

Development of the Singgalang Newspaper 2007-2020

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Abstrak

Tujuan penelitian ini untuk mengetahui alasan Singgalang melakukan digitalisasi, untuk mengetahui tantangan dan strategi penerbit Singgalang. Metode penelitian yang digunakan yaitu menggunakan metode heuristik, kritik sumber, interpretasi dan historiografi. Dari hasil penelitian yang telah dilakukan, dapat disimpulkan bahwa Singgalang telah melakukan banyak perubahan baik secara fisik (koran) maupun digital. Alasan perubahan tersebut didasari dengan kenyamanan pembaca, mempertahankan eksistensi serta mengikuti perkembangan zaman. Pada awal 2000-an, Singgalang berkonvergensi dengan mengubah tampilan koran dari bentuk, ukuran, mengubah menjadi koran berwarna, dan foto-foto diperbanyak. Kemudian pada 2007, Singgalang melakukan digitalisasi dengan membuat website singgalang.co.id.

Kata kunci: perkembangan, surat kabar, singgalang.

Abstract

The aim of this research is to find out why Singgalang is digitizing. To find out the challenges and strategies of the Singgalang publisher. The research method uses heuristic methods, source criticism, interpretation, historiography. From the results of the research that has been carried out, it can be concluded that Singgalang has made many changes both physically (newspapers) and digitally. The reasons for these changes are based on reader comfort, maintaining existence and keeping up with current developments. In the early 2000s, Singgalang converged by changing the appearance of the newspaper in terms of shape and size, changing it to a color newspaper, and increasing the number of photos. Then in 2007, Singgalang digitized it by creating the website singgalang.co.id.

Keywords: development, newspapers, singgalang.

INTRODUCTION

Since its inaugural publication on December 18, 1968, Singgalang newspaper initially emerged as a print media outlet (McQuail, 2011). However, driven by technological advancements that emphasize efficiency in time and space utilization, Indonesian newspapers, ranging from local to national publications, have expanded into digital versions.

This shift aims to cater to readers with demanding schedules or those seeking convenience in accessing news

without physical copies. Singgalang has similarly adapted to this trend. In 2007, Singgalang underwent digitalization to compete with other digital media outlets and respond to predictions that print media usage would decline over time. This strategic move ensured Singgalang remained competitive.

Despite migrating to digital, Singgalang continued producing print newspapers, as they still outnumbered digital users at the time. The transition proved challenging due to the lengthy transformation process from print to

online, leveraging digital technology. Additionally, *Harian Haluan* and *Harian Singgalang* retained their organizational structure, including editorial management, due to limited human resources (Rizal, 2024).

Singgalang's newspaper circulation reached 40.000 copies from 2001 to 2019. However, production declined significantly to 2.000 copies in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Singgalang adhered to its predetermined circulation target, aiming to sell out the allocated quantity to meet production goals (Soesilo Abadi Piliang, 2023).

The COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 brought significant global social and economic changes. People adapted to new habits, staying home to avoid infection, altering consumption patterns, and impacting businesses with declining revenue. The behavioral shift, particularly in urban areas, led to increased internet usage for various needs, replacing physical interactions with online alternatives for communication, news and entertainment (Made Ayu, et.al, 2023).

The prolonged COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted Singgalang media, resulting in declining print newspaper circulation and sales. This decline is evident in the decreasing number of street vendors. During the heyday of newspapers (1960s-2000s), vendors were ubiquitous at street corners and traffic lights. However, by 2015, they had largely disappeared,

replaced by subscription services through designated agents (Krisnawati, 2014).

Singgalang newspaper, now converged, has long developed engaging trends to captivate diverse readers. Features like "Pojok" on the front page and "Singgalang Masuk Sekolah" make it stand out. Singgalang also innovatively presents local news on digital platforms, updating breaking events. If detailed information is unavailable, Singgalang posts preliminary reports via web portals and social media, serving the community's information needs. Following initial reporting, Singgalang gathers detailed information from eyewitnesses at the scene. Upon obtaining comprehensive details, Singgalang updates its coverage on its web portal and social media platforms, providing the public with timely and accurate information (Eriandi, 2023).

METHODS

The methodology utilized in this study combines heuristic analysis, source criticism, interpretative techniques and historiographical approaches (Sjamsuddin, 2007). Heuristics, an art rather than a science, facilitates historical research by gathering sources. This study utilizes data from books, interviews, journals, internet resources and newspaper archives (Abdurrahman, 1999).

Source criticism involves analyzing gathered sources critically, verifying their

relevance and validity (Lailani Putri, Aqmarina, 2014). It comprises: (1) External, External criticism is carried out to determine the extent of the validity and authenticity of the source. Criticism of the authenticity of the source, for example, by checking the date of publication of the document, checking the material in the form of paper or ink whether it matches the period in which such materials were commonly used or produced. Ensuring whether a source is an original source or a copy. Whether it is a rewrite or a photocopy (Heryati, 2017). The author conducted external criticism by visiting the Singgalang daily newspaper office and the Padang city library to ensure the authenticity of a source such as newspaper archives and newspaper printing.

(2) Internal, Internal criticism is to see and investigate its contents. This means that this step is a way of investigating a historical source that aims to examine the truth of the contents (data) of the source (Prasowo, 2016). The author conducted internal criticism by asking the staff of the Singgalang daily newspaper office for information regarding whether the source is valid or not.

Then at the interpretation stage, researchers are required to be careful and objective, especially in terms of subjective interpretation of historical facts. This can be done by knowing the

characteristics of civilization, or in other words the actual general conditions and using critical reasoning, in order to find scientific conclusions or historical descriptions. At this interpretation stage, historical science does not stand alone. A number of concepts and theoretical approaches from other sciences are needed, and analytical. The author interprets by citing interviews with the staff of the Singgalang daily newspaper and newspaper photos into a piece of writing that contains information.

Historiography, the final stage of historical research, involves crafting a narrative. History transcends mere factual accounts; it weaves events into a cohesive story. This storytelling process connects historical realities, interpretations and meanings. In this study, historiography entailed interviewing Singgalang newspaper staff, exploring the publication's origins, development and current status through targeted questions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Digitalization has existed before the 2000s. Initially, digitalization started from Yahoo Messenger e-mail. At that time, journalists sent news via email and then distributed it through e-mail groups on Yahoo!. That was the beginning of digitalization in the 2000s, then the website and e-paper were present. Since 2007, Singgalang has had a website, namely singgalang.co.id and has survived

until now. Then the changes became faster, social media grew and the website's readers decreased and switched to working on a website that no longer presents news that has been published but presents today's news that can be accessed today (update). These changes are increasingly widespread, making newspapers improve and innovate in the community. Giving birth to innovation in information disruption, one of which is in creating a digital model. Digital makes a media one step ahead and its scope is wide. If newspapers are only limited to local areas, with digital access, newspapers can be enjoyed by the entire community so that digital can penetrate space and time (Eriandi, 2023).

One of the things that is done is the convergence of forms and convergence of content. The convergence of forms is to create digital media, namely e-paper hariansinggalang.co.id and can be accessed on the website. The current number of accessing is around 1000 readers and customers can read, access and download newspapers in digital form at a rate. So customers are free to access e-paper not only today, but anytime.

Singgalang also provides request packages such as searching for e-papers of a certain year. Then in terms of content, it presents news that is different from social media and websites. The characteristic of news from website media portals is written briefly and presented

quickly. However, this can be applied today and will make Singgalang even more left behind because the news that Singgalang makes has been made by other news media. There are some news that need to be explored in depth so that it gives a different feel from social media and others. The reason Singgalang is digitizing is because it is aware that print media will continue to have fewer readers along with the times, so it is time to migrate to digital media so as not to be left behind by other media that are also migrating to digital media and must be balanced. It is very rare for people today to read newspapers except for those in their 50s and above. And also seeing the condition of young people today, they spend more time surfing the internet and they no longer read newspapers (Djabar, et.al, 2009).

The impact of information disruption has forced Harian Singgalang to strengthen both content and sales so that the print media is not eroded by time. Until now, Harian Singgalang is still read by the people of West Sumatra and migrants. One of the things that Harian Singgalang has done is to strengthen regional news content in the newspaper. Then strengthen it in the field of digital technology (Arista, 2018).

In 2007, many people still searched for information using print media. In 2007, Singgalang also switched to digitalization by creating a website. However, at that

time it was not yet intended for commercial purposes or had not been used to increase company revenue and was still just presenting news, and displaying the Singgalang daily pdf the next day. The management of the Singgalang newspaper, like other newspapers, includes various managerial and operational aspects to ensure that the newspaper can function effectively and efficiently (Yuke, 2023).

Currently, the generation aged 50-60 and above dominates newspaper subscriptions because they are generally technologically illiterate and prefer to read newspapers. And also government agencies still subscribe to newspapers today. But indeed there is a reduction in circulation of around 25-30%. However, Singgalang is still optimistic because government agencies still subscribe to newspapers. These agencies such as the DPRD, regents, mayors, and the Communication and Information Agency in all regencies/cities in West Sumatra. For agencies that subscribe to the Singgalang newspaper, it depends on the contract cooperation and it has been stipulated in the cooperation rules between Singgalang and the agency with the principle of mutual benefit. With an offer, for example, there is an agency that takes 100 copies with compensation of 1x a week and the coverage content is only half a page of the newspaper. If the agency orders 200 copies, with compensation the newspaper contains 1

page for 1x a week. In a month, it gets a quota of 4 times. Like the Padang city government agency takes around 100-200 copies every day. Each agency is different, such as Pasaman 200 copies, Solok 50 copies and others. So all work together not only by buying newspapers, but there is also compensation. The regulation is updated every year and this program has only started recently and the price of newspapers has adjusted. However, along with its development, the sales of Singgalang newspaper circulation since digitalization have decreased from previous years, but Singgalang also has online media such as Top 1 and singgalang.co.id and these online media are also paid and some people or agencies subscribe to also place advertisements (Iva Tureyza Idroes, 2023).

The development of the Singgalang newspaper over the years was felt directly by its readers. Then with the permission of the Minister of Information NC.0682/PERS/SK/DIRPP/SIT/1970, dated April 27, 1970 from the first edition published once a week, then published twice a week (Wednesday & Saturday) with 4 pages each. Then, since December 18, 1979 published every day in 8 pages with publication 7 times a week, in accordance with the permission of the Minister of Information No. 965/DIR.JEN/PPG/K/1979. Furthermore, on August 16, 1984, Harian Singgalang

published 12 pages every day until now (Eriandi, 2023).

In the early 2000s, Singgalang's circulation reached 100 thousand copies, the same as Kompas's circulation, which then decreased to 15 thousand copies. The factor that caused the decrease in circulation was not due to a decrease in purchasing power, but to reduce production costs, number of pages and newspaper size. If the circulation is increased, the company will not make a profit due to the high production costs. Currently, the standard circulation is only produced at 5,000 copies and fluctuates. There are certain moments, for example during Eid al-Fitr, it can increase to 15 thousand copies. Although Singgalang has been published in West Sumatra for a long time, it has experienced production developments (Istiqlal, 2018).

Newspapers in the 2000s were widely used because at that time it was the election era and became the main source of news. And also online media in the 2000s in West Sumatra at that time was not much, there was only the website padangmedia.com. Bill Gates predicted that in the 2000s newspapers would die out but that did not prove to be true because the media before the 2000s were converging and adapting to growth and also in the 2000s was the era of media using websites and finally singgalang.co.id appeared (Aji, 2016).

The presence of online media, people can see newspapers and magazines through websites in digital form. Some forms of graphic media are e-books, e-magazines, online magazines, and so on. Visual media in digital form is easy to distribute. Simply by uploading the digital visual media to the internet media, people around the world who are connected to the internet network will be able to download the media. Users of social media can easily participate, share and create content including blogs, social networks, Wikipedia, forums and virtual worlds are the most common forms of social media used by people around the world. However, based on the results of the author's research, until now not everyone in Indonesia can access the internet, either because of limited infrastructure or because of the ability to use it (Khaer et.al, 2021).

This is where the role of media company management is needed so that it can survive and compete with other competitors in reporting information media, especially with the development of broadcasting technology ranging from newspapers, magazines, radio, television and the internet as a means of broadcasting information to meet the needs of social beings. Media communication is very important in this global era. Information after information is distributed very quickly compared to the era before technology entered

Indonesia. Long after that, print media still exists from the beginning until now (Nur, 2021) .

CONCLUSION

From the results of the research that has been conducted, it can be concluded that Singgalang has made many changes both physically (newspapers) and digitally. The reasons for these changes are based on reader comfort, maintaining existence and keeping up with the times. In the early 2000s, Singgalang converged by changing the appearance of the newspaper from the shape, size, changing it to a colored newspaper, and increasing the number of photos. Then in 2007, Singgalang digitized by creating the website singgalang.co.id. When the Covid-19 virus pandemic hit in 2020, it caused many changes both socially and economically globally and made people during the pandemic adopt new habits, namely staying at home more to avoid transmission of the Covid-19 virus so that people prefer to read news through digital media than newspapers to avoid transmission of the Covid-19 virus.

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