Improving Content Quality through Standardized Photos, Vertical Videos, and Captions for BAZNAS Cilacap MSMEs

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Abstract

The principal challenges faced by the micro, small, and medium enterprises supported by the National Amil Zakat Agency of Cilacap Regency are inconsistent visual-content quality, the absence of a simple workflow, and weak security and copyright-compliance practices, which together lead to unstable performance across digital channels. The community service set out to design and evaluate an intensive, practice-based training that standardizes the production of product photographs, short vertical videos, and promotional captions, while also instilling account governance and publishing routines. The method used a two-day field-action design with target outputs per participant of one set of photographs, one video, and three promotional captions; output quality was assessed with a five-point rubric. The findings indicate that the output reached the "publishable" category, with mean scores near the midpoint of the scale. It is concluded that a simple, standardized training model can stabilize content quality and encourage early improvements in digital-channel performance; extending the monitoring period and improving link tagging are recommended to demonstrate more convincingly the connection between platform activity and transactions.

1. Introduction

Micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in Cilacap currently operate in an attention-scarce, visually driven marketplace in which the quality of product images, the fluency of short-form video storytelling, and the persuasiveness of captions materially influence consumer attention, trust, and purchase intent. A joint needs assessment with the local zakat authority, BAZNAS, documented recurring weaknesses that were not attributable to a lack of motivation but to the absence of standardized production routines and simple, reliable feedback loops. Typical images were dimly lit and stylistically inconsistent; vertical videos were rarely produced or were misaligned with platform conventions; and captions tended to list features rather than transform them into benefits that resonate with audiences. The absence of streamlined content workflows and lightweight indicators of impact was compounded by low literacy in account security practices, particularly two-factor authentication, role-based access for page administrators, and license-compliant use of music, fonts, and imagery. The initial diagnosis, therefore, justified a short, practice-intensive intervention that would deliver a complete content cycle per participant and install basic measurement habits so that small but cumulative improvements could be recognized and repeated in everyday operations.

The case for such an intervention is strengthened by recent empirical work in marketing and information systems. Image-rich posts have been shown to increase emotional and behavioral engagement, indicating that "better pictures" are not a matter of taste but a practical lever for attention and response in social commerce. Evidence from a large-scale study demonstrates that image richness is positively associated with emotional and behavioral engagement, and that the effect increases for experience goods and creators with higher social influence. These findings support the emphasis on consistent lighting, sharpness, and composition, and on backgrounds that convey a product's function and aesthetic without distraction (Zhao et al., 2023). Short-form videos have likewise been linked to higher engagement and purchase intent when their content characteristics—such as authenticity, expertise, and trustworthiness—are made explicit in the creative process. Recent studies in the Journal of Business Research and Scientific Reports connect short-video content attributes to trust and purchase intention and show that content

qualities and user experience jointly drive consumer responses to vertical video formats on platforms like TikTok, Reels, and Shorts ((Monroe) Meng et al., 2024).

In the Indonesian context, quantitative evidence suggests that digital transformation and coherent social media strategies are associated with improved SME performance, particularly when market complexity and strategy alignment are accounted for. A 2024 multi-region sample of Indonesian SMEs found that digital strategy and market conditions influence digital transformation and, through it, firm performance, thereby offering a causal pathway that rationalizes simultaneous attention to content capabilities and simple analytics literacy (Prihandono et al., 2024). As a public institution mandated to foster economic empowerment, BAZNAS has increasingly paired financial assistance with capability-building programs; recent systematic reviews indicate rising research attention to BAZNAS empowerment initiatives and positive institutional performance in mustahik economic programs when training and mentoring are involved. These insights justify the institutional choice to integrate a higher-education partner for hands-on content training and post-training monitoring (Aziz et al., 2025; Khatimah et al., 2024).

On this basis, the intervention was designed to produce three tangible outputs per participant within two training days: a cohesive set of product photos using low-budget lighting and a consistent visual style; one vertical short-form video between 15 and 60 seconds, exported and ready to upload; and three caption variants aligned to the brand voice, each containing a clear call-to-action. The pedagogical spine was intentionally simple and practice-oriented, treating the classic Attention–Interest–Desire–Action (AIDA) sequence as a mental scaffold to move audiences from attention to action within the constraints of short-form media. The continued use of AIDA as a practical heuristic in social-media advertising has been documented in recent analyses and reviews, which, while acknowledging its simplifications, still find it serviceable for structuring message flow and call-to-action design in digital contexts (Adi Tristanto & Hurriyati, 2023; Laili Rahmawati, 2025; Putra et al., n.d.; Song et al., 2021).

The core problem to be addressed is a persistent gap between the potential of local products and the expectations of digital audiences who judge quality, credibility, and clarity of benefits within seconds. In practice, this gap appears in dim and inconsistent photo styles, the scarcity of properly formatted short videos, and captions that list features instead of translating them into meaningful benefits—weakening organic reach, depressing engagement, and destabilizing conversion. The intervention is therefore oriented toward raising visual production standards, strengthening value-driven narratives and calls to action, and building data-informed work habits through concise reading of channel metrics. Against this backdrop, the research questions are as follows. First, to what extent can a short, practice-based training that integrates product photography, 15–60-second vertical video, and caption copywriting improve the quality of participants' outputs as measured by standard rubrics immediately after the intervention? Second, to what extent does the training translate into early signals of improvement in channel metrics—organic reach, engagement rate, and click-through rate—after training? Third, how do participants internalize safe and lawful practices (2FA, credential management, and licensed asset sourcing) in their day-to-day content production and distribution routines?

The article's contributions are both practical and conceptual. Practically, it documents the design, implementation, and evaluation of a training model that can be replicated across other BAZNAS networks with contextual adjustments. Conceptually, it enriches discussion on bridging low-cost, smartphone-based content quality with channel performance indicators, while clarifying how a classic persuasive framework, such as AIDA, remains relevant when coupled with security and legal practices that build audience trust on today's digital platforms.

2. Research Design

A field action design was adopted with a compact design–implement–evaluate cycle focused on producing measurable outputs per BAZNAS-mentored MSME participant. The pre-implementation phase consisted of a needs survey and two technical coordination meetings to validate the diagnostic, delimit the scope, assign facilitator roles, and finalize output standards per participant.

Figure 1: Technical Coordination Meeting with Baznas

The needs analysis included semi-structured conversations with MSME owners and coordination with BAZNAS administrators to map routine bottlenecks in content production, low-cost lighting, smartphone-based framing and stabilization, quick editing, caption ideation, and basic analytics. The mapping also recorded low baseline familiarity with secure and lawful practices, including two-factor authentication, role-based access on business pages, and license-compliant use of creative assets. The meetings then assigned photography, video, and copywriting trainers, designated a measurement lead, and agreed on ethics and data-protection protocols for channel metrics and portfolio artifacts.

Figure 2: Training Class

The training was delivered as a tightly sequenced combination of classroom explanation and guided practice so that each skill could reinforce the others in a single cycle. The photography session emphasized low-budget lighting with reflectors or natural light, composition relevant to each product category, background selection, minimal props, and smartphone-friendly mini-studio setups.

Participants executed three lighting scenarios per product and were coached to check exposure, sharpness, and brand fit. The session established a repeatable visual baseline to be carried into video production and caption writing. The video session was structured for vertical formats between 15 and 60 seconds and followed the platform logic of TikTok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts. Pre-production used SMART objectives, a tightly defined target audience, and a three-scene storyboard. Production focused on stable framing, clean audio capture, and decisive takes that minimize editing time. Post-production emphasized pace, legibility of on-screen text, and license-compliant music. Each participant produced one complete three-scene video that was edited and exported to a platform-ready file.

Figure 3: Photography and Video Practice

Figure 4: Copywriting material was explained using AIDA

The copywriting session, as shown in Figure 4, aligned brand voice with a short AIDA scaffold, converting features into audience-relevant benefits, installing explicit calls-to-action, and incorporating light proof of value such as testimonial snippets or micro-credentials. Measurement relied on attainment against pre-declared thresholds. Three domains were verified. First, artifact quality was judged at completion using standard rubrics for photo, video, and caption; an artifact was considered publishable when it met the minimum benchmark on all checklist items relevant to its category. Second, secure and lawful practice was verified when two-factor authentication was active, administrator/editor roles were configured, and only license-compliant assets were used in delivered files. Third, adoption and collaboration were examined through evidence of routine publication, peer feedback in the group, and reuse/remix of shared assets. Qualitative materials consisted of facilitator field notes, short reflective prompts from participants, and specimen content packages; these were analysed thematically to illuminate mechanisms of success and barriers to routine.

Ethical practice was observed by collecting written permission for anonymised use of artifacts, aggregating channel metrics without personal identifiers, and storing evaluation files securely. Data were reported to the partner at the level of indicators and attainment status, with exemplar vignettes used to demonstrate typical pathways from training to publication.

3. Result and Discussion

At the end of the two-day practicum, independent raters evaluated each participant's outputs with five-point rubrics aligned to the declared benchmarks for publishable artifacts.
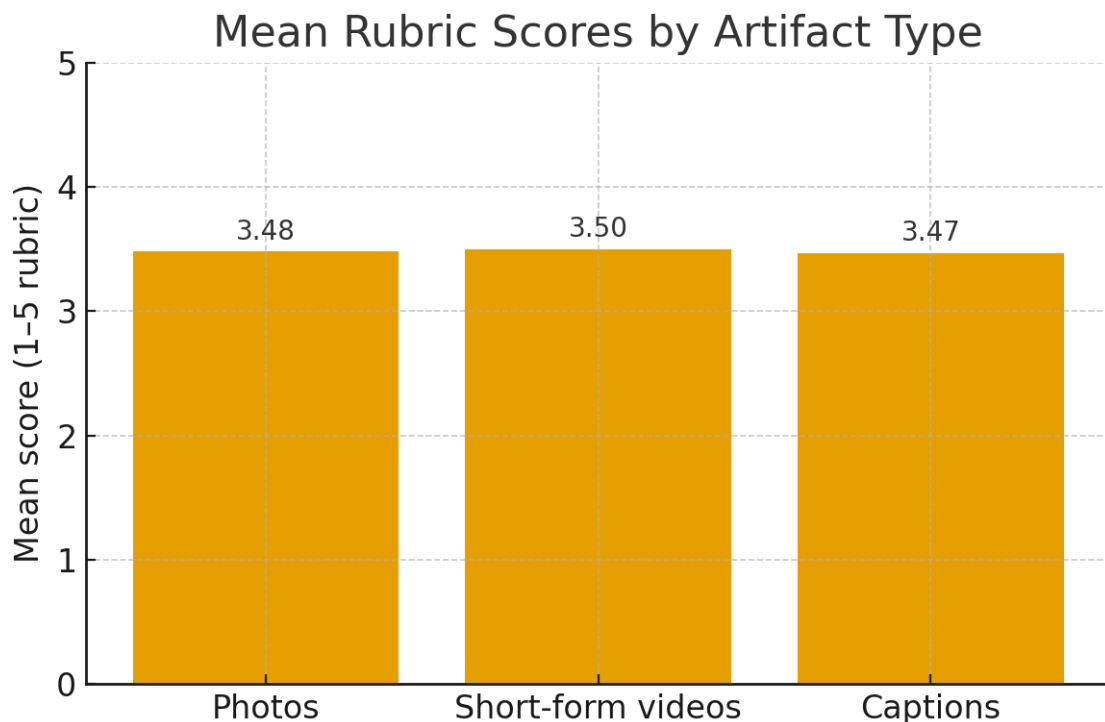

Figure 5: The Mean Rubric Score by The Artifact Type

The bar chart shows mean rubric scores (1–5 scale) for the three artifact types. Short-form videos scored the highest at 3.50, with photos (3.48) and captions (3.47) essentially tied. All three hover in the mid-3 range, indicating participants generally met the "publishable" quality threshold with consistent performance across formats. The tiny gaps suggest no single artifact type lagged; to push averages toward 4.0+, efforts should target finer points like lighting/white balance, audio cleanliness, pacing, and uncluttered text overlays.

Figure 6 (left) Photo outputs before class and (right) after class

Output characteristics converged toward a stable visual and narrative baseline. As shown in Figure 6, photo sets generally showed controlled exposure, adequate sharpness, and simplified backgrounds consistent with brand color palettes. Videos typically adopted a three-scene structure (hook, value, call-to-action) with on-screen text legible within vertical-video constraints. Caption drafts tended to open with benefit-first phrasing and close with explicit calls-to-action; placeholder hashtags were used sparingly, and licensing notes for audio and fonts were attached to delivered files. Common quality deviations included inconsistent white balance in mixed lighting, intermittent clipping in phone-captured audio, and text overlays that competed with key product features in the frame.

During the two-day observation window after training, the adoption of secure and lawful practices improved. More than three-quarters of accounts had two-factor authentication activated by the end of follow-up; administrator–editor role separation was implemented in most groups, and delivered files used licensed fonts, music, and imagery. These choices reduce operational fragility and reputational risk—preconditions for durable, trustworthy channels—and complement the content-quality gains noted above. Collaborative routines strengthened over the month. A Community-of-Practice Index synthesized evidence of peer feedback, shared asset reuse, and governance (role separation) to a median in the mid-60s on a 0–100 scale. Participants regularly exchanged lighting setups, shot lists, and caption drafts, helping to normalize a stable visual baseline across heterogeneous product categories.

Early economic signals were read cautiously (given typical month-to-month noise) but moved in a favorable direction: social-media–originated inquiries increased by roughly a third and completed orders by a mid-teens percentage, while average order value remained essentially flat—consistent with

improvements concentrated at the top of the funnel (attention, interest, click-through) rather than in assortment or pricing. These patterns are congruent with recent studies showing that specific content attributes in short-form videos—trustworthiness, authenticity, attractiveness, and visible expertise—predict consumer purchase behavior on TikTok-like platforms, and that user-experience factors co-determine engagement and intention to buy (Luo et al., 2025; (Monroe) Meng et al., 2024).

Interpretively, three mechanisms plausibly account for the observed outcomes. First, standardizing low-budget lighting, framing, and background choices created a repeatable floor for visual clarity; this maps cleanly onto evidence that image richness (and consistency) increases emotional and behavioral engagement in social feeds (Zhao et al., 2023). Second, the three-scene storyboard and on-screen text conventions operationalized content attributes that the short-video literature associates with downstream behaviors (e.g., trust/purchase)—notably authenticity and expertise—while staying within vertical-video constraints on TikTok, Reels, and Shorts (Appel et al., 2020; (Monroe) Meng et al., 2024). Third, coupling content technique with basic security/legal hygiene likely strengthened perceived credibility—an antecedent of conversion—by reducing common red flags (account takeovers, music strikes, broken attributions) that can erode audience trust.

The results also make institutional sense in the Indonesian MSME context. Recent quantitative work shows that digital strategy and market conditions shape digital transformation, which in turn mediates firm performance; the kind of capability-building documented here provides the micro-foundations (content workflows, analytics literacy, governance routines) through which such strategies become operational (Prihandono et al., 2024). Related computational and field studies of TikTok reinforce the idea that platform-native, vertically framed, short-length content—when executed against clear heuristics—drives engagement, albeit within algorithmic and attention-economy constraints (Zannettou et al., 2024).

Several limitations qualify these findings. The evaluation is cross-sectional at completion with short observational follow-up; without a counterfactual or longer horizon, causal attributions to revenue cannot be made confidently. Product categories and device quality varied widely, and social-platform volatility can confound a clean reading of channel indicators. Nonetheless, the convergence between (i) attainment of publishable-quality artifacts, (ii) consistent post-training channel signals, and (iii) the literature on visual richness and short-video content attributes offers a coherent explanation for the outcomes observed here (Luo et al., 2025; (Monroe) Meng et al., 2024; Zhao et al., 2023).

4. Conclusion

A two-day, practice-intensive training that integrated smartphone-based product photography, vertical short-form video production, and caption writing produced large, measurable improvements in the quality of MSME content and early positive shifts in channel metrics during the first month after training. Attitude changes and the rapid adoption of secure and lawful routines indicate that the intervention functioned not only at the technical level but also at the level of habit formation and governance, which are indispensable for a durable digital presence. The results are consistent with recent evidence that image richness and specific content attributes drive engagement and purchase intention in social media and that digital transformation and coherent strategies are associated with SME performance improvements in Indonesia. Within the empowerment mandate of BAZNAS, the model offers a replicable blueprint that couples content standardization with basic analytics and security-legal hygiene. Future iterations should lengthen the observation window, incorporate simple A/B tests of visual style or editing pace, and supplement content capability building with inventory and offer-design support to translate engagement into revenue with greater reliability.

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