



Creative Strategy for Vlog Content on Kelana Saka's YouTube Channel to Increase Engagement

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ABSTRACT

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This research explores the creative strategies implemented by the Kelana Saka YouTube channel in increasing audience engagement, with a focus on travel category vlog content. Since the rise of YouTube usage in Indonesia, the platform has become an important means for creators to express themselves and earn revenue through partnership programs. Kelana Saka, as a successful example, offers unique content with a personal and authentic approach, utilizing strong narratives and compelling visuals. Through a descriptive qualitative method, this research analyzes the creative elements in content production, including cinematography, idea development, and the use of data for content performance evaluation. The main data sources of this research were obtained through interviews and documentation. The results show that strategies based on uniqueness, thumbnail personalization, and adaptation to audience preferences have contributed significantly to audience engagement and loyalty. The results showed that in increasing engagement, the Kelana Saka channel implemented creative strategy stages in the form of strategy planning, content production, content distribution and promotion, and evaluation.

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1. Introduction

In Indonesia, the video sharing site whose usage has increased is YouTube. The increase in usage has occurred since 2014 (Saputra & Efendy, 2023). According to Databoks, YouTube users in Indonesia were ranked fourth in the world in early 2023 with a total of 139 million users. The increase also occurred during the co-19 pandemic along with the policy of limiting activities in the community in Indonesia.

The increase in YouTube usage is also due to the paid partnership program offered by YouTube, which allows content creators to earn income from the program. This makes people very interested in becoming YouTube creators because of the material benefits obtained and the function of YouTube as a medium of self-expression. However, not only does it provide space for creators to express themselves, but it also gives the audience the opportunity to choose the type of entertainment they want (Labas & Yasmine, 2017).

One of the most popular content formats on YouTube in recent years is the vlog. Vlog (short for video blog or video log) is a type of content where a person blogs in video form. Vlogs usually contain documentation of daily life, personal experiences, product reviews, travel or opinions on certain topics (Lestari & Sasmita, 2020). Vlogs have a significant influence on audience behavior and digital culture. Popular vlog categories such as lifestyle, education, entertainment, and travel continue to grow and attract thousands to millions of viewers every day. Kelana Saka's YouTube channel is one of the

successful examples in this category, with effective creative strategies in content production, the channel has managed to build a large follower base (Laily & Purbantina, 2021).

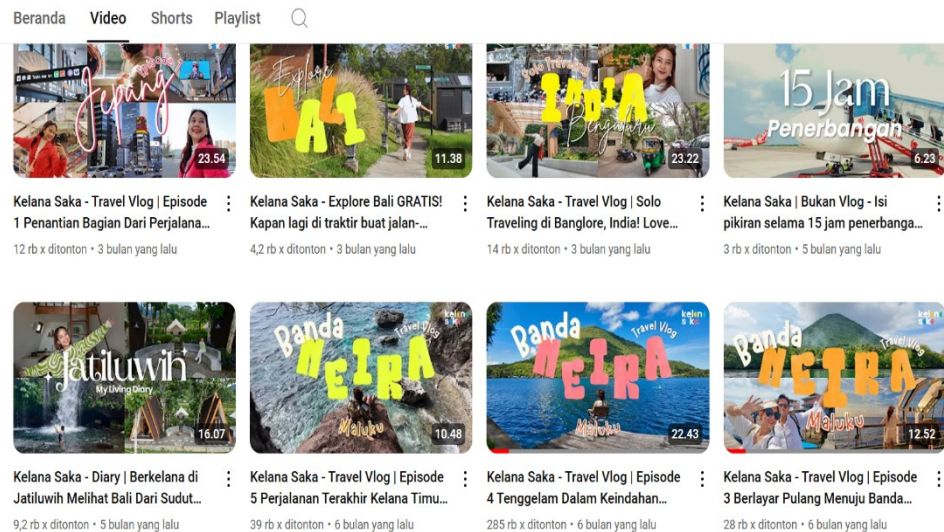


Figure 1. Kelana Saka content

Source: www.youtube.com/@kelanasaka

Kelana Saka is a YouTube channel with a vlog content format in the travel category, which focuses on the journey of a woman who dreams of traveling the world and is currently exploring Indonesia and Southeast Asia. The channel's content covers a variety of travel destinations, providing insight into different cultures, sights, and experiences. The videos typically include travel guides, tips, and personal experiences, aiming to inspire and educate viewers about different places around the world. The channel is designed for travel enthusiasts looking for adventure and practical advice on travel.

Backpacker Tampan is one of Kelana Saka's competing YouTube channels that focuses on travel content with a spontaneous, energetic, and humorous style. The energetic charm of the host is one of the main forces that binds the audience, especially with the personal narrative approach of frugal backpacking experiences. Handsome Backpacker emphasizes entertainment and unexpected moments during the trip, packed with dynamic visuals such as drone shots. As a competitor, handsome backpacker challenges with a light-hearted yet engaging content style, appealing to a broader audience segment looking for both entertainment and inspiration on their travels.

However, despite the popularity and growth of channels such as Kelana Saka, there are still aspects that have not been fully explored, understood, or researched in depth about the creative strategies used by YouTube content creators. In terms of how they generate creative ideas, plan and develop content, researchers feel that Kelana Saka's YouTube channel is a clear example of the success that can be achieved through effective creative strategies. Studying the strategies used by this channel can provide valuable insights for other content creators.

There are several previous studies that are relevant to this topic, the first is a study conducted by Atha Ramaputra and Subhan Afifi in 2021 entitled on the analysis of creative strategies for promotional content for foodies businesses through Instagram social media, using a conceptual framework that includes creative strategies for promotional content, endorsement, and local culture-based public education on social media. This research uses the constructivism paradigm and case study method on foodies businesses in Pekanbaru city, Riau. Data analysis was carried out through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and verification and conclusion drawing. The results of the study show that creative strategies in the promotion of foodies businesses involve three main stages: planning, implementation, and evaluation (Ramaputra & Afifi, 2021).. The fundamental difference between research on Creative Strategies in Kelana Saka Vlog Content Production and previous research is the object and focus of research. Previous research focused more on creative strategies for business promotion through Instagram social media, while research on creative strategies in vlog content production on Kelana Saka's YouTube channel examines how creativity is expected in vlog content production to build audience engagement and loyalty. In addition, this study also emphasizes

aspects of storytelling, cinematography, and the influence of visual narratives in shaping audience behavior, which are not discussed in previous studies.

The second previous research is a study conducted by Shera Aske Cecariyani and Gregoriu Genep Sukendro (2018) entitled on the analysis of creative strategies and YouTube content objectives in the case study of prank content created by Yudist Ardhana. This research aims to find out the creative strategy applied by Yudhist Ardhana in his prank content, using the theory of creative strategy, basic logic, humor, and content as a theoretical basis. The method used is qualitative with a descriptive case study approach, involving interviews, observation, and other related data collection. The results show that Yudist Ardhana's creative strategy in his prank content is unique and different from others, because he tries to modify the content with his personal characteristics, so as to successfully entertain and maintain the interest of the audience so as not to get bored with the content presented. The main difference between this research and the research on creative strategies in the production of vlog content on the Kelana Saka channel lies in the focus and approach of the content studied. Research on Yudist Ardhana's content emphasizes the use of humor and modification of personal characteristics in prank content to entertain the audience (Aske Cecariyani & Genep Sukendro, n.d.). Meanwhile, research on Kelana Saka examines creative strategies in vlog production that include the use of in-depth storytelling, cinematography, and local cultural authenticity as key elements in attracting and retaining audiences. In addition, Kelana Saka's research also focuses on the impact of creativity on audience engagement with the channel, which is not discussed in previous research.

Research on the creative strategy of Kelana Saka's vlog content also has relevance to research from (Hariyani, 2020). entitled Vlog Content Construction of Diamond Play Button Recipients on YouTube Indonesia. Both highlight the importance of creative strategies in content creation. The difference with previous research lies in the focus of the analysis. Previous research focused more on analyzing the various content concepts used by the two creators. This study explores creative strategies involving viral concepts such as pranks, tutorials, and challenges, and how the content is produced to maximize engagement with the audience. The researcher used qualitative methods to understand how this variety of concepts attracts viewers and affects the creators' popularity on YouTube. Meanwhile, research on Kelana Saka's vlog content strategy focuses on how cinematography and travel narrative influence the audience experience.

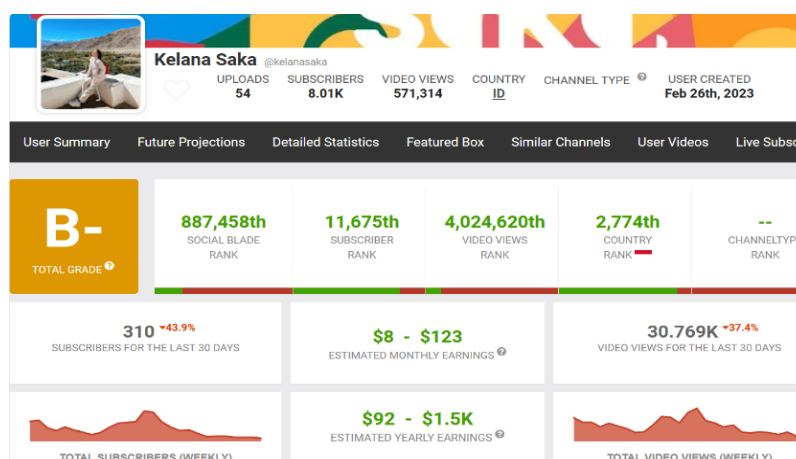


Figure 2. Kelana Saka Channel Engagement Data

Source: Sociablade.com

Choosing to research on creative strategies in vlog production has some compelling reasons. With the rapid growth of digital platforms like YouTube, creative strategies are key for content creators to stand out amidst stiff competition. In an era where new content is uploaded every second, understanding and developing effective creative strategies has become highly relevant. Creativity not only attracts attention but also plays a crucial role in sustaining audience engagement, making this research important to understand how creative strategies can influence audience behavior and content success. Audience behavior in the context of creativity's impact on audiences includes various aspects of audience interaction with the content they consume. Some of the audience behaviors that are

influenced by creative strategies include engagement, namely viewing time, interaction on social media, and subscribers.

Creative strategy in the context of digital marketing is a directed planning that involves developing creative ideas and concepts to produce content that can attract the attention of target audiences and build high engagement. Creative strategy is not only about visual innovation, but also about how to deliver relevant and effective messages to the audience. According to (Rizky Amarta & Anwar, 2023), Creative strategy is an integrated approach that combines understanding of audience needs and innovation in composing content to achieve specific goals.

In the digital age, vlogging content on platforms such as YouTube requires creative strategies to compete for the attention and engagement of audiences. Creative strategies become more important due to the dynamic nature of digital content, where users have full control to choose, watch, and interact with the content they like (Jorano Firdaus et al., 2021). Creativity in vlog content can be seen from the visual aspects, storytelling, and narrative conveyed by the content creator.

Kelana Saka's YouTube channel is known for having unique content that is different from many other vlogs. With a focus on adventure, cultural exploration, and strong narratives, Kelana Saka offers something different from common vlogs that are more everyday or lifestyle in nature. This uniqueness is an interesting reason to research and identify the creative strategies applied by the Kelana Saka YouTube channel in increasing engagement. Wangsa Loka, the creator behind the Kelana Saka YouTube Channel, explained that the main reason for starting this channel was to document his life journey. He sees that the trips he takes should not just be stored in his memory, as sweet memories are limited. By creating video content, he can capture every moment of the trip visually. The Kelana Saka content was initiated from November to December 2023, although Wangsa Loka has been active as a creator since 2022. Interestingly, all creative processes are done by the creators themselves, except when there is cooperation with clients, such as Pesona Indonesia, which sometimes contributes to the production of additional content.

The results of this study will serve as a practical reference for content creators in increasing engagement with audiences through creative strategies. By studying the successful creative strategies in Kelana Saka, other content creators can adapt relevant techniques to improve content quality and maintain their audience engagement. This research will also contribute to the literature on creative strategies in digital content production, particularly vlogging. This research enriches the understanding of the creative elements that can influence audience engagement on digital platforms such as YouTube.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1. Creative strategy

Creative strategy in the context of digital marketing is a directed planning that involves developing creative ideas and concepts to produce content that can attract the attention of target audiences and build high engagement. Creative strategy is not only about visual innovation, but also about how to deliver relevant and effective messages to the audience. According to (Rizky Amarta & Anwar, 2023), creative strategy is an integrated approach that combines understanding of audience needs and innovation in composing content to achieve specific goals. In the digital age, vlogging content on platforms such as YouTube requires creative strategies to compete for the attention and engagement of audiences. Creative strategies become more important due to the dynamic nature of digital content, where users have full control to choose, watch, and interact with the content they like (Kertamukti, 2019). Creativity in vlog content can be seen from the visual aspects, storytelling, and narrative conveyed by content creators.

According to research from (Kertamukti, 2019). There are several important stages in developing a creative strategy for vlog content, namely:

1. Understanding the Target Audience

The first stage in developing a creative strategy is to understand who the target audience is. This includes the demographics, interests, and needs of the audience. This understanding helps in finding relevant content themes and styles.

2. Creative Idea Development

After understanding the audience, the next step is to develop a unique and original creative idea. These ideas should be relevant to the audience and build engagement. Original content tends to be more desirable and viral.

3. Content Production

At this stage, visual, narrative, and other technical elements are applied in content production. The use of interesting visuals, innovative camera angles, and creative editing techniques are important factors in improving the quality of vlogs.

4. Content Distribution and Promotion

Once the content is produced, a proper distribution strategy is required to ensure the content reaches the desired audience. This includes the use of YouTube SEO, Collaboration with other creators, and utilizing social media to promote vlog content.

5. Evaluation and Adjustment

Evaluation of the engagement results, such as the number of views, comments, likes, and shares, is used to understand the effectiveness of the strategy. Based on this data, strategies can be adjusted to generate better engagement in the future.

3. Method

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach, where the main focus is to understand and describe in depth the creative strategies applied by the Kelana Saka YouTube channel in increasing audience engagement. This approach is suitable because researchers want to explore the phenomena behind vlog content creation and how creative elements affect audience interaction and engagement. As explained by Eri Barlian in (Hasan et al., 2022), that the reason for using qualitative methods is because this method can be used to explore and understand the hidden things behind a phenomenon, which are sometimes difficult to understand in depth with other methods.

To obtain data related to this research, the author used data collection techniques in the form of documentation, and in-depth interviews. Documentation by observing such as the number of views, likes, shares and subscribers to support understanding of the success of the strategy (Hasan et al., 2022). Researchers will conduct in-depth interviews with the creators of the Kelana Saka YouTube channel. This interview aims to explore information related to creative strategies applied in content creation, creative ideas behind vlogs (P, M, & Thaha, 2023).

This research uses interviews as a primary data source to explore in-depth information related to the creative strategies applied by Kelana Saka in managing its vlog content. Interviews were conducted with several informants who met the criteria, such as good knowledge of Kelana Saka's content, and active involvement in interaction with the content. As a complement to the interviews, this research also used secondary data in the form of documentation. The documentation analyzed includes archives of video content published on Kelana Saka's YouTube channel, including engagement data such as the number of views, likes, and shares. To produce data in accordance with the research objectives, several stages are needed such as data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Yuliani, 2018).

In qualitative research, validity can also be tested through the triangulation method, namely by verifying findings from various data sources or different methods. This triangulation aims to increase the accuracy and validity of the data, and reduce bias in data collection (Ardiansyah et al., n.d.). By triangulating, researchers can confirm findings from various points of view, so that the research results become more valid and reliable.

As for this research, the researcher will use the type of method triangulation. Method triangulation is triangulation that involves using more than one data collection method to study the same phenomenon. By comparing the results of various methods, researchers can check the consistency of findings (Hasan et al., 2022). The aim is to verify the research results through the use of various data collection techniques such as interviews and content analysis.

4. Result and Discussion

Based on the results of the research that has been conducted, there are four of the five stages of creative strategy (Kertamukti, 2019) used by Kelana Saka creators. the four stages are strategic planning, content production, content distribution, and evaluation and adjustment. The following is a description of the Kelana Saka channel's creative strategy at each stage.

4.1. Presenting the Results

A. Strategy Planning

The process of developing creative ideas for the Kelana Saka vlog does not start from planning before shooting, but rather after the shooting process is complete. Wangsa Loka explained that after the footage was taken, he just started to imagine the storyline of the vlog. It was at this stage that creative ideas about how the narrative would be shaped began to emerge. This stage of idea development then materializes in a series of voice overs, script writing, and the final editing process. This approach allows the creator to adjust the story to the visual material that has been taken, creating a more natural storyline that blends with the images displayed.

From the results of interviews with audiences, it is known that the way the story is presented by Kelana Saka is one of the elements that attracts their attention. They found Kelana Saka's vlog storyline easy to follow and interesting, because the narrative built not only describes the physical journey, but also the emotional atmosphere experienced during the trip. This creates a more personal connection with the audience, making them feel involved in the story presented. Audiences also consider that this approach makes Kelana Saka's vlogs more interesting than other travel vlogs that may only focus on practical information.

B. Content Production

Wangsa Loka as the creator of Kelana Saka content emphasizes that one of the characteristics of Kelana Saka content is the use of deep narratives, with an Indonesian language style full of parables. In building the narrative, he often describes the atmosphere experienced by the people on the trip, adjusting the narrative to the visuals available. For example, when vlogging about a train trip in Yogyakarta, he describes the moods of the people on the train, some of whom are saying goodbye to loved ones, while others have just met their loved ones. This in-depth narrative is supported by harmonious visuals, creating an emotional atmosphere that reaches the audience. The creative process involves the stages of shooting footage, voice over, script writing, and editing, where all these elements are combined to form a coherent story.

On the technical aspect, Wangsa Loka explained that he pays close attention to lighting. He prefers to shoot during the day, as the quality of his camera does not support shooting at night. Natural lighting is considered very important for maintaining visual quality. In addition, he also likes to shoot close-ups to show the details of objects more clearly. The dominant camera angle is often on the left side, according to his personal preference.

Wangsa Loka's editing process is quite structured, where he starts by taking footage, then doing voice over, writing the script, and finally doing visual editing. This sequence is applied so that the narration, visuals, and audio can blend perfectly, creating a harmonious and interesting story for the audience.

Based on interviews with audiences, visual quality is considered an important element in the experience of watching travel vlogs. Audiences stated that attractive visuals, such as shooting angles, the use of close ups, and natural lighting make the vlogs feel fresher and more enjoyable to watch.

C. Content Distribution

When it comes to content distribution, Wangsa Loka has a different approach from many other creators. He prefers to create funny and authentic thumbnails or video covers, rather than following the standard thumbnails used by many other YouTube creators, where the creator's face dominates the thumbnail. Wangsa Loka found that thumbnails that fit his personality were more successful in attracting viewers than more formal or standard thumbnails. His experiments with formal thumbnails actually got fewer views. In addition to YouTube, he also uses Instagram as a platform to inform audiences about new content, although the focus of distribution remains on YouTube.

D. Evaluation and Adjustment

Evaluating the success of the creative strategy is done simply by comparing the performance of different types of content. For example, Wangsa Loka created several types of content while in Japan, such as a "One Day in Japan" vlog, a recommendation vlog, and a culinary vlog. After comparing the views of the three types, he found that the "One Day in Japan" type had a much higher number of views. The results of this evaluation were then used as a reference for her next content production, where she focused more on the type of content that the audience proved to like.

Audiences also revealed that they tend to give likes or comments on Kelana Saka vlogs that contain personal experiences. This interaction shows that the content strategy presented by Kelana Saka has succeeded in attracting audiences, to engage through responses and interactions on the YouTube platform.

4.2. Create a Discussion

From the results of the interview with Wangsa Loka as the creator of Kelana Saka and the audience of Kelana Saka, it is evident that the creative strategy of the Kelana Saka Channel is driven by the desire to present authentic and personal content. This is in line with the creative strategy theory (Kertamukti, 2019) which emphasizes the importance of uniqueness and personalization in attracting and retaining an audience. By using strong narration and deep visuals, Kelana Saka's content successfully creates a viewing experience that is not only informative but also emotional. The use of metaphors in the narration, combined with relevant visuals, effectively conveys certain moods and feelings to the audience, thereby creating a closer emotional connection between the creator and the audience.

The unconventional approach in creating thumbnails also shows that Wangsa Loka prefers to follow his creative instincts rather than industry standards. This proves that authenticity can be an effective strategy in attracting an audience. Although many creators use a formal approach by featuring their faces as the focus of thumbnails, Wangsa Loka found that thumbnails reflecting his personality attract more attention and increase viewer engagement.

In terms of content evaluation, a data-driven strategy is also evident, where Wangsa Loka analyzes the performance of various types of content to determine the type of content most favored by the audience. This is important in maintaining high engagement on YouTube, where audience preferences can change rapidly. By focusing on the types of content that are more favored, this channel is able to adjust its content strategy to remain relevant to the audience.

Technical aspects in filming also play an important role in maintaining visual quality. Limitations in equipment, such as the camera's inability to take pictures at night, do not hinder Wangsa Loka from continuing to produce quality content. On the contrary, he utilizes natural lighting and close-up camera angles to create visuals that align with the content theme, thereby keeping the audience's attention.

However, unfortunately, in Kelana Saka's content, none of the five stages of the creative strategy have been implemented (Kertamukti, 2019). In the section on understanding the target audience, one unique aspect of this channel's development is the absence of a predetermined target audience from the beginning. Wangsa Loka did not start the channel with a specific view on who would watch the content. He lets the content he creates determine who eventually comes and becomes a loyal audience of his channel. This shows a flexible approach, where creators focus on producing honest and authentic content, allowing relevant audiences to come naturally.

5. Conclusion

The conclusion of this research shows that the creative strategy implemented by Wangsa Loka on the YouTube channel Kelana Saka is based on an authentic and personal approach, in accordance with the theory of creative strategy. The generated content emphasizes deep emotional and visual narratives that can capture the audience's attention. In the production process, Wangsa Loka prioritizes natural lighting and close-up shooting techniques to create clear and engaging visuals.

Content evaluation based on view performance proves that more personal types of content, such as the vlog "A Day in Japan," are more favored by the audience. This shows the importance of strong storytelling in increasing engagement. The audience also responds positively to unique and personal

visual approaches, including the selection of authentic thumbnails that do not follow industry standards.

Although Kelana Saka's content has successfully created high engagement, one aspect that has not been optimally implemented is the determination of a specific target audience. Wangsa Loka did not set a target audience from the beginning, but rather let the content he created determine who would watch. This flexible approach, although successful, can be improved through a deeper understanding of the audience to strengthen future content strategies.

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