

Marketing Strategy of Wayang Kulit in Wukirsari Village Through Active Community Involvement in Social Media and Cultural Events

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Abstract.

Wayang kulit is one of Indonesia's intangible cultural heritages that has high artistic, philosophical, and historical value. Wukirsari Village, as one of the centers of wayang kulit craftsmen in Yogyakarta, has great potential in preserving and marketing this traditional art. This article discusses the marketing strategy of wayang kulit through a community participatory approach in utilizing social media and implementing cultural events. Using a qualitative descriptive method, data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation of cultural actors, local communities, and creative business actors. The results of the study show that active community involvement in creating digital content, such as puppet making videos, promotions via Instagram and TikTok, and collaboration in local events such as cultural festivals, has been shown to significantly increase the appeal and reach of shadow puppet marketing. This strategy not only strengthens local cultural identity but also encourages the village's creative economy. Thus, the integration of local wisdom and digital innovation is key to marketing traditional culture in the modern era.

Keywords: *Shadow puppet; Marketing strategy; Social media; Community participation; Cultural events; Wukirsari.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Wayang kulit is currently facing significant challenges due to shifting cultural consumption patterns, especially among the younger generation who are more familiar with digital entertainment and instant visual content. Wayang kulit is one of Indonesia's cultural heritages that has been recognized by UNESCO as a Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity. This traditional performing art not only reflects the noble values of the nation, but also holds a wealth of philosophy (Rohman, 2020; Yuliana, 2020), spirituality, and local wisdom that has been passed down through generations.

In the context of Javanese society, wayang kulit plays a strategic role as an educational medium, a messenger of moral values, and a means of social reflection. However, the continuous wave of modernization has shifted public perception toward traditional arts. Wayang kulit, which once served as the main form of entertainment in rural communities, is now increasingly marginalized. The lack of dalang (puppet master) regeneration, declining interest from younger generations in learning this art form, and weak promotional and marketing systems are the main causes of the decreasing presence of wayang kulit in society.

On the other hand, these challenges also present new opportunities, where digital technology and social media can be utilized as tools for both preserving and developing local cultural arts (Hidayat, 2021; Saragih, 2023).

Wukirsari Village, located in the Imogiri Subdistrict, Bantul Regency, Special Region of Yogyakarta, is one of the cultural villages widely known as a center for wayang kulit craftsmen. This village not only preserves the traditional process of wayang-making but also hosts creative communities that are actively engaged in cultural preservation efforts. Amid the challenges of globalization, Wukirsari demonstrates a spirit of collaboration among cultural practitioners, the local community, and the village government in sustaining this traditional art form. Nevertheless, challenges in the areas of marketing, distribution, and the broader promotion of wayang kulit remain critical issues.

In recent years, creative initiatives have begun to emerge from the Wukirsari community to market wayang kulit through digital approaches. The use of social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, and YouTube has become a new communication tool that enables the products and stories behind wayang kulit to reach a wider audience—across generations and even across countries. The villagers are actively involved in the process of creating digital content, including documenting the wayang-making process, conducting interviews with artisans, and live-streaming performances. This strategy represents a form of cultural innovation that focuses not only on preservation but also on the empowerment of the local creative economy.

In addition to social media, cultural events such as the Wayang Kulit Festival, art performances, and open workshops have also become important strategies in building connectivity between cultural practitioners and the public. These events serve not only as direct promotional platforms, but also strengthen the cultural identity of the community, create educational spaces, and open up opportunities for collaboration with external parties—including tourists, students, and investors in the creative economy sector.

This article aims to explore in greater depth how the active involvement of the Wukirsari Village community in utilizing social media and cultural events can serve as an effective marketing strategy to strengthen the existence and economic value of wayang kulit. By combining participatory approaches with digital technology, it is hoped that this traditional art can not only survive amidst the currents of modern times, but also grow as an integral part of the social and economic life of the local community.

II. METHODS

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach ((Bungin, 2017); (Sugiyono, 2018)) which aims to describe in depth the process, dynamics, and strategies used by the Wukirsari Village community in marketing local cultural products in the form of shadow puppets. The qualitative approach was chosen because it is more appropriate for understanding social phenomena contextually and naturally, especially in cultural studies involving values, meanings, and social interactions. This study focuses on the aspect of active community participation in digital promotion and the implementation of cultural events, which cannot be measured only by numbers, but needs to be explored through the narratives, experiences, and perspectives of the direct actors.

1. Community Service Location

The community service location is centered in Wukirsari Village, Imogiri District, Bantul Regency, Special Region of Yogyakarta. This village was chosen because it has a reputation as a center for wayang kulit craftsmen that is still active economically and culturally. In addition, Wukirsari is also known as a cultural village that has a local institutional structure that supports the preservation of tradition, and has shown initiative in developing social media-based promotions and organizing cultural events regularly. The collaborative social environment, creative community, and access to tourists make this village a relevant case study to examine the synergy between cultural preservation and modern marketing strategies.

2. Subjects of Community Service

The subjects in this community service are individuals or groups who are directly involved in the promotion, production, and implementation of cultural activities in Wukirsari Village. The classification of informants is divided into five main categories:

- **Puppeteer:** The main actors who produce puppets, both traditionally and with a contemporary creative approach. They provide information related to the production process, marketing challenges, and adaptation to technology.
- **Social Media Manager:** Individuals or teams who manage puppet promotion accounts on platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, and YouTube. They provide information on content strategy, target audience, algorithms, and digital interactions.
- **Cultural Event Organizers:** Local communities or committees that initiate cultural events such as festivals, exhibitions, art performances, and training. They are key in connecting offline and online promotions.
- **Local Residents and Youth Communities:** Community members who are voluntarily or actively involved in cultural promotion activities, either as participants, content creators, tour guides, or visitors.
- **Village Officials and Figures:** Village leaders and local cultural figures who have strategic views regarding the development of village potential through culture.

3. Data Collection Techniques

To obtain rich and in-depth data, the devotee uses several data collection techniques, namely:

a. Participatory Observation

The researcher conducted direct observations at the location for some time, including participating in community activities such as puppet making, creative training, art performances, and cultural festivals. Observations were carried out systematically to record promotional activities, interaction patterns between actors, and community responses to marketing activities.

b. In-depth Interview

Interviews were conducted using a semi-structured format to allow flexibility in exploring the personal experiences of informants. Interviews were directed at themes such as motivation for involvement, promotional strategies used, audience responses, and the socio-economic impacts of cultural promotion.

c. Documentation Study

Documents collected included photos of activities, videos uploaded on social media, promotional brochures, village activity reports, and digital archives from official social media

accounts. This documentation was analyzed as visual and narrative evidence that supports the research findings.

d. Literature Review and Supporting Literature

As a complement, a review of literature and theories related to cultural marketing strategies, community participation in digital promotion, and the concept of tourism villages and the creative economy was conducted. This literature was used to build a theoretical framework that strengthens the analysis of field data.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This community engagement has yielded several important findings that indicate a significant transformation in the marketing strategy of wayang kulit in Wukirsari Village, driven by the active involvement of the local community—particularly in the use of social media and the organization of cultural events. This transformation has not only led to increased sales of handcrafted products but has also strengthened cultural identity, expanded promotional reach, and fostered the growth of a community-based creative economy ecosystem.

1. The Active Role of the Community in Digital Content Production and Promotion

One of the main findings is the emergence of an active role played by the community—especially the younger generation and local groups—in creating and disseminating digital content (Jenkins, 2009) that promotes the art of wayang kulit. The community is no longer merely an audience or group of artisans, but has become content producers who utilize social media as a primary promotional channel.

The content produced is highly diverse, ranging from documentary videos of the wayang-making process, artisan profiles, simple tutorials, to live-streamed wayang performances. One observed Instagram account managed by a local community successfully increased its followers to over 15,000 within a year, thanks to consistent posting of educational content presented in a visually appealing and communicative manner. Community involvement in content production reflects the application of the principle of participatory culture, where people are not merely consumers of information, but also actively engage in the process of creation and distribution. This aligns with the concept of community-based marketing, a marketing strategy rooted in the potential and active participation of the community itself.

2. Utilization of Social Media as a Modern Promotional Channel

Social media has proven to be a highly effective tool for marketing cultural products such as wayang kulit. Platforms like Instagram and TikTok are the primary choices due to their strong visual appeal and algorithms that support content virality. Features such as reels, live streams, stories, and local hashtags like #WayangWukirsari, #BudayaJogja, or #HandmadeIndonesia help enhance the visibility of the content.

Several artisans have also begun using e-commerce platforms and online marketplaces to expand their sales reach. They integrate visually appealing promotions on social media with direct links to their online shops on platforms like Shopee, Tokopedia, and even Etsy for international markets.

However, the effectiveness of social media promotion largely depends on the community's

ability to manage content professionally. Therefore, training and mentoring from university students, creative practitioners, and digital village programs have played a significant role in enhancing the community's capacity for digital media management.

3. Cultural Events as a Sustainable Offline Promotional Strategy

In addition to online strategies through social media, Wukirsari Village also regularly holds various cultural events as a means of direct (offline) promotion. Events such as the Wukirsari Wayang Kulit Festival, Pentas Dalang Muda (Young Puppeteer Performances), and Wayang-Making Workshops serve as important moments that bring together artists, tourists, buyers, and students within a shared cultural space.

These events function not only as cultural performances but also as a village branding strategy (Kurniawan, 2022). During these events, artisans can showcase their work, sell products, and even establish partnerships with external parties such as educational institutions, travel agencies, and art collectors.

Moreover, these events carry strong educational and social values. Young people are involved as organizers, hosts, digital content creators, and even as young puppeteers performing on stage. Thus, cultural events serve not only as platforms for product promotion but also as arenas for regeneration and the preservation of local cultural values.

4. Social and Economic Impact of Participatory Strategies

The combination of digital strategies and community-based cultural events has generated significant social and economic impacts. Socially, community involvement in cultural promotion has enhanced the sense of belonging toward local heritage. People no longer view wayang kulit as a relic of the past, but as a living tradition—something to be developed, reimagined, and taken pride in.

Economically, several artisans have reported an increase in sales turnover by 30–50% over the past two years. Wayang kulit products are now marketed not only as performance tools but also developed into souvenirs, merchandise, interior decorations, and even contemporary art pieces. This demonstrates that the use of social media and cultural events has opened up opportunities for product diversification and broader market segmentation.

However, challenges remain, particularly in terms of sustaining content production, role distribution among community groups, and funding for event implementation. Therefore, synergy between the village government, local communities, educational institutions, and the private sector is crucial to ensure the long-term sustainability of these strategies.

5. Strategy Analysis: Integrating Local Wisdom and Digital Innovation

Conceptually, the marketing strategy of wayang kulit in Wukirsari can be understood as an integration of local wisdom and digital innovation. Local wisdom is reflected in the values presented in the content, historical narratives, and the involvement of cultural figures. Meanwhile, digital innovation is evident in the new ways cultural messages are delivered to global audiences through visual language and more adaptive technologies.

This approach reflects the model of glocalization, which combines local strength with global potential in a single marketing strategy. Glocalization allows local products to retain their

distinctive identity while remaining competitive and accepted in broader markets.



Figure 1. Implementation of Training and Socialization of Wayang Kulit in Wukirsari Village

IV. CONCLUSION

This community engagement reveals that the marketing strategy of wayang kulit in Wukirsari Village has undergone a significant transformation through the use of social media and the organization of cultural events, involving the active participation of the community. The involvement of the community—especially the younger generation—in the production and distribution of digital content has been key to maintaining the relevance of wayang kulit in the modern era. Social media has been effectively utilized to reach a wider audience, foster dynamic interaction, and build a strong cultural identity through visual narratives and digital storytelling.

Meanwhile, the cultural events regularly held in the village—such as festivals, art performances, and workshops—serve not only as promotional platforms but also as spaces for education, regeneration, and interaction among cultural practitioners. These activities strengthen the community's collective awareness of the importance of preserving local culture, while also providing real economic opportunities for artisans and artists.

The integration of digital innovation with local wisdom values demonstrates that cultural preservation does not have to be in conflict with modernization. On the contrary, both can coexist through approaches that are adaptive, collaborative, and community-empowering. The community-based marketing strategy implemented in Wukirsari stands as a concrete example that

traditional culture can survive, grow, and even remain competitive amid the tides of digital globalization.

The success of this strategy cannot be separated from the synergy among various community elements—artisans, youth communities, the village government, and external partners—who together have built a vibrant and sustainable cultural ecosystem. Thus, this participatory approach to cultural marketing can be replicated in other regions as a strategic model for developing a creative economy rooted in local wisdom.

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It is hoped that this article will be of benefit not only in the academic sphere but also as a tangible contribution to the development of traditional cultural preservation strategies in the digital era.

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