

ANALYSIS OF UNDERSTANDING OF STORYTELLING IN MARKETING FOR LAWEYAN BATIK ENTREPRENEURS

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Abstract: Kampoeng Batik Laweyan is an educational tourist destination as well as a shopping tour in Surakarta. Batik entrepreneur is a major player in the batik industry. Industrial areas and batik tourism can be enhanced with various marketing strategies, one of which is by utilizing storytelling marketing. Previous research has proven that the use of storytelling marketing can have a positive impact in increasing brand value, increasing customer loyalty and even making customers willing to pay more to get the product. This study aims to reveal the understanding of storytelling in marketing activities for Laweyan batik entrepreneurs. This study uses qualitative methods and a descriptive approach with data from interviews with Laweyan batik entrepreneurs regarding their understanding of marketing storytelling and marketing documents. Interview results were validated by observation as a form of triangulation in this study. Research subjects were selected by purposive sampling technique with a certain mix. The results of this study found that understanding of marketing strategies by utilizing storytelling marketing is still lacking, because Laweyan batik entrepreneurs are still focused on increasing product selling points, they do not explain the ability to retain customers and also attract potential customers.

Keywords: *storytelling marketing, Laweyan batik entrepreneurs, Laweyan tourism, marketing*

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1. Introduction

Batik is an Indonesian cultural heritage, so it needs to be preserved. There are many ways that can be done to preserve batik culture, one of which is to make batik a garment that is suitable for all groups, both the elderly and young people. In the city of Surakarta there are two batik centers, namely Kampoeng Batik Laweyan and Kampung Batik Kauman. Batik Laweyan is well known by the public at large, and there is even a special tourist destination, namely Kampoeng Batik Laweyan which is used as an educational tourism destination as well as a shopping tour. Kampoeng Batik Laweyan, which has been developing since the 14th century AD and is the oldest batik village in Indonesia, has experienced its heyday until its decline. The city of Solo or Surakarta can also be known as a competitive Indonesian batik factory and is known abroad. Now Kampoeng Batik Laweyan has been further developed to support the development of the batik industry and tourism in the area. Batik entrepreneurs as the main players in the batik industry play an important role in the development of the region. The

development of the batik industry and tourism can be enhanced by various marketing strategies, one of which is by utilizing storytelling marketing.

Previously, researchers had explored the problems that occurred in Kampong Batik Laweyan with a focus on the research area of Pajang Village, Laweyan District, Surakarta City by conducting interviews with one of the Laweyan batik entrepreneurs. From the results of the interviews it was found that one of the current problems is the existence of predatory pricing or selling at prices below the market. This is even more pronounced because now buyers can easily choose the goods they want to look for at the marketplace, where it is very clear that the products are being sold at below market prices and some are even being sold below the cost of production. Of course this will have an impact on the marketing of batik itself.

There are many strategies in an effort to increase the selling value of products, one of which is storytelling. Storytelling is a form of marketing strategy that has proven effective in increasing product sales value. Storytelling has been carried out by many business people, both small and large, to attract and retain customers (Pulizzi, 2012). In contrast to advertising, storytelling presents a unique way of creating a positive impression on consumers' minds of products/brands by presenting interesting stories that remain relevant to the product/brand to increase positive value for the product/brand. Presentation of storytelling is usually done in the form of news, blogs, videos, webinars, podcasts and social media. Storytelling strategies have proven to be effective in marketing practices, this is because human memory is formed by stories (Schank, 1999). As a rule of thumb when it comes to storytelling, humans tend to store, categorize and retrieve information in the form of stories. Stories are able to relive and repeating stories gives humans a sense of pleasure (Holt, 2003).

Storytelling itself is a basic form of communication since the early history of human life (Patterson & Brown, 2005). Storytelling is not only done in verbal form, the form of storytelling depends on where the media is. Printed storytelling can be in the form of novels, and storytelling can also be shown in video form. Fundamentally, storytelling is a way for humans to express emotional expressions in seeing the world and also a way for humans to know the world (Kim & Jeong, 2010). Storytelling can be categorized as a way of sharing knowledge or experience through a series of stories to convey a set of ideas, concepts (Sole & Wilson, 2002). As a means of sharing experiences, storytelling can be an effective way to retain customers and attract potential customers (Jensen, 1999).

Storytelling is done to get around people's boredom with conventional forms of marketing strategies such as advertising. Stories have the ability to touch someone's emotions and feelings, so they can move someone to act (Lin & Liou, 2016). Through storytelling, business people can share and convey social issues that are packaged well to provide positive value to products/brands. This story can be in the form of experience, so that by telling stories it is able to describe past experiences to achieve future expectations. Good storytelling is able to create value and give a positive impression to consumers to see, hear, feel and then remember it.

Storytelling as a form of marketing strategy has three forms (Lindawati, 2018). First, Data Driven Storytelling, this strategy uses data to be utilized in creating story content. The more complete the data, the more it raises awareness of a problem. Of course the presentation of data must be packaged into an interesting story and in a language style that is easily understood by consumers. Second, Philanthropic Storytelling, as a strategy to fulfill consumers' curiosity about the ins and outs of the company. This strategy will make consumers understand how the company does business, so that by understanding how the company works, consumers will have more trust. This is also done to fulfill global awareness of good business. The third

strategy is customer-led storytelling, namely telling the successful experiences of users. This is able to increase public awareness of the product/brand through user stories.

Much research has been done on storytelling from various fields, ranging from studies in management, marketing, operations, information systems and psychology. Storytelling is often used as a sweetener in narrative form. Storytelling refers to the use of stories with plots and characters, as well as sequences of actions and experiences that are carried out or experienced by a certain number of people, both real and imaginary (Boldosova, 2020). Storytelling is one of the keys to success in digital marketing.

The application of storytelling strategies is found in video marketing strategies, social media, events and exhibitions (González Romo et al., 2017). Storytelling about the history and process of making sake in Japan can be an innovative way of engaging customers to increase their loyalty (Lee & Shin, 2015). Storytelling is able to have a different impact on consumer impressions and actions towards products. Consumers who get "storytelling" about products/brands are able to describe the product/brand in much more positive terms and are willing to pay more for the product (Lundqvist et al., 2013).

In implementing marketing strategies for local Indonesian fashion brands, storytelling techniques are able to build a sales funnel and can attract the audience into the sales funnel and add value to the products sold (Kinasih, 2021). Brand Storytelling can also be an effective strategy in forming Value Perceptions so that it can influence Visit Intention (Anita & Lestari, 2020).

Currently there are many forms of marketing strategies by utilizing storytelling. However, there is no storytelling research that focuses on the marketing of Batik Laweyan. Due to the absence of research on storytelling on the marketing of Batik Laweyan, this research will focus on storytelling on the marketing of batik located in Pajang village, Laweyan, Surakarta. This study aims to reveal the understanding of Laweyan batik entrepreneurs regarding storytelling marketing in marketing activities as well as the contribution of batik entrepreneurs in the development of local tourism in Kampung Batik Laweyan.

Geographically, the area of Pajang Village is side by side to Kampoeng Laweyan Batik, only limited by the Jenes River. Pajang Village is a village that has a strong historical story in the development of the city of Surakarta. The researcher focused on research in Pajang Village because there is also a center for Batik Cap crafts. The uniqueness of the historical story and also the series of elements of Batik Cap in Pajang Village, Laweyan are added values that can make this research interesting. Therefore this research is important because it has the priority to provide information about understanding storytelling marketing for Batik Entrepreneurs in Pajang Village, Laweyan District, Surakarta City in marketing activities to be developed in the development of local tourism potential in Laweyan Batik Village with a research focus in Pajang village, Laweyan District, Surakarta City.

2. Research Method

Methodology This study uses a qualitative method and a descriptive approach. Qualitative methods are often called naturalistic research methods because the research is carried out in natural conditions (Sugiono, 2018). The qualitative method is defined as a social science research method that collects and analyzes data in the form of human words and actions and researchers do not try to calculate or quantify the qualitative data that has been obtained and thus do not analyze numbers (Afrizal, 2015). This research was conducted in Laweyan Surakarta, with a focus on Pajang Village, Laweyan District, Surakarta.

Sources of data in qualitative research come from spoken and written words. In this study, the main data source was obtained from interviews with Batik Entrepreneurs, while the secondary data source was obtained from the results of marketing documents at their online shop.

The sampling technique used to determine the sample to be used in this study is purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is a data source collection technique with certain considerations. The subject selection process is carried out by determining the subject selection criteria. These criteria are: (1) Batik Entrepreneurs who have been running a business for more than 5 years; (2) Batik Entrepreneurs who carry out their own production activities; and (3) Batik Entrepreneurs located in Pajang Village, Laweyan District, Surakarta. Data collection in this study was carried out by means of personal interviews and documentation of marketing activities at the online store they owned.

The main instrument in this study was the researcher himself, who was assisted by three auxiliary instruments, including: (1) an interview guide to keep the course of the interview in accordance with the issues to be uncovered; (2) Writing tools to record important things during the interview; and (3) Documents from marketing activities at online stores that are owned.

Data validation in this study used a triangulation technique. The technique used in this study is the source triangulation technique, namely by using three sources with different uniqueness. The data collected in this study were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Laweyan Batik, History and Culture

Laweyan is one of the areas in Surakarta City which is a tourist destination as a center for the batik industry and has also been designated as a cultural heritage area with many ancient buildings that still stand strong today. Batik in the Laweyan region has added value that is not necessarily owned by other regions, one of which is the historical factor which is owned as part of the history of the development of batik since the time of the kingdom of Pajang in the 16th century to the Kasunanan period of Surakarta in the 20th century. Since ancient times, the batik industry has been no stranger to Laweyan residents. According to literature, Laweyan residents have been involved in the fabric business for a long time in the 14th century until it was known as a region producing quality cloth. Even the name of the Laweyan area itself is taken from the Javanese "Lawe" which means thread. Then in the 16th century, precisely in 1546, the people of Laweyan Bari became familiar with the technique of making batik thanks to the services of Kyai Ageng Henis who was also a descendant of King Brawijaya V. Until the profession of batik artisans mushroomed in the Laweyan area. Laweyan batik continues to experience development, in the 20th century in 1911, a new batik technique with the advantage of a faster batik process was introduced by KH. Samanhudi, namely Batik Cap technique. The discovery of this new technique made the batik industry in the Laweyan region develop very rapidly, so that it was called the heyday for craftsmen at that time.

Laweyan batik also experienced a period of decline marked by the decreasing number of Laweyan batik craftsmen, from the 1970s to the late 1990s. One of the causes of the decline of the Laweyan batik industry was the discovery of a printing technique that could produce batik fabric in multiple quantities compared to written and stamped batik techniques. However, currently the Laweyan batik industry has begun to revive, marked by the establishment of the Kampoeng Batik Laweyan Development Forum on September 25, 2004. Over time, the Laweyan batik industry began to thrive again with the emergence of batik entrepreneurs,

namely, apart from producing their own batik fabric, they also conjured their homes. become a batik gallery to showcase their wares. This moment became a turning point for the Laweyan area, which was originally only a batik industrial area where they were only craftsmen or batik fabric makers, now it has become a batik tourism area with a mix of batik producers, batik shopping centers and batik cultural tourism.

The tourist area of Kampoeng Batik Laweyan is currently still centered on the Jl. Sidoluhur alone, this is marked by the batik galleries lined up along the road. In other areas there are also galleries owned by batik entrepreneurs but located randomly. This of course can result in a separate gallery from the tourist center of Laweyan batik being missed by tourists when they visit Kampoeng Batik Laweyan. In order to attract more tourists, creativity and innovation must always be improved so that they can continue to grow. Seeing the history of the Laweyan area which is thick with elements of batik culture, of course there is still a lot of potential that can be explored again to develop tourism in Kampoeng Batik Laweyan .

3.2. Anxiety from Laweyan Batik Entrepreneurs

The Batik industry will continue to grow if it is balanced with support from various parties, both from the business actors themselves, consumers and the government. All business actors certainly have hope that their business will continue to experience growth and sales will continue to increase. Competition in the batik industry in the market is certainly getting tougher, especially in an increasingly advanced era like today. The existence of a marketplace makes competition more visible because consumers can directly compare the various product choices they want. Competition in the industrial world naturally occurs. Competition in quality can make the industry continue to grow, but competition in price will actually undermine the development of the batik industry.

Informant 2 expressed his anxiety about undermining prices by selling batik fabric below a reasonable price. According to him, even in the field there were sellers who set selling prices below the cost of production.

"And also like this, I have anxiety when other production prices can be cheaper. In fact, for example, if I produce myself, I know the cost of production. Why in other places it can be cheaper, even cheaper than raw materials, that's my anxiety. Where do they get their raw materials from? Really, they can sell it below the COGS, even though I know the production price. Does the government have to provide the lowest retail price, or the lowest selling price in order to stabilize prices in the market. There's nothing called predatory pricing or what it is, destroying the price. That's all."

The government needs to set the lowest retail price in order to make the market price of batik fabric more stable. Price wars that occur can damage the batik industry, especially for those who have prioritized the quality of batik fabric for sale in the market.

"For example, the price of the raw material for the fabric that I bought, in 2 meters, is about Rp 38.000. So, for example, at the Shopee, someone sells the price of fabric per piece, maybe in 175 centimeters, the price is Rp. 25,000. They sell products in printing specification, what kind of fabric is it. What they are doing is destroying our industry, damaging our sales industry as well. Even though in the end the quality will be different, the buyer doesn't know that yet, especially if the fraud seller claims that their products are good. Well, that will have an impact on our industry."

The practice of price wars is an important issue because buyers of batik fabric in general do not know how quality batik fabric is handmade or fabric with batik pattern is processed through printing techniques.

Informant 3 also shared the same view that currently many people still do not know about the differences between original batik and fabric with batik pattern. At the same time, the hope is that the government will participate in educating the public about batik fabric.

"My hope is more in educating the public about the understanding between original batik and fabric with batik pattern. That's because it really influences sales, because most people don't know or don't understand the differences between both written batik and fabric with batik pattern. Because in order to educate the public, several actors are needed, not only entrepreneurs or craftsmen but also the government, to learn about how to spread understanding between original batik and fabric with batik pattern."

3.3. Understanding of Storytelling Marketing

In maintaining the existence of a brand in the market, it is necessary to carry out an effective and consistent marketing strategy. Creativity and innovation also need to be carried out in the midst of market dynamics until now. It has been proven that there are many brands that are currently living with names, or even those that are trying to return to compete in the middle of the market, it feels like they are desperately trying to control the market even though they once triumphed in dominating the market. Based on history, the Laweyan batik area itself can also be evidence, where it once triumphed and then experienced a gloomy period with only a handful of batik entrepreneurs left at that time. Even though now it looks like they are trying to recover and return to glory, if no real strategy is implemented it could just turn into a memory.

Many marketing strategies can be implemented, one of which is storytelling marketing which has proven effective in increasing brand and product value. It is undeniable that every entrepreneur wants sales of their products to continue to increase so that their business can continue to grow.

Storytelling can be categorized as a way of sharing knowledge or experience through a series of stories to convey a set of ideas, concepts (Sole & Wilson, 2002). Storytelling is a form of marketing strategy that has proven effective in increasing product sales value. Storytelling has been carried out by many business people, both small and large, to attract and retain customers (Pulizzi, 2012). In contrast to advertising, storytelling presents a unique way of creating a positive impression on consumers' minds of products/brands by presenting interesting stories that remain relevant to the product/brand to increase positive value for the product/brand. As a means of sharing experiences, storytelling can be an effective way of retaining customers and attracting potential customers (Jensen, 1999).

In accordance with this explanation, the notion of storytelling marketing is a means of sharing knowledge and experience in the form of a series of stories that can be utilized in marketing activities with an effective ability to increase the selling value of products/brands, retain customers and also attract potential customers. The three main capabilities of storytelling marketing should be understood and understood by entrepreneurs in an effort to improve their business development.

Based on information from Laweyan batik entrepreneurs in Pajang village, storytelling marketing is a form of marketing by telling and explaining products in an attractive and selling language. This was conveyed by resource from informant 2 who stated that storytelling marketing is a marketing activity by telling the product.

"Storytelling that I know is telling something. If I am in the business sector, I will tell about a product."

Another batik entrepreneur in the village of Pajang Laweyan, namely informant 3, added that storytelling marketing is a marketing activity by explaining products in attractive and selling language.

"My understanding of storytelling is explaining the products that I sell or I publish in a language that attracts the attention of consumers and people who are interested in my products as much as possible. To be interested is to have its history. Or how do I do the stuff I make with what words, with what language or more words. The point is to sell more."

It can be said that the understanding of Laweyan batik entrepreneurs in Pajang village regarding storytelling marketing is lacking, because they only emphasize the aspect of increasing the selling value of the product, they have not discussed aspects of retaining customers and also attracting potential customers. There are even batik entrepreneurs who don't understand storytelling marketing at all. Informant 1 said he had never heard of storytelling marketing.

3.4. Application of Storytelling Marketing

The application of storytelling marketing in the right way can certainly maximize its ability as a means to increase the selling value of products/brands, retain customers and also attract potential customers. In practice, of course, every company has different forms of storytelling, but there are several criteria for effective storytelling in marketing, including (Znanewitz & Gilch, 2016): 1. The right story (true core), the story must represent the core of the company, it can be about company history or from the experiences of its members or other stakeholders. 2. Entertainment and excitement, interesting and up-to-date stories, according to the target market. 3. Uniqueness, the story is different from the shape of competitors. 4. Conciseness, the story is already in the form of a summary of several sentences. 5. Simplicity, the story must be simple, not long-winded. 6. Connectivity, stories in serial form, so as to make customers curious and involved. 7. Brand persona, the brand character is displayed consistently, making it easy for customers to recognize and remember. If these seven criteria are implemented in a varied and consistent manner, they can certainly have a positive impact on increasing the selling value of the product/brand, retaining customers and also attracting potential customers.

Based on the results of interviews with Laweyan batik entrepreneurs in Pajang village who understand storytelling, they admit that some have implemented a marketing strategy by utilizing storytelling although it has not been maximized and some have stated that they have not implemented it. The marketing activities they carry out are generally in online stores or social media. This was done by informant 2 and informant 3, besides they are producing their own batik fabric they also sell directly to consumers, while informant 1 only produced batik fabric according to orders from batik fabric traders.



Figure 1. Online Store Marketing Documents from one of the informants
(Source: Researchers, 2022)

Marketing activities carried out by informant 1 only take advantage of existing relationships. This is because its current business activities are only as a manufacturer of Batik Cap fabric, so its marketing is only limited to utilizing batik fabric traders who regularly order it. When asked about the marketing activities carried out in order to be known by the batik traders, he answered that it was carried out by word of mouth from the batik traders.

Based on interview results, marketing activities carried out by informant 2 have utilized storytelling marketing but have not been maximized.

"Not yet, it's about 50% and is not complete yet."

So far, marketing activities by utilizing storytelling marketing have been carried out by telling the production process of batik fabric by packaging it in the form of a video of the sequence of making Batik Cap fabric with the addition of a little necessary narration.

"So far we have only made videos and added a little text, but it hasn't been conceptualized properly."

The narration included is usually an explanation of pattern and their philosophy. "For the storytelling marketing, some of it is in the form of video images earlier. There are some in the form of pattern, explanations of pattern and their philosophies. That includes storytelling too."

In addition to videos of the process of making batik fabric, the marketing activities carried out also featured photos of the batik fabric they produced themselves. Photos of batik fabric displayed on online stores and social media have not been accompanied by a description, they are still limited to updating the latest photos of the fabric being produced. This is due to limited human resources that do not exist specifically to manage marketing activities.

"It's just that we only upload or update a number of products, just take photos, no need for narration, description or other storytelling. Only the photo doesn't have a description, because the time and energy capabilities are also sober."

Then the marketing activities carried out by informant 3 based on the results of the interviews, so far they have only carried out ordinary marketing activities and have not really implemented storytelling marketing because they adjust to their target market.

"So far, I haven't, it's just normal. Because I see that, for the market that I'm working on, for those directions, it's not like that. I don't know yet, or I don't know myself either. And the target market is different."

Even though they admitted that they had not used storytelling marketing in their marketing activities, when interviewed by informant 3 they tried to explain story materials that could be used in storytelling marketing. Sources of stories that can be developed are the materials used and the history of pattern designs. Stories are told in language and words that are easier to understand, to add insight into the patterns that are made.

"Yes, maybe what, regarding the material of the venom or the history of the design that I made, what about this pattern cloth. What do you use, using language or words that are easier to understand and can also add insight into the pattern or designs that I make."

In addition, informant 3 added that stories can be presented using narration with intonation and words that inspire consumers or potential buyers to gain a new understanding of the products being marketed.

"Oh, it's as simple as this. Hopefully it's not wrong, for example there is the same fabric product, batik pattern seragini. From those who don't have storytelling, they just describe things, batik is written like this, this color, that's just the way it is. But for storytelling marketing, according to my understanding, I use intonation or words that inspire consumers or potential buyers to be more interested and also get a new understanding of what I sell."

Based on information from the three interviewees regarding the implementation of storytelling marketing, both those who have implemented it and those who have not implemented it, there is some conformity with the criteria for effective storytelling in this study. Of the 7 criteria for effective storytelling, Laweyan batik entrepreneurs in Pajang village only mentioned 3 criteria that were appropriate, namely, 1. The Right Story, by explaining product specifications, 2. Entertainment and excitement, and 3. Simplicity.

4. Conclusion

Analysis of storytelling marketing for Laweyan batik entrepreneurs shows that understanding of marketing strategies by utilizing storytelling marketing is still lacking, because it is still focused on increasing the selling value of products, for other capabilities, namely retaining customers and also attracting potential customers who have not been mentioned by Laweyan batik entrepreneurs. In addition, based on the criteria for implementing effective storytelling marketing, Laweyan batik entrepreneurs only mentioned 3 criteria out of 7 effective criteria, namely 1. The Right Story, by explaining product specifications, 2. Entertainment and excitement with interesting and selling narratives, and 3. Simplicity with a simple description of the product.

Based on the results of the analysis and discussion in this study, the tourism potential of Laweyan batik can still be developed further. The history and culture attached to the Laweyan tourist area can be used as a source of stories to support the marketing of the Laweyan batik industry. This is what should be done so that the development of the Laweyan batik industry and the tourist area of Kampoeng Batik Laweyan can progress together. In addition, support from the government as a regulator is also needed, in order to educate the public about authentic batik and setting the lowest price so that market competition can be maintained.

This research has limitations because it has only identified the potential for storytelling marketing qualitatively from the point of view of Laweyan batik entrepreneurs in Pajang village. For this reason, further research is needed in order to develop the industrial and tourism potential of Laweyan batik. Further research is expected to reveal a more appropriate strategy in order to develop the local tourist area of Kampoeng Batik Laweyan.

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