



# Social Media Utilization in Food Businesses in the 2nd District of Albay

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## ABSTRACT

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The study investigates the utilization of social media by food businesses in the 2nd District of Albay, focusing on its advantages and disadvantages. With the rapid growth of digital platforms, understanding the impact of social media on business operations is crucial for fostering economic success. The primary aims of this research were to assess the current status of food businesses regarding social media usage, identify the benefits and challenges they encounter, and provide actionable recommendations for enhancing their social media strategies. To achieve these aims, a descriptive quantitative research design

was employed, utilizing a self-administered survey questionnaire distributed to 50 food establishments in Daraga and Legazpi. Analysis included frequency counting and the calculation of weighted means to evaluate responses. Findings revealed that while businesses recognize the benefits of social media for customer engagement and marketing, they also face significant challenges, such as time constraints and managing negative reviews. The study concludes that effective



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social media management requires investment in training and strategic planning. By addressing these challenges and leveraging the advantages offered by social media, food businesses can enhance their operations, improve customer relations, and ultimately achieve greater economic success.

## INTRODUCTION

Social media has dramatically impacted how businesses engage with customers, advertise their goods, and increase sales in the food sector. Social media marketing's effects on the food industry are examined, focusing on how it may influence consumer behavior, foster brand loyalty, and make finding new products and restaurant reviews easier. Food brands may interact with a worldwide audience on social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok by using target marketing, influencer collaborations, and aesthetically appealing content to draw in and establish a connection with consumers. Kulkarni (2025) asserts that adding food delivery and e-commerce to these platforms improves the user experience by guaranteeing seamless transitions from perusing to purchasing.

In the postmodern phase of industrial development, thriving business performance is essential for achievement in a competitive landscape. To achieve sustainable business performance, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) encounter various social and technological challenges (Haseeb et al., 2019).

Smaller restaurants' constrained budget for paid advertising and professional content production is a significant difficulty. Smaller restaurants usually rely on organic social media growth, engaging with their local communities, unlike McDonald's, which has vast resources for creating well-thought-out, global marketing plans. They can use platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok to share daily specials, behind-the-scenes material, and customer content (Lepkowska-White et al., 2019). These more genuine, personal approaches assist small restaurants in building a robust sense of community and rapport with their patrons, something more significant, less personal chains often find more challenging to accomplish.

Successful marketing and promotion strategies achieve customer development, profitability, and long-term company success. Present markets become more competitive through changing markets, globalization, and innovative technology, which have rapidly changed the business world (Manzoor et al., 2020). Similar to the tactics utilized by small restaurants in the northeastern USA, Albanian dining venues frequently implement focused advertising that enables them to connect directly with particular consumer segments based on their location, preferences, and behaviors. However, Albanian businesses also emphasize producing user-

generated content, encouraging patrons to post online suggestions and dining experiences (Belisa & Horská, 2024). In addition to serving as free advertising, this content strengthens the restaurant's relationship with its customers by encouraging a sense of community and trust.

The influence of social media strategy in Albania is based majorly on the cooperation of influencers. Restaurants can gain more credibility and audience through the trust that local influencers already have with their followers by using it. Immediate feedback from social media channels enables Albanian companies to participate in real-time discussions with their clients, tackling issues, appreciating customers for favorable reviews, and replying to questions swiftly. This engagement improves customer satisfaction and loyalty, enabling companies to adjust their products based on real-time customer feedback (Belisa & Horská, 2024). The use of social media in food establishments, especially small and medium-sized ones, is essential for promoting and selling their products. According to Hernandez et al. (2022), developing and implementing a social media strategy significantly influences sales growth, which is important in the food sector. Rapidly increasing internet users have challenged business organizations to change their way of doing online business. To capitalize on the internet's potential, many companies have adopted innovative business models that leverage its capabilities (Chawla & Chodak, 2021).

In Indonesia, firms aim to thrive in the age of information technology disruption, marked by intensely connected business activities, and must swiftly embrace social media technology (Subagja et al., 2022). The study provides substantial and positive evidence of the influence of social media use and innovation on the performance of SMEs. This implies that Surabaya SMEs recognize the importance of social media in business success. The elements that influence the use of social media by small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the food sector in Brunei Darussalam (Antique et al., 2023). It also explores how social media creates opportunities for SMEs (Bouargan et al., 2021). The study of Soetjipto (2023) focused on developing a new marketing strategy through social media, which also helped the food businesses analyze the strategies' effectiveness for business growth.

In the Philippines, social media has revolutionized online businesses. It is now a key tool for reaching and selling to customers. While popular platforms exist globally, the most effective ones vary by country and target audience. To succeed, businesses must identify and monitor their potential customers' most popular social networks to stay informed about trends and engage effectively (Cañet et al., 2021). Technological advancements have made companies use social media platforms to advertise their products. With the increase in online

shopping, companies must develop innovative marketing strategies to sell their products. Technological advancements have effectively made companies use social media platforms to advertise their products. Companies must develop new marketing tactics to promote their products as Internet shopping becomes more popular. This e-commerce revolution provides customers with a diverse range of products and creates countless business prospects and a big market for enterprises to tap into (Juntilla et al., 2022).

In Albay, particularly in Ligao City, business establishments have used social media in marketing campaigns in the food industry and agricultural products (Department of Agriculture Regional Office V, 2020). To maintain loyalty among the customers, Galicia, a coffee shop owner in Daraga, Albay, mentioned that he continuously seeks innovative methods to connect with his target audience, using social media effectively to attract more visitors to his modest store (Serafica, 2024).

This research on the use of social media by food companies in the 2nd District of Albay differs from prior studies as it focuses on a particular area, explicitly examining small to medium-sized food enterprises in a more rural setting. Unlike other broad studies that cover large-scale companies or nationwide trends, this study delves into the individual challenges and opportunities of food businesses in the 2<sup>nd</sup> District of Albay. It considers digital literacy, local economic conditions, and cultural differences. Additionally, it examines how these businesses use specific social media platforms to engage with their community, which might differ from trends observed in more technologically advanced or urban areas. This study highlights how social media directly affects local businesses' growth, sustainability, and competitiveness. It also offers insightful information about a region that may not have received much attention in earlier research, which advances our knowledge of how digital resources are changing the food industry in this specific region of the Philippines.

This study focuses on these goals and aims to deliver practical insights to improve social media strategies for food enterprises in Albay. It seeks to enhance the understanding of social media dynamics in various regional contexts and investigate how social media influences perceptions and promotes the success of food businesses. In this digital culinary revolution, adept use of social media rises beyond a mere marketing strategy to become an essential resource for food businesses aiming to thrive in today's market.

Social media marketing has been extensively studied, but less focus has been placed on how ASEAN food SMEs, especially those in rural areas, use digital marketing. The use of social media by small community retail and service enterprises to adjust to changing rural markets was examined by Son and Niehm

(2021), highlighting the need for more research in the context of food SMEs in ASEAN. The majority of the material now in publication concentrates on urban businesses, frequently ignoring the particular difficulties faced by rural food SMEs, such as poor internet connectivity, cultural factors influencing consumer interaction, and a lack of digital literacy. Information and communication technology's function in promoting urban resilience and sustainability was studied by Agboola and Tunay (2023), but less is known about how these elements affect rural businesses, especially in the ASEAN region. Furthermore, Vladimirova et al. (2024) looked at how social media affects the consumption of sustainable fashion, emphasizing the need for more study into its wider implications for the sustainability of businesses in other sectors. Furthermore, there is still a dearth of study on how SMEs adjust their tactics in response to immediate client feedback. In order for food SMEs to improve their social media strategies and attain long-term success in the ASEAN market, this gap must be filled (Annamalah et al., 2024).

## FRAMEWORK

The study is anchored on theories such as The Intersectionality and Social Capital Theory by Collins et al. (2019), the Digital Business Ecosystem (DBE) by Senyo et Al. (2019), and The Social Media Visibility by Napoli (2019). The theoretical framework is the structure that supports the research study's theory. It is based on existing knowledge, observations, and ideas that discuss and evaluate the most relevant theories to the study.

According to Collins et al. (2019), the conceptualization of Intersectionality and social capital, emphasizing opportunities to access social and economic resources, are deeply influenced by the interplay of race, class, and gender. It also draws attention to these disparities and encourages the creation of entrepreneurial environments that break down institutional obstacles and welcome participation from traditionally under-represented groups.

Assessing social media presence in the context of the study's primary goal involves looking into the connections and exchanges between the institutions on online forums. Businesses use social media as a virtual platform to establish and preserve connections with their audience. Examining how these businesses use social connections, build online networks, and create a digital presence is made possible by the Intersectionality and Social Capital Theory lens, which reflects the fundamental ideas of network development and the advantages of these relationships. Using the Social Capital Theory, the study seeks to unearth insights into how the contemporary social media ecosystem contributes to the

institutions' overall social capital and, potentially, affects business success.

Senyo et al. (2019) introduced the digital business ecosystem (DBE), which explains how businesses adopt technologies by engaging within broader, interconnected digital networks. According to this concept, which emphasizes the value of cooperation and creativity, the ability of robust businesses to contribute to and integrate into these dynamic ecosystems will determine how healthy technology is adopted in the current digital economy. Businesses navigating complicated, changing digital landscapes will find it especially useful since it provides a more profound knowledge of the factors impacting IT adoption.

This theory is relevant to the second objective. Continuous exposure to promotional and engagement strategies on social media platforms can influence how customers perceive and engage with the selected food establishments. The cultivation process occurs as customers are repetitively exposed to various promotional content, such as advertisements, posts, and interactions on social media.

By applying the DBE, food businesses can better assess how to balance the benefits and challenges of social media use, ensuring they optimize their strategies to align with both the perceived usefulness and ease of use for their target audiences. Social media's apparent complexity also becomes a problem because of the constant algorithm changes and the possibility of unfavorable customer reviews, which can make the process seem more onerous, particularly for businesses that are inexperienced in managing the dangers to their online reputation.

This idea becomes pertinent because it offers a framework for comprehending how food companies' difficulties in using social media for economic success may be exacerbated by their fear of unfavorable outcomes, such as a tarnished online reputation or poor customer feedback.

Social media exposure increased during this revolutionary period, marked by the rapid development of algorithms, changing user habits, and emerging digital trends. Three crucial elements were increasingly important during these years: network dynamics, algorithmic flexibility, and cultural importance. Algorithmic adaptability describes the capacity of users and brands to adjust their content to changing platform algorithms, including Instagram's transition to Reels and TikTok's emergence as a video-focused platform (Napoli, 2021). While the actual product may not always match the meticulously produced social media visuals, food businesses are tasked with offering food and experiences that line with this nurtured ideal, which can pose issues.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study examines how food businesses use social media in the 2<sup>nd</sup> District of Albay. The study further explored the following specific objectives: (1) Status of Food Business in utilizing social media in terms of a. type of Business Operation: Sole Proprietorship, Partnership, Cooperative; b. profile in terms of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises; and; c. type of Service (Restaurant, Café); d. type of Social Media Platform used (Facebook, TikTok, Instagram, YouTube, etc.) (2) Determine the advantages and disadvantages of using social media in food establishments. (3) Analyze the challenges food establishments face in leveraging social media for business success, including issues related to: a. resource constraints; b. technical know-how; and; c. negative feedback. (4) Provide an action plan and recommendations based on the research findings aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of social media strategies for business success in the context of the local food industry.

## METHODOLOGY

### Research design

The study used a descriptive quantitative design, focusing on numerical data to summarize and describe population characteristics, trends, or patterns. Survey questionnaires were sent to the food business in Second District Albay to collect quantitative data. This method, known for its cost and reliability, enables statistical analysis using frequencies, averages, and percentages. A subject's "what" and "how much" is thoroughly grasped even though causal relationships are not examined.

### Respondents

The respondents to this study were business owners or managers within the 2<sup>nd</sup> District of Albay. There were 50 food business establishments on the said area. To gather data, total enumeration is conducted, covering the 50-food establishment. It is stated that setting selection criteria for participants is essential to achieving the goals of a survey, so it is imperative to identify the appropriate respondents. Therefore, total enumeration was utilized to gauge the best information.

The respondents in this survey were classified according to the scale of their business ventures, such as Micro, Small and Medium businesses. The distribution is as follows: 33 respondents indicated they were from micro-sized businesses, 17 indicated they were from small businesses, and none indicated they were from medium-sized businesses. A total of 50 individuals participated in the survey.

A thorough comprehension of the collected data is made possible by analysis through weighted mean, which provided significant insights into the perspectives and experiences of businesses at different phases of growth and scale.

### **Instrumentation**

The study utilized a self-administered survey questionnaire with closed-ended questions on a Likert scale. The survey had three sections: Part 1 gathered demographic information, Part 2 assessed advantages and disadvantages of using social media in food business establishments using a Likert scale from 5 (Strongly Agree) to 1 (Strongly Disagree), and Part 3 focused on challenges businesses face when using social media, rated on a scale from 5 (Always Experienced) to 1 (Never Experienced).

### **Research Ethics Protocol**

This research was conducted ethically. Participants were fully informed about the study's purpose, their rights, and potential risks, and their information was kept confidential.

To protect the privacy of businesses, their names were not revealed, and the names of owners or managers were also kept anonymous. Only with the participants' express consent were photos taken. The willingness of the respondents to complete the questionnaires and take part in the study is much appreciated by the researcher.

### **Data Gathering Procedures**

A self-administered survey questionnaire was designed with two sections: the respondent's profile and a Likert scale. It was validated by a research adviser and a panel member before distribution. Informed consent was obtained to ensure participants understood the study's purpose, voluntary participation, and confidentiality. Surveys were distributed to 50 Daraga and Legazpi City food establishments, with local government approval. Data collection occurred on-site from late November 2023 to January 2024, with follow-ups to ensure timely returns. Data cleaning removed incomplete or inconsistent responses, and statistical analysis was performed to ensure consistency and reliability. Cross-validation provided a thorough understanding of social media usage in Albay's 2nd District food businesses.

### **Statistical Analysis**

The researcher used frequency counting to total the respondents' data to validate and produce an accurate, reliable analysis and interpretation of the

collected data. Based on the frequency discovered, a percentage was determined. Secondary data was derived from publicly available resources such as journals, theses, and published research. This information was obtained through local and international research. Once approved, the researcher proceeded to prepare the instrument for inspection by an adviser.

The weighted mean was computed using the formula (De Belen & Feliciano, 2018). In addition, a five-point Likert scale was used to understand better the ratings given by the respondents.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section provides the findings derived from the data collected by the researcher through a survey questionnaire completed by 50 food establishments in Daraga and Legazpi, Albay. The researcher utilized a tabular presentation of the data to enhance comprehension of the results and employed appropriate statistical tools to analyze and interpret the data. This part includes the results analysis, the conclusions drawn by the researcher from the data, and the recommendations provided by the study to increase the effectiveness of social media tactics for attaining commercial success in the regional food sector.

### Type of Business Operation

This part discusses the type of business operation. There are four major categories, namely Business structures, which include sole proprietorship, partnership, and corporation. The profile of the enterprise under this category is micro, small, and medium. The type of services is restaurant, café, and food stand/stall. It also shows the type of social media used: Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, and Twitter. The data was gathered by frequency and percentage.

**Table 1**

*Type of Business Operation*

Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Business Structure		
a) Sole Proprietorship	34	68
b) Partnership	3	6
c) Corporation	13	26
Profile of the Enterprise		
a) Micro	33	66

b) Small	17	34
c) Medium	0	0
Type of Service		
a) Restaurant	36	72
b) Café	7	14
c) Food Stand/Stall	7	14
Type of Social Media use		
Facebook	43	86
Instagram	18	36
YouTube	7	14
Tiktok	26	52
Twitter	1	2
Pinterest	1	2

Table 1 shows the describe the status of business operation, enterprises, and industries of the fifty food establishments. Out of the selected food establishments, 68% or 34 respondents are owned by sole proprietors, a frequency of 13 or 26% are owned by corporation, and the remaining 6% or frequency of 3 have partnership as their business structure. Sole proprietorship has dominated the business structure in 2nd District of Albay with 68%. 66% of the profile of the enterprise were micro enterprise while the type of service establishment they offer is a restaurant with 72%. The 86% business owners use Facebook as an advertising platform.

Within the business enterprise, 66% or 33 frequencies of the establishments are classified as micro enterprises, while the remaining 34% fall under the category of small enterprises. Among the 50 food establishments, 36 or 66% are classified as restaurants, 14% as cafes or with frequency of 7, and the remaining 14% as food stalls with frequency of 7. The type of social media used are Facebook that garnered 86% or with frequency of 43, TikTok with 52% with frequency of 26, Instagram with a frequency total of 18 which 36%, YouTube with 14% or frequency of 7, Twitter and Pinterest with 2% with 1 frequency.

The results emphasize important consequences for the business practices and marketing tactics of food venues in the 2nd District of Albay. Sole proprietorships prevail in the business framework, with most classified as micro-enterprises, showcasing the food sector's openness to small-scale business owners. This indicates a necessity for policies that promote scalability and sustainability

for these enterprises. Restaurants account for 72% of the businesses, indicating a market inclination that might gain from expanding into different food service options such as cafés or food stalls. Utilizing social media is essential for marketing, with Facebook at the forefront at 86%, while TikTok (52%) and Instagram (36%) are also becoming prominent platforms. This highlights the significance of training initiatives to assist companies in enhancing their visibility on both leading and developing platforms. The limited usage of platforms such as Twitter, Pinterest, and YouTube indicate unexplored possibilities for niche marketing and brand distinction. The function of social media in offering fair access to marketing resources is consistent with social capital theories, but disparities in digital literacy and access remain. By focusing on these gaps with specific assistance and infrastructure enhancement, marginalized communities can be empowered, promoting inclusivity. By capitalizing on emerging trends and offering digital capacity-building, companies in Albay can improve their growth and competitiveness in the digital era.

In the theory of Social Capital and Intersectionality Theory by Collins, P.H. (2020), it was explained that access to resources is influenced by race, class and gender. On the other hand, the inequities shall be subjected for development to break the barriers and meet inclusion. The data gathered shows that any type of business structure such as sole proprietorship, partnership and corporation has equal access to social media platform that break inequities among the business owners in 2nd district of Albay thus some of them were limited or don't use all the social media platform mentioned above.

The study by Olsson and Bernhard (2021) highlights that sole proprietorship, especially in the restaurant industry, are primarily microenterprises that leverage social media platforms like Facebook to increase their visibility and engage with customers. Similarly, cooperatives and partnerships, though more resourceful, use social media to build regional public brands and engage larger customer bases. According to a 2024 study on the influence of cluster social capital in specialty agriculture, social media is a key platform for these groups to promote shared values and foster community engagement. Social media's effectiveness as a marketing strategy is further emphasized by Mahoney and Tang (2024), who point to the widespread adoption of platforms that allow businesses to reach their target audiences, promote products, and even drive social change. Additionally, Ramos and Limos-Galay (2023) reveal that sole proprietorships dominate the milk tea industry, where social media serves as a cost-effective marketing tool, enabling businesses to reach a wide audience without the expense of traditional advertising. Selezneva (2024) also underscores the impact of TikTok in driving

consumer purchasing decisions in the beauty and cosmetics industry, noting that while platforms like Instagram and TikTok are effective for engaging consumers, Facebook remains a dominant marketing tool, particularly in localized markets like the 2nd District of Albany. These studies collectively demonstrate the critical role of social media in helping businesses, both large and small, enhance their marketing efforts and connect with customers.

**Advantages of Social Media**

Table 2 presents the advantages of social media with the indicators that social media helps in promoting our food business and reaching a wider audience; interacting with customers on social media enhances our brand image and customer relationships, and Social media platforms provide valuable insights into customer preferences and trends. The data were presented through the use of weighted mean and adjectival rating.

**Table 2**  
*Advantages of Social Media*

Indicators	Weight/Numerical Rating					Weighted Mean	Adjectival Rating
	5 SA	4 A	3 N	2 DA	1 SDA		
1. Social media helps in promoting our food business and reaching a wider audience	3.30	1.04	0.24	0	0	4.58	Strongly Agree
2. Interacting with customers on social media enhances our brand image and customer relationships	3.00	1.20	0.30	0	0	4.50	Strongly Agree
3. Social Media platforms provide valuable insights into customer preferences and trends.	3.20	1.04	0.30	0	0	4.54	Strongly Agree
Average Weighted Mean						4.54	Strongly Agree

Table 2 shows the advantages of social media. Social media helps in promoting our food business and reaching a wider audience, garnered a weighted mean of 4.58; interacting with customers on social media enhances our brand image and customer relationships obtained a 4.50 weighted mean, while social media platforms provide valuable insights into customer preferences and trends with 4.54 weighted mean. All of them attained an adjectival rating, which is strongly agreed upon. The average weighted mean resulted in 4.54 with an adjectival rating of strongly agree.

That businesses lie in its ability to enhance visibility and customer engagement. Sweeney et al. (2020) said that these platforms facilitate real-time customer feedback, fostering stronger relationships and loyalty. Bresciani and Eppler (2020) highlight the cost-effectiveness of social media advertising, which allows food businesses to reach a broad audience without the high costs associated with traditional media. 2<sup>nd</sup> District of Albay business owners strongly agree and consider these indicators as an advantage in their business.

The outcomes shown in Table 2 emphasize how social media has a significant impact on enhancing business practices in the food industry, particularly for entrepreneurs in Albay's 2nd District. With a weighted mean of 4.58, social media's ability to increase brand awareness and reach a wider audience highlights how effective it is as an inexpensive marketing tool. Furthermore, its role in enhancing brand image and encouraging consumer engagement—as demonstrated by a weighted mean of 4.50—highlights the value of interaction in fostering loyalty and trust. The capacity of social media platforms to deliver essential insights into customer trends and preferences, backed by a weighted mean of 4.54, emphasises how important they are for making well-informed decisions. These results are in line with theories that emphasise the value of digital tools for expanding market reach and understanding consumer behaviour, such as the Digital Business Ecosystem (DBE) and social media visibility theory. As a result, businesses that successfully use social media can expect more visibility, closer ties with clients, and data-driven strategic planning, making it a crucial component of the contemporary competitive digital market.

The theory of Digital Business Ecosystem (DBE) introduced by Senyo et al. (2019) supports the indication since, in this rapidly changing world, social media has become one of the mediums for advertisement. This will ensure that the business will reach a more extensive and broader audience, not just in the local area but also in neighboring municipalities or provinces. Supported by the theory of Napoli (2019), social media visibility suggests that businesses' perceptions of success and customer engagement are shaped by how frequently and effectively

they appear on social media platforms. This dynamic challenges balancing brand representation with customer satisfaction as businesses navigate heightened public scrutiny and increasing pressures to maintain a flawless image. Therefore, business owners will gain insights into customer preferences and trends through interaction with customers.

Additionally, Alhammadi and Wahab (2024) highlight the cost-effectiveness of social media advertising, noting that it allows food businesses to reach a broad audience without incurring the high costs associated with traditional media. In the 2nd District of Albay, business owners strongly agree that this affordability is a significant advantage for their operations. The low cost of social media platforms enables them to compete effectively and increase their visibility without overextending their marketing budgets.

**Disadvantages of Social Media**

Table 3 presents the disadvantages of social media with its indicators: Managing social media accounts requires significant time and effort, negative reviews or comments on social media can harm our business reputation, and the fast-paced nature of social media may lead to challenges in maintaining consistent content. The data were presented through the use of weighted mean and adjectival ratings.

**Table 3**  
*Disadvantages of Social Media*

Indicators	Weight/Numerical Rating					Weighted Mean	Adjectival Rating
	5 SA	4 A	3 N	2 DA	1 SDA		
<b>A. Disadvantages of social media</b>							
Managing social media accounts requires significant time and effort.	2.30	1.12	0.78	0	0	4.20	Agree
Negative reviews or comments on social media can harm our business reputation.	1.80	1.60	0.72	0	0	4.12	Agree

The fast-paced nature of social media may lead to challenges in maintaining consistent content.	2.30	1.20	0.66	0.04	0	4.20	Agree
Average Weighted Mean						4.17	Agree

Table 3 shows the disadvantages of social media. Managing social media accounts requires significant time and effort, and the fast-paced nature of social media may lead to challenges in maintaining consistent content, obtained a weighted mean of 4.20, while negative reviews or comments on social media can harm our business reputation garnered a 4.12 weighted mean. Agree is the adjectival rating of the indicators. The average weighted mean is 4.17, and the overall adjectival rating is agreed.

The indicators are important to the study as business owners confirmed that these drawbacks are evident in the industry. Managing social media accounts demands considerable time and effort; as Kaplan and Haenlein (2020) noted, having technical skills like content creation, analytics interpretation, and social media strategy development is vital for optimizing social media marketing effectiveness. The rapid environment of social media can amplify negative publicity, complicating image management for businesses, which must remain on-trend, as pointed out by Ramos and Limos-Galay (2023), to enhance engagement.

The results presented in Table 3 many important implications for social media-using enterprises. The time and effort necessary to manage social media accounts, Businesses must handle their social media presence strategically because of the danger of negative reviews and the challenges of maintaining constant content. To ensure effective and profitable social media management, businesses should first invest on specialised knowledge, such as hiring social media managers or providing staff training. By aggressively responding to criticism and comments with empathy and open communication, a business can minimize potential harm to its reputation and turn setbacks into opportunities for consumer loyalty. Furthermore, the rapid dynamics of social media require a carefully designed content strategy comprising content calendars and management tools to ensure consistency. In order to avoid becoming overly reliant on a single platform, businesses should also recognise the need of incorporating social media activities into their entire marketing strategies. In the end, these challenges show how businesses must align their social media plans with long-term expansion goals to make sure that fleeting engagements result in long-term success. Businesses can

lower risks and increase online visibility by addressing these issues.

The indicators of negative reviews can affect the business’s reputation. The fast-paced nature of social media may lead to challenges in maintaining consistent content since the theory states that it is relevant for brand management and crisis communication, where businesses often avoid discussing failures to preserve a strong public image. Social media’s emergence has made this problem worse since companies now have to deal with the enormous pressure to control public opinion in real time, which makes self-censorship more calculated.

Moreover, Wang et al. (2024) observe that the fast-paced nature of social media can challenge businesses in maintaining consistent content. The pressure to stay on trend and create timely content can exacerbate negative publicity if not managed carefully. For businesses, maximizing engagement while minimizing risks requires focused attention on both content creation and reputation management.

**The Challenges in Using Social Media for Business Success**

The table outlines a food establishment’s challenges in using social media for business success. It identifies five key issues: resource constraints, lack of technical know-how, managing negative feedback, maintaining consistent content creation, and measuring return on investment (ROI). Each challenge is assessed using a numerical rating system to determine how frequently it is experienced, with a weighted mean calculated for each. The adjectival ratings summarize the frequency, showing that all challenges are frequently encountered. Overall, the table provides a structured analysis of the establishment’s social media difficulties. The data gathered were interpreted through weighted mean and adjectival rating.

**Table 4**  
*Challenges in Using Social Media for Business Success*

Information	Weight/Numerical Rating					Weighted Mean	Adjectival Rating
	5 AE	4 FE	3 OE	2 RE	1 NE		
Resource Constraints: Our food establishment faces challenges in allocating sufficient resources (time, budget, personnel) to manage social media effectively.	1.50	1.52	0.90	0.4	0	3.96	Frequently Experienced

Technical Know-How: Staff members may lack the technical knowledge and skills to navigate and utilize social media platforms optimally for business purposes.	1.40	1.12	1.26	0.04	0	3.82	Frequently Experienced
Negative Feedback Management: Handling negative feedback or reviews on social media poses a challenge for our food establishment, impacting our online reputation.	1.60	1.60	0.78	0.04	0	4.02	Frequently Experienced
Content Creation and Consistency: Maintaining a consistent and engaging presence on social media platforms requires significant effort and may be a challenge for our food establishment	1.70	1.84	0.60	0	0	4.14	Frequently Experienced
Measuring Return on Investment (ROI) Our food establishment faces difficulty accurately measuring the ROI from social media efforts.	1.20	1.12	1.44	0	0	3.76	Frequently Experienced
General Weighted Mean						3.94	Frequently Experienced

Table 4 shows the challenges of using social media for business success. Resource Constraints: Our food establishment faces challenges in allocating sufficient resources (time, budget, personnel) to manage social media effectively, garnered a 3.96 weighted mean. Technical Know-How: Staff members may lack the necessary technical knowledge and skills to navigate and utilize social media platforms optimally for business purposes, obtaining a 3.82 weighted mean. 4.02

is the weighted mean of Negative Feedback Management: Handling negative feedback or reviews on social media poses a challenge for our food establishment, impacting our online reputation. The Content Creation and Consistency: Maintaining a consistent and engaging presence on social media platforms requires significant effort and may be a challenge for our food establishment. It has a total of 4.14 weighted mean. Measuring Return on Investment (ROI) Our food establishment faces difficulties in accurately measuring the ROI from social media efforts, which has a weighted mean of 3.76. All of the information has an adjectival rating that is frequently used. The general weighted mean is 3.94, and the overall adjectival rating is frequently experienced.

The total weighted mean of 3.94 indicates that using social media for commercial success is a common difficulty for food enterprises. The biggest challenge is content development and consistency (4.14), which calls for constant work to keep an interesting online presence. Negative feedback management (4.02) emphasizes how important it is to have efficient plans in place to safeguard the company's online image. Furthermore, staffing, money, and talent limits are highlighted by resource constraints (3.96) and technological know-how (3.82), while challenges in estimating ROI (3.76) indicate a lack of clarity in assessing the efficacy of social media.

A number of significant areas where businesses, especially small and medium-sized organisations (SMEs), frequently suffer are highlighted in the table that presents the difficulties experienced by food businesses in using social media to achieve commercial success. Lack of technical expertise, scarce resources, issues with unfavorable reviews, inconsistent content production, and ROI evaluation are some of these challenges. These difficulties imply that in order for businesses to effectively use social media platforms, they need to invest in training and improving digital skills. Additionally, adopting a digital resilience strategy can help businesses better manage negative feedback and resource limitations by allowing them to learn from setbacks and modify their strategies. Businesses can also gain advantages by utilizing cost-effective social media tools, delegating specific tasks, and concentrating on regular, strategic content production to ensure an engaging online presence. In the end, businesses can more accurately measure the impact of their social media operations and make sure they are optimizing these platforms' efficacy by evaluating ROI using particular KPIs and leveraging community interaction. In the end, although the challenges are considerable, they present chances for growth, education, and enhanced customer interaction that can result in enduring success in the digital realm.

The businesses in the 2<sup>nd</sup> District of Albany face challenges in the usage of social media for business success, such as properly manipulating the platforms

or the technicalities, resource restraints, content creation, measuring ROI, and managing negative. The dynamic and changing nature of the digital landscape for enterprises is stated by the digital resilience theory (Amador, 2024). It suggests that by adjusting and carefully navigating the online environment, businesses can develop digital resilience in the face of obstacles like unfavorable comments, technological difficulties, or resource shortages on social media. The ability of firms to learn from failures, actively and transparently address issues, and use digital platforms not just for advertising but also as forums for productive interaction and problem-solving is known as digital resilience. These challenges imply a need for targeted training in digital marketing, reputation management, and analytics. Investing in affordable tools or outsourcing content creation and customer engagement can help food establishments overcome these barriers and maximize social media's potential for business growth. This would help the businesses to reach their peak by understanding that setbacks are a way to become more resilient. Additionally, Rickard (2021) identifies several challenges faced by businesses in the 2nd District of Albany when utilizing social media for business success.

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings, the following conclusions were derived: (1) Sole proprietorships dominated food businesses in Albany's 2nd District, with Facebook as the top promotional platform due to its affordability and accessibility. Exploring TikTok and Instagram could further enhance their reach and competitiveness. (2) Social media is crucial in supporting food businesses in Albany's 2nd District by enhancing visibility and customer engagement and providing valuable consumer insights. Business owners recognize its effectiveness in promoting products, building relationships, and adapting to market demands, ultimately driving growth and maintaining a competitive edge. (3) This study highlighted the importance of social media in the success of food businesses in Albany's 2nd District, emphasizing its benefits in brand promotion and customer engagement. Despite challenges like time management and negative feedback, social media remained a valuable tool for expanding reach, with strategic engagement and consistent content being key to long-term success. (4) This study identified challenges faced by food establishments in Albany's 2nd District in using social media for growth, such as limited resources, lack of skills, and managing feedback. It proposed a solution focusing on digital marketing training, resource allocation, strategic content planning, community engagement, and monthly reviews to improve social media engagement and business performance.

## TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH

Consider implementing this action plan for a popular local café that wants to improve its social media presence and customer engagement. The café's management starts by organising monthly training sessions for employees, which are taught by a social media expert and educate them how to create compelling content and connect with customers online. Over the next two months, they developed a disciplined resource allocation strategy that provided defined standards for funding, time, and personnel allocated to social media initiatives. Concurrently, they develop a social media calendar to ensure constant posting and strategic content planning. Within four months, a feedback management system is implemented, enabling employees to properly resolve customer problems while maintaining a strong brand reputation.

To increase visibility, the marketing team begins using analytics tools to analyse interaction and return on investment, determining which strategies work best. Over three months, they will broaden their material by include films of behind-the-scenes café operations, customer testimonials, and collaborations with local cuisine influencers. In addition, the café launches community-driven initiatives including giveaways, freebies, and themed events every two months to encourage consumer participation.

Every month, the management team evaluates social media performance to detect patterns and adapt strategy accordingly. This systematic method ensures that the café maximizes its online presence while conserving resources, building a loyal clientele, increasing foot traffic, and, ultimately, driving business growth through data-driven social media activities.

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