



Local Television Strategy to Survive in the Era of Media Convergence: Case Study of TVKU Semarang

Amelia Syafira^{1,a)}, Taruna Budiono^{1,b)}

¹Film and Television Study, Universitas Dian Nuswantoro, Semarang, Indonesia

a). Corresponding author: taruna.budiono@dsn.dinus.ac.id

Abstract. The emergence of local television stations in Indonesia as a result of the enactment of Broadcasting Law Number 32 of 2002. TVKU Semarang, part of Dian Nuswantoro University, is one of the local television stations that has maintained its independence amidst competition with national television networks and digital platforms. With the increasing internet penetration and the shift in consumer behavior towards digital media, TVKU faces significant challenges in sustaining its operations. This study employs a qualitative approach with a case study method to explore the communication strategies implemented by TVKU in navigating the era of media convergence. The findings indicate that TVKU successfully utilized SWOT analysis to understand the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats it faces. The strategies employed include improving human resources, content innovation, and managing competition by leveraging digital platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok. Additionally, TVKU has developed a niche market by establishing partnerships with government and private institutions. TVKU's success in surviving in the digital era highlights the importance of adapting to technological changes and consumer behavior, as well as diversifying revenue streams. In conclusion, TVKU has effectively implemented comprehensive strategies to maintain its existence amidst the growing challenges and competition within the local television industry.

Keywords: Local Television, Media Convergence, Niche Market, Social Media.

INTRODUCTION

The emergence of local television stations in Indonesia was driven by the enactment of Broadcasting Law Number 32 of 2002. In 2003, TVKU Semarang was established in response to the opportunities created by this law. TVKU is part of Dian Nuswantoro University in Semarang. Local television stations are designed to serve specific regions and often feature content related to local wisdom, natural beauty, and local culture (Artanti, 2015). At the beginning of the broadcasting law's implementation, there were four local television stations broadcasting in Semarang: TV Borobudur (TVB), Pro TV, Cakra Semarang TV, and TVKU. Over time, many of these local stations were acquired by national television networks, leading to the gradual loss of the local identity that should characterize local TV stations. Unlike other local stations, TVKU has remained independent and continues to broadcast programs with local content.

TVKU Semarang remains a local television channel that has not been acquired by national media networks. According to the AGB Nielsen Media Research Bulletin, the purchase of digital media advertising space has increased by 17%, driven by four main factors. First, the decline in average viewer ratings indicates that television is no longer the main entertainment medium at home, particularly with the growing popularity of smartphones and the internet. Second, in the digitalization era, the television industry has rapidly expanded, encompassing not only national and commercial television but also local channels and digital platforms. Digital television has also begun to penetrate social media networks, creating more opportunities for online interaction and content

consumption. This trend has significantly driven the increase in digital advertising space purchases.

As consumers shift to digital media, companies are inclined to allocate their advertising budgets to platforms that can reach a wider and more engaged online audience. Therefore, the increase in digital media advertising space purchases has become highly relevant in keeping up with changing consumer trends and preferences in this digital age. As the number of TV channels increases, it becomes more difficult for competitors to achieve a viewer rating of 1%. Additionally, television population growth has continued in 10 cities with residents aged 5 and older. Finally, TV advertising rates have increased by 3% to 5%, which can affect the cost per rating point (CPRP) [1]. One key to the success of local television media is its ability to synergize diversity by expanding and maintaining the ideology of local media, particularly in the education, business, and tourism sectors of each region [1]

The digital era presents various challenges, especially in competition for local television stations in Semarang. The implementation of digital television not only focuses on issues related to program production processes but also on converting all television from analog to digital systems to become more straightforward, efficient, and modern. The emergence of the internet adds to the challenges for local television, as people increasingly turn to more accessible streaming media, thereby reducing the audience for conventional television.

In 2023, internet users in Indonesia increased to 78.19%, compared to the previous year, which reached 77.02%. This means that 215.62 million people were connected to the internet out of a total population of 275.77 million. This represents an increase of about 5 million people from the previous year, when 210 million people were connected to the internet [2]. The development of media technology not only includes technological advances but also involves changes in industry paradigms, local cultural aspects, and evolving societal demands. These changes create a consumer need for more up-to-date information, delivered faster, and with higher accuracy. This process is the result of social evolution occurring within society [3]

There are 40 local television stations officially registered across Indonesia, reflecting intense competition among these stations, comparable to the competition among national television stations. Technological advancements in the television media sector pose various challenges and threats that local television stations in Semarang must face. One of the impacts is the growth of the internet, which encourages conventional media to enhance their creativity, ideas, and programs through the various media platforms available today.

The high internet penetration in Indonesia, reaching 78.19%, with 215.62 million people connected out of a total population of 275.77 million [2], poses a significant threat to TVKU in generating revenue. Intense competition, low viewership, and limited network coverage are the main challenges for some local television stations in Semarang. The growth of the local television industry in this city has further intensified the competition in the search for revenue sources.

METHODS

This research is a qualitative study using a case study approach based on the constructivism paradigm. The main objective of this study is to identify the communication strategies employed by the local television industry, particularly TVKU,

to sustain and compete in the digital era. A descriptive approach is used to provide a comprehensive and thorough overview of how local television stations survive in the digital age, making it easier to understand.

The descriptive method in this study will detail the existing conditions, including facts or data obtained directly from the field through interviews with local television media. The study aims to provide a complete picture of the communication strategies implemented by these television stations to maintain their existence in the face of increasing competition, particularly in the context of technological developments and media transformation in the digital era [4].

The case study approach allows for an exploration of real-life systems within specific time and space boundaries. Through detailed and in-depth data collection, this research can illustrate the context and complexity of the phenomenon being studied. The use of various information sources also helps the researcher gain a better understanding of the aspects involved in the case study [5]

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

TVKU SEMARANG STRATEGY IN THE ERA OF MEDIA CONVERGENCE

TVKU Semarang employs a strategy to maintain its existence in the era of media convergence by gaining a deep understanding of its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Through a SWOT analysis, TVKU Semarang can identify the internal and external factors affecting its performance. Based on the SWOT analysis, the following findings have been identified:

1. **Strengths:** Diverse programs with cultural value, such as Javanese-language news, provide a distinct characteristic and a competitive edge in cultural content.
2. **Weaknesses:** A lack of competent personnel and technical issues with equipment and transmitters can hinder the station's development.
3. **Opportunities:** Cultural programs packaged with a youth-oriented concept offer an opportunity to attract younger viewers, while emphasizing cultural values can expand the viewer base in Central Java.
4. **Threats:** Intense competition with digital platforms and social media, which are now more frequently accessed by audiences.

To address these challenges, several strategies that can be implemented by local television stations in Semarang include:

1. **Enhancing Human Resources:** Investing in training and workforce development to improve employee competence.
2. **Maintenance and Facility Improvement:** Repairing and upgrading equipment and transmitters to address technical issues.
3. **Content Innovation:** Continuously developing innovative programs that meet viewer needs, collaborating on content development with partner institutions, and relaying content from other media that has the potential to generate profits.
4. **Competition Management:** Building partnerships with government and private institutions to co-develop content, offering video production services for client needs, and producing offline events or coverage required by clients.

With these strategies, local television stations in Semarang can have a clearer vision of how to maintain their existence amid changes and challenges in the era of media convergence [6].

GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE AGENCIES AS CLIENTS

Building partnerships with supporting sources is a highly effective strategy for maintaining the sustainability of local television amidst current technological advancements. Initiating partnerships and creating mutually beneficial relationships are primary goals in establishing positive cooperation with government agencies. In this context, TVKU not only focuses on developing partnerships but also applies a long-term relationship marketing strategy. Relationship marketing aims to create, maintain, and strengthen enduring cooperation over an extended period. This approach involves utilizing various media platforms to keep connections with viewers, clients, and government agencies intact [7].

Key factors in developing a relationship marketing strategy involve the following steps: first, customer relationship interactions begin with marketing efforts from local television staff such as TVKU, who initiate effective two-way communication with clients or public relations representatives from government agencies. Second, coordination of activities is a key aspect where the marketing team manages activities between the two different companies. Lastly, adaptation relates to the ability to adjust and understand the needs of each company [8]. These three steps have been effectively implemented by the TVKU marketing team to maintain long-term cooperative relationships.

In general, all television stations compete with each other, especially with technological advancements in the current era and the significant impact of the pandemic on local television in Semarang. Based on niche theory, this competition illustrates the struggle to obtain vital resources needed by local television stations, both to maintain their existence among other local television stations and within their surrounding environment [9].

Three main concepts in this theory provide a deeper understanding. First, there is the concept of “space,” which refers to the available market in the environment where the two television stations operate. Second, the concepts of “niche breadth” and “niche overlap.” Niche breadth describes how broad the range of resources required by a media outlet to maintain its existence. Meanwhile, niche overlap measures the extent to which two television media depend on the same resources. Third, the concept of “competitive superiority” refers to a media’s ability to meet audience needs and its capability to replace or even surpass other media or other local television stations in the competition to sustain the company’s survival.

In practice, local television does not only rely on advertising revenue. As previously discussed, a generalist niche breadth approach is often applied. Although some television stations may focus more on certain revenue sources with a more specific niche breadth approach, the rapid development in the local television industry and market dynamics show that diversifying revenue sources is important to maintain the company’s survival.

In the case of TVKU Semarang, the niche market being targeted is government and private institutions in Semarang and Central Java. These government and private institutions become potential clients for TVKU, for whom TVKU acts as an organizer of off-air events, as well as a production house that produces all their audiovisual needs, ranging from advertisements, company profiles, to other commercial videos.

SOCIAL MEDIA OPTIMIZATION

With the rapid advancement of technology and the growth of the internet, local television must proactively leverage these innovations to stay relevant and compete with other digital media. Actively using social media is key to increasing engagement with the target market and the community in Semarang. Technological developments also force business players in conventional media, including local television, to adapt to these changes. Utilizing various media platforms such as websites, YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok becomes an important strategy to attract clients' attention and ensure that the public remains interested in watching TVKU's programs

Social media has also changed the way people enjoy audiovisual content. Previously, people could spend hours watching television, but now there is a phenomenon where people are more likely to scroll while watching short videos on social media. This phenomenon, known as binge-watching, increased significantly during the COVID-19 pandemic when everyone was unable to move around.

Binge Scrolling is the transformation of binge-watching television as a form of social solidarity has emerged within a broader ecosystem of interconnected media forms and practices. These have similarly strengthened the connection between staying home, staying connected, and staying safe. Central to this new networked viewing practice is the challenging issue of lockdown boredom.[10]

Leveraging technology and various media platforms provides advantages for TVKU. Besides increasing engagement with followers, data and views from these platforms can be used as broadcast evidence to clients and republished in various media. YouTube also serves as an alternative streaming service if there are issues with the television channel from TVKU's network.

LOCAL TELEVISION'S COMPETITIVE LANDSCAPE IN THE DIGITAL ERA

Local television stations today face competition not only from other local stations and national networks but also from various streaming platforms that offer video services, both free and paid. This presents a unique challenge for local stations like TVKU, as these digital streaming platforms not only erode their viewership but also raise concerns about how they manage users' personal data. For instance, platforms like Netflix collect personal data and user preferences related to the movies or series they watch or dislike. Referring to the Streaming Culture Model, one highlighted element is the concept of "boundaryless identity," which suggests that content available on online streaming platforms has the potential to influence users' identities and perspectives.

With the rapid advancement of technology and the growth of the internet, local television stations must proactively embrace these innovations to remain relevant and competitive with other digital media. Actively utilizing social media is key to enhancing engagement with target audiences and the community in Semarang. The technological evolution also compels businesses in conventional media, including local television, to adapt to these changes. Leveraging various media platforms such as websites, YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok becomes a crucial strategy to attract clients and ensure that the public remains interested in the programs offered by TVKU Semarang.

Utilizing technology and various media platforms offers significant advantages for TVKU Semarang. Beyond increasing engagement with followers, the data and views from these platforms can be used as broadcast evidence for clients and republished across

different media outlets. YouTube, for instance, serves as an alternative streaming service in case of issues with TVKU Semarang's television channel.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the above results, the challenges and strategies of TVKU Semarang, a local television station, in navigating the competitive landscape of the digital era. Despite the significant threats posed by the rise of digital media and streaming platforms, TVKU has maintained its independence and local focus. The station's success lies in its ability to adapt to technological advancements, embrace social media, and innovate in content creation. By leveraging its cultural strengths, enhancing human resources, and forming strategic partnerships with government and private institutions, TVKU continues to sustain its operations and relevance in a rapidly evolving media environment. This case exemplifies how local media can survive and thrive by integrating traditional broadcasting with modern digital platforms, ensuring their role as key players in the regional media landscape.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author would like to thank the Operations Director and technical director of TVKU Semarang for their willingness to be interviewed for this research

REFERENCES

1. B. Pengkajian, D. A. N. Development, K. Dan, B. L. Sdm, K. Communication, and D. A. N. Informatika, "Existence of Local Media".
2. Lavinda, "No Title," 2023. <https://katadata.co.id/digital/teknologi/646342df38af1/apjii-pengguna-internet-indonesia-215-juta-jiwa-pada-2023-naik-1-17>
3. Qoute Nuraini Cahyaningrum, "Existence of Local Media," in *The Existence of Local Media in the Age of Convergence*, 2013, p. 47.
4. M. Machmud, *Guidelines for Writing Final Projects Based on Basic Research Principles*. Selaras Publisher, 2022.
5. C. Jhon, W, "Penelitian Kualitatif & Desain Riset," *Mycol. Res.*, vol. 94, no. 3, p. 522, 2015.
6. M. Anang Firmansyah, "The Book of Product and Brand Marketing," *The Book of Marketers. Prod. and Brand*, no. August, pp. 143–144, 2019.
7. M. Morissan, *Periklanan : Integrated Marketing Communication*. Kencana Prenada Media Group, 2010.
8. I. H. Listyawati and R. Marketing, "Implementation of Relationship Marketing as a Strategy," *Jbma*, vol. I, no. 2, pp. 25–32, 2013.
9. S. I. Kom et al., *A5_FIX_ Manuscript-Book-Chapter_Dynamics-Communication-Contextual*. 2021..
10. M. Flayelle, P. Maurage, K. R. Di Lorenzo, C. Vögele, S. M. Gainsbury, and J. Billieux, "Binge-Watching: What Do we Know So Far? A First Systematic Review of the Evidence," *Curr. Addict. Reports*, vol. 7, no. 1, pp. 44–60, 2020, doi: 10.1007/s40429-020-00299-8.