NATIVE ADVERTISING ON TELEVISION BUSINESS MODEL: THE CASE OF METRO TV INDONESIA

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ABSTRACT

Objective: The primary objective is to ascertain the underlying factors that contribute to the formation of nationalist sentiments among this population and to propose strategic measures that the government could adopt to facilitate comprehensive growth on Sebatik Island.

Theoretical Framework: Employing a mixed-methods approach that combines qualitative and quantitative research methodologies, this study seeks to comprehensively examine the extent of nationalist sentiments harbored by the inhabitants of Sebatik Island towards their country, Indonesia.

Method: The study employs focused group discussions and customized questionnaires to collect data. The qualitative analysis encompasses responses gathered from a cohort of 62 participants, revealing that 66% exhibit a notable degree of nationalism, while the remaining 34% demonstrate a lower level of such sentiments.

Results and Conclusions: The research findings underscore a generally favorable perception of Indonesian nationalism among the populace of Sebatik Island, even amidst challenges stemming from their interdependence with Malaysia. By prioritizing the welfare of the Sebatik community, their affiliation with Indonesian identity can organically thrive, thereby contributing to heightened security and a stronger sense of patriotism within the border vicinity.

Originality/Value: This research offers novel insights into the intricate determinants influencing nationalist sentiments within the population of Sebatik Island, casting illumination on the subtleties of their viewpoints within the unique context of a coexistent border alongside Malaysia.

Research Implications: The outcomes of this study prompt a reevaluation of prevailing policies associated with the development of border regions, encompassing considerations related to infrastructure, education, healthcare, and the management of resources.

Keywords: editorial-business relation, media sustainability, native advertising, news organization, television.

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MODELO DE NEGÓCIO DA PUBLICIDADE NATIVA NA TELEVISÃO: O CASO DA METRO TV INDONÉSIA

RESUMO

Objetivo: O objetivo principal é verificar os fatores subjacentes que contribuem para a formação de sentimentos nacionalistas entre essa população e propor medidas estratégicas que o governo poderia adotar para facilitar o crescimento abrangente na Ilha Sebatik.

Estrutura teórica: Empregando uma abordagem de métodos mistos que combina metodologias de pesquisa qualitativa e quantitativa, este estudo busca examinar de forma abrangente a extensão dos sentimentos nacionalistas nutridos pelos habitantes da Ilha de Sebatik em relação ao seu país, a Indonésia.

Método: O estudo emprega discussões em grupos focados e questionários personalizados para coletar dados. A análise qualitativa abrange as respostas coletadas de um grupo de 62 participantes, revelando que 66% exibem um grau notável de nacionalismo, enquanto os 34% restantes demonstram um nível mais baixo de tais sentimentos.

Resultados e conclusões: Os resultados da pesquisa destacam uma percepção geralmente favorável do nacionalismo indonésio entre a população da Ilha Sebatik, mesmo em meio aos desafios decorrentes da interdependência com a Malásia. Ao priorizar o bem-estar da comunidade de Sebatik, sua afiliação à identidade indonésia pode prosperar organicamente, contribuindo assim para aumentar a segurança e fortalecer o senso de patriotismo nas proximidades da fronteira.

Originalidade/valor: Esta pesquisa oferece novas percepções sobre os intrincados determinantes que influenciam os sentimentos nacionalistas da população da Ilha de Sebatik, iluminando as sutilezas de seus pontos de vista no contexto único de uma fronteira coexistente com a Malásia.

Implicações da pesquisa: Os resultados deste estudo levam a uma reavaliação das políticas predominantes associadas ao desenvolvimento das regiões de fronteira, abrangendo considerações relacionadas à infraestrutura, educação, saúde e gerenciamento de recursos.

Palavras-chave: organização de notícias, publicidade nativa, relações editoriais-empresariais, sustentabilidade dos media, televisão.

1 INTRODUCTION

Over the past decade, the issue of media sustainability has become a discourse among the press in Indonesia. Frere (2013) defines media sustainability as the organizational resilience of news and journalism in a country to effectively ensure the availability of quality journalism in the face of political-economic pressures. Meanwhile, Picard (2010) argues that the sustainability of media companies is determined by the interaction between production, market, technology, social power, and managerial
factors. Thus, media business sustainability involves not only the ability to withstand industry competition but also the ability to read or predict future media business developments.

The television industry is one of the mass media that has long relied on advertising to sustain and endure its business. The popular advertising format used is the 30- and 60-second spot ads. From this advertising format, the television industry has generated substantial revenue year after year. However, the increasing number of television stations has intensified competition for advertisements, making it more challenging and competitive. Moreover, the presence of the internet has led advertisers to shift from television to the online platform. Television has adopted new approaches to continue attracting advertisers, such as offering native advertising—a content-based advertising concept that does not emphasize promotional or commercial aspects. Native advertising utilizes various formats commonly used in journalism, such as text, photos, videos, and infographics, presenting them in a news-like format (Couldry & Turow, 2014). This presentation style makes audiences comfortable receiving information through native advertising as the information conveyed does not overtly highlight promotional or sales elements, unlike traditional ads or advertorials.

Ferrer Conill (2016) defines native advertising in the context of journalism as paid content delivered in the form and function of news. Its purpose is to create a reading experience rather than merely viewing an advertisement, thereby enhancing ad consumption by readers and connecting advertiser brands with readers and mass media. Meanwhile, Dan Greenberg, CEO of the advertising agency Sharethrough, states that native advertising is a form of paid media that follows the format and user experience of the existing website or platform (Sharethrough, n.d.).

The Interactive Advertising (Bureau, 2013) defines native advertising as paid advertising that seamlessly blends with page content, assimilating into the design, and being consistent with the behavior of the platform or media, so that the audience feels integrated with the content. Essentially, two characteristics can describe native advertising from various available definitions: the adaptation of editorial content format and a user experience that is not disruptive.

Native advertising differs from advertorials or infomercials, or other forms of advertising content. Advertorials highlight the promotion of a product or service by emphasizing its superiority. Astute readers can usually discern the sales elements when
reading an advertorial. There are four impacts resulting from the use of native advertising. First, the lack of transparency in native advertising, given the minimal differentiation between native advertising content and news compared to other types of ads. Second, readers struggle to identify native advertising due to the limited differentiating boundaries between native advertising content and news. Most readers even perceive native advertising as news. Third, the credibility of media, advertisers, and content is compromised because native advertising has misled its readers. Fourth, the breakdown of the wall of separation occurs as native advertising blurs the line between news and ads, integrating editorial work patterns with advertising (Pasandaran, 2018).

The practice of native advertising in news content complicates the separation between news and ads, requiring a reevaluation of the understanding of the boundary between news and ads and the media business model (Carlson, 2015; Artemas et al., 2018; Li, 2019). The marketing department views native advertising as an innovation to increase revenue, advertiser interest, reader engagement, and even the quality of reporting. Meanwhile, the editorial department, which initially resisted native advertising due to its potential to interfere with critical thinking, has slowly embraced its presence, making it an integral part of the mass media company's organization.

Cornia et al. (2020) argue that media companies must increasingly integrate editorial and commercial interests with the rise of native advertising. This conclusion is based on research involving 12 newspapers and broadcasting institutions in six European countries, which conducted interviews with 41 respondents who are mass media managers. The study found that the separation of news and advertising no longer plays a central role as before, as both the editorial and marketing sides are driving new cultural changes that are seen as prerequisites for adapting to changes in the media business. Moreover, new norms have emerged and been implemented. These new norms involve integrating news and advertising interests based on values of collaboration, adaptation, and business thinking. However, the emergence of these new norms has led to difficult negotiations due to specific considerations of both the editorial and marketing sides. Nevertheless, these new norms represent a commitment to sustainably maintain the media business.

Meanwhile, native advertising appears as news. Its purpose is to provide useful information or increase knowledge for readers. Native advertising is not created to showcase the advantages or uniqueness of a product to encourage readers to buy it.
Instead, native advertising focuses more on providing information to readers rather than attempting to sell specific products or services (Apdillah et al., 2022). Thus, native advertising imparts new knowledge and information to readers, created based on the requests of specific product or service owners.

Television has begun utilizing native advertising after it gained popularity in the digital media (Whittle & Xue, 2018). The format of native advertising is also more informative and enjoyable, making it more effective (Wojdynski & Evans, 2016). The news website The Atlantic led the way on January 14, 2013, by publishing an article titled "David Miscavige Leads Scientology to Milestone Year." The lead of the news mentioned, "2012 was a historic year for Scientology, with the religion growing to over 10,000 churches, missions, and affiliated groups spanning 167 countries." The news received positive comments from readers displayed at the bottom of the news column (Carlson, 2015).

Metro TV is one of the news television stations and became the first news television station in Indonesia, broadcasting since November 25, 2000. Metro TV is a subsidiary of the Media Group owned by Surya Paloh, an Indonesian media figure who initiated endeavors in the press industry since founding the daily newspaper Prioritas. The presence of Metro TV aims to spread news and information throughout Indonesia and become a trusted and comprehensive source of news in conveying the country's conditions to the outside world. Currently, Metro TV broadcasts can be enjoyed digitally and terrestrially in 280 cities across Indonesia, transmitted from 25 transmitters.

Apart from news content, Metro TV also airs various informative programs on technological advancements, health, economics, general knowledge, arts and culture, and more to educate the nation. Uniquely, Metro TV features news programs in two foreign languages, English and Mandarin. Furthermore, Metro TV has collaborated with various foreign television stations in the form of news exchange, workforce development, and more. The goal is for Metro TV to become part of the global broadcasting community.

Positioned as a news television station, Metro TV differs from the majority of other television stations in Indonesia that emphasize entertainment by adopting a "supermarket" concept where all types of shows are available, ranging from soap operas, movies, music, comedy, sports, to news. This situation has led to Metro TV's audience being segmented and relatively smaller in number compared to "supermarket" television stations. Consequently, Metro TV faces difficulties in attracting advertisement revenue.
as advertisers are less interested in advertising on news television with a segmented audience.

Understanding this situation, Metro TV has leveraged news as an added value and an opportunity to provide alternative advertising space. They do so by offering unconventional advertising options. While other television stations typically offer advertisement durations within program breaks (spot ads), Metro TV combines this approach with native advertising in various formats such as blocking time, built-in segments, special programs, special coverage, and special dialogues featured within news bulletin or news magazine broadcasts. Moreover, Metro TV also offers advertising strategies in the form of separate and standalone advertorials outside news bulletin or news magazine programs.

Another entity that utilizes native advertising is Netflix, a video content provider company. In 2014, while seeking to popularize the series "Orange Is The New Black," Netflix published a 1,500-word article titled "Women Inmates: Why the Male Model Doesn't Work" on The New York Times news site. The article appeared more like journalism than an advertisement because it was based on facts and journalistic standards. As a result, the article became one of the most popular on The New York Times. Other media outlets that have used native advertising include Washington Post, Wired, Wall Street Journal, BuzzFeed, Gawker, The Los Angeles Times, and others (Schauster et al., 2016).

This study aims to examine how native advertising is utilized in the television business model, highlighting the case of Metro TV, the first news television station in Indonesia. The discussion in this study employs a case study approach that focuses on how television business sustainability is achieved through native advertising and how the use of native advertising affects the editorial-business relationship within the television media organization.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In the current media landscape, the concept of media sustainability has emerged as a critical discourse, particularly evident in the Indonesian press. Media sustainability, as conceptualized by Frere (2013), underscores the resilience of news organizations in the face of multifaceted political-economic pressures. Concurrently, the evolution of media sustainability involves a complex interplay of factors articulated by Picard (2010),
including production, market dynamics, technological advancements, social power dynamics, and managerial strategies. This multifactorial perspective underscores that media sustainability extends beyond competition resilience to encompass a proactive understanding of future media business developments.

Gumucio-Dagron & Dlamini's (2004) formulation identifies three pivotal pillars—financial, social, and institutional viability—essential for media businesses to establish a mutually reinforcing ecosystem. Meanwhile, the intricate balance between external influences and internal mechanisms is pivotal. State policies and legislative frameworks form external cornerstones while internal elements such as managerial leadership, working conditions, and media ownership wield substantial influence over media companies' survival.

Within this landscape, the television industry, a prominent player in mass media, has traditionally relied on advertising for sustenance. However, with a proliferation of television stations, intensifying competition for advertisements has prompted innovative strategies. The rise of the internet has further prompted a shift in advertising preferences, spurring television to embrace native advertising. Native advertising, with its seamless integration into editorial content, offers a non-intrusive means of engaging audiences, as articulated by Couldry & Turow (2014). This advertising format, championed by Ferrer Conill (2016), blurs the lines between news and advertising, reshaping the audience's experience and fostering a unique form of engagement.

Metro TV, Indonesia's pioneering news television station, exemplifies how native advertising becomes a strategic tool for sustaining business operations. The unconventional approach of embedding native advertising within news broadcasts and programs addresses the challenge of segmented audiences, a situation unique to news-focused stations. This case study enables a deeper exploration of how native advertising not only enhances revenue generation but also influences the editorial-business relationship within the media organization.

The interaction between the editorial and marketing departments within media organizations has become a focal point of change due to the emergence of native advertising. As outlined by Cornia et al. (2020), the distinction between news and advertising is shifting, ushering in new norms that demand collaboration, adaptation, and business acumen. Yet, this transformation isn't without friction, as the editorial team's commitment to maintaining journalistic integrity collides with the marketing department's
pursuit of revenue growth.

In essence, this theoretical framework posits that the incorporation of native advertising within media organizations’ revenue models is a pivotal strategy for media sustainability. Through the lens of a case study focused on Metro TV, the framework delves into the complexities of how native advertising intersects with media sustainability and influences editorial-business relationships within a news television station. This research endeavor illuminates the dynamic forces shaping the media landscape and the strategies employed to navigate its challenges.

3 METHOD

This research employs a constructivist paradigm with a qualitative approach through a case study method. The constructivist paradigm is chosen to reveal how the reality of native advertising utilization in television media management is constructed. Within the constructivist paradigm, reality is considered a form of social construction, and the truth of reality is relative and context-specific, as deemed relevant by social actors (Hidayat, 2002).

Based on the data analysis utilized, this research employs a qualitative approach. Bogdan and Taylor, as cited in Moleong (2018), define qualitative methodology as a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from individuals and observable behaviors. This approach is directed towards the background and individual as a whole (holistic), thereby not isolating the individual or organization into variables or hypotheses, but considering them as part of a whole.

The method used in this research is the case study method developed by Robert K. Yin, which has its own instruments to examine issues in the field of social sciences. The case study is a research method that is more suitable for focusing the core research question on the elements of how or why, when the researcher has limited control over the events to be investigated, and when the research focus is on contemporary phenomena within the context of real life. Additionally, case study research can be categorized into three types: explanatory, exploratory, and descriptive case studies (Yin, 2019).

Research data is obtained through in-depth interviews, observations, and literature studies. In-depth interviews are conducted face-to-face with the editorial team and sales marketing personnel of Metro TV, with various hierarchical levels ranging from reporters, producers, executive producers, news production manager to sales account
executives, and sales marketing managers. The interview process took place from February to March 2023, with each interview lasting approximately 60 minutes per interviewee. In addition, direct observations were conducted for one month to understand the workflow in both the news division and the sales marketing division of Metro TV. The researcher also explored various documents and literature related to the research and analyzed a number of news content produced and broadcasted by Metro TV to reveal how native advertising is applied in the business model of Metro TV.

4 RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Since its first on-air broadcast in 2000 until the present day, Metro TV has positioned itself as a news television amidst other general entertainment formats. The program content is dominated by news and information, with a composition of 70 percent news and 30 percent non-news. Being a news television, Metro TV is aware that obtaining advertisements tends to be challenging due to its distinct segment compared to general entertainment television. Not all products are inclined to advertise on news television with the format of television commercials (TVC). The strategy employed by Metro TV is to offer advertisements with a format that emphasizes informational aspects such as corporate actions and other public relations activities, targeting private corporations and ministries/agencies.

Assistant Chief Marketing Officer of Metro TV, Agus Masrianto, revealed that Metro TV was the first television to implement native advertising because news television had to find a niche for advertisements amidst competition with general entertainment television. Furthermore, the benchmark for advertisers is television ratings and share, where general entertainment television generally has higher ratings and share compared to news television.

"When Metro TV began operating in 2000, the competition for TVC advertisements was cutthroat due to the dominance of general entertainment genre television. For us, that had become a red ocean, and competing would result in defeat. Ultimately, we thought and discussed, leading us to conclude that news is essentially information, and advertising also conveys information. Therefore, there is a similarity between news and advertising, allowing them to be combined into a new type of advertisement format that we initially referred to as 'publictising' or 'public relation advertising'. This term wasn’t in any book, and we created it ourselves because public relations activities involve conveying information and presenting it as news to the audience. Later on, this advertisement format developed and is now known as native advertising" (Agus Masrianto, interview on February 11, 2023).
An example of native advertising within Metro TV's news program content is the coverage of the implementation of the 3M health protocol (wearing masks, washing hands, maintaining distance) in various public facilities and services, such as train stations, terminals, airports, shopping centers, office buildings, government offices, and schools. This news was broadcast on Metro TV for three months, from October 1 to December 31, 2020, with a total of 280 news segments. The label of the Covid-19 Handling Task Force logo was displayed at the beginning and end of the news, indicating that the coverage of the 3M health protocol was presented in the form of native advertising.

Another example is the coverage of an oil spill in the waters off the northern coast of Java, Karawang, West Java, in July 2019. The oil spill resulted from a pipeline leak during Pertamina's offshore oil drilling. Pertamina utilized native advertising, which is paid news content, in Metro TV's news program. The content revealed various efforts undertaken, from addressing the pipeline leak to cleaning up the oil spill in the waters and coastal areas, compensating affected parties, and conducting environmental recovery activities to address pollution impacts (TV, 2019).

Agus Masrianto added that the utilization of native advertising is a business strategy executed by Metro TV to increase the company's revenue. This is what has allowed Metro TV to sustain itself for over two decades in the Indonesian media industry. Native advertising creates a new market segment that aligns with Metro TV's targeted audience.

"It must be acknowledged that news television in Indonesia hasn't been as popular because audiences are more inclined towards entertainment. Ideally, news television should have quality content because it provides timely and educational information, promoting intellectual growth and capturing a large audience. However, advertisers have a different perspective because entertainment content, especially soap operas, tend to attract more viewers compared to news. Therefore, Metro TV offers a different approach, believing in advertisers by packaging advertisements with informative and educational content. Although the news television audience is smaller, it is of higher quality as news viewers deliberately choose to watch the news, making it a higher-quality audience" (Agus Masrianto, interview on February 11, 2023).

Metro TV's Manager of News Production, Yohannes Siahanenia, acknowledged native advertising as a strategy to generate company revenue in the face of a highly competitive media industry. The News Division of Metro TV also supports the use of native advertising by allocating dedicated time to air native advertising content within news bulletin programs, known as "built-in segments."
"The built-in segment in Metro TV's news bulletin program is indeed a part of our broadcasting strategy for collaborative content. The built-in segment is also part of our strategy, aimed at presenting advertiser content as an integral part of daily news. The condition is that it shouldn't be overly hard selling. For example, the Jakarta Fair built-in segment includes a dedicated news item, making it seem like a part of the news, not an advertorial, and the news angle is discussed with the advertiser. So, we have one segment dedicated to native advertising content from advertisers. This can be done very well and has become a strategy. Furthermore, we now offer the built-in segment to advertisers and it is broadcasted and uploaded on Metro TV's website and social media. This has become a company policy and is known to the company's management. It has become a necessity and is unavoidable" (Yohannes Siahanenia, interview on February 15, 2023).

Referring to the concept of media sustainability developed by (Gumucio-Dagron & Dlamini, 2004), there are three pillars that support media business sustainability: financial, social, and institutional viability, or the institution's willingness to survive. These three pillars drive Metro TV to utilize native advertising to ensure the sustainability of its business. Recognizing that television revenue comes from advertisements, Metro TV makes earnest efforts to secure advertisers through various means. Advertisements are also needed as a source of funding for the company's operational activities and news production. Similarly, the social factor is leveraged by Metro TV to secure advertisements. Strong relationships with corporations and government agencies are strong social assets that enable Metro TV to acquire funding through advertisements. Meanwhile, institutional viability is demonstrated by Metro TV by implementing native advertising as a strategy and making it a business model to ensure its ongoing sustainability. Therefore, Metro TV has a strong desire to become a financially and operationally healthy company by utilizing native advertising.

4.1 IMPLICATIONS OF EDITORIAL-BUSINESS RELATIONSHIP

In the context of the editorial-business relationship, the use of native advertising in news reporting has led the editorial team of Metro TV to adapt and compromise with the advertisers' desires. For example, in the coverage of the crude oil spill in the waters of Karawang, West Java, which was presented as native advertising. The Metro TV editorial team agreed to and adjusted the news theme to align with Pertamina, the advertiser. The coverage highlighted Pertamina’s efforts in addressing the oil spill and its resulting impacts. Nonetheless, the Metro TV editorial team still undertook editorial steps in reporting the case of the oil spill in Karawang, including sending reporting teams to
the field, gathering facts on-site, and conducting interviews with parties involved in the oil spill incident.

Yohannes Siahanenia, Manager of News Production at Metro TV, ensured that there is no rejection from the editorial team regarding native advertising, including the coverage of the crude oil spill in Karawang, West Java. However, certain requirements must be met in the creation of native advertising content. One of these requirements is that native advertising content must possess news value and should not be overtly hard selling. In other words, Metro TV is highly selective about native advertising and not all requests for native advertising from advertisers are accepted.

"We usually discuss with advertisers before working on native advertising content. Discussions involve the theme and content so that we can understand what the advertiser wants. On the other hand, we want the advertiser to understand the limitations when producing native advertising content. For example, in the case of native advertising content related to plastic bottle waste management, which we received from a bottled water producer. We started with a pile of plastic bottle waste and then showcased creative individuals who repurpose plastic bottles into useful and productive items. Therefore, the message conveyed is subtle and discreet, ensuring that viewers are comfortable while watching the content even though it contains advertising elements. We often decline requests if advertisers do not align with the concept we offer. Secondly, advertisers may want hard selling, even going so far as to request reporters to demonstrate their products" (Yohannes Siahanenia, interview on February 15, 2023).

Robert Parus, Executive Producer at Metro TV, ensured that not all advertiser requests are fulfilled in the creation of native advertising. As a news television, critical thinking is essential, even when creating native advertising, which inherently assists advertisers. The solution is to engage in discussions and compromises with advertisers regarding the theme and news angle.

"Native advertising should start from an issue, not just an advertising proposition that eventually becomes commercial or promotional and hard selling. The middle ground comes from the issue, so there are discussions with advertisers before working on native advertising. This includes the desired interviewees; although requests or suggestions from advertisers are accommodated, the editorial team provides notes or suggestions to ensure the advertiser's desired outcome is achieved" (Robert Parus, interview on February 17, 2023).

Assistant Chief Marketing Officer at Metro TV, Agus Masrianto, mentioned that there has been a shift in the attitude and perspective of Metro TV's editorial team towards native advertising. Initially, there was resistance as news was meant to be separate from
advertisements and each should stand independently. However, this change in attitude occurred through dialogue and discussions between the editorial team and Metro TV's sales marketing, both of which realized that the news and information aspect forms the core of the news television business. Relying solely on spot advertisements would be difficult to finance operational expenses. Native advertising represents advertiser-requested news content that maintains an informational focus and does not urge viewers to purchase products.

“There was indeed a conflict between the editorial team and sales marketing regarding native advertising, but it was resolved amicably. There has been a shift in understanding, particularly on the editorial side, acknowledging that the principle of separating news from advertisements is ideal and good, but it cannot capture the existing business. Referring to the term used by the owner of Metro TV, Surya Paloh, there needs to be an idealistic yet realistic stance. This is what makes the editorial team and sales marketing work harmoniously. Separating news from advertisements poses a challenge for maintaining idealism while also being realistic. That's why knowledge and maturity are required to uphold both idealistic and realistic attitudes. Ultimately, the creation of native advertising still adheres to journalistic principles and certain boundaries that must be respected” (Agus Masrianto, interview on February 11, 2023).

Alwin Febrian, Head of the Marketing Division at Metro TV, explained that the Metro TV editorial team often rejects native advertising requests due to content that doesn't align with journalistic principles. Another reason is that advertisers want native advertising to emphasize product promotions, which tends to lean towards hard selling. This has led Metro TV's sales marketing to understand and be aware of the limitations desired by the editorial team, so when they engage with advertisers, they can remind them of the applicable boundaries for native advertising at Metro TV.

"The majority of native advertising submitted to Metro TV aims to be aired within news programs, but there are conditions; it should not be overly hard selling. Both the editorial team and sales marketing agreed to and follow these limitations set by the editorial team. The key is to avoid damaging the screen and prevent it from appearing crass. However, advertisers have their desires, so we engage in discussions with the editorial team. Despite holding onto our ideals, we must also ensure that the revenue is not lost. The solution lies in discussions between sales marketing and the editorial team, finding a middle ground in terms of approach, and this is what's discussed. But sales marketing also has its own ideals. As long as advertiser requests are reasonable, they will be accommodated” (Alwin Febrian, interview on February 20, 2023).

The consequence of utilizing native advertising has led to a blurred boundary between news and commercial interests. However, in journalistic practice, it is crucial to maintain a clear separation between editorial and commercial interests. This is intended
to preserve the independence of the press institution and avoid undermining public trust. This clear separation is often referred to as the "firewall," signifying a distinction between advertisements and news, enabling the audience to distinguish between news and advertising. Upholding the firewall will facilitate the task of journalists, ensuring that they are not burdened by advertisers' interests, and vice versa.

The firewall is an ideal concept established and agreed upon by the global media organizations to segregate commercial interests from editorial pursuits. This separation is intended to uphold the quality and independence of journalism, ultimately fostering a high level of public trust while preserving the role of the press as a fundamental pillar of democracy. Within the framework of democratic life, the press is a pivotal element required to ensure a system of checks and balances between the realms of politics and economics.

Bill Kovach and Tom Rosentiel, in their book "The Elements of Journalism," describe the objective of the firewall as maintaining the professionalism of mass media while preventing commercial interests from intervening in reporting, thereby safeguarding the media's independence. Journalists are not concerned with advertising matters, and marketing personnel are not involved in editorial affairs. Consequently, the roles and responsibilities of the editorial and marketing departments remain distinct (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2021).

Harsono (2010) asserts that the firewall reflects the fundamental philosophy of journalism. The firewall should be a journalistic principle that separates news from advertising. The firewall serves as a reminder that advertisements should not interfere with editorial matters. Conversely, editors and journalists need not be involved in advertising affairs. Violations of the firewall can result in various risks, ranging from minor to serious. One thing is clear: readers' trust in mass media will be eroded sooner or later. Furthermore, breaching the firewall can lead to the lack of separation of tasks and roles for journalists, potentially muddling the working system within media organizations. A journalist whose duty is to cover and report news may end up seeking or even arranging advertisements or crafting news with ad content. Conversely, an advertising marketing specialist may influence news content or impact the content of news pieces.

The significance of maintaining the separation between commercial interests and news for the existence of journalism has led many journalistic thinkers to analogize it
with the separation of church and state in Western democracy. Commercial interests must be distinct from news, each functioning independently without mutual influence. The secularism in journalistic practice emerged alongside concerns about disturbances within the editorial realm due to the infiltration of commercial interests. Moreover, editorial professionalism could be compromised in favor of serving commercial interests.

Several journalistic thinkers also analogize this separation with the Great Wall of China to illustrate the robust and unwavering boundary between news and commercial interests. Adherence to the separation between news and advertising becomes highly attractive to business institutions, government entities, and individuals seeking to advertise. Ultimately, this enhances the bargaining power of mass media, generates revenue, and ensures the sustainability of quality press organizations.

Conversely, if the firewall principle is violated, public trust is likely to diminish, tarnishing the hard-earned reputation of media organizations. The subsequent impact could lead the public to seek alternative sources of information outside of mass media, as the credibility and accuracy of mass media content become questionable (Hartoyo, 2018). This poses a threat to the continuity of mass media as a vital democratic pillar responsible for oversight functions.

5 CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The research findings highlight two significant points. Firstly, the practice of native advertising has become commonplace in television media, particularly on Metro TV, where advertisers' messages are embedded within a news format. While adhering to journalistic principles, native advertising aims to provide valuable information with news value while subtly incorporating sponsor messages. Then, native advertising has become an integral part of Metro TV's business model to boost revenue. The chosen news format has opened up new avenues for native advertising as a means to obtain advertisements. This situation has led to the adaptation of advertising into news content. Alongside technological advancements, economic factors drive the use of native advertising in mass media as an effort to maintain financial stability and remain competitive in the media industry. This phenomenon also raises the issue of hypercommercialism, where the balance between commercial and editorial content in mass media becomes skewed.

Although native advertising has altered the dynamics of separating news from advertising, stricter oversight is needed from media regulatory authorities such as the
Press Council to uphold journalistic integrity. Therefore, the Press Council should tighten requirements regarding the appearance and identification of native advertising, and provide warnings to media and advertising companies to maintain clarity between news and ads. By taking these steps, mass media can preserve journalism quality and build public trust, especially in an era where social media increasingly dominates as a source of information.
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