

# CREATIVE ECONOMY BRANDING: CONQUERING MARKETS THROUGH INNOVATION AND BRAND EXCELLENCE

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## Abstract

Creative economy plays a vital role in making innovative contributions to the economy amid digital transformation and globalization. The main objective of this research is to identify the relationship between the creative economy, innovation, and branding. This study employs a qualitative approach, utilizing data collection techniques through interviews and document analysis, while also integrating case studies to gain diverse perspectives on the relationship among these three elements. The research findings indicate that branding within the creative economy is a crucial component in building a strong brand identity and driving innovation. Innovation in the branding process enables brands to compete uniquely, attract customers, and retain loyal clientele. The research results also illustrate the distinctions between conventional branding and branding within the context of the creative economy. Conventional branding primarily focuses on the functional benefits of products or services, whereas branding in the creative economy emphasizes the emotional connection between the brand and consumers, as well as the cultural messages or lifestyle conveyed by the brand. In conclusion, this study underscores the crucial role of branding and innovation in the success of the creative economy. Within the context of the creative economy, branding is not merely a tool for brand differentiation but also an expression of the brand's deep-seated vision, values, and uniqueness.

**Keywords:** *Creative Economy, Innovative Contribution, Digital Transformation, Branding in the Creative Economy.*

## A. INTRODUCTION

The creative economy has become an integral part of diverse and innovative economic contributions amidst digital transformation and globalization. The creative economy draws upon concepts and knowledge originating from human creativity (Sartika et al., 2022). With significant significance, the creative economy shapes the culture, identity, and lifestyle of societies worldwide. Encompassing various fields such as arts, culture, media, entertainment, fashion, design, information technology, architecture, and food, the creative economy has achieved a growth rate of 5.76% in Indonesia, surpassing the growth of other sectors. Unbounded by conventional limits of expression, cross-disciplinary collaboration, and innovation have driven growth dynamics in this industry. Creativity, imagination, and the development of new

concepts are key drivers of the creative economy, yielding unique, attractive, and high-value-added goods and services.

The creative economy sector in Indonesia holds significant growth opportunities for several reasons. Changing consumer behavior and an emphasis on experiences and differentiation have heightened the demand for unique goods and services. The creative economy can contribute to economic growth, local empowerment, and the creation of new jobs through collaboration opportunities, idea generation, and efficient sharing of creative works (Prajanti et al., 2021), supported by the opinions of Sugiarto (2018) and President (2017). The success of the creative economy is influenced by several essential elements within the global economy. Firstly, digital technology has opened up opportunities for collaboration, creativity, and sharing of works widely and efficiently. Secondly, consumer consumption patterns emphasizing experiences and differentiation have driven demand for unique products and services. Thirdly, local economic improvement and job creation are outcomes of the creative economy.

The creative economy also shapes a significant portion of a country's culture, identity, and image. Creative economy practitioners have the potential to act as agents of social and cultural change through their business activities. The creative products they produce can reflect the cultural and artistic richness of a region or country. They also leverage local cultural and artistic heritage to create unique and distinct creative products compared to the works of creative economy practitioners in other countries. Within the framework of economic development, the creative economy also has the potential to increase income and generate employment, as explained by Purnomo (2016) and emphasized by the research findings of Murni & Rekha (2021).

The creative economy sector is growing rapidly, but it also presents significant challenges for its stakeholders. Some of the issues faced by stakeholders include increased competitiveness, market access and distribution, and strengthening branding (Mia, 2019). Setiawan & Sesilia (2020) in their research show that creative economy practitioners need to enhance their competitiveness to succeed in an ever-evolving and dynamic business environment. To achieve this, they need to develop effective marketing strategies, improve product and service quality, and innovate to meet changing market demands. Additionally, effective distribution strategy design and wide market distribution are also crucial.

It is essential for creative economy practitioners to build a strong brand reputation and differentiate themselves from competitors through brand management practices, customer communication, and appropriate marketing strategies. The main challenge faced by creative economy practitioners is the increase in global competition. Creative products and services are now more accessible to consumers worldwide due to technological advancements and globalization. As a result, creative economy practitioners must compete with competitors from various parts of the world offering similar products and services. Competitiveness drives innovative creative economy practitioners to seek and communicate their advantages uniquely (Sidauruk, 2018).

Branding becomes highly important in efforts to differentiate and position oneself in the eyes of consumers, especially in the context of intensifying competition. Creative business practitioners have the opportunity to leverage branding to form a

strong identity, message, and image. Through effective branding practices, emotional relationships between creative businesses and consumers can be enhanced, while brand awareness can be increased. Additionally, creative economy practitioners face challenges in managing consumer perceptions regarding the quality and value of the products or services they offer. Through branding, communication barriers can be overcome, ensuring that consumers have a clear understanding of what a particular brand offers. This has the potential to influence consumer perceptions of the quality, uniqueness, and reliability of the presented products or services.

Although awareness of the importance of innovation and branding in the creative economy has increased, research exploring the relationship between branding, innovation, and the creative economy is still limited. Current research tends to examine innovation and branding separately, neglecting their interaction and impact on overall creative economy performance. It is important to better understand how branding can drive innovation and conversely, how innovation integrated into branding can provide a competitive advantage. Amidst the rapidly evolving creative economy, a better understanding of how interactions are influenced by changing market trends, consumer behavior, and technological advancements is needed. However, comprehensive research on these dynamics remains limited, especially globally across various sectors of the creative economy and business.

Research on the influence of innovation and branding on the creative economy still needs to delve into practical implications for industry practitioners. While conceptual understanding has been provided through academic studies, there is a lack of guidelines for practitioners to integrate branding and innovation strategies into their business decision-making. Branding has so far been seen as a crucial element in building brand image and capturing market share. However, this research unveils deeper dimensions of the role of branding in achieving success in the creative economy. This research has the potential to provide new insights into the central role of branding in shaping excellence and differentiation amid intensifying global competition and transformation in the creative economy. In a deeper investigation, this study reveals that branding is not just a tool to distinguish a brand but also an expression of the brand's vision, values, and uniqueness.

This research can enhance our understanding of how innovation can be utilized in the branding process and how strong branding strategies can trigger and deliver innovation. As a result, this research can play a crucial role in business decision-making. Furthermore, it can assist stakeholders in developing innovative and effective branding strategies. The primary objective of this research is to analyze and uncover how the relationship between the three elements of the creative economy – creative economy, innovation, and branding – contributes to their success. Additionally, this research identifies the complex relationship between these three elements to understand how effective integration can form a strategic basis for gaining a competitive advantage in the creative economy.

## **B. METHOD**

This study adopts a qualitative research approach as the primary focus is to deeply understand the complex relationship between branding, innovation, and the creative economy, along with their impacts on the success of creative industry

practitioners. Qualitative research is more suitable for comprehending complex phenomena. The characteristics of the creative economy involve creative complexity, human interactions, and subjective experiences. The qualitative approach allows for an understanding of the context in which innovation and branding interact, as well as the meanings attributed by creative economy practitioners. This method enables researchers to investigate these aspects in-depth and comprehend their implications in the real world. This approach aids in analyzing how social, cultural, and environmental factors influence these interactions.

The qualitative approach is highly useful in identifying trends and rapid changes within the evolving creative economy. Moreover, qualitative research can assist in the development of more profound theories and concepts regarding the relationship between branding and innovation within the context of the creative economy. Interdisciplinary studies like this can provide direct insights into branding and innovation strategies, allowing researchers to understand the deeper variations and dynamics of this phenomenon. To investigate this relationship from various perspectives, this research will combine case studies and surveys, with data analysis through interviews, document analysis, and questionnaires. This approach has been carefully selected to provide diverse perspectives on how branding, innovation, and the creative economy are interconnected. Qualitative data will be collected through semi-structured interviews with creative industry practitioners who serve as subjects in the case studies.

## C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Branding Concept in the Context of the Creative Economy

In the context of the creative economy, branding is defined as the representation of the vision, principles, and underlying values of the industry. It encompasses a broad and varied approach to brand creation and management. The concept of branding also includes strategies employed by creative industry practitioners to craft visually appealing identities. Moreover, it acknowledges that a brand is a continuous entity that extends beyond mere visual elements. Branding holds immense importance in the creative economy as it can create profound value for customers. This entails more than just building a business; branding seeks to understand the emotions, desires, and values desired by customers, making them part of the brand's narrative when they purchase goods or services (Hidayat, 2011).

Brands are often regarded as a means to convey cultural or artistic messages within the creative economy. This might involve supporting specific cultural principles or even engaging in the process of defining and nurturing cultural heritage. Elevating cultural or creative values to the forefront becomes an integral part of branding in such situations. It also involves creating a strong brand image. Overall, notions of branding in the creative economy result in a broader ecosystem and greater significance for brands. These concepts contribute to the success of creative industry practitioners and their relationships with consumers.

A particularly significant branding concept within the creative economy is the notion of a distinctive brand identity. This identity serves as a symbol underlying the brand, both visually and verbally. It encompasses differentiating elements such as distinct logos, typography styles, and verbal messages like slogans or taglines. In the

creative industry, a brand can set itself apart from fierce competition by possessing a strong brand identity. A standout brand can attract customers and leave a lasting impression. This initial step is crucial in establishing a connection between consumers and the brand. In the dynamic realm of the creative economy, this relationship can yield success and consumer loyalty (Nastain, 2017).

Brand messaging that remains consistent is highly important in the branding concept as it aids in creating a clear and strong brand identity for customers. This is key to maintaining robust customer relationships, building trust, and fostering brand loyalty amidst a dynamic environment. The primary focus in branding within the creative industry is to craft an engaging brand experience. Customer interactions with the brand through products, services, or content cultivate positive experiences to enhance emotional connections and elevate customer loyalty levels. The brand experience is a vital tool for building sturdy customer relationships, meeting their functional and psychological needs. This significantly impacts brand success in a competitive industry.

The branding concept within the creative economy emphasizes the importance of creating distinct and unique brands. This assists customers in understanding why a particular brand stands apart from its competitors and why they should choose it. Cultural, artistic, or creative values encapsulated within the brand can become its hallmark. Establishing appeal and achieving success in the market requires differentiation (Tourism, 2014). Within the context of branding in the creative economy, the focus is on forging emotional connections between customers and the brand. Crafting a strong and profound bond with the brand can be heightened through brand characteristics that evoke emotions. Many brands strive to reinforce their cultural messages, aspirations, or lifestyles to consumers, significantly aiding their resilience in the diverse creative economy.

The branding concept within the creative economy involves consumer contribution to brand marketing. This encompasses participation in design contests, collaborations, or direct interactions with the brand to gather their views and feedback. Consumer involvement sparks creativity and enables brands to directly listen to consumer perspectives and feedback. The branding concept within the creative economy must be able to swiftly adapt to industry developments, consumer preferences, and trends. Jeffrey (2019), in his research, discusses the use of creativity in city branding strategies, which relates to the concept of the creative economy and how effective branding can aid cities in enhancing their attractiveness. The results of this research demonstrate how innovation and a strong brand image can be key factors in achieving excellence in the creative economy.

Innovations in products or services, adapting brand messages, and the ability to adjust to technological or market changes can sustain relevance and success. The ability to adapt and innovate in a rapidly changing environment is essential. Maintaining a balance between evolution and consistency is crucial in creative economy branding. Consistency allows the brand to be recognized, while evolution enables the brand to remain relevant in an ever-changing environment. The brand identity should remain consistent in conveying core messages while remaining open to the developments and changes that may be necessary over time. To sustain a strong

identity and continuous growth in the creative economy, this is of utmost importance (Firmansyah, 2023).

## **2. Key Aspects of Branding in the Creative Economy**

Branding is a strategic approach encompassing various essential components. It involves building a unique brand identity through both language and visual elements. Consumers possess a cohesive perception of the brand with consistent brand messaging. The captivating brand experience engages customers through products and services, resulting in deep emotional connections (Ningrum, D. P., 2022). Consumers form emotional attachments to brands due to brand attributes associated with specific emotions. They can also contribute to brand formation by interacting directly or collaborating with others.

Participation enables brands to remain relevant through innovation and change. While consistency in brand identity is vital, brands must also be prepared to adapt according to trends, consumer preferences, and industry developments. All these components work together to formulate a strong branding strategy within the creative economy. This strategy allows brands to establish a recognizable identity, forge strong consumer relationships, and remain pertinent in an ever-evolving environment (Firmansyah, 2023).

## **3. Main Differences between Conventional Branding and Branding in the Creative Economy**

The creative economy distinguishes conventional branding from creative branding based on the methods and creativity employed. With a more traditional and conservative approach, conventional branding leans towards established marketing standards. Consistent visual components, such as unchanging logos and colors, form the core of its brand identity. Functional advantages and efficiency are crucial functional traits emphasized in brand messaging (Nawari & Ulfa, 2020). In contrast, branding within the creative economy is markedly different. Constructing a brand identity hinges on creativity. As elucidated by Mumuh & Sulistiono (2017), within the creative economy, brands foster experimentation and innovation in their visual elements and messaging. Their brand identities are dynamic and often change to reflect the highly creative developments in industries such as art and design. Visual elements of their products or services can be more experimental and bold, reflecting the creative and artistic aspects of their offerings. Cultural messages, aspirations, emotions, or lifestyles often take center stage in brand messaging (Sumartik & Larassaty, 2016, September).

The creative economy and conventional branding differ significantly in terms of branding approach. Conventional branding emphasizes the functional benefits of products or services, highlighting features and product advantages. Its aim is to convince customers by furnishing them with information about product performance. However, within the creative economy, branding centers around forging an emotional relationship between customers and the brand. Brands are associated with feelings, such as cultural messages or an ideal lifestyle. Beyond functional considerations, the real goal is to evoke emotional attachment to the brand.

The primary objective of conventional branding is to increase customer numbers and expand the business. With financial gains as its focus, this approach prioritizes business aspects. Additionally, traditional branding is more outcome-oriented, focusing on economic results and persuading customers to purchase their goods or services. In contrast, the creative economy entails a broader and more intricate purpose for branding. Within the creative economy, brands can have artistic and creative objectives alongside seeking financial gains. Spreading art messages, promoting cultural values, or contributing to a larger artistic and cultural ecosystem are three of the many goals these brands can pursue. In the creative industry, branding objectives encompass cultural, artistic, and social elements that go beyond merely financial considerations.

Purnomo, R. A. (2016) explains that conventional branding tends to be less flexible and responsive to changing trends and culture due to its adherence to established conventions and its lack of readiness to follow new trends. Conversely, branding within the creative economy is more responsive to trend changes as this industry evolves rapidly and dynamically. Consumers tend to have less participation in conventional branding. Traditional brands exert strong control over their brand messages and identities since consumers have limited direct interaction or contribution to the brand. This often leads to more focused and controlled delivery of brand messages. On the other hand, in the creative economy, brands in this industry tend to be more open to consumer ideas and often invite them to engage through collaborations or direct interactions. This could entail design contests involving customers in creating visual brand elements or listening to what customers have to say about brand identity. Customer engagement can enhance involvement and a sense of ownership with the brand.

#### **4. Innovation and Brand Excellence**

The concept of "innovation" in branding refers to the use of innovative solutions to create a distinct and fresh brand identity. In the business world, innovation has a significant impact on brand excellence. Innovation enables a brand to differentiate itself from its competitors, generating unique visual elements or messages that make it easily recognizable in a competitive market (Boer & During, 2001). In this context, brands that can adapt to changing trends and customer preferences are more likely to withstand market changes. Innovation plays a role in creating an engaging experience for consumers. A positive brand experience can foster a strong emotional connection between the brand and consumers. Innovation in branding also affects consumer loyalty, as brands that consistently offer something new and appealing tend to have loyal customers. Thus, innovation enhances a brand's competitiveness in the market.

Relevant studies in the creative economy have found that innovation in branding has a positive impact on brand excellence and business performance. These studies indicate that innovative brands are more successful in distinguishing themselves from competitors, attracting customers, and retaining loyal customers. Innovation can also create unique customer experiences, enhance customer loyalty, and add value in the creative industry. Additionally, this research demonstrates that in the creative economy, innovation in branding helps brands achieve higher levels of recognition and garner greater attention. Brands in this industry often boldly create

dynamic and experimental brand identities that reflect the creative nature of the industry. Other studies emphasize how innovation in branding enhances a brand's appeal to consumers seeking deeper artistic or cultural experiences.

This study focuses on the relationship between three key elements of the creative economy: branding, innovation, and brand excellence. The study also examines how innovative branding strategies can help brands dominate the market in this industry. Through our data analysis, we have found several significant findings that support the title of this research. The results of the study indicate a significant positive correlation between innovation in branding and brand excellence in the context of the creative economy. This finding highlights that brands capable of innovating in the way they build and manage their brands tend to experience increased competitive advantage in the creative economy industry. Our data shows that brands that focus on innovation in their branding strategies, such as creating creative brand identities, allocating resources for developing fresh brand messages, or introducing different approaches to communicating their brand to consumers, have a greater advantage in terms of attracting consumer attention, retaining market share, and enhancing brand appeal.

This positive correlation provides evidence that innovation in branding is not only a relevant approach but also crucial in achieving competitive advantage within the creative economy. Brands that can innovate and adapt to changes in this industry tend to be more successful in achieving long-term growth and success in this highly dynamic environment. Additionally, this research explains that branding plays a crucial role in connecting innovation with brand excellence in the creative economy. Brands with strong identities and consistent messages tend to support innovation more effectively and communicate innovative values to consumers. A strong brand identity helps brands differentiate themselves from competitors, while consistent brand messages help consumers better understand brand innovations. Therefore, strong branding is a key element in the success of brands in the creative economy.

Regarding the influence of Customer Experience, the results of the study show that in the creative economy, brands that offer unique and engaging customer experiences have a greater brand advantage. Memorable consumer experiences are vital for brand success in the creative economy as they foster a strong emotional bond between consumers and brands, enhance loyalty, and help brands build a strong image in a competitive market. Furthermore, brands that respond to trends and changes in the creative economy have a higher tendency to achieve brand excellence. This responsiveness includes a brand's ability to quickly identify and respond to changes in the creative industry. Successful brands can leverage these changes to add value to customers and create products or services that align with trends.

In a dynamic creative economy, where consumer trends and preferences can change rapidly, brands that can adapt and respond to these changes can gain a significant competitive advantage. Being responsive to trends allows brands to stay relevant and innovative, which, in turn, helps them dominate the market and establish a strong brand advantage. Therefore, a brand's ability to understand and respond to trends is a crucial factor in achieving success within the creative economy.

Brands that can adjust and adapt to consumer trends are poised to have a substantial competitive edge in the fast-changing creative economy. This is especially



true in an environment where consumer tendencies and preferences can shift swiftly. By staying attuned to and accommodating these trends, brands can maintain market leadership and build a robust brand advantage through responsiveness. Consequently, a brand's comprehension of prevailing trends and its capability to adapt to them are pivotal for success within the creative economy.

In such a dynamic landscape, a brand's capacity to swiftly interpret and react to emerging trends is integral. The ability to predict and embrace changing consumer preferences allows brands to create products, services, and experiences that cater to evolving demands. Brands that can stay ahead of the curve by anticipating trends and promptly adjusting their strategies accordingly are more likely to establish themselves as leaders in the creative economy.

In conclusion, in the realm of the creative economy, where trends and consumer preferences evolve rapidly, a brand's agility in adapting and responding to these changes is a key determinant of competitive advantage. A brand's capability to align with emerging trends and swiftly modify its offerings enables it to remain relevant, innovative, and, ultimately, successful in this dynamic economic landscape.

#### **D. CONCLUSION**

This study underscores the significance of innovation in branding as a pivotal component contributing to brand excellence within the creative economy. The findings indicate that brands capable of innovatively developing and managing their identities tend to possess a larger competitive advantage. The development of distinct brand identities, novel messages, and innovative communication strategies all constitute branding innovations.

Furthermore, this research underscores the crucial role of branding in bridging innovation with brand excellence. Brands with strong identities and consistent messages are more likely to support innovation and effectively communicate innovative values to customers. A strong brand identity aids in differentiation from competitors, while a consistent brand message assists customers in better understanding brand innovations. Thus, in the context of the creative economy, strong branding stands as a key to brand success.

The consumer experience within the creative economy constitutes an integral part of this study. Brands capable of delivering unique and captivating customer experiences tend to thrive in competitive environments as they can establish strong emotional connections between the brand and customers, thereby enhancing customer loyalty. Positive customer experiences lead to increased customer loyalty.

In conclusion, participants within the creative economy should pay heed to two primary elements in their pursuit of long-term success and brand superiority: innovation in branding and a focus on the consumer experience. This research provides a deeper insight into how these two elements interrelate and how each can contribute to the overall growth of the industry. Additionally, this study emphasizes that the highly dynamic nature of the creative economy necessitates adaptation to evolving consumer trends and preferences. Brands that can adjust to market changes are more likely to achieve long-term success within the industry.

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