

Beach-Hub Creative: A Blue Marketing and Digital Finance Strategy for Empowering Coastal Youth

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Received:	Revised:	Accepted:	Available online:
25.02.2026	19.03.2026	13.04.2026	29.04.2026

Abstract: Coastal tourism areas offer significant opportunities for strengthening local economies through the development of tourism-based creative enterprises. However, in many coastal communities this potential has not been fully optimized due to several structural and capacity-related challenges. Limited entrepreneurial literacy among local youth, low utilization of digital technologies in business activities, and inadequate financial management practices among small enterprises often hinder the transformation of tourism resources into sustainable economic opportunities. Considering that young people represent an important driver of innovation and local economic development, strengthening their entrepreneurial capacity becomes an essential step in maximizing the potential of coastal tourism. This study aims to examine the effectiveness of the Beach-Hub Creative program as a community-based empowerment model designed to enhance youth entrepreneurial capacity in coastal tourism areas. The program integrates blue marketing strategies with basic digital financial management practices to support the development of creative and sustainable businesses. The research employed a participatory approach through educational sessions, practical training, and guided practice on digital marketing, product branding, and the use of simple digital financial recording tools. The findings indicate that participants experienced notable improvements in their understanding of digital promotion strategies, product branding, and more structured financial management practices. Moreover, the program increased participants' confidence and motivation to initiate tourism-based creative businesses. These results suggest that the Beach-Hub Creative model can contribute to strengthening youth entrepreneurship and promoting sustainable economic development in coastal tourism communities.

Keywords: Coastal tourism, local youth, digital marketing, blue marketing, digital financial management, creative economy.

1. INTRODUCTION

Coastal tourism areas in various regions of Indonesia possess significant potential to stimulate the economic growth of local communities, particularly through the development of the tourism and creative economy sectors. The richness of marine resources, the uniqueness of local cultures, and the wide range of tourism activities emerging in coastal areas provide opportunities for communities to create and develop various productive enterprises (Batilmurik & Lao, 2016). If managed optimally, this potential can make a substantial contribution to increasing income and improving the welfare of communities surrounding tourist destinations (Yanti et al., 2024). However, the utilization of this potential still faces several challenges, including low levels of entrepreneurial literacy, limited market access, and business management practices that are not yet carried out professionally (Butar-butur et al., 2025).

The rapid development of the digital economy also requires business actors to be able to utilize information technology in operating and expanding their businesses (Kahveci, 2025). Digitalization in marketing and business management has been proven to enhance the visibility of tourism destinations and broaden market reach for creative economy actors. The use of social media, websites, and various other digital platforms enables business actors to promote tourism products and services more effectively while simultaneously increasing the attractiveness of destinations in the eyes of tourists (Ramírez-guerrero et al., 2025).

In the process of tourism-based economic development, local youth play a crucial role as key drivers of creative economic activities within tourism destinations (Pradnyana et al., 2025). Young people generally possess high levels of creativity and innovative spirit, which can be leveraged to generate new business opportunities. However, in practice, many young individuals still face limitations in digital marketing skills, financial management capabilities, as well as in developing

product identity and branding. Therefore, empowerment initiatives through entrepreneurship training and the strengthening of digital competencies are essential strategies to enhance youth engagement in local economic activities (Lopes et al., 2025). Previous studies have also demonstrated that entrepreneurship training serves as an effective mechanism for fostering the creative economic potential of young people while simultaneously contributing to the improvement of community welfare (Maharani & Yoviani, 2024).

On the other hand, the sustainability of business activities is strongly influenced by entrepreneurs' ability to manage financial resources in a systematic and accountable manner. The adoption of digital technologies in financial record-keeping, the use of transaction management applications, and the implementation of digital payment systems can significantly assist business actors in managing their finances more efficiently, transparently, and accountably (Inayah & Susliyanti, 2025). Furthermore, the integration of digital marketing strategies with digital financial management has the potential to enhance business competitiveness amid the rapidly evolving digital economy (Sharabati et al., 2024).

Within the context of coastal tourism development, the concept of blue marketing emerges as a relevant approach to support sustainable destination management. This approach emphasizes the development of tourism products and services that utilize marine resource potential while simultaneously highlighting local cultural identity as a primary attraction (Walewangko et al., 2026). Beyond functioning as a marketing strategy, blue marketing also promotes awareness of the importance of preserving coastal and marine ecosystems, thereby supporting the long-term sustainability of tourism destinations (Tambunan et al., 2025). Opportunities can be created by providing unique solutions tailored to consumer needs (Avita et al., 2023). The importance of a creative marketing strategy lies not only in product or service differentiation but also in how those products or services are marketed to consumers (Fathurrochman et al., 2021). By implementing a creative approach in marketing strategy, business actors can discover new, previously unexplored opportunities. Creativity in marketing can foster strong appeal, increase brand awareness, and strengthen consumer loyalty (Dejawata et al., 2014). Thus, business actors can not only survive the competition but also create new, sustainable business opportunities. In this regard, a creative marketing strategy is key to opening access to broader business opportunities and achieving success amidst a challenging business environment (Labaso et al., 2018).

Based on these conditions, there is a pressing need for empowerment initiatives that simultaneously enhance digital literacy and strengthen the entrepreneurial capacity of local communities, particularly young people residing in coastal tourism areas. In response to this need, a community engagement program was designed by integrating the Beach-Hub Creative concept, an integrated business model that focuses on empowering local youth through the implementation of blue marketing strategies and digital financial management (Rahman et al., 2025). This program is intended to address several critical challenges, including the low level of digital entrepreneurial literacy within educational environments in coastal tourism areas, limited understanding of the application of blue marketing strategies in developing marine-based businesses, and the suboptimal capacity of business actors to manage financial activities through digital systems (Sumiati et al., 2026).

Through this initiative, it is expected that community digital literacy and entrepreneurial capacity in developing coastal tourism-based businesses will significantly improve. Furthermore, the program aims to strengthen understanding of the implementation of blue marketing strategies that leverage marine resources and local cultural wisdom as key competitive advantages, while also enhancing the ability of business actors to manage finances in a more transparent, efficient, and sustainable manner through the adoption of digital technologies (Walewangko et al., 2026).

Previous research have demonstrated that community empowerment programs integrating digitalization and digital marketing can significantly increase community participation in tourism-based economic development. The digital transformation of tourism villages through the use of social media and websites has been proven to enhance both the visibility and attractiveness of

tourist destinations (Siroj et al., 2024). In addition, strengthening digital capabilities through entrepreneurship training has been shown to increase youth engagement in the development of local creative economies (Mujiani et al., 2026).

Moreover, digital financial literacy represents a crucial factor in ensuring business sustainability. The adoption of technology in financial management enables business actors to record transactions more accurately while supporting more informed and strategic business decision-making processes (Kurniasari et al., 2025). Therefore, the integration of digital marketing strategies, digital financial management, and the blue marketing approach constitutes a strategic framework for promoting the sustainable development of coastal tourism-based creative economies (Maharani & Yoviani, 2024).

2. METHODS

This community engagement program adopts a participatory approach that emphasizes active participant involvement through training and mentoring activities. This approach was chosen to ensure that participants not only receive theoretical knowledge but also gain practical experience in applying the concepts introduced throughout the program. Through this method, the program aims to improve participants' digital entrepreneurship literacy, deepen their understanding of blue marketing strategies, and strengthen their ability to manage business finances using digital tools. The program is structured into three main stages: preparation, implementation, and evaluation.

During the preparation phase, the community service team conducted an initial visit to the activity location to observe and discuss with representatives of the Liang youth community. This preliminary activity aimed to identify the actual conditions and challenges faced by participants, particularly regarding the use of digital technology in entrepreneurial activities. These observations and discussions provided valuable insights into the participants' needs, which then became the basis for developing training materials. The prepared materials included an introduction to the concept of blue marketing, digital marketing strategies that leverage the potential of coastal tourism, and an introduction to simple digital applications that can support business financial recording. The participants in this activity were 40 young people native to the Liang coastal area, consisting of men and women of productive age, aged 18-25.

The implementation phase consisted of several activities, including socialization sessions, training presentations, interactive discussions, and hands-on practice. During the training sessions, participants were introduced to practical methods for utilizing digital media as a promotional tool for tourism products and creative businesses related to coastal potential. Furthermore, participants were given insight into the importance of developing product identity and branding by incorporating local cultural values and marine-based resources as distinctive competitive attributes. In the financial management component, participants were introduced to the use of a simple financial recording application that can help them manage business transactions in a more organized and structured manner. The learning process was complemented by question and answer sessions and simulation activities, allowing participants to directly practice the use of digital platforms in their business operations. This training session lasted two hours, due to the many interactive question and answer sessions between participants and the community service committee.

The final stage involved program evaluation to assess the extent to which community engagement activities benefited participants. Evaluation was conducted through questionnaire distribution, direct observation during the program, and feedback discussions with participants. Program success was measured using several indicators, including increased participant understanding of digital entrepreneurship and the concept of blue marketing, changes in participant perspectives regarding the use of technology in business activities, and the emergence of stronger motivation to develop businesses in more creative and well-managed ways. Furthermore, indicators of success were also reflected in increased awareness among participants about the importance of utilizing digital media for business promotion and maintaining more systematic financial records.

The evaluation results were then analyzed using a descriptive qualitative approach, taking into account the level of participant engagement, responses expressed during the program, and changes in understanding demonstrated after the training. Through this approach, the community engagement initiative is expected to not only provide additional knowledge but also encourage meaningful changes in participants' attitudes and behaviors in utilizing digital technology to support the sustainable development of businesses based on coastal tourism potential.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Liang Village represents one of the coastal areas endowed with considerable tourism potential, particularly through the scenic beauty of its beaches and the richness of its marine resources. Such potential offers significant opportunities for local communities to develop various tourism-related enterprises, including culinary businesses, souvenir production, and tourism services. However, these opportunities have not yet been fully utilized due to limited knowledge and capacity among community members—especially the younger generation—in areas such as digital entrepreneurship, technology-based marketing, and business financial management. In response to these conditions, this community engagement program was implemented to enhance the knowledge and practical skills of local residents in developing businesses based on coastal tourism potential. Through this initiative, the community is expected to gain a deeper understanding of how digital technologies can be utilized to promote their businesses, to become familiar with blue marketing strategies that highlight marine resources and local cultural identity, and to strengthen their capacity to manage business finances in a more systematic and organized manner. Ultimately, these efforts aim to enable the tourism potential of Liang Village to be more effectively leveraged in supporting sustainable local economic development.

Table 1. Problem Identification

No.	Problems	Needs
1.	Limited knowledge of digital entrepreneurship.	Digital entrepreneurship training
2.	Low utilization of social media for business promotion.	Digital marketing training.
3.	Limited understanding of the blue marketing strategy.	Blue marketing socialization and training..
4.	Business financial records are still maintained in a simple manner.	Training on the use of digital financial applications.
5.	Coastal tourism potential has not been optimally utilized for business development.	Mentoring for the development of coastal tourism-based businesses.

Figure 1 illustrates the outreach and training activities conducted by the community engagement team in the Liang Beach tourism area. During this program, university students were also involved as facilitators to assist participants throughout the implementation process. The primary target participants of this activity were local youth residing in the surrounding Liang Beach area. Throughout the program, participants demonstrated a high level of enthusiasm and engagement. They followed the training sessions attentively, actively posed questions, and participated in discussions on how digital technologies could be utilized to support the development of businesses related to coastal tourism potential. Such active participation and engagement indicate a strong interest among local youth in learning and exploring entrepreneurial opportunities within the Liang Beach tourism area.



Figure 1. Outreach and training activities.

In general, local youth in Liang Village possess considerable opportunities to develop a variety of businesses related to coastal tourism. These opportunities include culinary enterprises, the sale of local products, and services that support tourism activities in the Liang Beach area. The strategic location of Liang Village, which is directly connected to the coastal tourism ecosystem, provides a natural advantage for young people to actively participate in tourism-driven economic activities. The increasing flow of visitors to the Liang Beach area further strengthens the potential for local youth to transform simple business ideas into sustainable economic ventures. Products such as traditional snacks, fresh seafood-based cuisine, handicrafts made from coastal materials, and small-scale tourism services such as equipment rental or guiding services can become significant sources of income if managed properly. In this context, youth entrepreneurship is not only an economic opportunity but also a strategic instrument for strengthening the local tourism economy and preserving the cultural identity of coastal communities. However, prior to the implementation of this program, most participants had not yet utilized digital technologies optimally to support the growth of their businesses.

Although digital platforms have become an essential component of modern marketing practices, many young entrepreneurs in Liang Village were still unfamiliar with how these tools could be strategically used to expand market reach and attract potential visitors. Promotional activities were still relatively basic and were typically limited to local networks within the surrounding community. As a result, the potential market that could be reached through digital channels remained largely untapped. In practice, many businesses relied primarily on word-of-mouth promotion or informal recommendations among local residents and visiting tourists. Such practices, while valuable for maintaining community relationships, often limit the scalability of local businesses in an increasingly competitive tourism market. This situation reveals a clear gap between the availability of business opportunities and the capacity of local youth to fully capitalize on those opportunities through modern digital approaches. Furthermore, business financial records were either maintained manually or, in some cases, not systematically managed at all. In several instances, income and expenditures were not recorded consistently, making it difficult for business owners to evaluate financial performance or plan future business strategies. Without proper financial documentation, entrepreneurs face significant challenges in assessing profitability, controlling operational costs, and making informed business decisions. The absence of systematic financial management can also hinder access to external support, such as microfinance programs or government assistance initiatives, which often require clear financial records as part of their administrative requirements. These conditions indicate that although business opportunities are widely available, local youth still require additional knowledge and skills, particularly in the areas of digital marketing and business financial management. More importantly, this condition highlights an urgent need to transform the entrepreneurial mindset of young people so that they no longer

perceive their businesses merely as small informal activities, but as scalable and competitive enterprises capable of contributing to the broader coastal tourism economy. Through this outreach and training program, participants were introduced to the concept of blue marketing, a marketing strategy that leverages coastal natural resources while simultaneously highlighting local cultural values as a key attraction for tourists. This concept encourages local entrepreneurs to position their products not only as commodities, but also as narratives that reflect the uniqueness of coastal life in Liang Village. Blue marketing invites young entrepreneurs to recognize that the beauty of the sea, the authenticity of local traditions, and the richness of coastal culinary heritage are powerful storytelling elements that can significantly enhance the attractiveness of their products in the tourism market. By integrating environmental awareness with marketing creativity, blue marketing promotes a form of tourism entrepreneurship that is both economically productive and environmentally responsible. In other words, the sea is not merely a backdrop for tourism activities—it is a strategic asset that can be transformed into a compelling marketing identity capable of attracting wider audiences.

Participants were also encouraged to understand the importance of developing a clear product identity and branding in order to enhance market recognition. In a competitive tourism environment where visitors are exposed to numerous product choices, a strong brand identity becomes a decisive factor that distinguishes one product from another. Therefore, participants were motivated to think critically about how their products could represent the uniqueness of Liang Village. This includes considerations such as packaging design, brand naming, visual identity, and the storytelling elements that accompany each product. By building a distinctive brand narrative that reflects coastal culture and local authenticity, young entrepreneurs can create stronger emotional connections with consumers. Such branding strategies not only increase product attractiveness but also strengthen the long-term sustainability of local businesses by establishing memorable and recognizable market identities. In addition, they received practical guidance on how social media platforms can be effectively utilized as promotional tools to reach broader markets. Participants were introduced to various strategies for creating engaging digital content, including product photography, short promotional videos, and storytelling-based posts that highlight the uniqueness of their businesses. Social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and short-form video platforms offer unprecedented opportunities for small entrepreneurs to promote their products without requiring large marketing budgets. When used strategically, these platforms can transform local businesses into visible attractions for potential tourists who are planning their visits to Liang Beach. Participants were encouraged to view social media not merely as communication tools, but as powerful digital storefronts capable of connecting local products with regional, national, and even international audiences. This shift in perspective is essential in fostering a more proactive and innovative entrepreneurial culture among the youth of Liang Village.

During the training sessions, participants were also introduced to simple digital financial recording applications designed to assist them in managing business income and expenditures in a more organized and systematic manner. These applications allow entrepreneurs to record transactions, monitor cash flow, and generate basic financial summaries that can support better business decision-making. By adopting digital financial tools, participants can gradually move away from informal financial practices and begin to build more professional business management systems. The ability to track financial performance accurately is crucial not only for maintaining business sustainability but also for increasing credibility when seeking partnerships, investment opportunities, or institutional support. In this regard, financial literacy becomes a fundamental pillar that strengthens the entrepreneurial resilience of local youth. Through these initiatives, it is expected that local youth will begin to manage their businesses more effectively and take greater advantage of the tourism opportunities available in the Liang Beach area. More importantly, this program seeks to ignite a new entrepreneurial spirit among young people—one that is innovative, adaptive, and deeply rooted in the unique identity of coastal communities. When local youth are equipped with digital skills, financial literacy, and a strong sense of cultural branding, they are no longer merely participants in the tourism economy; they become active drivers of regional development. The

transformation of youth entrepreneurship in Liang Village therefore represents not only an economic intervention, but also a strategic movement toward building a more resilient, creative, and sustainable coastal tourism ecosystem.

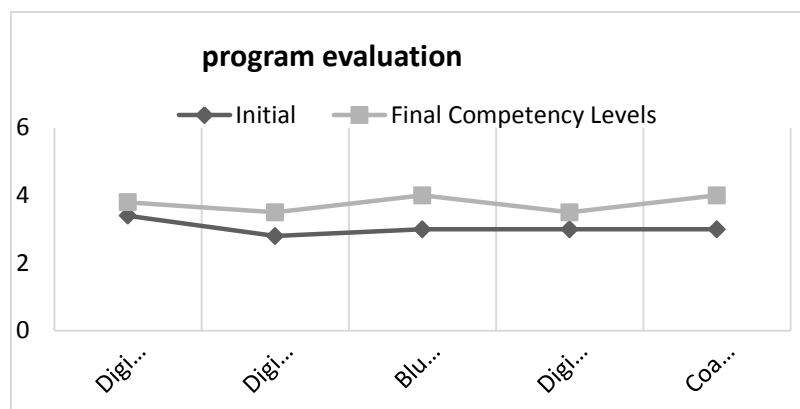


Figure 2. Participants' competency test results before and after the community engagement program.

The results of the program indicate that local youth have begun to recognize the importance of utilizing digital marketing strategies and maintaining more systematic business financial records. Throughout the program, participants demonstrated a strong interest in exploring the use of social media platforms to promote both local products and the tourism potential of Liang Beach. This response reflects a growing motivation among local youth to develop their businesses through more modern and innovative approaches.

Figure 2 presents the evaluation results derived from participants' practical exercises, including the development of sample promotional content and hands-on practice in recording business transactions using simple digital financial applications. Through these activities, participants not only acquired theoretical knowledge but also gained practical experience that can be directly applied in managing their business operations.

Figure 2 presents the results of the competency assessment conducted before and after the implementation of the community engagement program. The evaluation involved 40 participants, consisting of local youth aged 18–25 years in Liang Village. The competency test was designed using a structured questionnaire with a Likert scale (1–5), measuring participants' understanding and practical skills across several key indicators. The assessment covered four main competency indicators:

- 1) Understanding of digital marketing concepts,
- 2) Ability to utilize social media marketing concepts,
- 3) Understanding of blue marketing strategies, and
- 4) Ability to manage simple digital financial records

The results show a significant improvement across all indicators. Prior to the program (pre-test), the average competency score of participants was 2.48, indicating a relatively low level of understanding and skill. After the program (post-test), the average score increased to 4.12, reflecting a substantial enhancement in both knowledge and practical competencies.

Overall, this program is expected to serve as an initial step in encouraging local youth to actively utilize coastal tourism potential while fostering the sustainable development of community-based businesses in the Liang Beach area.



Figure 3. Group photo with participants after the community training program.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The community engagement program implemented in the Liang Beach tourism area has generated positive impacts for the local youth who participated in the activities. Through the outreach and training sessions conducted during the program, participants developed a greater awareness of the importance of utilizing digital technologies in developing businesses related to coastal tourism potential. Local youth also gained knowledge of digital marketing strategies, the concept of blue marketing, and practical methods for maintaining more systematic business financial records using simple digital applications. The program outcomes indicate an increasing interest among participants in promoting local products and the tourism potential of Liang Beach through social media, while also beginning to manage their business activities in a more organized manner. One of the strengths of this program lies in its training approach, which did not rely solely on theoretical instruction but was complemented by hands-on practical sessions. This approach enabled participants to better understand and internalize the materials presented. In addition, the involvement of university students as facilitators provided valuable support for participants in navigating each stage of the training process more effectively. Nevertheless, several limitations were identified, including the limited duration of the program and the varying levels of participants' digital literacy and technological skills.

Looking ahead, similar initiatives should be continued through more sustained mentoring and capacity-building programs to enable local youth to further develop their competencies, particularly in the areas of digital marketing and business management. With continuous support and guidance, it is expected that local youth will be better equipped to leverage the tourism potential of Liang Beach more effectively and to develop creative and sustainable community-based enterprises.

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komunikasi dalam media cetak . Maka dengan permasalahan tersebut kami tertarik untuk melakukan pelatihan digital marketing dalam meningkatkan penjualan produksi pertanian pada kelompok wanita tani pamulang barat . Gambar 1 . Identitas Kelompok Wanita Tani Pamulang Barat 25 Re-branding adalah strategi yang dapat menjadi solusi bagi kelompok Wanita Tani dalam mengatasi masalah pemasaran dan branding . Masalah-masalah dalam branding sering kali muncul ketika kelompok Wanita Tani menghadapi persaingan yang semakin ketat di pasar lokal maupun regional , serta perubahan dalam preferensi konsumen terhadap produk-produk pertanian . Branding yang kurang menarik dapat menyebabkan ketidakmampuan untuk bersaing dan mempromosikan produk pertanian secara efektif . 1.

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