



## Optimizing Digital Content Management to Increase the Effectiveness of Fajarcirebon.com's Online Media

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### Abstract

The advancement of digital media demands content management that not only delivers information but also aligns with the increasingly diverse needs, interests, and preferences of users. In an era where information is easily and rapidly accessible, audiences play a more active role in selecting content that meets their specific needs. This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of digital content on online media by applying the Uses and Gratifications Theory, which views audiences as active subjects in selecting, utilizing, and responding to media to fulfill specific purposes such as acquiring information, entertainment, or engaging in social interaction. Through a conceptual approach to digital content practices across various platforms, this study identifies three main issues on the online media website fajarcirebon.com: the absence of clearly presented key points that aid comprehension, the lack of external links that support informational credibility, and the suboptimal use of images that affects visual appeal and content reach. This article proposes solutions including the development of key points, the addition of external links, and the optimization of visuals to enhance user engagement and overall content effectiveness. The findings are expected to serve as a reference for online media in designing content strategies that are more adaptive and responsive to the current needs of digital audiences.

**Keywords:** digital content, social media ,SEO, effective article, optimization



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### INTRODUCTION

Digital transformation has revolutionized the way people communicate and disseminate information compared to previous eras. The development of the internet and digital devices has

driven significant changes in public habits of consuming information—shifting from print media to online media that is faster, more dynamic, and interactive. Today, online media has become the primary channel for accessing news and information in real-time, particularly through mobile devices and social media platforms.

Within this context, Fajar Cirebon emerges as a digital communication medium that plays an important role in delivering accurate and reliable local information for the people of Cirebon and its surroundings. On the other hand, the prevalence of fake news (hoaxes) that are difficult to verify poses a particular challenge for readers (Andriany & Triwardhani, n.d.). As a local media outlet, Fajar Cirebon serves as a bridge between the community and local developments. However, in practice, the delivery of information through social media often remains suboptimal—especially in terms of content structure—which negatively affects its reach and effectiveness.

Moreover, in today's digital era, the capacity to disseminate information is no longer exclusive to conventional media institutions—individuals with access to digital platforms can also act as content producers. This situation has intensified competition in the digital media industry and necessitates continuous innovation in content management.

Amid the rapid flow of information and growing competition in digital content, content management strategies have become a key factor in attracting and retaining audience attention. One crucial strategy in this regard is the application of Search Engine Optimization (SEO). This strategy includes several main aspects, such as organizing articles systematically, providing credible sources, and using visually appealing and functional elements (Daoud et al., 2024). These elements significantly enhance content visibility on search engines and improve the user experience when accessing information.

From the perspective of modern communication theory, the Uses and Gratifications Theory (U&G) offers a relevant conceptual foundation. This theory asserts that audiences actively select and use media to fulfill their specific needs, such as concise, accurate, and easily accessible information. Today's media users have high expectations regarding content quality—not only in terms of speed and accuracy but also in visual appeal (Sichach, 2023). Furthermore, the U&G theory explains such behavior, wherein users consume media to fulfill purposes such as

information-seeking, social interaction, entertainment, and self-representation (Whiting & Williams, 2013; Katz et al., 1973). Therefore, media must adjust their methods of information delivery to align with the preferences of today's digital audiences.

This article will explore three key issues that hinder the effectiveness of digital content delivery in online media, particularly on Fajar Cirebon. First, the absence of key point features that help readers quickly grasp the core information. Second, the lack of external links, which serve to provide additional references and enhance informational credibility. Third, the suboptimal use of alt text in images, which reduces visual appeal and negatively impacts SEO performance. These three issues form the basis for formulating strategic solutions, which will be further discussed in this article, with the aim of improving the effectiveness of digital content delivery and expanding audience reach and engagement

## **.LITERATUR REVIEW**

The development of digital media has encouraged numerous studies on content management strategies and the effectiveness of online information delivery. The Uses and Gratifications (U&G) Theory has frequently been employed as a conceptual framework to understand how audiences consume and utilize media based on their specific needs.

Luo (2002) identified that user satisfaction with digital media is influenced by three main aspects: informativeness (the level of information provided), entertainment (its entertainment value), and irritation (disruptions or discomfort during content access). This study highlights the importance of balancing information delivery with a pleasant user experience to maintain audience engagement. However, it does not specifically examine how content structure or visual presentation strategies affect the effectiveness of news delivery on digital platforms, particularly in local media contexts as addressed in this article.

Berry (2023) argues that an effective SEO strategy should not rely solely on technical optimization for search engines but also consider users' needs and motivations through the lens of U&G theory. Content that meets user expectations has a greater chance of retaining their attention. This article aligns with that perspective while offering a specific contribution to local media by directly applying key points, external links, and content visualization features.

Bhatiasevi (2024) developed five U&G constructs to analyze social media usage behavior. His findings confirm that users have diverse motives for accessing digital media, such as cognitive needs, social integration, and relaxation. However, the study does not directly link user preferences to content structure in the context of local online media, as explored in this article.

Gao (2023) introduced a technological dimension into the U&G model and found that factors such as system intelligence and personalization influence users' continued use of digital platforms. This supports the argument that digital media must design content that aligns with user expectations. This article draws inspiration from those findings and implements them by developing adaptive content strategies for local media.

Schultheiß, Häußler, and Lewandowski (2023) compared SEO-optimized content with high-quality content and found that technically optimized content often ranks higher in search results despite not always excelling in substance. This article contributes by offering a balanced approach between content quality and SEO technical aspects in managing local web-based media.

Thus, this article provides an original contribution to digital journalism by integrating U&G theory and SEO strategies in the context of local media, while presenting concrete solutions for designing content that is both technically effective and communicatively impactful.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

This article adopts a theoretical-conceptual approach aimed at analyzing issues in the management of digital content in online media based on specific theoretical frameworks and perspectives. No primary data collection methods such as interviews or surveys were employed; instead, the study relies on literature review and critical observation of phenomena occurring in the field.

The main theoretical foundation for this study is the Uses and Gratifications (U&G) Theory, developed by Elihu Katz and Jay G. Blumler in 1974. This theory posits that audiences are active agents in selecting and using media based on specific needs and objectives, such as information-seeking, entertainment, social interaction, and personal satisfaction (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1974). U&G has been widely applied in digital media research to explain how users align their media preferences with the content available (Ruggiero, 2000).

This theoretical framework is employed to assess the extent to which digital content structures in online media—such as key points, external links, and image optimization—are able to meet the expectations and needs of today’s digital media users. Hsu et al. (2020) emphasize that perceived interactivity and clear information presentation are critical factors in attracting and retaining user engagement. Accordingly, this study examines how the content structure of Fajarcirebon.com—including the use of key points, external links, and visual imagery—relates to these principles.

The analysis is conducted descriptively by linking actual conditions observed in content management practices with the core principles of U&G theory. This theory has proven to be relevant in various digital contexts, including social media, news websites, and interactive platforms (Hoque & Hossain, 2023).

Through this approach, the article seeks to formulate strategic solutions to the challenges of digital content effectiveness, particularly within local media, by gaining a deeper understanding of digital audience behaviors and needs.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

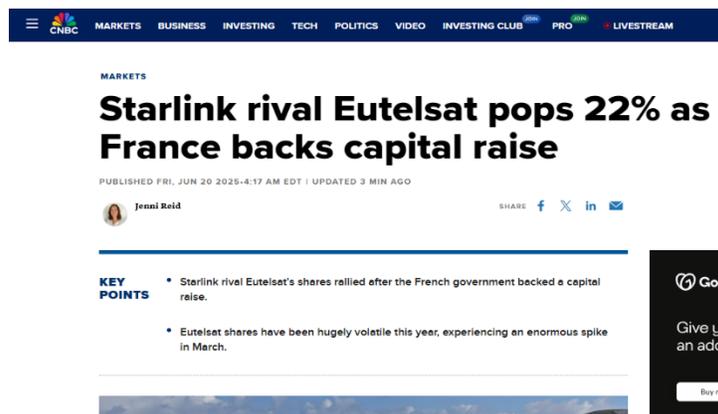
Based on the analysis and observation of the online news site Fajar Cirebon through the domain fajarcirebon.com, several weaknesses were identified that hinder the site’s ability to optimally present articles and attract online visitors. One of the primary objectives of writing articles in online media is to increase reader traffic. However, in practice, several essential aspects have not been fully optimized. The three main problems identified include: (1) the absence of emphasis on key points, (2) limited use of external links, and (3) inadequate optimization of visual elements, such as images.

These three issues directly affect audience satisfaction with the digital content provided, making it unable to fulfill user needs as outlined in the Uses and Gratifications Theory (Katz & Blumler, 1974). According to this theory, users seek news that is concise, informative, credible, and easily accessible.

In response to these content-related issues—which render it less engaging and inefficient for audiences to consume—this article proposes strategic solutions aimed at enhancing the

effectiveness of information delivery. These solutions are designed by taking into account the behaviors and needs of digital media users, as framed by the Uses and Gratifications Theory, which emphasizes that audiences actively choose and utilize media to fulfill specific needs, such as the Concise, Informative, easily accessible

In today’s digital era, people increasingly favor content that is concise and does not consume much of their time. Information consumption patterns have shifted toward speed and selectivity, with audiences typically allocating only brief moments to grasp the core of a news story. Therefore, media outlets must present information efficiently and directly to the point to remain relevant and appealing to digital audiences, who are often highly mobile and time-constrained.



*Example of key points from CNBC.com*

One approach to address this need is the use of key points in news articles. Digital content that highlights the main messages increases comprehension and trust, especially among mobile users (Zou, 2024). This feature helps readers quickly understand the essence of the information through succinct bullet points, typically placed at the beginning or middle of the article. Within the framework of Uses and Gratifications Theory, the presence of key points reflects the fulfillment of audience needs for clarity and informational efficiency. In addition to improving the reading experience, this feature enhances narrative structure, increases readability, and supports content optimization for digital search engines—making articles more accessible and capable of reaching a broader audience.

Media that presents information in a credible and informative manner holds an advantage in building audience trust. In the digital realm, credibility does not solely depend on writing style

or a media outlet's popularity but also on how verifiable and traceable the provided information is. High-quality articles must convey accurate and relevant data accompanied by clear references. Transparency in data usage and relevant personal experience can improve customer trust, which in turn strengthens loyalty (Wuryantini, 2024). Therefore, news presentation must not only be engaging but also journalistically accountable.

One effective step to enhance credibility is the inclusion of external links directing readers to trusted sources, such as official government sites, research institutions, or validated statistical data. These links allow readers to verify information and gain deeper insights into the issues being discussed. From the perspective of Uses and Gratifications Theory, this strategy represents the media's responsibility to fulfill the audience's need for trustworthy information. Moreover, external links contribute to improved visibility through search engine optimization (SEO) and reinforce the media outlet's image as a transparent and professional source of information.

Easily Accessible is essential, The use of visual media should be carefully designed to serve as both an effective and engaging tool for information delivery. One useful strategy is inserting images accompanied by alternative text (alt text), as interface designs that encourage active interaction (e.g., reactions to content) have been shown to enhance user recall—even with trade-offs in satisfaction (Ruiz, 2024). Alt text not only clarifies the visual context of the content but also increases image discoverability in search engines such as Google Images.



Sebut Wanita Independen Lebih Banyak dari Pria Mapan, Prilly Latuconsina Tuai Kecaman. foto: Twitter (X) @999071

Liputan6.com, Jakarta Belakangan Prilly Latuconsina jadi sorotan warganet usai melontar *statement* yang dianggap kontroversial sejumlah orang yaitu, wanita independen lebih banyak daripada jumlah laki-laki mapan.

*Example of optimization image from liputan6.com*

In the context of Uses and Gratifications Theory, engaging and relevant visual elements fulfill users' aesthetic needs and enrich their understanding of the presented information. Well-designed images can reinforce core messages and create emotional appeal that drives user engagement. Beyond enhancing the reading experience, optimizing visual elements like images and alt text plays a crucial role in digital strategy through SEO principles. This increases the likelihood of content appearing in image search results, thereby expanding reach and generating organic traffic. Therefore, effective visual use is not merely an aesthetic consideration—it is a strategic component that responds to the behavior and expectations of today's digital audience.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the analysis, it can be concluded that the low effectiveness of digital content in online media stems from its inability to meet the needs of today's audiences, who are increasingly active, selective, and goal-oriented. Digital audiences are no longer passive; rather, they consciously choose and use media to achieve specific purposes such as acquiring information, seeking entertainment, or engaging in social interaction. This ineffectiveness is evident in the absence of clearly presented key points that facilitate quick understanding, the lack of external links that affect content credibility, and the insufficient use of engaging visual elements, which results in reduced appeal and visibility in search engines.

Referring to the Uses and Gratifications Theory, today's digital audiences prefer content that is concise, trustworthy, and visually engaging. Therefore, content management strategies should be tailored to align with these preferences by presenting clear key points, incorporating relevant external links, and strengthening visual elements such as images and alt text. This approach is expected to enhance the overall quality and effectiveness of digital content and foster stronger audience engagement in an increasingly competitive digital environment.

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