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DYNAMICS OF UTILIZING DIGITAL STORYTELLING IN CULTURAL VALUE-BASED COFFEE SHOP MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the dynamics of the use of digital storytelling in coffee marketing communications. A shop based on cultural values, amidst the rapid growth of creative MSMEs and the dominance of social media platforms that demand more emotional and authentic narratives. The purpose of this study is to analyze the process of digital narrative formation, the role of local communities, and adaptation to technological changes and trends, to understand how cultural values are integrated into marketing communication practices. The study used a qualitative approach with a phenomenological design, conducted at coffee MSME shops in Kendari City, with the subjects being owners, workers, content creators, and regular customers. The results show that digital storytelling functions as a narrative bridge between cultural identity, customer experience, and loyalty building, while active involvement of local communities and adaptation of content formats to algorithms increase engagement and brand awareness. Authenticity. The implications of the research emphasize the importance of a narrative-cultural framework in MSME digital marketing strategies, as well as the need for community engagement and ethical regulation of digital content.

Keywords: *Digital storytelling, cultural values, social media, local community.*

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INTRODUCTION

Coffee industry Coffee shops in Indonesia are experiencing exponential growth as a manifestation of the creative economy of MSMEs, contributing 15-20% to the F&B sector's GDP, according to data from the Central Statistics Agency (MSmes and Review 2023) . This phenomenon is driven by the urbanization of millennials and Gen-Z, who seek authentic consumption experiences, where coffee A shop is not just a beverage provider, but rather a narrative space that integrates local cultural rituals such as traditional Javanese coffee or Sulawesi Toraja coffee (Azahra et al. 2024) . The shift in marketing communication paradigms from transactional to relational models is increasingly prominent in the digital era, with digital storytelling as a strategic instrument for building brands. equity through narrative transportation so that the immersive process where consumers are emotionally involved in the brand story (Yu 2022) . On platforms like Instagram and TikTok, coffee Shop utilizes user-generated content to create cultural congruence, where cultural values become competitive differentiators in saturated markets. However, this dynamic of utilization faces adaptation challenges, as digital storytelling often becomes trapped in visual aesthetics alone, ignoring the depth of cultural values that shape long-term loyalty (Mandung 2025; Ofosu-boateng and Jose 2025) . In addition, digital storytelling provides an illustration of the increase in consumer engagement coffee MSME shops often fail to internalize this dynamic effectively, resulting in shallow marketing communications that lack resonance with audiences who crave cultural authenticity (Lies and Anindita 2022; Lima, Teixeira, and Moreira 2024) .

Specific problems arise from the imbalance between algorithm-driven viral content and the essence of cultural values, leading to brand erosion. authenticity and loss of competitive differentiation in the coffee market shop. In addition, the impact includes a decrease in customer lifetime Value is lost due to consumer digital fatigue, where local cultural narratives, such as the philosophy of "guyub rukun" (living together in harmony) are marginalized by the trend of content globalization. Likewise, a lack of understanding of the dynamics of adoption (from exploration to institutionalization) exacerbates the inefficiency of marketing ROI, especially for MSMEs with limited resources (Amanda et al. 2026; Cam, Dinh, and Lee nd) . In line with this, several previous studies have demonstrated the great potential of digital storytelling and the integration of local culture in MSME marketing strategies, but have not adequately

described the dynamics of the process of utilizing digital storytelling in coffee marketing communications. shop based on cultural values.

For example, in research (Wibowo 2026) , found that digital storytelling elements in culinary review videos on TikTok were able to increase audience appeal and engagement , but their focus was limited to the review content by the reviewer and not on the narrative construction by the brand . Coffee the shop itself and does not explore the integration of cultural values as the core narrative. This is also the case with findings (Anggawirya, Floriani, and Reliubun 2025; Prasetyo, K., Bate, AP, & Amrullah 2026). that the integration of innovation, digital capabilities, and local culture contributes to the marketing strategy of MSMEs, but their emphasis on the general framework of various sectors makes the digital storytelling mechanism a marketing communication tool for coffee The shop is not specifically explained. Similarly, research (Widiyanto, Wibowo, and Hakim 2025) found that authentic local narratives and consistent digital identity can build brand differentiation. However, this study is only a single case and descriptive, without describing the dynamics of the evolutionary process of adopting and adapting digital storytelling innovations in the long term.

Therefore, based on several studies, digital storytelling and the integration of local culture have an important contribution in strengthening MSME marketing strategies, especially in increasing consumer engagement, brand differentiation, and digital identity. However, it still appears that most research is still oriented towards general marketing results and has not comprehensively explained the dynamics of the process of utilizing digital storytelling in coffee marketing communications. A shop based on local cultural values. Likewise, previous research has tended to focus storytelling on external content such as reviewer reviews and used a descriptive approach, allowing brands to construct cultural narratives. Coffee the coffee shop has not been specifically described. Furthermore, research examining the relationship between local culture and digital marketing generally positions culture as a supporting element of brand identity, rather than as the core of a strategically constructed narrative in marketing communications. However, in the context of coffee in the shop, local cultural values not only function as symbols or communication complements, but can also be a source of meaning that differentiates a brand from its competitors. This situation demonstrates the mechanism of integrating cultural values into a brand's story, as well as how these values are translated into digital content that is relevant and meaningful to the audience. Therefore, it still requires a more in-depth

explanation. Another gap is seen in the dominance of research that focuses on content produced by external parties, such as reviewers, influencers, or independent content creators, so it does not fully describe how coffee players Shops, as brand owners, build, manage, and develop their own cultural narratives through various digital platforms. As such, the process of constructing stories based on a brand's internal identity and values remains largely unexplored. Furthermore, most existing studies use a descriptive approach or single case studies, thus failing to explain the dynamics of sustainable digital storytelling utilization. Yet, advancements in digital technology, changes in social media algorithms, and shifting consumer preferences require businesses to continually adapt their communication strategies to remain relevant and build long-term relationships with their audiences.

Therefore, research is needed that is able to describe the adaptation patterns and dynamics of the use of digital storytelling based on local cultural values in the context of coffee. Shop, starting from the exploration, implementation, development stages, to becoming an integrated part of the marketing communications strategy. The need for this research becomes even more important when placed in the context of Kendari City. As the capital of Southeast Sulawesi Province, Kendari is experiencing rapid growth in the creative economy sector, including the development of coffee businesses. shop that targets the younger generation, students, creative workers, and digital communities. This development shows that coffee Shops in Kendari no longer merely serve as places for consumption, but also serve as spaces for social interaction, the exchange of ideas, and the formation of cultural identity for urban communities. At the same time, Kendari boasts a rich and diverse local culture, encompassing the Tolakines, Munanes, and Butones cultures, as well as various traditions of the Southeast Sulawesi community that are still alive and thriving in the community's social life. This cultural richness provides a potential narrative resource for development in digital storytelling practices, but its use as a foundation for digital marketing communications remains understudied, particularly in the coffee sector. Shop.From an academic perspective, most research on digital storytelling, branding, and culture-based marketing remains concentrated in major cities such as Jakarta, Bandung, Yogyakarta, and Surabaya. Consequently, the context of developing regions in Eastern Indonesia, including Kendari, remains relatively underrepresented in the scientific literature. Yet, their social, cultural, and consumer behavior characteristics have the potential to produce different patterns of digital storytelling

utilization compared to more economically and digitally advanced regions. Based on these conditions, the research gap lies in the still limited understanding of the dynamics of utilizing digital storytelling based on local cultural values as a coffee marketing communication strategy. shop, especially regarding the cultural integration process, adaptation patterns carried out by MSME actors, and their contribution in building engagement and brand loyalty on an ongoing basis. Therefore, research in Kendari City is important to conduct because it can not only enrich the literature on digital storytelling based on local culture in the context of coffee MSMEs shop, but also provides a more comprehensive understanding of how local cultural values can be processed into authentic, relevant, and sustainable digital marketing narratives in facing the dynamics of the creative industry and changes in consumer behavior in the digital era.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Digital Storytelling

Digital storytelling in a marketing context refers to the practice of designing story-style narratives delivered through digital media (e.g., Instagram, TikTok , YouTube , websites) to create emotional connections between brands and consumers (Thomas and Grigsby 2024) . From a marketing perspective, digital storytelling is not simply “telling a story,” But rather a communication strategy that processes narratives. elements (setting , characters, conflict, resolution, and narrator's point of view) to build a brand consistent and memorable narrative (Pristiyono 2022) . For MSMEs such as coffee shop, digital storytelling becomes an important instrument for building a brand authenticity and differentiation in a hypercompetitive market, because personal narratives about the origins of coffee beans, the roasting process, or stories of local communities can generate narratives. Transportation, which is the state when consumers "enter" the story and experience affective and cognitive changes that support the formation of a positive attitude towards the brand (Latifah, Damayani, and Winoto 2025) . In the context of this research, digital storytelling is understood as a mechanism that connects brand identity with consumer experiences through the process of creating and disseminating narratives digitally. Therefore, the effectiveness of digital storytelling depends not only on the quality of the story being constructed,

but also on the narrative's ability to represent values that are relevant to the audience. Thus, digital storytelling becomes a strategic tool for coffee shop to translate local cultural values into stories that can be understood, felt, and remembered by consumers, thereby strengthening engagement and emotional connections with the brand.

Marketing Communications

Conventionally, marketing communications is understood within an integrated framework. marketing communication (IMC), namely the systemic coordination of various communication activities (advertising, sales promotion, public relations, personal selling , and social media) to convey consistent and mutually reinforcing messages (Mogaji 2025) . In the digital context, IMC has evolved into an integrated more relational and dialogic communication , where consumers are not only recipients of messages, but also co-creators of narratives through comments, reviews, and user-generated content (Baier, Decker, and Asenova 2025) . This change shows that marketing communication is no longer one-way, but rather through interactions that allow for an exchange of meaning between brands and consumers. In the context of coffee shop, digital storytelling has become an important part of marketing communications because it serves as a medium for conveying brand identity, values, and experiences in a more personal way. Through interactive communication, the narrative built by coffee Shop images can be received, interpreted, and redeveloped by consumers through various digital activities. Thus, marketing communications provides a space where digital storytelling can effectively build engagement and strengthen long-term relationships between brands and their consumers.

Cultural Values

Cultural values refer to the system of meanings, symbols, norms, and practices inherited and lived by a particular community, which shape the collective identity and way of thinking of the community members (Uning et al. 2021) . In the marketing context, cultural values become cultural capital that can be integrated into the brand identity to create differentiation that is difficult for competitors to imitate (Torelli and Rodas 2024) . According to (Theocharis 2025) , cultural Branding occurs when a brand connects its identity to a particular culture, so that consumers not only buy the product, but also “buy” into the identity and lifestyle associated with that culture. In the

marketing literature, (Maheshwari et al. 2025) introduced the concept of brand equity consisting of brand awareness, brand associations, perceived quality and brand loyalty , and defining the brand associations as a network of associations of meaning attached to a brand. In this context, cultural values become cultural associations that enrich the brand profile image coffee shop. In this study, cultural values are positioned as the main source of meaning that forms the substance of the digital narrative built by coffee shop. Local cultural values not only serve as symbols or aesthetic elements in marketing communications, but also serve as the foundation of an identity that differentiates a brand from its competitors. When cultural values are translated into digital storytelling and consistently communicated through various digital marketing channels, they have the potential to form strong cultural associations in the minds of consumers. Therefore, cultural values become elements that provide depth of meaning to the brand narrative while strengthening authenticity, differentiation, engagement, and consumer loyalty to coffee shop.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with a phenomenological design to understand the subjective meaning and experiences of coffee actors. shop in utilizing digital storytelling based on cultural values. Phenomenology was chosen because it is suitable for uncovering perceptions, meanings, and dynamic processes that cannot be accessed through quantitative approaches, as emphasized by (Tiwari, Tripathi, and Srivastava 2025) that phenomenology focuses on "lived experiences" as the primary source of data. The population consists of all coffee shops. MSME shops in Kendari City that are active on social media, with a sample of 12 informants selected through purposive sampling, including owners, baristas, and content creators, because they have direct experience in designing and executing digital narratives. The research location was chosen in Kendari City, Mandonga District, because these two districts have a large number of coffee shops. A shop with a strong MSME ecosystem, so it is representative of the dynamics of digital coffee culture. shop in Kendari City. The research procedure followed a cycle of data collection, reduction, presentation, and verification. Data analysis used the Miles and Huberman (2014) model with stages of

data reduction, display, and verification to systematically clarify key patterns and themes.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Experience Using Digital Storytelling

The results of this study indicate that for coffee shop owners and workers in Kendari, digital storytelling is meaningful as a means of establishing personal and community identity, not just a promotional tool. *The first indicator,* emotional involvement in crafting coffee stories based on local culture, is evident in how narratives about traditional coffee rituals, the background of local coffee farmers, or the nuances of Kendari urban life are constructed as a form of cultural pride. Informants stated that the display of cultural values in digital content makes them feel like they are "not just selling coffee, but selling the story of Kendari," so that storytelling activities transform into cultural practices. An expression that emphasizes local identity. *The second indicator is* the perceived effectiveness of digital storytelling in increasing consumer loyalty, as evidenced by high engagement on social media and increased repeat purchases. Visitors are connected to authentic coffee narratives. *The third indicator,* narrative resonance with community identity, is evident when customers affirm a sense of "home" and pride when their coffee stories appear on social media. This finding aligns with research (Shaheen 2025) showing that relevant and emotional stories on social media can attract attention and thus enhance brand awareness. awareness and encourage purchasing behavior. In addition, findings (Junaedi 2025) show that integrating local coffee culture narratives on social media can increase awareness and appreciation of cultural values, while strengthening the brand. identity and competitiveness. Therefore, the findings of this study confirm that digital storytelling in coffee shops in Kendari City functions as a narrative bridge between cultural identity, consumer experience and the formation of community loyalty in the digital space.

The Formation of Digital Narratives

Based on the results of this study, it shows that the process of forming a digital narrative in coffee Kendari's coffee shop is collaborative, dynamic, and deeply rooted

in local values. *The first indicator,* namely the integration of local traditions (symbols, rituals, language) with digital content formats, is evident in how the coffee shop The shop packages the story of Kendari coffee, including the drama of urban life and traditional coffee rituals, into short, visually textured videos on Instagram and TikTok. This narrative not only depicts the coffee-making process but also affirms consumers' self-image as part of the city's community, allowing digital storytelling to bridge the gap between physical and digital spaces. *The second indicator,* the collaboration between local creators and owners in crafting authentic stories, is found through content engagement. A young creator from Kendari who "translates" cultural values into content relevant to Gen-Z and millennials. *The third indicator,* adapting to trends without losing the essence of culture, is evident in the flexibility of content formats (e.g., reels and live videos). storytelling) which maintains the themes of mutual cooperation, hospitality, and the stories of coffee farmers. This finding is in line with research (R. Wang, Chan-olmsted, and Zhou 2025) shows that the involvement of content creators increases engagement and trust , while expanding market reach without losing the authenticity of local coffee stories . In addition , the findings (Gu and Zhao 2025) emphasized that the integration of traditional cultural values in digital promotional content increases consumer trust and forms a stronger product image . Therefore, the findings of this study confirm that the process of forming a digital narrative in coffee Kendari shop is a culturally practice grounded co-creation in digital spaces, which strengthens place identity as well as marketing appeal.

Meaning for the Customer Community

Based on the results of this study, it shows that for the coffee customer community In a shop in Kendari, digital storytelling based on cultural values has a meaning that goes beyond mere promotional content, but also becomes a means of forming emotional connections, social identity, and cultural participation. *The first indicator,* namely strengthening customers' emotional connections with cultural values, is evident from reports that stories about local coffee, coffee traditions, and narratives of Kendari youth life in social media content make customers feel "close" and "connected" to the shop. Based on interview results, they don't just come for coffee, but to "enter the story of the city they see on the screen." *The second indicator, namely changes in consumer behavior based on interest in the story, is evident from the increase in the frequency of visits,* repeat purchases, and the increase in the

number of customers who visit. purchase, and the urge to recommend the shop to friends, which customers described as a response to coffee narratives that were “honest” and “about people, not just products.” *The third indicator,* namely strengthening cultural awareness and appreciation, was evident when customers reported that they began to understand and appreciate coffee traditions, farmer stories, and Kendari's urban identity through the content they consumed. This finding aligns with research (Primanto, Arifin, and Zulfaris 2025). that authentic narratives are able to grow brands intimacy and stronger affective attachment than pure promotional messages. In addition, the findings (Li 2025) emphasized that storytelling content that depicts real life, farmer stories, and the coffee-making process in a transparent manner can improve the brand. Consumer loyalty and advocacy . Research (Maradiaga-lópez et al. 2025) shows that the integration of cultural narratives in digital content increases consumers' understanding of traditional values and strengthens the brand. culture-based equity. Therefore, the findings of this study confirm that digital storytelling is based on cultural values in coffee Shops in Kendari City not only build commercial relationships but also serve as narrative platforms that strengthen community identity, customer loyalty, and cultural awareness in the digital space.

Adaptation to Technology and Trends

Based on the results of this study, it shows that coffee Shops in Kendari utilize digital storytelling as a dynamic practice that constantly adapts to technological developments and social media trends, without losing the essence of local culture. *The first indicator, namely the flexibility of content to follow* viral algorithms and formats, is evident in the choice to package Kendari coffee stories into short videos, reels, and TikToks that suit Gen-Z and millennial content consumption patterns, while maintaining cultural messages through symbols, community narratives, and stories of coffee rituals . *The second indicator,* namely format innovation to maintain relevance, is seen in the implementation of interactive formats such as live storytelling, cultural quizzes, or short series depicting the daily lives of customers and coffee shop owners. *The third indicator,* namely the consistency of brand identity amidst changing trends, is seen when coffee The shop continues to position Kendari coffee, local visuals, and the value of mutual cooperation as the core narrative, despite changing video effects trends or content modes. This finding aligns with research (Sojapani and Purnamasari 2026). application of persuasion models in digital marketing coffee shop which

confirms that the combination of a new format with a strong narrative strengthens the brand recall and impression of brand openness . In addition , the findings (Y. Wang and Xin 2026) While adjusting the duration, rhythm, and visual style of content to fit the platform's algorithm increases reach and engagement , long-term success is still determined by narrative quality and cultural relevance. This finding also applies . (Aleksandra Tošović-Stevanović, 2025) that the consistency of cultural themes amidst digital format adaptations is able to build a brand strong and easily recognizable identity. Therefore, the findings of this study confirm that the process of adapting technology to coffee Kendari shop is a form of culturally grounded agility, where the dynamics of digital trends are used as a tool, not replacing the cultural meaning that is at the heart of marketing communications.

The Role of Local Communities

Based on the results of this study, it shows that the role of the local community in Kendari is a central element in the formation and dissemination of digital coffee narratives. A cultural value-based shop. *The first indicator,* namely the active participation of local content creators, is evident in the high level of content engagement. Kendari's young creators are producing UGC content depicting cafe life, local coffee stories, and youth community dynamics, then sharing it on Instagram and TikTok. *The second indicator, customer* co - creativity in shaping narratives, is evident in how customers not only consume content but also contribute through comments, reposts, and cultural contest ideas, which cafe owners often adopt as the basis for new narratives. *The third indicator,* strengthening city identity, is evident when coffee Kendari shops are considered by customers and creators to represent the city's creative face, making coffee and cafes symbols of a dynamic urban life yet deeply rooted in local culture. This finding aligns with findings (Brand et al. 2025) local co-creation and co-branding that demonstrate that active consumer involvement in digital storytelling practices strengthens the brand loyalty and sense of ownership towards the brand . Research (Liu, Shen, and Xia 2025) shows that the integration of city and community narratives helps build a sense of of place and deeper emotional attachment among consumers . Research (Latif, Rahmawati, and Ernawati 2025) confirms that local creators are able to expand reach, increase engagement , and strengthen consumer trust due to the sense of connectedness and authenticity they convey . Therefore, the findings of this study confirm that local communities are not just

audiences, but narratives. co-producers are vital in maintaining the relevance and authenticity of digital storytelling coffee shop in Kendari.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This study confirms that digital storytelling in coffee marketing communications Cultural value-based shopping is a dynamic cultural narrative practice, not just a short-term promotional technique. Findings show that the creation of digital narratives, adaptation to technological trends, and the role of local communities reinforce each other in building emotional connections, brand awareness, and brand awareness. authenticity and sense of place in the digital space. Integrating local cultural values into storytelling content has been shown to increase customer engagement and loyalty, while strengthening city and community identity. In practice, coffee MSME shops are encouraged to develop a consistent narrative framework and involve content local creators and consumers as co-creators. Future researchers are advised to examine these dynamics across regions and sectors, as well as to deepen the influence of specific platforms on the evolution of digital cultural narratives.

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