Ringelmann Effect, a theory by Maximilien Ringelmann, is the tendency for individual members to become less productive as the size of a group increases. While Social Loafing explains why individual effort decreases as the team size increases. Todoist stated that the larger group size, the contributions given by the employees could be less valuable.

In a company, planning is needed in designing ideas or concepts to attract public and media attention by setting a goal based on the company's vision and mission. This aligns with the theory proposed by Smith (2021), who states that a goal is a global indication of how an issue should be resolved. It is presented as a statement rooted in an organization's mission or vision, acknowledging an issue and outlining how the organization hopes to see it resolved (p. 217).

As a Public Relations professional of a company, one must have communication goal planning to strengthen the company's image and build positive relationships with customers that can be adaptable with different situations. According to Smith (2021), there are three parts of communication goals: reputation management goals, relationship management goals, and task management goals. From these three parts of communication goals, local brand like Ruaya can apply them. Ruaya has implemented a part of the communication goals, namely task management goals. According to Smith (2021), task management goals are concerned with getting certain things accomplished (p.222).

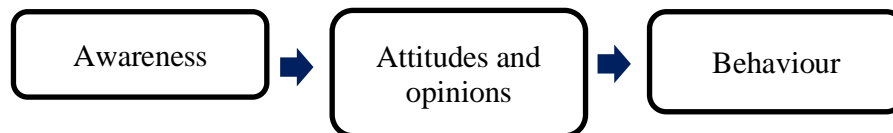
Ruaya consistently achieves its targets in creating souvenirs according to customer requests. The company places a strong emphasis on time and quality throughout the souvenir-making process, recognising that souvenirs are often needed for specific events that require rapid preparation. This commitment is evident when Ruaya is entrusted with creating souvenirs for a particular event, and the customer specifies a deadline, typically within a 3-day timeframe. Ruaya consistently agrees to such requests, completing the souvenirs swiftly and ensuring they meet the customer's specifications while maintaining quality and close supervision. This track record has established Ruaya as a trusted vendor for producing souvenirs quickly and with the highest quality, leading customers to repurchase for future projects.

To achieve a goal in a company, clear and measurable objectives are needed to maintain the company's reputation. This is in line with Smith's theory (2021), which suggests that an objective is a statement of specific outcomes for a public, emerging from an organisation's goal, presented in clear and measurable terms, pointing toward specific levels of awareness, acceptance, or action (p.225).

The company's objectives must be carefully chosen by determining the target market, conducting campaigns gradually, considering the need for process and time, and determining priority scales that are deemed important for the company's progress. This can be seen in Ruaya as a company that requires income stability and can accept orders in small quantities up to large quantities. For

example, Ruaya received a minimum order of 20 exclusive merchandise items for an engagement event, while other companies usually provide orders with a minimum order above 50 to 100 pieces.

In addition, as a public relations professional within a company, one must have communication planning on what will be used to convey messages to the public, so that the message conveyed is targeted towards the objective. Anne (2010) believes that there are three steps that must be determined to perform a campaign that can help PR Practitioners achieve their objectives, they are:



1. Awareness is how the public understands the message given by PR Practitioners, awareness usually takes the form of information and knowledge,
2. Attitudes and opinions show how the public react to the given information and,
3. Behaviour is how to influence the public according to the desired response after we carry out a campaign or through our campaign messages. (p. 90-91)

Apart from that, the company's objectives must be chosen carefully, it must be determined to who the company's target market is, the campaign should perform in stages, requires process and time, and needs to control a priority scale that is considered important for the company's progress.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Ruaya's marketing branding activities have been carried out well through social media platforms via Tik Tok and Instagram, by building awareness regarding corporate souvenirs that can be marketed to corporate institutions and communities in Jakarta, Indonesia. The implementation of product marketing via this digital platform was previously carried out conventionally, such as face to face meetings or discussions via WhatsApp platforms. People nowadays are more comfortable making transactions from e-commerce, which is more secure. Meanwhile, Ruaya's owners preferred to make transactions by WhatsApp. They claim that chit-chatting in WhatsApp is more comfortable and the owners' themselves want the prospective customers to be directly connected to them by WhatsApp. The complex thing that we experienced and highlighted while we were running this campaign is integrating social media campaigns with local business e-commerce.

After seeing the insights of the campaign in social media, our group concluded that we achieved what we targeted, which are mainly to introduce Ruaya to the audiences and increase the number of the followers in their official social media account. After getting audiences' attention, we would show them that Ruaya is following the market trends and customer behaviour, even if they are 'new' in online market. The market trends for printing souvenir and merchandise business, according to the owners, are in the model and brand of tumbler plastic bottle. The model should be the most updated, viral and wanted by most of people. Nowadays, young executive are massively using brand Corkcicle and Mosh, so from the point of view of buyers who are currently of the new generation, in selecting products they tend to choose the latest or in line with the trend, because people think that those updating items, the product should be made from good materials and way more functional or practical. With this reason, Ruaya is flexible to meet the customers' request and it could be said that Ruaya is applying customer centric.

Some of the problems experienced by our partners in achieving effective communication in developing their business to become known to the public, are several alternative solutions that we propose are:

1. Develop and promote Ruaya products by building public brand awareness of the products.
2. Provide training and coaching to owner and company's PIC regarding strategies and tactics effective and targeted marketing communications.

To attract people's buying interest in Ruaya and also gain people's trust in Ruaya as an MSME/ *UMKM*, we are developing promotions that were previously carried out conventionally, into digital marketing techniques through social media and e-commerce.

We provided the training and coaching that we provide to company owners and administrators in stages over a month with sessions once a week. To support company development and enhance the knowledge of company management, we carry out several coaching methods:

1. Market research knowledge which aims to understand Ruaya's customer profile and how to communicate well and on target to corporate clients who are Ruaya's largest clients.
2. Analysis and use of digital media, for example social media and e-commerce.
3. Knowledge of the Point of View of the new generation of Ruaya products which is dominated by Millennials and Gen-Z regarding the latest trend.
4. Create attractive and memorable logo and brand voice.
5. Training on product marketing content on social media.
6. Photography training for products or how to take pictures.
7. Utilization of influencers/celebrities.

The aim of these trainings is to support company performance through digital campaigns and improve the brand image of our partner companies so that they become well-known in the wider community and people have an interest in buying MSME products.



(Source: Data Primer, 2023)

Our directed content is the latest trend and is currently in demand by many people. This content will be even more interesting if it is uploaded on social media that it represented in a research from Zulaikha & Khotimah (2022) that the application of digital content on one of the social media platforms (TikTok), where developments in technology and communication have created a unique advertising style. increasingly interactive and changing in a company's marketing activities. In the

training and coaching that we provided to Ruaya administrators, we also provided a mini studio which to Ruaya as a tool to improve the quality of images and videos for the content created.

Based on the interview session with the company owner, when building this MSME business, MSME or *UMKM* brand does not require complicated requirements and can generally be built at low cost, because MSMEs can usually be started with a small fund. Apart from carrying out the process of branding a product to the public for effective communication so that the message can reach the public quickly and precisely, so that the Ruaya brand is more widely known.

When we look back, before creating the Ruaya campaign, we visited the Ruaya office and factory to conduct interviews with the owners, aiming to gather more information about the company and identify any challenges they have faced over the years in producing souvenirs and merchandise. From the interview results, we observed several issues that need attention in terms of promoting Ruaya's products to the public. For instance, Ruaya is lack of an official social media account for conducting sales and marketing activities online, and it did not have a social media presence to attract clients and consumers on a broader scale. So far, all information about Ruaya has been spread through word of mouth, limiting its visibility to a small group of people, mainly colleagues and relatives.



(Source: Data Primer, 2023)

Motivated by these findings, we, as a Public Relations Practitioners, aimed to create a campaign for Ruaya, generating content on Ruaya's background, products, and the souvenir and merchandise production process. We produced this content directly at Ruaya's workshop. This campaign was crafted with the hope that Ruaya would become more widely known, increasing orders and projects.

The theories used in this campaign is aligned with the digital campaign. In attracting audiences' attention, we applied Cognitive Dissonance Theory as our strategies in our contents in the social media. We also used the theory from Anne Gregory (2010) which said that to reach the campaign objectives, PR practitioner should start from the awareness to finally shape the audiences' behaviours.

We implemented the theories above through a branding strategy that is right on target and in line with our hopes so it can reach the wider community. With attractive and up-to-date branding, we are sure that if it is combined with Ruaya's ability with good attitude, a honest, tenacious and persistent in their ways of work, the results will be extraordinary. So, the branding strategies we performed for Ruaya are:

1. Emphasising the authenticity of the company through the brand's commitment to quality, craftsmanship, and customer satisfaction
2. Engaging with the local community and establishing Ruaya as a trusted and valued partner for the community (religious community, football community, bicycle community, Harley Davidson community political organisation, so on)
3. Shaping visual identity by creating a cohesive brand image that resonates with its target audiences (interested in local pride and highlight the local culture in the production design) and revamping the brand's website and social media profiles to reflect a consistent and visually appealing aesthetic appearance.

As a PR practitioner, definitely we have a forward view of what strategies we have directed to Ruaya owners to develop their business. In our view, if the digitalization strategy is optimized, starting from branding to the products promotion, it will be easier for sellers and buyers to make transactions more effective.

1. In terms of buyers or potential buyers' point of view, especially in corporate teams, there are many things that they might need to think about before choosing a product. With easy access to digital catalogs which clearly describe the product material, existing stock and clearly described function, then created on social media, potential buyers have many choices and reasons to buy the product.
2. Concerning sellers for optimizing the digital campaign and strategy, this will certainly make it easier to offer their products when they have a product catalog that is always ready at any time for potential buyers to view and then choose them.

We found a research gap with the research background and when collecting triangulation data, the result was that the digital communication strategy coaching that we proposed and has been implemented by Ruaya owner and employees should be continued, as when we looking at their abilities are varied. Understand that Ruaya employees and owners do not have a digital marketing background that supports them for making the digital content marketing, so it is normal that their skills need to be improved. Therefore, with the following research gap and to fill the gap, so in the future we advice Ruaya that:

1. Ruaya owner can provide digital marketing training for employees or entrepreneurs, which is now available many options to join online and free of charges
2. As a PR practitioner from LSPR (London School of Public Relations), we are willing to be contacted again, provide any information needed and re-coaching back to Ruaya for digital communication strategies that we get from LSPR's lecture materials to be implemented in Ruaya's promotions

This campaign is not only helping the brand to grow and being known by more people. But, to do more, which can be useful and beneficial for all people who work in Ruaya. When Ruaya becomes bigger company and brand in the future, it would open such opportunities for new people to become a part of Ruaya. Because, when we are supporting local business, we give contribution to the economic good impacts.

CONCLUSION

In this part, we would like to conclude that the objectives of the campaign were achieved. This study has provided valuable insights into the development and implementation of a branding strategy for Ruaya to enhance brand awareness and attract new customers. Firstly, we would begin by measuring the engagement using insight metrics in each social media (Instagram & TikTok), which includes likes, shares, and comments, the reach and impressions, and the follower growth.

In Instagram, Ruaya have posted in total 3 photos and 18 videos/or reels since 30th December 2023. Per 18 January, Ruaya received 6,964 total likes, 102 comments, and 16 shares. Meanwhile on Tiktok, Ruaya have posted the same number of videos since 3rd Januari and received 381 total likes, 9 shares and 4 comments. The result is, between Instagram and Tiktok, Instagram is the best platform to create and develop branding strategies for brand awareness and also for the marketing activities. It is also easier to engage with the audiences since the layout of the platform is user-friendly to showcase the products in the form of photos and videos.

Reach is the measure of the total number of unique users who saw the contents, while, the impressions is the total number of times the contents were displayed. Per 18 January, our campaign reached 2,014 accounts in total since its first post, and the impressions we received is 7,170 times all contents played. In week 2, it can be seen in the table that reach and impressions in Instagram has reached the biggest amounts due to our collaboration with the key audiences. For the follower growth, per 18 January 2024, Ruaya digital campaign has gained 1,055 follows. The age range of followers is dominated by 25–34-year-old and 92,1% are women.

With this achievement, it can be concluded that the Owner and employees of Ruaya also understand how to communicate on digital platforms in a persuasive ways and lead to current trends.

Digital marketing emerges as a critical component of Ruaya's branding strategy, given its potential to reach and engage with a broader audience. Recommendations include the development of targeted digital marketing campaigns, social media engagement strategies, and the optimization of online channels to maximize brand visibility and customer engagement. In fact, currently the content created by Ruaya is more varied, attractively communicated, and in line with customer needs.

Besides, to further expand its reach and promote its products, Ruaya should consider experimenting with other marketing techniques such as paying for Facebook and Instagram Ads, as well as conducting live shopping events. These methods can help Ruaya reach a wider audience and showcase its products in a more interactive and engaging manner

Looking ahead, the future research is expected to explore the long-term impact of the branding strategy implementation on Ruaya's brand equity, customer loyalty, and financial performance. Using tracking brand metrics over time would also provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of the branding strategy in achieving its objectives.

With the digital marketing strategy training that we provide for 2 times a month, for total 3 months, it is an opportunity for Ruaya to learn strategic digital marketing whose knowledge is obtained from LSPR course material and is successfully implemented in local UMKMs to help them in terms of digital branding and marketing communication strategies to a wider reach.

Additionally, conducting comparative research to analyze the branding strategies adopted by Ruaya and its competitors could provide valuable insights into industry standards and areas which need enhancement. Comparing Ruaya's branding endeavors with those of industry frontrunners and current trends would offer guidance for strategic decisions and ongoing improvements.

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