

Development of Application-Based Business Models in the Creative Cosplay Industry

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Abstract

The cosplay industry is a rapidly growing sector of the creative economy, combining performing arts, craftsmanship, and digital entrepreneurship. With the rise in global interest in anime, gaming, and pop culture, cosplay has evolved from a recreational activity into a creative industry that generates income for designers, rental providers, photographers, and event organizers. However, the industry still faces major challenges, including high production costs, limited access to quality costumes, and a fragmented service system that hinders business scalability and collaboration. These conditions highlight the urgent need for a more integrated and technology-driven business approach. This study aims to design an application-based business model to address these barriers and optimize opportunities for cosplayers and service providers. A quantitative approach was employed by distributing questionnaires to 112 respondents from various cosplay communities and providers. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and Business Model Canvas (BMC) mapping to identify key components of the proposed model. Findings show that most respondents express a strong demand for digital platforms that provide affordable access to costumes, efficient rental and purchase services, and community-based features. The results further highlight revenue opportunities for providers and service providers through integrated application systems. This study contributes to the development of digital business models in creative industries and provides practical implications for entrepreneurs and policymakers in supporting innovation within the cosplay sector.

Keywords: Cosplay Industry, Creative Economy, Application-based business model, Business Model Canvas, Digital Innovation.

1. Introduction

The cosplay industry has become a prominent element of the global creative economy, driven by the rapid growth of anime, manga, video games, and popular culture (Wicaksono, 2024). Cosplay, short for “costume play”, is a term used to describe costume fandom, where individuals are dressing as fictional characters (Lotecki, 2012), and has evolved from a niche hobby into a mainstream cultural and economic phenomenon. In Japan, French, USA, and Switzerland, cosplay conventions attract thousands of participants every year (Keller, 2019), creating demand both for costumes, photography services, event organizer, and community platforms. Beyond its entertainment value, cosplay also represents a dynamic form of creative labor and identity expression that contributes to tourism, media industries, and small business innovation (Gn, 2011; Matsuura & Okabe, 2014).

In Indonesia, cosplay events have become increasingly frequent after the COVID-19 pandemic, with major conventions such as Comic Frontier, Indonesia Comic Con, and Gelar Jepang Universitas Indonesia (GJUI) gaining significant popularity (Izza Aeda, 2023). According to data from JFest Chart—a comprehensive database of Japanese pop-culture



events in Indonesia compiled through contributions from event organizers and communities nationwide—the number of such events has shown a steady upward trend from 2022 to 2024 (Subagio, 2025).

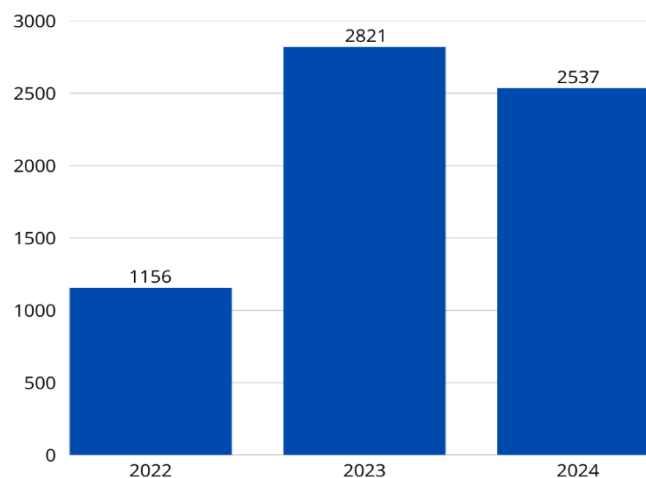


Figure 1. Japanese Events in Indonesia after the pandemic

Source: JFest Chart, 2025

Figure 1 shows that post-pandemic, various Japan-themed events have been increasingly held across major cities, reflecting the public's growing enthusiasm for Japanese pop culture and the expanding opportunities for cosplay-related entrepreneurship. This expansion indicates that cosplay has become not only a cultural movement but also an emerging economic sector within Indonesia's creative economy framework (Digdowiseiso, 2023).

Despite this expansion, the industry faces several structural obstacles. Excessive production costs, limited access to quality costumes, and fragmented distribution channels restrict participation and business growth. Studies of creative micro-enterprises in Indonesia show similar constraints in financial capital, digital marketing, and technological integration (Kurniawan et al., 2023; Wachyuni et al., 2024). Cosplayers often struggle to obtain costumes that are both affordable and authentic, while service providers remain fragmented and lack optimal integration in offering their services. These issues highlight the need for innovative business models that can address accessibility, affordability, and sustainability across the cosplay ecosystem.

Digital technology offers transformative opportunities. Application-based business models have reshaped industries from transportation to fashion rental by connecting users and providers in seamless ways (Le, 2025; Liu, 2016; Tran et al., 2022). In creative industries, digital platforms have improved visibility and collaboration, particularly in fashion (Lee & Huang, 2020) and photography (Sampaio & Sebastião, 2024). Within Indonesia, digital transformation has been linked to the advancement of local creative sectors through entrepreneurship platforms that strengthen collaboration and innovation (Alfie Faj'ri et al., 2024; Purbasari et al., 2021). Yet, few studies have examined how such models can be adapted to niche cultural domains like cosplay, where community engagement and aesthetic authenticity are central.

To address this gap, this study aims to develop an application-based business model tailored to the needs of the cosplay industry in Indonesia. Using a quantitative approach, questionnaires were distributed to community members and service providers to capture their preferences, expectations, and challenges in accessing cosplay-related services. The analysis

employs the Business Model Canvas (BMC) framework (Osterwalder & Pigneur, 2010) to design a comprehensive digital business structure that integrates customer segments, value propositions, and revenue streams.

The novelty of this research lies in bridging digital entrepreneurship and creative cultural practices. Academically, it extends discussion on the digitalization of creative industries by applying a structured business model framework to cosplay—a field rarely analyzed from an entrepreneurial perspective. Practically, it offers insights for entrepreneurs, policymakers, and digital innovators seeking to leverage technology to enhance inclusivity and sustainability in Indonesia’s creative economy.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Business Model

Business model theory provides a structured framework to explain how organizations create, deliver, and capture value (Osterwalder & Pigneur, 2010). The Business Model Canvas (BMC) is one of the most widely used tools, consisting of nine components: customer segments, value propositions, channels, customer relationships, revenue streams, key resources, key activities, key partnerships, and cost structure (Osterwalder & Pigneur, 2010). BMC enables researchers and entrepreneurs to map strategic elements systematically, which is particularly useful in industries with fragmented markets such as cosplay. Previous studies highlight its adaptability in designing models for start-ups and creative ventures.

2.2. Creative Economy and Digital Entrepreneurship

According to John Howkins theory, creativity is a generative process that involves creation, exploration and innovation, using ideas to continuously produce new ones. The creative economy emphasizes cultural production, innovation and intellectual property as central drivers of growth (Howkins, 2001). The creative economy emerges a result of the reflection of the creative ideas and thought of human beings into daily life and transforming them into sources of economic values (Boğa & Topcu, 2020). In this context, cosplay can be positioned within the cultural and creative industries, as it integrates artistry, performance, and entrepreneurial opportunities.

Digital Entrepreneurship is a branch within the broader study of entrepreneurship, with major publications emerging in the early 2000s (Campos, 2024). Digital Entrepreneurship research highlight how digital technologies, such as mobile computing, cloud services, social media, 3D printing, and data analytics, are reshaping uncertainty in entrepreneurial processes and outcomes (Nambisan, 2017). Digital entrepreneurship, as a growing phenomenon, brings together and engages stakeholders from various social and economic sectors (Fang & Collier, 2016). Digital entrepreneurship is commonly understood as pursuing business or economic opportunities through digital technologies (Anim-Yeboah et al., 2020). Digital entrepreneurship theory further strengthens this framework by underscoring how digital platforms reshape market dynamics, lower entry barriers, and connect niche communities (Susanto et al., 2022).

2.3. Cosplay and Japanese Popular Culture Events

Cosplay, derived from the term *kospure*, is a blend of the Japanese words “costume” (コス) and “play” (プレ) (Lotecki, 2012). Cosplay is an activity among manga and anime fans, where individuals or groups use costumes, makeup, and accessories to portray characters from anime, manga, games, films, literature, or idol groups (Pramana & Masykur, 2020). Cosplay

is often characterized by vibrant, unusual hair colors and revealing costumes. Its purpose is to bring cartoon characters to life in the real world, serving as a form of fan expression enjoyed by children, teenagers, and adults alike (Ayunada et al., 2018).

The term cosplay was first introduced by Nobuyuki Takahashi, founder of Studio Hard, when he attended the Los Angeles World Science Fiction Convention fashion show in 1984 (Lotecki, 2012). The cosplay phenomenon first emerged in Japan in 1978, with the first event held at a fashion show in Kanagawa Prefecture (Pricillia, 2018). Cosplay quickly gained international recognition as anime and manga became popular overseas.

Japan is recognized as a nation with a wealth of traditions and customs. Modern Japanese culture is known as Japanese Pop Culture. Popular culture is a culture that widely embraced and easily accepted by many people (Ayunada et al., 2018). Cosplay is closely related to Japanese popular culture events, such as anime and manga conventions. Today, these gathering have grown into major global events that attract thousands of participants, creating opportunities not only for cultural expression but also for commercial activities. Conventions such as Comic Market (*Comiket*) in Japan, Comic-Con in the United States, and regional festivals in Southeast Asia particularly Indonesia, are example of how cosplay has developed into an integral part of transnational cultural consumption (Matsuura & Okabe, 2014).

Cosplay events serve multiple purpose, including spaces for performance and fandom, foster cross-cultural exchange, and generate significant economic activity through ticket sales, merchandise, photography, costume rentals, and event management services (Gn, 2011). These events thus play a vital role in shaping the cosplay industry as both a cultural practice and a business ecosystem.

2.4. Cosplayers and Community Practices

Cosplayers represent the core participants in this industry, functioning simultaneously as creators, consumers, and performers. Their practices go beyond simple costume wearing involving craftsmanship, role-play, and social interaction within fan communities (Lotecki, 2012; Rahman et al., 2012). Cosplayer motivations are diverse, ranging from self-expression and artistic creativity to social recognition, identify building, and community belonging (Peirson-Smith, 2013). Online and offline communities facilitate collaboration, knowledge sharing and peer support, which are crucial in sustaining the growth of the cosplay ecosystem (Matsuura & Okabe, 2014). For business models, understanding cosplayer practices is essential because their behaviors as both users and prosumer (producer-consumers) directly shape demand for costumes, rentals, event services, and digital platforms.

2.5. Costume Rental Business

The costume rental services is a type of business that provides cosplay costume rental services. In the 2016s, the costume rental business has begun to gain popularity become an important sector within the cosplay industry, responding to the high costs and time-consuming process of producing authentic costumes (Saputra, 2024). Rental services provide affordable access to a wide range of costumes, allowing participants to engage in cosplay without heavy financial investment (Anindita, 2023). However, the market is often fragmented and localized, with small-scale providers or informal networks dominating supply. Common challenges include inconsistent quality, limited customization, and lack of standardized trust mechanisms between providers and users (Subagio, 2025). Recent studies in the fashion and creative industries suggest that digital platforms can transform rental services by enhancing scalability, building reputation systems, and integrating logistics (Lee & Huang, 2020). Applying this insight to cosplay highlights the potential of application-based models to professionalize rental businesses, improve user trust, and expand accessibility.

3. Methods

3.1. Research Design

The quantitative descriptive research method was used to analyze the emergence of application-based business model in the cosplay industry. The methodology was selected with the intention to drive user requirements, preferences and expectations can be systematically mapped into the Business Model Canvas (BMC). This approach is considered appropriate, since it yields measurable data from a large sample of participants so that the resultant models represent the viewpoint of both consumers and service providers.

3.2. Data Collection

This research was conducted by distributing structured questioners to cosplayer and costume rental vendors on May 2025. The scales included in the survey were Likert-type and addressed user experience, service availability, cost or affordability of the service and potential integration into a digital application. The sampling technique was purposive, that is, prospective respondents who were involved actively in activities and business of cosplay. The instrument was reviewed by creative economy and entrepreneurship experts to guarantee the validity of its content prior to dissemination.

3.3. Data Analysis

The data was analyzed descriptively in order to generate trends and patterns for consumer and provider responses. The results were subsequently categorized and plotted against the nine components of the Business Model Canvas (Osterwalder & Pigneur, 2010). This model was then used to create a high-level application-based model that identifies areas of possibility and need for direction in the cosplay field.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Respondent Profile

Data collection was conducted using Google Forms, which are distributed online to two main target groups, as Cosplayers as potential users of the application service, and Providers of cosplay costume rental services.

The questionnaire was available for seven days and distributed among the cosplay community networks and social media sites to reach relevant respondents. A sum of 112 responses was collected in the period, which includes of 74 cosplayers and 38 providers. This balanced representation of both user and provider perspectives strengthens the reliability of the findings.

According to demographic information, indicated that the most of respondents were people aged between 15 and 25 years old, confirming that cosplay is definitely a hobby for the youth (Figure 1; Subagio, 2025). In regard to event participation, the majority of participants (78.4%) reported visiting a Japanese pop-culture or cosplay convention 1-2 times per month, around 16.2% reported attendance of 3-4 such events per month while around 5.4% attended more than five times each month (Figure 2; Subagio, 2025). These findings imply that cosplay is a daily, routine cultural activity rather than an occasional hobby and are consistent with previous research which highlights the strong event-orientation of cosplay communities (Peirson-Smith, 2013).

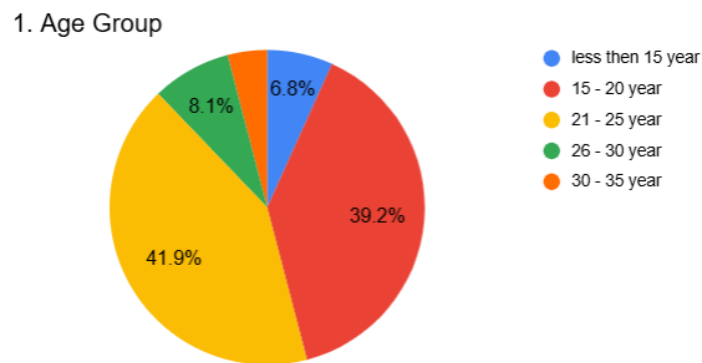


Figure 1. Age Group

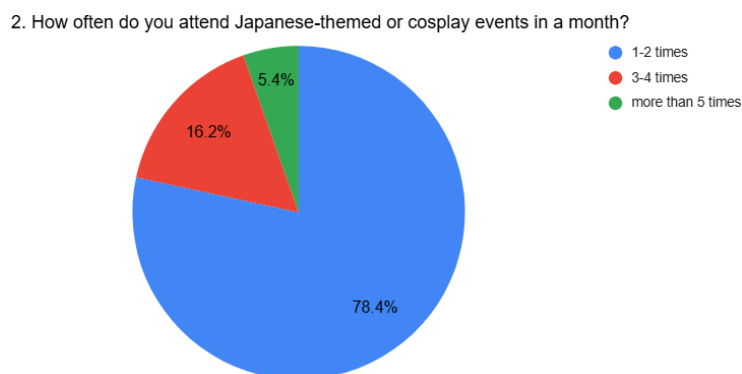


Figure 2. Frequency of Attending Cosplay Events

Furthermore, cosplay participation also differed on the level of costume usage. More than half of cosplayers (56.8%) make use of 1-5 costumes annually, and others wear 5-10 costumes (25.7%) or more than 20 costumes (8.1%) per year (Figure 3; Subagio, 2025). That variation sheds light on the extreme spectrum of participation in cosplay and the potential scale of demand for costume-related services. These results are consistent with the study by Rahman et al. (2012) who point out that cosplay practices range from casual involvement to highly committed performance identities (Rahman et al., 2012).

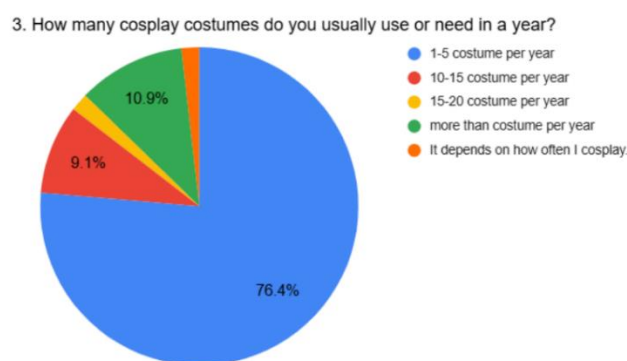


Figure 3. Number of Costumes Used in a Year

4.2. User Needs and Preferences

The survey identified four key drivers of user need and preferences, including being affordable, authentic, accessible and trustworthy. First, affordability emerged as a crucial factor, with 75.7% of respondents indicating that they prefer renting costume rather than purchasing, as rental is more practical and cost-efficient (Subagio, 2025). The majority reported an average rental price of around IDR 150,000 per costume (37.8%), followed by IDR

100,000 (20.3%) and IDR 120.000 (16.2%) (Subagio, 2025). This pricing reflects the general market range for cosplay costume rentals and confirms that budget concerns remain central to consumer decision making.

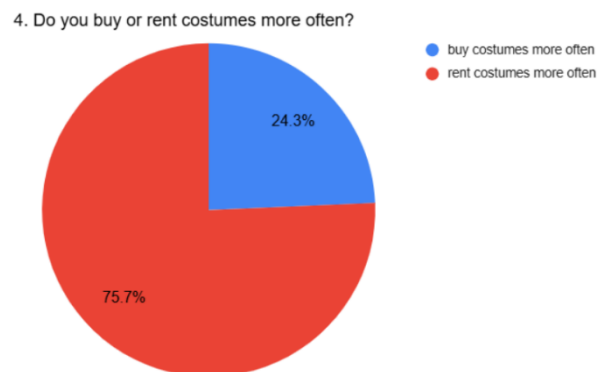


Figure 4. The Habit of Renting or Buying Cosplay Costumes

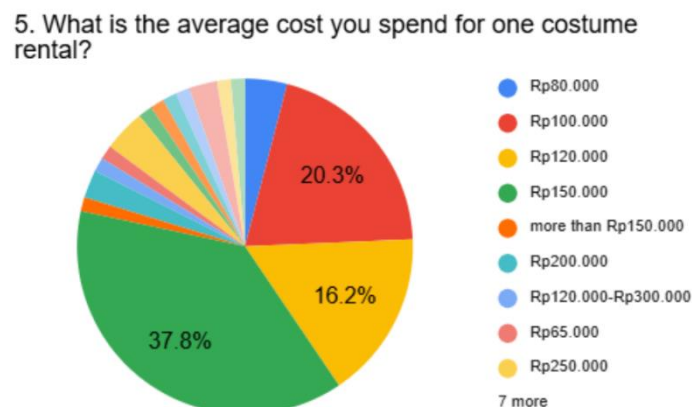


Figure 5. Average Cost of Costume Rental per Use

Second, accessibility and search channel play a crucial role. Ironically, 95.5% of respondents said that Instagram was their method for finding costume providers, while other social media platforms were far less significant (Figure 6; Subagio, 2025). This demonstrates that Instagram currently serves as the primary marketing channel for cosplay rental business, highlighting both the opportunities and limitation of relying on a single platform.

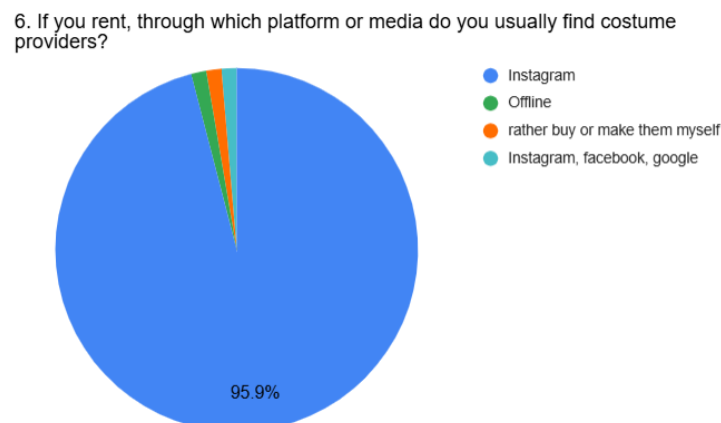


Figure 6. Platforms for Finding Costume Providers

Third, balance preferences were also conditioned by authenticity and variety. Although most participants acknowledged the availability of costumes, it seems that they were met with challenges in finding real and appropriately fitting garments. In particular, 64.9% of respondents faced problems with inappropriate sizing, and 55.4% indicated that costumes were not available in their region (Figure 7; Subagio, 2025). Such barriers restrict broader participation and reinforce the need for integrated digital solutions.

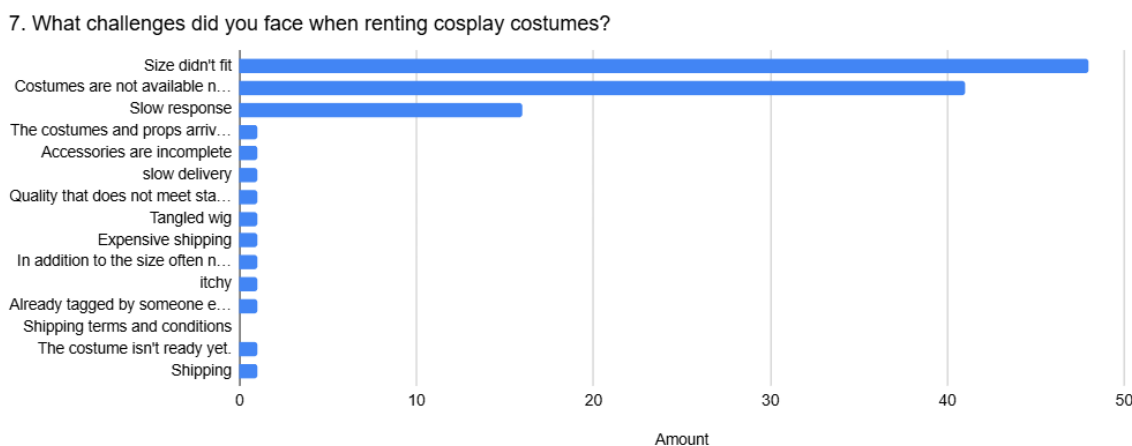


Figure 7. Challenges When Renting Costumes

Finally, trust emerged as a consistent challenge. Respondents pointed out issues such as slow responses from providers (21.6%) and inconsistent quality of costumes and services. These findings resonate with prior research in creative and fashion rental industries, where adoption is influenced by perceptions of cost, quality, and reliability (Lee & Huang, 2020). They also support earlier arguments that fragmented cosplay service markets hinder scalability and user satisfactions.

These findings altogether contribute to conceptualizing an app-based business model that integrates affordability, transparency, location-based search, reputation systems, and secure transactions. Such a model would address the pressing issues faced by both consumers and providers, while also professionalizing the cosplay rental ecosystems.

4.3. Service Provider Perspectives

Service providers such as rental business and event organizer are important to support the cosplay ecosystem. The majority of rental providers in this study reported that their business had been operating for at least two years, with respondents spread across various regions of Indonesia, particularly on Java, Sumatra, and Kalimantan. This geographical distribution represents a growing tendency of cosplay entrepreneurship further than in urban locations.

Resource-wise majority of the providers had a large stock, 31.6% the providers with more than 50 costumes, while other managed 5-10 costumes (6.9%), 10-15 costumes (13.8%), 25-30 costumes (6.9%), 35-40 costumes (6.9%), and more than 50 costumes (31.10%) (Figure 8; Subagio, 2025). Several even mentioned having 75-100 costumes, indicating operations at a relatively larger scale. Despite this, the frequency of rentals varied widely: 35.5% rented 1-5 costumes per month, 19.4% rented 5-10, another 22.6% exceeded 20 rentals, while the rest reported between 10-20 rentals monthly (Figure 9; Subagio, 2025). These figures illustrate the fragmented and uneven nature of the costume rental market, as Gn's (2011) also noted that cosplay business structures remain underdeveloped and inconsistent.

8. How many rental costumes do you have?

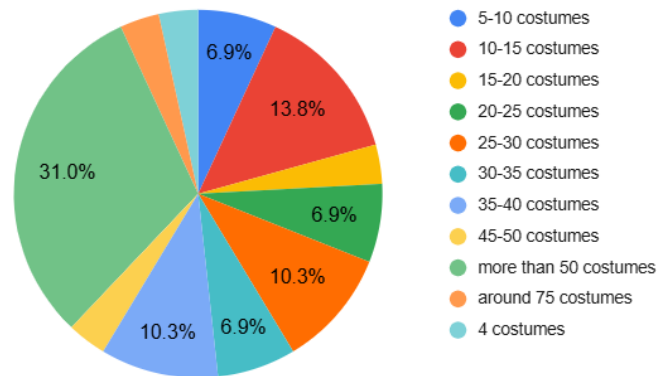


Figure 8. Number of Costumes Owned

9. What is the average number of costumes rented each month?

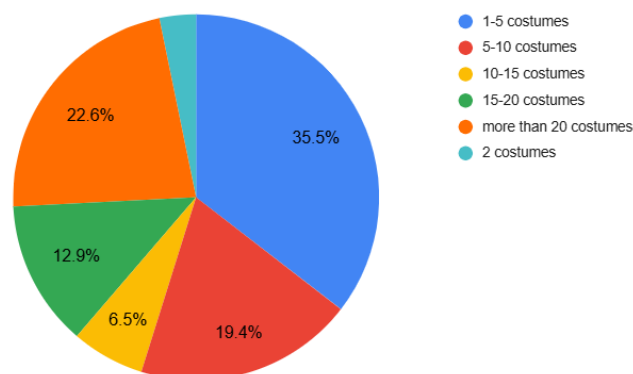


Figure 9. Number of Costumes Rented per Month

Digital presence became an essential requirement for providers. The overwhelming majority (92.1%) depended on Instagram for marketing and orders, followed by a small percentage using Facebook and WhatsApp (Figure 10; Subagio, 2025). Furthermore, 87.2% of transactions were online purchases, while offline was at 12.8%, highlighting the big importance of digitalization for this industry (Figure 11; Subagio, 2025). These findings echo those of Keller (2019), who found that cosplay economies are more and more transacted through online platforms and social media.

10. What platforms do you typically use to market and receive costume rental orders?

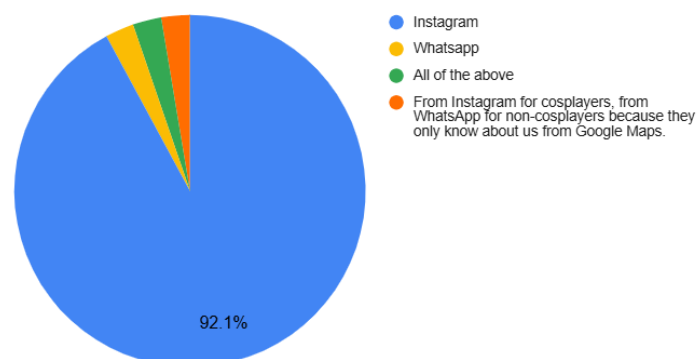


Figure 10. Promotional Media and Costume Ordering

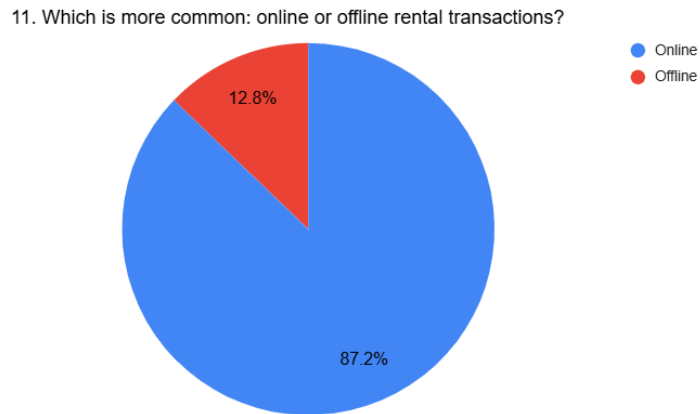


Figure 11. Types of Transactions That Are More Frequently Performed

However, various challenges have hampered the growth of providers. Costumes often suffered damage during rentals (73.7%), loss of accessories (60.5%), and communication difficulties with customers (42.1%) (Figure 12; Subagio, 2025). Alarming, 60.5% of providers reported negative experiences such as fraud, damage, or theft, including cases involving false identities. Such risks reflect broader trust and reliability issues common in sharing economy services.

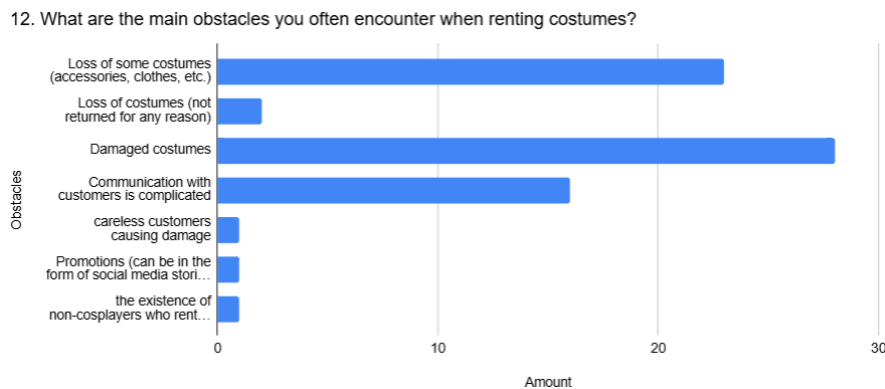


Figure 12. Frequently Encountered Obstacles

In terms of demand, provider's experiences were mixed: 30.8% reported a decrease in demand, 28.2% reported growth, 20.5% noted fluctuations, and 20.5% described stagnation (Figure 13; Subagio, 2025). These differences suggest that cosplay rental markets rely heavily on external factors such as event frequency, consumer purchasing power, and pop-culture trends. This precariousness support earlier arguments that without digital integration and platform-based solutions, small-scale providers face difficulties scaling up or stabilizing their operations.

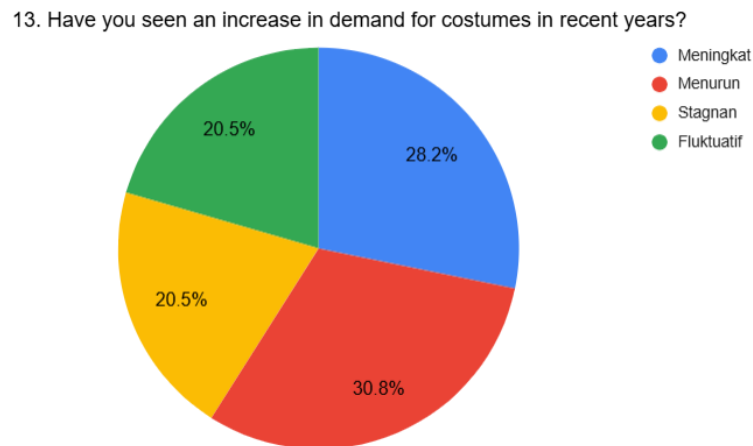


Figure 13. Changes in Costume Demand in Recent Years

Overall, these results show while cosplay costume rental business in Indonesia is already run with considerable inventory and digital usage, they have long-standing issues of fragmentation, risk management, and demand fluctuation. These problems could be addressed through a comprehensive application-based platforms, which offers service integration, user verification and ensuring more efficient matchmaking between cosplayers and providers.

4.4. Business Model Canvas (BMC) Mapping

The survey findings were systematically organized into the nine components of the Business Model Canvas (BMC) (Osterwalder & Pigneur, 2010). This framework enables a holistic understanding of how an application-based model could create, deliver and capture value in the cosplay industry.

1. Customer Segments

The primary customer segment of the proposed application consists of cosplayers, particularly teenagers aged 15 to 25 who frequently participate in Japanese pop-culture events and conventions. These users represent the largest demand group, as most of them prefer renting costumes over purchasing due to cost and practicality.

In addition to cosplayers, the platform also targets service providers such as rental business, photographers, and event organizers who require greater visibility and access to broader markets. Secondary stakeholders, including sponsor, cultural communities, and fan clubs, also form part of the ecosystems, contributing indirectly to the platform's sustainability.

2. Value Propositions

The study findings identified four key values: affordability, authenticity, accessibility, and trust. Cosplayers expect to access affordable rentals without compromising costume authenticity, while providers demand a system that can consolidate fragmented markets and promote professionalism. By offering location-based searches, verified providers, user reviews, and secure payment features, the platform delivers value through convenience, reliability, and efficiency. The propositions are designed to address the structural weakness that currently limit growth in the cosplay rental market.

3. Channels

At present, Instagram dominates as the primary channels for connecting cosplayers and providers, with 95.9% of respondents reporting its use. While this demonstrates the importance of social media, it also highlights reliance on a single medium. The proposed application therefore serves as a direct channel for transactions while maintaining integration

with existing platforms such as Instagram, thereby aligning with current user habits while introducing more structured digital solutions. Offline channels, particularly cosplay conventions and Japanese pop-culture events, also remain important touchpoints for outreach and promotion.

4. Customer Relationships

Customer relationship in the cosplay industry are largely community-based, relying on word of mouth, reputation, and peer support. The application would formalize these relationships by embedding trust mechanisms such as rating systems, user reviews, and verified accounts. Personalized recommendations, for example suggesting costumes based on past rentals or upcoming events, would further strengthen relationship by offering tailored experiences. This approach maintains the social character of cosplay communities while enhancing professionalism.

5. Revenue Streams

The proposed model generates revenue primarily through commissions charged on rental transactions. Additional revenue streams include subscription fees for premium provider accounts, enabling higher visibility within the platform as well as advertising opportunities for sponsors. Collaborations with event organizers could also create revenue through ticketing systems and promotional partnerships. Moreover, ancillary services such as photography packages, accessories, and logistics could further diversify the platform's income sources.

6. Key Resources

To deliver these services, several resources are critical. The digital infrastructure, including application software, servers, and secure payment gateways, forms the backbone of the platform. Costume inventories by providers represent another vital resource, alongside databases that enable trust and reputation management. Human resources in areas such as customer service, dispute resolution, and platform moderation are also essential to maintaining smooth operations.

7. Key Activities

The core activities of the platform include continuous application development and maintenance, ensuring user-friendly interfaces, and updating security system for safe transactions. Equally important are marketing efforts and community engagement to expand user adoption. Verification of providers and quality assurance of listed services are key to building trust, while facilitating logistics coordination ensure that costumes and related services are delivered efficiently.

8. Key Partnerships

The ecosystem depends on partnerships across multiple domains. Costume designers and rental providers form the foundation of the supply side, while collaborations with event organizers strengthen the link to consumer demand. Logistics companies are crucial for expanding access beyond local markets, ensuring costumes can be delivered and returned efficiently. Payment gateway providers, including digital wallets and banking partners, also play a central role in enabling secure and seamless financial transactions.

9. Cost Structure

Finally, the cost structure of the platforms is shaped by expenses in technology development, marketing, and customer support. Regular platform updates, cybersecurity measures, and server maintenance represent ongoing investments. Marketing campaigns and

event sponsorships require significant funding but are necessary for expanding market presence.

Additional costs arise from managing partnerships, coordinating logistics, and providing responsive customer service. While these expenditures are considerable, they are justified by the platform's potential to professionalize the cosplay rental business and create a sustainable digital ecosystem.

4.5. Proposed Application-Based Business Model

Based on the mapping of findings into the nine components of the Business Model Canvas, this study proposes an integrated application-based business model tailored for the cosplay industry. The model positions cosplayers as the primary users who seek affordable, authentic, and easily accessible costumes, while also serving providers such as rental businesses, photographers, and event organizers who require broader market reach and greater operational efficiency. By consolidating fragmented services into a single platform, the proposed model addresses key challenges of affordability, accessibility, and trust.

The model functions as a multi-sided platform, creating value by connecting cosplayer and service providers within a unified ecosystem. For cosplayers, the application provides location-based search, transparent pricing, and quality assurance through verified providers and user reviews. This reduces the risk of poor experiences, such as receiving ill-fitting costumes or unreliable services, which were identified as common pain points in the survey. For providers, the platform enhances visibility through digital marketing, reduces reliance on a single channel like Instagram, and allows for secure online transactions that minimize risks of fraud or miscommunications.

From a financial perspective, the application introduces diverse revenue streams, including transaction-based commissions, subscription fees for premium providers, and advertising opportunities for sponsors. These mechanisms ensure the sustainability of the platform while also supporting scalability as demand increases. At the same time, key partnerships with costume designers, logistics companies, and event organizers expand the platform's ability to deliver value-added services, from delivery and return system to bundled event packages that combine costume rental, photography, and ticketing.

The novelty of this proposed business model lies in its ability to bridge cosplay as a cultural practice with digital entrepreneurship in the creative economy. While cosplay has traditionally been community-driven and informally organized, the integration of an application-based platform introduces professionalism and structural efficiency without undermining the participatory nature of the practice. By embedding trust mechanisms, consolidating services, and leveraging digital technologies, the model transforms fragmented networks into a coherent ecosystem that benefits both consumers and providers.

In line with insights from the platform economy (Kenney & Zysman, 2016) and the sharing economy (Erickson & Sørensen, 2016), this model positions the cosplay industry as a niche yet scalable sector of the creative economy. It provides not only a blueprint for business innovation but also a framework for policymakers and cultural stakeholders interested in fostering sustainable development in creative industries. Ultimately, the application-based business model demonstrates how technology can enhance accessibility, affordability, and trust, while simultaneously reinforcing cosplay's role as both a cultural expression and an economic opportunity.

4.6. Implications and Contributions

The findings of this study carry significant implications for both academic discourse and practical applications in the field of creative industries. From an academic perspective, this

research contributes to the limited body of literature that addresses cosplay not only as a cultural phenomenon but also as a business domain within the creative economy. By applying the Business Model Canvas framework, the study demonstrates how theories of digital entrepreneurship and the platform economy can be adapted to niche cultural industries. In doing so, it extends the scope of existing scholarship on creative economy models, showing that cosplay, often perceived as a subcultural or leisure activity, can also be analyzed as a structured entrepreneurial ecosystem. This contribution is particularly relevant to ongoing discussions about the intersection between cultural identity, technology, and economic development.

From a practical perspective, the proposed application-based business model provides actionable insights for entrepreneurs, costume providers, event organizers, and policymakers. For entrepreneurs and rental businesses, the model offers a clear pathway to professionalize operations by consolidating fragmented services, reducing reliance on single marketing channels, and improving customer trust through verification and review systems. For cosplayers, the platform promises affordability, accessibility, and convenience, addressing key challenges such as limited costume availability, inconsistent quality, and unreliable service providers. For policymakers, the model highlights opportunities to support the creative economy through digital infrastructure, funding, and regulation that encourage entrepreneurship while safeguarding cultural practices.

Furthermore, the model emphasizes the importance of sustainability and scalability in creative industries. By integrating diverse revenue streams, such as rental transactions, subscriptions, advertising, and event partnerships, the application ensures financial viability while fostering long-term growth. Partnerships with logistics providers and event organizers also extend the platform's impact beyond costume rental, contributing to a more resilient and interconnected cosplay ecosystem. These practical contributions resonate with broader goals of cultural preservation, economic inclusion, and digital transformation, aligning cosplay with other sectors that have successfully adopted platform-based business models (Kenney & Zysman, 2016).

Ultimately, this study illustrates that cosplay, as both a cultural practice and an entrepreneurial sector, stands at the intersection of creativity, community, and technology. By bridging gaps in affordability, accessibility, and trust, the proposed business model not only strengthens the sustainability of cosplay but also reinforces its role as part of the wider creative economy.

5. Conclusion

This study developed an application-based business model for the cosplay industry using the Business Model Canvas framework. The results showed that cosplayers prioritize affordability, authenticity, accessibility, and trust in choosing costume rental services, while providers face challenges of fragmentation, inconsistent demand, and risk management. By consolidating these perspectives, the proposed model offers a digital platform that integrates cosplayers, providers, and event-related services into a more reliable and sustainable ecosystem. The model addresses current structural gaps and highlights the potential of cosplay not only as a cultural activity but also as a viable sector of the creative economy.

In practical terms, this study suggests that entrepreneurs and developers should focus on developing user-oriented application systems, emphasizing affordability, transparency, and efficient matching features. The addition of location-based search tools, digital verification systems, rating mechanisms, and secure transactions can significantly improve

user experience and trust. In addition, policymakers and creative economy institutions are encouraged to support digitization initiatives in niche cultural industries such as cosplay, by providing training, digital literacy programs, and financial incentives for small-scale providers. Such efforts can drive innovation and strengthen Indonesia's creative entrepreneurship ecosystem.

Although this study provides valuable insights into digital business transformation in the cosplay industry, further research is needed to deepen and broaden understanding in this area. Future investigations could expand the sample scope to include more diverse regions and cross-country comparisons, allowing exploration of cultural and economic differences in cosplay entrepreneurship. Additionally, employing qualitative or mixed-method approaches, such as interviews, case studies, or ethnography, could offer richer insights into user behavior, motivation, and trust formation in digital environments. Research could also assess the technological feasibility and usability of prototype applications through usability testing or simulation models. Finally, examining long-term business sustainability, including financial performance, consumer retention, and community impact, after implementing the proposed model would provide a more comprehensive evaluation of its effectiveness.

In summary, the findings of this research not only contribute to the academic discussion on digital entrepreneurship in creative industries but also provide a strategic foundation for future innovation, investment, and policy development in Indonesia's evolving cosplay economy.

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