



## Optimizing Cultural Events for Destination Branding and Community Empowerment in Tenganan Dauh Tukad

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### Abstract

This community service program aims to empower the local community of Tenganan Dauh Tukad Village by enhancing their digital capacity in promoting cultural tourism. Under the theme “The Living Culture Destination,” the program was implemented in three phases: cultural content documentation during the Perang Pisang ceremony, development of visual branding and digital media assets, and digital literacy training for youth and local tourism stakeholders. The outcomes included promotional videos, curated photo content, and social media templates that reflected the village’s core values: Authentic, Sacred, Tradition-bound, Educational, and Elegant. The village’s Instagram account was rebranded as @tengananexperience, supported by a content strategy built around three pillars: Be Promotional, Be Human, and Be Entertaining. The program had a positive impact by improving community skills in managing social media, fostering cultural pride, and positioning Tenganan Dauh Tukad as a sustainable cultural tourism destination. This initiative illustrates how digital empowerment at the community level can serve as an effective strategy for heritage preservation and inclusive tourism development.

**Keywords:** community service, digital empowerment, cultural tourism, Instagram branding, Tenganan Dauh Tukad, sustainable tourism.

### Abstrak

Program Pengabdian kepada Masyarakat ini bertujuan untuk memberdayakan masyarakat Desa Tenganan Dauh Tukad melalui peningkatan kapasitas digital dalam promosi pariwisata budaya. Mengusung konsep “The Living Culture Destination”, kegiatan ini dilaksanakan dalam tiga tahap: dokumentasi konten budaya saat upacara Perang Pisang, pengembangan branding visual dan konten digital, serta pelatihan literasi digital kepada pemuda dan pelaku pariwisata lokal. Kegiatan ini menghasilkan berbagai materi promosi seperti video pendek, foto tematik, dan template media sosial yang mencerminkan nilai-nilai lokal: Asli, Sakral, Teguh Tradisi, Edukatif, dan Elegan. Akun Instagram desa juga direbranding menjadi @tengananexperience dengan strategi konten berdasarkan pilar: Be Promotional, Be Human, dan Be Entertaining. Dampak kegiatan ini meliputi peningkatan kemampuan pengelolaan media sosial, tumbuhnya rasa bangga terhadap warisan budaya, serta penguatan posisi Tenganan Dauh Tukad sebagai destinasi wisata budaya berkelanjutan. Program ini menunjukkan bahwa penguatan kapasitas digital masyarakat lokal merupakan strategi efektif dalam mempromosikan pariwisata berbasis komunitas dan pelestarian budaya.

**Kata kunci:** pengabdian kepada masyarakat, pemberdayaan digital, pariwisata budaya, branding Instagram, Tenganan Dauh Tukad, pariwisata berkelanjutan.

### 1. Introduction

In the digital era, community empowerment increasingly requires the integration of technology to build sustainable, inclusive, and participatory development at the village level (Nina Mistriani et al, 2023). Digital-based community empowerment has proven to enhance the independence and capacity of local communities, especially in rural areas, by equipping them with digital literacy and marketing skills to manage tourism, promote local products, and participate in digital governance. Various studies highlight the effectiveness of digital platforms—such as social media, websites, and digital marketing tools—in increasing visibility, engagement, and economic outcomes for tourism villages (Yafie et al., 2023). Additionally, technology-based approaches such as Smart Tourism and the implementation of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)

using the Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) model have shown positive impacts in both knowledge transfer and economic improvement (Ali et al., 2023). These findings affirm that empowering communities through accessible technology not only fosters innovation and local entrepreneurship but also strengthens cultural identity and sustainable destination development in the long run.

In an increasingly competitive tourism landscape, the sustainable development of destinations is no longer focused solely on increasing tourist numbers but also on empowering local communities and strategically building a strong and authentic destination image. Villages with unique cultural attributes, such as Tenganan Dauh Tukad in Bali, hold great potential to be positioned as distinctive cultural tourism destinations. As one of Bali's original *Bali Aga* villages, Tenganan is known for its preservation of pre-Majapahit customs, traditional architecture, ceremonial practices, and unique handicrafts such as the rare *geringsing* woven textiles. These cultural assets form a strong foundation for destination branding efforts that aim to differentiate the village and create emotional resonance with potential visitors.

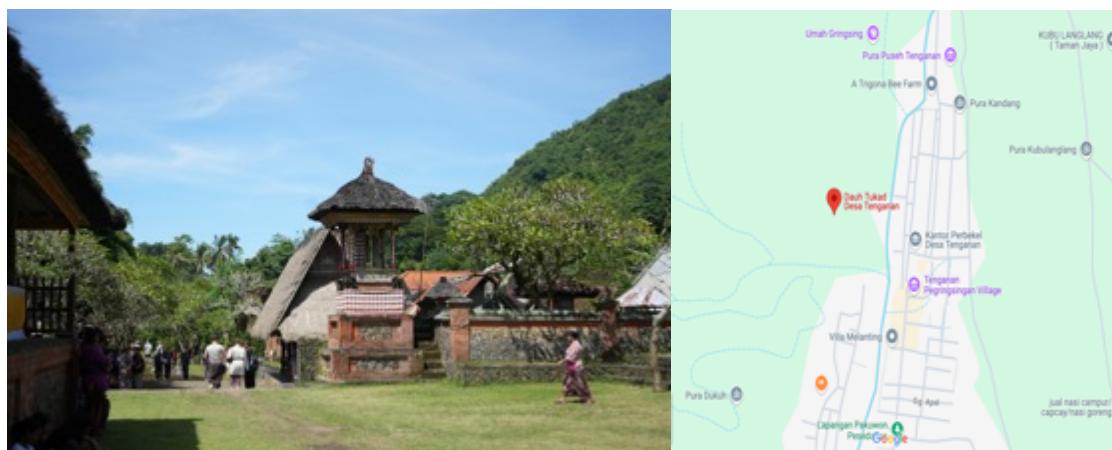


Figure 1. Tenganan Dauh Tukad Landscape and Administrative of Map

Tenganan Dauh Tukad deserves greater promotional attention due to the frequent misconception that it is the same as Tenganan Peglingsingan, a more widely recognized village with a similar name and geographical proximity. This confusion has led to a lack of visibility and appreciation for Tenganan Dauh Tukad's unique cultural and social attributes, which are distinct from its neighboring counterpart. While both villages belong to the *Bali Aga* cultural lineage, Tenganan Dauh Tukad has its own living traditions, community dynamics, and local narratives that remain underrepresented in mainstream tourism discourse. The overlap in naming has unintentionally overshadowed the identity and tourism potential of Tenganan Dauh Tukad, resulting in missed opportunities for cultural preservation, economic development, and community empowerment. Therefore, a more targeted and differentiated branding strategy is essential to clarify its identity, highlight its distinctive assets, and position the village as a unique cultural destination in Bali's eastern tourism area.



Figure 2. Calendar of Events, Wonderful Tenganan Dauh Tukad Village 2025

Tenganan Dauh Tukad Village stands out as a culturally vibrant destination due to its rich calendar of traditional ceremonies and communal events that span nearly every week during its peak cultural season. As depicted in the 2025 “Calendar of Events,” the village hosts a series of deeply rooted rituals—such as the Perang Metekrok Ceremony, Daha Nyambah Ceremony, Mekare-kare (Pandan War) ceremonies—each involving intricate symbolism, community participation, and intergenerational transmission of values. These events not only showcase the living heritage of the Bali Aga people but also provide immersive, time-bound cultural experiences that are rare in other destinations. The frequency and diversity of ceremonies, including offerings, temple processions, traditional swings (Anyuman), and ritualistic combat, highlight the village’s extraordinary capacity to maintain its ancestral traditions while fostering unity and identity among its residents. This dense and unique cultural calendar is a significant asset for developing authentic cultural tourism, reinforcing Tenganan Dauh Tukad’s positioning as a destination where culture is not only preserved but actively performed and celebrated.

However, the full potential of Tenganan Dauh Tukad has yet to be harnessed effectively through modern destination branding strategies. One key challenge is the limited capacity of the local community to engage in and lead the branding process. As highlighted in (Hanna et al., 2021), effective place and destination branding involves a multi-disciplinary approach that integrates identity (what the place is), image (how it is perceived), and active stakeholder participation. According to (Zenker et al., 2017), a place brand is shaped by a network of associations in the minds of consumers, based on visual, verbal, and behavioral expressions of the place. These associations are most powerful when co-created and maintained by the people who embody the identity of the destination—the local community.

Leveraging these events not only offers opportunities to differentiate the village’s identity but also serves as a strategic tool for strengthening destination branding and empowering local communities. Effective event-based branding—when aligned with local narratives and actively driven by community participation—can foster authentic tourism experiences, improve local capacity, and enhance the village’s visibility in a competitive tourism market (Hanna et al., 2021; Qu et al., 2011).

In the digital era, destination image is also shaped by how places are portrayed online. (Költringer & Dickinger, 2015) emphasize that a destination’s digital representation across platforms such as destination marketing organization (DMO) websites, travel blogs, and social media plays a critical role in influencing tourists’ perceptions and expectations. Therefore, incorporating authentic cultural content into digital narratives is essential to strengthen the emotional and cognitive associations that form the brand image. To achieve this, local communities must be equipped not only with cultural knowledge but also with digital and communication skills to express their identity in compelling and contemporary formats. (Qu et al., 2011) offer a comprehensive model of destination branding, proposing that a destination image is constructed through three interconnected dimensions: cognitive image (knowledge-based perceptions), affective image (emotional responses), and unique image (elements that differentiate the place).

Therefore, this study aims to explore how cultural events in Tenganan Dauh Tukad can be optimized as strategic content for destination branding while simultaneously building the capacity of local residents to co-create, promote, and sustain their cultural identity in the tourism economy.

## 2. Method

The method used in this Community Service Program (PKM) began with a direct engagement session with the Head of the Village or *Bendesa Adat* of Tenganan Dauh Tukad to identify the community’s needs, particularly in the area of tourism development. Based on this initial assessment, a relevant topic was selected, focusing on the promotion of cultural events in the village—specifically the traditional “Perang Pisang” ceremony.



Figure 3. Discussion with *Bendesa Adat*

Further discussions were held to determine appropriate participants, which included members of the Village Tourism Awareness Group (*Pokdarwis*), the Village Tour Guide Association, and local youth, with a total of 30 participants. The content collection phase was scheduled to coincide with the Perang Pisang event on April 15, 2025, allowing authentic documentation of the tradition. The main PKM activity was set to take place on April 26, 2025, strategically timed after *Galungan* holiday to optimize community engagement and cultural promotion impact.

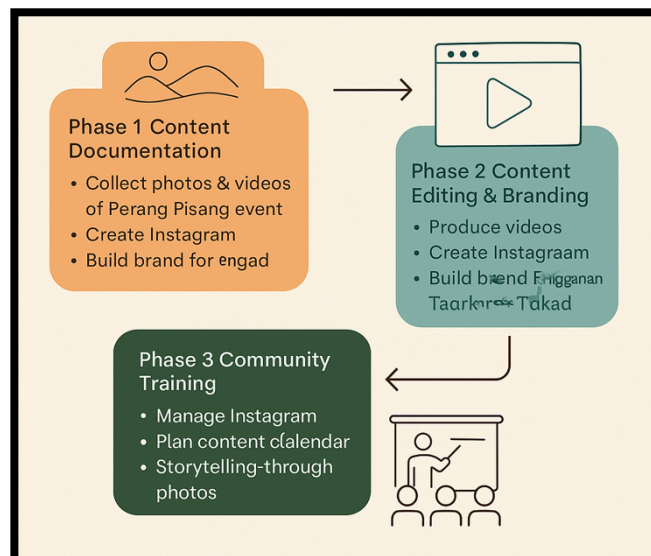


Figure 4. Stage of Community Services in Tenganan Dauh Tukad Village

To evaluate the effectiveness of the training and community engagement, the program incorporated both quantitative and qualitative assessment tools. A pre-test and post-test approach was used to measure the improvement in digital literacy among participants, particularly in their understanding of content creation, Instagram management, and branding principles. The tests assessed basic knowledge of social media platforms, editing tools, content strategy, and visual identity.

In addition, a participant satisfaction survey was conducted at the end of the program to capture feedback on the relevance, clarity, and usefulness of the training modules. The survey used a Likert scale and open-ended questions to assess participants' perceived improvements, engagement with the facilitators, and overall experience. The combination of these evaluation tools ensured a data-informed analysis of impact and provided valuable insights for the future replication and scaling of similar community empowerment initiatives.

## 2.1 Phase 1: Content Documentation and Community Engagement

This initial phase focused on collecting visual and narrative content to support the promotion of the cultural event. The activity was carried out in collaboration with the local youth group, aiming not only to gather media materials but also to foster active participation and skill development among the younger generation in content creation.

The documentation process utilized a variety of tools, including professional cameras for high-quality still photography, drones for capturing aerial perspectives of the event and its surroundings, and smartphones for more spontaneous, candid footage. This combination ensured a diverse range of content formats suitable for both promotional and archival purposes.

The content collected during this phase included:

- a. **Live event coverage**, capturing key moments and unique rituals during the *Perang Pisang* (Banana War) event;
- b. **Portraits and activity shots of local community members**, highlighting cultural expressions, traditional attire, and interactions among villagers;
- c. **Video testimonials from domestic and international tourists**, sharing their impressions and experiences, which serve as persuasive material for future visitors;
- d. **Behind-the-scenes clips** involving the youth in action, providing a human-interest angle to the story.

This phase not only laid the foundation for the development of promotional materials in later stages but also empowered local youth by involving them directly in the storytelling process of their own heritage, reinforcing a sense of pride and ownership over their cultural tourism assets.

## 2.2 Phase 2 : Content Editing, Branding, and Social Media Optimization

In this phase, the raw visual materials collected during the documentation process were curated and edited to produce engaging and platform-optimized content. The focus was on transforming the footage and photographs into compelling visual narratives suitable for digital promotion, especially through social media. The editing process included:

- a. **Short-form video editing** tailored to the Instagram Reels format, highlighting the most dynamic and culturally rich moments of the *Perang Pisang* event to attract wider audience engagement.
- b. **Curated photo editing** to produce aesthetically pleasing, *Instagram-worthy* posts featuring high-resolution images of the event, the community, and scenic elements of Tenganan Dauh Tukad.
- c. **Color grading and audio layering** were applied to enhance the emotional impact of the content, using traditional music and ambient sounds to preserve the cultural atmosphere.

Beyond content polishing, this phase also involved **developing a cohesive branding identity** for Tenganan Dauh Tukad, which included:

- a. Crafting a **memorable tagline** that encapsulates the spirit of the village and its unique traditions.
- b. Establishing a **visual branding guide**, including font, color palette, and logo placement to ensure consistency across platforms.
- c. Designing **templates for future posts**, stories, and promotional flyers to maintain brand recognition.

The goal of this phase was not only to prepare content for immediate sharing but also to build a long-term digital identity for Tenganan Dauh Tukad that is attractive, recognizable, and aligned with the values of cultural preservation and sustainable tourism.

## 2.3 Phase 3 : Community Training and Capacity Building

This phase focused on empowering the local community through hands-on training sessions facilitated by lecturer of Bali Tourism Polytechnic and specialized in content and social media management. The primary objective was to equip community members—especially the youth and tourism groups—with the skills needed to independently manage and sustain Tenganan Dauh Tukad's digital presence beyond the PKM program.



**Figure 5.** Community Training

Key activities in this phase included:

- a. **Training on Instagram Management**, where participants learned how to operate the official Instagram account of Tenganan Dauh Tukad. This included optimizing the profile, managing post frequency, using relevant hashtags, engaging with followers, and analyzing basic insights to track performance.
- b. **Storytelling through Visuals**, a session focused on how to narrate compelling stories through photographs—highlighting cultural values, personal experiences, and local traditions that resonate with online audiences.
- c. **Practical Tutorials on Phase 1 and 2**, where facilitators demonstrated easy-to-follow steps for capturing quality content (photo and video), using simple editing tools, and publishing posts in reel or carousel format. This hands-on approach enabled participants to replicate the earlier phases using only smartphones and free editing apps.

All training activities were conducted by experienced facilitators using interactive and participatory methods, ensuring that the learning process was engaging, culturally sensitive, and adaptable to the community's needs. The ultimate goal was to build digital independence, enabling the community to continuously promote their cultural tourism through authentic and self-managed content creation.

### 3. Results and Discussion

#### 3.1 Activity Implementation Process

The first phase marked the beginning of community involvement through participatory content creation. The PKM team, in collaboration with youth from Tenganan Dauh Tukad, conducted an intensive field documentation process during the *Perang Pisang* cultural event. Using a combination of DSLR cameras, drone technology, and smartphones, a diverse range of visuals was collected—capturing not only the dynamic rituals of the event but also the surrounding village atmosphere, traditional attire, and expressions of joy and community spirit.



**Figure 6.** Local Youth Community

Significantly, the inclusion of local youth in this phase provided them with hands-on experience in digital media production, from camera handling to interview techniques. This approach fostered a sense of pride and ownership in preserving and showcasing their cultural heritage. Moreover, the testimonials from domestic and international visitors added an emotional and persuasive layer to the content, enhancing its value as a promotional tool.



**Figure 7.** Content Documentation

The project transitioned from raw documentation to professional content presentation. Visual materials were edited into short, engaging formats suitable for Instagram Reels, YouTube Shorts, and image carousel posts—formats proven effective for maximizing engagement on digital platforms. The team introduced basic branding elements, including a consistent color palette, typography, logo placement, and most importantly, a community-crafted tagline that reflected the unique identity of Tenganan Dauh Tukad.

The goal was not just aesthetic appeal, but strategic communication—creating an image of the village that aligned with trends in eco-cultural tourism. The content emphasized sustainability, authenticity, and local wisdom, which are increasingly important values for today's tourists. By showcasing traditions through a modern lens, the village brand became more relatable to younger, tech-savvy travelers.



Figure 8. Editing Content using Light Room Apps Training

Participants were invited to engage in a practical session where they learned how to transform their personal photo collections into compelling Instagram content using mobile editing tools. The training focused on introducing them to user-friendly apps, particularly **Adobe Lightroom**, which allows flexible and professional-level photo editing via smartphones. As part of the session, a set of custom-made **Instagram presets** was provided—specifically designed to align with Tenganan Dauh Tukad’s branding elements, such as its earthy tones, cultural elegance, and traditional atmosphere. These presets not only help maintain visual consistency across posts but can also be used without time limitations, empowering participants to continue producing high-quality content independently in the future. This phase also involved launching and optimizing a dedicated Instagram account for the village. Engagement strategies such as hashtag optimization, post timing, and caption writing were also integrated to ensure the content could organically reach wider audiences.

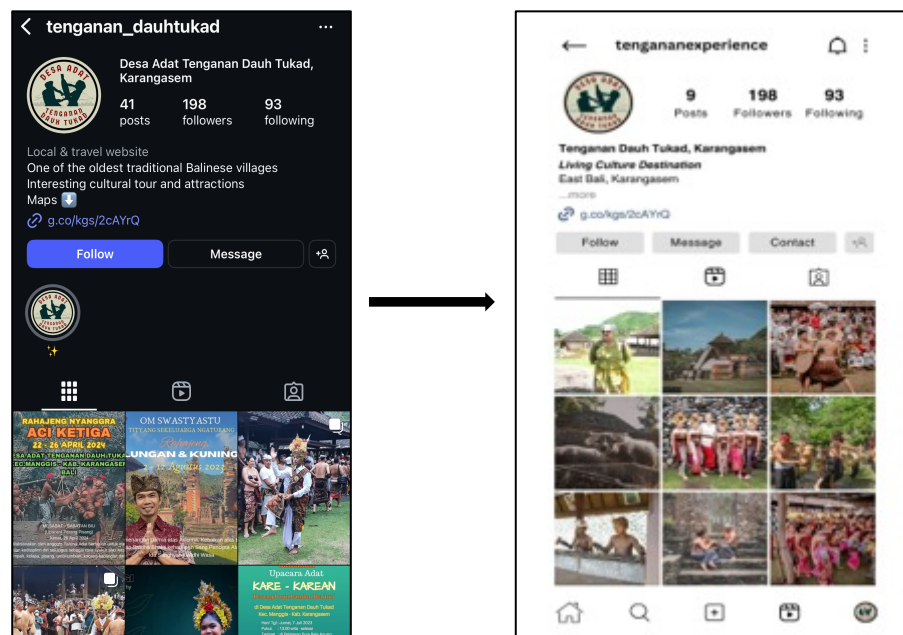


Figure 9. Draft of Social Media Branding on Instagram

To optimize its digital visibility and enhance its appeal to a wider audience, the Instagram handle for Tenganan Dauh Tukad was officially rebranded to **@tengananexperience**. This strategic username change reflects a shift from a static identity to a dynamic cultural journey—an invitation for visitors to not just

observe, but experience the essence of the village firsthand. The new handle is concise, tourism-friendly, and aligned with global digital trends in cultural branding. Central to this transformation is the reinforcement of the key message: **“The Living Culture Destination.”** This tagline serves as the core narrative, emphasizing that Tenganan is not a museum of the past, but a vibrant, living village where centuries-old traditions continue to thrive in everyday life.

The brand identity of Tenganan was then refined around five core values: **Asli (Authentic), Sakral (Sacred), Teguh Tradisi (Steadfast in Tradition), Edukatif (Educational), and Elegan (Elegant)**. These values function as a compass for storytelling and visual direction. “Asli” ensures that content reflects real community voices and unfiltered rituals. “Sakral” acknowledges the sacredness of cultural practices, ensuring they are presented respectfully. “Teguh Tradisi” communicates the community’s strong commitment to preserving its customs, while “Edukatif” encourages content that informs and inspires cultural understanding. Lastly, “Elegan” elevates the visual language, using a clean, respectful aesthetic that honors the dignity of the village’s heritage. This identity is expressed through design, tone, and curation, helping the account stand out in a cluttered digital space while remaining true to its cultural roots.

To maintain consistency and build meaningful engagement, all content is now organized under three strategic content pillars: **Be Promotional, Be Human, and Be Entertaining**. “Be Promotional” includes event announcements, travel guides, and highlights of local attractions, such as traditional weaving, rituals, and village tours. “Be Human” focuses on community storytelling—featuring local artisans, elders, youth, and testimonials from tourists—to humanize the brand and build emotional connection. Meanwhile, “Be Entertaining” injects light-heartedness and relatability through behind-the-scenes moments, reels, trivia, and interactive stories, designed to attract younger audiences and boost algorithm performance. By aligning its digital strategy with these content pillars and brand values, **@tengananexperience** is now positioned as a culturally rich, digitally relevant, and emotionally resonant destination brand.

### 3.2 Impact of Community Services and Evaluation

The implementation of this community service project has brought a significant impact on the local community of Tenganan Dauh Tukad, particularly in strengthening their capacity to promote cultural tourism through digital platforms. By involving youth, tourism groups, and local stakeholders in hands-on training and content creation, the project not only increased awareness of their cultural assets but also empowered them with practical skills in social media management, storytelling, and branding. As a result, the community is now more confident and capable of independently managing the village’s online presence, attracting a wider audience through visually appealing and meaningful content.

Beyond digital literacy, the project has fostered a renewed sense of pride and ownership among residents toward their heritage. The branding of Tenganan as *The Living Culture Destination* has given the community a unified identity that aligns with modern tourism trends while honoring their ancestral traditions. The increased visibility on social media has also contributed to higher interest from potential visitors, which is expected to translate into greater support for local crafts, cultural events, and small-scale tourism businesses—thus creating a sustainable tourism model rooted in community participation and cultural preservation.



**Figure 10.** Word Cloud of Community Feedback

Here is a **word cloud visualization** based on the most frequently mentioned keywords in community feedback regarding the social project: Words such as **“Baik” (Good)**, **“Bermanfaat” (Useful/Beneficial)**, **“Bagus” (Great)**, and **“Positif” (Positive)** are the most prominent, reflecting a very favorable reception of

the program. Other words like **“Jelas” (Clear)**, **“Lanjutkan” (Continue)**, and **“Sangat” (Very)** indicate that participants not only appreciated the clarity of the material presented but also expressed a strong desire for the program to continue. This word cloud demonstrates that the community viewed the initiative as impactful, educational, and worth sustaining in the future.

During the implementation of the program, several challenges emerged that required on-site adaptation. One of the primary issues was initial resistance from certain community members who were skeptical about the effectiveness of promoting cultural heritage through social media. This hesitation was particularly evident among the older generation, who viewed digital platforms as unfamiliar and potentially incompatible with traditional values. In addition, infrastructural limitations—such as unstable internet connectivity and a lack of high-quality recording equipment—posed further difficulties in capturing and sharing real-time content during the documentation phase. To address these issues, the team employed a culturally sensitive communication strategy by engaging directly with the Bendesa Adat (village leader) and other respected local figures to bridge generational understanding. On the technical side, additional recording equipment was provided by the service team, and content production was scheduled for offline editing before planned uploads. Practical training sessions were also delivered using user-friendly mobile applications to help local youth develop basic digital skills. These mitigation efforts proved effective in building trust, fostering active participation, and ensuring the smooth execution of the program through collaborative and community-driven approaches.

#### 4. Conclusion

This community service project has successfully demonstrated the role of digital empowerment in promoting cultural tourism, particularly through strategic content creation and social media branding. By involving the local community of Tenganan Dauh Tukad—especially the youth and tourism actors—in a series of participatory activities, the project strengthened their capacity to manage and promote their cultural assets through digital platforms. The phased approach—from content documentation, editing, branding, to training—ensured that the outcomes were not only impactful but also sustainable. The rebranding of the village’s Instagram account to @tengananexperience and the adoption of a consistent content strategy based on the values of Asli, Sakral, Teguh Tradisi, Edukatif, and Elegan helped position Tenganan as a "Living Culture Destination" in the eyes of a wider audience.

As a follow-up, the community is encouraged to form a dedicated digital promotion task force composed of trained local youth and Pokdarwis members to manage the village’s online presence on an ongoing basis. This group should develop monthly content plans aligned with the village’s cultural calendar and monitor engagement metrics to refine strategies. For long-term development, it is recommended that the village establish a formal collaboration with local universities or tourism institutions, allowing students or interns to contribute regularly in areas such as content creation, campaign design, and digital storytelling.

To ensure sustainability, a monitoring and evaluation mechanism should be put in place, which includes biannual performance reviews of social media metrics (followers, engagement rates, reach), feedback surveys from tourists and community members, as well as regular reflection meetings among the digital team, local leaders, and tourism stakeholders. A simple reporting system using Google Sheets or mobile dashboards can help track progress and flag issues early. With this framework, the community of Tenganan Dauh Tukad can maintain digital relevance, build cultural resilience, and strengthen their positioning as a model of sustainable, community-based tourism in Bali.

#### 5. Acknowledgments

The authors would like to express sincere gratitude to the entire community of Tenganan Dauh Tukad, especially the Bendesa Adat, local youth, Pokdarwis, and tour guide association, for their warm welcome, active participation, and enthusiasm throughout the implementation of this community service project. Special thanks are also extended to the facilitators, and technical team who contributed their time and expertise in delivering training and developing visual materials. Appreciation is given to Politeknik Pariwisata Bali for the support and opportunity to carry out this meaningful program, which aims to preserve cultural heritage through digital empowerment. Without the collective spirit and collaboration of all parties involved, this initiative would not have been possible.

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