

Understanding Business Model of Digital Journalism in Indonesia

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Abstract

The transformation in the media landscape in Indonesia is underscored by the emergence of digital-centric media entities and a new mode of news production distinctly divergent from traditional journalism. The purpose of this study is to examine the evolving business model of digital journalism, a sector experiencing rapid growth following the advent of the internet, social media, and the consolidation of online journalism since 2010. Employing a qualitative-descriptive method, this research is designed to capture the digital journalism business model in Indonesia's post-traditional print and broadcast media systems. From 2021 to 2023, the authors meticulously observed the contents and management of selected news media outlets, conducted semi-structured interviews, and gathered pertinent documents. The key question of this study centers on the nature of the business model underpinning journalism on digital platforms and its repercussions for the interest of news production and publication. The study reveals that business models for digital news media remain unstandardized, and the ecosystem of platform-based journalism has yet to achieve a healthy climate. From the perspective of digital news consumption, the prevailing culture of gratuitous (free) news culture and the concern of keeping trusted news media pose significant obstacles for news corporations in sustaining their operations.

Keywords: business model; digital journalism; free-access news; news; news verification

Abstrak

Transformasi pada arsitektur media di Indonesia ditandai semaraknya organisasi media berbasis digital dan produksi berita yang berbeda jauh dengan di era jurnalisme konvensional. Paper ini ingin mendiskusikan model bisnis berita digital di Indonesia, yang semarak pasca revolusi internet, media sosial dan menguatnya jurnalisme daring tahun 2010. Riset ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif-deskriptif. Metode ini dipilih karena mempertimbangkan cakupan data riset yang luas, melingkupi perkembangan jurnalisme online pasca disrupsi di media cetak dan penyiaran. Peneliti melakukan observasi terhadap sejumlah kanal media siber, melakukan wawancara mendalam dan pengumpulan dokumen terkait sepanjang tahun 2021-2023. Pertanyaan utama yang dijawab dalam riset ini adalah bagaimana model bisnis jurnalisme platform digital dan implikasinya pada tuntutan kerja produksi berita jurnalisme. Riset ini menemukan model bisnis media digital belum baku dan ekosistem jurnalisme berbasis platform digital belum tumbuh. Dari aspek kerja produksi dan diseminasi berita, budaya konsumsi berita gratisan dan tuntutan agar tetap dipercaya menjadi tantangan bagi korporasi jurnalisme digital untuk menjaga keberlanjutannya.

Kata Kunci: akses berita gratis; berita; jurnalisme digital; model bisnis; verifikasi berita

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INTRODUCTION

Over the past two decades, digital journalism has experienced a significant evolution both in Indonesia and globally, as evidenced by previous studies (Braun & Eklund, 2019; Carpes da Silva & Sanseverino, 2020; Fink, 2019; Saidah, 2021; Zhang, 2019). Along with the transformation of technology from print-based and broadcast frequencies to a single internet-based platform, two important differences have emerged between journalistic professionals and those who use conventional and digital journalism (Richard, 2022, pp. 1–2). Firstly, the internet provides a practical and unlimited space for news dissemination, with just one screen. The internet allows journalists to carry out direct and fast interactions with their audiences, including planning and evaluating news. Secondly, the internet is a space for the cheapest dissemination of news, eliminating paper raw materials and broadcast transmission, which is full of extensive hardware (Nurlatifah & Irwansyah, 2019). Richard (2022) defines digital journalism as the activity of producing and disseminating journalistic products, which uses internet-based platforms, whether in the form of websites or social media.

With those issues in mind, this paper discusses the digital journalism business model in Indonesia, catalyzed by the Internet technology revolution, social media, and the consolidation of online journalism. The advent of the digital era has witnessed a marked increase in the number of internet users and the frequency of internet utilization in Indonesia, leading to a surge in information consumption through digital media platforms. According to Setyowati (2020) internet users in Indonesia, it reached 196.7 million, or almost 70% of the population. Internet penetration has also reached 72% of Indonesia. The COVID-19 pandemic since 2020 has caused print and broadcast-based media corporations that rely on advertising and paper as raw materials to experience a crisis and require them to migrate to internet platforms. Two newspapers, namely *Suara Pembaruan* and *Koran Tempo*, are good examples of web-based information services that are the new advantage of both media.

Meanwhile, digital journalism is experiencing a rapid revolution through the presence of social media such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram. Those platforms support publication and audience engagement in a more attractive way. Amid the rise of disinformation, news on digital platforms is challenged by verification work and providing in-depth information, namely fact-checking, to keep its relevance. Fact-checking is part of digital journalism, as highlighted by Nurlatifah and Irwansyah (2019, p. 122) underscoring the critical need for accuracy and depth in the era of digital information exchange.

The landscape of digital journalism in Indonesia is in flux, evolving with technological developments and shifts in audience behaviors. News production, which requires various conditions, such as the completeness of 5W + 1H, is currently no longer implemented as indicated by the digital era, which demands the new ability to present information on various platforms (Arrese, 2016; Fletcher & Nielsen, 2017, p. 1173; Franklin, 2014). The ability to present data and/or information in a visual form that can be easily shared on social media and trigger comments from internet users (Harcup & O'Neill, 2017). Moreover, journalists must also be able to examine information circulating on the internet because they should act as a fact checker. Such transformative shifts have profound implications for the news business model, affecting the media structure, production techniques, and ethical frameworks.

At a macro level, journalism in the digital society generally has two opposite conditions. First, it is an information product related to the public interest, has a social mission, and is oriented to control economic and political practices to make the nation's life more intelligent. Second, it is information production work that has business value, part of the creative industry that supports the economic life of its professional workers. Initially, the news presented on

conventional media platforms was a product of journalism with a high ideal of quality, but due to business interest, the production and dissemination models experienced a crisis according to fast information consumer demand. In this case, digital disruption forces journalism producers to carry out more practical production experiments. Digital journalism activities not only involve journalists but also content creators.

This paper maps the digital journalism business model in three aspects. First, the type of platform that is growing for the production, dissemination, promotion, and marketing of news. An identification of the current phenomenon of journalism in online or digital media, which is visible in the development of news distribution models on the internet in Indonesia. Second, sources of funding, which is linked to web-based journalism with social media as a new business model in digital journalism. Third, explore the competencies and qualifications of creative workers in the digital journalism industry.

According to Franklin (2014, p. 481) and Richard (2022, pp. 1–2), digital journalism is characterized by three things: (1) news production is decentralized, no longer with the old bureaucratic system, (2) diversity of news dissemination from the single web or publisher model, to the collaboration model via aggregator platforms, (3) changes in human resource qualifications and skills needed for journalists or content creators. If we observe in the last ten years, the news model on the internet is not always fast news like Detik.com, but has developed a data-based in-depth story model. More, the funding has shifted from traditional advertising revenues to models like Google AdSense (Evens et al., 2017).

The advent of the Internet has rendered news reporting more efficient, eliminating journalists' need to physically interact with sources or be present at the event location. Remote interviews through digital communication technologies, video conferencing, and citations from social media statuses have become new standard practices within online journalism. The ease of accessing current issues through conversations in social network groups or trending topics online has significantly enhanced the information-gathering process for journalists (Ambardi et al., 2014). In line with Suciati and Puspita (2019), posits that internet technology is revolutionizing journalistic practices in four fundamental respects: firstly, by altering the essence of news content and form; secondly, by transforming journalistic methodologies and the integration of technological tools; thirdly, by initiating profound changes in newsroom management and the broader industry landscape; and fourthly, by redefining the nature of news and reshaping the dynamics between various stakeholders within the news ecosystem, including news organizations, journalists, audiences, sources, competitors, advertisers, and governmental bodies.

The digital media landscape in Indonesia has evolved significantly over the past two decades. Suciati and Puspita (2019) delineate this progression through three distinct phases: the initial transition of news from print to online platforms, a subsequent emphasis on the velocity of reporting, and finally, the adoption of a multimedia and/or multiplatform approach, incorporating data, interactive visuals, and social media. The genesis of this transformation dates back to 1995, marked by Republika.co.id's inaugural online news publication in August, closely followed by Kompas.com in September. During this nascent stage, instantaneous news reporting was relatively uncharted in the Indonesian context.

Meanwhile, the pursuit of immediacy in news reporting gained momentum in 1998, coinciding with the onset of political reforms epitomized by Detik.com's commitment to real-time political news dissemination. This era saw a departure from the traditional 5W+1H journalistic framework in favor of a 3W formula to expedite the publication process, even at the expense of completeness. Sapto Anggoro, one of Detik.com's founders, posited that the platform's readership was tuned to the intrinsic association of online media with rapidity. The

recent COVID-19 pandemic has also prompted an acceleration of adapting how journalistic tasks are carried out, both in the newsroom and on the ground (Musfialdy et al., 2024). The distinct real-time and up-to-date nature of digital news, as pioneered by Detik.com, set it apart from its old counterparts and catalyzed the emergence of other fast-reporting online media entities, the sites *Okezone.com* (2007), *Ini.com* (2008), and *Viva.co* which was previously named *Vivanews.com* (2008).

However, this emphasis on speed has not been without its pitfalls. The imperative to report news swiftly has sometimes led to compromises in data accuracy and ethical breaches within the Indonesian online journalism sector. The race to be the foremost in reporting events has precipitated issues of factual reliability, with premature publications of unverified and incomplete information. Moreover, the propensity to utilize unauthenticated information from social media has further exacerbated the challenge, with subsequent investigations revealing the falsehood of such data (Wahyudi & Sujoko, 2024).

The dissemination of inaccurate news poses significant reputational risks for media organizations. For instance, Tempo, a nationally recognized media outlet renowned for its comprehensive coverage, operates an online platform, Tempo.com, which has achieved rapid news delivery. However, the quality of this rapid dissemination does not parallel that of its print counterpart. This discrepancy stems from the pressure on Tempo journalists to meet the accelerated pace and immediacy demanded by online media, alongside striving to augment readership figures. Consequently, the reporting on Tempo.co often elicits mixed reactions from media analysts concerning its accuracy and is perceived as inferior to the publication's traditional print version. This trend exemplifies a broader issue within online news media, where the imperative for speed compromises journalistic integrity and accuracy, threatening the credibility of the media entity (Maulina, 2019).

The reliance on social media as a primary news source is becoming increasingly prevalent and is regarded as a natural progression in the public's demand for swift information dissemination. According to Rosemarwati and Lindawati (2019), motivations for online media's use as a news source encompass the ease and speed of accessing current information (43.7%), the daily provision of the latest updates (39.4%), the ability for repeated access (36.6%), the extensive and diverse user base (35.2%), and the offering of exclusive insights not available through traditional media channels (15.5%). Despite these advantages, most online media journalists acknowledge that information sourced from social media content constitutes secondary data, warranting cautious trust and verification.

The employment of social media introduces potential risks when due diligence in fact-checking and verification of acquired information is neglected. A survey conducted by Maverick for the London School of Public Relations Jakarta revealed that only half of the respondents (138 out of 321) affirmed conducting verifications of information sourced from the internet prior to its publication (Ambardi et al., 2014). It also shows that more than 30% of respondents (from a total of 77 respondents) said they cared about the information disseminated by an account and ignored its identity (Rosemarwati & Lindawati, 2019). Further, the study illuminated that over 30% of respondents (from a total of 77) prioritized the content published by an account over the authenticity of the account's identity. Integrating social media-derived content into news narratives is poised to redefine digital journalism and impose a consequential funding diversity (De-Lima-Santos et al., 2022).

The latter stage, as delineated by Suciati and Puspita (2019) signifies a departure from the erstwhile emphasis on the rapidity of news production and dissemination. Contemporary online journalism, exemplified by platforms such as Tirto, eschews the urgency of immediate

reporting in favor of a more deliberative approach, leveraging infographics and interactive visuals. This evolution repositions social media from a mere conduit for news promotion and linkage to an integral news platform for nuanced news narration, utilizing video graphics that amalgamate text and graphics into cohesive, animated narratives.

Infographics are an attempt by the news media to explain facts so that readers don't get bored when reading in-depth text-only reports that are long-writing. Reading in-depth news requires time and analysis, so the presence of infographics provides a new space for readers to understand the content of the news finding out the value points of the published news. Steps like this are actually very effective in attracting readers, especially as infographics can be used to attract news by posting them on social media connected to news links. Deploying infographics, particularly when linked to social media, proves highly effective in captivating the audience's attention to the news (Indainanto, 2021).

Aside from infographics, another current development is the use of machines or automated journalism to search and group a large amount of data as raw material for news. Ariestyani (2021) observed that journalists' duties in the newsroom are assisted by artificial intelligence (AI), the use of data search robots as pioneered by Beritagar.id. Journalists save time copying and manually researching data, spending more time making calls to sources and following up on data. However, the use of AI is not without problems, including challenges to news ethics. This is proven in the results of research by Ariestyani (2021), which a robot journalist named Petruk, used by Beritagar.id, did not carry independent practices as required for human journalists. Petruk will continue to produce news from data obtained from online media, even though the content is biased toward certain interests.

In the third phase, a new form of journalism characterizes free for readers to make opinion columns. If, in the old media, opinions were newsroom products that also reported and presented facts about events, this is not the case in the new media. In the new media era, news sites as mainstream media still provide space for outside writers or non-journalists to write their opinions or thoughts on certain public issues. Hence, there is a discussion forum as a space for residents to write opinions or even report news.

Further, there are sites that specialize in presenting opinions, such as Magdalene, an advocacy media specialized for women in Indonesia. In this third phase, content aggregator sites were also developed. It began to develop in the second phase, where sites duplicated news stories or shared links from their official news sites. Apart from sites that collaborate with news aggregator such as Google, there are also sites that do not ask for permission to re-upload their news, which later invites ethical and even legal issues. In the third phase, content aggregator sites emerged such as Line Today (Suciati & Puspita, 2019).

In line with those observations, this paper aims to enrich the discourse on the current state of digital journalism in Indonesia by dissecting its business models and evaluating their impacts on editorial working management. The three aspects that will be highlighted are the type of platform, funding sources, and editorial working demands. We, then, contribute to the lack of scholarly investigations into the dynamic digital news business model. We found past studies paid solely to the transition of journalism practices from traditional to cyber media, often neglecting the analysis of the underlying news business models. Prior studies (i.e. Franklin, 2014; Nurlatifah & Irwansyah, 2019; Sjøvaag, 2016; Yusuf, 2016) have addressed specific facets, such as news typology or staff qualifications, without delving into the broader economic frameworks underpinning digital media operations.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a qualitative-descriptive approach. This method was chosen because it takes into account the broad scope of research data, covering the development of online or digital platform-based journalism in Indonesia, with a strong emphasis on its business models. The main question answered in this research is what the business model of digital platform-based news is and what implications are for its quality of news production. To answer those questions, we focused on exploring and analyzing data from several selected online media that have developed innovative and engaged with platforms, including Detik.com, Suara.com, and Tirto.id. By paying attention to the phenomenon of migration from print to online media, the authors also looked at Kompas.com as a site that accompanies the printed version of the Kompas daily newspaper (Dirgantara et al., 2020). The research spanned from 2021 to 2023, and it was conducted primarily within Yogyakarta and Jakarta, the two cities with extensive development of online news media institutions (Saidah, 2021).

In alignment with established qualitative research methodologies (Creswell & Creswell, 2017; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011), the steps of this research go through three stages as follows: First, document collection related to the current development of digital journalism in Indonesia from 2021 to 2023. A database of previous academic articles and studies related to online news media was also compiled to enrich perspectives and discourse around this issue. Second, to review selected digital news sites, examining the categories of content they are developing, editorial management, funding sources, and the use of social media. Third, semi-structured interviews with relevant stakeholders, especially media managers and journalist associations. Apart from clarifying documents to develop dimensions of internal and external news media in 2021-2023, in-depth interviews also function as a form of triangulation to ensure that the documents of online news media development in Indonesia obtained are valid. The interview was held around September-October 2021. The informants were the people in charge of the media at the managerial level. The collected data is analyzed by using concepts of digital journalism, social media, media ethics, etc. Meanwhile, conclusions and recommendations were made after the data analysis step. In carrying out the data analysis, the authors referred to the qualitative data analysis recommended by (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Digital Journalism Business Model

Through a comprehensive analysis involving scrutiny of online news portals, this paper found a number of trends in changing news media business models from the conventional to the digital model in Indonesia. Informant 1 said digital journalism shows a business model that is no longer a single-exclusive model, and there are many choices of management structure, funding sources, and also human staffing qualification.

Digital platforms are distinguished by their inherent novelty and exercise discretion in selecting their journalistic models. This diversity is pivotal as it prevents a homogenization of content delivery, which could potentially confound the audience regarding the distinct editorial stances of different outlets. A lack of differentiation might erode the journalistic integrity and, by extension, the credibility of digital media (Informant 1, personal communication, September 10, 2021).

Furthermore, the Tempo Group exemplifies the strategic pivot towards digitization, not merely in content delivery but also through the exploration of ancillary business ventures, such as financial management training programs. This adaptation underscores the expansive potential of digital media to innovate beyond traditional journalistic revenue streams. Informant

1 acknowledges advertising as a primary revenue source. However, apart from advertising, the revenue model has expanded to include client engagement models, namely, customer activation. Our Informant 1 also emphasized that the digital journalism business is now adopting artificial intelligence, marking a sophisticated revolution.

Another example of news media transformation from conventional to digital is Jakarta Post. Koswaraputra et al. (2019) identified a parallel transformation in the editorial and business of The Jakarta Post according to the digital media landscape. If readers from abroad are still more interested in subscribing to paid content, while domestic readers are likely to seek free access to news items. News promotion of Jakarta Post is now starting to be done through social media while relationships with customers are carried out through online activities, for example, seminars and sending news via email. Jakarta Post's source of income is starting to shift from conventional advertising to paid content, paid premium content. The editorial staff has added about 30 people with digital talent for positions as journalists, web designers, web developers, social media teams, and photographers.

Aside from a single news media company like Tempo, we found a network business model of digital journalism. For instance, Ayo Network's operations in Bandung (Saidah, 2021). This digital media network connects its business to other big cities such as Yogyakarta, Surabaya, etc. The media group manages local and national news content provided by a large number of citizens or writers from outside the editorial team. For news created by citizens, if they reach a certain number of clicks, Ayo Bandung will give a cash prize, and their news is massively promoted via Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube. In addition, Ayo Bandung also offers other non-news businesses such as public relations consultancy, social media analysis, media buying, and search engine marketing. Apart from that, offline marketing is carried out by holding writing competitions and roadshows to secondary schools.

Informant 2 emphasized changes in audience behavior after the spread of online media and social media, which triggered a new model of business in journalism. Any conventional media is no longer the main source of information for the general public. Social media, which allows anyone to become a creator and source of news, has replaced the classic media role of information provider. Social media allows to voice what readers think directly to the editor and to the public (Informant 2, personal communication, September 10, 2021)

The authors find there is no standard for digital media business in Indonesia, seeing that everyone is still looking for a fit model. For example, Tempo did not originate purely from online media but was formerly a famous printed magazine. Similarly, during its 26 years of existence, the Liputan6.com site started as part of/from the famous Liputan 6 news of SCTV broadcaster, or it was originally a complement to the conventional SCTV. In an effort to adapt to digital business, Tempo magazine and Liputan6.com are taking steps by collaborating with other news media, other news organizations, and the public. The two media sites apply interactive platforms as well as social media in the sense that they have realized a multiplatform position by not only presenting information in one single news format.

Overall, the presence of the internet and social media influences the quality of journalism. All informants agreed that high-quality content is important, but to achieve the desired quality, digital media companies must be strong regarding capital investment and news production teams. Informant 3 assessed that digital technology means a news media company must have a multi-platform, and each platform must have its own business model. In this sense, publishers serve as content purveyors to reflect the diverse requirements of various platforms and audience habits. Informant 3 articulates that content creation on the web necessitates alignment with Google trends, while platforms like TikTok demand adherence to their specific trending

narratives, highlighting the multiplicity of content providers necessitated by the digital age. Publishers are now tasked with tailoring content to fit the unique demands of each platform (Informant 3, personal communication, September 10, 2021).

Informant 3 further observes that managers of old media outlets are now compelled to navigate the complexities of digital advertising and other ancillary business elements, given the prevalent use of IT companies and Google for ad placements. The revenue model has shifted dramatically, with media outlets receiving only a 25 percent share of advertising revenues, a stark contrast to the past when conventional media wielded complete control over news dissemination and advertising income. The advent of digital media introduced reliance on tools like Ad-sense, but the landscape has evolved to include Ads Manager models, offering clients the flexibility to set their own product pricing.

There is also a digital aggregator working model where the media site appears on the front page of Google (when people open a mobile device), meaning that news or content that is searched for through the title on Google is a lucrative business model. It also means that the biggest visitors to media are from Google, and Google has 5 platforms that are used to disseminate articles to readers. A 2020 survey in 40 countries regarding media income sources during the COVID-19 pandemic showed that commercial advertising received the highest aggregation from/to Google, followed by sponsored content and grants (Informant 2 and 3, personal communication, September 10, 2021).

The authors see that the digital journalism business requires an understanding of how search engines work, which relies heavily on organic search systems. Meanwhile, Informant 2 said that Google and Facebook are always changing their algorithms, so she has to be aware of it (Informant 2, personal communication, September 10, 2021). The digital news media must present content that attracts viewers and brings communities in a globalized sharing culture (Karlsson et al., 2022). It can be done by, among others, recruiting influencers or creating journalistic video content with themes that attract viewers, as well as subscription content with payment methods via digital wallets, where the digital wallet is part of the global media companies. In Indonesia, involving marketing influencers is increasingly common because they have a huge number of followers, engagement, and creative content styles. Strategies such as not paying a lot of taxes may be one of the reasons why the media ends up collaborating a lot with influencers. Apart from applying subscription management created with payment methods via digital wallets, providing content at the lowest possible price, for example, one thousand per day for viewers, is increasingly pivotal.

Beyond audience engagement, Informant 3 points out that financial sustenance for digital journalism ventures can be sourced through grants from both domestic and international non-governmental organizations. This approach typically involves collaborative initiatives with other social entities focused on spotlighting specific societal issues.

I have acquaintances who oversee media, such as Watchdoc. Their space is divided into two teams: one responsible for documentation and the other focused on revenue assistance. They seek financial support from groups and NGOs, while friends can also obtain funding from benefactors and similar sources. There are multiple methods that can be employed to obtain finances. By utilizing the Kitabisa program, we can distribute high-quality news. In the current advanced technology, there are abundant options for individuals involved in digital media to obtain alternative revenues (Informant 3, personal communication, September 10, 2021).

Informant 4 illustrates another facet of navigating financial challenges in digital journalism. When advertising revenues fall short of covering editorial expenses, Konde.co seeks the support of international donors and partnerships with NGO activists. Moreover, Konde.co embarks on initiatives such as offering journalistic training to women activists, including domestic workers

and NGO employees, leveraging these educational programs as additional revenue streams. The inception of media ventures often begins with utilizing free social media platforms to gauge community engagement before transitioning to a dedicated online presence—a cost-effective strategy compared to immediate website development. Finally, as part of digital-based news production and dissemination in the United States, there’s a burgeoning trend of media outlets operating exclusively through social media channels like YouTube, Twitter, and Facebook, distributing a single video across multiple platforms for broader reach (Informant 4, personal communication, October 5, 2021).

Arriving from those arguments, this paper concludes that digital journalism fosters a new ecosystem for news business models, simultaneously catalyzing opportunities for business diversification beyond traditional news content delivery.

“Free News”, Speed and Verification

This study found two causal factors in the transformation of conventional to digital journalism: the less innovation of classic media and its obligation to pay. These two factors also mark a new journalism business model. In general, distribution and access to news on digital media are almost all free. Table 1 shows the shifts from conventional to digital news media in Indonesia by comparing their characteristic differences.

Table 1 demonstrates the shift in technology and the business model of news media in digital society. It primarily addressed that the advent of digital technology has precipitated a paradigm and culture shift in news consumption, relegating traditional media formats to a secondary status in terms of content provision. However, the free news delivery model has triggered financial problems related to guaranteeing the continuity of an expensive news production cost. Another crucial issue is the rapid growth of the so-called click-bait-oriented news media model with less content quality control.

During the last five years, digital journalism has started to adopt diverse readers, no longer based on speed but on accuracy and verification. The COVID-19 pandemic, for example, is an opportunity for both old and digital media to regain public trust, one of which is by acting as a fact checker, checking the truth of information spread on social media. Some challenges faced by digital media in carrying out this role include accusations that the media takes sides with one particular group or makes sources unwilling to talk.

To tackle those two issues, we agree with informant 1 and informant 2, which highlight the role of quality news literacy in enlightening the general readers/internet consumers about the inherent costs associated with producing quality news, which is seldom free. Addressing this issue, however, is a complex endeavor that demands a collective effort of stakeholders

Table 1. Differences of conventional and digital journalism

Dimension	Conventional	Digital
Platform	Print, broadcasting, all offline medium	Website, social media platforms, podcast
Revenue	Advertising, direct sales. Paid platform	AdSense, Google mediated team. Free platform
Audience engagement	Subscribers, readers, One way interaction	Subscribers, readers, news creator. Multi way interaction
Dissemination	Pre-produced, delayed (packed)	Real time creation (unpacked)
Content source	Professional produced, limited	Brand and user generated, unlimited
Communication	Direct mail, real statistic based	E-mail, social media, SEO based

Source: Compilation of references, 2022

(social media platforms, civil societies, and governments). More, Mardjianto (2018) accentuates the need for media sustainability, advocating for general reader education on the value of ethical, comprehensive, and accurate journalism, which necessitates significant financial and professional investment. The professional skills of journalists and media personnel are pivotal, as they are not only tasked with content creation but also with the ethical deployment of news technology. Haq and Fadilah (2018) seen that transformation of Kompas into a multi-platform digital entity, including Kompas.com and Kompas.id, reflects an effort of the national company to sustain their journalistic culture within the newsroom, transitioning from traditional methods to a digital-centric work environment over an extended period

Yusuf (2016) research delves into the intricate dynamics of news production within digital magazines, focusing on Detik.com, renowned for its real-time news coverage, and Tempo, which originated as a traditional print magazine. At Detik.com, a distinct team manages digital news production, while Tempo adopts a more integrated approach, utilizing personnel familiar with both technical and aesthetic nuances for the conversion process to various digital formats such as PDF, EPUB, CBR, or CBZ. Tempo retains the same personnel for news production as its print counterpart.

Conventional media and journalism confront challenges posed by the advent of digital journalism, which offers swifter access to accurate information. Initially, the emphasis was on speed, leading to a competitive environment among digital news outlets to deliver breaking news promptly. However, in response to public scrutiny, editorial consciousness in digital news production has emerged, prioritizing the maintenance of quality through rigorous verification, fact-checking journalism, and the promotion of a slower news production model, along with the proliferation of in-depth news, as said by Informant 2 below.

Previously, the emphasis was placed on speed, whereas now speed remains a crucial factor, but we must also ensure the validity of the data. The paramount factor is the swiftness of news dissemination, as individuals tend to share the most expeditious news they can readily obtain with others. To achieve equilibrium, one must first verify. This occurs in the case of significant events, such as catastrophes. If the information does not originate from an authoritative source, it is advisable to refrain from sharing it (Informant 2, personal communication, September 10, 2021).

In short, our findings align with Abrar et al. (2022) exploration of linking digital news business models with new ethical considerations. Formerly passive recipients of messages, individuals have transitioned into active message producers, exercising their discretion to select news based on personal trust. Despite this shift, media organizations remain bound by ethical responsibilities in their news production. Despite evolving work paradigms, the journalistic code of ethics continues to serve as a cornerstone for guiding the interaction between media entities and society. Notably, a strong public expectation persists for the media and journalists to function as the fourth pillar of democracy, operating independently from political authority, as emphasized by Syah (2014). This role entails watchdog functions, amplifying the voices of marginalized groups, and ensuring sustainable development.

We find fact-checking has now become an integral part of the newsroom as a tool to keep trusted news. Triggered by hoaxes on social media, people started looking for media to verify information. Misinformation and unverified information, such as fake capture are spreading on various social media platforms, such as Facebook and Twitter, which cannot fully be assessed. In response to this problem, trusted digital journalists adopted a new team to play the role of fact checker (Informant 1 and 2, personal communication, September 10, 2021). For instance, when there was a lot of disinformation on WhatsApp groups, the Liputan6.com newsroom created a rival platform, namely a fact-checking platform that facilitates discussions between

people reporting hoaxes adding tips on verifying photos, videos, or others.

An analysis of fact-checked content on prominent news media platforms in Indonesia, such as Kompas.com and Tirto.id, spanning October to November 2018, Nurlatifah et al. (2019) found that the fact-checking themes raised were varied, from social, legal, and political. The fact-checking methodology is a confirmation by interviewing sources representing official institutions (generally government institutions) and comparing them with information from news that has been broadcast using applications such as Google Reverse Image.

In short, there is a dynamic model of news media in digital platforms and their business models are changing from their conventional formula. In surviving their business and keeping the trust of the public, we found the tandem of the digital payment formula for online news access and fact-checking challenged news media and digital journalism. We agree with media scholars, such as Ripolles (2021) and Nurlatifah and Irwansyah (2019, p. 84) that the so-called 'fact-checking journalism' and the introduction of a digital subscription to news media are a new trend that aims to improve public behavior in digital media use and improve the quality of journalism. A specific news item produced by fact-checkers is a trusted news initiative, which is different from casual news, which simply relies on quotes from general sources.

CONCLUSION

This study found that the digital journalism business model has increasingly developed in Indonesia over the last ten years. It is the activity of producing and disseminating journalistic products, which uses internet-based platforms, whether in the form of news websites or social media. As media technology transforms from print-based and broadcast frequencies towards a single internet-based global platform, two important differences emerged in the current journalism business. First, the internet provides a practical and unlimited space for the dissemination of information throughout the world, with just one screen. The internet drives media managers, including journalists, to carry out direct and fast interactions, including planning and evaluating news. Second, the internet has become a cheap space for news media dissemination. Production and distribution do not require raw paper materials, let alone broadcast transmission, which is full of hardware.

This study further found a rapid change in the news media landscape, marked by the proliferation of digital-based media organizations and news production that is far away from the analog era. However, there are two controversial issues that need attention. First, the issue of business models that are not yet standardized and how digital platform-based news media and journalism can grow healthily as economic institutions. Advertising is still the main source of income, but media managers also need to maintain direct relationships with customers digitally amidst the culture of consuming free news, keeping digital meetings, etc. Second, maintaining the quality and accuracy of news on digital platforms. This study further finds that digital platforms provide a new space for seeking funding to cover the high cost of news creation, for example, training and consultant activities, so that there is sustainability through efforts to maintain the loyalty of netizens. We recommend further research on the recent application and the effectiveness of data tracking through fact-checking to ensure minimal errors in digital news production. This work pattern receives assistance from the Google platform through the Google News Initiative or through the Meta Group, which funds fact-checking work. In addition, we see a pressing need for the Indonesian Press Council to update cyber media codes of ethics to align more closely with the state of digital journalism in Indonesia.

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