

Managing value proposition of small medium enterprise through digital business communication

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ABSTRACT

Digital business communication has proven to be a determining factor in increasing the competitiveness and adaptability of SMEs in the midst of a dynamic digitalization era. In addition, the use of the Value Proposition framework in digital marketing strategies has shown significant effectiveness in expanding reach and increasing customer engagement in local product-based SMEs. This study aims to analyze how Gang Gowes implements its value proposition through strategic business communication on Instagram in the context of bicycle tourism in Solo, Indonesia. The demand for tourism, sports, and culinary experiences has grown beyond just recreation and health, but also the desire to socialize, create, upload, and share content on social media platforms, especially Instagram. This study uses a qualitative approach by analyzing Gang Gowes' Instagram posts and conducting in-depth customer interviews. Through the BMC analysis, we found that Gang Gowes, as a bicycle rental business, implements a value proposition by differentiating itself from other similar bicycle rental business competitors. Gang Gowes offers a spontaneous experience, aesthetic value, and quick services. Furthermore, the use of interactive communication through Instagram provides interesting visualization, routes travelled, and stories built by customers that provide a value proposition to consumers effectively. This study offers a value proposition implementation model that can be replicated by tourism businesses based on experience and visual narratives, a business that can build attractiveness as well as emotional engagement with its consumers.

Keywords: Business communication; value proposition; Instagram marketing; digital branding

Mengelola proposisi nilai usaha kecil menengah melalui komunikasi bisnis digital

ABSTRAK

Komunikasi bisnis digital terbukti menjadi faktor penentu dalam meningkatkan daya saing dan adaptabilitas UKM di tengah era digitalisasi yang dinamis. Selain itu, penggunaan kerangka Value Proposition dalam strategi pemasaran digital telah menunjukkan efektivitas signifikan dalam memperluas jangkauan dan meningkatkan keterlibatan pelanggan pada UKM berbasis produk lokal. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis bagaimana Gang Gowes mengimplementasikan proposisi nilainya melalui komunikasi bisnis strategis berbasis Instagram dalam konteks wisata sepeda di Solo, Indonesia. Permintaan akan pengalaman pariwisata, olahraga, dan kuliner telah berkembang lebih dari sekedar rekreasi dan kesehatan, melainkan keinginan untuk bersosialisasi, membuat, mengunggah, dan berbagi konten di platform media sosial, khususnya Instagram. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan melakukan analisis terhadap postingan Instagram Gang Gowes dan melakukan wawancara mendalam pelanggan. Melalui analisis Business Model Canvas, kami menemukan bahwa Gang Gowes sebagai bisnis persewaan sepeda menerapkan value proposition dengan cara membedakan diri dengan kompetitor bisnis persewaan sepeda lainnya yang serupa. Gang Gowes menawarkan pengalaman spontan, nilai estetika, dan pelayanan yang cepat. Proposisi nilai ini tidak hanya memberikan keunggulan bagi Gang Gowes namun juga memperkuat identitas bisnis di kota Solo. Lebih lanjut, penggunaan komunikasi interaktif melalui Instagram memberikan visualisasi yang menarik, rute yang dilalui, cerita yang dibangun pelanggan memberikan proporsi nilai kepada konsumen secara efektif. Penelitian ini menawarkan model implementasi value proposition yang dapat direplikasi oleh bisnis pariwisata berbasis pengalaman dan narasi visual, sebuah usaha yang bisa membangun daya tarik sekaligus kedekatan emosional dengan konsumennya.

Kata-kata kunci: Komunikasi bisnis; value proposition; pemasaran Instagram; digital branding

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INTRODUCTION

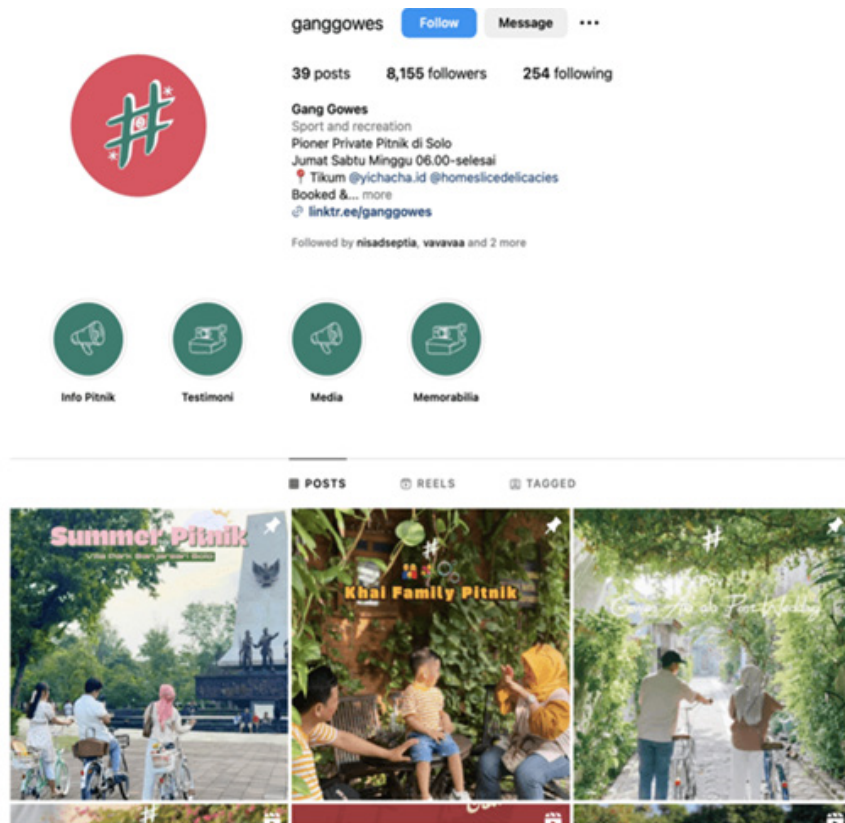
The bicycle rental business appears as a promising business opportunity that requires relatively low capital for SME (Small & Medium-sized Enterprises) business actors. To offer greater convenience for domestic and foreign tourists, actors in the tourism industry have to integrated online and offline services (Sá et al., 2022).

Statistically, based on data from the Solo City Culture and Tourism Office, the number of tourist visits to Solo City has reached 4,515,514 people as of October 31, 2024, from a target of 1.5 million tourists during 2024. Meanwhile, in 2022, the income from Solo City tourism reached more than IDR 60 billion. This proves that Solo City is one of the tourist destinations with local cultural characteristics and historical value. Thus, the potential for local tourism in Solo is very large, supported by a variety of attractions ranging from heritage tours at the Kasunanan Palace and the Laweyan batik center, to traditional culinary festivals such as klepon and timlo. Digital promotion through social media and reservation applications expands the reach. Annual cultural events such as the Solo Batik Carnival add to the dynamics of visits and further strengthen Solo's position as a leading, innovative and sustainable tourist destination. Furthermore, 22,300 local tourism

industry players in Solo City participated in domestic promotions. This indicates a dynamic tourism ecosystem by emphasizing the strength of local culture as the main identity.

Gang Goves business in Solo, is a pioneer in bicycle tourism services that offers a cycling experience package, where tourists can cycle along interesting routes with tour guides, photo and video documentation, culinary experience, prepared equipment, and cycling gear provided (Bram, 2024). Since the acquisition of its business license in August 2023, a micro-based small business in the field of sports and recreation named *Gang Goves* has become a trend resulting in service scheduling with a waiting list system every Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. Its Instagram account has been followed by 6,993 followers per May 29, 2024 with a reach of 181,662 accounts, and 571,889 impressions from accounts based in Surakarta, Sukoharjo, Bekasi, and Jakarta areas.

Gang Goves offers unique experience for tourists, where they can cycle through alleyways with a guide to discover hidden beautiful photo spots in Solo. The tour package includes training, Instagram-reel-worthy picture and video recording, and breakfast packages from selected partner restaurants; Homeslices Delicalices in Area 2 and Yi Cha Cha Hotpot & Café in Area 1 (Rey, 2024).



Source: Research Results, 2024

Figure 1. Screenshot of @ganggowes Instagram account

Gang Gowes romanticizes the little things through slow-living lifestyle. The cycling tour will bring visitors back to their childhood, where can enjoy homey moments with the community, creating a unique, memorable, and authentic impressions that are all captured in professional documentation. With creative innovation to improve guide services capabilities, route updates, documentation, culinary references, and workshops, *Gang Gowes* offers cycling sports and recreation services, while staying relevant and connected to the needs and desires of its customers by utilizing tourism resources. These measures show proper implementation of

value proposition into the operational activities of *Gang Gowes*.

Khair and Ma'ruf (2020) explained that Instagram is considered as the most popular social media to be one of the marketing tools in creating and increasing consumer awareness of a brand. Through Instagram, *Gang Gowes* utilizes various photo and video features, comments, captions, locations, hashtags, tagging and Instagram ads (Kusuma & Sugandi, 2018). This is a digital marketing strategy that allows the rapid dissemination of information, even in seconds (Trulline, 2021).

In an environment that consists of different components, two business stakeholders are within a community that lives in an open social system (Mamahani et al., 2018). A business can sustain when it shows added value to its products or services compared to those of competitors. Bicycle rental businesses provides proper infrastructure and recreation facilities. Several brands of bicycle rental businesses have been thriving in Indonesia since 2023, including Basikal View Bali, Moana Bike Tour, Lost in Jogja, and Jalan Bike. Besides investigating business communication using a business approach that is revealed in the value proposition, one of the components of the Business Model Canvas, this research also examined the business communication used by *Gang Gowes* on Instagram page as branding strategy.

In the article titled “Investigating the effects of a shared bike for tourism use on the tourist experience and its consequences,” it is explained that tourists who use bicycles during their trips tend to feel more satisfied with their experience and develop a sense of loyalty to the destination. They also experience feelings of enjoyment (hedonic) and perceive their experience as unique, which are important emotional aspects of their trip. Furthermore, the instrumental and affective values of shared bike use are positively related to hedonic and perceived

uniqueness experiences. Nevertheless, only perceived uniqueness has a favorable impact on destination loyalty, despite the positive effects of either hedonic and perceived uniqueness pose on satisfaction (C.-F. Chen & Huang, 2020). Meanwhile, another research on mountain bike tourism in the forests of Australia discusses that bike tourism will develop well in the future with new bike technologies, including electric bikes and newly handled route information technologies. It highlights the complexity of the market for mountain and other forms of bike tourism and the urgent need to develop more sophisticated tourism products rather than just more trails, and the combination of appealing recreational infrastructure (bike rental, service, and repair facilities, attractive areas, accommodation suited to the needs of mountain bikers, et cetera) (Pröbstl-Haider et al., 2017)

In article Culinary Tourism in Kutawaringin (Bandung): Structural Relationship Between Food Quality, Tourist Perceptions, And Culinary Tourism Satisfaction from Kusumawardhani et al. (2024) mention about food quality is a crucial aspect of the tourism industry. As Jokom et al., (2023) and Kotler and Keller (2021) note, it is the most significant factor in shaping a traveller’s culinary experience. The quality of culinary tourism products significantly influences tourist loyalty (Martina et al., 2023). Food plays a significant role in destination

tourism as it can shape travellers' perceptions of a place Park and Widyanta (2022) proposes that tourists' choice of destination is influenced by their perceived image, satisfaction with food, culinary quality, and the resulting impact on their behaviour. It is important to note that this is a subjective evaluation. A memorable food image of a destination opens up opportunities for future visits. Kaur and Kaur (2022) and Topczewska et al. (2022) believes that gastronomy tourism is growing in popularity in emerging destinations. Duarte Alonso et al. (2022) states that culinary management as a tourist product goes through a process of adaptation to the tourist destination market. Therefore, it is essential to understand the interaction between tourist perceptions and culinary quality to design satisfying culinary experiences that entice tourists to indulge in the culinary offerings repeatedly. A memorable food image of a destination opens up opportunities for future visits (Kaur & Kaur, 2022; Topczewska et al., 2022). Gang GOWES completed their service with breakfast food culinary at Solo. Gang GOWES has become a rental business with a bicycle like in Greece which implements "cycle-tourism" (Bakogiannis et al., 2020) and the attraction of tourist destinations in Taiwan through "bike-tourism" (C.-A. Chen & Lee, 2017).

Research on the implementation of value

propositions in tourism and experience-based service businesses has grown significantly over the past five years, particularly with rising interest in the *experience economy* (Pine & Gilmore, 1998) and *aesthetic consumption* (Schmitt, 1999). A study by Diansyah et al. (2023) revealed that motorcycle rental businesses in Bali can successfully enhanced customer loyalty through the integration Strategic Brand Communication.

Damayanti and Puspitasari (2024) use the Business Model Canvas (BMC) to explain the potential of heritage tourism as a business, selling "memories" like Gang GOWES, which uses cycling routes in Pasar Gede or Kampung Batik to create experiences with historical value. Meanwhile, Wardhani et al. (2024) found that Gen Z and millennials prefer digital-based marketing communications. These findings are supported by Indika and Jovita's (2017) research, which ties visual promotions on Instagram to attracting clients and providing business information. The main segment is younger target customers, such as Gen Z or Gen Millennials; this is supported by a study conducted by Djafarova and Bowes (2021) in the Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services, which shows the effectiveness of visual platforms such as Instagram and TikTok in encouraging emotional customer involvement. Meanwhile, Adner (2016) highlighted on the

role of collaborations between Gang Gowes and local cafes, which can lead to long-term collaboration and inclusion in the service. Sari et al. (2023) highlighted that aesthetic visual media and strong storylines might help Gang Gowes develop the correct image for its target consumers, who are younger. Gang Gowes provides picturesque routes to bicycle rental clients, citing research by C.-F. Chen and Huang (2020), which shows that visual material can raise consumer interest by 40%. Based on earlier BMC research, Gang Gowes has integrated the “memory and aesthetics” value proposition not just for bicycle rentals but also for guide services to fulfil the needs of today’s consumers. As a result, Gang Gowes’ research adds to and complements academic research on how digital media is used in business communication, as well as the implementation of bicycle rental businesses that emphasise spontaneous customer experiences with value propositions comprised of nine Canvas Business Model elements to add value and character that distinguishes them from competitors.

When using social media as a marketing tools in business communication, the value proposition can be used as a basis for creating the content needed by consumers to guarantee that the prepared content fits with the company’s target market segmentation (Marendra et al., 2023). Kotler and Keller (2021) define the

value proposition as a set of advantages that a business provides to clients in order to satisfy their demands. The value proposition is an intangible offering. Business products can be a combination of goods, services, information, and experiences. Value proposition creates value for customer segments through a mix of different elements that serve the needs of that segment. Value can be either quantitative, such as price and speed of service and it can be quantifiable in the forms of design and customer experience. Several forms of added value include product novelty, performance, personalization, task fulfillment, design, brand or status, affordability, cost reduction, risk reduction, accessibility, convenience, and usability (Mubandari & Hartini, 2023).

This study sees that based on previous research, there is a clear gap that business communication researchers have not studied is the implementation of Value Proposition in depth in local experience-based services that prioritize memory and aesthetics because they focus only on products. In addition, previous research has not explored digital channels strategically, so this study provides an empirical case study on the local cycling tourism SME Gang Gowes, enriching communication management literature with the perspective of heritage cities and experiential tourism. The case of *Gang Gowes* in Solo as a cycling

tourism that offers spontaneous experiences, memories, and visual documentation has not received academic attention, so this research positions itself as a bridge between digital communication strategies and value proposition management in experiential tourism SMEs.

Based on the aforementioned explanation, the researchers were interested in answering the following research question: how does *Gang GOWES*' implement the value proposition in offering added-value and characterize its business communication? This research was also performed to explain how *Gang GOWES* applies value proposition in its business communication.

This study aims to analyze how *Gang GOWES* implements its value proposition through

Instagram-based business communication in the context of personal bicycle tourism in Solo

RESEARCH METHODS

In this qualitative descriptive research, primary data and secondary data were regarded. Primary data were obtained from the *Gang GOWES* admin and Instagram posts in the forms of pictures, videos, captions, comments, or testimonies. Whereas secondary data were collected from relevant documents and information from online libraries. This research was conducted by collecting direct field data in the city of Solo, Central Java, Indonesia. The data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. Interviews were performed with five informants who were consumers of

Table 1 Perceptions of *Gang GOWES* Participants

No	Respondent	Occupation	Description
1	T (25)	Informant 1 State Civil Service	Interesting documentation shows togetherness, unexpected experiences passing through hiding places, and taking pictures in hidden aesthetic spots in the alley. Affordable prices and meet the expectations.
2	AR (24)	Informant 2 Private Employee	Unplanned moments of wandering in the alley make the trip cheerful. Although the route is the same as other rental services, the documentation looks natural and unique according to the price and exceeds expectations.
3	WS (36)	Informant 3 Civil Servant	I am interested because of the design, aesthetic documentation on Instagram videos, service beyond expectations, professional, reasonable prices, and complete delicious breakfast package.
4	ADU (30)	Informant 4 Nurse	The price is right. The documentation results are the most interesting and can be uploaded as memories with friends from various cities who gathered in Solo.
5	S (23)	Informant 5 Influencer	The concept and documentation exceeded expectations. The most interesting and more complete than the others. The guide directed the photo style and the admin gave clothing suggestions to match the theme.

Source: Interview Result, 2024

the business, consisting of those taking single, couple, and group services. Osterwalder et al. (2015) developed an analytical technique of 11 value proposition elements applied to the gathered data. This research was conducted through several stages: data condensation, data display, data withdrawal, and presentation of conclusions (drawing and verifying conclusions). The validity of the research data was tested using credibility tests (internal validity), transferability (external validity), dependability (affirmation), and confirmability (Crick, 2020).

Table 2 presents the insight data presentation that were obtained from the *Gang Gowes*' Instagram between April 20 to July 18, 2024.

As demonstrated in the table, the distribution of Instagram users by age, gender, and location

Table 2 Socio-demographic variables

Age 13–17	: 8.8%
Age 18–24	: 36.8%
Age 25–34	: 33.7 %
Age 35–44	: 16.3 %
Age over 45	: 4%
Female	: 67,7%
Male	: 32.2%
Jakarta	: 22.3%
Surakarta	: 9.1%
Bekasi	: 6.5%
Sukoharjo	: 6.4%
Tangerang	: 2%

Source: Insight Instagram, 2024

Table 3 *Gang Gowes* Instagram Insight Data (April 20 – July 18, 2024)

No	Characteristics	Number	Percentage Increase (%)
1	Account Reach	332,977	
	Followers	3,663	1.1%
	Nonfollowers	329,314	98.9%
2	Impression	1,512,914	+207 %
3	Content Reach		
	Reels	66,200,000	
	Stories	16,800,000	
	Post	10,500,000	
4	Profile activity	25,076	+119%
	Profile visits	22,221	+115%
	External links taps	2,855	+155%

Source: Insight instagram, 2024

indicates that the majority fall within the 18–24 age range (36.8%) and the 25–34 age range (33.7%). This suggests that Instagram is most popular among young and productive individuals. Users aged 13–17 accounted for 8.8% of the total, while those aged 35–44 made up 16.3%. Only 4% of users were over the age of 45, highlighting a lower participation rate among older demographics. In terms of gender distribution, females represented 67.7% of the total user base, compared to 32.2% for males, suggesting that Instagram appeals more to women than men. Additionally, the data show that users expressing interest in *Gang Gowes* services via Instagram are dispersed across Indonesia's major cities, with the largest concentration in Jakarta.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This research was performed to examine the implementation of the Value proposition of *Gang Gowes* business communication described through two aspects: Product and Customer with findings presented in the following sections.

Gang Gowes offers a sports and recreational service that is spontaneously planned, allowing participants to explore Solo's tourism sites by cycling through alleys. The value proposition of this service is categorized into three main aspects within the Product section: Benefit, Experience, and Feature, which will be elaborated upon in the following sections.

Gang Gowes journeys are characterized by spontaneous planning, which serves as a distinctive value from other businesses. This spontaneous approach allows for unique routes, photo locations, facilities, and themes, offering participants a personalized and distinct experience each time. The unplanned nature of the tours ensures that each participant's travel experience varies, making each route and moment special and different from others. For instance, participants can choose between themes such as nostalgic, fruit, or floral during the Villa Park Banjarsari route. The nostalgic theme features classic bicycles, retro furniture, traditional toys, and snacks, creating a sentimental atmosphere. This was echoed by

a customer in an interview (Informant 1, August 9, 2024), who mentioned that *Gang Gowes* allowed them to discover hidden aesthetic spots in Solo's alleyways with their family. Another participant (Informant 2, August 9, 2024) noted that cycling with *Gang Gowes* lightened the mood and provided a unique experience depending on the route selected.

The role of the guide in assisting and documenting the participants' journeys is a key business value for *Gang Gowes*. The effectiveness of the performance admin is measured by their responsiveness to inquiries, efficiency in managing reservations, processing payments, and making schedule adjustments. Additionally, the use of a One-Day Service (ODS) system enhances the customer experience by providing participants with soft copies of photos and videos within 24 hours of the trip. These files, stored on Google Drive, are accessible via a download link sent through Instagram, and are available for the following 14 days.

In terms of the customization aspect, participants are allowed to select the title, captions as well as the background music of the video. They can also adjust the style of their videos to their preferences. Consumers can also select a culinary menu or workshop from a *gowes gang* partner based on their preferences. In this menu customisation feature, statistics

showed that respondents were satisfied with the existing menu and returned to try the cuisine. This implies that the customisation component has an impact on the business environment and UKM.

Gang Gowes provides travel services that include photo and video documentation to enhance recreational experiences for travelers with families, friends or even solo traveler. Cycling also allows participants to explore the city's natural beauty from new perspectives and experience from interactions with locals. Consumers do not have to be concerned about getting lost because there are qualified guides. The tour package also supports small businesses (MSMEs), as participants can easily stop to shop for food along the way.

Gang Gowes adopts a bright and cheerful color palette with modern, aesthetically pleasing edits using mobile phones to enhance the visual appeal design of its documentation. To differentiate itself from competitors, *Gang Gowes* captures photos and videos of participants' journeys and shares them on social media, incorporating songs, titles, and the hashtag *#cyclingformemorabilia*, which reflects the idea of cycling to create and enjoy memories. Additionally, *Gang Gowes* uses a font style that is both easy to read and visually distinctive. Participants are also encouraged to wear bright-colored clothing, which enhances

the visual harmony of the documentation and aligns with the overall design aesthetic.

Gang Gowes services range in price from IDR 275,000 to IDR 400,000, depend on the selected route. This price includes various amenities such as guides, bicycles, helmets, activities, culinary experiences, and photo and video documentation. According to Informants 1 and 2 (August 9, 2024), the costs were deemed reasonable, especially as they included a culinary breakfast package it provided post-cycling excursion at the assembly location. The informants in this research also found the price reasonable for the service.

Gang Gowes carefully selected partners to collaborate with based on criteria such as parking security, convenience of location for vehicles, and halal food and drink certification. In addition, for safety and comfortability, the bicycles equipped with helmets and experienced guides.

Gang Gowes offers four distinct routes: Pura Mangkunegaran, Villa Park Banjarsari, Kampung Batik Laweyan, and Keraton Kasunanan. Participants can sign up for the trips in various ways, including solo trips, group trips with friends or partners, or private tours for more than two individuals at varying price points. Participants can also choose between a short 2 km route or a longer 5 km route, as well as select the appropriate age category (children

or adults). The service also offers options for the type of bicycle, allowing participants to cycle alone or with a passenger, and provides bicycles tailored to different body sizes (short, medium, and tall).

Compared to competitors that typically offer only rental facilities and guides without additional documentation, *Gang GOWES* provides a comprehensive range of services that include bicycles, guides, helmets, workshop activities with MSMEs, culinary menus, and breakfast provided at the gathering point in Solo. *Gang GOWES* also provides some documentation of properties and floral arrangements. This extensive range of facilities adds up to the overall value of *Gang GOWES* services.

Gang GOWES offers additional documentation benefits including photo and video reels editing. Each journey features unique moments, making the documentation both intimate and exclusive to each trip. This personalized approach enhances consumer's satisfaction as expressed by Informant 1, who noted, "From the documentation of yesterday's trip or other journeys shared by *Gang GOWES*, the atmosphere is always joyful, romantic, and full of intimacy. Each experience is unique. *Gang GOWES* consistently excels at capturing these moments" (Interview, 9 August 2024).

Insights from user data and participant testimonials reveal that *Gang GOWES* attracts a

diverse customer base from teenagers, working professionals, and families. Participants provide feedback through responses to admin inquiries and comments on uploads featured on *Gang GOWES*' Instagram highlights and stories. These testimonials are publicly accessible, allowing potential customers to view and read them to gain insights before placing a service order. This practice is an integral part of *Gang GOWES*' value proposition, which is categorized into three distinct aspects.

Participants expect prompt responses from the Instagram admin regarding information on travel, costs, facilities, and equipment. In addition to prioritizing safety and comfort during the cycling experience, they seek a guide who is courteous, attentive, and responsive to changing conditions. Furthermore, participants desire a well-planned meeting spot that provides secure parking for cars and other motorized vehicles. Of course, they want documentation of their riding memories to be uploaded on social media.

Traveling, exercising, and enjoying food culinary have evolved beyond mere leisure and physical well-being; they are now integral to maintaining a presence on social media platforms like Instagram. *Gang GOWES* has adeptly tapped into this emerging market by offering bicycle rental services that include guided tours and documentation. This allows customers to

capture and share their experiences, effectively catering to the desire for engaging social media content.

Participants have expressed several concerns, including slow response times from admin, dissatisfaction with documentation results, delays in receiving documentation, inconvenient parking and transportation options, difficulties in following the route, anxiety about cycling alone, get awful food and perceptions of high costs not justifying the value. These issues may lead participants to reconsider or compare *Gang Gowes* with other services or even opt to travel independently. These concerns were highlighted in the comment sections observed by researchers.

To remain competitive, *Gang Gowes* must emphasize its unique value propositions, such as comprehensive cycling facilities, guided tours, and exclusive documentation services. Enhancing service quality, innovating, and offering distinctive products are essential for differentiating *Gang Gowes* from other providers. Additionally, customer feedback suggests potential areas for expansion. Informant 1 suggested, "Since it is really good, maybe in the future we can add a pre-wedding package because we see that many couples are interested" (Interview, 9 August 9 2024). Informant 2 recommended, "If possible, please increase the content on your IG, and perhaps

create merchandise specifically for *Gang Gowes*" (Interview, 9 August 2024).

The value propositions employed by *Gang Gowes* in its business communication strategies are critical for ensuring survival and competitiveness in the market. These propositions are designed to create an ideal strategy concerning customers, competitors, and market dynamics. The core objective of establishing a value proposition is to offer services that align with intended value, thereby meeting customer needs, securing a competitive advantage, and capturing market share through distinctive character development, particularly in Solo.

Soegiantoro et al. (2023) stated that value proposition differentiates a product or service by highlighting why it should be chosen by consumers. It should address their problems, satisfy their needs and desires, and if necessary, fulfil their true aspirations. Customer data indicating an increase in Instagram followers and positive testimonials suggest a preference for traveling from outside the city rather than opting for other bicycle rentals.

Character, in this context, refers both to the product and the customer experience. *Gang Gowes* distinguishes itself through the novelty and spontaneity of its dynamic travel offerings. The company's performance also involves managing incoming messages via Instagram

inboxes with a focus on security, and creating engaging routes that offer both exercise and visually appealing documentation outcomes. Additionally, *Gang Gowes* provides a mobile-friendly design at a reasonable price.

Gang Gowes has implemented a value proposition to create a distinct character in bicycle rental services, including customer facilities and risk mitigation initiatives. *Gang Gowes* offers consumers alternate routes not just on traditional roads, but also into city lanes in Solo via numerous bicycle customisations. *Gang Gowes* also provides instructions to help with photo and video documentation. According to consumer interviews, the novelty, theme, and documentation components generate customer happiness due to their unique characteristics. This is consistent with the communicated value proposition, which is to develop perceptions, form preferences, and encourage customers to choose *Gang Gowes* as their first choice. So, it can be claimed that *Gang Gowes* has succeeded in using Instagram as a promotional tool, establishing a brand for bicycle rental services as a sports and leisure tour. *Gang Gowes* has been successful in maintaining a positive image by adopting consistent design hues and a strong, easily identifiable brand identity. This is exhibited through a series of Instagram posts asking customers to join *Gang Gowes'* aesthetic experience. Furthermore, Instagram

clearly communicates information by pointing customers to the provided links. In addition, Instagram photos have been demonstrated to highlight experiences with family, friends, and partners, which helps customers develop ties. The audio-visual features of *Gang Gowes* Instagram posts and clips have effectively attract customer. As a result, *Gang Gowes* provides a reference to the application of value propositions that sell memories and aesthetics via the Business Model Canvas (BMC), which is consistent with the arguments of Taylor et al. (2020), who explain that a successful value proposition is dependent on the synergy of all business components, in this case, various integrated marketing elements.

Gang Gowes Instagram data analysis (April–July 2024) shows success in reaching 332,977 accounts, with 98.9% non-followers, indicating engaging audience content through viral Reels. Impressions jumped 207%, driven by short video content (Reels reached 66.2 million reach). Profile activity increased 119%, including external link clicks (+155%), proving audience interest in *Gang Gowes* services. The main challenge is converting non-followers into followers, consistently creating content in short video format is very effective in reaching a wide audience.

Research respondents mentioned the aesthetics of documentation as the main value

of *Gang Gowes*, from photos in hidden alleys to outfit direction that aligns with the theme, indicating that the “gain creators” in *Gang Gowes*’ Value Proposition are not only bicycles and guides, but also the creation of Instagrammable content that strengthens travel memories. The uniqueness of the route and the spontaneity of exploration moments in the alleys of Solo are perceived as “pain relievers”, reducing the boredom of standard tourism and creating the unexpected sensation that customers crave. Affordable pricing, including bicycle, guide, and breakfast packages, successfully fulfills the “customer jobs” of a need for a comprehensive experience without budget exploitation, thus strengthening *Gang Gowes*’ Value Proposition as an economical choice for memorable tourism.

In the context of digital business communication, the effectiveness of *Gang Gowes*’ Instagram content can be seen from the high engagement on aesthetic documentation posts and customer testimonials, in line with data that 61% of Instagram users use this platform to find new products or services. Consistent visual storytelling strategies and the use of special hashtags such as #MemoriGangGowes act as organic and low-cost advertising channels, in line with findings that in-feed ads on Instagram contribute more than 50% of the Instagram platform’s advertising revenue. Furthermore, the combination of user-generated content and

brand-generated content strengthens the “co-creation” of value, where customers feel part of the brand narrative and are encouraged to re-share their experiences. This approach is in line with the value proposition principle that co-creation deepens customer relationships and drives long-term loyalty.

Finally, demographic data showing that 9.1% are from Surakarta and 6.4% from Sukoharjo underscores the potential of the local market that can be activated through loyalty and referral programs, while the penetration of 6.5% of customers from Bekasi and 2% from Tangerang indicates the need for fixed-price packages for weekend tours, creating a new value proposition tailored to the needs of short-break travelers. Thus, *Gang Gowes*’ integrated digital business communication combines visual storytelling, real-time interaction, competitive pricing, and strategic collaboration, systematically managing the Value Proposition to create, deliver, and capture value in the context of experiential tourism in Solo.

By targeting domestic and international tourists, alongside Gen Z and Millennial demographics segments identified by Pine and Gilmore (1998) in their *experience economy* framework as prioritizing transformative experiences over material ownership *Gang Gowes* operationalizes its value proposition through vintage, Instagrammable

bicycle designs and photogenic cycling routes.

This study strengthens the evidence that digital business communication and Value Proposition significantly drive SME performance, while offering a new contribution in the form of integrating spontaneity and aesthetic documentation in experiential tourism. In addition, this study also explains the effective use of the Instagram platform as a key element in creating and delivering the *Gang Gowes* value proposition.

The concept of experiential marketing in urban cities adds evidence that social interaction and experience co-creation increase customer satisfaction. Unlike the application of value propositions to physical products, this study makes experiential services the core of the value proposition, shifting the focus from tangible assets to intangible experiences that are curated and captured digitally. The segmentation of Gen Z and female millennials as early adopters of Instagram-based tourism experiences provides higher market precision than conventional digital tourism studies. Overall, this study strengthens previous findings on the important role of digital business communication and value propositions for SMEs, while introducing new elements, namely experiential spontaneity and aesthetic documentation, which enrich the value proposition in experiential tourism. This approach presents a different perspective by

emphasizing co-creation through Instagram, thus becoming a model that can be adapted by similar tourism SMEs.

This claim is consistent with Schmitt' (1999) definition of aesthetic consumption, which claims that modern society consumes by purchasing things or services that meet emotional and visual identity demands. This has been implemented in the Gang Gowes business, which offers bicycle excursions with views of the Solo City alley with local cultural values, historical narratives, and documentation. Furthermore, Gang Gowes concept in line with the value proposition that highlights the importance of tourism value, which is subsequently uploaded to each customer account as a "spectacle" as a digital trend (Djafarova & Bowes, 2021). While collaborations with local influencers embody Djafarova and Trofimenko (2018) *social proof* theory, where peer endorsements amplify credibility. Customer relationships are cultivated through personalized interactions and digital communities, resonating with Prahalad and Ramaswamy (2004) *co-creation of value* paradigm, where customers actively shape their experiences, as evidenced by user-generated content campaigns like #GowesBermemori. Revenue diversification premium tour packages, branded merchandise, and partnerships with local cafes demonstrates VU's (2020) dynamic capabilities theory,

which advocates for innovative resource recombination to sustain competitive advantage. These strategies are underpinned by *VRIO resources* by Jay Barney (Astawa & Astawa, 2022), including a curated database of scenic routes and a skilled photography team, which are valuable, rare, inimitable, and organizationally embedded. Strategic alliances with heritage sites and culinary businesses reflect Adner's (2016) *business model*, where cross-sector collaborations enhance value delivery. A SWOT analysis underscores experiential differentiation as *Gang Goves* core strength, critical in tourism, while weather dependency highlights operational risks. The company's success in translating academic theories into practice, such as Schmitt's (1999) *aesthetic consumption* through vintage bicycles validates Osterwalder et al. (2015) assertion that a strong value proposition requires coherent operational infrastructure. Each BMC element, from photogenic bicycle maintenance (Key Resources) to cafe partnerships (Key Activities), reinforces the core message of "memory and aesthetics," transforming cycling into an emotionally resonant, visually captivating experience.

Thus, *Gang Goves*' company differs from traditional bicycle rental since it incorporates elements of spontaneous experience-based tourism, aesthetic documentation, and routes that

promote local cultural values. As an example of co-creation, customers as consumers reproduce various material on Instagram (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004). So, by merging several areas of corporate communication, *Gang Goves* has created a unique and distinct value proposition.

This co-creation not only increases customer engagement but also strengthens local storytelling by highlighting local cultural values in every route offered, namely integrating local communities into the cultural tourism experience in the city of Solo. The resulting aesthetic documentation of customers facilitates "digital word-of-mouth" and significantly expands marketing reach. This increases cultural and emotional relevance, strengthens brand differentiation, and encourages the growth of the number of cycling tourists seeking authentic experiences. Thus, *Gang Goves* has succeeded in combining elements of experience, co-creation, and integration of local culture in a sustainable and adaptive value proposition.

There are challenges and threats in *Gang Goves*' communication business as a pioneer of spontaneous experience-based bicycle rentals, namely the Green transportation policy in Solo is still limited because the local government in its implementation is still minimal and does not target green bicycle tourism as a propotas in the 2023 RKPD (Regional Development

Work Plan). The green transportation budget is only 0.5% of transportation spending, weakening the long-term sustainability of support for ecological bicycle tours and rentals. Furthermore, competition with similar businesses in other cities is getting tighter with the potential to integrate digital applications that strengthen the integration of culture and green transportation.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that *Gang Gowes* has succeeded in implementing value proposition in its business communications through digital platforms, especially on the Instagram platform. A distinct service from traditional bicycle rental is offered by *Gang Gowes*. It sells memories, impromptu encounters, and aesthetic documentation. Additionally, consistent reel posts with expertly designed layouts on the Instagram platform serve as another way to showcase the new value offer. First, *Gang Gowes*' business communications highlight the vibrancy and spontaneity of its bike routes by sharing stories about Solo, a city that rich in regional cultural characteristics. This strategy distinguishes *Gang Gowes* from other bicycle rental companies and impacts consumer impression. Second, by providing a range of themes to meet their demands, *Gang Gowes* caters to a wide range of consumer preferences.

Third, the pathways chosen through the alley result in visually appealing images and films that may be posted on Instagram, showcasing the distinctive features of *Gang Gowes*. The aforementioned three factors have a big impact on *Gang Gowes*'s traits. *Gang Gowes* is a pioneer in bicycle rental with a tourism concept that offers a variety of unique options. Additionally, the findings from customer interviews support *Gang Gowes*' value proposition, which includes customer service that is both quick and friendly. In terms of bicycle models, routes, themes, documentation formats, and other attributes, *Gang Gowes* consumers anticipate more variations. An overview of *Gang Gowes*' bicycle rental business's value proposition is given by this study. One of its drawbacks is that the value proposition was only examined for a brief time using Instagram posts, which might not adequately capture customer preferences that are dynamically changing all the time.

Therefore, *Gang Gowes* as a bicycle rental business has implemented a value proposition in the Business Model Canvas (BMC) perspective through the first two aspects, products by providing education on the need for cycling services in Solo City through aesthetic documentation, flexible customization, and spontaneous experiences. While in terms of Customers, *Gang Gowes* provides solutions to problems related to the needs and desires of

customers for Gen Z and Millennials, a cycling concept that supports tourism while capturing and sharing their experiences, effectively fulfilling the desire to attract social media content.

This study provides a conceptual contribution to the development of communication management studies in SMEs in the digital era, and offers a value proposition implementation model that can be replicated by experience-based tourism businesses. In terms of practice, these findings certainly provide direct inspiration for other SMEs in the tourism sector, that communication strategies do not always have to be expensive and complex, but can be done in a simple way with an experience-based approach and visual narrative, an effort that can build appeal as well as emotional closeness with its consumers.

The sustainability of businesses such as Gang GOWES requires cooperation, so we recommend the role of local and central governments to support environmentally friendly bicycle tourism-based SMEs and open up opportunities to develop tourism in cities that have strong cultural memories such as Solo. In addition, this study also opens up space to develop business communication theory in the context of SMEs that prioritize experience and digitalization, especially through social media as the main channel. Meanwhile, from

a practical perspective, the author recommends that SMEs and policy makers can use the Gang GOWES communication model as a reference in developing branding strategies that combine co-creation and visual narratives based on consumer experience.

Future research is encouraged to explore the application of business models, such as the Business Model Canvas, in assessing value propositions in additional areas or over different time periods. Broader research on general business communication issues could provide further insights and focus on the bicycle rental business. In addition, potential future research could explore and compare similar businesses across a wider range of businesses.

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