

Strategies of Local Television Media in Maintaining Existence

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Received : July 05, 2024

Accepted : August 15, 2024

Published : August 31, 2024

Citation: Reza, F., Agustin, P., Putri, S.H., & Sugiarta, N. Strategies of Local Television Media in Maintaining Existence. Sinergi International Journal of Communication Sciences. 2(3), 156-166.

<https://doi.org/10.61194/ijcs.v2i3.497>

ABSTRACT: This study employs a qualitative method with a case study research approach. The subject of this research is I Channel TV Bandung, while the object is the media partnership on the Instagram account @inikpop. Informants were selected using purposive sampling. Data collection methods include observation, interviews, literature review, and documentation. Data analysis techniques involve data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. Data validity testing is conducted through source triangulation. The results of this study indicate that the partnership established through media collaboration on the Instagram account @inikpop includes cooperation in the form of advertising and promotional media publications for event organizers, building a positive corporate image through program quality and partnerships, as well as engaging with the audience to foster closeness. Media partnerships help I Channel TV maintain its existence amidst competition from online and digital media through its flagship program, INIKPOP, which also has its own promotional media channels such as Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok.

In addition to media partnerships, active engagement on social media also assists I Channel TV in attracting back television audiences, who have started to decline, by presenting information content that is packaged in an engaging and distinctive manner on social media. This approach helps balance television's existence with the advancement of online media technology in people's daily lives.

Keywords: Media Partnership, Local Television, K-Pop, Existence, Instagram.



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INTRODUCTION

In the digital era, the existence of local television media is facing increasing challenges. The rapid advancement of digital technology and the dominance of online media have fundamentally transformed how audiences consume information and entertainment (Napoli, 2016). Traditional media, particularly local television stations, must now compete not only with national broadcasters but also with the vast array of content available on social media platforms and streaming services. This competitive environment requires local TV stations to innovate and adapt to shifting audience preferences to remain relevant (Bivens, 2008).

One strategy frequently employed by media organizations is building strong media partnerships. Media partnerships are collaborative relationships between media outlets and external organizations such as event organizers, businesses, and public institutions. Sulistiyani (2017) emphasizes that these partnerships are crucial for gaining publicity, increasing brand visibility, securing objective media coverage, and fostering sustainable relationships with stakeholders (Sulistiyani, 2017). Moreover, according to Couldry and Hepp (2017), media partnerships are part of broader media relations practices that enhance a media organization's public image and trustworthiness (Couldry & Hepp, 2017).

In the context of Indonesia's local broadcasting landscape, these partnerships take on even greater significance. Local television stations typically face resource limitations compared to their national counterparts, necessitating strategic collaborations to maximize their reach and impact (Wardani, 2008). However, the advent of digital media has created new avenues for these partnerships, particularly through social media platforms, enabling local stations to connect more directly with niche audiences.

A notable case study in this regard is I Channel TV Bandung, a local television station that has managed to sustain its presence amid intense media competition. One of its flagship programs, INIKPOP, focuses specifically on Korean popular culture (K-pop), including music, drama, lifestyle, fashion, and culinary topics. The popularity of K-pop and broader Hallyu (Korean Wave) phenomena has grown significantly worldwide, particularly among younger audiences (Jin, 2018). Recognizing this cultural trend, I Channel TV created INIKPOP to tap into the high demand for Korean-related content.

Interestingly, I Channel TV adopts a distinctive approach in its media partnership strategy. While most media partnership proposals in other local stations are directed toward the television station as a whole, I Channel TV's partnerships are proposed specifically for the INIKPOP program. This program-based partnership model allows the station to collaborate directly with event organizers and brands interested in the K-pop niche, making the partnerships more targeted and effective.

During preliminary observations, the researcher found no other local TV stations in Bandung offering programs exclusively dedicated to Korean culture. Additionally, no other local stations in the region have as frequent or as specific media partnerships directed toward individual programs rather than the station overall. This highlights a unique strategic positioning of I Channel TV Bandung, leveraging INIKPOP not only as content but also as a platform for partnership engagement.

Relevant previous studies have addressed various strategies undertaken by local television media to sustain their competitiveness. For instance, Wahyuni (2019) explored how local TV stations improve the quality of their news programs to maintain audience interest (Wahyuni, 2019). Similarly, Setiawan et al. (2023) investigated the communication strategies used by iNews TV Padang in responding to the digitalization trend. However, these studies primarily focus on internal production or management strategies and rarely examine program-specific partnership models integrated with digital platforms (Setiawan et al., 2023).

This research addresses that gap by exploring how media partnerships, specifically channeled through the Instagram account @inikpop, contribute to maintaining the existence of I Channel

TV Bandung. The study not only investigates the effectiveness of this strategy but also analyzes how social media integration supports local television's efforts in adapting to digital disruption. Furthermore, by focusing on a niche program within a local TV station, this research offers new insights into how specialized content can serve as a vehicle for sustainable audience engagement and brand strengthening.

The purpose of this research is to analyze the strategic implementation of media partnerships through INIKPOP's Instagram account and its role in maintaining the existence and relevance of I Channel TV Bandung amidst the digital media landscape. Specifically, this study aims to (1) explore how media partnerships enhance the corporate image of the station, (2) examine audience engagement through social media platforms, and (3) identify the challenges faced in implementing such strategies.

Through these objectives, the research contributes to the understanding of how local television media can balance traditional broadcasting practices with the opportunities and challenges of the digital era.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative research methodology, which is appropriate for exploring the nuanced and contextualized strategies employed by I Channel TV Bandung in sustaining its existence through media partnerships. Qualitative research is particularly suited for understanding phenomena in their natural settings, allowing researchers to gain deeper insights into human behavior, organizational processes, and social dynamics (Denzin, 2012; Flick, 2018; Francis & Baldesari, 2006; Neuman, 1997).

According to Sugiyono (2022), qualitative research emphasizes the interpretation of meaning rather than generalization (Sugiyono, 2015). It involves inductive data analysis and relies heavily on the researcher as the key instrument. The qualitative approach enables the exploration of subjective experiences and organizational strategies that cannot be captured through quantitative measures alone.

Furthermore, as Moleong (2017) asserts, qualitative research employs various techniques such as interviews, observations, and document analysis to interpret social phenomena effectively (Moleong, 2003). This methodological flexibility ensures a comprehensive understanding of the unique characteristics of the INIKPOP program and its role in media partnerships at I Channel TV Bandung. Data collection in qualitative research involves both primary and secondary data sources (Creswell, 2016; Creswell & Poth, 2018; Mulyana, 2007; Pawito, 2007).

In-depth interviews were conducted with key informants, including I Channel TV employees, producers of the INIKPOP program, and collaborating event organizers. Interviews allowed the researcher to gain first-hand insights into the rationale behind media partnership strategies and the challenges encountered. Wahyuni (2019) highlights that interviews in qualitative research provide a flexible yet structured avenue to capture informants' perspectives and experiences in their natural settings (Wahyuni, 2019).

Direct field observations were conducted during various INIKPOP media partnership events and activities. The researcher acted as an observer, documenting the implementation of partnerships and interactions with audiences. Observation is a key technique for capturing non-verbal communication, environmental context, and spontaneous behaviors (Yin, 2018).

Secondary data were gathered to support primary data collection. The following sources were utilized:

- Books and Academic References: Literature on media partnerships, media management, and communication strategies provided the theoretical framework for this research.
- Previous Research (Theses & Dissertations): Relevant theses and dissertations were reviewed to examine existing studies on local television strategies and media relations.
- Internet and Online Media: Digital content from social media platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok, specifically related to the INIKPOP program, was analyzed to understand the station's digital engagement strategies.
- Document Analysis: Company archives, partnership agreements, promotional materials, and internal reports from I Channel TV Bandung were reviewed to triangulate findings.

The study employed purposive sampling to select informants with specific knowledge and experience related to the research objectives. According to Palinkas et al. (2015), purposive sampling is ideal in qualitative research to identify participants who can provide rich, relevant, and diverse information.

Informants included:

- Program producers of INIKPOP
- I Channel TV management and marketing staff
- Representatives of event organizers who collaborated with INIKPOP
- Audience members and K-pop community leaders
- The criteria for informant selection were based on their involvement and experience with media partnerships at I Channel TV Bandung.

Data were collected from March 2023 to October 2023 through the following techniques:

- Semi-Structured Interviews: Conducted face-to-face at I Channel TV Bandung's office and via virtual platforms when necessary.
- Non-Participant Observations: Conducted during media partnership events, observing interactions between the station, event organizers, and the audience.
- Document Study: Analysis of company archives and social media content related to INIKPOP partnerships.

The data analysis process followed the Miles and Huberman model, which consists of four key stages (Miles & Saldaña, 2014):

- Data Collection: Gathering primary and secondary data from interviews, observations, and documents.

- Data Reduction: Filtering and organizing data to focus on relevant information related to the research questions.
- Data Display: Structuring data into visual formats such as matrices, flowcharts, and narrative descriptions to facilitate analysis.
- Conclusion Drawing and Verification: Identifying key themes, patterns, and relationships, followed by validation to ensure accuracy and reliability.

To ensure the credibility and validity of the research findings, triangulation was applied. Triangulation involves combining multiple data collection methods and sources to cross-verify information (Patton, 2015). This study employed:

- Source Triangulation: Comparing data from different informants (employees, event organizers, audiences).
- Method Triangulation: Using interviews, observations, and document analysis concurrently.
- Theoretical Triangulation: Applying various theoretical perspectives on media partnerships and audience engagement.

All informants were informed of the purpose of the study and gave their consent prior to participation. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained throughout the research process, in line with ethical guidelines for qualitative research (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Implementation of Media Partnership through the Instagram Account @inikpop in Maintaining the Existence of I Channel TV as a Local Television Station in Bandung

In this chapter, the researcher presents a detailed explanation of the findings obtained during the study. The research results were gathered through interviews with predetermined informants, selected based on the relevant information and data required for this research. Data collection methods included observations, interviews, and documentation.

The @inikpop Instagram account was created in response to the expanding competition in the digital and online world, as well as the increasing rivalry in local television broadcasting. With the rapid growth of digital platforms, many people are becoming less interested in watching traditional television. As a result, local television broadcasting must develop strong strategies to maintain its existence within society. One of the solutions to address this challenge is through media partnerships.

An essential aspect of media partnerships involves establishing collaborations in advertising and promotional media publications for event organizers, building a positive corporate image through high-quality programming and partnerships, and interacting with the audience to create engagement and closeness.

Establishing Collaboration in Advertising and Promotional Media Publications for Event Organizers

INIKPOP, as one of I Channel TV's flagship programs, has its own social media presence to expand its audience reach. This social media strategy facilitates program promotion and serves as a platform for potential collaboration with I Channel TV or INIKPOP, making it easier for interested parties to obtain the necessary information.

This aligns with the establishment of advertising and promotional media collaboration with event organizers, where promotional content is published on the @inikpop Instagram account. This strategy ensures that information is widely disseminated through social media, maximizing audience reach and engagement.



Figure 4.1 INIKPOP Event Poster

Source: Instagram @inikpop

Figure 4.1 shows an event poster from INIKPOP, promoting a dance cover event for K-Pop fans through Instagram @inikpop, including fans of the dance groups APHRDITE and DEBBY. The event was held on Saturday, June 10, 2023, at Cihampelas Walk (Ciwalk) Bandung.

The event featured dance performances by APHRDITE and DEBBY and was supported by Cihampelas Walk, Solaria, and Warung Talaga (Serba Tahu Nomor Satu). The activities included interviews, games, and performances by each group. This event aimed to encourage audiences to continue watching INIKPOP on I Channel TV while fostering engagement and direct interaction with the community attending the event at Cihampelas Walk.

The media partnership in the form of advertising and promotional media collaborations serves as a distinctive strategy for INIKPOP in attracting a wider audience. Advertising and promotions are not limited to the television program itself but are also extended to social media platforms, allowing information to be disseminated more quickly and efficiently. Utilizing digital, online, and social media platforms for advertising and promotion plays a significant role in re-engaging audiences and sustaining the existence of local television stations.

Building a Positive Corporate Image through Program Quality and Partnerships

Establishing partnerships plays a significant role in building a positive corporate image among the wider community. One example of this is that through partnerships, people who were previously unaware of I Channel TV as a local television station become more familiar with it.

Additionally, a positive corporate image is built through program quality—when a program is well-produced, it attracts audiences with its engaging content and informative presentations. The quality of a program is not only determined by its content but also by how the program is packaged to be perceived as a high-quality production by the audience.

Ongoing partnerships can also contribute to enhancing the quality of a television station's programs. The better the program quality, the more valuable partnerships can be established, leading to the program becoming a flagship show. Enhancing the standard and quality of programming creates a positive impression for the company, especially when the program is exclusive to the station, such as INIKPOP on I Channel TV Bandung.

I Channel TV has positioned itself as a local television station that consistently presents engaging programs for its audience. Furthermore, it is the only local TV station that offers a dedicated K-Pop program. This aligns with INIKPOP, a flagship show that contributes to the positive image of I Channel TV. The credibility and reputation of INIKPOP also play a key role in attracting potential partnerships, as it is a consistent provider of K-Pop-related content that maintains a unique style in delivering information through social media platforms.

Engaging with the Audience as a Form of Connection

Interacting with the audience is crucial in establishing a close and strong relationship with them. Interaction should not only occur through social media but also in person, as direct engagement fosters trust between the audience and the media.

Today, interaction is no longer limited to face-to-face (in-person) communication. With technological advancements, engagement can occur virtually without the need for physical meetings. One of the most effective ways to interact is by utilizing social media, which provides an easy and efficient means to build relationships, closeness, and communication with the audience, even over long distances.

Different forms of social media interaction emerge in various ways, such as:

- Replying to comments on posts
- Liking posts that share informational content
- Re-sharing posts from the INIKPOP account to other audience accounts
- Sending messages via Direct Message (DM) on Instagram

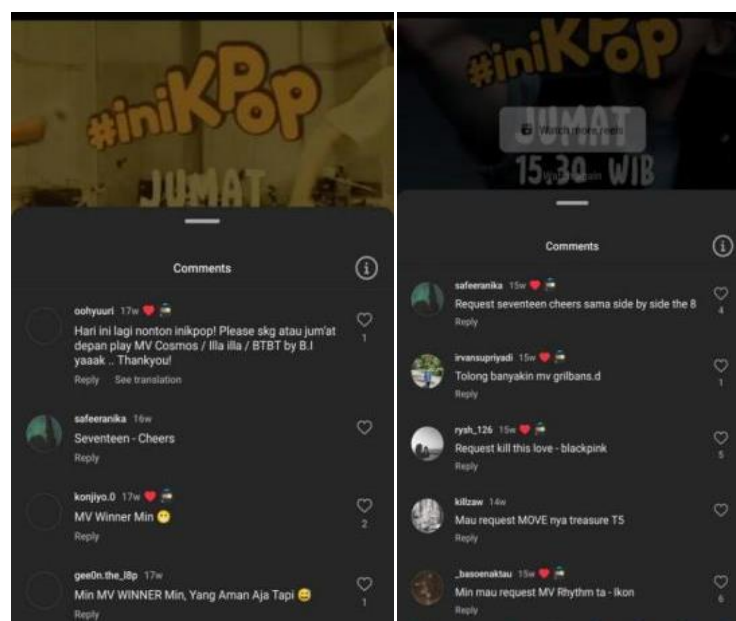


Figure 4.2 Audience Comments on INIKPOP's Instagram

Source: Instagram @inikpop

Figure 4.2 illustrates an example of interaction between followers/audiences in the comment section of posts on Instagram @inikpop. Many of the comments relate to requests for specific K-Pop music videos (MVs) to be aired on I Channel TV's INIKPOP program.

By maintaining active engagement through social media interactions, INIKPOP strengthens its relationship with its audience, ensuring continued viewer interest and participation in the program.

Challenges in Implementing Media Partnership to Maintain the Existence of I Channel TV

Maintaining television's position as a medium of information, entertainment, and public viewing has become increasingly challenging. Television stations not only have to compete with other TV competitors but also with the rise of online media, which is easily accessible and widely preferred by audiences. As a result, television is no longer the primary source of information for the general public.

Additionally, television stations face difficulties in attracting audiences back to watching TV and positioning it as a credible source of information. The challenges do not only stem from the shift of audiences to online media but also from difficulties in securing collaborations with potential clients for I Channel TV. Obstacles arise during the partnership proposal process, requiring strategic solutions to overcome these barriers.

During observations and interviews, the researcher found that I Channel TV's branding as a local Bandung television station remains relatively weak among the wider public. Many people are still unaware of I Channel TV's existence, mainly because audiences have increasingly turned to social media and online platforms for information and entertainment.

One effective solution for television stations is to actively participate in social media by creating engaging informational content to attract audiences. This approach helps reconnect audiences with local television while utilizing social media as a distribution channel for information and entertainment. Additionally, this strategy makes it easier for potential partners to reach out to the company for collaboration opportunities.

Reasons for Choosing the Instagram Account @inikpop as an Information Distribution Platform for Media Partnership

Instagram was chosen as the primary platform for publishing partnership-related information because it is one of the most widely used social media platforms today. The platform attracts a large number of daily active users, making it an effective channel for outreach and engagement.

This is reflected in the follower count of the Instagram account @inikpop, which has approximately 12,500 followers, compared to I Channel TV's Instagram account (@ichanneltv_bdg), which only has 4,857 followers.

Furthermore, @inikpop was selected because most partnership proposals are related to K-Pop events, making it the preferred platform for posting K-Pop-related information. Additionally, the target audience of @inikpop consists of K-Pop fans and INIKPOP program viewers, ensuring that the content reaches an engaged and relevant audience.

On the other hand, the I Channel TV Instagram account (@ichanneltv_bdg) has a more general audience, meaning that the information shared does not specifically target a particular demographic. By using @inikpop, the dissemination of information is more focused and strategically aligned with the interests of K-Pop enthusiasts and potential event organizers.

CONCLUSION

Establishing Collaboration in Advertising and Promotional Media Publications for Event Organizers

The media partnership strategy implemented by I Channel TV through the Instagram account @inikpop has been successfully executed. @inikpop serves as a promotional platform for disseminating K-Pop-related information and upcoming K-Pop events organized by various parties. Additionally, building a positive corporate image through program quality and partnerships is crucial. The quality of a television program is determined by how well it is produced and presented to attract a large audience. The content should be relevant and cater to the needs of the audience. To enhance visibility, short promotional clips of the program are created and shared through Instagram @inikpop and @ichanneltv_bdg to reach a wider audience. Furthermore, engaging with the audience plays a vital role in strengthening brand connection. Audience interaction takes place in two forms:

- Online interaction through social media, including comment sections, likes on posts, sending Direct Messages (DMs), and reposting user-generated content from both followers and non-followers.

- Offline interaction through outdoor coverage and filming activities, allowing for direct audience engagement.

Overcoming the Challenge of Weak Branding for I Channel TV One of the major challenges faced by I Channel TV is its lack of strong branding among the general public. Additionally, most audiences have shifted to social media for entertainment and information. To address this issue, I Channel TV must actively utilize social media by creating engaging and up-to-date content. These updates should be packaged attractively and published on social media platforms to regain audience interest and increase brand awareness.

Choosing Instagram @inikpop as the Primary Platform for Media Partnership Information The Instagram account @inikpop was selected as the main platform for disseminating media partnership information because:

- It has a larger follower base (12.5K followers) compared to @ichanneltv_bdg, which only has 4.8K followers.
- INIKPOP is a flagship program on I Channel TV, making it an ideal platform for promoting collaborations, events, and partnerships.

By leveraging Instagram @inikpop, I Channel TV can effectively reach a wider audience, strengthen media partnerships, and enhance its presence in the digital era.

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