

STRATEGI KOMUNIKASI BRANDING BLIBLI MELALUI METAHUMAN SEBAGAI VIRTUAL BRAND AMBASSADOR DI INSTAGRAM

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Abstrak

Persaingan industri *e-commerce* di Indonesia mendorong Blibli mengadopsi teknologi kecerdasan buatan berupa MetaHuman Lav Caca sebagai *virtual brand ambassador* di Instagram @bliblidotcom untuk mengatasi *audience fatigue* dan menjaga *brand safety*. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis perancangan strategi komunikasi branding tersebut, konstruksi makna nilai merek, serta persepsi pengikut terhadap kredibilitas dan keterlibatannya. Berpijak pada paradigma konstruktivisme, penelitian ini mengintegrasikan *Source Credibility Theory* dan *Uncanny Valley Theory*. Pendekatan yang digunakan adalah kualitatif deskriptif dengan metode studi kasus intrinsik retrospektif, di mana pendekatan intrinsik berfokus memahami keunikan kasus secara mendalam, sementara retrospektif merekonstruksi fenomena yang telah selesai terjadi, sebab kolaborasi ini telah resmi berakhir dan hanya berjalan dari April hingga September 2023. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam (3 informan internal, 4 informan eksternal), observasi konten (April–September 2023), dan dokumentasi, yang diolah menggunakan perangkat lunak NVivo 12 Pro. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan pemanfaatan MetaHuman berhasil menarik perhatian visual di ranah *top-of-funnel* melalui asimilasi budaya lokal dangdut Jawa. Namun, strategi ini gagal menembus *middle-to-bottom funnel* (konversi penjualan). Pengejaran kesempurnaan visual melahirkan disonansi kontekstual (gaun mewah di dapur) yang mematikan keterhubungan emosional (*human soul*). Kredibilitas personal MetaHuman runtuh secara eksperiensial akibat ketiadaan indra biologis, sehingga kepercayaan *followers* bergeser ke tingkat institusional melalui legitimasi akun resmi bercentang biru. Dampaknya, interaksi organik berjalan dangkal karena didominasi motif pragmatis berburu kuis sembako gratis, yang akhirnya mendasari keputusan pivot strategis Blibli untuk kembali ke *human brand ambassador* konvensional. Penelitian ini berkontribusi merumuskan konsep *Credibility Gap (Uncanny Valley of Trust)*, di mana transparansi status AI berhasil meredam ketakutan visual tetapi justru memicu skeptisisme konsumen terhadap otentisitas ulasan.

Kata kunci: Strategi Komunikasi Branding, MetaHuman, *Virtual Brand Ambassador*, Kredibilitas Sumber, *Credibility Gap*.

BLIBLI'S BRANDING COMMUNICATION STRATEGY THROUGH METAHUMAN AS A VIRTUAL BRAND AMBASSADOR ON INSTAGRAM

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Abstract

The intense competition in the Indonesian e-commerce industry prompted Blibli to adopt artificial intelligence technology in the form of MetaHuman Lav Caca as a virtual brand ambassador on Instagram @blibliidotcom to mitigate audience fatigue and maintain brand safety. This study aims to analyze the design of this branding communication strategy, the construction of brand value meaning, and followers' perceptions of its credibility and engagement. Grounded in the constructivist paradigm, this study integrates Source Credibility Theory and Uncanny Valley Theory. The approach used is descriptive qualitative with a retrospective intrinsic case study method, in which the intrinsic approach focuses on understanding the uniqueness of the case in depth, while the retrospective approach reconstructs a phenomenon that has concluded, as this collaboration officially ended and only ran from April to September 2023. Data were collected through in-depth interviews (3 internal informants, 4 external informants), content observation (April–September 2023), and documentation, which were processed using NVivo 12 Pro software. The research findings indicate that the utilization of MetaHuman successfully captured visual attention at the top-of-funnel stage through the assimilation of Javanese dangdut local culture. However, this strategy failed to penetrate the middle-to-bottom funnel (sales conversion). The pursuit of visual perfection created contextual dissonance (a luxury gown in a kitchen setting) that eliminated emotional relatability (human soul). MetaHuman's personal credibility suffered an experiential collapse due to the lack of biological senses, shifting followers' trust to the institutional level through the legitimacy of the official verified blue-checkmark account. Consequently, organic engagement remained superficial, dominated by pragmatic motives of hunting for free staple food giveaways, which ultimately underpinned Blibli's strategic pivot decision to return to conventional human brand ambassadors. This study contributes to formulating the concept of the Credibility Gap (Uncanny Valley of Trust), in which AI status transparency successfully mitigates visual eeriness but triggers consumer skepticism toward review authenticity.

Keywords: Branding Communication Strategy, MetaHuman, Virtual Brand Ambassador, Source Credibility, Credibility Gap.