THE EVOLUTION FROM NIELSEN RATINGS TO SOCIAL MEDIA METRICS IN INDONESIAN BROADCASTING

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ABSTRACT

Indonesia's shift from analog to digital broadcasting, punctuated by the Analog Switch Off (ASO) initiative, was envisioned as a watershed moment—a long-overdue leap toward technological modernity and global parity. Framed as a solution to spectrum inefficiency and audience fragmentation, ASO promised to reposition television within the rapidly evolving digital ecosystem. Yet beneath this surface-level modernization lies a dissonant reality: while the tools of digitalization are in place, the epistemology of the industry remains largely analog. Broadcasters have adopted new platforms but retained old logics—linear, hierarchical, and unidirectional—thereby digitizing form without transforming function. This study interrogates that paradox by analyzing the cross-platform strategies of five dominant television networks—RCTI, SCTV, Trans TV, tvOne, and Metro TV—on YouTube, TikTok, and Instagram. Through metrics such as subscriber growth, content typology, and comment sentiment, we explore whether these networks have cultivated authentic, dialogic relationships with their audiences or merely transplanted analog mindsets into digital shells. Our findings suggest that Indonesia's digital television evolution is stalling not because of technological deficiency, but due to a failure in institutional imagination. Regulatory inertia, oligopolistic media control, and infrastructural inequity compound this inertia, but the deeper failure lies in the inability—or unwillingness—of legacy media to reframe their role within a participatory, algorithm-driven attention economy. Unless the industry embraces a paradigmatic shift in both policy and mindset, the digital transition may well become a cautionary tale: a technically successful yet substantively hollow transformation, where old media wears new clothes but tells the same old story.

Kata kunci: *digital migration, Indonesian television, audience interaction, engagement rate, media convergence*

ABSTRAK

Evolusi dari Rating Nielsen Ke Metrik Media Sosial di Dunia Penyiaran Indonesia. *Peralihan Indonesia dari penyiaran analog ke digital, yang ditandai dengan inisiatif Analog Switch Off (ASO), dianggap sebagai momen penting - sebuah lompatan yang telah lama ditunggu-tunggu menuju modernitas teknologi dan kesetaraan global. Dibingkai sebagai solusi untuk inefisiensi spektrum dan fragmentasi pemirsa, ASO berjanji untuk memosisikan ulang televisi dalam ekosistem digital yang berkembang pesat. Namun, di balik modernisasi di tingkat permukaan ini, terdapat kenyataan yang tidak sesuai: meskipun perangkat digitalisasi telah tersedia, epistemologi industri ini sebagian besar masih bersifat analog. Penyiaran telah mengadopsi platform baru namun tetap mempertahankan logika lama-linier, hierarkis, dan searah-sehingga mendigitalkan bentuk tanpa mengubah fungsi. Penelitian ini menginterogasi paradoks tersebut dengan menganalisis strategi lintas platform dari lima jaringan televisi dominan-RCTI, SCTV, Trans TV, tvOne, dan Metro TV-di YouTube, TikTok, dan Instagram. Melalui metrik seperti pertumbuhan pelanggan, tipologi konten, dan sentimen komentar, kami mengeksplorasi apakah jaringan-jaringan ini telah membangun hubungan yang otentik dan dialogis dengan pemirsanya atau hanya memindahkan pola pikir analog ke dalam cangkang digital. Temuan kami menunjukkan bahwa evolusi televisi digital di Indonesia terhenti bukan karena kekurangan teknologi, tetapi karena kegagalan dalam imajinasi kelembagaan. Kelambanan regulasi, kontrol media yang oligopolistik, dan ketidakadilan infrastruktur*

memperparah kelambanan ini, tetapi kegagalan yang lebih dalam terletak pada ketidakmampuan - atau keengganan - media lama untuk membingkai ulang peran mereka dalam ekonomi perhatian yang partisipatoris dan digerakkan oleh algoritma. Kecuali jika industri ini merangkul perubahan paradigmatik dalam kebijakan dan pola pikir, transisi digital mungkin akan menjadi kisah yang patut diwaspadai: transformasi yang secara teknis berhasil namun secara substantif hampa, ketika media lama mengenakan pakaian baru namun menceritakan kisah lama yang sama.

Kata kunci: migrasi digital, televisi Indonesia, interaksi penonton, tingkat keterlibatan, konvergensi media.

INTRODUCTION

The trajectory of Indonesia's television industry, particularly in its transition from analog to digital broadcasting, embodies both latent potential and structural contradictions. Heralded as a transformative step toward technological modernization, the Analog Switch Off (ASO) initiative launched by the Indonesian Ministry of Communication and Information marks a critical inflection point in the media ecosystem. The transition is designed not only to improve spectrum efficiency and audiovisual fidelity, but also to reposition television as a digitally converged platform amid the rising dominance of internet-based streaming services (Nurizar, 2020; Rusdiyanto & Apriono, 2020). This repositioning signals a broader effort to keep traditional television relevant in a media environment increasingly defined by on-demand consumption and platform pluralism.

Statistically, Indonesia has one of the largest television markets in Southeast Asia, with over 80 million households owning at least one TV set, and television still accounting for over 60% of daily media consumption among older demographics (Syafei & Rahyadi, 2025). Yet, this high penetration belies the fragmentation emerging in younger audiences, who increasingly favor YouTube, TikTok, and OTT platforms such as Vidio or Netflix for on-demand, mobile-friendly content (Permana et al., 2019; Prihatmadi, 2024). This generational divergence underscores a critical challenge: traditional television must not only digitize its infrastructure but also reinvent its content strategies to remain culturally and commercially resonant.

Some broadcasters, notably tvOne, have embraced digital convergence by leveraging YouTube as a secondary distribution channel. This not only circumvents the limitations of terrestrial coverage but also creates diversified revenue streams via platform monetization and algorithmic audience targeting (Prihatmadi, 2024). This strategic migration underscores the adaptability of select industry actors who are integrating transmedia storytelling and digital metrics to remain competitive in an increasingly attention-driven economy (Nilssen, 2010). Such cases exemplify the potential for legacy media to transition from linear broadcasting to agile content ecosystems— provided they are willing to experiment with participatory and data-driven models.

However, this narrative of adaptability must be tempered by a recognition of the profound systemic barriers that complicate

digital transformation. Chief among them is regulatory inertia, as the long-delayed implementation of key reforms—such as the Network Station System (SSJ) mandated in the 2002 Broadcasting Law—has been persistently undermined by the oligopolistic interests of dominant private media conglomerates (Armando, 2019; Sudibyo & Patria, 2013). These conglomerates continue to dominate over 90% of national television viewership share, constraining the decentralization and content diversity envisioned by reform-era policymakers. This stagnation reveals how institutional power structures can dilute the democratizing potential of digital media reform, resulting in change that is surface-level rather than systemic.

In parallel, the ASO process has revealed acute digital divides, especially in rural and low-income populations. Studies show that households earning below one million rupiah per month often lack digital converter boxes or basic knowledge of how to access digital broadcasts. Additionally, government subsidies for digital receivers have reached only a fraction of intended beneficiaries (Rizky et al., 2024). The uneven access to digital infrastructure raises critical questions about inclusivity, suggesting that without targeted policies, digitization may deepen existing media inequalities rather than resolve them.

What unfolds is a terrain marked by systemic ambiguity—an ecosystem where Indonesia's television industry exhibits clear signs of digital adaptability through platform diversification and cross-media convergence, yet remains constrained by entrenched regulatory stagnation, infrastructural disparity, and the enduring influence of oligarchic media ownership. The inherent affordances of digital transformation—namely content fragmentation, user-driven personalization, and algorithmic interactivity—presuppose a governance model that is agile, inclusive, and technologically coherent. Until such a governance model is realized, Indonesia's media digitization may remain a hybrid of innovation and inertia, never fully capitalizing on its transformative promise.

In this study, we argue that the digital evolution of television must be analyzed not simply through the prism of technological adoption—such as broadcasting content via YouTube or deploying digital set-top boxes—but rather through a comprehensive framework that accounts for the dynamic interplay between media institutions, technological infrastructures, and participatory culture. To further interrogate this claim, we examine the social media engagement patterns of five dominant national broadcasters—RCTI, SCTV, Trans TV, tvOne, and Metro TV—across platforms like YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok. These platforms serve not just as auxiliary distribution channels but as barometers of audience interactivity, sentiment, and digital literacy. By shifting focus from distribution to dialogue, we assess whether digital presence translates into meaningful audience engagement or merely reproduces the old paradigms in new containers.

Ultimately, the future resilience of Indonesian television will depend not only on its capacity to innovate within emerging digital architectures, but also

on its willingness to undergo deeper institutional reforms. These include the democratization of content production, equitable access to digital infrastructure, and the fostering of critical digital literacy among viewers. Without these structural recalibrations, the ASO and broader digital transition risk becoming symbolic gestures rather than engines of genuine media democratization.

LITERATURE REWIEW

The transition from analog to digital television constitutes one of the most transformative structural shifts in the history of broadcast media. This shift is not merely a technical evolution but a paradigmatic overhaul that reconfigures the very architecture of television infrastructure, regulation, and audience engagement. At its core, digital broadcasting offers improved signal quality, spectrum efficiency, and the capacity for multicasting—allowing several digital channels to occupy the bandwidth previously used by a single analog channel (Kruger, 2002; Evans, 1991).

Beyond its technical merits, the digital migration redefines the production and distribution of content across multiple platforms. Traditional linear programming is increasingly supplemented—or even replaced—by on-demand, multi-platform delivery mechanisms such as IPTV, OTT services, and digital streaming platforms. This transformation demands new content strategies, nonlinear editing workflows, metadata tagging, and interactive design to meet the expectations of a more fragmented and personalized viewer base (Rodembusch & Medeiros, 2015; Cai-jun, 2008).

Crucially, digitalization dissolves the traditional mass audience paradigm, replacing it with a decentralized and highly individualized viewing culture. Viewers now engage with content interactively, often across multiple devices and platforms, and exercise agency in shaping what, when, and how they consume media. This has led to an intensified competition for attention, requiring broadcasters to evolve from linear distributors into agile content creators and data-driven media brands (Prihatmadi, 2024; Iglesias & Sabucedo, 2010).

The migration from analog to digital television signals more than a change in signal transmission—it marks a systemic realignment of media production, audience relationships, and institutional practices. It ushers in a new era where content is shaped by interactivity, accessibility, and convergence, positioning television at the intersection of broadcast legacy and digital innovation (Starks, 2006).

Drivers and Global Context of the Transition

The migration from analog to digital television has been globally framed as both a technological necessity and a policy-driven imperative, reshaping broadcasting infrastructures and public access to media. At its core, the rationale for this transition stems from the technical superiority of digital broadcasting, which delivers enhanced image resolution, high-fidelity sound, reduced transmission errors, and allows for spectrum efficiency through multiplexing—enabling several digital channels to occupy the bandwidth of one analog channel (Kruger, 2002; Evans, 1991; Mandal, 2003). The shift to digital is also a cornerstone for deploying interactive features, high-definition (HD) formats,

electronic program guides, and multimedia services that were technically impossible under analog standards (Zeng, 2002).

From a policy standpoint, the transition is strongly linked to economic modernization agendas and spectrum reallocation. Governments around the world have recognized the transition as an opportunity to free up valuable spectrum for mobile broadband and emergency communication systems, especially through the so-called digital dividend (Adda & Ottaviani, 2005; Starks, 2006). In Europe, the European Commission mandated full analog switch-off by 2012 and strongly encouraged national governments to pair technical rollouts with public communication campaigns and equipment subsidies to ensure universal access (Iglesias & Sabucedo, 2010). Countries such as the United Kingdom established Digital UK to manage the switchover process, ensuring alignment between government policy, broadcasters, and equipment manufacturers (Starks, 2006).

However, the global rollout has not been universally smooth. Research indicates that digital transitions often exacerbate existing inequalities, particularly among low-income households, elderly populations, and rural communities. These groups face barriers such as lack of technical knowledge, limited digital literacy, and affordability of set-top boxes or compatible television sets (Verdegem et al., 2008), (Samudera et al., 2024). In the Indonesian context, public sentiment toward the Analog Switch-Off (ASO) program reflected widespread confusion and dissatisfaction, with over 70% of social media responses expressing negative views about the implementation and accessibility of digital services (Syafei & Rahyadi, 2025), highlighting gaps in policy communication and social support.

Moreover, in countries with dominant state-owned or oligopolistic broadcasting sectors, the digital transition has become entangled in political and economic interests. As observed in Indonesia, the regulatory environment has been shaped by powerful conglomerates that influence the pace and nature of digital broadcasting reform, often to protect market dominance rather than to promote equitable access or content diversity (Prihatmadi, 2024; Armando, 2019).

While the global transition from analog to digital television is largely driven by clear technical and policy advantages—including improved signal quality, spectrum efficiency, and service innovation—it is also marked by complex sociopolitical challenges. These include digital inequality, resistance from legacy stakeholders, and the need for robust regulatory and educational frameworks to ensure that digital television fulfills its promise of broader inclusion and public service.

Hybrid Strategies and Migration to Social Media Platforms

The analog-to-digital transition has not only transformed broadcasting infrastructure but also radically reshaped the strategic logic of media distribution, particularly through the rise of hybrid content strategies. Increasingly, television broadcasters are no longer confined to the linearity of traditional airwaves or even the structured logic of digital terrestrial broadcasting. Instead, they are actively

migrating to social media ecosystems—platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook—which now serve as critical nodes in their distribution and audience engagement strategies.

This migration is not accidental, but rather a strategic adaptation to changing audience behaviors and digital consumption patterns. In the post-broadcast era, audiences—especially younger, mobile-first viewers—are gravitating toward on-demand, personalized, and short-form video content. Traditional broadcasters are thus compelled to "follow the audience" into these digital spaces in order to maintain relevance and compete with native digital content creators (Prihatmadi, 2024), (Rodembusch & Medeiros, 2015).

Platforms such as YouTube have become integral to broadcasters' digital strategies. In Indonesia, for example, major stations like tvOne, Metro TV, and Trans TV have developed high-traffic YouTube channels where they repurpose televised content, stream live news, and distribute exclusive web-based programming. This not only extends the life cycle of their content but also opens new revenue streams through platform monetization and targeted advertising (Prihatmadi, 2024). Similarly, TikTok and Instagram Reels are leveraged to push snackable video clips, behind-the-scenes content, and influencer-led promotions, facilitating more intimate, algorithmically-driven relationships with viewers (Hetherington, 2009).

The importance of this migration lies in its power to reconfigure the broadcaster-audience relationship from passive reception to active interaction. Social media platforms facilitate two-way communication, real-time feedback, community-building, and user-generated content integration—features that traditional broadcasting cannot replicate. This shift moves television away from being a unidirectional medium toward becoming a participatory and dialogic digital experience, where viewers are co-creators of media discourse (Starks, 2006; Cave & Nakamura, 2006).

Moreover, migration to social platforms plays a critical role in addressing the audience fragmentation that accompanies the digital era. Unlike terrestrial or satellite broadcasts that are geographically bounded, social media transcends physical constraints, enabling hyper-targeted content delivery to global, diasporic, and niche audiences. This is particularly crucial for developing markets like Indonesia, where large segments of the population access television primarily through mobile devices and rely on platforms like YouTube for news and entertainment (Syafei & Rahyadi, 2025).

However, the migration also presents challenges. Broadcasters must now navigate platform algorithms, content moderation standards, and shifting monetization rules, which are often opaque and controlled by Silicon Valley tech companies. Furthermore, the pressure to produce "viral" content can incentivize sensationalism or reduce the depth and editorial quality traditionally associated with broadcast journalism (Samudera et al., 2024).

Despite these limitations, the migration of television to social media platforms is not a marginal development—it is now a core survival strategy in a media economy

defined by attention scarcity, platform capitalism, and convergent content flows. For broadcasters, embracing social media is no longer optional; it is essential for maintaining cultural relevance, audience loyalty, and financial sustainability in the digital era.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a descriptive quantitative approach to analyze the social media engagement of five leading Indonesian television stations—RCTI, SCTV, Trans TV, tvOne, and Metro TV—across three dominant platforms: YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok. The research focuses on comparing official account performance using engagement data sourced directly from Phlanx, a widely recognized influencer marketing and analytics platform. As television increasingly migrates into the digital ecosystem, these platforms represent critical touchpoints for audience interaction, brand visibility, and content adaptability. Rather than infer causal relationships, the study emphasizes mapping trends and comparative behaviors in digital engagement across these platforms and networks.

Engagement metrics from Phlanx—such as interaction averages, follower counts, and overall engagement rates—are collected from each television station's verified accounts within a standardized time frame. Data are analyzed using basic descriptive statistical techniques, including mean, range, and visual comparisons via tables and bar charts. Guided by Creswell's (2014) principles of quantitative description, the analysis aims to provide a snapshot of how Indonesian broadcasters are performing in the highly competitive digital attention economy. This method allows for a clear understanding of content resonance and platform adaptation without extending into predictive modeling or inferential statistics.

FINDINGS

The TikTok engagement patterns of Indonesia's leading broadcasters illustrate not only divergent digital strategies but also reveal how audience affinity and platform-specific behavior disrupt traditional assumptions tied to brand dominance.

While SCTV commands the largest follower base (11.8M), its relatively low engagement rate (0.31%) suggests that a large audience does not necessarily translate into active participation or emotional investment. In contrast, RCTI, with fewer followers (8.9M), records the highest engagement rate (0.75%) and most average likes per post (66,291), highlighting its ability to generate more resonant or algorithmically favored content. This aligns with theories of affective engagement and algorithmic visibility, where content virality is driven less by institutional authority and more by platform-native audience appeal.

Table 1 TikTok Engagement Metrics of Indonesian Television Broadcasters

TV Station	Username	Followers	Engagement Rate (ER)	Avg. Likes/Post	Verified
SCTV	@sctv_	11.8M	0.31%	36,865	Yes
RCTI	@officialrcti	8.9M	0.75%	66,291	Yes
Trans TV	@transtvofficial	1.9M	0.63%	12,055	Yes
tvOne	@tvoneofficial	459.4K	0.68%	3,108	No
Metro TV	@metro_tv	7.7M	0.22%	17,022	Yes

Interestingly, tvOne, though significantly smaller in scale (459.4K followers) and lacking platform verification, performs competitively with a 0.68% engagement rate. This may suggest a tight-knit or niche audience cluster, supporting arguments in digital media studies around micro-communities and trust-based interaction. The lack of blue tick verification, often associated with authenticity and credibility, does not appear to impair engagement, possibly indicating that content quality or ideological alignment plays a more vital role among its followers than platform-endorsed status.

Meanwhile, Metro TV's performance raises strategic concerns. Despite a strong follower base (7.7M), its low engagement rate (0.22%) suggests a disconnect between audience reach and content relevance. This could reflect either content fatigue, poor alignment with TikTok's visual storytelling norms, or weak audience targeting. The findings support broader literature emphasizing that success on short-form platforms like TikTok depends on platform-native logic, where humor, authenticity, trends, and rapid editing override traditional production polish or institutional brand identity.

Table 2 Instagram Engagement Metrics of Indonesian Television Broadcasters

TV Station	Username	Followers	Engagement Rate (ER)	Avg. Likes	Avg. Comments	Verified	Notable Sub-Accounts
SCTV	@sctv	6.5M	0.38%	22,381	510	Yes	@sctv.sport, @sinetron.sctv
RCTI	@officialrcti	3.1M	0.06%	1,582	154	Yes	@rctiplus, @hafizrcti, @layardrama_rcti
Metro TV	@metrotv	1.9M	0.02%	305	34	Yes	@metrotvtoday (unverified)
Trans TV	@transtv_corp	1.9M	0.01%	188	4	Yes	@rumpi_TV, @officialtrans7, @mytrip_myadvntr
tvOne	@tvonenews	1.4M	0.01%	145	7	Yes	None prominently linked

Overall, the data underscore that in the TikTok ecosystem, audience interaction is decoupled from institutional prestige. Broadcasters must rethink their strategies by shifting from legacy-centric broadcasting logic to a digital-native content ecology, where responsiveness, creativity, and authenticity govern engagement. This transformation is not just operational but epistemological, requiring media institutions to rethink what it means to "broadcast" in a participatory, algorithm-driven media environment.

The Instagram landscape of Indonesia's major television broadcasters reveals that engagement performance is shaped by more than just follower count or institutional prestige. Although all five broadcasters possess the blue verification badge, a symbol shown to increase public trust and platform credibility (Liao et al., 2023), the degree to which they convert this legitimacy into meaningful audience interaction varies considerably.

SCTV dominates with the highest engagement rate (0.38%), and benefits from a robust ecosystem of verified niche accounts such as @sctv.sport and @sinetron.sctv, which cater to segmented interests and reinforce its brand presence through vertical content streams. Similarly, RCTI, while showing a lower ER (0.06%), demonstrates a content segmentation strategy with accounts like @rctiplus and @layardrama_rcti—aligned with a logic of platform diversification and thematic curation that matches the content fragmentation characteristic of digital-native consumption (Helin, 2018).

Trans TV, though underperforming on its main account (@transtv_corp, 0.01% ER), also operates a suite of popular verified sub-accounts like @rumpi_tv, @officialtrans7, and @mytrip_myadvntr, reflecting a multi-brand content network model. This portfolio approach may disperse engagement across its ecosystem, a possibility consistent with findings from (Rath et al., 2018), which suggest that audience engagement is highest when content is aligned with topical interest and platform-specific storytelling formats.

In contrast, tvOne and Metro TV, though verified, show extremely low engagement—both with ERs at or below 0.02%. These results point to either a lack of visual storytelling alignment, weak platform strategy, or insufficient cross-channel promotion. Particularly in visual-heavy platforms like Instagram, media brands must optimize for not just visibility, but also for content tonality, narrative personalization, and frequency of interaction (Strekalova & Krieger, 2017).

Finally, the verified badge remains a necessary condition for trust, but it is not a guarantee of engagement. Verified status signals institutional legitimacy, but without audience-centric content formats, thematic specialization, or platform-native engagement design, broadcasters risk becoming visible but irrelevant in crowded digital spaces. The findings echo (Liao et al., 2023) in suggesting that the impact of verification is magnified when combined with micro-targeted strategies, especially among broadcasters transitioning from mass to fragmented digital publics.

Table 3 YouTube Engagement Metrics of Indonesian Television Broadcasters

TV Station	Channel Name	Subscribers	Engagement Rate (ER)	Avg. Interactions/Post	Verified	Notable Notes & Sub-Channels
SCTV	@sctv_	21.9M	0.08%	1,184	No	Main channel only, high reach but low interaction
RCTI	@OfficialRCTI	3.8M	0.29%	743	Yes	Uses a **dichotomous strategy** with high-subscriber sub-channels: @rctientertainment (7.75M), @rctilayardrama (18.3M)
tvOne	@tvOneNews	15.2M	0.01%	94	No	Mainstream news content, low engagement
Metro TV	@metrotvnews	10.2M	0.00%	2	Yes	Content uploaded as micro-clips, used more as an archive
Trans TV	@TRANSTVofficial	18.3M	0.00%	42	No	Similar to Metro TV: segmented uploads, not full shows

DISCUSSION

The YouTube engagement patterns among Indonesia's major television broadcasters reveal a key paradox of digital broadcasting at scale: subscriber count alone no longer predicts engagement. SCTV, with 21.9 million subscribers, shows the highest reach but a relatively modest engagement rate (0.08%), suggesting content may be passively consumed or algorithmically surfaced without prompting active user interaction. Interestingly, despite lacking official verification, SCTV outpaces others in interactions per post, a sign that platform-native branding may override formal verification, especially in markets with high platform familiarity.

RCTI provides the most strategically distinct case. While its main channel has only 3.8M subscribers, it deploys a dichotomous content strategy, segmenting content across multiple verified, thematically focused sub-channels. For example, @rctilayardrama alone has 18.3M subscribers, surpassing many networks' primary channels. This vertical structuring reflects digital-era audience fragmentation, aligning with findings from (Helin, 2018) that emphasize the

importance of content specialization and account diversification to cater to platform-specific consumption behaviors.

On the other hand, tvOne, Metro TV, and Trans TV, despite having between 10–18 million subscribers, show critically low engagement—with Metro and Trans TV reporting almost zero effective interaction (ER = 0.00%). This stark underperformance is likely a result of how content is structured: both use YouTube as a repository of short-form news clips or TV fragments, rather than as a dynamic space for serialized storytelling, personalization, or community building. As noted by (Strekalova & Krieger, 2017), media format significantly impacts engagement—with longer-form narratives, emotional hooks, and platform-interactive elements consistently outperforming fragmented or archival content.

The influence of verification status appears less clear on YouTube compared to Instagram or TikTok. While verified status has been shown to positively influence user trust and content credibility (Liao et al., 2023), channels like tvOne and SCTV, both unverified, perform comparably or better than verified counterparts like Metro TV. This may suggest that on YouTube—where subscribers often search for specific shows rather than institutions—content branding and recommendation algorithm alignment matter more than official verification.

In conclusion, YouTube data affirms that digital adaptation is not merely about platform presence or scale, but about how content is modularized, branded, and emotionally framed for interaction. Broadcasters relying on static or utilitarian content strategies (e.g., news clipping) struggle to generate active viewer engagement, while those embracing multi-channel segmentation, thematic focus, and audience feedback loops (as RCTI exemplifies) are more aligned with platform-native content logic that defines YouTube's dynamic media ecosystem.

Cross-Platform Discussion: Navigating the Digital Migration—Strategies, Successes, and Community Building

The migration of Indonesian television broadcasters into digital spaces marks a pivotal shift from traditional broadcast logic to a dynamic, platform-centric communication model. However, a comparative analysis of TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube reveals that this transition is uneven—marked by both strategic innovation and structural inertia.

Among all platforms, SCTV stands out for its consistent digital engagement, particularly on TikTok and Instagram. Its high follower count, competitive engagement rates, and network of verified sub-accounts (e.g., @sctv.sport, @sinetron.sctv) reflect a strategy rooted in audience segmentation and content personalization. SCTV adapts well to platform-specific aesthetics, such as short-form video and emotional storytelling, which align with theories of affective audience engagement (Balfour, 2019). Yet, its YouTube performance, despite a massive subscriber base (21.9M), shows low engagement—indicating that

even popular broadcasters must rethink how long-form video is structured and promoted on algorithm-driven platforms.

RCTI employs the most digitally sophisticated strategy through its multi-channel fragmentation on YouTube—offering specialized accounts like @rctilayardrama (18.3M subs) and @rctientertainment (7.75M subs). This mirrors platform-native behaviors where audiences prefer thematically curated channels over generalized networks. On TikTok, RCTI also scores the highest engagement rate (0.75%), underscoring its success in crafting emotionally resonant, trend-aligned content. RCTI's approach reflects a strategic migration toward content ecosystems—where digital life is organized around interest communities rather than institutional loyalty (Rath et al., 2018).

In contrast, Metro TV, tvOne, and Trans TV illustrate the limits of traditionalism in digital migration. Despite having millions of subscribers or followers across platforms, their engagement is minimal—e.g., 0.00% ER on YouTube for both Metro and Trans TV. The common issue: they treat digital platforms as repositories rather than communities. Uploading segmented news clips or program fragments without adapting to the narrative structures, visual styles, or participatory formats of each platform fails to trigger audience interaction. Metro TV, in particular, uses YouTube as a documentation archive, not an interactive channel, resulting in only two interactions per post despite over 10 million subscribers.

Verification status (blue tick) also plays a complex role. While it positively correlates with trust and audience perception on platforms like Instagram (Liao et al., 2023), it is not sufficient on its own to generate engagement. tvOne, for instance, is verified on all platforms but consistently ranks among the lowest in terms of ER and interactions. This supports the theory that trustworthiness must be paired with platform-native content and emotional resonance to convert passive viewers into active communities (Strekalova & Krieger, 2017).

Crucially, none of the broadcasters have fully succeeded in cultivating a participatory digital community in the sense described by Bruns (2016)—where users contribute to meaning-making and content circulation. Engagement remains largely reactive (likes, views) rather than interactive (comments, shares, co-creation), which suggests that these institutions still operate with a broadcast mentality in a participatory media environment.

CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATION

Indonesian television broadcasters have made meaningful progress in their migration to digital platforms, but success is highly contingent on how well they adapt content, tone, and structure to each platform's native culture. SCTV and RCTI demonstrate that segmentation, sub-channel curation, and visual storytelling are key to digital resonance. Meanwhile, Metro TV, Trans TV, and tvOne reflect the risks of treating digital platforms as secondary outlets. The future of broadcast

relevance in Indonesia will depend not just on presence, but on platform literacy, community co-creation, and adaptive storytelling in real time.

To evolve into truly digital-native institutions, broadcasters should:

- Adopt a "platform-first" mindset, designing content specifically for TikTok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts, rather than repurposing television fragments.
- Build interactive communities, not just audiences—by leveraging live comments, polls, co-creation (e.g., duets, challenges), and behind-the-scenes content.
- Invest in dedicated digital content teams fluent in meme culture, mobile editing, and short-form scripting to match platform rhythm and trends.
- Use account segmentation strategically, but ensure cross-promotion between sub-brands and a unified editorial voice.
- Go beyond metrics to meaning—foster emotional engagement, shareable formats, and creator collaborations that spark user participation, not just passive views.

In short, success in the digital era requires rethinking television not as a distribution model, but as a participatory media experience.

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