



Authentic Storytelling Videos Increase Farmer Product Sales on Social Media

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Abstract. General Background: The rapid development of digital technology has transformed product marketing, with social media becoming a primary commercial channel and video content widely used to build engagement, trust, and purchasing decisions. Specific Background: In Indonesia, increasing internet penetration creates opportunities for small and medium enterprises, including agribusiness communities such as KWT Donan in Cilacap, which still face conventional marketing challenges. Knowledge Gap: Although social media video content is considered a strategic solution for expanding market reach and strengthening local product branding, its role in increasing sales for farmer community products has not been deeply analyzed. Aims: This study aims to analyze the use of promotional video content on social media as a key strategy to increase sales of products produced by the Donan Cilacap Farmers' Community Group (KWT). Results: Using a qualitative case study design, data were collected through in-depth interviews with key informants, participatory observation, and analysis of promotional video documentation. The findings show that promotional video content is highly successful in increasing KWT Donan product sales by raising brand awareness, expanding market reach, and building consumer trust through authentic storytelling. The most successful content characteristics include storytelling videos about farmers and products, highlighting production processes and local added value, with durations of 45 seconds to 2 minutes, delivered in informal and narrative styles using local language and authentic visuals. Implementation barriers include limited production resources, low digital literacy among members, lack of in-depth evaluation of social media insights, and inconsistency in video production and uploading. Novelty: This study identifies specific video content and delivery characteristics associated with stronger sales outcomes in a farmer community context. Implications: The findings provide a practical reference for farmer groups and local agribusiness communities to optimize social media video strategies while addressing operational and digital capability constraints.

Keywords: Social media marketing; Video storytelling; Farmer product sales; Agribusiness promotion; Digital marketing strategy

1 Introduction

The development of digital technology has fundamentally changed the economic landscape, particularly in how products are marketed and sold. Social media platforms, initially designed for interpersonal connections, have evolved into vital commercial arenas. According to data from the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII), internet penetration in Indonesia continues to show significant growth, with most users actively engaging on various social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, and YouTube. This phenomenon opens vast opportunities for business actors, including Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), to reach broader markets with relatively affordable costs. Among the available content types on social media, video content has shown superior dominance and effectiveness. Reports from various global marketing research institutions consistently indicate that videos can increase user engagement, build trust, and ultimately drive purchasing decisions more effectively than static content like text or images.

Videos allow dynamic product information delivery, usage demonstrations, and storytelling that can touch audiences' emotions.[1] The ability of videos to present authentic narratives is particularly relevant for products with story value, such as local agricultural products. In the context of the agribusiness sector, Indonesian farmer groups often face classic challenges, ranging from limited market access, long supply chains, to difficulties in building strong brand images. Their products often have to compete with those from large corporations with far more massive marketing resources. The Donan Cilacap Farmers' Community Group (KWT Donan) is one example of a small-scale agribusiness entity producing various local agricultural products. They have the potential to improve their members' welfare through direct sales to consumers, but are often hindered by limitations in conventional marketing reach. Utilizing social media through video content can be a strategic bridge to overcome these challenges. By producing engaging videos such as showcasing organic planting processes, farmer interviews, harvest cooking demos, or stories behind the products KWT Donan can directly communicate with potential consumers, build loyal communities, and highlight the uniqueness and quality of their products. [2] However, despite its great potential, there has been no in-depth analysis specifically measuring the extent of the effectiveness of this video content implementation in increasing product sales volume for KWT Donan. This study aims to quantitatively and qualitatively analyze the effectiveness of video content on social media as a marketing tool to increase sales of KWT Donan products in Cilacap. The results of this research are expected to provide empirical evidence on the impact of this digital marketing strategy, as well as formulate practical recommendations that can be replicated not only by KWT Donan but also by other farmer groups across Indonesia aiming to transform digitally.

The research problems include identifying the characteristics of promotional video content used by the Donan Cilacap Farmers' Community Group on social media and determining the supporting and hindering factors in utilizing video content as a digital marketing strategy. The research objectives are to identify the characteristics and types of video content used in product promotion by the Donan Cilacap Farmers' Community Group and to evaluate the factors that support and hinder the effectiveness of using video content in group product marketing.[3]

The practical benefits of this research will be strongly felt by various parties, including STMM as an educational institution. For STMM, as an educational institution, this research can serve as a rich and relevant case study for courses such as Digital Marketing Strategy, Video Production, Marketing Communication, or Social Media, allowing students to learn the application of theory in real-world practice. Additionally, the findings can provide valuable input for refining or developing STMM's curriculum, ensuring that teaching materials remain relevant to industry needs, especially in digital marketing and content production.[4] The results can also inspire STMM students to develop final projects or assignments focused on developing promotional video content strategies for MSMEs or local communities, applying the knowledge they have acquired. Furthermore, through publishing high-quality research with impact, STMM can enhance its reputation as a center of excellence in communication, media, and digital marketing studies.

For the Donan Cilacap Farmers' Community Group, the benefits include increased sales and market reach, as understanding video content effectiveness allows the farmer group to optimize their promotional strategies to reach wider audiences and increase their product sales volume. The research will also provide more efficient marketing strategies by offering concrete guidance on the most effective video content types, optimal durations, suitable social media platforms, and resonant messages, helping them allocate marketing resources more efficiently.[5] Moreover, the farmer group will gain understanding and new skills in utilizing social media as a marketing tool, aiding their adaptation to the digital era. Effective video content will also help build and increase awareness of the Donan Cilacap Farmers' Community Group's products in consumers' minds. For other agricultural MSME actors, the results of this research can serve as a model or guide for other farmer groups or agricultural MSMEs wishing to optimize their product marketing through social media. Additionally, the research findings can serve as valuable educational material for programs supporting MSMEs or agriculture organized by the government or private institutions.[6]

2 Literature Review

Digital marketing uses the internet and platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok to connect businesses with consumers affordably. Social media fosters engagement and increases purchase likelihood, making it an effective tool for farmer groups to boost visibility and sales [7] Video content, which combines visual and audio elements, has higher engagement rates and emotional appeal compared to text or images [8]. Videos that showcase a product's story or production process help build trust and influence buying decisions [9], especially for farmer groups who can authentically display their agricultural practices. The effectiveness of promotional videos in boosting sales can be measured through views, interactions, and conversions.[10] For groups like the Donan Farmers' Group, videos help reach wider markets and differentiate products, highlighting features like organic or sustainable farming [11]. Digitalization empowers farmer groups by improving market access, product visibility, and customer relationships [12], strengthening group identity and customer loyalty.

The research identifies issues around promotional video effectiveness, such as low engagement or impact. It aims to evaluate how these videos affect engagement and sales, with a literature review on digital marketing and agricultural product promotion forming the foundation. A mixed-methods approach (quantitative and qualitative) is used, combining surveys, interviews, observations, and content analysis. Data collection includes consumer feedback, group member responses, sales statistics, and social media insights, with analysis focusing on engagement metrics and sales impact. Conclusions and recommendations will offer effective video strategies for farmer groups and social media managers, and findings will be shared through seminars, reports, and academic articles. This qualitative case study focuses on the Donan Cilacap Farmers' Community Group in Central Java, examining their promotional videos. Key informants include the group leader, secretary, and active members involved in video creation. Data is collected through interviews, participatory observations, and document analysis. Research procedures include developing instruments, obtaining consent, and analyzing data using thematic analysis. Triangulation and member checking ensure data validity. The final report includes findings and recommendations to improve video content effectiveness for farmer groups, upholding ethical principles like informed consent, confidentiality, and data integrity.[13]

3 Research Methodology

This research adopts a qualitative approach with a case study design. The qualitative method is chosen to provide a deeper understanding of the phenomenon, explore the meanings behind it, and examine the perceptions and experiences of farmer group members regarding the use of video content in promoting their products on social media.

The study is conducted at the Donan Cilacap Farmers' Community Group, located in Donan District, Cilacap Regency, Central Java. The research subjects are the promotional videos produced by KWT Donan. Key informants include the group leader and members actively involved in video content creation, such as the Chairman, Secretary, and other members who play an active role in video production.[14] To collect rich and in-depth data, the research employs several techniques:

In-depth Interviews: Conducted with key informants to explore their perceptions, experiences, and opinions on video content creation and its impact on product marketing. The interviews are semi-structured, with flexible interview guides to facilitate a comprehensive understanding of the subject.[15]

Participatory Observation: Researchers directly engage in the farmer group's video creation activities, observing the creative process, member interactions, and dynamics during content production and distribution.

Documentation Analysis: The study involves collecting and analyzing relevant documents, such as the promotional videos produced by the group.

The research procedure is carried out in the following steps:

Preparation: Research instruments, such as interview guides and observation formats, are prepared. Permission and consent are obtained from the farmer group and informants to conduct interviews.

Data Collection: In-depth interviews are conducted with key informants, participatory observations are made during video content creation, and relevant documents related to the promotional videos are collected.

Data Analysis: Interviews and observation notes are transcribed, and thematic analysis is used to identify emerging key themes. The data is categorized and interpreted to understand the meanings and relationships between themes.

Data Validation: Data triangulation is performed by comparing information from various sources (interviews, observations, and documentation). Member checking is also conducted by seeking confirmation from informants on the preliminary findings to ensure their accuracy and credibility.

Research Reporting: The research findings are compiled into a report, including the background, methodology, results, and conclusions, along with practical recommendations to improve video content effectiveness in product marketing for farmer groups.

In conducting the research, the following ethical principles are adhered to:

Informed Consent: Informants are fully informed about the research's purpose, procedures, and potential risks, and are asked to give voluntary consent.

Confidentiality and Anonymity: The identities of informants are kept confidential, and any data collected are presented without revealing personal information.

Data Integrity: Data are analyzed objectively, and the integrity of the collected data is maintained without manipulation for specific interests.

4 Results and Discussion

The study confirms that promotional videos on social media have been highly effective in increasing KWT Donan's sales. This success was gradual and built on three key pillars:

Brand Awareness Increase: Videos expanded KWT Donan's reach beyond local markets to a wider audience. Before using videos, their market was limited, but through video, products like fresh vegetables gained recognition outside Cilacap. Pak Salim, the advisor, stated, "Consumers today want honest stories, not ads. Video shows that honesty."

Market Reach Expansion: Social media acts as a 24/7 marketing agent. Ibu Novi Haryani, the chairperson, shared that large orders came from cities like Jakarta and Bandung after seeing their videos shared on platforms like WhatsApp and TikTok.

Trust Building: The most significant finding was how videos built trust. By showcasing authentic farming processes, consumers felt connected and trusted the product's quality. Ibu Nur Dwi Cintaniati, the secretary, noted, "People prefer real videos like harvesting or product processing. They want to see the process and farmer's face."

The success of KWT Donan's video strategy is rooted in authenticity. Building trust through real stories leads to expanded market reach as consumers shared videos on social media, breaking past the local market. Thus, **brand awareness** and **market expansion** are results of successful trust-building. An analysis of the most engaging videos revealed three main characteristics:

Content Type: Storytelling: The most successful videos used storytelling, focusing on the farmers' journey, from seed to harvest, which connected with audiences emotionally. Ibu Nur Dwi Cintaniati mentioned, "*Jujur, Mas, alat kita seadanya. Pakai HP (handphone) anggota, gantian. Kadang lagi rekam, memorinya penuh atau baterainya habis. Belum lagi editing-nya, saya belajar sendiri dari narasumber Pengabdian dari kampus STMM, jadi ya hasilnya basic sekali. Mau beli mikrofon biar suara jelas saja masih mikir-mikir dananya.*" (Real videos, like harvesting or processing, sell better than overly made-up ones)

Delivery Style: Authentic and Informal: Videos using local dialects and informal, honest communication created emotional closeness with viewers. Ibu Sri Masriah, a member, explained, "*Tantangan terbesar kita sebetulnya bukan di alat, tapi di mindset dan literasi digital. Anggota bisa rekam, tapi bingung setelah rekam. Caption-nya bagaimana, hashtag-nya apa agar tepat sasaran. Jujur, sebagian besar masih 'gaptek'. Ini pekerjaan rumah (PR) besar kita.*" (I was shy at first, but using my local dialect made it feel genuine, and people liked it)

Optimal Duration: 45 Seconds to 1 Minute: Videos lasting between 45 seconds and 1 minute were the most effective, providing enough time to tell the story without losing attention. Ibu Novi Haryani observed, "*Kami akui, kami belum sampai ke tahap analisis. Unggah ya unggah saja. Harusnya kan kita pelajari insight-nya, video mana yang disukai, jam berapa audiens kita aktif. Kami belum sampai sana, masih merab-raba. Yang penting upload dulu, pikirnya.*" (Videos around one minute work best. If too long, people skip)

Despite the effectiveness of video content, KWT Donan faces several challenges:

Limited Production Resources: Informants acknowledged the lack of proper equipment (smartphones, external microphones) and technical skills in video editing, leading to subpar video quality. **Low**

Digital Literacy: Many members struggle with understanding social media algorithms, hashtags, and writing persuasive captions. Ibu Nur Dwi Cintaniati shared, "The challenge isn't the equipment, but the lack of digital literacy."**Lack of Data Evaluation:** KWT Donan does not systematically analyze social media insights, leading to an inconsistent strategy. Ibu Novi Haryani admitted, "We need to study the data, like when our audience is most active, but we haven't gotten there yet."**Inconsistent Content Production:** Due to time constraints and resource limitations, KWT Donan struggles with maintaining a consistent posting schedule, which negatively impacts their social media momentum. The findings align with key communication, marketing, and technology adoption theories:

Source Credibility and Persuasion Knowledge: KWT Donan's approach of using authentic content builds trust with consumers, aligning with the Source Credibility Theory. By avoiding overtly persuasive content, they foster trust, which is essential for persuasion.

Narrative Transportation and Social Identity Theory: The success of storytelling and the use of local dialects can be explained through Narrative Transportation Theory and Social Identity Theory. By telling authentic stories, KWT Donan creates emotional connections and strengthens trust through shared identity with local consumers.[16] KWT Donan effectively uses credibility-based and narrative persuasion strategies. Their authenticity gains consumer trust, but they face a **capability gap**. While authenticity is their strength, a lack of technical and strategic resources limits their ability to fully leverage this strength.[17]

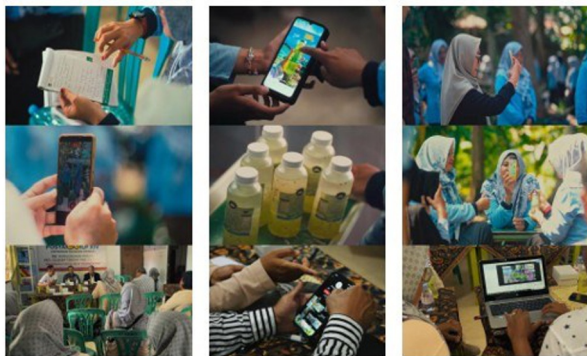
5 Conclusion

This study concludes that the use of video content on social media is highly effective in increasing sales for KWT Donan, operating through a mechanism of "authenticity-based marketing." This success is not coincidental but follows a clear cause-and-effect path, primarily driven by Trust Building. The effectiveness of KWT Donan's videos stems from its ability to build "trust capital," achieved by strategically rejecting traditional advertising formats or contrived content, which is no longer trusted by the increasingly savvy consumers. Trust is built through specific content characteristics, such as storytelling, which transforms the product from a commodity into a story by showcasing real processes like harvesting or processing, and by featuring the farmers' faces. The delivery style is authentic and informal, including the use of the local "ngapak" dialect, which audiences perceive as unique and genuine. The video duration, kept between 45 seconds and 1 minute, is considered the "sweet spot" for delivering the story effectively without causing audience fatigue. The trust capital built through these videos acts as a catalyst, triggering the organic sharing of content on social media. This has successfully broken the boundaries of the "local market" and opened up new

markets in larger cities such as Jakarta and Bandung, ultimately increasing brand awareness and product sales. However, despite this success, the study also identifies a paradox that hinders KWT Donan's full potential. Theoretically, KWT Donan possesses a rare and valuable asset: authenticity. Yet, this success is threatened by a "capability gap", where KWT Donan lacks complementary resources (technical, analytical, and managerial) to fully exploit the potential of this authenticity asset. This gap is clearly evident in four main barriers: limited production resources, low digital literacy, lack of data evaluation, and inconsistent content production.

To address these challenges, it is recommended that KWT Donan focus on closing the capability gap through intensive, practical digital literacy training. This training should not only cover basic video recording but also strategies for optimization, such as understanding insight analysis, using relevant hashtags, and writing persuasive captions. To overcome the limitations of equipment, KWT Donan is advised to seek funding or assistance from partnership programs or CSR initiatives to acquire essential production tools, such as smartphones with better camera specifications and external microphones. Additionally, improving technical quality should remain aligned with authenticity, keeping editing simple and natural. Next, KWT Donan should standardize their successful video formula by documenting and formalizing what has proven effective: authentic storytelling, informal/local style, and video duration between 45 seconds to 1 minute. They should consistently reject advertising formats or contrived content, maintaining videos that highlight real processes and the farmers' faces to build trustworthiness. Expanding the storytelling format is also recommended by including not only planting and harvesting processes but also personal stories of individual farmers, showcasing their expertise and trustworthiness, or the backstory behind processed products. To tackle the challenge of inconsistency, KWT Donan should create a realistic content upload schedule, such as twice a week, rather than trying to upload three times a week, which may not be sustainable. One or two core members should be responsible for managing the content production to ensure regularity. Additionally, a batch content production strategy could be implemented. This would involve recording multiple videos during a single event (such as harvesting) and gradually uploading them, ensuring consistency without interrupting their primary farming tasks.

DOCUMENTATION:



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