

EMBEDDED SOCIAL MEDIA AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR THE READINESS OF SME'S IN ASEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY FREE TRADE

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Abstract

AEC (ASEAN Economic Community) is an agreement between ASEAN (Association of South East Asia Nations) countries to establish a free trade area of cooperation with the goal of improving the economic competitiveness of the ASEAN region. AEC forces ASEAN countries to compete openly, moreover, a critical attitude appears on the readiness of Indonesia to face free competition. The experience shows that SMEs are the cutting edge defense of the Indonesian economy. In general, the main problem of the small and medium scale of businesses is that they do not yet have a strong and weak brand in marketing communications. In line with technological advances, smartphones now have features that can be used as a marketing communication tools. Communication technology makes the smartphone attached (embedded) in the life of the individual users. This study aims to determine Embedded Social Media, Publish Word Of Mouth And Its Implications For The Readiness of SME's In ASEAN Economic Community Free Trade. Quantitative approach with survey method was conducted. Questionnaire delivered to 207 respondents at four cities in Banten province. The result of this research shows that phenomenon of embedded social media has been significantly changed smartphone user attitude. Publish word of mouth connected to each other through smartphones so, in perspective of entrepreneurs the network of conversations groups in social media is an asset that can be marketed for their products. This condition makes SMEs ready to face the challenges of global competition.

Keywords: *ASEAN Economic Community Free Trade, Marketing Communication, Publish Word of Mouth, Social Media.*

INTRODUCTION

The demands of free trade as a consequence of globalization and technological developments become more apparent with the enactment of the AEC (ASEAN Economic Community), at the end of December 2015. The consequences of facing the enactment of the ASEAN economic community area at the end of December 2015 will lead to a free trade environment in the ASEAN region. This condition forces ASEAN countries to compete openly. The critical attitude that emerges is the readiness of Indonesia to face the competition, given the competitiveness of human resources and the quality of products/services is still low, plus the condition of business climate that does not support.

The experience of the Indonesian economic crisis that happened in the past few years proves that small and medium enterprises (hereinafter called SMEs) are the spearhead of Indonesia's economic defense. According to research conducted by UKM Center University of Indonesia, the number of SMEs in Indonesia there are 53 million. However, large and strong SMEs are minimal, ie only 10-16% while the rest enter the informal sector (UKM Center UI, 2013). In the increasingly fierce and global competition, SMEs should be more creative in the production, distribution, and marketing of their products.

Advances in communication and information technology, causing a new phenomenon characterized by the use of smartphones almost in every layer of society. The presence of new media is the increasingly widespread use of telecommunication devices that are getting easier and cheaper.

Telecommunication facilities in the form of smartphones make the integration of mobile phones, internet, and computers. Marshall McLuhan, Danis McQuail has predicted a communications revolution with the emergence of a global village phenomenon and information technology that keeps the world at hand. The communication revolution has been able to overcome the obstacles of distance, space and time. The advantages of this communication technology, in the end, make smartphones embedded in the lives of individual users. In everyday activities, it is clear that smartphone users cannot escape from communication activities. (Criapin Thurlow, et al., 2004). This embedded phenomenon even in some cases gives effect "addiction" to smartphone users and internet in general.

Referring to the above description, in various scientific studies, it is often mentioned that the phenomenon of social networking is part of the behavior of Y Generation, the generation that grows in the midst of the hustle and bustle of wireless technology development (Strauss & Howe; 2000). Exposure to technology also affects the sensitivity of generation Y to change. They are a generation that is familiar with the internet and very active in social networking media. They are highly techno-minded and interact more through gadgets. As William Strauss and Neil Howe put it in his book "Millennials Rising: The Next Great Generation" that the power of this generation is its high creativity. Through tech help, they have more chance of exposure to see the world without needing to go to the place. By just clicking makes a person feel and see many ideas and phenomena in other parts of the world.

In line with the demands of global trade, the utilization of internet technology primarily through social media becomes increasingly urgent. Social media can overcome barriers to the limited range of marketing communications of SME products. The phenomenon of embedded social media in Y and Z generation allows social media to be shortcut media marketing communications. Thus, SME products can penetrate the international market. This paper would like to describe the readiness of SME managers to enter the AEC free market.

Theoretical Framework

CMC has become a part of everyday life. CMC is examined and compared with other communication media through a number of aspects that are considered universal for all forms of communication theory, including intrapersonal communication, interpersonal communication, and hyperpersonal communication. However, it is not limited to synchronicity, persistence or "recordability," and anonymity. In intrapersonal communication, each person perceives stimuli according to their personal characteristics, then in communication science, messages are given different meanings by different people. In this theory, CMC is one of the sources in improving the quality of interpersonal communication. This theory can be seen from the growing internet in the community. Then when associated with hyperpersonal communication, face to face communication relationships now have the same value as communicating via computer or CMC.

Along with the development of technology, messages or information conveyed from the communicator on communicant feels as fast as direct communication. Therefore, it allows interaction between people who do not share the same physical space. In the context of widespread use of social media is an enormous environmental influence. Some sources say this is a technological revolution in which people adopt innovation very quickly compared to previous communications technology innovations (Van Slyke, et al., 2007).

In the view of behaviorism, human beings are learners, they will try to adapt to the environment through the learning process. As a discipline that observes human behavior, behaviorism studies human behavior as an adaptation to environmental stimuli through the process of thinking. Behavior is defined simply as a result of acquiring knowledge. However, both the acquisition and use of knowledge include a set of observable behaviors. The material objects of psychology and communication science are the same: the human soul includes components: attitudes, opinions, behaviors, cognitions, affections, and donations. Hosland, et al (1953) says that the process of behavioral change is essentially the same as the learning process.

The Internet Communications and Social Media Channels

Basically, marketing has undergone two important changes in the last few decades. The first stage is dominated by producers; while the second by retailers. The first is characterized by an aggressive promotional strategy, while the latter takes advantage of proximity to consumers (Schultz & Schultz 1998). Currently, marketing has entered the third phase of marketing influenced by the increasing role of information technology (IT) in the consumer lifestyle that has led to a focus on consumer dominance (Jim Blythe, 2006).

Forrester Research (2006) identifies a growing trend where the current focus is in an online community known as Groundswell. One feature of this phenomenon is that consumers interact via web 2.0 that requires internet access, but not limited to, Facebook, LinkedIn, MySpace. In this era, the user is also possible for the production of content sites such as YouTube, Instagram, and so forth to connect with each other. Friendships are shaped by people's connectivity, interactive technology, and the economy online (Charlene, 2008). It is defined as a social trend in which people use technology to get the information they need from each other, not just from traditional institutions like companies (Charlene, 2009). The existence of this communication network is facilitated by Web 2.0

Web 2.0 technology, a term coined by Tim O'Reilly, which uses the collective intelligence of people interconnectivity of computer users over the internet network. Network 2.0 is also known as social media (Tim, 2007). Social media is an interactive medium therefore known as a new media or citizen media (Rob, 2009). This distinguishes it from conventional media ie media used by companies with the nature of one way information flow that is, the message conveyed by the company to the audience (one to many) and in social media (many-to-many) in various situations and conditions. Dave Evans (2008) defines social media as a democratization of information, converting people from content readers to content publishers. This is a shift from the broadcast mechanism to many-to-many models. According to the Federal Network Council Internet is defined as a computer network that allows the transfer of data or information through a form of transmission protocol according to the global addressing system. Internet (inter-network) can be interpreted a wide computer network that connects computer users of one computer to another computer and can connect with computers from one country to countries around the world, wherein it there is a wide range of information facilities Internet services.

Computer technology, internet and telecommunication technology have opened the eyes of the world. New phenomena such as new forms of interaction based on social media networks, new marketplace, and world business network without limit. It is well realized that the development of the internet has changed the pattern of interaction of society such as business interaction, economy, social and culture.

METHODS

The research method used by the writer is survey method. explanative research is intended as an attempt to explain and trace further the relationship between embedded social media variables that are suspected to affect the readiness of SME managers in facing free trade in ASEAN region. Explanative research is a research that tries to describe and interpret the object as it is. With the explanative descriptive method, this research is possible to perform relationships between variables, test hypotheses, develop generalizations, and develop theories that have universal validity (Best, 1982). In this study, the object of observation is the use of social media by the owner or manager of SMEs in four cities in Banten province. Social network users in the context of this research are those who are connected to the medium of communication of SME products marketing online. The sample size in this research is 207 respondents.

SME managers is someone who in their daily life is involved in the management of the small-scale business. Included in the category of managers may include owners, managers, and marketing personnel in SME business units. Sampling technique in this research is done by simple random. This technique is used because the sampling frame is already known. Sample cranes are obtained from the SME and business communities in four cities in Banten province. Variable embedded media (variable X) operationally can be interpreted as a situation and condition of changes in communication and

lifestyle patterns that occur due to environmental changes and technological advances. (Lutterell, Regina, 2015).

This situation occurs where environmental changes have encouraged individuals to adopt smartphones as an inherent part of their lives as social beings. The adherence of social media is used to facilitate social activities and transactions including ease of internet access, e-banking, e-trading, e-government, and e-mail. In addition, embedded social media can also of the innovation power and community norms and social openness. Meanwhile, the variables of readiness to face free competition in the era of MEA is operationally defined as their readiness in marketing communication through social media. The existence of social media is used as a shortcut to solving the problem of the high cost of conventional marketing communication. Their readiness in managing social media includes share, manage, optimized and engage social media.

Data were collected through questionnaires as the main instrument of the study. For the purpose of data analysis, also conducted observes and 6-month interview with SMEs businessman.

RESULT

Respondents in this study are those who are domiciled and conduct their business activities in the areas of Serang, Cilegon, Tangerang and South Tangerang. Their age is productive age, which is between 17 years to 62 years. What is interesting from this picture is the age of the early as SME managers ie those who have started a business at the age of 17-25 years there are as many as 25%. They are young entrepreneurs. Most of these young entrepreneurs are still students.

In general, the various problems faced by SMEs in Banten Province is the low quality of human resources of SMEs especially in the areas of (1) management, organization, technology, and marketing. (2) The low competence of SME entrepreneurship. (3) Limited access to productive resources especially to capital, technology, information and markets; financial institution service products mostly still in the form of working capital credit, while investment credit is very limited; the role of society and business world in service to SMEs is also not yet developed, because the service to SMEs is still considered less profitable. Nevertheless, in the last year service to SMEs gradually began to increase. Improving services and attention to SMEs is motivated by the existence of a very urgent need for the enactment of an ASEAN economic community zone or often called AEC term.

This fascinating phenomenon is a positive phenomenon in which some of them initially started the business as drop shippers and resellers by utilizing online media. From the results of observations in the field, their activities in pursue online business at first just take advantage of spare time and maximize the use of gadgets for activities that positive. Researchers categorize them from ages under 25 to over 50 years. This age grouping is based on the consideration that the condition in the field is apparently there are SME managers who are still in school age. They are students and students who have started to study independently either on their own initiative or to help the efforts of their parents. The results show there are 10 major areas of successful business using social media as a marketing communication medium. The ten types of business are (1) culinary, (2). fashion, (3) herbs, (4) cosmetics, (5) properties, (6) various services such as vehicle registration services, birth certificates, and other documents, (7) consultants, (8) handicraft, (9) medical, and (10) education. Of the ten types of successful u business marketing through social media, only seven types of businesses where SMEs can come to exist. While 3 business fields such as medical, education and consultants have not been developed through SME business. For more details can be seen from the picture below.

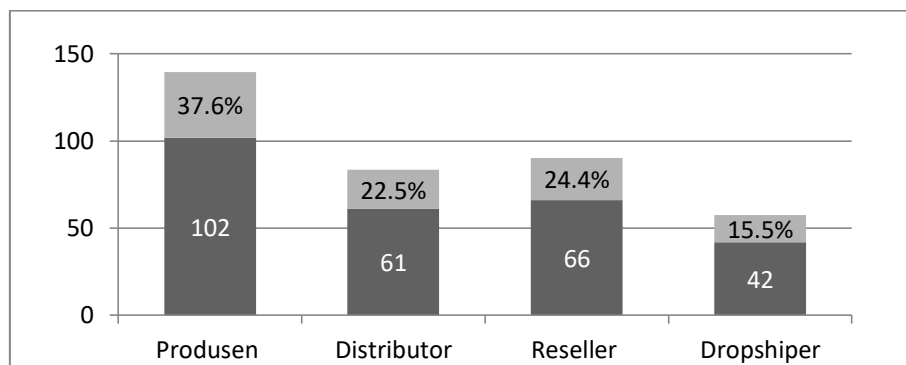


Figure 1.: Type of SME Enterprises Using Social Media

Source: Data processed from the research)

In this study, the respondents are the managers and owners of SMEs that include manufacturers, or distributors and also who become resellers only. From the chart, it can be seen that most of the respondents in this research is the manager of SMEs fashion business. The type of SME fashion that respondents are Muslim clothing including in its clothes, hijab and various accessories for Muslim fashion.

Fashion businesses that culminate in second order are the production of sportswear, jeans jackets and clothing, and the third fashion business is the business of bed sheets, bedcovers, and other bedding accessories. Please note that the area of Tangerang and South Tangerang as the location of this study is the center of the fashion business. For example, in Cipadu and its suburbs is a fashion trading center for fashion businesses in Tanah Abang and Cipulir markets, as well as other business centers in Jakarta, Surabaya and other major cities in Indonesia. Coverage business is already a national scale even some of them are already imported to various countries.

This type of SME business respondents of this second largest research is the culinary business and the third largest is the herbal business. For the business killer, type of food and beverages in the packaging. The food business is mostly done by businessmen in Cilegon and Serang city. Types of culinary include catfish about, milkfish satay, *emping melinjo* and variant of *melinjo* seed products, various traditional cakes such as; brittle, Zipang, traditional balloon cakes typical of other Banten areas. As for the type of herbal business includes a variety of herbal products for both treatments and for the health of the body,

Duration Using Social Media As A Media Marketing Communication

One of the main problems of SME managers, in general, is the high cost of promotion and marketing activities of products/services. The main cause is due to limited access to strategic marketing places, expensive rental fees, and limited networking limitations. During this time they rely on conventional marketing system with conventional marketing communication methods as well. For marketing products/services they have a shop either in the form of an offline store or through traditional markets and modern markets. In addition to having a shop and there are some who have workshops, they also apply the marketing system through distributors and resellers who directly touch the end consumer. of course, with such a system requires a lot of money.

With the presence of social media, shortcut for SME managers in marketing their products. From the results of their interviews stated that they are very helpful with social media. The specter of advertisement cost in mass media and promotion that has been hard for SME can be exceeded. The following figure below shows how long they used social media as a marketing communication medium.

Most of the SME managers who make respondents in this study already use social media as a marketing communication medium. There are as many as 40% of respondents have more than three years using social media, and as much as 36% using social media has been for 2 to 3 years. From interviews and observations, it is known that they use more than one kind of media marketing tool.

Social media used by SME managers to market their products/services is; Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, BlackBerry Messenger (BBM) and Whats App (WA). The table below describes the old composition using social media as a marketing communication medium by SME managers in four cities in Banten Province.

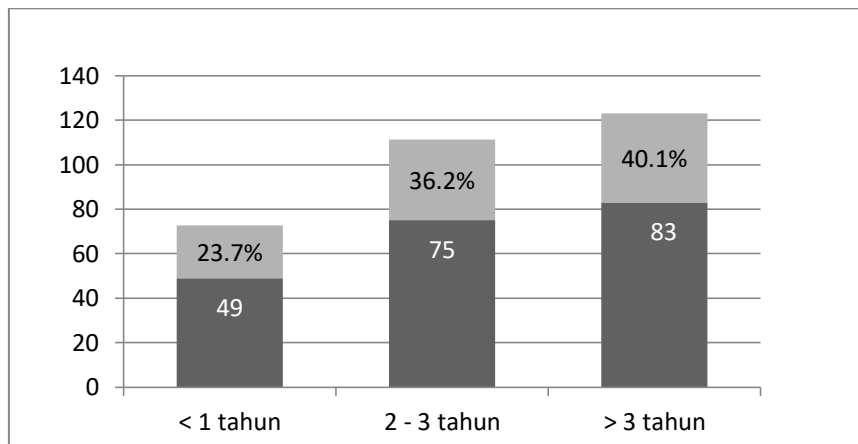


Figure 2: Long Using Social Media As A Media Marketing Communication

(Source: Data processed from the results of research)

Only 24% of respondents new one-year using mass media as marketing communication media. They are the managers of SMEs who have been relying on the delivery of their products through conventional marketing communication media. The managers of SMEs is a business actor who has decades of running culinary, fashion, herbal and other products/services. Many of them have regular and continuous customers. They already have distributors in some areas in Banten province and surrounding areas.

Business Category

Of the 207 respondents SME business managers they can be categorized as a drop shipper, reseller distributors, and manufacturers. The figure below shows the composition of the respondent's business category as follows:

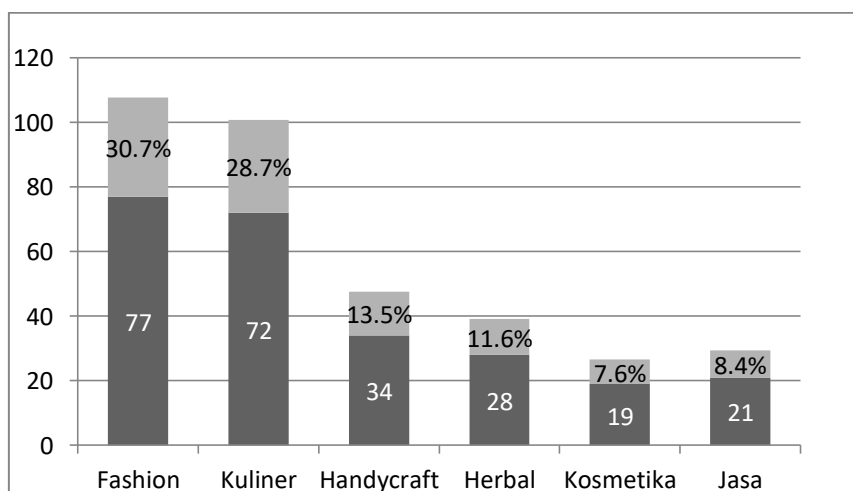


Figure 3: Business Category of Respondents

(Source: Data processed from research results)

From the picture above shows that most of the respondents are producers and resellers. As explained in the previous chapter, the fashion, bedding, herbal and culinary industry in Tangerang and Tangerang Selatan is the economic buffer industry of DKI Jakarta. The area of Banten province adjacent to the capital provides a good opportunity for the entrepreneur to develop well.

There are several centers of the fashion industry and herbal products that successfully market their products through social media. They rely on Instagram and Facebook to penetrate national and international markets. For example, the business is a character blanket. Production of SMEs this city of attack has been able to survive even compete with similar products. Initially, this business is a home business run by a housewife. initially limited market only local city attack. Conventional media campaigns that are carried out are just following the promotional events organized by the local government and following the bazaar activities of several organizers who are sporadic. However, after using social media, the reach of marketing communication able to penetrate the city of attack area and even successfully reach the national and international markets.

Embedded social media can be seen in SME managers with several dimensions. At least online experience, various problems felt by SME managers, innovation power, and social norms system ultimately determine how embedded the manager of SMEs on the social media and make it as a marketing communication media. For more details can be seen in the table below:

Table 1. Embedded social media on SME managers

n = 207

No	Observation Variable	Score	Average
1.	Online experience (practice before adoption of innovation)	1233	5.96
	Ease of getting internet access		
	Affordability Internet Fee		
	Security in conducting e-banking		
	Security in doing e-trading		
	Ease of delivering messages via e-mail		
	Security in e-mail/chat		
2.	Problems of SMEs	1230.23	5.94
	Limitations of marketing communication budgets		
	Marketing held owner		
	Relying on conventional media through word of mouth		
	Not yet aware of the importance of branding		
3.	Innovation Power of SME managers	1220.75	5.90
	Aware MEA will affect SMEs		
	SMEs are aware that to win the competition must be adaptive to the development of technology		
	SMEs know that the development of technology is a shortcut for product marketing communications		
	SMEs should creatively exploit marketing communication opportunities through social media		
4.	Community Norms	1212.38	5.88
	Involvement in the business community		
	Limitations in activity due to physical disability		
	Limitations in activity due to old age		
	Obstacles to perform activities due to geographical factors		
	Transportation difficulties due to infrastructure limitations		
	Risk of counterfeit goods		

Source: Data processed from the results of research

For the online experience is divided into four indicators namely; internet access, e-banking, e-trading and e-mail/chart. Internet access is important in the era of information technology where

gadgets/smartphones are embedded with individuals wherever they are. For that reason, the size of internet access is the ease of getting internet access and affordability of internet costs. In the e-banking indicators, measured in three measurements namely; ease of access to e-banking facilities, e-banking security and e-banking convenience.

SME managers judge that their banking transaction experience using e-banking tends to be good. For e-trading indicators, the authors describe it into three sizes, namely convenience, security and security in e-trading. From the interviews, respondents said that during this experience of doing e-trading well and rarely found the problem. Likewise with the last indicator of the online experience, ie communication via e-mail/chat. They said that ease and security of communication through e-mail/chart is very good and very helpful for them in conducting SME management activities both for coordination in internal communication with an external. The score for the online experience indicator is 1233 with an average of 5.96 means, the respondent considers that his online experience is likely to be good

For the second sub-variable of the online experience of SME managers is the needs and problems of SMEs. There are four indicators of the needs and problems of SMEs namely the high cost of marketing communications, limited marketing human resources, limited range of marketing communications and unknown brand. In terms of the high cost of marketing communications, SME managers state that they have limited budgets for promotion and other marketing communications. The problem of the two SMEs is the limited human resources of marketing. They have limitations to pay the salaries of marketing personnel, in addition to the existing marketing personnel very high turn over. On the basis of these two reasons, marketing is often held directly by the owners of SMEs. SME managers also stated that they have been plagued with a limited range of marketing communications, therefore they still rely on word of mouth communication.

This phenomenon that makes them very enthusiastic using social media because social media can be a word of mouth (WOM) by using internet technology. The last indicator of the sub-variables of SME problems is the fact that their product brand is not yet known. Many of SME managers are less aware of the importance of brand building. While the sub-variables of needs and problems of SMEs is 1230.25 with an average of 5.94. this figure indicates that the respondents assess the high problems faced by SMEs in Banten province.

In the sub-dimension of innovation power of SME managers, measured by three indicators namely; awareness of environmental change, adaptive to technological change and creativity of SME managers in Banten province. The first indicator of measurement is done by cultivating their awareness of the current environmental changes. They realize that the enactment of the MEA will have an effect on the sustainability of their business. After realizing the environmental changes, the next measurement is the awareness that to win the competition, they must be adaptive to the development of technology and realize also that the use of technology to be a shortcut for SMEs in marketing their products. Therefore they think that SMEs should creatively take advantage of opportunities by using social media as a marketing communication medium. The sub-dimension score of respondents' innovative power is 1220.75 with an average of 5.90. this figure indicates that the respondents' innovation power tend to be high.

The last dimension of the respondent's online experience variables is the norm of society. This sub-dimension is written with six indicators, namely; Involvement in the business community, Limitations in activity due to physical disability, Limitations in age-old activities, constraints due to geographical factors, transportation difficulties due to infrastructure limitations, counterfeit/counterfeit goods risk. The score for this sub-dimension is 1217.38 with an average of 5.88. this figure indicates the respondent's assessment of community norms that tend to be positive and adaptive to change.

Socio-economic factors such as; age, education, business scale and long business management will determine the character's style and personal maturity. In the context of this study, knowledge of SME managers and their perception of social media can be formed by both ways mentioned above. The established knowledge will persuade them to learn more about the existence of innovation, in this case, social media. Perceptions of the relative advantages of social media, built through the process of knowledge and understanding and experience they learn the characteristics of computers, internet,

smartphone, social media applications and features. They can say that social media has the advantage to be used as a marketing communication medium because they already know the information function and benefits of social media well.

Broadly speaking, the attitude of SME managers' respondents to social media is very positive. They say they are interested in adopting media because social media is considered to have "consumption value". Terence A. Shimp in his book entitled advertising and promotion; says that a product/service/idea is adopted because it has a usability value (Shimp 2003; 17). Consumers and potential consumers before deciding to adopt or consume a product, he will consider the benefits that can be derived from its product/service/idea. The five values of consumption are; (1) functional value, (2) emotional value, (3) social value, (4) epistemic value, and (5) conditional value.

Functional value is the basic value of a product/service/idea that can provide solutions to problems or potential problems faced by consumers. Social media as a marketing communication media is considered to have a functional value because of ability as a marketing communication tool. Namely, media used to convey product information, superior product offerings, prices, discounts and other marketing programs and used to know the feedback on communication programs that have been done. The functional value of other social media is to educate consumers, create a "need" so that the consumer-minded so as to encourage interest and purchase decisions. Conditional values are also one of the main considerations for SME managers to adopt social media as a marketing communication medium. It has been described in the previous chapter, about the condition prior to innovation that the development of communication technology has brought the impact of environmental change.

The use of embedded smartphones ultimately influences their behavior patterns, both in interactions, communications, economic transactions and other lifestyles. This condition has forced the business actors to immediately clean up due to changes in consumer behavior. Currently, the generation of X and many generations of Y especially in big cities such as in Jakarta, Bogor, Tangerang, Depok and Bekasi (JABODETABEK) have used smartphones as a means to conduct economic transactions.

In the view of Shimp (2003: 129) groups of children and adolescents is an earning power that has a major impact on personal and household purchases. Apparently, SME entrepreneurs are aware of this phenomenon. Generation Y is a generation that is very attached to the gadget and dependence with the internet. So now the respondents SME managers are increasingly aware that using online media is not an option but a necessity because of the demands of the global environment. Social media is a technology that can answer their problems. In this context, social media as a marketing communication medium has conditional value. And must be adopted and implemented immediately.

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