



The Use of Digital Storytelling as Entertainment Content on Social Media Twitter

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Abstract. Storytelling is a technique that aims to provide information to the audience. Nowadays, storytelling is used in various media, including social media, called digital storytelling. Digital storytelling offers information through multiple types of content, such as entertainment content. Twitter is one of the social media which can be used as a source of information through short messages or is commonly called "tweets." A tweet can consist of images, videos, links, and texts. The use of tweets requires digital storytelling to be implemented via Twitter to create entertainment content. Threads are one of the most common ways of delivering information on Twitter. The limited number of characters in tweets on Twitter makes its users must be creative in stringing words to compose compelling storytelling. Digital storytelling can create a relationship between the writer and the reader. This study uses a qualitative descriptive research method with data collection techniques using literature studies. At the end of the research, it will be found that digital storytelling skills were one of the strategies for thread writers in creating entertainment content. This research offers novelty through writing digital storytelling on threads as entertainment content production on Twitter.

Keywords: digital storytelling, entertainment, social media, Twitter.

1 Introduction

The development of information technology is currently increasingly accelerated. The dissemination of information can be done through several Internet-based platforms that are networked to various parts of the world. Based on data from the Association of Indonesian Internet Service Providers [1], Indonesia's Internet penetration rate has increased to 78.19% or more than 215 million Indonesian using the Internet in 2023. The use of social media is one of the effects of Internet penetration. Most widely used social media platforms in Indonesia are include WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, Telegram, Twitter, and others [2]. Twitter is one of the social media that has quite a high number of users in Indonesia. Based on Statista, Indonesia is the fifth country with the most Twitter users in the world, with 18.45 million users [3].

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Twitter is a social media founded by Jack Dorsey, Evan Williams, Biz Stone, and Noah Glass in 2006. Twitter allows its users to create messages that are used as a communication medium. The term message on Twitter is called a tweet, which is written text of up to 280 characters that can be wrote by Twitter users. Twitter provides facilities for users who want to write tweets of more than 280 characters by continuous tweets or commonly known as threads. Furthermore, as of October 27, 2022, Tesla's CEO, Elon Musk, bought Twitter shares in full. Then, as of July 31, 2023, Twitter rebranded its logo, which originally consisted of a small blue bird, now replace with a white "X" on a black background. In addition, Twitter also provides a paid premium service called Twitter Blue with one of its features that allows users to write tweets of up to 4,000 characters.

Twitter has various benefits, one of which is the dissemination of information or knowledge through tweets. Through Twitter, users can share many quotes or content about love, humour, motivation, even verses in the holy book [4]. In recent years, Twitter has become a means to share stories from its user through the available threads feature. This digital storytelling trend has started to increase in Indonesia since the thread entitled 'KKN di Desa Penari' which was shared by user @SimpleM81378523 or commonly called SimpleMan became very popular. The thread which mentioned is based on a true story earned more than 200 thousand likes on Twitter based on three threads that have different points of view from each character. The thread was adapted and made into a novel, also a film with the same title.

Another quite popular thread is 'Dikta & Hukum' which is shared by user @Kejeffreyan and has been adapted into a novel, also a series with the same title. This thread is an example of a real-person fiction that is quite popular on Twitter. Real-person fiction (RPF) is a subset of fan fiction that is often found on various online platforms [5]. In contrast to the 'KKN di Desa Penari' thread, RPF uses real people in the visualization of the characters. The characterizations are presented by adapting the alternate universe (AU) concept from the characters told in the thread, for example Korean and Thai actor or idol.

These phenomena show that many writers use the thread feature on Twitter for digital storytelling, especially for entertainment content. Therefore, the use of Twitter as a digital storytelling media has a big influence in the production of entertainment content. The purpose of this research is to find out how the use of the thread feature on Twitter to produce entertainment content is an effective strategy.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Digital Storytelling on Social Media

Storytelling is a form of communication that emphasizes stories with a particular style. In its application, storytelling tells a specific event or identity using photos, pictures, and videos. The narration used is narrative from pictures, photos, and videos because

these three things are not enough to say something [6]. With new digital technology, stories that were initially only with photos, pictures, or videos can be said using multi-platform (social media), which is called digital storytelling. Various photos, videos, and pictures can tell a story for themselves [7].

Digital storytelling is a form of communication that utilizes information technology and aims to exchange information packaged using specific topics and an attractive presentation style [8]. Information and stories conveyed in digital storytelling are relatively shorter. The story shared can be a person's story, historical, horror, scientific, and other exciting stories. In its use, digital storytelling combines narrative and the art of storytelling using digital technology, such as images, audio, video, and animation [9].

Digital Storytelling is an extraordinary medium for building digital literacy skills. This is because video, audio, text, photos, and music can create, communicate and share stories. Digital storytelling can be used as entertainment, learning media, building communities, adding connections, describing identities and experiences, and carrying out specific actions [10].

Digital Storytelling is Art-based research that facilitates audiences to share personal/professional narratives using different models [11]. The approach taken is narrative research to expand the knowledge that is understood. Digital Storytelling's research analysis supports the scientific values, beliefs, and perspectives of social workers over time [12].

2.2 Transmedia Storytelling

Transmedia storytelling is a procedure using various platforms that focus on the audience to participate in the story in a focused and comprehensive manner. The challenge is that media can only be enjoyed singly, even though the highest satisfaction of the audience lies in understanding and wide access to media. However, in its application, Transmedia Storytelling focuses on the audience as the core. Therefore, Transmedia Storytelling brings the audience to enjoy the emotional journey of a story from time to time [13].

Transmedia Storytelling is a broad science with a variety of media used by various tools, some of which are: Project Models, Transmedia Radar Diagram, Experience Design Pyramid, Possible Platform Segmentation, Participation Tropes, Law of Participation, Measuring Engagement, dan Audience Journey (see Fig. 1).

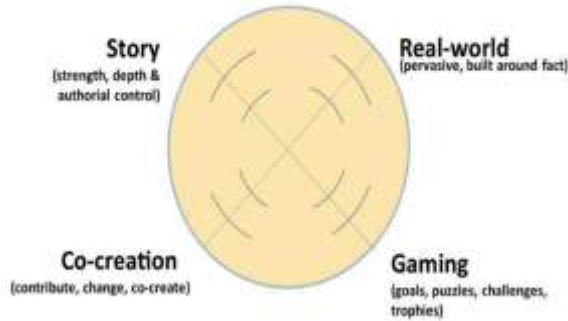


Fig. 1. Transmedia Radar Diagram

The picture above explains the axis of the radar diagram.

- Importance of narrative: The story volume for one's experience and how the writer controls one's experience.
- Importance of co-creation: How big and important the audience contributes to the story experience. This can be seen from clicking links to creating content.
- Importance of the real-world: How significant is the story experience that includes real locations, places, events, and people?
- Importance of gaming: It is important for the audience to have goals and achievements for the story.

3 Methodology

This study used a descriptive qualitative methodology through a search of the literature. Qualitative research is research that describes facts through data in the form of narratives. Data in qualitative research can be collected through interviews, documents, publications, focus group discussions, literature studies, and internet searches. Qualitative research is expected to provide an overview of a phenomenon broadly through the results of various data analysis [14].

The description of research results is presented descriptively by presenting data through the results of a literature search conducted by researchers through direct observation. Researchers are directly involved in the process of data collection, data analysis, and data presentation.

In this study, researchers used entertainment content threads on Twitter as research objects. Researchers read various threads on Twitter from all genres such as horror, comedy, mystery, to romantic drama, both fiction and non-fiction. The threads read are threads for the 2019-2023 period. The results of the observation of the research object were then analyzed using the appropriate literature study.

4 Result & Discussion

Currently on social media, the audience gets a lot of content, ranging from informational content, marketing, motivational stories, news, to entertainment. Twitter, is one of the social media that has been released for a long time and still survives today. There are three types of content characters that are widely distributed through Twitter accounts and are liked by the audience, namely (1) entertainment/humor content that relates to the audience's lives; (2) educational content; and (3) marketing content [15]. The large amount of entertainment content on Twitter exposes a lot of audiences to similar content. Digital storytelling techniques then become a new strategy in the process of conveying messages so that messages are unique, different from the others, and attractive to the audience. Good storytelling can create personal and emotional involvement between the writer and the audience, create two-way communication, and increase social media engagement [16] (See Fig. 2).



Fig. 2. Digital Storytelling on Twitter @diosetta

The thread above is horror-themed Digital Storytelling content @diosetta on Twitter entitled “Weton Tulang Wangi”. Based on the picture above, there is a relatively high user reach, 1,4M Views, 2,583 Retweets, 448 Quotes, 11.3K Likes, and 3,907, Bookmarks within two weeks after the content was broadcast. Based on the Transmedia Radar Diagram, this content provides an experience to the audience that matches what is told in the Thread (See Fig. 3).



Fig. 3. Audiens’s experience about what happened in Thread

In contrast to "Mbah" on the @zwitpotato account on Twitter, this story did not reach the audience because the storytelling couldn't have been more interesting, and the photos used are less attractive. So, the audience reach is only 703 Views, 2 Retweets, 1 Quote, 12 Likes, and 5 Bookmarks (See Fig. 4).



Fig. 4. Digital Storytelling on Twitter @ zwitpotato

In several threads, good storytelling will invite the audience to feel what the author feels, causing empathy. Besides that, good storytelling is also able to invite the audience to dive into the story as if reading a novel. With the limited characters that Twitter has

(currently by subscribing, the number of characters can be adjusted), a thread writer must be good at stringing words and composing stories into several tweets. Stories and storytelling have a role in evoking emotions. It can help the audience to put every experience and make it into a single unit of memory. Individuals will be encouraged to take further action in the future from the memory results obtained from stories and storytelling. It is needed for the storyteller to influence the audience to take action in the future. This is the role of stories or storytelling to maintain closeness and engagement with the audience.

Another interesting example of digital storytelling is the account @prabu_abimanyu. As the Head of the Sidoarjo Criminal Investigation Division, through his Twitter account, he uncovers many crime cases that occurred in Sidoarjo and its surroundings using the Thread feature. Every effort to uncover the crime case, he pours it into a descriptive narrative. His skill in writing and using a variety of vocabulary to compose sentences in making the Threads, often generate good engagement. For example, in the latest Thread entitled "Dead Body on the Toll Road" which he created on July 30, 2023, has gained 13.300 retweets, 1.694 quotes, 93.700 likes, and 18.300 bookmarks (data as of August 2, 2023 at 10.14 WIB) (See Fig. 5).



Fig. 5. Digital Storytelling on Twitter @prabu_abimanyu

This phenomenon is part of transmedia storytelling, in which stories that are generally distributed through book media (novels, comics, etc.) are now possible to be distributed through other media, namely social media, especially Twitter.

5 Conclusion

Based on the results of the discussion in the previous chapter, it can be concluded that in line with the current developments in social media, digital storytelling skills are important. Currently the audience is looking for entertainment through content that provides emotional and personal closeness.

Storytelling techniques on Twitter open space between the audience and the thread setter (TS) to communicate in two directions which will then increase the engagement of the Twitter account. In its use on Twitter, digital storytelling can not only be used to compose a story as entertainment content (travel stories, drama, horror), but also for learning, testimonials, even for brand management.

To create interesting digital storytelling on Twitter for entertainment content, the following skills are needed:

1. Understand the target audience

A writer of threads on Twitter, of course, must first understand his target audience before starting to write storytelling. This target audience includes segmentation, targeting, and positioning. Of course the storytelling writing that is done will be different from each entertainment content depending on the target audience. The more suitable the target audience is, the more appropriate the storytelling will be, and the more preferred the threads will be.

2. Writing technique

The ability to write in the preparation of digital storytelling is a skill that must be mastered. This will determine how the writing style of each storytelling is made. This capability also includes how to cut each tweet to spark the audience's curiosity to continue to the next tweets and finish threads. What's more, the challenge lies in the limited Twitter characters, namely 280 characters, even though currently Twitter has also provided a Twitter Blue subscription facility that allows us to tweet longer and edit our tweets.

3. Language skills

Language skills are the next skill that must be possessed by a digital storyteller. After understanding the intended target audience, creating good storytelling requires a good combination of technical writing and language skills. Language skills are important to adjust the choice of words that can be used by adjusting the story to be told and the target audience. For example, in alternate universe (AU) threads, which are generally in the romantic drama genre, skills in romantic, intimate language, etc. are certainly needed. Or in the example of other entertainment threads that are in the horror genre, descriptive language skills are needed to describe a tense atmosphere.

4. Think creatively

In the social media industry that requires high creativity, of course the ability to think creatively is needed. For written storytelling to attract attention, new and unprecedented ideas or topics are needed that can differentiate our threads from other users' threads.

5. Social media analytics

After storytelling is released, the next thing that needs to be done is to monitor and evaluate the results of our threads. Is it liked by the audience and increases engagement or not. Twitter has a Twitter Analytics feature to check and analyze our Twitter account

and see if threads created using digital storytelling strategies are getting good interest. The results from Twitter Analytics can be used as a consideration in creating future entertainment content threads.

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