

## **Web series as a digital marketing medium for Islamic bank**

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### **Abstract**

The digital era has revolutionized human lifestyle significantly, as internet makes the world seem limitless without boundaries. Web series is one form of new media that emerged from the internet. Many companies use web series as a digital marketing medium because it is more efficient and effective in reaching a wider range of consumers. This study uses a qualitative descriptive method with a case study approach. This study aims to describe and analyze the existence of 4 webseries produced by Bank Syariah Indonesia (BSI) as its digital marketing media. The results of this study indicate that the BSI web series contains affirmation of brand identity and shows its commitment in developing Islamic economics and finance as the largest Islamic bank in Indonesia. The web series produced by BSI are also a place for promotion through placements featuring several products placed in the web series scene, such as: mobile banking apps, home ownership financing, and working capital financing for entrepreneurs.

**Keywords: web series, digital marketing, Islamic bank**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The development of the digital world is a 21st century phenomenon that brings radical changes to the way humans access information and communicate (Ryan & Jones, 2009). Internet technology is now easily accessible, implemented in mobile phones that are attached and carried everywhere. Distance and time restrictions are almost meaningless. New media, a new form of communication and information media has emerged, utilizing the extensive internet network that spans the entire world (Lister et al., 2009).

Digital marketing is widely used by companies to market their products (Ryan & Jones, 2009). The use of digital marketing can save time and efforts in predicting consumer

behavior, distribution, and help companies to monitor competitors' activities and strategies.

Web series is one of the new medias used as marketing medium by companies. Web series is a serial program concept that is broadcasted via the internet and is available through the global online video sharing service providers such as YouTube and Vimeo (Majek, 2012). Not to mention the emergence of numerous internet-distributed video services has changed the entertainment landscape. These services range from major international players like Netflix, Disney, Amazon, and Apple to a vast array of countless national and regional services (Lobato & Lotz, 2021). More and more web series are being developed as a result of this business model. Several local Indonesian companies also provide similar video streaming service, such as Vidio, which is owned by Emtel (Sudarsono & Olivia, 2021), and Maxstream, which was launched by Telkomsel.

YouTube as the world's largest online video sharing service provider has introduced a new term, namely prosumer. This concept allows the viewer to be both a producer and a consumer (Ritzer & Jurgenson, 2010). The form of this web series is similar to conventional television programs in several aspects, but web series has unique strength as it can be accessed anytime and anywhere.

Nowadays web series is also used as a promotional media for companies to market their products. The prospect of web series in Indonesia is considered quite good. This is because the use of Youtube is quite high in the community. According to Katadata.id research in the first month of 2021, as many as 94% of internet users aged 16-64 years in Indonesia access Youtube. This percentage is the highest compared to other platforms (Lidwina, 2021). Based on this massive number, it can be concluded that the web series on Youtube has the potential for a wide reach to introduce the company's brands, products and services (Hamzah & Putri, 2019).

The use of web series as a digital marketing medium in Indonesia began around 2014 by two telecommunication companies, namely XL and Smartfren (Tamitiadini & Lutfianto, 2019). Over time, more and more companies in Indonesia are using web series as a medium for digital marketing of their products and services, such as Toyota Indonesia which released several web series and short films on their official channel on Youtube.

On average, each episode of the web series is watched no less than 3 million times, there are even certain episodes that reach 8 million views.

Web series are considered more effective because they reach a wider audience than conventional electronic media. In addition, the production cost is relatively cheaper than placing advertisements on television (Tamitiadini & Lutfianto, 2019). Other companies/brands that have digital marketing content in the form of web series and are watched millions of times include the sweetener product Tropicana Slim with the mini series “SORE - Istri dari Masa Depan” (Asrita & Rhizky, 2020).

PT Bank Syariah Indonesia, Tbk.—hereinafter referred to as Bank Syariah Indonesia or BSI—is the largest Islamic bank in Indonesia, as the result of the merger of 3 national Islamic commercial banks belonging to the Association of State-Owned Banks (Himbara), namely Bank Syariah Mandiri, BRI Syariah, and BNI Syariah (Humas Setkab RI, 2021). With this inauguration, BSI is an Islamic bank which has the largest assets in the country as 240 trillion Rupiah.

President Director of BSI, Hery Gunardi as reported by Merdeka.com, said that BSI began targeting young people to take advantage of Indonesia's demographic bonus, which was dominated by people in productive age. BSI offer an Islamic concept that is more friendly for millennials and generation Z by launching the Gen-Sy campaign which stands for the term “Generasi Syariah” (Islamic Generation). This campaign is in the form of Islamic financial literacy and the launch of savings, investment and financing products targeting the younger generation (Merdeka.com, 2021).

Image 1. BSI’s web series thumbnail on Youtube



The launching of the web series on the official BSI channel on Youtube is a way to approach young people. Until November 2021, BSI had launched 4 web series titles:

1. “Harmoni Cinta” (Love Harmony).
2. “Griya Ajar Cinta” (School of Love).
3. “Hey, Elsa!” (Hi, Elsa!).
4. “Mendadak Ganteng” (Suddenly Handsome).

The plot of this web series takes the background of the lives of young people in their 20s from the urban Muslim community, compatible with BSI's target market. These web series have elements of drama, romance and comedy. As researched by Maheshkumar (Maheshkumar, 2020), web series publishers usually target the younger generation as the main target audience.

**Table 1. Web series released by BSI**

<b>Title</b>	<b>Plot</b>	<b>Episodes</b>
Harmoni Cinta	Husna, an employee of Bank Syariah Indonesia is facing a dilemma because her mother always asks her to get married.	9 episodes Aired 5-15 April 2021
Griya Ajar Cinta	Three friends run a free non-formal education center for poor children.	14 episodes Aired April 30 to June 19, 2021
Hai, Elsa	Elsa, Addin's childhood friend, returns from studying abroad. Addin who comes from a modest family tries to get close to Elsa who comes from a rich family	8 episodes Aired August 12 to September 9, 2021
Mendadak Ganteng	A group of youngsters founded Mendadak Ganteng dot com, a men's fashion startup company.	9 Episodes Aired 27 October to 30 December 2021

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This study uses a descriptive qualitative method, where the researcher will describe how the web series is used as a corporate image and marketing medium for Bank Syariah

Indonesia (BSI). The subjects in this study are all things related to the BSI web series, so the researcher tries to get a detailed explanation to solve the problems in this study. The descriptive method has the aim of directly describing the nature of something that is ongoing when the research is conducted and looking for the cause (Arikunto, 2002).

The approach used in this research is a case study. A case study is a series of scientific activities carried out intensively, in detail and in depth about a program, event, and activity, either at the individual level, a group of people, institutions, or organizations to gain in-depth knowledge about the event (Rahardjo, 2017) Case study research is carried out in-depth exploration of a program, process, incident to one or more people who are bound by time and activity. Researchers collect data using various procedures in detail and in a continuous time (Sugiyono, 2016). The case studied in this study is the release of a web series by BSI. The subject of this research is the web series content of Bank Syariah Indonesia, in this case observation, documentation and in-depth analysis are carried out to obtain data and information. The object of this research is the role of the BSI web series as a company's digital marketing instrument.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Web series**

Web series is a form of new media which is a new form of television and cinema which is distributed over the internet. In contrast to television broadcasts, web series can be enjoyed more flexibly than regular broadcasts. The existence of web series is a disruption to the old style media (Majek, 2012). The concept of a web series that is inserted in the form product or service promotion is called the Branded Web Series (Risangdaru, 2020).

New Media is a form of media that uses computer technology as a means of distributing information. New media is often identified differently from the old media that existed earlier, such as television, radio and print media. Lister (Lister et al., 2009) classified new media into several categories:

1. Communication via computers, such as electronic mail, chat, sending pictures and sounds, the world wide web (WWW), blogs, social media and mobile phones.

2. Distribution and consumption of media in an interactive and hypertext format. For example, the world wide web, CDs, DVDs, podcasts, and computer games.
3. Virtual Reality Simulation.
4. Changes in the form of media that already existed, such as the development of photography, animation, television, journalism, and cinema.

### **Digital Marketing**

Digital marketing is a type of marketing that uses the internet and digital technology to promote products and services. The development of digital marketing in the 90s and early 2000s made many brands and businesses use technology as one of the spearheads of marketing. As mentioned by Ryan and Jones in *Understanding Digital Marketing*, with digital devices getting closer to human life and the entry of the 4.0 industrial revolution era, there has been a shift in consumer behavior from conventional face-to-face shopping to online shopping (Ryan & Jones, 2009).

## **RESULTS AND ANALYSIS**

### **BSI Mix Marketing Strategy**

BSI uses marketing mix approach as one of its marketing strategy to reach wider consumers. The marketing mix is a set of controllable variables that companies use to influence buyer responses, according to Kotler. The best level of customer satisfaction can be achieved by each company by arranging different combinations of these variables in accordance with organizational needs. The organization or business may accomplish its objectives when customers are satisfied. Depending on the resources at hand and the company's marketing goals, each variable's arrangement changes from organization to organization (James, 2012).

**Price.** The price element in Islamic banking is formed from the ratio of profit sharing on deposits, profit margins for financing and fee-based income from services offered by banks. The establishment of BSI is expected to increase the assets of Islamic banking in Indonesia. This will strengthen the competitiveness of Islamic banking so that it can offer competitive prices with other banks.

**Products.** The products offered by BSI are savings, transactions, business services, gold products (gold pawns and installments), hajj and umrah savings, investments, financing and customer priority services. All of these banking service products are increasingly accessible with a fast and easy-to-use mobile banking application.

**Promotion.** Promotional techniques carried out by BSI are direct and indirect marketing, including through print media, distribution of brochures in strategic places, especially at ATM machines, branch offices, e-mail, advertisements in print media, electronic media and internet media. The use of advertisements on internet media, both on websites and on social media, is getting a bigger portion considering the era of the digital industry. The use of the internet is also a way to attract market segments from generation Y (millennial generation) and generation Z. Both of these generations are in their productive age and have a very large dependence on the internet (Dwidienawati & Gandasari, 2018). According to the research, millennials are already very familiar with digital media, it's no wonder that the web series was used by BSI as a promotional medium on Youtube to expand market segmentation.

**Place.** The data shows that after the merger, BSI has around 1,365 outlets across Indonesia. All of these outlets come from legacy banks BNI Syariah, BRI Syariah and Bank Syariah Mandiri and will be integrated into the BSI system by the end of 2021. In addition to relying on services at its branch offices, BSI also relies on digital services using BSI mobile application. When compared to other digital financial services, BSI has the advantage of being equipped with Islamic features such as prayer schedules, Qibla direction, as well as Islamic philanthropy services.

**People.** The majority of BSI's shares are owned by state-owned banks that are members of the Association of State-Owned Banks (Himbara). Important names in the world of Islamic finance are listed in the management of BSI such as Adiwarmanto Karim, TGB M. Zainul Majedi, Sutanto and Komaruddin Hidayat. Vice President of Indonesia, K.H. Ma'ruf Amin said, as reported by Sindonews on March 10, 2021, that the formation of BSI was a manifestation of the government's seriousness and willpower in developing Islamic finance.

**Process.** BSI has three segments that become its main focus, namely wholesales, retail, and MSME actors. In terms of funds from third parties (DPK) BSI optimizes low-cost funds or CASA by exploring the potential for savings and current accounts using wadiah contracts, where people entrust funds to BSI without the lure of profit sharing.

**Physical Environment.** The vast the network owned by BSI must also be balanced with the high quality of employee skills, advances in technology used and the ability of employees to use technology will be supporting factors to increase the number of customers and the number of transactions.

### **Analysis of BSI webseries contents**

Harmoni Cinta is the first series of web series produced by BSI. Harmoni Cinta is more focused on affirming the company's brand identity as a leading Islamic bank in Indonesia along with the formation of BSI from the merger of three Indonesian Islamic commercial banks.

Image 2. Scene showing corporate culture in “Harmoni Cinta”



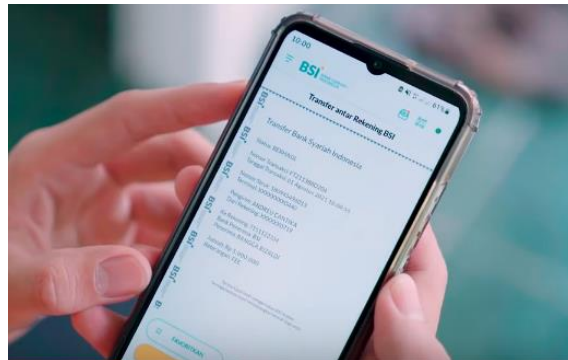
In several scenes of "Harmony of Love", this web series emphasizes the Islamic corporate identity which is upheld by BSI people. Despite the changes in the composition of ownership and management structure, BSI still has a strong commitment to the development of Islamic finance in Indonesia. The main characters had roles as BSI employees, highlighting the Islamic and professional corporate culture.

The second web series is Griya Ajar Cinta. There is continuity between Harmoni Cinta and the Griya Ajar Cinta web series, because one of the characters (Bisma) has appeared



in *Harmoni Cinta*. The emphasis of this mini series is on home financing products aimed at the millennial generation and generation Z. *Griya Ajar Cinta* also provides education to the younger generation about financial planning. The audience is taught that young people have to think about the future by having a proper house at a young age. BSI offers financing products that are a solution to these needs.

Image 2. Product placement in “Hai Elsa”



The third web series “Hi, Elsa” emphasizes the convenience offered by the mobile banking application to access various BSI products. The existence of an application on the cellphone makes it easier for various transactions such as savings and fund transfers. Meanwhile, “Mendadak Ganteng” aims to inspire the younger generation to develop creativity and an entrepreneurial spirit. The product offered for business pioneers is working capital financing. In addition to promoting working capital financing products, “Mendadak Ganteng” also illustrates that to develop a business, it takes hard work and strong teamwork.

In addition, Islamic values in each web series are shown by the clothes of the actors who wear Islamic attires and contain Islamic values, both worship and muamalah. Each video is also inserted with the BSI logo watermark as an affirmation of brand identity.

## **RESULT AND CONCLUSION**

Web series is one form of new media that is used as a marketing medium in the digital era because it is cost efficient and has a wider reach. Web series exists to meet consumer needs for proper entertainment.

Bank Syariah Indonesia as a business entity that targets the young generation of productive age uses web series as one of its digital marketing mediums. The web series

produced by BSI present stories that are close to young people life, and are wrapped in Islamic values. In its web series series, BSI demonstrates the affirmation of the company's brand identity and introduces its products to the audience such as, mobile banking applications, home financing, and working capital financing. The product is placed in scene of the web series as indirect advertisement put into costumers' mind.

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