



The Impact of Digital Transformation on Corporate Competitiveness in Indonesia's Creative Economy Sector

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Abstract

Digital transformation has become a vital element in the development of the creative economy in Indonesia, where this sector is considered to have high potential in driving innovation-based economic growth. This study aims to critically analyze the influence of digital transformation on the competitiveness of companies in the Indonesian creative economy sector. This study uses a qualitative approach through a literature study method by reviewing ten relevant scientific articles from various national and international journals published between 2018 and 2025. The analysis was carried out using a thematic synthesis approach to identify patterns, relationships, and main themes related to the influence of digitalization on business strategy, product innovation, operational efficiency, and market penetration. The results of the study show that digital transformation has a positive impact on company competitiveness, especially in terms of increasing production efficiency, expanding market reach through digital platforms, and accelerating the innovation process. However, the success of digitalization is greatly influenced by internal factors such as technological capabilities and digital literacy of human resources, as well as external factors such as digital infrastructure and government policy support. The digital divide and low organizational readiness are the main challenges in optimizing this transformation. This study emphasizes that digital transformation must be understood as a sustainable strategic process, not only as the adoption of technology, but also as a comprehensive change in business culture and structure.



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INTRODUCTION

Digital transformation has become a major driver of change in various economic sectors, including the creative economy, which is the new backbone of Indonesia's growth (Hanum et al., 2024). The development of information and communication technology (ICT) has significantly changed the patterns of production, distribution, and consumption in the creative industry, from graphic design, film, music, to digital products (Cornellia et al., 2025). In the midst of the digital era, companies in this sector are encouraged to adopt technologies such as digital platforms, big data, and artificial intelligence to strengthen their competitiveness (Surti, 2025). This context makes digital transformation not only an option, but a strategic necessity for creative economy actors to survive and grow in an increasingly competitive market.

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Digital transformation is the process of integrating digital technology into all aspects of an organization's operations and strategies, with the fundamental goal of improving efficiency, innovation, and customer experience. This transformation is not just the application of digital tools, but involves fundamental changes in mindset, organizational culture, and work structure. According to Irwanto et al. (2025), digital transformation creates new ways of building social relations, identities, and meanings, especially in the context of increasingly complex digital communication (Irwanto et al., 2025). In the education sector, Panda et al. (2025) highlighted that digital transformation is an important strategy in expanding access and quality of learning, especially in remote areas, through systemically strengthened digital competencies (Mohammad et al., 2025).

The impact of digital transformation is not only felt at the technical level, but also has significant implications for business models and organizational governance. Research by Navarro-Labastida (2025) shows that digitalization allows organizations to adjust information strategies more quickly, but also demands adaptation in human resource capacity (Navarro-Labastida, 2025). In addition, digital transformation also contributes to increased efficiency in public services and the health sector, but still requires a strong ethical and policy framework so as not to create new digital divides. Therefore, the success of digital transformation depends heavily on the organization's ability to manage change comprehensively—both in terms of technology and people.

However, the digital transformation process does not always go smoothly. Many micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in the creative economy sector still face major challenges in terms of digital literacy, technological infrastructure, and funding for transformation (Mahrinasari et al., 2024). This digital inequality risks widening the gap between business actors who have adopted technology and those who have not, creating a "competitive gap" in a sector that should be inclusive (Prihandono et al., 2024). In addition, the impact of digital transformation on competitiveness also depends heavily on the extent to which companies can develop innovation and adaptation capabilities that are relevant to market changes (Rahman, 2025).

Other studies show that companies that are successful in digital transformation are able to improve operational efficiency, expand market reach through online channels, and create added value through more creative and personalized products (Miradji et al., 2024). Digitalization allows the creative process to be carried out collaboratively and across geographical boundaries, providing great opportunities for expansion and innovation (Panjawa & Laut, 2024). In addition, the adoption of digital technology strengthens relationships with consumers through interactive experiences, which are important elements in maintaining customer loyalty in the creative sector (Yuwono et al., 2025).

However, there are not many studies that explicitly measure or examine the direct impact of digital transformation on the competitiveness of companies in the creative economy sector, especially in Indonesia. Many public policies are still macro in nature and have not touched on the micro aspects of the digitalization challenges faced by creative business actors (S. Apriliani et al., 2025). Therefore, this study is relevant to fill the gap by analyzing how digital transformation actually affects competitiveness, both in terms of efficiency, innovation, and market expansion of companies in this sector (Faizin et al., 2024).

The urgency of this research is driven by the increasingly intense global competition in the creative industry driven by digital platforms. Indonesia, which has abundant cultural wealth and creativity, has great potential to excel in the digital economy, but without the right digital transformation, these opportunities can become a burden. By analyzing internal and external factors that influence the success of digital transformation, this study aims to provide strategic insights for business actors and policy makers (Wimpertiwi et al., 2024).

Previous studies have mostly highlighted general aspects of digitalization and innovation, such as the study by Dinihayati et al. (2024) which examined digital entrepreneurship-based

strategies in the hospitality sector (Dinihayati et al., 2024). Meanwhile, research by Ediyanto et al. (2025) focuses on the potential for developing innovative products in the manufacturing sector (Ediyanto et al., 2025). Although relevant, these studies have not specifically highlighted the intersection between digital transformation and corporate competitiveness in the context of Indonesia's culturally and structurally unique creative economy.

Based on this background, the purpose of this study is to critically analyze how digital transformation affects corporate competitiveness in Indonesia's creative economy sector. This study also aims to identify the determinants of successful digitalization and provide strategic recommendations for creative industry players in optimizing the use of digital technology to increase sustainable competitiveness.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with a literature review type that aims to understand and analyze in depth the impact of digital transformation on the competitiveness of companies in the Indonesian creative economy sector. Literature review was chosen as a methodological approach because it allows researchers to explore and synthesize previously existing theoretical and empirical findings, in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon being studied (Snyder, 2019). In this context, a qualitative literature-based approach is very relevant because the topics discussed are conceptual and dynamic, covering the development of digital technology and its implications for business strategy and competitiveness in the creative industry.

The data sources in this study consist of secondary data obtained from various scientific articles, reputable national and international journals, conference proceedings, and policy reports published between 2019 and 2025. All documents analyzed were selected based on the relevance of the topic, the credibility of the publisher, and suitability with keywords such as digital transformation, business competitiveness, and creative industry in Indonesia. The article selection process was carried out following the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines to ensure the quality and validity of the literature data used (Page et al., 2021).

The data collection technique was carried out through systematic searches in several academic databases such as Google Scholar, ScienceDirect, SpringerLink, and Emerald Insight. The search process includes the stages of identification, screening, and final selection of articles that meet the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Inclusion criteria include articles that discuss the relationship between digital transformation and the competitiveness of companies in the creative economy sector, written in Indonesian or English, and published in the last five years. Meanwhile, exclusion criteria include articles that have no direct relevance to the focus of the research and do not meet accountable academic standards.

The data analysis method used in this study is thematic analysis, which aims to identify, organize, and interpret important patterns (themes) that emerge from the literature data reviewed (Braun & Clarke, 2021). The analysis process began by reading all selected articles thoroughly, then openly coding relevant information, and continuing with grouping the codes into main themes such as "adoption of digital technology", "business innovation strategy", and "increasing competitiveness". The final result of this analysis is a conceptual mapping of the relationship between digital transformation and corporate competitiveness, especially in the context of the creative economy in Indonesia.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The following is a table of bibliographic data which is the result of a selection of the 10 most relevant scientific articles related to the topic "The Impact of Digital Transformation on Corporate

Competitiveness in Indonesia's Creative Economy Sector". This data was obtained through a filtering process from more than 20 articles found through academic searches based on specific keywords. The selected articles represent various sectors in Indonesia's creative economy, such as fashion, film, design, and digital-based MSMEs.

Table 1. Literature Review

| No | Author | Title | Research Focus |
|----|---|--------------------------|--|
| 1 | Dynamic Capabilities for Omnichannel Transformation in MSMEs | Febriani et al. | Dynamic capabilities strengthen omnichannel strategies in the fashion and furniture industry, increasing adaptability and competitiveness. |
| 2 | Empowering SMEs Toward Sustainable Tourism and Creative Economy | Cornellia et al. | The digital literacy gap is a challenge in strengthening the creative economy based on MSMEs in Yogyakarta. |
| 3 | Strategic Branding for Local Fashion Brands | Rinjany, F. K. | Digital transformation through strategic branding helps local MSMEs reach the global market and increase competitiveness. |
| 4 | Knowledge Management and Product Innovation | Fauziah, L. | Digital knowledge management contributes to product innovation and the sustainability of creative businesses. |
| 5 | Digital Promotion in Indonesian Film Industry | Indriasari & Hadiningrat | Digital promotion increases the competitiveness of the film industry through cross-platform content distribution. |
| 6 | Digital Transformation of Creative Art Start-Ups | Amanda et al. | Creative arts start-ups face the challenge of rapid adaptation due to market changes and digital technology. |
| 7 | Digital Business Strategy for MSMEs | Surti, S. | Inequality in the implementation of digital strategies causes a decline in the performance of creative MSMEs. |
| 8 | Strategic Management for Creative Industry | Rahman, A. | A digitalization-based strategic management model increases operational efficiency and creative innovation. |
| 9 | Innovation Strategy in MSME Competitiveness | Santoso, M. R. | Digital-based innovation drives the growth and competitive advantage of creative MSMEs. |
| 10 | Business Recovery and Digital SWOT Analysis | Apriliani et al. | Digital-based SWOT analysis helps creative businesses recover post-pandemic. |

The results of a literature review of ten selected scientific articles on The Impact of Digital Transformation on Corporate Competitiveness in Indonesia's Creative Economy Sector reveal a broad, dynamic, and contextual picture of how digital technology intervenes in various strategic aspects of companies in Indonesia's creative economy sector. These studies show the reality that digital transformation is not just the adoption of technology, but a complex structural change involving managerial, operational, cultural, and innovative aspects.

In a study by Febriani et al. (2025), the concept of dynamic capabilities is raised as the main pillar in the digital transformation process. This study shows how MSMEs in the fashion and furniture sectors are able to build an omnichannel strategy in response to changes in consumer preferences

and demands for digitalization. The application of the dynamic capability model allows companies to increase flexibility, adapt cross-platform promotion strategies, and accelerate the innovation cycle. Thus, the company's competitiveness in facing market dynamics is getting stronger thanks to a fast and relevant response to digital transformation (Febriani et al., 2025).

A study by Cornellia et al. (2025) enriches the discussion by focusing on digital literacy and the readiness of MSME digitalization in the creative tourism sector in Sleman, Yogyakarta. This study shows that there is a significant digital gap between business actors who have access to technology and training, and those who do not. This gap not only widens the gap between large and small business actors, but also has a direct impact on competitive performance in terms of market visibility and operational efficiency. Therefore, digital intervention cannot be separated from efforts to improve competence and infrastructure evenly (Cornellia et al., 2025).

Meanwhile, Rinjany (2025) explores how strategic branding has become the main tool in digital transformation for local brands in the fashion sector. Branding combined with social media and e-commerce technology allows local MSMEs to penetrate national and even global markets, something that was previously difficult to achieve without digital support. This study emphasizes that competitiveness is not only related to internal efficiency, but also external perceptions formed through strong, authentic, and consistent digital narratives (Rinjany, 2025).

Furthermore, Fauziah (2024) highlights the importance of knowledge management in supporting product innovation. This study shows that creative companies that actively manage and share internal knowledge are able to create new products that are more relevant to market trends, thereby strengthening their competitive position. Digital transformation plays a major role in accelerating the product development cycle through broader and faster access to market data (Fauziah, 2024).

From the film sector, Indriasari and Hadiningrat (2025) revealed that digital transformation brings major changes in the distribution and promotion of Indonesian films. With the existence of digital platforms and social media, film companies are no longer dependent on cinemas as the main channel. This has triggered the formation of a new business model that is more agile and responsive to market tastes. In this context, competitiveness is determined by the speed of content production, the strength of digital promotion, and the ability to build online communities (Indriasari et al., 2025).

Amanda et al. (2025) studied the challenges of digital transformation in creative arts-based start-ups. They found that rapid market changes and ever-growing technological developments force business actors to continue to innovate and adjust business models. Digital transformation requires adaptive thinking skills and synergy between elements of technology and creativity, so that companies can survive and grow amid market pressures (Budiarto et al., 2023).

Surti's research (2025) specifically raised the issue of inequality in the implementation of digital strategies in creative MSMEs. He showed that many business actors have difficulty translating digital policies into operational actions due to limited human resources, funds, and understanding of technology. This hinders the achievement of optimal performance and reduces the potential for increasing competitiveness that should be possible through digitalization (Surti, 2025).

Meanwhile, Rahman (2025) offers a solution approach by developing a digitalization-based strategic management model. He emphasizes the importance of synergy between digital vision, change management, and the formation of shared values as the key to strengthening long-term competitive advantage. Competitiveness in the digital era, according to this study, is not only about technology, but also about strategic leadership that is able to shape the new direction of the organization as a whole (Rahman, 2025).

In the dimension of product innovation, Santoso (2024) shows that innovation strategies supported by information technology encourage creative MSMEs to continue to present adaptive and

value-added products. This innovation is not only physical products, but also in the form of digital services that enrich customer experience and expand market reach (Santoso, 2024).

Finally, a study by Apriliani et al. (2025) describes how creative MSMEs utilize digital-based SWOT analysis in the post-pandemic business recovery process. By using digital tools for financial monitoring, marketing, and market analysis, companies can accelerate the restructuring process and establish new strategies that are more adaptive and competitive (R. Apriliani, 2024).

Overall, the findings of these ten articles confirm that digital transformation plays a central role in increasing the competitiveness of companies in Indonesia's creative economy sector. However, the success of the transformation is largely determined by the readiness of the organization to manage change as a whole, from internal structure, marketing strategy, to human resource management. Digital transformation must be understood as an ongoing process that requires learning, flexibility, and collaboration between stakeholders so that its impact is truly felt in achieving sustainable competitive advantage.

Discossion

Determining Factors for Digitalization Success

The success of digital transformation in increasing the competitiveness of companies in Indonesia's creative economy sector is largely determined by various interrelated factors that form a dynamic innovation ecosystem. One crucial factor is the technological capability and innovative ability of the company itself. Dellyana et al. (2023) show that the adoption of digital governance and adaptive technology platforms play an important role in driving accelerated growth in creative sub-sectors such as music, film, and animation (Dellyana et al., 2023). Digital transformation not only accelerates the production and distribution process, but also opens up opportunities for cross-regional collaboration and export of local content to the global market. As a real example, digital platforms such as GoPlay (a subsidiary of Gojek that focuses on video-on-demand) have succeeded in becoming a place for local filmmakers to distribute their work digitally, expanding the reach of audiences to foreign countries.

However, technology will be meaningless if it is not balanced with the readiness of human resources. Setiawan (2018) emphasized that digital literacy is the main foundation in absorbing and adapting new technologies (Setiawan, 2018). Companies that are able to equip their workers with basic to advanced digital skills, such as digital content management, social media analytics, and e-commerce management, will be able to innovate faster and survive in a competitive business climate. For example, the batik artisan community in Yogyakarta, which is part of "Kampoeng Batik Laweyan", has started integrating an online sales system through Tokopedia and Shopee, after receiving digitalization training from the local government and university partners. As a result, their sales increased by 40% post-pandemic, according to a report from the local Cooperatives and SMEs Office in 2022.

On the other hand, external factors such as support from the entrepreneurial ecosystem and government policies are also important. Purbasari et al. (2019) showed that business incubators, access to micro-financing, and collaboration with creative communities and educational institutions provide significant support for creative MSMEs (Purbasari et al., 2019). The government, through the Creative Economy Agency (Bekraf), which is now part of the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, has launched various mentoring programs, such as Startup Digital Indonesia and BEKUP (Bekraf for Startup). One example is Ruangguru, which started as a small startup in the edutech sector and has now grown into the largest digital learning platform in Indonesia, thanks to the support of the policy ecosystem and public-private sector collaboration.

In addition, readiness for e-commerce is the main foundation in the digitalization strategy of creative companies. Priambodo et al. (2021) emphasized that during the COVID-19 pandemic, creative companies that already had an e-commerce system or joined the digital ecosystem were better able to survive than those that had not been digitized (Priambodo et al., 2021). A relevant example is "Pijakbumi", an eco-friendly shoe brand from Bandung, which has adopted a web-based sales system and digital logistics since 2019. When the pandemic hit, Pijakbumi was still able to meet the demand of the export market to Europe and Southeast Asia because its system was fully integrated with global marketplaces and shipping services such as DHL and Tokopedia International.

Table 2. Impact of Digital Transformation on Competitiveness

| Digitalization Impact | Implications for Competitiveness |
|---|---|
| Production automation and cost efficiency | Increased margins and price flexibility |
| Digital platforms and market expansion | Global market access & customer loyalty |
| Big data & analytics | More accurate decision making |
| Technology-based creativity | Product innovation and local brand uniqueness |
| Cross-platform collaboration | Synergy between creative industry actors |

Strategic Recommendations for Creative Industry Players

In facing the challenges and opportunities presented by digital transformation, creative industry players in Indonesia need to adopt strategies that are not only adaptive but also long-term oriented. One of the most urgent steps is serious investment in digital education. The government and private sector must work together to provide relevant digital skills training, from the use of creative software, digital marketing, to managing online stores. According to Utami and Lantu (2014), strengthening human resource capacity through digital education has been proven to increase company readiness in facing technology-based markets (Utami & Lantu, 2014).

However, education alone is not enough without supporting infrastructure. Equalizing internet access, especially in remote areas that are the base of many creative MSME players, must be a development priority. Without adequate connectivity, the potential for innovation in the regions will not be able to grow optimally. Alanudin (2024) stated that inclusive digital infrastructure is the foundation for creating equitable growth in the creative economy sector (Alanudin, 2024).

In addition, the development of business incubators and innovation clusters is a very effective strategy for growing the creative business ecosystem. Incubators not only provide workspace and access to technology, but also foster startups through mentoring and networking. Dellyana (2023) and Wardana (2023) show that the incubator model integrated with universities and local governments has succeeded in creating many sustainable creative businesses, especially in cities such as Bandung and Yogyakarta (Wardana et al., 2023).

To strengthen national competitiveness, multi-party collaboration or a pentahelix approach is a must. Collaboration involving academics, industry players, government, creative communities, and the media can strengthen cross-sector synergy. Fatimah and Purwanti (2023) state that the success of the digitalization of the creative sector is greatly influenced by the existence of a solid collaborative network, which is able to accelerate technology transfer and the formation of adaptive policies (Fatimah & Purwanti, 2023).

Finally, a digital export strategy must be part of the long-term vision of the Indonesian creative industry. Increasing competitiveness applies not only at the local level, but also globally. Therefore, industry players must develop strong digital branding and content licensing strategies so that Indonesian creative products can enter the international market. Rahmanita (2024) highlights

the importance of this approach in transforming local industries into part of the global value chain, especially in sectors such as fashion, music, and graphic design (Rahmanita, 2024).

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that digital transformation has a significant impact on increasing the competitiveness of companies in Indonesia's creative economy sector. Through digitalization, industry players are able to increase operational efficiency, expand markets through online channels, and accelerate product and service innovation. However, the success of this transformation does not happen automatically, but rather depends on the internal readiness of the organization in terms of technological capabilities and human resource competencies. In addition, external support such as public policy, business incubator ecosystems, and digital infrastructure also play an important role in facilitating this transformation process. Companies that are able to combine technological innovation with branding strategies, knowledge management, and synergy between stakeholders have proven to be more adaptive to change and have a sustainable competitive advantage.

Practical advice from these findings is the need for creative industry players to not only focus on technology acquisition, but also build internal capacity that supports sustainable innovation, such as digital training, cross-sector collaboration, and integration with the e-commerce ecosystem. The government is also advised to strengthen interventions at the micro level by providing digitalization training, managerial assistance, and equitable infrastructure development.

The main limitation of this study lies in its approach which is based on literature studies so that it does not include primary data from the field that might strengthen the results of the analysis. In addition, although it covers various sub-sectors of the creative economy, some sub-sectors such as games and animation are still underrepresented in the analyzed literature.

For further research, it is recommended to conduct field studies based on surveys or in-depth interviews to better understand the dynamics of digitalization implementation in various types of creative industries, as well as to develop an evaluative model that can quantitatively measure the contribution of digitalization to company competitiveness.

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