

## EFFORTS TO INCREASE THE MARKET FOR PULI CRACKER PRODUCTS THROUGH REBRANDING AND HALAL CERTIFICATION

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### Abstract:

**General Background:** Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) are vital to economic development, yet many face challenges in expanding their market reach. **Specific Background:** The Puli Cracker MSME, owned by Mrs. Makilah, exemplifies this challenge, as it primarily relies on local orders without strategies for broader market expansion. **Knowledge Gap:** A lack of business development skills, particularly in product packaging, branding, and certification, hinders the potential growth of many small businesses like Mrs. Makilah's. **Aims:** This community service project aims to assist the Puli Cracker MSME in creating packaging stickers, improving product packaging, and obtaining halal certification to enable market expansion beyond the local community. **Results:** Through interviews and observations, the project identified key areas for improvement, including product labeling, packaging redesign, and halal certification registration. The implementation stages included creating packaging stickers, repackaging the crackers, and fulfilling halal certification requirements, all of which positively impacted the business. **Novelty:** The project introduced a structured, step-by-step approach to MSME development, combining product enhancement with halal certification, which is often overlooked in small-scale enterprises. **Implications:** The improvements in packaging and branding, along with the halal certification, are expected to significantly enhance the marketability and credibility of Mrs. Makilah's Puli Cracker, allowing it to reach a wider market. These interventions provide a replicable model for other MSMEs aiming to grow sustainably and expand their market share.

**Keywords:** *Cracker Puli, Market, Rebranding, Halal Certification*

## INTRODUCTION

The rapid growth of society makes all aspects grow, especially the economy. Social and economic growth are related to each other to make life better and equal. With this growth, people use various ways to survive and improve their standard of living, there are several ways to raise the standard of living, one of which is by opening Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). MSMEs themselves are a form of individual, group, small business entity or household that does not require many requirements. The existence of MSMEs can create jobs, drive economic growth and improve people's welfare. There are many sales sectors in an MSME, there are food, fashion, electronic goods, cosmetics to household needs. The MSME sector most sold by the public is food, according to data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), the number of micro-scale industries (IMK) reached 1.51 million business units in 2020 or as much as 36% of the entire national IMI.

Mrs. Makilah puli crackers are MSMEs engaged in the food product business, which was pioneered by Mrs. Makilah who is located in Kedurus Hamlet, Kepatihan Village. The sale of puli cracker products is not sold in the market, but only accepts orders from neighbors or the surrounding community with simple packaging. By rebranding labels and packaging and registering these products to obtain halal certification, MSME actors become confident in offering their products in a wider market and the public gets a guarantee of the products that will be purchased and consumed.

Food, medicines, cosmetics and other useful products are part of the needs of life that must be fulfilled properly, safe, quality and nutritious and at a price that can be reached by the community and also does not conflict with the religion, beliefs and culture of the community. To maintain this, a system is needed that provides guarantees and protection for both producers and consumers. Producers must have a sense of responsibility for goods or products that are disseminated to the public, both from health to halal. As users or consumers, the public also has the right to know the composition or content contained in the product before buying and consuming the product. The information that must be listed on the product includes the origin, safety, quality, nutritional content, and other necessary information so that the public can know and make decisions based on this information. The accuracy and correctness of information for consumers is very important to avoid negative views considering the progress of science and technology is developing in the food sector very rapidly.

With these advances, various forms of food processing can be carried out, starting from using sophisticated tools and processes and using fresh mixed food ingredients and dry supporting materials. What needs to be explained and

detailed about the halalness of these ingredients, food ingredients used as staples and mixed ingredients for the manufacture of a product must be known for their origin, especially if using animal composition. To find out the halalness and purity of a food, a special study is needed in the fields of food, chemistry, biochemistry, industrial engineering, biology, pharmacy and understanding of sharia.

With the problems obtained by Mrs. Makilah's puli crackers, to reduce these problems, the community service team made labels or stickers that were attached to the packaging so that buyers or consumers could find out what composition and content was in the puli crackers. For packaging that previously used thin plastic and was tightened using staples that were not suitable for use for food products, we replaced it with food grade or special plastic for food and tightened it using a sealer machine. Then the community service team also registered the puli crackers to get a halal certificate. With good packaging and having a halal certificate will be an added value for the product.

Previous Community Service is community service which is used as a comparison in avoiding a manipulation in a scientific paper and corroborating the service that will be written by the service that has not been researched by other service members. To develop the potential of halal business in Indonesia, several strategies are needed as an effort to accelerate optimization between business owners and the government (Warto, et al; 2020).

The second previous Community Service used for comparison was a community service entitled Halal Certification Assistance for MSMEs in Pondokagung Village, Kasembon District, Malang Regency. The results of the community service gained awareness from partner business units to implement a halal assurance system in their business and registration of business units in the halal certification process to LPPOM MUI (Nadya, et al; 2023).

The third Community Service used for comparison was a community service entitled MSME Development of Jamu Hamlet Sumberdadi, Jombang Through Re-Branding of the Identity of the Njampi Logo. The results of the research use the concept of color, typography and composition that gives a professional impression according to the characteristics of the product (Ferdiansyah, et al; 2022).

The Community Service is the same as using the method of community service, interviews, and observations to find out what is a problem for MSMEs. The subject of the equivalent or equal service is only different in the product sold. The results of the previous community service that halal certification can grow the potential of halal businesses in Indonesia and several strategies are also needed as an effort to accelerate optimization between business owners and the

government. From the results of the previous community service, it supports the process of this activity with several existing differences, that halal certification and rebranding can indeed be beneficial for MSME actors to develop their businesses.

## **METHOD**

This community service activity aims to make packaging stickers, improve packaging and register products to get halal certificates. Supporting techniques in this case are field observation and interviews. The following are some of the methods used in community service activities (Febryanasari, et al., 2024);

1. **Preparation Stage** : Some of the preparations carried out are interviews and observations to MSMEs Cracker Mrs. Makilah. The interview and observation aimed to find out what obstacles were experienced and what improvements we could make to something that had been running in Puli Cracker MSMEs. At that time, observation had been carried out on the Puli Ibu Makilah Cracker MSMEs, at this stage it was carried out on July 30, 2024 at Kedurus Hamlet, Kepatihan Village, Tulangan District, Sidoarjo Regency.
2. **Implementation Stage** : Implementation is carried out based on the results of interviews and observations that have been carried out. This implementation work is also carried out in stages because there are 3 things that will be improved or added, including making sticker labels, replacing packaging and registering halal certification. At this implementation stage, data collection and halal certification registration requirements are carried out on August 1, the process of making labels or packaging stickers, and repackaging puli crackers will be carried out on August 17, 2024 in Balongdowo Peces Village, Candi District, Sidoarjo Regency. Product photos and data validation by the Halal Center were held on August 27, 2024 at the University of Muhammadiyah Sidoarjo campus.
3. **Evaluation Stage** : This evaluation is the final stage after working on all the obstacles experienced by the Puli Cracker MSMEs of Ibu Makilah. At the evaluation stage, all work results are handed over, then comments or criticisms and suggestions will be received which will then be improved by the community service team if any. Assistance and submission of sticker and packaging files, assistance to MSME actors to operate and use sealer machines and also the provision of halal accounts for monitoring the halal certificate registration process on the halal website.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

In the early stages of this service program, field observation aims to find out what problems are experienced by home industry actors in the Puli Cracker product Ibu Makilah. The activity was carried out on July 30, 2024 and from the results of the observations made, it was concluded that the home industry actors

in the puli cracker industry wanted the sales area to be wider in order to increase sales (Nuraini & Eni Widhajati, 2019) but on every day it is prevented from packaging and product guarantors so that sales are only made when there is an order from a neighbor. The solutions we offer are in the form of making sticker labels to add product value, replacing food-grade packaging so that it is safer and registering halal certification that guarantees the halalness of puli cracker products. The service will help make stickers to manage halal certification so that products can be sold with a wider range.

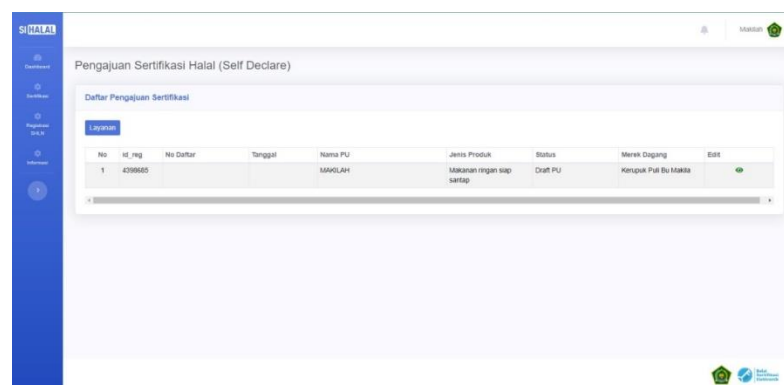
a. **Stages of preparation**



**Figure 1.** Conducting an interview with Mrs. Makilah Owner of Puli Crackers

At the preparation stage, interviews were conducted with the owners of puli crackers. With this Community Service, it will help home industry players in marketing and selling Gerit Jowo products with a wider reach, because previously it was only done with neighbors based on orders received. Home industry players want to make stickers for promotion, better packaging and register halal stickers in order to gain more trust from buyers in consuming puli crackers.

b. **Implementation Stage**



**Figure 2.** Proof of registration for halal certification of MSMEs Crackers Puli Ibu Makilah on the Sihlal website

After the preparation stage, the community service team gets information and completeness of what must be prepared to register halal certification. Several completeness such as product composition, the amount of materials used, various kinds of existing ingredients and the completeness of the business owner's documents have been collected by the service team, then the service team creates an account on the sihalal website to send all the necessary documents. Registration for halal certificates is all done online, so that owners can find out the progress of the registration process directly.



**Figure 3.** Making stickers or labels for packaging

At the implementation stage, the community service team made stickers or labels that would be pasted on the packaging. So that buyers can find out what the contents and composition of puli crackers are. There is also an address so that buyers can directly visit the sales location or puli cracker production site. For buyers who are far from the sales location, they can buy via WhatsApp and the goods can be sent via delivery. The puli cracker product is sold per package weighing 50g for a price of 5,000 rupiah.



**Figure 4.** Repacking pulley cracker packaging

The initial packaging used by Mrs. Ah is an ice plastic packaging then tightened using staples. The packaging is not suitable for use, because it can be dangerous if the object gets into the food. With the existing technology, we replace the previous packaging with packaging that is indeed for food or foodgrade so that the quality of the food sold is guaranteed. To increase the storage period, we use a sealer machine to seal the packaging, so that there is no leakage and the food can last longer and not be contaminated.



**Figure 5.** Handover of MSME products to MSME companions Dr. Hana Catur Wahyuni, ST., MT.



At the time of registration on the sihalal website, we choose Mrs. Hana's companion to assist MSMEs in the process of managing halal documents, submitting halal, verifying and validating, the production process to the issuance of halal certificates. After registering MSMEs on the sihalal website, we verify and validate by providing registered MSME products to companions as proof and conditions that the product has been verified and validated by the halal team accompanied by the community service team. That the product has been verified and registration can be forwarded to the center for the issuance of halal certificates.

### c. Evaluation Stage

At the evaluation stage, there were several revisions to the label and sticker design to suit the owner's request, but overall the sticker design has been approved. For packaging, after we inform about the price and packaging products, the owner agrees because the packaging cost is still in accordance with the budget and puli cracker products become better and add selling value and can make crackers more durable. In the halal certification process, all stages have been submitted by the community service team, the next process is to wait for confirmation regarding the issuance of a halal certificate that can be directly seen by the owner. The community service team has also provided a sticker design file that can later be printed repeatedly by the owner, for packaging, the community service team provides a sealing machine and also some packaging for the beginning of production.

## CONCLUSION

**Fundamental Finding:** The community service intervention effectively improved the business practices of the Puli Cracker MSME by addressing packaging, labeling, and halal certification, which enhanced product marketability and durability. **Implication:** These improvements allowed the business to expand its potential market beyond the local community, contributing to its long-term sustainability and competitiveness. The initiative demonstrates how simple yet strategic interventions can significantly impact small businesses, serving as a replicable model for other MSMEs. **Limitation:** The project was limited to the technical aspects of packaging and certification without addressing broader business challenges, such as digital marketing or distribution strategies. **Further Research:** Future studies should explore the long-term effects of such interventions on MSME growth, particularly by integrating digital marketing techniques and assessing the scalability of similar models across different business sectors.



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