

Empowerment of Msme Actors in Lontar Village Through Packaging Skills to Increase The Selling Value of Products

Pemberdayaan Pelaku Umkm Di Kelurahan Lontar Melalui Keterampilan Pengemasan Untuk Meningkatkan Nilai Jual Produk

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Abstract

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) play a strategic role in Indonesia's economy; however, many MSME products remain less competitive due to inadequate packaging quality, as commonly found in Lontar Village, Surabaya, where packaging tends to be simple, minimally informative, and lacking clear product identity, which negatively affects consumer perception and market competitiveness. This study aims to empower MSME actors in Lontar Village by enhancing their knowledge and skills in designing and implementing professional, functional, and market-oriented product packaging to increase product selling value. The activity employed a participatory workshop and mentoring approach involving ten MSME actors selected through purposive sampling, with data collected through observation, documentation, and evaluation of packaging conditions before and after the activity and analyzed using a qualitative descriptive method. The results indicate an improvement in participants' understanding of packaging as a strategic marketing tool, along with enhancements in visual design, completeness of packaging information, material suitability, and overall packaging functionality, demonstrating that the training and mentoring process effectively strengthened both technical skills and strategic awareness of packaging in shaping product image and competitiveness. These findings suggest that practical and contextual packaging empowerment programs can enhance MSME readiness to compete in local and modern markets and serve as a strategic entry point for sustainable MSME development policies.

Keywords: MSME empowerment, packaging design, product competitiveness, community service, packaging

Abstrak

Usaha Mikro, Kecil, dan Menengah (UMKM) memiliki peran strategis dalam perekonomian Indonesia; namun, banyak produk UMKM yang masih kurang kompetitif akibat kualitas kemasan yang belum memadai, sebagaimana ditemukan di Kelurahan Lontar, Surabaya, di mana kemasan produk cenderung sederhana, minim informasi, dan tidak memiliki identitas produk yang jelas sehingga berdampak pada rendahnya persepsi konsumen serta daya saing produk di pasar. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk memberdayakan pelaku UMKM di Kelurahan Lontar melalui peningkatan pengetahuan dan keterampilan dalam merancang serta menerapkan kemasan produk yang profesional, fungsional, dan berorientasi pasar guna meningkatkan nilai jual produk. Kegiatan ini menggunakan pendekatan workshop partisipatif dan pendampingan yang melibatkan sepuluh pelaku UMKM yang dipilih melalui purposive sampling, dengan data dikumpulkan melalui observasi, dokumentasi, dan evaluasi kondisi kemasan sebelum dan sesudah kegiatan, kemudian dianalisis menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan adanya peningkatan pemahaman peserta mengenai kemasan sebagai alat pemasaran strategis, disertai peningkatan pada desain visual, kelengkapan informasi kemasan, kesesuaian bahan, serta fungsi kemasan secara keseluruhan, yang menunjukkan bahwa proses pelatihan dan pendampingan efektif dalam memperkuat keterampilan teknis sekaligus kesadaran strategis mengenai pentingnya kemasan dalam membentuk citra dan daya saing produk. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa program pemberdayaan kemasan yang praktis dan kontekstual dapat meningkatkan kesiapan UMKM untuk bersaing di pasar lokal maupun modern serta menjadi titik masuk strategis bagi kebijakan pengembangan UMKM yang berkelanjutan.

Kata kunci: pemberdayaan UMKM, desain kemasan, daya saing produk, pengabdian kepada masyarakat, kemasan

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INTRODUCTION

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) are the backbone of the Indonesian economy, which has a strategic role both nationally and regionally (Simpony et al., 2025). The contribution of MSMEs to the Gross Domestic Product, which reaches around 61% and their ability to absorb more than 97% of the national workforce, shows that this sector not only functions as an economic driver but also as a buffer for social stability and community welfare. In the context of inclusive economic development, MSMEs are an important instrument in income equity and reducing the unemployment rate (Sari & Hariyanto, 2021).

The significant role of MSMEs is also seen in their ability to survive in the midst of various economic crises. Business flexibility, proximity to the local market, and adaptability to changing demands make MSMEs relatively more resilient than large-scale businesses (Chyntia et al., 2025). Therefore, strengthening MSMEs is not only an economic agenda but also a sustainable social development agenda. The amount of MSMEs' contribution is not always in line with the level of competitiveness of the products produced. Many MSMEs still face limitations in managerial aspects, innovation, and marketing strategies (Suardi et al., 2024). One of the most common problems is the low quality of product packaging, which ultimately has an impact on consumer perception and the product's position in the market. In the city of Surabaya, as one of the economic and trade centers in East Java, MSMEs are growing very rapidly. Lontar Village is one of the areas that has considerable potential for MSMEs, both in the food, beverage, and other processed products sectors. The products produced by MSME actors in this region basically have good taste quality and raw materials and the potential for further development (Renate et al., 2025).

The results of initial observations show that MSMEs in Lontar Village face serious challenges in competing with similar products marketed in modern culinary centers such as G-Walk Surabaya and other modern retailers. The competition does not only occur in the price aspect, but also in the appearance of the product and the perception of quality in the eyes of consumers (Sutoni & Randany, 2021). One of the most prominent distinguishing factors between local MSMEs in Lontar Village and MSMEs that have entered modern retail is the quality of product packaging. Products sold at G-Walk are generally packaged with professional designs, attractive visuals, and complete and clear product information. This creates the impression of a product that is more quality, hygienic, and reliable (Maesaroh et al., 2023).

Most MSMEs in Lontar Village still use simple packaging that has minimal design, uses low-quality materials, and often does not include complete product information. This condition makes it difficult for local products to compete even though the quality of the content is not inferior to products sold in modern retail (Anekawati et al., 2021). The gap in packaging quality has a direct impact on consumer perception. In many cases, consumers tend to assess the quality of the product from its packaging first before making a purchase. Less attractive packaging can reduce buying interest, even before consumers try the product (Mu'ah et al., 2024).

Packaging no longer merely serves as a product protector, but has evolved into a very important visual communication tool. Packaging plays a role in conveying brand identity, product value, and product positioning in the market (Yazid et al., 2025). Through visual

design, colors, typography, and packaging materials, manufacturers can build a specific image that is inherent in the consumer's mind. According to Yumna and Ardial, packaging includes the entire process of designing, manufacturing, and presenting packaging materials that aim to protect products while increasing marketing appeal. In other words, packaging is a combination of protective functions and promotional functions that cannot be separated (Anjani et al., 2025).

The strategic function of packaging also includes aspects of distribution and storage efficiency (Purwanto et al., 2022). Well-designed packaging can extend the shelf life of products, maintain product quality during the distribution process, and facilitate product arrangement on the sales shelf. This is very important, especially for MSME food and beverage products. In the context of marketing, packaging is often the first promotional medium that interacts directly with consumers. In the midst of a flood of product choices in the market, attractive packaging can be a determining factor that makes consumers choose one product over another. Therefore, packaging has a strategic role in increasing the competitiveness of MSME products (Epriyani et al., 2025).

The real condition of MSME partners in Lontar Village shows that there is a limited understanding of the basic principles of packaging design. Many MSME actors do not understand the importance of visual consistency, the right color selection, and the use of design elements that are in accordance with the character of the product and the target market (Al Rizky, 2024). In addition, limited knowledge in the selection of packaging materials is also a major problem. Some MSME actors choose packaging materials solely based on low prices without considering aspects of food safety, durability, and suitability with the type of product. As a result, the packaging is not able to provide optimal protection to the product (Astuti et al., 2024).

Another problem that is often faced is the lack of understanding of packaging printing techniques that are economical but still of quality (Parengkuan & Mile, 2025). Many MSMEs think that attractive packaging is always synonymous with high costs, so they are reluctant to innovate in the packaging of their products. In addition to design and material aspects, product labeling regulations are also still a challenge for MSMEs (Suraya et al., 2021). Important information such as composition, expiration date, distribution permit, and manufacturer identity are often not listed in full. This not only lowers consumer confidence, but also limits the product's chances of entering a wider market. As a result of these various limitations, local MSME products often lose competition not because of the quality of their contents, but because of their unconvincing appearance (Sariningsih et al., 2025). Less attractive first impressions make it difficult for products to penetrate the modern market and only circulate in the limited scope of the local market. In fact, various studies show that professional and attractive packaging can significantly increase consumer buying interest. Good packaging is able to create a perception of added value, so consumers are willing to pay a higher price for the same product (Kurniawan et al., 2025).

This packaging problem is becoming increasingly crucial along with changes in consumer behavior that are increasingly visual-oriented. Modern consumers tend to make quick purchase decisions based on visual appearances, especially in the context of shopping in modern retail and digital platforms (Pujiyanto et al., 2025). In addition to the visual aspect,

today's consumers are also increasingly concerned about environmental sustainability issues. The trend of using eco-friendly packaging is growing and becoming an important consideration in purchasing decisions. Consumers are starting to avoid products with packaging that are considered harmful to the environment. Green packaging not only contributes to environmental conservation, but can also improve brand image in the eyes of consumers. Magnier and Crié's research shows that eco-friendly packaging can significantly improve brand image and consumer loyalty (Purnawarman et al., 2025).

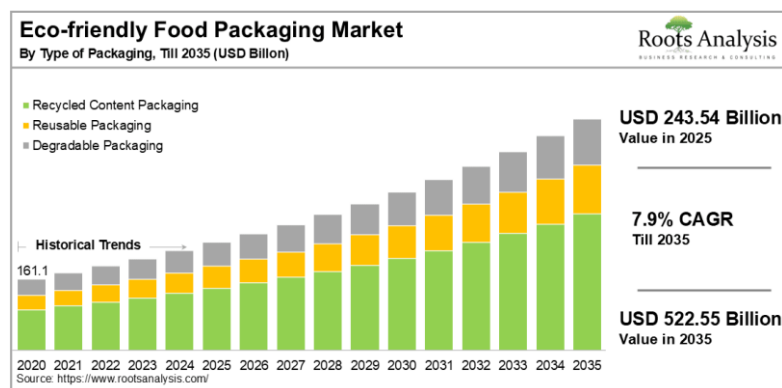


Figure 1. Graph of Increase in Eco-friendly Food Packaging Market

Based on the phenomenon faced by MSME actors in Lontar Village who experience limitations in the aspect of *packaging design*, this community service program is carried out with the aim of increasing the knowledge and ability of business actors to design and implement *packaging* that is professional, attractive, and in accordance with regulatory standards. This service program is expected to be a catalyst for the transformation of local MSMEs to be able to compete sustainably with competitors in modern retail, as well as increase the contribution of MSMEs to the regional economy.

METHOD

This community service activity was carried out in Lontar Village, Sambikerep District, Surabaya City with the target of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) engaged in the food and beverage sector. The selection of the location was based on the results of initial observations and discussions with the village which showed that MSME actors in the area had good product potential, but still faced obstacles in terms of product packaging, especially in terms of design, material selection, and completeness of packaging information.

Subject and Participant Selection Techniques

The subjects of this service activity amounted to 10 MSME actors, who were selected using purposive sampling techniques with the following criteria:

1. Have food or beverage products that have been actively marketed,
2. Using packaging that is still simple and not optimal in terms of design and function,
3. Domiciled and operating in the Lontar Village area, and

4. Has a commitment to participate in the entire series of training and mentoring activities.

Methods and Stages of Activities

The method of implementing activities uses a workshop approach and participatory mentoring, which is designed to increase the knowledge and practical skills of MSME actors in designing and implementing more professional product packaging. The stages of service activities include:

1) Initial Socialization and Identification Stage

This stage is carried out through program socialization to participants and initial observation of the condition of product packaging used by each MSME. Participants were asked to explain the type of product, target market, and obstacles faced in packaging. Documentation in the form of photos of the initial packaging is used as the basic data for evaluation.

2) Packaging Material Workshop Stage

At this stage, participants were given material briefings on basic packaging concepts as part of a marketing strategy. The materials presented include:

- a) The role and function of packaging in increasing the attractiveness of products,
- b) Basic principles of packaging design (visual, information, and brand identity),
- c) Selection of packaging materials that are in accordance with the characteristics of food and beverage products,
- d) Aspects of food safety and functionality, and
- e) The introduction of eco-friendly packaging as part of the sustainability trend. The delivery of material was carried out interactively through discussions and simple case studies that were relevant to the conditions of the participating MSMEs.

3) Practical Training and Mentoring Stage

After the material workshop, the activity continued with practical training on packaging design. Participants were directed to analyze the advantages and disadvantages of previously used product packaging, then design a new packaging concept that is more attractive, functional, and informative. At this stage, the assistance is carried out directly by the service team to provide input related to visual design, selection of packaging materials, and the suitability of packaging with the product characteristics of each MSME.

4) Evaluation and Documentation Stage of Results

The evaluation was carried out by comparing the condition of the packaging before and after the training based on several indicators, namely:

- a) Visual aspects and neatness of design,
- b) Completeness of information on the packaging,
- c) Suitability of packaging materials with the type of product, and
- d) Packaging functionality in protecting the product.

Data was collected through observation, photo documentation, and reflective discussions with participants, then analyzed in a qualitative descriptive manner to describe changes and achievements of activities. Through these methodist stages, this service activity is expected to be able to increase the capacity of MSME actors in designing and implementing

more professional product packaging, so as to support increasing the competitiveness of MSME products in the local market and modern markets.

Table 1 Activity Schedule

Day/Date	Method	Purpose
November 24, 2025	Socialization and <i>Workshops</i> Packaging Practices	✓ Doing Introduction program packaging to MSME actors in Lontar Village ✓ Identify current product packaging of each participant ✓ Identify Problems and Challenges The Düsseldorf Offender MSMEs in the packaging aspect ✓ Introducing Variety Types Packaging The Suitable with the product characteristics of each participant

This training is expected to increase the knowledge and ability of MSME actors in designing *professional*, attractive, and regulatory standards, so as to increase the competitiveness of their products in the modern market.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Implementation of Workshop and Participant Response

The packaging workshop and training activities will be held on November 24, 2025 offline by involving 10 MSME actors in Lontar Village. In the early stages of the activity, participants were given triggering questions related to the function of packaging in influencing consumer perception. The results of the initial discussion showed that most participants still viewed packaging as a product wrapping tool, not as part of a marketing strategy and brand identity.

The workshop on packaging material provides a conceptual understanding of the role of packaging as a visual communication element that can build product image and increase consumer appeal. The material presented included packaging functions, basic principles of visual design, selection of packaging materials according to product characteristics, food grade aspects, and introduction to environmentally friendly packaging. During these sessions, participants demonstrated a high level of participation through active discussions and questions related to direct application to their respective products.

These results indicate that the participatory workshop method is effective in increasing the initial awareness of MSME actors regarding the importance of packaging as a strategic element of marketing, in line with the findings of previous research that stated that packaging design education can change the mindset of small business actors towards the value of their products.



Figure 2. Packaging Material Presentation Activities

2. Results of Packaging Practice Training and Assistance

After the material briefing, the activity continued with practical training sessions and packaging design assistance. Participants were directed to conduct an independent evaluation of the product packaging used before the training, especially on the visual, functional, and completeness of information. The results of initial observations show that most of the packaging of MSME products still uses a simple design, lacks brand identity, and does not include complete product information.

Through direct assistance, participants then design new packaging concepts that are tailored to the characteristics of their respective products. This process encourages participants to consider the suitability between the type of product, target consumers, and packaging functions in maintaining product quality. The documentation before and after the training showed significant changes, especially in improving the neatness of the design, choosing more suitable materials, and adding identity elements such as labels and product information.

These results show that a direct practice approach with intensive mentoring is able to improve the technical skills of MSME actors in designing more professional packaging. These findings support the view that practice-based learning is more effective than a purely theoretical approach in community service activities.



Figure 3. Packaging Practice Training Activities

3. Evaluation of Activity Achievements Based on Indicators

The evaluation of the results of the activity was carried out by comparing the condition of product packaging before and after the training based on several indicators, namely: visual aspects of the design, completeness of packaging information, suitability of materials with products, and packaging functionality. Based on the results of observation and documentation, most of the participants experienced an increase in the four indicators.

Visually, the product packaging after training looks neater, informative, and has a clearer identity. In terms of completeness of information, participants began to include important elements such as product names, product types, and manufacturer identities. In addition, the selection of packaging materials becomes more in accordance with the characteristics of food and beverage products, so as to not only improve aesthetics but also support product safety and quality.



Figure 4. Examples of Packaging Made

This improvement shows that packaging training not only has an impact on aesthetic aspects, but also on the functional understanding of packaging as a product protector and communication medium with consumers. These findings are in line with the literature that states that appropriately designed packaging can increase consumer perception of quality and consumer trust in MSME products.

4. Discussion and Implications

Packaging plays a critical role in determining the competitiveness of MSME products, not only as a protective layer but also as a strategic component of product value creation (Purnawarman et al., 2025). Many MSME actors traditionally perceive packaging as merely a functional element to protect products from physical damage (Mulyawati et al., 2025). However, this limited perspective prevents MSMEs from fully utilizing packaging as a tool to enhance product attractiveness and market positioning (Prayudhi et al., 2024). The results of this community engagement program indicate a significant shift in participants' understanding of packaging functions (Purbaningrum et al., 2025). Through training and

mentoring, MSME actors began to recognize packaging as part of branding and marketing communication. This change reflects the development of strategic awareness regarding the importance of packaging in influencing consumer perceptions (Rapiyanta et al., 2025). Packaging serves as the first point of interaction between the product and potential consumers. Visual appearance, structure, and packaging information contribute to forming initial impressions that influence purchasing decisions. Consumers often evaluate product quality based on external presentation before experiencing the product itself (Bastomi & Sholehuddin, 2022).

Improved packaging design contributes directly to strengthening product identity. Packaging that reflects product characteristics and business identity helps create differentiation in competitive markets. This differentiation is essential for MSMEs seeking to build recognition and long-term customer loyalty (Nur et al., 2021). Label completeness is another important aspect of packaging improvement observed in this program. Information such as product name, composition, production date, and producer identity enhances product transparency and credibility. Informative packaging increases consumer trust and reflects professionalism among MSME actors (Chyntia et al., 2025).

Material selection also plays a significant role in determining packaging effectiveness. Appropriate packaging materials help maintain product quality, safety, and shelf life. MSME actors who understand material suitability are better equipped to ensure consistent product quality during storage and distribution (Suardi et al., 2024). In addition to protection, packaging functions as a marketing tool that communicates product value without direct interaction. This function is especially important for MSMEs with limited access to formal promotional channels. Packaging serves as a visual communication medium that represents product quality and brand image (Renate et al., 2025).

This role becomes increasingly relevant in the digital marketing environment. Online consumers rely heavily on visual information when making purchasing decisions. Attractive and professional packaging improves product presentation in digital catalogs and social media platforms, increasing consumer interest and engagement (Sutoni & Randany, 2021). The participatory training approach applied in this program proved effective in improving participants' competencies. Direct involvement in packaging design allowed MSME actors to develop practical skills and understand the relationship between design decisions and product presentation outcomes (Maesaroh et al., 2023).

Practice-based learning helped participants bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and real-world application. Hands-on experience enabled participants to identify weaknesses in their previous packaging practices and apply immediate improvements. This experiential learning process enhanced participants' confidence and independence (Mu'ah et al., 2024). The mentoring process further strengthened the effectiveness of the intervention. Continuous guidance enabled participants to receive direct feedback and refine their packaging designs. Mentoring ensured that participants could apply newly acquired knowledge within their business operations (Anjani et al., 2025; Yazid et al., 2025).

This activity also contributed to improving participants' understanding of packaging as part of an integrated business system. Packaging is closely connected to product quality, branding, marketing, and distribution. This systemic perspective supports more structured

and professional business management (Purwanto et al., 2022). Improved packaging capacity enhances MSME readiness to compete in wider markets. Products with standardized packaging are more likely to be accepted in formal markets, including retail stores and online platforms. This improvement creates opportunities for business expansion and increased income (Epriyani et al., 2025).

The introduction of environmentally friendly packaging concepts also encouraged participants to consider sustainability aspects. Awareness of sustainable packaging reflects the development of long-term business thinking. Sustainable practices can strengthen product competitiveness and align MSMEs with evolving market expectations (Al Rizky, 2024). The findings demonstrate that participatory and practice-based packaging training is an effective strategy for strengthening MSME capacity. Improved packaging knowledge and skills contribute to enhanced product quality, stronger branding, and increased competitiveness. These improvements support the long-term sustainability and professional development of MSMEs (Astuti et al., 2024).

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Community service activities in the form of training and packaging design assistance for MSME actors in Lontar Village, Sambikerep District, Surabaya, have proven to have a positive impact on improving the ability of business actors to design more professional product packaging, both from visual aspects, completeness of information, material suitability, and packaging understanding as part of a marketing strategy. The participatory workshop approach combined with practice and mentoring is considered effective because it is able to improve technical skills as well as strategic awareness of MSME actors, although this activity still has limitations in the number of participants and the duration of mentoring so that it cannot measure the long-term impact. Therefore, it is necessary to sustain programs with a wider reach and more intensive mentoring. This finding also has important policy implications, namely the need to make improving packaging quality an integral part of regional MSME development programs, strengthening collaboration between local governments, universities, and MSME actors in sustainable assistance, and encouraging the adoption of environmentally friendly packaging as part of sustainable MSME development policies.

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