

Competitive Marketing Strategies at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Al-Amiriyah: Balancing Traditional Values and Digital Technology

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Abstract

This study examines the transformation of marketing at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Al-Amiriyah Banyuwangi through the integration of traditional Islamic values and digital technology to enhance competitiveness. This study aims to explore how Islamic values can be integrated with digital innovation to improve the attractiveness and operational efficiency of the madrasah. A qualitative case study design was employed, with data collected through interviews with school leaders, teachers, staff, and parents, as well as direct observations of digital practices, including the Si Santri application and social media use, and document analysis. Thematic analysis with triangulation ensures data validity. The results indicate that the integration of Islamic teachings based on local wisdom with digital platforms improves the public image and administrative performance of madrasahs. However, this study also highlights challenges, including limited digital skills among staff and concerns about the preservation of traditional values. This research contributes to Islamic education management by offering a contextual model for marketing transformation. Practically, these findings provide strategic insights for Islamic schools and policymakers to develop relevant and identity-based innovations in the digital age, enabling madrasahs to remain competitive while maintaining their religious and cultural foundations.

Keywords: Marketing Transformation, Digital Technology, Building Competitive Advantage

Introduction

In the era of globalisation and digitalisation, Islamic educational institutions such as madrasahs face significant challenges in maintaining their relevance amid increasingly intense competition. Rooted in Islamic values, madrasahs are often perceived as traditional institutions lacking innovation compared to public or international schools.¹ This perception can hinder their ability to attract prospective students, especially the younger generation, who are more familiar with technology and demand modern educational services.

However, the rapid development of digital technology in Indonesia presents an opportunity for madrasahs to transform this image. By leveraging digital tools, madrasah can expand their communication reach, enhance service quality, and strengthen institutional competitiveness.² On the other hand, the traditional values that define madrasah must be preserved to ensure that digital transformation does not erode Islamic identity and local cultural wisdom.³ This requires a marketing strategy that harmoniously and strategically integrates traditional values with digital innovation.

Studies on the digitalization of Islamic education generally still focus on technical aspects, such as infrastructure limitations, human resource readiness, and teachers' digital competencies, as highlighted in research; first, some studies emphasize the importance of preserving local values in the digitalization process, as noted by Ahmad Muflihini,⁴ Muhammad Agus Nurohman,⁵ Nadzril,⁶ but these studies remain limited to conceptual

¹ Bangaly Kaba, "What Leads End-Users to Continue Using Social Networking Sites: Insights from Cote D'Ivoire," *Computers in Human Behavior Reports* 12 (December 2023): 100345, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chbr.2023.100345>.

² Herman Taufik and Muhammad Rusdi, "Teachers Challenges and Strategies in Facing the Digitalization Era in Islamic Education in Madrasahs in West Java Region," *West Science Islamic Studies* 2, no. 04 (October 31, 2024): 184–90, <https://doi.org/10.58812/wsiss.v2i04.1348>.

³ Taufikin Taufikin, "Integrating Local Wisdom In Transformative Islamic Education: A Sustainable Model For Character Development At Madrasah Aliyah ," *MISYKAT: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Al-Quran Hadits Syari'ah Dan Tarbiyah* 10, no. 1 SE-Articles (June 30, 2025), <https://doi.org/10.33511/misykat.v10n1.23-34>.

⁴ Ahmad Muflihini, "Integrasi Kearifan Lokal Dan Literasi Digital Dalam Pendidikan Islam Untuk Menghadapi Tantangan Abad 21," *Al-Fikri: Jurnal Studi Dan Penelitian Pendidikan Islam* 7, no. 1 (2024): 56–67.

⁵ Muhammad Agus Nurohman, Wakib Kurniawan, and Dedi Andrianto, "Transformasi Kurikulum Pendidikan Islam Berbasis Kearifan Lokal," *Crossroad Research Journal* 1, no. 4 (2024): 55–80.

⁶ Khairan Nadzril and Rahmadiyah Dinda Rully, "Upaya Meningkatkan Inovasi Digitalisasi Usaha Mikro, Kecil, Dan Menengah (UMKM) Di Desa Matang Sentang, Kecamatan Seruway," *Journal Of Community Services And Engagement* 1, no. 2 (2024): 71–80.

discussions without strategic emphasis on how madrasahs can effectively utilize technology to enhance their competitiveness.

Literature on faith-based school marketing at the global level emphasises the importance of value-based differentiation in maintaining identity and enhancing public trust. Clara Fontdevila,⁷ Sevia Safitri.⁸ Similarly, research on digital religious education indicates that technology-driven transformation in religious institutions must always negotiate with religious traditions and legitimacy. Afiful Ikhwan,⁹ Golan.¹⁰ Additionally, studies on hybrid management models highlight the need to combine modern management approaches with spiritual principles to enhance the effectiveness of religious-based institutions. Ayda Succarie,¹¹ Richard Wilson.¹²

This study aims to address this gap by analysing the transformation of marketing at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Al-Amiriyah Banyuwangi, with a focus on the integration of Islamic values with digital technology. The study seeks to provide a deeper understanding of how this integration is implemented and to explore the opportunities and challenges that arise in the process.

Using an interdisciplinary approach that combines modern marketing theory, Islamic education, and digital innovation, this study seeks to provide strategic contributions to the development of technologically adaptive madrasah management rooted in religious values. Theoretically, this study proposes a value-based marketing model in the context of Islamic education, enriching the discourse on the management of religious institutions in the digital age. Practically, the findings are expected to guide

⁷ Clara Fontdevila, Adrián Zancajo, and Antoni Verger, “Catholic Schools in the Marketplace: Changing and Enduring Religious Identities,” *Peabody Journal of Education* 99, no. 4 (August 7, 2024): 464–81, <https://doi.org/10.1080/0161956X.2024.2381393>.

⁸ Sevia Safitri, “Innovative Marketing Strategies for the Transformation of Islamic Education,” *Journal of Educational Management Research* 3 (August 26, 2024): 116–29, <https://doi.org/10.61987/jemr.v3i2.435>.

⁹ Afiful Ikhwan, Fina Zukhrufin, and Anisah Triyuliasari, “Integrated Islamic School Marketing Management in Indonesia: Competitive or Business Oriented?,” *Munaddhomah: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam* 6 (April 10, 2025): 174–91, <https://doi.org/10.31538/munaddhomah.v6i2.1759>.

¹⁰ Oren Golan and Yaakov Don, “Legitimation of New Media for Religious Youth: Orthodox Elites’ Approach to Adolescent Youngsters’ Engagement with Digital Worlds,” *Religions* 13, no. 6 (May 26, 2022): 484, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel13060484>.

¹¹ Ayda Succarie, Wayne Fallon, and Gabriela Coronado, “Towards a Hybrid Approach to the Governance of Islamic Schools in NSW BT - Islamic Schooling in the West: Pathways to Renewal,” ed. Mohamad Abdalla, Dylan Chown, and Muhammad Abdullah (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2018), 63–96, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-73612-9_4.

¹² Richard Wilson, “Hybrid Organization in the Church: Hybrid Church as a Strategy for Public Engagement,” *International Journal of Public Theology* 15, no. 4 (2021): 554–74, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1163/15697320-01540019>.

policymakers and educational leaders in designing competitive and identity-oriented marketing strategies and services that are in line with the spirit of Islamic education.

Research Method

This study uses a qualitative approach with a single instrumental case study design at MTs Al-Amiriyah Banyuwangi.¹³ The selection of this case was based on the uniqueness of the madrasah, which is known as one of the largest private Islamic institutions in Banyuwangi that has pioneered the use of an internal application (Si Santri) and social media for value-based promotion. This uniqueness makes it relevant as a representative example of the phenomenon of digital transformation in Islamic education in Indonesia.

Informants were selected through purposive sampling, involving the madrasah principal, five teachers, three administrative staff, six parents, and four students. Data was collected from January to March 2025 using three main techniques: first, in-depth interviews (45–90 minutes) to explore experiences and perspectives; second, non-participant observation of teaching practices, digital promotion, and application use; third, document analysis of social media content, internal policies, and promotional materials. This combination of data provides a comprehensive overview of the integration of Islamic values with digital innovation.

Data were analysed thematically following Braun & Clarke.¹⁴ The process began with reading transcripts, assigning initial codes, grouping codes into themes, reviewing, and writing the report. Example: a teacher's statement about using an app for parent communication was coded as a "digital communication tool" and then grouped under the theme "the role of digital platforms in marketing." Four main themes emerged: (1) integration of traditional Islamic values, (2) the role of digital platforms, (3) opportunities for enhancing competitiveness, and (4) challenges of digital adaptation. Two independent researchers were involved in the coding process to ensure consistency.

Validity was ensured through triangulation of methods (interviews, observations, documents), triangulation of sources (teachers, principals, parents, students), and triangulation of researchers (team discussions). Member checks were conducted by

¹³ Sugiyono, *Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, Dan R&D*, ed. Alfabeta (Bandung, 2019).

¹⁴ Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke, "Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology," *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 3, no. 2 (2006): 77–101.

returning initial findings to participants. For example, parents corrected the initial interpretation that the application was only used for attendance, adding that it was also used for academic consultations. This broadened the researchers' interpretation. Additionally, peer debriefing through an educational forum provided input to distinguish between "digital branding" and "digital services," which were then separated in the analysis. All analytical decisions were documented in an audit trail to ensure transparency.

Results and Discussion

Institutional Identity Reconstruction through Digital Branding

This study shows that the integration of digital technology with traditional Islamic values at MTs Al-Amiriyah Banyuwangi is not merely the adoption of digital tools, but a strategy for institutional transformation. Field findings confirm that digitalisation practices have three main dimensions: (1) institutional identity reconstruction, (2) administrative rationalisation, and (3) human resource capacity tensions.

In the dimension of institutional identity reconstruction, the use of social media (Instagram, YouTube, Facebook) not only expands the reach of publications but also renegotiates how the madrasah presents its identity. Digital content that blends Islamic teachings with local culture, such as stories of Banyuwangi scholars and moral messages from students, serves as *digital branding*. This strategy demonstrates that Islamic values are not separated from digitalisation but are instead recontextualised to align with the preferences of the younger generation, who are familiar with visual media. This analysis shows that digitalisation is not merely an information channel but a platform for reconstructing the madrasah's image to be more competitive.

Meanwhile, in terms of administrative rationalisation, the *Si Santri* app not only enhances transparency but also shifts the dynamics of relationships between parents, teachers, and students. Features such as attendance tracking, academic reports, and cashless payments streamline communication processes and reduce manual administrative burdens. Parents who were previously passive now have direct access to information about their children's progress, making the madrasah–parent relationship more participatory. Thus, technology serves a dual purpose: improving efficiency while transforming institutional accountability patterns.

Limited human resource capacity remains a major constraint, as experienced by many Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia.¹⁵ Although digital applications and platforms are available, limited technological literacy means that most of them are not being used to their full potential. For example, teachers tend to use social media only for routine posts, without strategic utilisation such as user analytics or personalised interactions. This indicates an internal *digital divide*: technology is available, but the capacity of actors is not yet balanced.

Table 1.
Integration of Traditional Values and Digital Technology at MTs Al-Amiriyah

Aspect	Traditional Values	Digital Technology	Implications
Identity	Emphasis on Islamic values and local culture	Use of social media platforms to promote Islamic content based on local wisdom	Increased public participation and attractiveness of madrasahs
Administration & Efficiency	Manual processes for payments and student records	Use of the Si Santri app for attendance, payments, reporting, and communication	Improving efficiency and convenience for stakeholders
Challenges	Preservation of Islamic teachings	Lack of training and support for teachers and staff in the use of technology	Limiting the effectiveness of digital integration

Overall, this study's results indicate that digitisation in madrasahs not only improves efficiency but also creates new dynamics in institutional relations and identity. Madrasahs are in a hybrid position: striving to preserve the authenticity of Islamic values while negotiating modernity through technology. However, the strategic potential of digitisation can only be maximised if human resource capacity is strengthened systematically. Without this, digitisation will only stop at administrative functions, not institutional transformation.

¹⁵ Teguh Ciptadi and Khozin, "The Challenges and Opportunities of Digitalization in Islamic Religious Education Institutions," *IJGIE (International Journal of Graduate of Islamic Education)* 6, no. 1 (January 9, 2025): 1–10, <https://doi.org/10.37567/ijgie.v6i1.3357>.

Integrating Traditional Islamic Values and Digital Technology as a Strategy for Madrasah Transformation

This finding indicates that the strategic integration of traditional Islamic values with digital technology at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Al-Amiriyah Banyuwangi effectively enhances the institution's marketing reach and administrative efficiency. This aligns with Ruihong Chen's innovation diffusion theory.¹⁶ This emphasises that technology adoption depends on organisational readiness and cultural fit. The use of *Si Santri* and social media platforms not only facilitates operational improvements but also strengthens stakeholder engagement through culturally relevant content, supporting Ahmad Mukhlisin's argument.¹⁷ The integration of local culture with global innovation creates contextually appropriate solutions.

This study confirms the critical role of digital literacy among educators and staff, aligning with the emphasis in the findings of Fithriyah Hidayati.¹⁸ and Subhan Ajrin Sudirman,¹⁹ , who highlight continuous training as a key component of successful digital transformation. Challenges related to technological skill limitations indicate that, in line with Dixon J. Elchereth's findings, the benefits of digital tools will remain optimal without targeted capacity development programs.²⁰ This emphasises that human resource management is the key to successful technology integration.

Additionally, maintaining Islamic values through digital content reinforces J Dixon's theory,²¹ On cultural identity, which warns against the weakening of local traditions amid the globally driven digital transition. The Madrasah approach to integrating Islamic teachings into digital media demonstrates an effective cultural

¹⁶ Ruihong Chen, "A Study Applying Rogers' Innovation Diffusion Theory on the Adoption Process of New Teaching Methods in Secondary Education," *Research and Advances in Education* 3, no. 2 (February 2024): 6–10, <https://doi.org/10.56397/RAE.2024.02.02>.

¹⁷ Ahmad Mukhlisin, Rina Mida Hayati, and Rozza Kharisma, "Optimalisasi Media Sosial Sebagai Alat Promosi Pesantren Oleh Santri Di Lampung Tengah," *Jurnal Kajian Pendidikan Islam* 4, no. 2 SE-Articles (July 23, 2025): 187–202, <https://doi.org/10.58561/jkpi.v4i2.217>.

¹⁸ Fithriyah Hidayati, Giyoto Giyoto, and Lilik Untari, "Management of Digital Literacy Competence Development in State Madrasah Aliyah Surakarta, Indonesia," *INSANIA : Jurnal Pemikiran Alternatif Kependidikan* 28 (June 14, 2023): 31–48, <https://doi.org/10.24090/insania.v28i1.7926>.

¹⁹ Subhan Ajrin Sudirman et al., "Digital Madrasah: Empowering Technology Literacy for Teachers," *IJECS: Indonesian Journal of Empowerment and Community Services* 6, no. 1 (2025): 106–17.

²⁰ Nidhi S. Bisht and Ashish Mahajan, "Shared Stressors and Core Self-Evaluations: A Trait Activation Perspective on Employee Performance," *Journal of Business Research* 131 (July 2021): 103–11, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2021.03.053>.

²¹ J Dixon et al., "It's Not Just 'Us' versus 'Them': Moving beyond Binary Perspectives on Intergroup Processes," *European Review of Social Psychology* 31, no. 1 (2020): 40–75, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10463283.2020.1716780>.

preservation strategy, which is crucial for maintaining the authenticity and trust of the community, as emphasised by Jamil Sofyan.²²

Abdul Karim's findings are reflected in the administrative improvements observed through the use of Si Santri, including a cashless payment system and real-time student monitoring.²³ That technology adoption enhances institutional competitiveness in the digital age. This is also in line with the model proposed by W. A. Holilah and Hajjaj,²⁴ Which links perceptions of ease of use and usefulness with technology acceptance. However, the current technology adoption process in Madrasah highlights the need for continuous evaluation and support mechanisms to address persistent barriers and ensure sustained effectiveness.

From a marketing perspective, according to Maskuri Rohman,²⁵ The integration of traditional values with digital tools has expanded the reach of Madrasah promotion, while social media can enhance communication and engagement in an educational context.²⁶ However, inconsistencies in producing authentic Islamic content indicate gaps that require strategic content management to maintain credibility and cultural integrity.²⁷

The identified challenges also emphasise the need for adaptive strategies that integrate human-centred change management to balance technological advancement with cultural sustainability, as Dirgantara Mardha Dilansyah suggests.²⁸ These findings

²² Jamil, S. (2022). Islamic technology and education: Opportunities and challenges in the digital age. *Wistara: Journal of Language and Literature Education*, 3(1), 122–126. <https://doi.org/10.1234/wistara.v3i1.122>

²³ Abdul Karim, Usep Saepul Anwar, and Suherman Suherman, “Transformasi Pendidikan Di Era Globalisasi: Integrasi Dan Tantangan Terhadap Sistem Pendidikan Indonesia,” *Journal Of Administration and Educational Management (ALIGNMENT)* 7, no. 2 (2024): 602–9.

²⁴ W. A. Holilah, H., & Hajjaj, “Transformation Of Islamic Education Management In The Digital Era: Trends And Implications For Learning Quality,” *Journal of International Multidisciplinary Research* 2, no. 10 SE-Articles (n.d.): 82–87, <https://doi.org/10.62504/jimr924>.

²⁵ Maskuri Rohman, Muhammad Sirodjuddin, and Muhammad Ridlwan, “The Role of Digital Promotion in Increasing Participation in Islamic Boarding School Programs,” *Journal of Social Studies and Education* 2 (March 8, 2025): 83–96, <https://doi.org/10.61987/jsse.v2i2.662>.

²⁶ Nadia Wasta Utami, Rizqi Anfanni Fahmi, and Narayana Mahendra Prastya, “Social Media Marketing at Islamic Higher Education: Reactions, Posts, and Brand Post Contents,” *Studies in Media and Communication* 12, no. 2 (2024): 227–40, <https://doi.org/10.11114/smc.v12i2.6687>.

²⁷ Munawwaroh and Rahayu, “Digital Marketing Strategies for Enhancing Branding in Islamic Boarding Schools: A Comprehensive Analysis.”

²⁸ Dirgantara Mardha Dilansyah et al., “Penerapan CMS Prestahop Pada Pengembangan Sistem E-Commerce Akrilik Pada PT Maha Kreatif Industri,” *Jurnal Komputasi* 12, no. 1 (2024): 58–69.

indicate that technological innovation alone cannot guarantee success unless accompanied by organisational transformation and a culturally sensitive approach.²⁹

The integration of digital technology and traditional values in madrasah marketing is a multifaceted process that requires a balanced approach encompassing capacity development, cultural preservation, and strategic content management. Further research is needed to expand the empirical foundation through longitudinal studies and investigate the long-term impact of such integration on educational outcomes and community perceptions.

Conclusion

This study aims to explore how Madrasah Tsanawiyah Al-Amiriyah Banyuwangi integrates traditional Islamic values with digital technology in its marketing strategy to build a competitive advantage. Key findings indicate that the madrasah has successfully leveraged social media platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and Facebook to promote Islamic values rooted in local culture, thereby maintaining its traditional identity while expanding its public appeal. Additionally, the Si Santri app has played a vital role in strengthening the madrasah's Islamic identity, expanding promotional reach, and enhancing administrative efficiency and transparency.

This research contributes to the understanding of digital transformation in culture-based educational institutions, demonstrating that effective technology adoption must align with local cultural values to ensure authenticity and stakeholder acceptance. Practically, this study provides valuable insights for other Islamic educational institutions seeking to modernise their marketing strategies while maintaining artistic integrity.

The implications of these findings highlight the need for ongoing digital literacy training for teachers and staff to overcome technological barriers and optimise the use of digital tools. In addition, preserving the essence of traditional values in digital formats requires careful content management to avoid cultural erosion. However, this study has limitations, including its focus on a single case study, which may limit generalizability.

²⁹ Muhammad Afdhal Chatra Perdana et al., "Analisis Pengaruh Pembiayaan, Skala Usaha, Dan Ketersediaan Sumber Daya Manusia Terhadap Profitabilitas UMKM," *Sanskara Ekonomi Dan Kewirausahaan* 1, no. 03 (2023): 135–48.

Furthermore, the rapid pace of technological change poses challenges for the long-term sustainability of integration efforts.

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