

**BEYOND THE COVER:  
MARKETEERS MAGAZINE'S DIGITAL ADAPTATION  
THROUGH COMMODIFICATION**

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***Abstract***

*This research was motivated by the increasing number of online media that make it easier for people to access information quickly, causing a decrease in public interest in print journalism. As a result, many print media companies had to close. Marketers magazine overcame this problem by making covers one of the primary weapons to attract public attention. Through this structural study, researchers analyzed how Marketeers magazine responded to these conditions with commodification made to content, readers, and workers. This research uses a critical model with a qualitative approach. This research method is a descriptive analysis and data collection method using in-depth interviews so that researchers can dig for more data and facts on critical informants and informants. The results of observations made with these interviews are compared between the results of interviews. The results found that Marketeers carried out a process of commodification of content, readers, and workers. From the commodification process, Marketeers magazine experienced an increase in sales. This can be a benchmark for print media industry entrepreneurs in Indonesia so that they can continue to exist in the Indonesian print media industry.*

**Keywords:** *Cover, Commodification, Print Media, Magazines, Political Media*

**INTRODUCTION**

Mass media, especially online media, are increasingly daring to show their existence in today's media industry. This rapid development impacts the increasingly fierce competition between media in providing information for their communicants. Especially print media business people who are increasingly marginalized day by day because of the many online media that are present and provide convenience for their readers. Quoted from We Are Social, the total population of Indonesia in January 2015 reached 255 million people, while registered smartphones have touched 308 million devices. This means that many Indonesians have more than one smartphone to use daily. This fact changed how mass media conveyed information to audiences and prompted a technological revolution that gave birth to several changes, including various devices that allow newspaper readers and television viewers to read, hear, and watch news from smartphones.

In addition to being unable to compete with online media that are mushrooming, media falls because paper prices continue to rise. According to Press Council data, the onslaught of digital social media and online media is enough to affect the print industry. One thousand one hundred media in Indonesia at the end of 2013 experienced a growth of only 0.25 per cent. Nielsen data shows that 2013 print media sales reached 23,340,175 (Himawan, 2015). This condition is also due to the decline in advertising spending for newspapers. According to Nielsen data, mass media advertising spending until the second quarter of 2015 reached Rp 31.74 trillion. This number only shows a 6 per cent growth compared to the second quarter of last year, which reached Rp 29.82 trillion. As for the growth of newspaper advertising, it is much worse. Nielsen data shows newspaper advertising spending in the second quarter of 2015 reached Rp 8.23 trillion. This number shows a decrease of 4 per cent compared to the second quarter of 2014, which reached Rp8.59 trillion (Himawan, 2015). Daily Bola and Soccer must close at the end of 2015. In addition to these two print media, several subsidiaries of Kompas Gramedia It is also noted that some are closed, such as Fortune, Chip and Jeep magazines. Some print media based weekly and monthly are also countless that had to shuffle until finally closed from 2010 to 2015. As of November 1, 2014, this media must also die and change completely to online media. In the magazine industry, TRAX magazine was published in 2002 and ended its existence in the Indonesian print media industry by issuing its last issue in January 2016. The magazine that discusses music and the lifestyle of young people must admit the difficulty of surviving in the print media industry amid the onslaught of online media today.

According to the summary results of Dewan Pers 2014, The total number of print media published in Indonesia is 567 print media (Prasetyo, 2017). Specifically, there are 312 daily newspapers, 173 weekly newspapers, and 82 monthly newspapers. Jakarta is the province with the highest number of printing houses in Indonesia. There are 130 publications in the capital, with details of 32 daily issues, 65 weekly issues and 33 monthly issues. Jakarta became the province with the highest number of print media in Indonesia. According to Nielsen data, overall, media consumption in cities both in Java and outside Java shows that television is still the primary medium consumed by Indonesians (95%), followed by the Internet (33%), Radio (20%), Newspapers (12%), Tabloids (6%) and Magazines (5%) (Nielsen, 2014). From this data, print media consumers are in the last three orders. So, print media business people must be good at utilizing their commodities to continue to exist in the print media industry in Indonesia. What must be observed is that print media business

people must be good at innovating, such as integrating print media with online media or television. Nielsen (2014) data also shows that magazine consumption is the lowest. The development of technology that makes it easier for readers to get information easily and quickly is one of the causes of lack of interest in reading magazines.

Each element of the magazine results from consideration with the creative team so that the magazine can be tailored to the audience that reads it. Attractive images can make readers more interested in the content of the news delivered. The magazine design includes covers, illustrations, layouts, shapes, colors and typefaces. Innovation comes in various forms, one of which presents an attractive cover design to attract readers to buy the magazine. The cover is indeed a weapon for all print media because by displaying an attractive cover, readers will be happy to know the contents of the print media. Of the many magazines published in Indonesia, Marketeers magazine is a magazine that packs its cover attractively without specifically discussing hot topics that are the talk of the Indonesian public. Marketeers, first published in 2009, is a monthly magazine exploring various insights about new wave marketing. Marketeers magazine is also a unique magazine and different from other marketing magazines. Armed with national and international case studies, supported by thought leadership from MarkPlus Consulting, and supported by research findings from MarkPlus Insight, this journal not only turns data into detailed information but also turns insights into insights for readers.

In the September 2015 issue, Marketeers made a breakthrough with 17 covers in 1 issue. The cover contains a photo of Joko Widodo's head, and the edition is called JOKOWOW. This is a bold thing to do when producing a magazine because the creative team at Marketeers has often considered it when publishing this edition of JOKOWOW, starting from raising capital for production to preparing people to see this innovation. This special edition of JOKOWOW was released to celebrate Jokowi-JK's victory and a victory for the creative industry. Moreover, this JOKOWOW edition of Marketeers magazine also won Gold Winner at the ASIAN MEDIA AWARDS 2015 in the Best Design category.



Figure 1. Cover of Marketeers Magazine Jokowow Edition, September 2014

Other marketing magazines that compete with Marketeers magazine are Marketing Magazine and SWA magazine. With different approaches, these three marketing and business magazines have their target audiences. Marketing magazine provides a variety of relevant information and data for its readers. In addition to magazines, Marketing established various departments that meet marketers' needs in Indonesia, such as research, training, event consulting, and billboards. Here is a look at the covers of some issues of Marketing magazine:

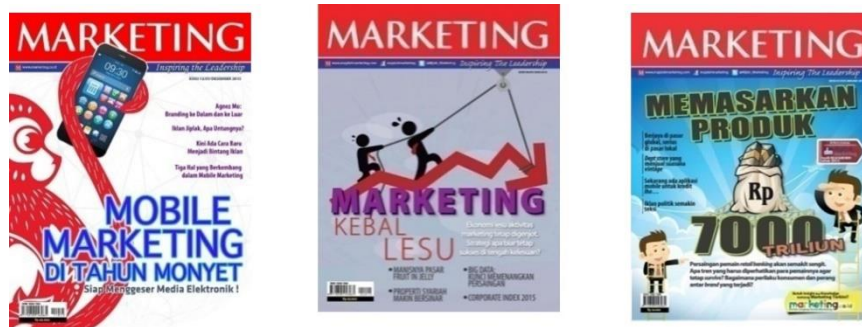


Figure 2. Marketing Magazine Cover

On the other hand, SWA magazine presents new business findings based on in-depth research, analyzes business problems, and offers solutions. Business practices with various problems will continue growing, so business magazines can analyze and provide solutions. Of the total pages of SWA Magazine, about 80% is allocated for manuscripts (contents) and 20% for advertisements. As a business magazine, almost all of SWA's content is business-themed. After all, light writing, such as the Interlocutory or Pause Section, also talks about things related to business activities. Here are the covers of several issues of SWA magazine.



Figure 3. SWA Magazine Cover

There are differences in visual design between Marketeers magazine, Marketing magazine, and SWA magazine. Marketeers magazine shows a dynamic side in its visual design that is different from its two competitors. The cover design needs to be considered because what appears on the cover of a magazine can be one factor determining whether a magazine is seen, opened, read, and purchased by potential customers. In the print media industry

today, companies are faced with the fact that the Indonesian people's reading interest still needs to be higher. According to a 2011 UNESCO study, Indonesians' reading preferences are lowest compared to other ASEAN countries. This low interest in reading is evidenced by the reading index of Indonesian people ranging from 0.0001, which means that out of 1000 people, only one still has a high interest in reading. With shallow reading interest, those in print media, especially magazines, must be able to anticipate readers' interest, at least by opening the magazine and then wanting to read it. The creative team's role is crucial to achieving this, and what plays a significant role is that the cover's appearance must make the audience interested in the magazine's content because of the image.

The above is in line with the statement of Artini Kusmiati et al (1999), the cover also needs to be artistically and beautifully designed to attract the attention of the reading public. Choose a title (text) that is short, easy to read, easy to understand, and can directly inform its content. Furthermore, in line with the explanation of Hendra Soeprajitno as Head of Content Marketeers, "... They are attracted, that is why we always try to, the cover is interesting because to make the first impression because the cover is a significant factor" (Hendra Soeprajitno Interview, 13 June 2016).

Media companies must be profitable while delivering value. Mass media companies must be able to maximize all the products they have. Because these products are precious assets and determine whether media companies can maintain their existence in the mass media industry. For example, some print media companies above have yet to maintain their existence because they cannot compete with the many online media currently loved by the public. To survive, media companies must maximize their products by implementing the right strategy to produce media products that attract audiences, which will attract advertisers to buy points in the media because it is undeniable that the survival of a media company depends heavily on the influx of advertising. Revenue from advertisers will undoubtedly be helpful for media companies, which will then be used to pay staff salaries, production costs, office rent or other responsibilities the company must pay. Based on this background, researchers see the importance of researching the tactics of Marketeer magazine in maintaining its existence in the digital era by identifying and analyzing commodification tactics carried out by Marketeers magazine.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Garnham & Fuchs (2014) posited that media organizations should be valued as part of an economic system, which is also closely linked to a political system. Different levels of



content exchange can largely determine the quality of social knowledge produced by the media for society under conditions that force the expansion of messages and the economic interests of policymakers and decision-makers. Wasko (2005) argues that this theory shows the dependence of ideology on economic power and attracts attention when analyzing the ownership structure and working mechanisms of the media market. Media organizations or businesses should be considered part of an economic system closely linked to a political system that is not democratic or pseudo-democracy. The quality of knowledge about the world (worldview) produced by the media to the public can be primarily determined by the commercial requirements of different media content under the conditions imposed on them, forcing the media company/industry to expand its market. In addition to the economic interests of owners and decision-makers in the media industry (Mudjiyanto et al., 2022).

Macrologically, Peter Golding and Graham Murdock (Curran & Gurevitch, 1991, pp. 15 – 32) show that political economy views on mass media can be divided into two types of models, namely the political economy perspective in the liberal model and political economy perspectives in critical paradigms. (Son, 2019). In addition, Hall (1997) explains that political economy also focuses on protest/opposition. In this field, the study of political economy focuses only on the incredible power of business and impenetrable systems, so this problem is related to resistance and resistance. In addition, political economists also consider various issues related to workers in the media industry, as well as media developments, especially related to the public sphere, civil rights, and democracy (Mudjiyanto et al., 2022). Mass media institutions need to be evaluated within the framework of an economic system closely linked to the political system. The quality of social knowledge produced by the media to society can largely be determined by the exchange rates of different content under conditions of forced market expansion and by the economic interests of landowners and policymakers. With the explanation above, researchers argue that Political Communication Theory is a theory that can explain how Marketeers magazine can compete with marketing magazines in Indonesia by improving visual design to attract more readers.

Political economy is a way or point of view that views and analyzes an issue or media phenomenon. When analyzing such problems or phenomena, there are four essential features from the point of view of political economy, namely political economy based on the study of social change and historical change, explaining the overall social relations that make up the economy - society. The cultural field is committed to moral philosophy and attention to social values and ethical principles, and the last area is social practice, which means this

phenomenon occurs in practice. According to Marx, commodities are the wealth of a society dominated by the capitalist mode of production and are like "a vast collection of commodities"; Individual commodities look like primary forms (Mosco, 1996).

There are three concepts of application of the political economy approach in the media industry proposed by Mosco (1998), namely:

- a. Commodification. This concept refers to using goods and services seen from their usefulness and then converting them into goods with market value. There are three forms of commoditized communication: intrinsic commodification, extrinsic commodification, and cybernetic commodification.
- b. Spatialization. The process of overcoming the barriers of space and time in the social life of media companies in the form of commercial expansion, such as the integration process: horizontal, vertical, and internationalization integration.
- c. Structuring. This process is the process of uniting human action with social change in structural analysis. An important feature of structural theory is its power for social change, which describes how structures are created and reproduced by human agents acting through structures.

Commodities are the process of converting use value into exchange value. Two main aspects that make this commodification necessary in communication studies, namely (a) communication and technology make an essential contribution to the commodification of the business sector and the economy in general; (b) commodification works throughout society by encompassing communication processes and institutions so that advances and contradictions in social commodification affect communication as a social practice (Mosco, 1996). Commodification in communication, according to Mosco (1996), can have several forms, namely (1) the commodification of content, (2) the commodification of audience, (3) The Commodification of Cybernetic, which is divided into two types, namely intrinsic commodification and extensive commodification; (4) the commodification of labor.

The commodification of content involves converting media content into marketable products. This process of commodification involves transforming messages from data into meaningful thought systems into marketable products. In other words, commodification in this form transforms a message from a set of data into a system of meaning into a marketable product. Creating exchange rates for communication content fully uses complex social relations in commodity trajectories involving labor, consumers, and capital. Mass media as an economic entity has a direct role as a creator of surplus value through the production and

exchange of goods and an indirect role through communication through advertising in creating surplus value in other areas of production of goods. Therefore, the commodification of media content that involves transforming messages results from the professional's ability to create a story in a meaningful system into a marketable product. Related to hyper semiotic theory, Piliang & Adlin (2003) classifies into six categories, namely:

- a. Proper signs are real signs within the scope of semiotic research, that is, signs with a relatively symmetrical relationship with the concept or reality they represent. For example, the sign of roses is used as a sign of love to represent affection in social life.
- b. Pseudo Signs: False signs are not authentic and artificial, reducing reality. In this case, the marker is only partially displayed to represent a complex reality. Fake marks are widely found in print and electronic media, including the internet. For example, markers of a small part of Aceh devastated by the earthquake and tsunami were used to represent the devastating disaster that befell all of Aceh, including all the suffering experienced by the people of Aceh.
- c. False Signs are signs used to mask one reality by indicating another reality. In this case, a sign with another fact represents another unrelated fact (a lie). For example, a marker wig (wig) worn by a person who is not bald will represent that he is indeed bald but does not appear bald by the wig. So, the wig marker gives the wrong signal because the person is not bald.
- d. Recycled signs are signs that represent reality in different temporal and spatial contexts and are used to represent other realities in different temporal and spatial contexts. For example, the use of markers for photographs taken during the Marsinah incident (a past event) to represent (ostensibly) the rape of a Chinese woman during the May 13 riots in Jakarta. This is possible because perhaps in the May 13 rape case there was no document about the incident but only the victim's confession.
- e. Artificial Signs: Artificial signs (artificial), also called artificial signs or unnatural marks, are signs created or designed using the latest imaging technology (digital or computer) and unrelated to the real world. In this case, an artificial sign is created not to represent something outside of itself (the sign itself) but to represent itself. For example, create artwork and player characters in cartoons, where all existing markers (art photos and players) are created to represent reality in the film itself without regard to the real world.



- f. Superlative Signs: Extreme signs are signs created to represent simple expressions in the real world, but in reality, they appear in unique signs consisting of many additional effects (sounds or images), creating an extreme (hyperbolic) impression beyond the limits of their realistic reflection. For example, markers related to fight scenes in Hollywood movies (such as in the movie "The Matrix") appear with various special effects to go beyond the limits of the actual description of the movie.

The commodification of audiences is one aspect of mass media as an economic entity that indirectly creates added value to market production through advertising. Audiences are the primary commodity of mass media. Mass media is structured by which media companies generate and distribute audiences to advertisers. Media programs are used to attract audiences, audiences become media labor (audience labor), and the media utilize their labour as commodities to sell to advertisers. Cybernetic Commodification is divided into two categories, namely Intrinsic Cybernetic and Extended Cybernetic. Intrinsic cybernetics involves treating viewers as commodities through rating services. Commodity cybernetics is intrinsically concerned with commodity demand, measurement processes for producing goods, and monitoring techniques to sustain production, distribution, exchange, and consumption. Measurement procedures for producing measurable goods through space and time for sale to advertisers. Therefore, commoditized cybernetics can be intrinsically understood as the process by which the public is used to improve ratings. Cyber commoditization is broadly linked to expanding commoditization in institutional areas such as public education, government information, media, culture, and telecommunications, which are created not for power struggles and models but to be globally accessible.

Commoditization of labor in communication is related to two aspects, namely: (1) the use of technology and communication systems to develop the commodification of all work processes, which in the communication industry can increase the flexibility and control available to employers; and (2) the political-economic approach sees it as a dual process in which labor is commoditized in the production of goods and services. This commodification will facilitate the entry of exploitation, especially exploitation, use or utilization for its interests; exploiting and blackmailing (humanizing) others is not commendable behavior. The media will exploit, exploit, use or commercialize minors for money or profit.

### **Magazine**

Magazines are published media or periodicals containing various experts' articles (Assegaf & Kini, 1983). Magazines are one type of print mass media. Mass media is one

element of mass communication. Mass communication is disseminating messages through media addressed to abstract people, i.e., some people who are invisible to the message's sender. (Effendy, 2011).

Magazines are usually bound; the cover is in the form of illustrations, photographs or drawings. However, it can also have a table of contents or main article, and the type of paper used is more luxurious than the newspaper (Junaedhie, 1995). According to Junaedhie (1995), judging from the content, magazines are divided into two types: general and general. Magazines contain essays, general knowledge, entertaining communication, pictures, sports, film, and art. Special Magazines. Magazines that contain essays on specialized fields such as family magazines, politics and economics.

Ardianto (2012) explained the characteristics of magazines divided into four characteristics, namely:

- a. Presented so much the frequency of magazine publication is usually weekly; the rest is biweekly or even monthly (once a month); the main thing is that magazine news is presented more fully because of the addition of scene language. Events or why are presented as a whole, such as events or actions in chronological order.
- b. The actual value is longer. If the news value of a newspaper is only one day, then the news value of a magazine can be a week. For example, if the newspaper were read yesterday or two days ago at this time, its novelty value would be lost. However, the magazine published two or three days ago is still valid today.
- c. Illustrations and photos are more numerous and exciting. Magazines have more pages, so in addition to presenting in-depth information, magazines can also display images/photos as a whole, in large format and sometimes color, and the quality of the paper used is suitable.
- d. Cover as a unique attraction. In addition to photos, magazine covers, or covers are also a unique attraction. Magazine covers are like human clothing and accessories; magazine covers often use good paper with attractive images and colors. The appeal of a magazine cover depends on the type of magazine as well as the uniformity or regularity of the magazine in displaying its features.

### **Cover**

A magazine has a design scope, which is about magazine covers. Visual elements on magazine covers are related to each other. Typography, illustrations, and colour are some visual elements that create an interesting composition on a magazine cover. One of the

distinctive features of magazines is the cover design. Magazines feature one headline or one main focus. The publication size is usually tabloid-sized or 8.5 x 11 inches, causing the focus to be that way. Covers often come with teaser headlines about other news in the publication (Rolnicki et al., 2008). Effendy (2011) defines a cover as the outer sheet of a magazine or book on which the name, title, and media are listed. The cover of a magazine is an inseparable part. The role of the cover is vital because when buying a magazine, the first thing you see is the cover or illustration image.

The titles (text) selection should be short, easy to read, easy to understand and can directly inform the content. If the cover appearance is attractive, it will make someone interested in buying the magazine. Extended news information on the cover should be interesting to many readers. The focus of this story must be carefully reported and presented and well written and edited (Rolnicki et al., 2008). A magazine cover is a visual communication that conveys messages from the messenger (editor) to the messenger (reader). In addition to functioning information, it also has a commercial promotional and marketing function (Kurniawan, 2016).

## RESEARCH METHOD

The paradigm used in this study is the critical paradigm. The main statement of the critical paradigm is the existence of different forces in society that control the communication process. According to Eriyanto (2001), critical theory was born because of concerns about accumulation and capitalism through significant capital, which began determining and influencing people's lives. The individual no longer has control over the capital; naturally, beyond his consciousness, he must adjust to the society controlled by capital. The current state of news with massive capital accumulation states that news is objective, but through a critical paradigm, the question first asked is objectivity itself. All categories must be questioned because they can be tools of the dominant group to establish its power and dominance in society. This research uses a qualitative approach. This approach allows a researcher to holistically interpret and explain a phenomenon using words without relying on numbers. According to Bogdan & Taylor (1975), qualitative methodology is a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words of people and observed behavior. This approach is directed at the setting and the individual holistically. So, it is not necessary to isolate individuals or organizations into variables or hypotheses but to view them as part of a whole (Bogdan & Taylor, 1975).

The research method used by researchers in compiling this research uses descriptive analysis methods, which is a research method that reveals problems that exist in the company, processing data, analyzing, researching and interpreting as well as making conclusions and giving suggestions, which are then compiled systematically so that the problems in the company can be understood. According to Sugiyono (2010), the descriptive analysis method serves to describe or describe the object under study through data or samples that have been collected as they are without conducting analysis and making conclusions that apply to the public. In other words, descriptive analysis research takes problems or focuses attention on problems as they are when the research is carried out; the research results are then processed and analyzed to conclude. In this study, researchers will focus on and analyze how Marketeers carries out the process of commodification of the visual context of Marketeers magazine covers, which includes the production process of Marketeers magazine covers, the process of audience commodification, and the commodification process carried out by Marketeers on their workers. These problems are obtained from the data and facts obtained by researchers when conducting in-depth interviews with key informants and informants.

This study involved informants with criteria that the researchers had summarized. Informants will see how they interpret this research problem. Some of the criteria below form the basis for the purposive selection of informants. Researchers select informants they consider able to provide in-depth and comprehensive information about Marketeers Magazine, especially its role on magazine covers. The object of research that the researchers chose was Marketeers magazine. Marketeers Magazine is a monthly magazine exploring knowledge about New Wave Marketing. Marketeers magazine is also a unique magazine and different from other marketing magazines. With a distinctive visual design, its information is also peeled in depth with reliable research. Researchers obtained primary data through in-depth interviews. An interview is a communication between two people involving someone who wants to obtain information from someone else by asking questions based on specific goals (Koentjaraningrat, 1993). The in-depth interview method is an in-depth interview that is conducted many times and requires a long time with informants at the research site. The interviewer is a person who uses the interview method as well and acts as a leader in the interview process. At the same time, the informant is the interviewee, who is asked for information by the interviewer. Informants are expected to master and understand data, information, or facts from an object of research (Bungin, 2007).

Interview techniques are a way to get information from respondents by asking directly face-to-face. The interview is conducted openly where the interviewer is not bound by the form of questions arranged in such a way. However, he is free to develop his interview with respondents regarding the relevant research topic. However, in its development, this interview technique does not have to be done face-to-face. However, it can be done by utilizing other means of communication, such as telephone and internet (Moleong, 2007). Data collection through in-depth interviews is open, not strictly structured, not in a formal setting, and can be repeated on the same informant. The questions that have been asked can be more detailed and in-depth. The leniency and flexibility of this method will be able to pry into the honesty of informants to provide accurate information, primarily related to their feelings, attitudes and views on the visual cover design of Marketeers magazine and the commodification process carried out by Marketeers magazine.

Data analysis is the process of finding and systematically compiling data obtained from interviews, observations and documentation by organizing data into categories, describing it into units, synthesizing, arranging it into patterns, choosing which ones are important to learn and making conclusions so that they are easily understood by oneself and others (Narwoko, 2004). The main problem in this study is that the researcher will answer it qualitatively using descriptive analysis. According to Moleong (2007), descriptive analysis is data collected in words and images, not numbers. In addition, everything collected is likely to be the key to what has been researched.

Based on the above opinion, descriptive analysis is data collected in words and images, not numbers. This is due to the application of qualitative methods. In addition, they are collecting possibilities that are key to what has been researched. Researchers use Source Triangulation because they want to test the correctness of the data by checking data from several sources, namely from Key Informers and Informers. The observations made with the interview are compared between the results of Informant and Key Informant data.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

The focus of research on the Commodification of the Visual Context of Marketeers Magazine Cover in the Print Media Industry in Indonesia based on the results of research conducted on March 13 – June 23, 2016, adapting from the concept of commodification of Media Political Economy from Vincent Mosco and the results of researcher interviews with key informants and several statements from informants related to the production of Marketeers magazine.

### **A. Commodification of Content**

Marketeers Magazine considers covers a tool to compete with other print media in display places such as bookstores, newsboys and magazines, and other places that sell merchandise in the form of newspapers and magazines. Because when you are at a point of sale, the design is one of the things that determines whether the magazine is in demand and bought by the audience or not. As Head of Creative Marketeers, Primas justified covers as a selling tool. He stated that covers are essential selling tools in the print media industry, especially print media, because covers must be designed artistically and beautifully to attract the audience's attention to read them. The titles (text) selection should be short, easy to read, easy to understand and can directly inform the content. The shape of the Marketeers magazine cover design is indeed adjusted to the positioning of Marketeers, which is also used as a tagline, namely cool, inspiring and progressive, which is also a simple way to explain who the target audience is and where the Marketeers magazine segmentation. That way, the design display is formed by the positioning of Marketeers magazine, which is indeed a dynamic design enthusiast and not monotonous.

Informants confirm that the positioning of Marketeers magazine has been right on target because almost all are interested in buying and subscribing to Marketeers magazine because of the attractive shape of the cover design and the presentation of the overall design that can make readers more comfortable when enjoying the content. This is also supported by the statement of Dian as Chief Operations of MediaComm Marketeers, that the cover is a reflection of what Vincent Mosco said that the cover of Marketeers magazine, which is a commodification of media content involves the transformation of messages is the result of professional ability to produce a story in a meaningful system and then become a marketable product.

The Marketeers cover images in Figure 5 make it clear that Marketeers magazine tried to change its visual design identity from rigid and less colorful to dynamic and colorful, implying each cover's many messages made in each issue. With these changes, the positioning and brand image of Marketeers magazine can be determined by the segmentation and target audience set.





Figure 4. Marketeers Magazine Cover Transformation

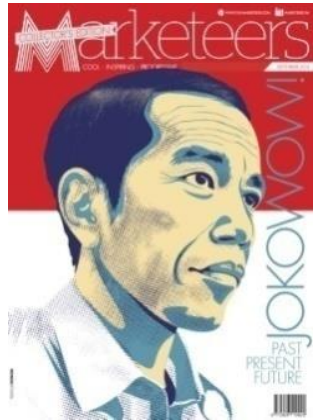
However, on the cover of the January 2016 issue, there was an event where the management of marketers gave up on capitalist policies by displaying the BRI bank with information about launching the BRI<sub>sat</sub> satellite. Several informants who spoke anonymously said that the cover of the January 2016 issue was a compulsion by marketers on the power of capital owners. Mosco (2009) explains that the commodification of content commodification is formed when information and data that are not meaningful at first are then processed in such a way by the media to obtain 'exchange value'. The exchange rate here is a transaction process carried out by marketers on the BRI side, which finally resulted in a decision to make the cover of the January 2016 edition belong to BRI.



Figure 5. January 2016 Marketeers' Issue Cover

In addition, the commodification of content on Marketeers also occurred during the cover of the JOKOWOW edition. Although the cover managed to get an achievement by getting an award as Best Design, it shows that Marketeers took advantage of the figure of Jokowi, who at that time was successfully elected as the 7th President of the Republic of

Indonesia. This can lead to a conflict of interest and the assumption that Marketeers are media that support Jokowi, even though the media should be neutral and impartial. In this issue, Marketeers displays 17 covers with Jokowi's face. It is very striking, and without people reading it, one would guess that Marketeers magazine is a Pro Jokowi magazine.



**Figure 6. Jokowi Edition Cover**

This proves that there has been a process of commodification of content in the production of Marketeers magazine, especially in making covers in each issue by exploiting the appearance of cover designs to generate profits. These commodification practices are by Vincent Mosco's expression that mass media is characterized by converting content or media content into commodities to get profit without paying attention to the quality that has been built so far.

### **B. Commodification of Audiences**

The commodification of audiences in the media industry will affect the media product itself and have implications for the extent to which advertisers dare to spend money. Media today has become a colossal industry that is very important for the economy. The audience's position is significant and has excellent potential for Marketeers. As a mass audience, we not only feed millions and billions of dollars into the pockets of media owners, but we also indirectly pay wages to workers in the media industry and advertisers. The triangular relationship between media, audience and advertisers seems increasingly inevitable in the media industry.

In general, it is undeniable that the life and death of a media is very dependent on advertising revenue. With advertising income, it will be easier for a media to survive. One of the paths taken by the media to be able to bring advertising is the process of commodification of the audience itself.

From the observations made by researchers, Chief Operations of MediaComm Marketeers Dian Wulandari tries to get as many magazine subscribers as possible by giving discounts in print and electronic magazines.

### C. Cybernetic Commodification

Apart from the number of customers, to attract advertisers, Marketeers also maximize other platforms besides magazines to be able to attract advertisers such as communities, online radio, websites, events and also social media.

#### a. Community

Every year Marketeers hold more than 300 community events in 18 cities in Indonesia with at least 25,000 marketing enthusiasts attending each year.

#### b. Radio Online

Marketeers also has an online radio that can be accessed on the [www.marketeers.com](http://www.marketeers.com) website. Since the appearance of the Marketeers website was changed last June 1, 2016, the number of Marketeers Online Radio listeners has increased significantly. It can be seen from the listener data taken directly from the following [www.primcast.com](http://www.primcast.com) :

Summary					
Reported period	Month Jun 2016				
First visit	01 Jun 2016 - 00:01				
Last visit	18 Jun 2016 - 23:52				
	Unique visitors	Number of visits	Pages	Hits	Bandwidth
Viewed traffic *	8,322	10,062 (1.2 visits/visitor)	63,180 (6.27 Pages/Visit)	63,180 (6.27 Hits/Visit)	65.86 GB (6863.49 KB/Visit)
Not viewed traffic *			481	481	269.97 MB
* Not viewed traffic includes traffic generated by robots, worms, or replies with special HTTP status codes.					

Monthly history					
Month	Unique visitors	Number of visits	Pages	Hits	Bandwidth
Jan 2016	240	381	19,233	19,233	23.11 GB
Feb 2016	326	476	24,006	24,006	32.75 GB
Mar 2016	322	480	19,741	19,741	25.85 GB
Apr 2016	336	494	23,332	23,332	30.98 GB
May 2016	632	898	23,410	23,410	31.07 GB
Jun 2016	8,322	10,062	63,180	63,180	65.86 GB
Jul 2016	0	0	0	0	0
Aug 2016	0	0	0	0	0
Sep 2016	0	0	0	0	0
Oct 2016	0	0	0	0	0
Nov 2016	0	0	0	0	0
Dec 2016	0	0	0	0	0
Total	10,178	12,791	172,902	172,902	209.62 GB

Figure 7. Radio Marketeers Data Traffic Period January 2016 – June 2016

#### 1) Website

Website Marketeers have undergone several changes in appearance until the last one was done on June 1, 2016. Traffic from [www.marketeers.com](http://www.marketeers.com) is also good enough to offer advertisers. It can be seen from the traffic data for the last year from June 1, 2015, to June 1, 2016, taken directly from the following Google Analytics.



**Figure 8. Data Traffic Website Marketers.com 1 June 2015 – 1 June 2016**

2) Social Media

Marketeers have active social media that they use to spread news, schedule events and other activities related to the company. Twitter is an active social media that has enough followers to be used as a means of promotion. With 414,189 followers, Twitter Marketeers named @the\_marketeers can be a means for advertisers to finance their promotional capital to get more exposure.



**Figure 9. Twitter Marketeers and Number of Followers for June 19, 2016**



**Figure 11. Twitter Marketeers and Number of Followers for June 19, 2016**

So from all platforms owned by Marketeers, advertisers get exposure from Marketeers magazine audiences and from online radio, websites, communities and events routinely held in 18 cities throughout Indonesia. This is by Vincent Mosco's expression that mass media is

now just an organization that produces messages for audiences to see and can attract advertisers.

With so many platforms and a large audience, advertisers will be interested in advertising their products by buying ad spots on the platform provided by marketers. In this case, the number of audiences is an essential commodity that also connects advertisers, company owners, the audience itself, and consumers of the advertiser's products. Critical Informant Dian, Chief Operations of MediaComm Marketeers, said that Marketeers do a lot of production processes not only from 1 platform but from several platforms, and audiences have unknowingly been used as commodities by Marketeers to attract advertisers.

The audience is the life of every media industry business person; in this case, it is print media. Marketers, a division of MarkPlus engaged in mass media, have treated the audience as a commodity to reap profits. With an audience spread across multiple platforms, Marketeers has brought in profits from sponsors by selling the number of magazine subscribers, followers on social media, community members and other platforms. With these numbers, Marketeers managed to commodify its audience unilaterally. After the cooperation agreement between the sponsor and Marketeers, the sponsor will be present with the display of content either in magazines, radio, websites, communities, or other platforms that are not necessarily liked by the Marketeers' audience.

### 3) Commodification of Workers

Every media company certainly has workers assigned to produce news that will be presented to as many audiences as possible to attract advertisers. However, now, workers are more often considered a tool for some companies to get as much profit as possible with the most minor production costs. In addition to carrying out production activities, media workers act as parties who distribute so that the audience can enjoy these media products. In utilizing services and workers, media companies do several things to remain enthusiastic about producing media products. It can be from loose working hours, other facilities, training, or a high nominal salary.

As media workers, their working hours cannot be equated with non-media workers under the auspices of MarkPlus Inc. With erratic working hours, even though in company regulations, employees must come before 8.30 am and may leave at 5.30 pm, due to company regulations that require employees to enter the office at 8.30 am, Informant 2, who is a graphic designer, feels burdened Because his work requires him to work several times overtime to complete his work.

Dian Wulandari also explained that Marketeers employees do not get overtime pay if their working hours exceed company rules and even the rules stipulated in Law No. 13 of 2003 concerning Manpower, significantly articles 77 to 85. Quoting from the Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 13 of 2003 concerning Manpower Article 77 paragraph 1, every employer must implement the working hours provisions. The provisions of these working hours have been regulated in 2 systems, namely:

- a) 7 hours of work in 1 day or 40 hours of work in 1 week for six working days in 1 week,  
Or
  - b) Eight hours of work in 1 day or 40 hours in 1 week for five working days in 1 week.
- (Source: Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 13 of 2003 concerning Manpower)

According to Informant 1 and Informant 2, Marketeers Magazine has commodified their workers by not providing overtime, which should have been the right of these workers as stipulated by applicable law. As Mosco says, the commodification of workers can go through two avenues: regulating flexibility and control over workers and "selling" those workers to increase the exchange rate of the content of media messages. In this case, Marketeers workers are given flexibility if they do overtime the previous day by coming later than the specified office hours. However, even so, the company still cuts the transportation money for its workers if they come later than the specified hour.

To anticipate this, Marketeers who try to produce good media products, Marketeers provide high salaries for their workers and arguably higher when compared to similar media workers. However, Informant 1 and Informant 2 agreed that higher salaries were necessary and above that of other media workers. However, the salary is considered unfair if it is aligned with their workload. Dian Wulandari realizes that Marketeers workers sometimes work on jobs outside their job description because they are under the same roof as workers from other business units. With a higher salary than other media workers, Informant 1 and Informant 2 still feel that it is unfair because their current salary must align with their workload. So, they feel squeezed in terms of energy and time. Apart from working hours, workers' idealism must also be sacrificed for the benefit of capital owners because workers should be able to be creative according to their idealism in producing media products. Informant 1, a reporter several times, had to cover events that did not match his idealism.

With the statement of Informant 1 above, just as Mosco said about the three processes of transformation of the commodification of workers, namely Separate, Concentrate and Reconstitute, for the case that Informant 1 said above, it can be said that the company has



carried out all three processes. Separate means separating concepts from execution so that concepts that have become agreements in producing media products become marginalized to get benefits that require Informant 1 to package news that does not have news value to be presented to the audience. Then, Concentrate, which means concentration of power, is done by the company by using its power and ordering Informant 1 to cover news with no value. Then, Reconstitute, which means redistributing skills and power at the production level to perpetuate position and power. The capital owner immediately descends into producing messages by asking Informant 1 to cover some coverage that is not at all news worth presenting to the audience. However, because the capital owner has power, he can ask Informant 1 to cover the coverage indisputably.

It is clear that Marketeers employees, represented by Informant 1 and Informant 2, have been commodifying workers. Many things that should be its employees' right are not given, such as overtime pay. Even though the state has regulated it, Marketeers Magazine violates these rules under the pretext that not providing overtime must be mutually agreed upon between the company and its employees. In addition to material things, employee idealism has also been deprived. It starts from unimportant coverage to the appearance of covers that force graphic designers to create images that do not match their idealism.

## CONCLUSSION

In conclusion, the research on the commodification of the visual context of Marketeers Magazine covers the Indonesian print media industry. It sheds light on the intricate dynamics between media, audience, advertisers, and workers. From March to June 2016, the study adapted Vincent Mosco's concept of modifying the media's political economy to analyse the practices within Marketeers Magazine. The findings reveal a deliberate strategic shift in Marketeers Magazine's cover designs to compete effectively, emphasising aesthetics and messaging tailored to their target audience. However, instances such as the January 2016 cover featuring BRI bank's satellite launch and the Jokowi edition raise questions about the magazine's alignment with capitalist interests and potential biases in political support.

Furthermore, the research highlights the commodification of audiences as media platforms leverage subscriber numbers, social media followers, and event attendees to attract advertisers. This underscores the symbiotic relationship between media, advertisers, and audiences, where the audience becomes a valuable revenue-generating commodity. Moreover, the study delves into the cybernetic commodification of media through expanding digital platforms like online radio, websites, and social media, enhancing advertiser exposure

and revenue streams for Marketeers Magazine. However, perhaps most concerning is the commodification of workers within Marketeers, where employees endure irregular working hours, lack of overtime compensation, and compromises in creative autonomy. Despite higher salaries than industry standards, workers feel undervalued and constrained by demands diverging from their professional ideals.

The research underscores the multifaceted nature of commodification within the print media industry, encompassing content, audience, cybernetic platforms, and labour. It prompts reflection on the ethical considerations of media practices, the balance between commercial interests and journalistic integrity, and the importance of fair labour practices in sustaining a vibrant and ethical media ecosystem. Addressing these concerns is crucial for fostering a media landscape and prioritizing transparency, accountability, and respect for all stakeholders involved.

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