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**DIGITAL SOCIAL MARKETING IN PHILIPPINE MISSION-CENTRIC SOCIAL ENTERPRISES:
EXPLORING FOUNDERS' INFLUENCE AND STRATEGIC APPROACHES**

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This paper prepared by **JOSEPH EMIL N. SANTOS** with the title: “**DIGITAL SOCIAL MARKETING IN PHILIPPINE MISSION-CENTRIC SOCIAL ENTERPRISES: EXPLORING FOUNDERS’ INFLUENCE AND STRATEGIC APPROACHES**” is hereby accepted by the Faculty of Information and Communication Studies, U.P. Open University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Course.

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Biographical Sketch

The researcher is an experienced marketing professional and educator currently serving as a Professor at De La Salle University-Manila in the Department of Marketing and Advertising. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Commerce with a major in Marketing Management and a Master of Marketing Communications from the same institution.

Alongside his academic pursuits, the researcher actively contributes to the marketing field through his research and publications featured in various conferences and journals. His professional experience includes leading telecommunications companies' sales, marketing, and product management roles.

Beyond his corporate work, the researcher is deeply committed to social responsibility and actively initiates programs for non-profit organizations and social enterprises in the Philippines. Among his notable affiliations is his role as Project Lead for the Ramon V. del Rosario (RVR) Siklab Awards at De La Salle University-Manila since March 2019. The RVR Siklab Awards recognize youth leaders who positively impact nation-building through social enterprises and advocacy work.

In his capacity with the RVR Siklab Awards, the researcher has been instrumental in activating and facilitating the awards program. He creates and implements pre-screening processes, manages interns, coordinates with stakeholders, and organizes virtual conferences. His dedication to this initiative underscores his passion for empowering youth and fostering positive social change. Through these endeavors, he demonstrates his belief in the power of marketing and education to drive meaningful social impact.

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Dedication

To the visionary leaders and trailblazers of the Ramon V. del Rosario Siklab Awards, whose unwavering commitment to social entrepreneurship and nation-building has ignited a spark of hope and inspiration in the hearts of countless Filipinos, including myself. Your tireless efforts to create positive change, empower communities, and uplift the lives of others have been a guiding light in my own journey of discovery and purpose.

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Abstract

This dissertation examines how founders' cultural-cognitive orientations and communication practices shape digital social marketing strategies in Philippine mission-centric social enterprises. The research introduces the Founder-Driven Authentic Digital Storytelling Framework through digital ethnography and case studies as a novel theoretical contribution integrating cultural sensitivity with strategic communication in digital spaces.

The study reveals that effective digital social marketing emerges from founders' ability to authentically adapt communication while aligning with their cultural values and social missions. The research demonstrates that successful digital engagement requires founders to balance cultural understanding with strategic storytelling across digital platforms.

The findings establish authentic digital storytelling as the primary mechanism for building trust and fostering meaningful connections with target communities. The introduced framework provides a structured approach to understanding how founders' personal narratives and cultural backgrounds influence their digital marketing strategies.

This work makes significant theoretical contributions by synthesizing authentic digital storytelling with cultural-cognitive and communication accommodation perspectives in social enterprise marketing. The practical implications offer actionable insights for social enterprise founders seeking to enhance their digital marketing impact while maintaining mission alignment.

Keywords: social enterprise, digital social marketing, authentic digital storytelling, founder perspectives, cultural-cognitive theory, communication accommodation theory, mission-centric enterprises, Philippine social enterprises, digital engagement, social impact

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

Background and Rationale of the Study

The emergence of social enterprises worldwide, particularly in the Philippines, has marked a significant shift in how organizations combine marketing strategies with a social purpose. Defourny and Nyssens (2010) define social enterprises as organizations that pursue social goals through marketing strategies, diverging from traditional businesses by prioritizing social value over economic profit (Mair & Marti, 2006). This aligns with the Philippine context, where the British Council (2015) report underlines the substantial role of social enterprises in the nation's economic and social development, identifying over 164,473 such entities.

Central to the success of these social enterprises is their adoption of effective social marketing strategies, a concept Andreasen (2002) clarifies as the application of commercial marketing principles to influence behaviors beneficial for individual and societal welfare. Peattie & Peattie (2003) emphasize how these strategies foster sustainable relationships with target audiences, extending the organization's mission and vision. In parallel, the integration of digital technologies has given rise to digital social marketing, which employs online tools to drive social change further (Tuten & Solomon, 2017), creating a new avenue for understanding how social enterprises, especially in the Philippines, leverage these resources in their marketing communication initiatives.

Despite the critical role of social marketing and its digital adaptation, research often overlooks the founders' perspectives, who are instrumental in shaping the strategic

direction of social enterprises, including their marketing endeavors (Dees, 2012). This gap signifies the potential for deeper insights into the execution and outcomes of social marketing strategies from those directly responsible for them. To explore this further, incorporating theoretical lenses like the Communicative Accommodation Theory (CAT) and the Cultural-Cognitive Theory (CCT) offers a comprehensive understanding.

CAT, proposed by Giles, Taylor, & Bourhis (1973), suggests that digital marketing engagement significantly depends on the founders' ability to adapt their communication to match audience preferences. This theory posits that individuals adjust their communication styles to increase, decrease, or maintain social distance from their interlocutors (Dragojevic et al., 2016). In digital social marketing, CAT implies that social enterprise founders who authentically accommodate their communication to resonate with their target audiences are more likely to foster engagement, build rapport, and ultimately drive social impact.

For instance, a social enterprise focused on promoting sustainable fashion might adapt its messaging across different digital platforms to cater to the preferences of various audience segments. The founder might use a casual, conversational tone and visually appealing content on Instagram to connect with younger, fashion-conscious consumers. In contrast, the same founder might adopt a more professional, data-driven approach to engage with potential investors or industry partners on LinkedIn. By strategically adjusting their communication style to match the expectations and norms of each platform and audience, the founder can enhance community engagement through their digital marketing approaches and build stronger relationships with key stakeholders.

Moreover, CAT suggests that accommodating communication is not just about linguistic adjustments but also involves paralinguistic and nonverbal adaptations (Giles & Ogay, 2007). In digital social marketing, this could manifest in using culturally relevant visuals, emojis, or multimedia content to enhance the relatability and appeal of the messaging. For example, a social enterprise working with indigenous communities might incorporate traditional art or symbols into their digital content to show cultural sensitivity and build trust with their target audience.

Simultaneously, the Cultural-Cognitive Theory (CCT), rooted in the work of Scott (2001) and DiMaggio (1997), suggests that founders' cultural backgrounds and cognitive representations influence digital marketing strategy conception and implementation, where cultural values may emphasize certain marketing practices over others. CCT posits that individuals' thoughts, feelings, and behaviors are shaped by their cultural schemes and shared understandings (Scott, 2014). In the context of social enterprises, this theory implies that founders' cultural orientations and cognitive frames significantly influence how they approach digital marketing and engage with their audiences.

For example, a social enterprise founder from a collectivistic culture might prioritize community-building and collaborative messaging in their digital marketing strategies, reflecting the cultural value of interdependence. This could manifest in user-generated content campaigns, online communities, or partnerships with local influencers to foster a sense of shared identity and purpose among the target audience. In contrast, a founder from an individualistic culture might focus more on highlighting the unique selling points of their products or services and emphasizing personal benefits in their digital marketing communications.

Furthermore, CCT suggests that cultural-cognitive factors shape the content of digital marketing strategies and influence the channels and platforms that social enterprise founders engage with (Hoffman & Novak, 2018). For instance, founders might prioritize more formal, hierarchical communication channels like official websites or email newsletters in high-power distance cultures. In contrast, cultures with low power distance might favor more informal, participatory platforms like social media or instant messaging apps.

The interplay between CAT and CCT in the context of digital social marketing is particularly relevant for social enterprises operating in diverse cultural settings, such as the Philippines. By understanding how cultural-cognitive factors shape communication preferences and adapting their digital marketing strategies accordingly, social enterprise founders can effectively navigate cultural differences, build trust with their target audiences, and drive social impact across various communities.

Moreover, integrating CAT and CCT in digital social marketing research offers a better understanding of how social enterprise founders can balance the dual objectives of achieving financial sustainability and creating social value. Founders can develop more effective and culturally sensitive strategies that support their social missions by accommodating their communication to resonate with their target audience's values and preferences while leveraging cultural insights to inform their marketing decisions.

This study suggests that social enterprises' digital social marketing strategies are intricately linked to founders' personal backgrounds and values. This perspective extends beyond traditional marketing analyses and offers a holistic view of how social identity and cultural cognition intersect with communication adaptation to enhance authentic digital

storytelling in social enterprises. The dynamic and interactive nature of digital platforms, which are needed by these theories, calls for exploration through digital ethnography and case studies. This approach allows an immersive examination of how CAT and CCT influences manifest in real-time digital marketing practices, providing depth and context to founders' particular interpretations and applications within the digital landscape.

Furthermore, assessing community response and mission-market alignment in social enterprises encompasses sustainability indicators and aligning these strategies with the enterprise's social mission. This approach highlights the broader impact of digital marketing on social engagement and change, examining both community response and the qualitative assessment of mission alignment and social impact contribution. By investigating the interplay between authentic storytelling, cultural-cognitive factors, and community engagement indicators, this study aims to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how social enterprises can optimize their digital marketing strategies to drive mission-driven outcomes.

This dissertation aims to bridge the existing understanding gap on the interplay between founders' personal backgrounds, their authentic digital storytelling approaches in digital environments, and community engagement through digital social marketing strategies in social enterprises. By examining founders' natural communication practices within a digital ethnography and case study framework, this study seeks to provide a rich, contextualized understanding of how social enterprise founders navigate the complexities of digital marketing while staying true to their social missions. The insights generated from this research have the potential to inform both theory and practice, contributing to the growing body of knowledge on social entrepreneurship and digital marketing and

providing actionable insights for social enterprise founders seeking to enhance their community engagement and social impact.

Research Question and Objectives

The research aimed to answer the research question: *“How do founders' cultural-cognitive orientations and communication accommodation practices influence their authentic digital storytelling approaches of digital social marketing strategies in mission-centric social enterprises?”* This study was guided by the understanding that social enterprises pursue both commercial and social welfare objectives (Defourny & Nyssens, 2010). Consequently, they require innovative marketing strategies to achieve their mission (Peattie & Peattie, 2003).

Drawing from existing literature and identified gaps (Dees, 2012; Marcelo, 2015; Tuten & Solomon, 2017), this research aimed to address the following sub-questions:

1. How do founders' cultural-cognitive orientations influence their digital social marketing narrative and community engagement?
2. How do founders adapt their communication practices to align with their mission and target audience?
3. How do founders design and assess their digital social marketing strategies through authentic digital storytelling?

Given the evolving landscape of social enterprises and their distinctive approach toward integrating social goals with business methodologies, scrutinizing these entities' digital social marketing strategies is necessary. The works of Mair and Marti (2006) have

clarified the importance of social entrepreneurship in addressing societal challenges through innovative solutions, while the application of digital technology in social marketing has been significantly highlighted by Chaffey and Smith (2017). This inquiry aims to dissect the convergence of the founders' cultural-cognitive orientations and their communication accommodation strategies within the domain of digital social marketing in mission-centric social enterprises.

This investigation's primary research question seeks to unravel the intricate dynamics between the founders' cultural-cognitive frameworks and their communication accommodation strategies in formulating and executing digital social marketing endeavors. This question examines how founders' personal backgrounds and values shape their authentic digital storytelling approaches in mission-centric social enterprises, recognizing that individual experiences and cognitive orientations influence how they engage with their communities through digital platforms (Hofstede, 1980; Giles, Taylor, & Bourhis, 1973).

Leveraging the theoretical underpinnings of Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT), as initially advocated by Giles, Taylor, and Bourhis (1973), this study aims to explore how founders of social enterprises adapt their communication tactics to align with their target audience's expectations and preferences within the digital realm. CAT's relevance in digital communication has been underscored by recent studies, which reveal how strategic communication adaptation can lead to enhanced engagement and message reception in digital platforms (Solomon, 2008; Tuten & Solomon, 2017).

Moreover, the Cultural-Cognitive Theory (CCT) serves as another basis for this investigation, focusing on how founders' cultural backgrounds and cognitive biases shape

their approach toward digital social marketing. Scott's (2001) exploration of the cultural-cognitive pillars of institutions suggests that individual actions and strategic choices are deeply infused with cultural norms and cognitive patterns. This framework is especially appropriate when investigating social enterprises, where founders often embed their cultural values and beliefs into their organizational culture and strategies (DiMaggio, 1997; Hofstede, 1980).

Hence, through a meticulous examination framed by a digital ethnography approach championed by Kozinets (2015) as a method that provides deep insights into digital communities and interactions combined with a case study methodology as detailed by Yin (2003), the research seeks to fulfill the following objectives:

1. To examine how founders' personal backgrounds and values shape their authentic digital storytelling approaches in mission-centric social enterprises. This involves exploring how founders' experiences and cultural orientations naturally influence their digital marketing narratives and community engagement strategies.
2. To understand how founders adapt their communication practices to align with their mission and target audience in digital platforms. This objective explores how founders naturally develop their storytelling approaches to build meaningful connections with their communities through digital engagement.
3. To identify how founders assess community response and mission-market alignment through digital engagement. This includes examining the qualitative indicators founders use to evaluate community building, engagement patterns,

and mission achievement through their authentic digital storytelling approaches.

By venturing into this research, the intention is to bridge the existing knowledge gap concerning the interplay of founders' cultural-cognitive orientations and communication practices within digital social marketing in social enterprises. This scholarly endeavor seeks to augment the theoretical landscape by synthesizing CAT and CCT within the context of digital social marketing. It also aspires to furnish practical insights for social enterprises striving to amplify their social impact through digital channels.

Research Significance and Contributions

Given the increasing prominence of digital platforms in shaping societal actions and behaviors, the exploration of digital social marketing strategies in mission-centric social enterprises carries profound significance. The emergent discourse around social enterprises, noted for blending business insight with social mission goals (Mair & Marti, 2006), offers abundant ground for examining how digital strategies can amplify social impact. This study, by integrating Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) and Cultural-Cognitive Theory (CCT) within the realm of digital social marketing, stands at the convergence of communication, culture, and marketing, striving to illuminate the pathways through which founders of social enterprises navigate the complexities of digital engagement.

The significance of this research lies in its interdisciplinary approach, connecting the dots between founders' personal backgrounds, values, and digital marketing

engagement practices. Giles, Taylor, and Bourhis (1973) started the essence of CAT in adapting communication to cater to audience preferences, a concept that has gained currency in the digital era (Solomon, 2008). The application of CAT in this study extends the theory to digital social marketing, offering insights into how strategic communication adaptations can foster deeper connections with target audiences online. Simultaneously, embedding CCT (Scott, 2001; Hofstede, 1980) into digital marketing strategies suggests that founders' cultural values and cognitive schemas can significantly color the approach and execution of these strategies, influencing their resonance and impact.

Further, the study's methodological reliance on digital ethnography and case study approaches allows for an immersive and clear understanding of digital marketing practices in social enterprises. Digital ethnography, as advocated by Kozinets (2015), promises an in-depth exploration of online cultures and practices, while the case study methodology outlined by Yin (2003) provides a structured framework for investigating complex phenomena within real-life contexts. Together, these methodologies support the examination of digital social marketing strategies within the unique setting of social enterprises, contributing rich experimental insights into the interplay of communication, culture, and authentic digital storytelling.

The research contributions extend across theoretical, methodological, and practical domains. Theoretically, the study enriches the literature on digital social marketing by intertwining CAT and CCT, offering a holistic lens through which authentic digital storytelling and community engagement can be examined. Methodologically, adopting digital ethnography and case studies in investigating digital social marketing practices provides a robust framework for future research in similar domains, showcasing

the value of immersive and contextually grounded research approaches. Practically, the study offers actionable insights for founders and practitioners within social enterprises, delineating how nuanced understanding and strategic accommodation of communication and cultural constructs can enhance community engagement and mission-market alignment in digital marketing efforts to amplify social impact.

Moreover, this research navigates the overlooked landscape of examining digital social marketing from the founders' perspective, offering a ground-level view of strategic decision-making processes. Clarifying how founders evaluate their marketing strategies' success beyond conventional indicators to include social impact and mission alignment encourages a rethinking of success indicators in the social enterprise domain (Andreasen, 2002; Tuten & Solomon, 2017). Thus, the study not only advances academic knowledge but also equips social enterprise founders with strategic insights to refine their digital marketing practices, fostering a more profound societal engagement and impact.

Exploring digital social marketing strategies through the lenses of CAT and CCT focused on mission-centric social enterprises represents a significant addition to scholarly literature and practice. By shedding light on the complex dynamics of founder-driven digital marketing strategies, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of how digital platforms can be leveraged for the greater social good, paving the way for future studies in this vibrant and impactful field.

Scope and Limitations of the Study

The intricate examination of digital social marketing strategies through the combined lenses of Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) and Cultural-Cognitive Theory (CCT), specifically within the setting of mission-centric social enterprises, defines an innovative and insightful research route. This study describes its scope around understanding how founders' cultural and cognitive backgrounds, coupled with their communicative strategies, shape the digital marketing landscapes of social enterprises. Drawing inspiration from Giles, Taylor, and Bourhis's (1973) foundational work on CAT, which highlights the significance of adaptability in communication strategies, and integrating it with Scott's (2001) and Hofstede's (1980) insights into cultural-cognitive dimensions, this research endeavors to bridge two pivotal theoretical domains. This incorporation offers a unique vantage point for scrutinizing digital marketing strategies, which has garnered increasing scholarly attention in the wake of the digital revolution (Kozinets, 2015; Tuten & Solomon, 2017).

Nonetheless, the research outlines its boundaries amid the vast landscape of social entrepreneurship and digital marketing. Predominantly, it orients towards mission-centric social enterprises, a choice that, while focusing on the investigation, necessarily narrows the breadth of enterprise types under consideration. Given the diversity within social enterprises, from their social missions to their operational models (Mair & Marti, 2006), concentrating on mission-centric organizations allows for deep, rather than broad, exploration. This focus facilitates a refined analysis of how such enterprises leverage digital platforms for social marketing, respecting the depth of understanding required for

such an analysis but simultaneously acknowledging the limitation in generalizing findings across all types of social enterprises.

The methodological approach, employing digital ethnography and case study methods as championed by Kozinets (2015) and Yin (2003), enables an in-depth examination of digital practices and founder perspectives. Nevertheless, while providing rich, detailed insights, this qualitative focus may limit the findings' scalability. The intricate, context-bound insights generated may not holistically encapsulate the breadth of experiences and strategies across diverse geographical and cultural contexts. Additionally, the reliance on digital ethnography and case studies prioritizes depth over breadth, constraining the capability to generalize findings across the entire spectrum of social enterprises operating in different contexts or scaling at different rates.

Another pivotal area of limitation lies in the reliance on founders' perspectives to inform the study's insights. While this approach undeniably offers valuable firsthand accounts of decision-making processes and strategic orientations, it may inadvertently narrow the narrative to singular viewpoints within each enterprise. This focus might obscure the contributions or interpretations of other stakeholders, such as employees, customers, or community members, whose perspectives could also offer significant insights into social enterprises' digital social marketing efficacy and strategies.

Furthermore, while robust in bridging communication and cultural-cognitive theories, the theoretical framework posits another boundary to this research. The application of CAT and cultural-cognitive theory provides a structured lens through which to examine digital marketing strategies, yet it also bounds the investigation to these specific dimensions. As digital marketing strategies and social enterprises evolve, so do

the theoretical models that might apply to them. The rapidly changing landscape of digital technology and social enterprise innovation might yield new theoretical lenses more aptly suited to future studies.

Finally, the digital focus of this study, imperative in the current philosophy of global business and social impact strategies, also delineates its limitations. The digital realm, marked by its fast-paced evolution and the emergence of new platforms and technologies, presents a moving target for research. Strategies that are effective at the time of the study may quickly become outdated as new digital innovations come to the fore. Moreover, the digital divide and access issues in various parts of the world indicate that digital strategies, while impactful, may not fully reach or engage all intended audiences, especially in lower-resource settings or among populations with limited internet access (Hinson, Boateng, & Madichie, 2010).

This investigation into the digital social marketing strategies of mission-centric social enterprises through CAT and CCT unfolds within a delimited scope, offering profound insights while acknowledging its methodological, theoretical, and contextual boundaries. As digital platforms and social entrepreneurial endeavors evolve, so will the scope and limitations of research seeking to understand and enhance their impact.

Chapter II

RELATED LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents a comprehensive review of the literature relevant to the study of digital social marketing strategies in mission-centric social enterprises, with a particular focus on the Philippine context. The chapter delves into the conceptual landscape of social enterprises, exploring their diverse typologies, mission orientations, revenue generation methods, sector-specific models, and legal structures. It then examines the evolution and significance of digital social marketing within social enterprises, highlighting the challenges and opportunities presented by this emerging field. The literature review also situates the study within the specific context of social enterprises in the Philippines, discussing their growth, expansion, and the policies and regulations that shape their operations. Notably, the chapter explores the role of digital ethnography as a methodological approach for investigating the digital media landscape and marketing strategies of these enterprises. It identifies significant gaps in the current research, particularly in understanding the influence of founders' personal backgrounds and values on the formulation and engagement outcomes of digital social marketing strategies. The chapter concludes by articulating the theoretical underpinnings of the study, integrating Communication Accommodation Theory and Cultural-Cognitive Theory as analytical lenses for examining the complex dynamics of authentic digital storytelling and community engagement in social enterprises.

Defining Social Enterprise

The conceptual landscape of social enterprise embodies a rich tapestry of definitions, operational models, and value propositions that straddle the domains of traditional businesses and nonprofit organizations. This binary existence, characterized by a mission-driven approach underpinned by sustainable business strategies, underscores the sector's hybrid nature. Defourny and Nyssens (2010) offer a critical examination of social enterprises, emphasizing using business tools to address and mitigate social issues. This dual focus aligns with geographical and cultural nuances and navigates through the evolving policy environments that uniquely shape the operational dynamics of social enterprises across different regions. At its core, the social enterprise seeks to champion community interests, prioritizing social causes without losing sight of the need for economic viability (Defourny & Nyssens, 2010). Dees (2012) encapsulates this sentiment by highlighting the inherent frustration with the traditional charitable sector's inertia, prompting a pivot towards more market-oriented approaches to catalyze social change.

This operational contrast fosters a spectrum of organizational forms, from entities primarily focused on social objectives to those adopting a commercial surface while strategically directing profits toward social initiatives (Mair & Marti, 2006). This diversity in operational models causes a debate concerning the balance between social impact and economic sustainability, with some purists advocating for the predominance of social missions (Dees, 2012). The influence of institutional and policy frameworks further complicates this definition, particularly in contrasting environments such as Europe and

the United States. Europe tends to integrate social enterprises within the broader social economy paradigm, merging them with cooperatives and nonprofit entities. Conversely, the American perspective accentuates the themes of innovation, scalability, and transformative potential, emphasizing social enterprises' crucial role in sectors such as healthcare, education, and environmental protection (Defourny & Nyssens, 2010; Dees, 2012).

Yunus, Moingeon, and Lehmann-Ortega (2010) introduce another dimension to the discourse through the concept of social business, which prioritizes social impact over profit maximization. This model posits a framework where investors recover their initial investment without dividends, thus challenging traditional notions of profitability within social enterprises. This diversity in understanding and operationalizing social enterprises is further magnified by the sector's multidisciplinary nature, incorporating insights from entrepreneurship, economics, and social welfare. This multidisciplinary introduces a spectrum of perspectives, sometimes divergent, on what constitutes the essence of a social enterprise. While innovation may be a focal point for some scholars, others might underscore outcomes such as social impact or sustainability (Dacin, Dacin, & Matear, 2010; Mair & Marti, 2006).

Social enterprises' dynamic and adaptable nature underscores their capacity to address various social challenges across varied contexts. While beneficial for practitioners, this adaptability presents a complex landscape for researchers aiming to consolidate these divergent perspectives into a cohesive theoretical framework. Despite these challenges, the extensiveness and flexibility inherent in conceptualizing social

enterprises underscore their indispensable role in navigating the contemporary societal landscape (Defourny & Nyssens, 2010; Dees, 2012).

Defining social enterprise necessitates a particular understanding that accommodates the diversity of operational models, stakeholders' expectations, and the broader socio-economic contexts within which these entities operate. The dialogue surrounding social enterprises remains a dynamic exchange, reflecting the sector's intrinsic adaptability and profound commitment to leveraging business mechanisms to foster social good. This ongoing conversation enriches the academic discourse and provides practical insights that inform the evolution and growth of social enterprises worldwide.

Typologies of Social Enterprises

In exploring the multifaceted landscape of social enterprises, the work of Alter (2007) provides a foundational framework for understanding the diversity of models, approaches, and operational strategies that underpin these entities. Social enterprises operate within a spectrum that combines the efficiency and innovation of traditional businesses with the altruism and social focus of nonprofit organizations, presenting an array of structures characterized by their mission orientation, revenue generation methods, sector of operation, and legal frameworks. This categorization is instrumental in unraveling the complexities of social enterprises, shedding light on their motivations, sustainability mechanisms, beneficiary engagement, and the integral challenges they navigate (Alter, 2007).

The typologies outlined by Alter (2007) illuminate various facets of social enterprises, where mission orientation underscores the primary motivators driving the enterprise's agenda, be it social impact, environmental conservation, or community empowerment. This aspect profoundly influences their operational strategies and models, dictating the balance between financial viability and social objectives. Revenue generation methods further delineate social enterprises, ranging from those predominantly reliant on market-based activities to those intertwining grant funding and commercial ventures. This variation reflects the enterprises' financial strategies and indicates the extent of their dependence on commercial revenues to sustain their social missions.

The sector of operation introduces another layer of differentiation, underscoring the areas where social enterprises exert their impact, whether in education, healthcare, environmental sustainability, or social welfare. This categorization acknowledges the sector-specific challenges and opportunities that shape social enterprises' operational dynamics and strategic orientation (Nicholls, 2009). Legal structures, lastly, encapsulate the regulatory and institutional frameworks within which social enterprises operate, spanning nonprofit, for-profit, and hybrid models. These legal parameters have profound implications for governance, accountability, and resource mobilization, influencing how social enterprises navigate the interplay between generating economic value and catalyzing social change (Defourny & Kim, 2011).

Despite the clarity these typologies bring to understanding social enterprises, their overlapping and interdependent nature often blurs the boundaries defining these entities. Many social enterprises embody attributes of multiple models, reflecting their adaptive

strategies to local contexts, resource availability, and sector-specific demands. While emblematic of the sector's resilience and innovation, this adaptability complicates the articulation of distinct boundaries and uniform impact indicators across the diverse landscape of social enterprises (Nicholls, 2009; Santos, Pache, & Birkholz, 2015).

Notably, the mutable nature of social enterprises, accentuated by their typological diversity, underscores the challenge of developing a one-size-fits-all definition or assessment criterion for their operations and impact. The intersectionality of mission orientation, revenue models, sectoral focus, and legal structures presents a complex matrix that requires nuanced understanding and flexible analytical frameworks (Mair & Marti, 2006). This intricacy is further compounded by evolving market dynamics, societal expectations, and policy environments, which continually reshape social enterprises' operational contours and mission focus (Dees, 2012).

In this context, the work of academics such as Nicholls (2009), who explores the mutable domain of social enterprise typologies and their implications for theory and practice, and Santos, Pache, and Birkholz (2015), who delve into the adaptive capacity and impact evaluation of social enterprises, offers valuable insights. These contributions highlight the necessity of a dynamic, context-sensitive lens in researching and understanding social enterprises, advocating for approaches that accommodate the sector's inherent flexibility and diversity (Nicholls, 2009; Santos et al., 2015).

In synthesizing the discussions on the typologies of social enterprises, it is evident that the field is marked by a rich diversity of operational models and strategies tailored to address specific socio-economic and environmental challenges. While showcasing the innovation and resilience of social enterprises, this diversity also underscores the

complexity of categorizing and evaluating these entities against standard indicators. The intersection of mission orientation, revenue generation methodologies, sectoral operations, and legal frameworks within which social enterprises operate underscores the multifaceted nature of this domain, demanding a nuanced and flexible approach in research and practice.

As the discourse on social enterprises continues to evolve, the contributions of scholars like Alter (2007), Nicholls (2009), and Santos, Pache, and Birkholz (2015) remain pivotal, offering a foundational understanding while inviting continuous inquiry into the dynamic, adaptable nature of social enterprises. This ongoing exploration is essential for advancing our comprehension of how social enterprises can effectively navigate the nexus of economic sustainability and social impact, contributing to a more equitable and sustainable future.

Mission Orientation

Mission Orientation within the domain of social enterprises encapsulates a broad spectrum of operational and ideological underpinnings that drive strategic decisions and actions. This orientation serves as a compass, guiding social enterprises across a vast landscape where financial sustainability intersects with social impact. Within this context, Alter's (2007) typologies of social enterprises offer a comprehensive framework to classify these entities based on their underlying missions and operational ethos. Two predominant forms emerge from this categorization: 'Social Bricks' and 'Mission-centric Enterprises,' embodying distinct philosophies and operational variations.

- *Social Bricks* represent a fusion between commercial endeavors and social objectives, operating under a business-like framework while embedding a social mission at their core. This model capitalizes on market-driven strategies to generate profit, which is subsequently reinvested to bolster the social cause, thereby creating a sustainable loop of financial viability and social impact. Newman and Jahdi (2009) observed that such enterprises leverage market dynamics to scale their impact without deviating from their foundational mission. This balance between commercial success and social intent is further elaborated by Smith and Stevens (2010), who highlight the dynamic equilibrium maintained by 'Social Bricks,' where market forces and societal needs coexist harmoniously. An exemplar of this model is seen in organizations that produce ethically sourced products, ensuring fair compensation and conditions for their producers. This resonates with the observations made by Battilana et al. (2015). These enterprises prioritize their social agenda, ensuring their commercial activities bolster rather than overshadow their social missions.
- *Mission-centric Enterprises* place the social or environmental mission at the forefront of their operations, viewing revenue generation and profit-making as supplementary functions that support the primary cause. Dacin, Dacin, and Matear (2010) briefly articulate that these entities are mission-first organizations, aligning business activities with the overarching goal of serving their cause. Despite their potential for impactful contributions, such enterprises often encounter scalability challenges, with their success evaluated in impact rather than financial profit. This aspect is explored by Moss et al. (2011), who discuss the limitations faced by

mission-centric models in achieving widespread systemic change due to their unwavering focus on impact. Nonetheless, their profound mission alignment can lead to significant transformative shifts within their target communities or sectors, as Santos (2012) noted. These organizations exemplify the principle that profitability serves as a means to an end, a tool to further and amplify their core missions.

The interplay between 'Social Bricks' and 'Mission-centric Enterprises' within social entrepreneurship illustrates the diverse pathways through which social impact can be achieved, contingent upon the mission orientation that underpins each model. The deployment of market-driven strategies within 'Social Bricks' showcases the potential for commercial activities to advance social goals, embodying an integrated approach where business and social objectives complement rather than conflict. Meanwhile, 'Mission-centric Enterprises' underscore the importance of social impact, employing business mechanisms to sustain and elevate their mission-driven endeavors.

This contrast between 'Social Bricks' and 'Mission-centric Enterprises' reflects the broader discussions surrounding mission orientation in social enterprises, as explored by Alter (2007), Newman and Jahdi (2009), and Dacin, Dacin, and Matear (2010), among others. The classification of social enterprises based on mission orientation enhances our understanding of their operational diversities and highlights the imperative to align business strategies with social objectives. As the landscape of social entrepreneurship continues to evolve, the insights provided by these scholars offer a valuable framework for analyzing and categorizing the myriad forms of social enterprises, facilitating a deeper

comprehension of the mechanisms through which these entities navigate the complex interplay between profit generation and social impact.

Exploring mission orientation within social enterprises reveals a nuanced spectrum of strategies and philosophies guiding these entities. Whether through the integration of social missions within business models as seen in 'Social Bricks' or the prioritization of social impact above all else characteristic of 'Mission-centric Enterprises,' the operational ethos of social enterprises is fundamentally shaped by their mission orientation. This delineation advances the discourse on social entrepreneurship and provides critical insights for practitioners and policymakers seeking to leverage business tools for social good. As social enterprises continue to embody diverse operation models, the foundational role of mission orientation remains a pivotal axis around which their strategies and impacts revolve, underscoring the intricate balance between achieving financial sustainability and making a tangible.

Revenue Generation Model

Understanding the revenue generation methods within social enterprises is crucial for comprehending how these organizations sustainably balance financial viability with their core mission. The diverse strategies employed by social enterprises reflect their innovative approach toward integrating financial sustainability with social impact. Predominantly, the Cross-compensation, Fee-for-service, and Employment Model represent critical methodologies embodying the multifaceted nature of social entrepreneurship. Adopting a specific model aligns with the enterprise's mission and the

needs of its target beneficiaries, which is fundamental for ensuring both longevity and maximal social impact.

- *Cross-compensation Model*, often analogized to the "Robin Hood" approach, exemplifies a strategic means of serving diverse market segments through differential pricing strategies. Dart (2004) highlights this model's application in health-focused social enterprises, where products or services are sold at a premium to wealthier segments to subsidize the provision to disadvantaged groups at reduced fees or for free. Santos (2012) and Mair and Schoen (2007) further emphasize the model's reliance on the enterprise's capability to effectively cater to and balance the expectations of both segments. The intrinsic challenge lies in maintaining brand consistency and value perception among premium-paying customers while ensuring that subsidized recipients are not marginalized. This model's sustainability hinges on the enterprise's adeptness at navigating these dual market dynamics.
- *The Fee-for-service Model* represents a direct transactional relationship between social enterprises and their beneficiaries, where the latter pays for goods or services. Dees (2007) and Alter (2007) argue that this model uniquely ties revenue generation directly to the social mission, fostering a direct correlation between the enterprise's financial health and social impact. Common among enterprises offering essential services like education, healthcare, or clean water, this model ensures that beneficiaries appreciate and utilize the services effectively, as they bear a direct cost. Moreover, high-quality service provision becomes crucial for the enterprise's financial sustainability.

- *The Employment Model* takes a distinct approach by integrating marginalized populations directly into the workforce, providing them with employment opportunities that exceed mere income. Battilana and Dorado (2010) delineate how this model offers stable employment to individuals facing significant barriers to traditional employment and contributes to their sense of dignity, societal integration, and personal development. Borzaga and Defourny (2001) elaborate on the dual benefit of this model, indicating that the social enterprise generates revenue like a conventional business while delivering profound social benefits. Customers purchasing from these enterprises often experience a deeper connection to the brand, knowing their spending supports meaningful social outcomes.

These revenue-generation methods portray how social enterprises creatively merge business techniques with social goals. Each model offers a different social enterprise perspective, presenting a unique set of challenges and opportunities. Whether through cross-subsidization, direct beneficiary transactions, or employing disadvantaged groups, these models illustrate the inventive pathways social enterprises navigate to fulfill their mission while ensuring financial stability.

The critical analysis of these models reveals a nuanced understanding of social entrepreneurship, highlighting the sector's complexity and innovative responses to social challenges. Such insights are invaluable for practitioners and researchers, offering a deeper comprehension of how social enterprises operate within and contribute to the broader socio-economic landscape.

Sector-specific Models

Exploring Sector-specific Models within social enterprises unravels the strategic adaptations tailored to address wide-ranging societal challenges. These models, including Agrarian and Rural Enterprises, Eco-centric Enterprises, Health and Well-being Enterprises, and those focused on Preserving Culture, underscore the diverse applications of social entrepreneurship across various domains. Each model encapsulates the essence of social enterprises' mission-driven operations, aiming to generate economic returns and foster systemic changes within their chosen sectors. The specificity of challenges and opportunities in these areas necessitates a nuanced understanding of domain intricacies, continuous innovation, and stakeholder collaboration, underscoring social entrepreneurs' multifaceted approach to instigating tangible impact.

- *Agrarian and Rural Enterprises* leverage the potential of agriculture and rural development to drive socioeconomic transformations, especially in regions where agriculture is the economic backbone. These enterprises showcase versatility, from cooperatives to agri-business ventures, focusing on improving market access for farmers, ensuring fair wages, and promoting sustainable agricultural practices (Hishigsuren, 2006; Neeliah & Shankar, 2018). Emphasizing local resource use and valuing indigenous knowledge contribute to cultural preservation and strengthening community identities. Nonetheless, these enterprises grapple with challenges such as market volatility, climate change effects, and restricted financial access, which pose substantial operational hurdles (Bernard & Spielman, 2009).

- *Eco-centric Enterprises* stand at the relationship of commerce and environmental stewardship, endeavoring to harmonize economic activities with ecological preservation. Engaging in sustainable tourism, organic farming, or waste management, their core mission focuses on ecological balance and promoting sustainable consumption (Thompson & Doherty, 2006). Hall, Daneke, and Lenox (2010) highlight their role in shifting consumer behaviors towards environmentally friendly choices. Yet, these enterprises face dilemmas in scaling impact without overburdening resources and managing the cost implications of sustainable production vis-à-vis making green products accessible (Crane & Matten, 2016).
- *Health and Well-being Enterprises* are pivotal in democratizing access to healthcare and wellness services, particularly for underserved communities. Through technological innovations, partnerships, and community-based models, they bridge gaps in traditional healthcare delivery, offering solutions from telehealth services to mental health initiatives (Chell, Spence, Perrini, & Harris, 2016; Seelos & Mair, 2007). These enterprises must navigate evolving healthcare regulations, quality assurance, and trust-building among their beneficiaries, which is critical for sustained impact (Bloom & Chatterji, 2009).
- *Cultural Preservation Enterprises* operate to safeguard and promote heritage, arts, and indigenous practices, serving as custodians of cultural identity and historical continuity. Their work spans from traditional craftsmanship revival to language preservation efforts, with the potential to foster tourism, education, and community pride (Zimmerman & Zeitz, 2002). These enterprises, however, face challenges in

sustaining interest and funding and navigating the effects of globalization that might dilute or overshadow local cultures (Anderson, 2005).

This comprehensive overview of sector-specific models reveals the breadth of social entrepreneurship's potential to address multifaceted social and environmental challenges. The alignment of mission-driven strategies within specific sectors epitomizes social enterprises' innovative and adaptive nature, evidencing their crucial role in driving systemic societal changes. As social entrepreneurship continues to evolve, these sector-specific models highlight the importance of deep sectoral knowledge, stakeholder engagement, and sustained innovation in achieving impactful outcomes.

Legal Structures

The legal frameworks enveloping social enterprises are critical, delineating their governance, accountability, and financial stewardship. These structures, Cooperatives, Non-profits with Income-generating Activities, and Social Business Ventures provide distinct pathways for social enterprises, each embedding specific regulatory landscapes, privileges, and hurdles. The choice of legal structure significantly influences an enterprise's operational paradigm, the scope for scaling, and the nature and magnitude of its social impact. This nuanced relationship between legal structuring and social entrepreneurship necessitates an ongoing dialogue and reassessment to ensure these frameworks remain facilitative of meaningful social change.

- *Cooperatives* assert a democratic ethos, heralding membership participation in decision-making and policy formation. Birchall and Simmons (2009) focus on achieving a harmonious blend of social and economic aims underpinned by

member ownership and control. Borzaga and Galera (2012) articulate how cooperatives allow individual members to accomplish collectively what might be unattainable independently, emphasizing the power of collective effort. The resilience of cooperatives, especially during economic adversities, stems from their community anchorage and long-term outlook (Puusa & Hokkila, 2010). However, Münkner (2013) raises concerns about the challenges inherent in member-driven governance models, such as potential inefficiencies and capital constraints, given that profits are often reinvested or shared among members.

- *Non-profits incorporating Income-generating Activities* represent an evolutionary leap from traditional non-profit models reliant on donations and public funding. Eikenberry and Kluver (2004) discuss this emergent model's strategy to integrate market mechanisms to bolster social missions, aiming to diminish dependency on fluctuating external finances. Moss, Short, Payne, and Lumpkin (2011) contend that such diversification grants greater financial autonomy and scalability. This model's unique positioning allows for a more predictable and consistent mission investment but is not without its complications. As Foster and Bradach (2005) note, the balancing act between profitability and social mission is a prevalent challenge, underscoring the importance of maintaining equilibrium to prevent commercial pursuits from eclipsing social objectives.
- *Social Business Ventures*, as conceptualized by Muhammad Yunus, introduce a profit-making yet mission-driven approach within the social enterprise domain. Yunus, Moingeon, and Lehmann-Ortega (2010) define these ventures as prioritizing social or environmental objectives while maintaining a commitment to

profitability, a departure from the shareholder profit maximization model. The entrepreneurial vigor encapsulated by these ventures fosters innovation and scalability, potentially leading to more enduring solutions to societal issues (Dacin, Dacin, & Matear, 2010). Yet, integrating profit motives with social goals brings forth the dilemma of stakeholder alignment, particularly in contexts of external investment. Santos (2012) emphasizes the complexity of ensuring that such alignment remains steadfast, advocating for robust governance structures and meticulous impact evaluation frameworks.

This examination of legal structures highlights their integral role in defining the contours of social enterprise operations. The varied nature of these structures underscores a broader spectrum of strategies and challenges social entrepreneurs face in their quest to marry social impact with financial viability. The dynamic interplay between legal form and social entrepreneurship efficacy demands a refined understanding and continuous scrutiny to optimize social enterprises' contributions to societal well-being.

Digital Social Marketing in Social Enterprise

Digital social marketing within social enterprises represents a convergence of digital marketing strategies with the social missions that characterize these organizations. It involves using digital platforms and tools to further social causes, engage with various stakeholders, and promote products or services that socially conscious consumers value. As social enterprises navigate the complex terrain of achieving their social missions while ensuring economic viability, digital social marketing emerges as a pivotal strategy. These

complex combinations leverage digital channels' vast reach, economical, and interactive nature to amplify social impact, foster community engagement, and drive sustainable growth. The following discussion delves into the definition of digital social marketing and explores strategies within this context, grounding the discourse in academically rigorous studies and contemporary research findings.

Digital social marketing is defined by its dual focus on leveraging digital marketing tools to promote social causes and using these platforms to engage directly with communities and stakeholders (Chaffey & Smith, 2017). It goes beyond traditional marketing by embedding social missions into the core of marketing campaigns, creating narratives that resonate deeply with the target audience's values and aspirations (Tuten & Solomon, 2017). This approach not only aids in raising awareness about pertinent social issues but also drives tangible actions benefiting the social enterprise and its cause.

Strategies within digital social marketing encompass a range of tactics to optimize the use of digital platforms to achieve these ends. Content marketing, social media engagement, email campaigns, and influencer collaborations are among the key strategies employed by social enterprises.

Content marketing in this space is characterized by creating and distributing valuable, relevant, and consistent content designed to attract and retain a clearly defined audience. The goal is to drive profitable customer action but with the added layer of fostering social change (Pulizzi, 2014). By sharing stories of impact, educational resources on social issues, and insights into the enterprise's work, social enterprises can build a loyal community of supporters and advocates online.

Social media engagement is another crucial strategy, utilizing platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to foster a two-way dialogue with followers. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) emphasize the importance of being present on platforms where stakeholders are active and engaging with them meaningfully. This strategy allows for real-time feedback, viral marketing opportunities, and heightened visibility for social campaigns.

Email campaigns, tailored to various segments of the social enterprise's audience, provide a direct line of communication to supporters, beneficiaries, and customers (Chaffey, 2019). These campaigns can disseminate impact reports, fundraising appeals, and updates about the enterprise's activities, facilitating a deeper connection with the mission and ongoing projects.

Influencer collaborations represent a newer yet increasingly significant digital social marketing strategy. By partnering with influencers who share the social enterprise's values, organizations can tap into the influencer's audience, gaining access to a broader or more engaged community. Freberg, Graham, McGaughey, and Freberg (2011) suggest that authenticity is key in these collaborations, as the influencer's genuine endorsement can enhance credibility and attract support from a wider audience.

Digital social marketing for social enterprises encompasses using digital platforms to further social goals, engage with stakeholders, and promote products or services with a social impact. It necessitates a nuanced understanding of digital marketing principles and a deep commitment to social change. By integrating content marketing, social media engagement, email campaigns, and influencer collaborations, social enterprises can amplify their message, foster community engagement, and drive meaningful actions. As

the digital landscape evolves, so will social enterprises' strategies, reflecting the dynamic interplay between technology, society, and social change.

Evolution and Significance

The evolution of digital social marketing within social enterprises represents a significant shift in how these organizations engage with stakeholders and promote their social missions. This transformation is deeply rooted in the broader digital revolution that has reshaped communication and marketing practices across industries. As social enterprises navigate the complex terrain of achieving their social missions while ensuring economic viability, digital social marketing has emerged as a pivotal strategy, leveraging the vast reach, economical, and interactive nature of digital platforms to amplify social impact, foster community engagement, and drive sustainable growth.

The beginning of digital social marketing can be traced back to the early adoption of digital platforms by businesses for commercial marketing purposes. With the advent of the internet and social media, organizations began exploring online spaces for marketing, initially focusing on traditional, often one-way, marketing communications (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010). However, it was not until the creation of social media platforms and the increasing societal emphasis on social responsibility that social enterprises started harnessing these digital tools for social marketing (Andreasen, 2002). This evolution marked a shift towards more interactive, engagement-focused strategies that leverage the participatory nature of digital platforms (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

The significance of digital social marketing for social enterprises lies in its ability to democratize marketing efforts, making them accessible even to organizations with limited

resources. Through digital platforms, social enterprises can reach a global audience, enabling them to spread their social missions far and wide (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019). This democratization has been instrumental in leveling the playing field, allowing smaller social enterprises to gain visibility alongside larger organizations. Furthermore, digital social marketing facilitates real-time engagement with stakeholders, including beneficiaries, supporters, volunteers, and customers. This interactive communication allows for immediate feedback, community building, and enhanced engagement, fostering a two-way dialogue vital for the participative nature of social enterprises (Mangold & Faulds, 2009).

The evolution of digital social marketing has also been characterized by the integration of content marketing strategies tailored to the unique needs of social enterprises. Content marketing in this space is distinguished by creating and distributing valuable, relevant, and consistent content designed to attract and retain a clearly defined audience, with the goal of driving profitable customer action while fostering social change (Pulizzi, 2014). By sharing stories of impact, educational resources on social issues, and insights into the enterprise's work, social enterprises can build a loyal community of supporters and advocates online.

Email campaigns, tailored to various segments of the social enterprise's audience, provide a direct line of communication to supporters, beneficiaries, and customers (Chaffey, 2019). These campaigns can disseminate impact reports, fundraising appeals, and updates about the enterprise's activities, facilitating a deeper connection with the mission and ongoing projects.

The significance of digital social marketing in social enterprises is further underscored by its role in driving innovation. By engaging with diverse audiences through digital platforms, social enterprises can gather insights and feedback that fuel innovation in tackling social problems (Nambisan, 2017). This iterative process, supported by digital interactions, allows social enterprises to refine their approaches to social issues, ensuring they remain relevant and effective in their interventions.

Moreover, digital social marketing plays a pivotal role in enhancing transparency and accountability, which are critical components of the success of social enterprises (Greenberg & MacAulay, 2009). Through digital platforms, social enterprises can regularly share updates on their activities, impact indicators, and financial information, fostering trust and credibility with their stakeholders. This transparency not only strengthens relationships with existing supporters but also attracts new ones who value openness and accountability in the organizations they support.

The evolution of digital social marketing has also seen the rise of influencer collaborations as a significant strategy. By partnering with influencers who share the social enterprise's values, organizations can tap into the influencer's audience, gaining access to a broader or more engaged community. Freberg, Graham, McGaughey, and Freberg (2011) suggest that authenticity is key in these collaborations, as the influencer's genuine endorsement can enhance credibility and attract support from a wider audience.

As digital social marketing continues to evolve, it promises to empower social enterprises further in their endeavors to effect social change and contribute to a more equitable and sustainable world. The ongoing development of new digital technologies and platforms presents continuous opportunities for social enterprises to innovate in their

marketing approaches, reaching and engaging stakeholders in increasingly effective and meaningful ways.

Challenges and Opportunities

While digital social marketing offers significant opportunities for social enterprises, it also presents a unique set of challenges that require careful navigation. Understanding these challenges and opportunities is crucial for social enterprises to effectively leverage digital platforms in pursuit of their social missions.

One of the foremost challenges is the digital divide and inequalities in internet access and digital literacy. This gap can limit the reach of digital marketing efforts to those within digital access corridors, potentially excluding marginalized and underserved populations (Ragnedda & Muschert, 2013). Such a divide underscores the importance of inclusive strategies that consider diverse needs and capabilities. Social enterprises must be mindful of this challenge and develop strategies that combine digital outreach with traditional methods to ensure comprehensive engagement with all stakeholders, including those with limited digital access.

The dynamic and ever-evolving nature of digital platforms presents another significant challenge. To remain effective, social enterprises must stay abreast of the latest digital trends, tools, and algorithms. This requirement can strain resources, especially for organizations with limited budgets and capacities (Kane et al., 2016). The rapid pace of digital innovation necessitates continuous learning and adaptation, which can be particularly challenging for smaller social enterprises or those operating in resource-constrained environments.

Managing online reputation poses another challenge, as digital spaces can amplify negative feedback or misinformation, potentially harming the organization's image and trust with stakeholders (Kietzmann et al., 2011). Social enterprises must be prepared to respond swiftly and effectively to online criticism or crises, maintaining transparency and authenticity in their communications. This requires developing robust crisis management strategies and fostering a culture of open dialogue with stakeholders.

The oversaturation of online content presents a significant hurdle for social enterprises seeking to stand out in the digital landscape. With a deluge of information vying for attention, social enterprises must create highly engaging and differentiated content to capture and retain audience interest. This necessitates creativity, investment, and a deep understanding of audience needs and preferences, which may be daunting for some organizations (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Developing a unique voice and compelling narrative that resonates with the target audience is crucial for cutting through the digital noise.

Measuring the impact of digital social marketing efforts presents another challenge. While digital platforms offer extensive analytics and data, translating these indicators into meaningful evaluations of social impact can be complex. Social enterprises must develop frameworks that go beyond traditional marketing indicators to capture the nuanced outcomes of their digital engagement efforts in terms of social change and mission fulfillment (Lovejoy & Saxton, 2012).

Despite these challenges, digital social marketing also presents significant opportunities for social enterprises. The global reach of digital platforms allows social enterprises to connect with a broader audience, transcending geographical limitations.

This expansive reach is instrumental in raising awareness for social causes, attracting support, and mobilizing resources on an unprecedented scale (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019). Social enterprises can leverage this global connectivity to build international networks of supporters, collaborators, and beneficiaries, enhancing their impact and scale.

The interactive nature of digital media facilitates direct engagement with stakeholders, fostering a sense of community and belonging that is vital for sustaining social initiatives (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). This two-way communication enables social enterprises to build deeper relationships with their supporters, gather real-time feedback, and co-create solutions with their beneficiaries. Such engagement can lead to increased loyalty, advocacy, and long-term support for the social enterprise's mission.

Digital tools also offer enhanced data analysis and insights capabilities, allowing for a deeper understanding of audience behaviors, preferences, and engagement patterns. Such analytics can inform more targeted and effective marketing strategies, optimizing resource allocation and impact (Kane et al., 2016). By leveraging these insights, social enterprises can tailor their messaging, content, and engagement strategies to resonate more effectively with different stakeholder groups.

The cost-effectiveness of many digital marketing tools presents a significant opportunity for resource-constrained social enterprises. Compared to traditional marketing methods, digital platforms often offer more affordable options for reaching and engaging audiences. This accessibility allows even small or nascent social enterprises to develop impactful marketing campaigns and compete for attention alongside larger organizations (Tuten & Solomon, 2017).

Digital social marketing also provides opportunities for innovative storytelling and impact demonstration. Social enterprises can leverage multimedia content, interactive experiences, and user-generated content to bring their missions to life and showcase their impact in compelling ways. This can be particularly powerful in educating audiences about complex social issues and inspiring action (Lovejoy & Saxton, 2012).

The rise of social media influencers and digital ambassadors presents another opportunity for social enterprises to amplify their messages and reach new audiences. Collaborations with influencers who align with the social enterprise's values can lend credibility and expand reach, particularly among younger demographics (Freberg et al., 2011).

Furthermore, digital platforms offer opportunities for social enterprises to diversify their revenue streams through e-commerce, crowdfunding, and digital fundraising campaigns. These digital avenues can complement traditional funding sources and enhance the financial sustainability of social enterprises (Austin, Stevenson, & Wei-Skillern, 2006).

In navigating these challenges and opportunities, social enterprises must adopt strategic, innovative, and inclusive approaches to digital social marketing. This may involve developing hybrid strategies that combine digital and traditional outreach methods, ensuring more comprehensive access and inclusivity. Embracing collaborative and partnership models can also strengthen digital marketing efforts. Collaborations with tech companies, digital experts, and other social enterprises can enhance digital capacities, share resources, and extend reach (Austin, Stevenson, & Wei-Skillern, 2006).

Adopting a data-driven approach to digital social marketing can help understand and segment audiences more effectively, allowing for personalized and impactful engagements (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019). However, this must be balanced with a commitment to privacy and ethical data use, ensuring that digital marketing practices align with the values and mission of the social enterprise.

While digital social marketing presents significant challenges for social enterprises, it also offers unprecedented opportunities for impact, engagement, and growth. By thoughtfully navigating these challenges and strategically leveraging the opportunities, social enterprises can harness the power of digital platforms to amplify their social missions, build stronger communities, and drive meaningful change in an increasingly connected world.

Paid Digital Social Marketing Strategies

Paid digital social marketing strategies have become increasingly important for social enterprises seeking to amplify their reach and impact in the digital landscape. These strategies offer several advantages over organic approaches, including speed to market, campaign sustainability, and increased message frequency. However, they also require careful consideration of budget constraints and platform selection.

One of the primary advantages of paid digital social marketing strategies is the speed at which campaigns can be launched and scaled. Unlike organic content, which often requires time to gain traction and visibility, paid advertisements can immediately appear in front of target audiences. This rapid deployment is particularly beneficial for social enterprises with time-sensitive messages or limited-time offerings. For instance, a

social enterprise launching a new product with a social impact component can use paid advertising to quickly generate awareness and drive initial sales, capitalizing on the momentum of the launch (Tuten & Solomon, 2017).

Campaign sustainability is another key advantage of paid strategies. While organic reach on social media platforms has declined over the years, paid advertisements provide a consistent and predictable way to maintain visibility. Social enterprises can ensure their messages continue to reach their target audience over extended periods by allocating budget to ongoing campaigns. This sustained presence is crucial for building brand recognition and maintaining engagement with supporters and potential customers (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019).

Increased message frequency is a third significant benefit of paid digital social marketing. Through paid advertising, social enterprises can control how often their target audience sees their messages, reinforcing key points and increasing the likelihood of action. This repetition is particularly important for social enterprises aiming to educate audiences about complex social issues or promote behavior change. Research has shown that repeated exposure to messages can significantly impact recall and persuasion, making paid strategies an effective tool for social enterprises seeking to drive meaningful change (Voorveld et al., 2018).

When considering platforms for paid social media advertising, social enterprises have a range of options, each with its unique strengths and audience demographics. Facebook and Instagram, both part of Meta's advertising ecosystem, offer extensive targeting capabilities and a wide user base, making them popular choices for many social enterprises. These platforms allow for precise audience segmentation based on interests,

behaviors, and demographics, enabling social enterprises to reach those most likely to engage with their mission (Kemp, 2023).

LinkedIn, while often more expensive, provides valuable opportunities for B2B social enterprises or those targeting professionals and decision-makers. Its targeting options based on job titles, industries, and company sizes can be particularly effective for social enterprises operating in specific sectors or seeking partnerships with businesses (Newberry, 2023).

Twitter offers real-time engagement opportunities and is often used for cause-related campaigns and public awareness initiatives. Its ad formats, including promoted tweets and trends, can help social enterprises join broader conversations and increase visibility around specific issues or events (Agrawal, 2022).

YouTube, as the second-largest search engine after Google, presents opportunities for social enterprises to share more in-depth content through video advertisements. This platform can be particularly effective for storytelling and demonstrating the impact of social initiatives (Cooper, 2023).

Emerging platforms like TikTok are gaining traction, especially among younger audiences. While still evolving their advertising offerings, these platforms can provide innovative ways for social enterprises to reach new demographics and experiment with creative content formats (Sehl, 2023).

Budget considerations are paramount for social enterprises when implementing paid digital social marketing strategies. Unlike larger corporations, social enterprises often operate with limited resources and must carefully balance their marketing expenditures with their social mission. According to some industry benchmarks, new organizations

should allocate between 12% to 20% of their revenue to marketing, while more established entities might budget 6% to 12% (Prosper Strategies, 2018). However, these figures can vary significantly based on the specific goals, stage of growth, and sector of the social enterprise.

When determining advertising budgets, social enterprises must consider several factors. First, they need to align their spending with specific, measurable objectives, whether that's increasing brand awareness, driving website traffic, or generating leads for their programs. Setting clear key performance indicators (KPIs) helps in allocating resources effectively and measuring return on investment (ROI) (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019).

Social enterprises should also consider the cost structures of different platforms. For instance, Facebook and Instagram generally offer lower cost-per-click (CPC) rates compared to LinkedIn, but the latter might provide more qualified leads for certain B2B social enterprises. Understanding these cost dynamics is crucial for optimizing budget allocation across platforms (Newberry, 2023).

Additionally, social enterprises must factor in the costs associated with creating high-quality content for their paid campaigns. This includes expenses for graphic design, video production, and copywriting. While some platforms offer tools to create ads within their ecosystems, investing in compelling content can significantly impact campaign performance (Tuten & Solomon, 2017).

It's also important for social enterprises to consider the seasonality of their operations and adjust their advertising budgets accordingly. For instance, a social enterprise focused on educational programs might increase their ad spend during back-

to-school seasons, while one working on environmental issues might ramp up campaigns around Earth Day (Voorveld et al., 2018).

Lastly, social enterprises should approach paid digital social marketing with a test-and-learn mindset. Starting with smaller budgets and gradually scaling based on performance can help mitigate risks and ensure efficient use of resources. This approach allows for experimentation with different platforms, ad formats, and messaging to identify the most effective strategies for reaching and engaging target audiences (Agrawal, 2022). Paid digital social marketing strategies offer significant advantages for social enterprises in terms of speed to market, campaign sustainability, and message frequency. By carefully selecting appropriate platforms and thoughtfully allocating budgets, social enterprises can leverage these strategies to amplify their impact and advance their missions in the digital age. However, it's crucial to approach paid advertising with clear objectives, a willingness to experiment, and a keen eye on ROI to ensure that marketing efforts align with and support the broader goals of the social enterprise.

Organic Digital Social Marketing Strategies

Organic digital social marketing strategies have become increasingly important for social enterprises seeking to establish a strong online presence and engage with their target audiences effectively. These strategies involve utilizing social media platforms and other digital channels to create and share content without paid promotion, relying instead on organic reach and engagement. While organic strategies offer several benefits, they also come with limitations that social enterprises must navigate, particularly in the context of resource constraints.

One of the primary benefits of organic digital social marketing strategies is their cost-effectiveness. Unlike paid advertising, organic strategies allow social enterprises to reach and engage with their audience without direct financial investment in promotion. This aspect is particularly advantageous for resource-constrained organizations, as it enables them to establish a digital presence and build relationships with stakeholders without significant monetary outlay (Tuten & Solomon, 2017). The low barrier to entry for organic strategies means that even small or nascent social enterprises can compete for attention alongside larger organizations, leveling the playing field to some extent.

Moreover, organic strategies foster authenticity and trust-building with the audience. By sharing genuine, value-driven content, social enterprises can cultivate a loyal community of followers who are genuinely interested in their mission and activities. This authentic engagement is crucial for social enterprises, as it aligns with their values-driven approach and can lead to more meaningful, long-term relationships with supporters, volunteers, and beneficiaries (Lovejoy & Saxton, 2012). The interactive nature of organic social media allows for two-way communication, enabling social

enterprises to respond to queries, address concerns, and gather valuable feedback from their community in real-time.

Furthermore, organic strategies provide social enterprises with valuable insights into their audience's preferences and behaviors. Through analytics tools provided by social media platforms, organizations can gain a deeper understanding of what content resonates with their audience, when they are most active, and how they interact with different types of posts. These insights can inform future content strategies and help social enterprises tailor their messaging to maximize engagement and impact (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019).

However, organic digital social marketing strategies also come with notable limitations. One of the most significant challenges is the declining organic reach on many social media platforms. As these platforms have become increasingly saturated with content and have shifted towards pay-to-play models, the visibility of organic posts has diminished. For instance, studies have shown that the average organic reach for Facebook posts is only about 5.2% of a page's total likes (Hootsuite, 2021). This decline in reach means that social enterprises must work harder to ensure their content is seen by their target audience, often requiring more frequent posting and highly engaging content to cut through the noise.

Another limitation is the time and effort required to maintain an effective organic social media presence. Creating high-quality, engaging content on a consistent basis demands significant resources in terms of time, creativity, and expertise. For social enterprises operating with limited staff and resources, this ongoing commitment can be challenging to sustain alongside other operational priorities (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

The need for continuous content creation and community management can strain already stretched teams, potentially leading to burnout or inconsistent online presence.

The engagement potential of organic strategies can be limited by the algorithmic nature of social media platforms. These algorithms often prioritize content from friends and family over that of businesses and organizations, making it harder for social enterprises to achieve consistent visibility in their followers' feeds. Additionally, the frequent changes to these algorithms require social enterprises to stay informed and adapt their strategies regularly, which can be resource-intensive and challenging for organizations with limited digital marketing expertise. (Kietzmann et al., 2011).

Despite these limitations, many social enterprises, particularly those operating under resource constraints, rely heavily on organic post utilization as a primary means of digital engagement. This approach necessitates creative and strategic thinking to maximize the impact of limited resources. For instance, social enterprises often leverage user-generated content, encouraging their supporters to share stories, photos, and experiences related to their cause. This not only provides a steady stream of authentic content but also increases engagement and community building (Mangold & Faulds, 2009).

Another strategy employed by resource-constrained social enterprises is the repurposing of content across multiple platforms and formats. A single piece of content, such as a blog post or video, can be adapted into various social media posts, infographics, or short clips, maximizing its reach and longevity. This approach helps social enterprises maintain a consistent online presence without the need for constant new content creation (Pulizzi, 2014).

Collaboration and partnerships also play a crucial role in organic social media strategies for resource-constrained social enterprises. By partnering with like-minded organizations, influencers, or volunteers, these enterprises can expand their reach and tap into new audiences without significant financial investment. Such collaborations can take the form of content sharing, joint campaigns, or cross-promotion, allowing social enterprises to leverage the networks and resources of their partners (Austin et al., 2006).

Moreover, social enterprises often focus on building a strong, engaged community rather than pursuing rapid growth in follower numbers. This community-centric approach aligns well with organic strategies, as it emphasizes quality interactions over quantity. By fostering deep connections with a core group of supporters, social enterprises can create a network of advocates who amplify their message organically, extending their reach beyond what paid strategies might achieve (Kanter & Fine, 2010).

While organic digital social marketing strategies offer numerous benefits for social enterprises, including cost-effectiveness, authenticity, and valuable audience insights, they also present challenges such as limited reach and resource-intensive maintenance. For social enterprises operating under resource constraints, the utilization of organic posts requires strategic thinking, creativity, and a focus on community building to maximize impact. By leveraging user-generated content, repurposing materials, fostering collaborations, and prioritizing meaningful engagement, social enterprises can navigate these limitations and effectively harness the power of organic digital social marketing to advance their missions and create lasting social impact.

Digital Social Marketing Strategies Across the Product Lifecycle

The product lifecycle concept, when applied to social enterprises, offers valuable insights into how digital social marketing strategies can be tailored to different stages of an organization's development and market presence. This framework is particularly relevant for social enterprises as they navigate the unique challenges of balancing social impact with financial sustainability. While the product lifecycle typically encompasses introduction, growth, maturity, and decline stages, this discussion will focus primarily on the introduction stage, which is critical for social enterprises in establishing their presence and mission in the market.

The introduction stage is characterized by the initial launch of a social enterprise's products, services, or initiatives into the market. During this phase, the primary objectives are to create awareness, educate potential stakeholders about the social mission, and build a strong brand identity. Digital social marketing strategies play a crucial role in achieving these objectives, leveraging the reach and interactivity of digital platforms to connect with target audiences effectively and cost-efficiently.

One of the key strategies for social enterprises in the introduction stage is to focus on awareness creation. This involves utilizing various digital channels to introduce the organization, its mission, and its offerings to potential customers, beneficiaries, and supporters. Social media platforms, in particular, offer powerful tools for raising awareness. For instance, Facebook and Instagram can be used to share visually compelling content that tells the story of the social enterprise and its impact. As noted by Tuten and Solomon (2017), social media marketing allows for rapid dissemination of

information and the potential for content to go viral, which can be particularly beneficial for social enterprises looking to quickly establish their presence.

Content marketing is another crucial strategy for awareness creation and education during the introduction stage. By producing and sharing valuable, relevant content that addresses the social issues the enterprise aims to tackle, organizations can position themselves as thought leaders and build credibility with their target audience. This approach aligns with the findings of Pulizzi (2014), who emphasizes the importance of content marketing in attracting and retaining a clearly defined audience. For social enterprises, this might involve creating blog posts, infographics, or video content that educates viewers about the social problem and how the enterprise's products or services contribute to the solution.

Email marketing, despite being one of the older digital marketing techniques, remains an effective tool for social enterprises in the introduction stage. It allows for direct communication with interested parties, providing a platform for more in-depth education about the enterprise's mission and offerings. As highlighted by Chaffey (2019), email marketing can be particularly effective for nurturing leads and building relationships with potential supporters or customers over time.

In terms of brand building, social enterprises in the introduction stage can leverage digital platforms to create a strong, mission-driven brand identity. This involves consistently communicating the organization's values, vision, and unique selling proposition across all digital touchpoints. Social media, in particular, offers opportunities for authentic brand storytelling. By sharing behind-the-scenes content, founder stories, and beneficiary testimonials, social enterprises can humanize their brand and create

emotional connections with their audience. This approach is supported by research from Lovejoy and Saxton (2012), who found that nonprofits and social enterprises that use social media for dialogic communication and community-building are more successful in engaging stakeholders.

Influencer partnerships can also be an effective strategy for brand building and awareness creation during the introduction stage. By collaborating with influencers who align with the social enterprise's values and have a following that matches the target audience, organizations can expand their reach and gain credibility through association. However, as noted by Freberg et al. (2011), it's crucial to ensure that these partnerships are authentic and align with the enterprise's mission to maintain trust with the audience.

Search engine optimization (SEO) is another critical digital marketing strategy for social enterprises in the introduction stage. By optimizing website content and structure for relevant keywords related to their mission and offerings, social enterprises can improve their visibility in search engine results. This organic approach to digital marketing can be particularly beneficial for resource-constrained organizations, as it provides a long-term, cost-effective way to attract interested parties to the enterprise's website. Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2019) emphasize the importance of SEO in driving targeted traffic and building online authority.

Paid digital advertising, while requiring financial investment, can be an effective way for social enterprises to quickly gain visibility during the introduction stage. Platforms like Google Ads and social media advertising offer precise targeting options, allowing organizations to reach specific demographics or interest groups that align with their mission. However, as noted by Tuten and Solomon (2017), it's important for social

enterprises to carefully consider their budget allocation and return on investment when engaging in paid advertising.

Crowdfunding campaigns, facilitated through digital platforms, can serve a dual purpose for social enterprises in the introduction stage. Not only do they provide a means of raising initial capital, but they also serve as powerful marketing tools for creating awareness and building a community of supporters. Platforms like Kickstarter or Indiegogo allow social enterprises to showcase their mission, products, and impact potential to a wide audience. This approach aligns with the findings of Mollick (2014), who highlights the marketing benefits of crowdfunding beyond mere fundraising.

Digital social marketing strategies offer a diverse toolkit for social enterprises navigating the introduction stage of their lifecycle. By focusing on awareness creation, education, and brand building through various digital channels, these organizations can effectively establish their presence, communicate their mission, and lay the groundwork for future growth and impact. The key lies in strategically combining these approaches in a way that resonates with the target audience and aligns with the enterprise's resources and objectives. As social enterprises progress through subsequent stages of the product lifecycle, these digital strategies can be adapted and refined to support evolving goals and challenges.

Platform-Specific Content Creation

The digital landscape has transformed how social enterprises engage with their stakeholders, necessitating a nuanced approach to content creation that considers the unique characteristics of each social media platform. This platform-specific content creation strategy is crucial for maximizing engagement, reach, and impact in the digital realm. Social enterprises must tailor their content, adapt their messaging and format, and leverage platform-specific features and tools to effectively communicate their mission and engage their target audiences across various digital channels.

Tailoring content for different social media platforms is a fundamental aspect of effective digital social marketing for social enterprises. Each platform has its own unique user base, content preferences, and engagement patterns, requiring organizations to customize their approach accordingly. For instance, LinkedIn's professional audience may respond better to industry insights and thought leadership content, while Instagram's visually-oriented platform might be more suitable for showcasing impactful imagery and short-form videos highlighting the social enterprise's work (Tuten & Solomon, 2017). This tailoring process involves not just adapting the content itself but also considering the tone, style, and format that resonate best with each platform's user base.

Facebook, with its diverse user demographics and various content formats, allows social enterprises to share a mix of text, images, and videos, making it ideal for storytelling and community building. As noted by Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), Facebook's algorithm favors content that generates meaningful interactions, encouraging social enterprises to create posts that spark conversations and foster community engagement. In contrast, Twitter's fast-paced environment and character limit necessitate concise, impactful

messages that can quickly capture attention and drive engagement through hashtags and trending topics (Kwak et al., 2010).

Instagram's visual-centric platform offers social enterprises an opportunity to showcase their impact through compelling imagery and short-form videos. The platform's Stories and Reels features provide additional avenues for creative storytelling and behind-the-scenes glimpses into the organization's work. As highlighted by Lee et al. (2015), Instagram users tend to engage more with authentic, visually appealing content that tells a story or evokes emotion, making it an ideal platform for social enterprises to share their mission and impact visually.

Adapting messaging and format to platform characteristics is crucial for ensuring that content resonates with the intended audience and aligns with platform norms. This adaptation goes beyond mere resizing of images or shortening of text; it involves a fundamental rethinking of how the message is presented and consumed on each platform. For example, while a long-form blog post might be appropriate for a social enterprise's website, that same content would need to be significantly condensed and reformatted for platforms like Twitter or Instagram. Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2019) emphasize the importance of understanding each platform's content consumption patterns and adapting accordingly to maximize engagement and reach.

On LinkedIn, social enterprises might focus on professional-toned articles and updates that highlight their organizational achievements, partnerships, and industry insights. The platform's preference for longer-form content allows for more in-depth exploration of topics relevant to the social enterprise's mission and impact. Conversely, platforms like TikTok or Instagram Reels demand short, engaging video content that can

quickly capture attention and convey a message in seconds. This stark contrast in content format and delivery underscores the need for social enterprises to be versatile in their content creation approach, adapting their core messages to fit the unique characteristics of each platform (Voorveld et al., 2018).

Leveraging platform-specific features and tools is another critical aspect of effective platform-specific content creation. Each social media platform offers unique features designed to enhance user engagement and content visibility. Social enterprises that skillfully utilize these tools can significantly boost their digital presence and impact. For instance, Facebook's live streaming feature allows organizations to host real-time Q&A sessions, virtual events, or behind-the-scenes tours, fostering a sense of immediacy and connection with their audience. Instagram's interactive stickers in Stories, such as polls, questions, and quizzes, provide opportunities for social enterprises to engage their followers directly and gather valuable feedback (Bayer et al., 2016).

Twitter's hashtags and trending topics offer social enterprises a way to join larger conversations and increase their visibility around relevant social issues. By strategically using hashtags and participating in trending discussions, organizations can amplify their message and reach new audiences interested in their cause. LinkedIn's article publishing feature allows social enterprises to position themselves as thought leaders in their field, sharing in-depth insights and analysis that can attract potential partners, donors, or collaborators (Kietzmann et al., 2011).

Moreover, many platforms offer analytical tools that provide insights into content engagement, audience demographics, and interaction patterns. Social enterprises can leverage these tools to refine their content strategy continuously, ensuring that their

efforts align with their mission and resonate with their target audience. As noted by Keegan and Rowley (2017), data-driven decision-making in social media marketing can significantly enhance community engagement and mission-market alignment through digital storytelling strategies.

The rise of ephemeral content, such as Instagram and Facebook Stories, presents both challenges and opportunities for social enterprises. These temporary posts, which disappear after 24 hours, can create a sense of urgency and exclusivity, encouraging followers to engage more frequently with the organization's content. However, they also require a different approach to content creation, focusing on timely, authentic moments that can build a more personal connection with the audience (Phua et al., 2017).

Platform-specific content creation is a multifaceted approach that requires social enterprises to deeply understand each platform's unique characteristics, user behaviors, and engagement patterns. By tailoring content, adapting messaging and format, and leveraging platform-specific features and tools, social enterprises can create more effective, engaging digital marketing strategies that resonate with their target audiences across various social media channels. This nuanced approach not only enhances visibility and engagement but also allows social enterprises to communicate their mission and impact more effectively in the digital space, ultimately contributing to their broader goals of social change and impact.

Social Enterprises in the Philippines

The landscape of social enterprises in the Philippines offers a compelling reflection of how such entities can drive substantial social and economic changes within developing countries. These organizations, which include the boundary between non-profit missions and for-profit drives, embrace various operational models and strategic orientations to address the country's multifaceted social challenges. According to Alter (2007), understanding the operational complexities of social enterprises can be approached by examining their mission orientation, revenue generation methods, sectors of operation, and legal structures.

In the context of the Philippines, social enterprises exhibit a rich tapestry of mission orientations. Many are primarily mission-centric, focusing intently on social or environmental goals. Gawad Kalinga, for instance, is emblematic of a mission-centric approach, with poverty alleviation at the core of its sustainable community development projects (Canare, Francisco, & Piza, 2017). Conversely, hybrid models like Human Nature demonstrate how enterprises can intertwine profit-making activities with social objectives, shedding light on the potential for sustainable business practices to contribute to societal welfare (Canare et al., 2017).

Regarding revenue generation, Filipino social enterprises display a broad spectrum of strategies. Rags2Riches exemplifies entities reliant on the sale of goods, leveraging eco-ethical fashion as a vehicle for social change (Mendoza & Thalberg, 2013). Others, such as specific healthcare and educational initiatives, might prioritize service fees as their primary revenue stream. This diversity in revenue generation reflects

strategic adaptability, allowing these enterprises to navigate the economic landscape effectively while pursuing their social objectives.

Examining the sectors of operation further reveals the breadth of impact these social enterprises have across the Philippines. From agriculture, where entities like Bayani Brew collaborate with local farmers, to arts and culture, where initiatives like the School of Living Traditions preserve indigenous heritage, the role of social enterprises in fostering economic and cultural sustainability is evident (Serrano, 2016). This sectoral diversity showcases the potential for social enterprises to address various dimensions of socio-economic development.

The legal structures underpinning social enterprises in the Philippines are similarly diverse, ranging from foundations and non-profits to corporations and cooperatives. This diversity reflects the operational needs and strategic orientations of these entities and points to the broader ecosystem within which they operate. The choice of legal structure can significantly impact an enterprise's ability to scale, secure funding, and achieve its mission objectives (Canare et al., 2017).

Despite these opportunities, social enterprises in the Philippines face considerable challenges. Balancing profit objectives with social missions often presents a complex dilemma, particularly in scenarios where these goals appear contradictory (Mendoza & Thalberg, 2013). Additionally, while there is growing recognition of the value these enterprises bring, the policy framework and support mechanisms sometimes lag, posing hurdles in terms of funding, scalability, and operational efficiency (Magno-Ballesteros & Llanto, 2017).

The nuanced landscape of social enterprises in the Philippines, characterized by diverse mission orientations, revenue models, sectors of operation, and legal structures, mirrors Alter's (2007) typologies, providing a concrete example of these theoretical frameworks in action. As these enterprises navigate the interplay between mission fulfillment and economic sustainability, they contribute substantially to societal well-being, economic inclusivity, and environmental sustainability. This dynamic field remains ripe for further research, particularly in exploring how enhanced policy support and innovation in business models can amplify the positive impact of social enterprises.

Growth and Expansion of Social Enterprises in the Philippines

The growth and expansion of social enterprises in the Philippines over recent decades provide a profound lens through which to view the dynamics of socio-economic development within the country. This evolution from grassroots movements aimed at poverty alleviation and community development in the 1970s and 1980s to sophisticated ventures that ingeniously blend profitability with social impact marks a significant transformation in the landscape of Filipino social entrepreneurship (Luna, 2016). Notably, this trajectory has been influenced by macro and micro factors, including rapid urbanization, the acute impacts of global phenomena such as climate change, and the rich cultural tapestry native to the Philippines (Dacanay, 2013; Martin, 2017).

From a macro perspective, the comparison of rapid urban development alongside persistent rural poverty created a fertile ground for social enterprise interventions focused on improving livelihoods, enhancing access to resources, and mitigating the effects of environmental degradation. Climate change, in particular, has had a pronounced impact

on the archipelago, catalyzing the emergence of eco-centric social enterprises aimed at environmental preservation and sustainable livelihoods (Dacanay, 2013). These enterprises address immediate community needs and contribute to broader ecological resilience.

On the micro-level, Philippine social enterprises have tapped into the wealth of indigenous crafts, traditions, and knowledge systems, driving economic development while preserving cultural heritage. Enterprises such as Rags2Riches and ANTHILL Fabric Gallery exemplify this approach, leveraging traditional craftsmanship to create sustainable and scalable business models that offer socio-economic upliftment to local communities (Martin, 2017). These initiatives underscore the potential for social enterprises to serve as custodians of cultural legacy while fostering economic inclusion.

Sectoral diversity is another defining feature of the Philippine social enterprise ecosystem. From agriculture and healthcare to education and technology, social enterprises have ventured into various domains, addressing distinct societal challenges. Agriterra and Enchanted Farm have made notable contributions to empowering local farmers and promoting sustainable agricultural practices. At the same time, platforms like Edukasyon. Ph has aimed to democratize access to education for Filipino youth (Gutierrez, 2019). This sectoral breadth underscores the versatility of social enterprises in tackling diverse development issues.

The ecosystem supporting the growth of these enterprises has also evolved, with educational institutions, funding mechanisms, and local government policies playing pivotal roles. Academic programs focused on social entrepreneurship and the start of impact investing have provided critical support and resources, facilitating the scaling and

sustainability of these ventures (Montalbo, 2018; Magno-Ballesteros & Llanto, 2017). Such developments illustrate the collaborative effort across sectors to nurture the social enterprise landscape in the Philippines.

However, growth challenges persist, particularly regarding scalability, capital access, and balancing profit with a social mission, and a debate is echoed globally within the social enterprise discourse (Canare, Francisco, & Piza, 2017). Navigating these challenges requires innovative solutions, a supportive policy framework, and a robust ecosystem that fosters partnerships, knowledge sharing, and capacity building.

In exploring the growth and expansion of social enterprises in the Philippines, it's crucial to consider the interplay of cultural, economic, and environmental factors that shape their development. These enterprises embody a shift towards more sustainable and equitable growth models, reflecting a broader philosophical reorientation towards integrating economic viability with social and environmental stewardship. As this sector continues to evolve, it represents the resilience and innovation inherent in the Filipino spirit and a potential blueprint for socio-economic development in other contexts.

Policies and Regulations for Social Enterprises in the Philippines

The legislative landscape for social enterprises in the Philippines navigates a complex interplay between grassroots-led developments and structured policy advancements. This comparison creates a multifaceted regulatory framework that reflects the sector's innate dynamism and evolving official recognition. Initiatives dating back to the 1990s set the stage for a legislative environment that, while not initially designed for social enterprises, supported collective and non-profit endeavors aimed at socio-economic development (Marquez, 2015). The Cooperative Code of the Philippines

(Republic Act No. 6938), introduced in 1990, epitomizes early legislative support, promoting collective business activities for mutual benefits.

The surge of social enterprises in the early 21st century underscored the necessity for regulations acknowledging their unique position, neither traditional NGOs nor purely for-profit entities. The Poverty Reduction Through Social Entrepreneurship (PRESENT) Bill stands out in this regard, offering a framework specifically for social enterprises, including proposed fiscal incentives and a dedicated support council, despite its protracted journey through legislative processes (Quimbo & Sulabo, 2019). Additionally, the Magna Carta for Micro and Small Enterprises (Republic Act No. 6977, as amended by RA 8289 and RA 9501) has facilitated improved access to credit for small businesses, indirectly benefiting many social enterprises (Flores & Agbisit, 2018).

Yet, challenges persist, notably the absence of a singular legal definition for social enterprises. This definitional gap complicates their ability to be formally recognized and to access benefits designed for them (Villanueva & Ganly, 2017). Consequently, many register as cooperatives, non-profits, or traditional corporations, which may not completely align with their dual aims. The operational diversity of social enterprises further complicates regulatory navigation, particularly for those engaged in sectors like environmental conservation, which may straddle the jurisdictions of various government agencies (Dacanay, 2013).

Despite these obstacles, some local government units (LGUs) have taken proactive steps, offering incentives and support to encourage social enterprise development within their jurisdictions (Gutierrez, 2019). These regional initiatives

highlight a growing recognition of social enterprises' value and potential contributions to local economies and communities.

The policy environment for social enterprises in the Philippines illustrates the sector's vibrancy and the ongoing adaptation of the state's regulatory frameworks. While existing legislation provides a foundation, there is an evident need for more refined, cohesive policies that accurately recognize and foster social enterprises' growth. Streamlining regulatory definitions, enhancing support mechanisms, and ensuring a more inclusive policy landscape could bolster the sector's development.

Digital Media Landscape of Social Enterprises in the Philippines

Immersing social enterprises in the Philippines into the digital media landscape presents a nuanced interplay between technology, societal impact, and entrepreneurial innovation. In a country characterized by high internet penetration and prolific social media engagement, digital platforms have emerged as pivotal tools for the growth and visibility of social enterprises (Aneja & Sarte, 2020). The democratization of information via digital channels has enabled these entities to transcend traditional marketing limitations, leveraging the narrative power of digital storytelling to differentiate themselves and engage with both local and global audiences effectively.

Digital platforms, including social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, and X, serve as vital conduits for these enterprises to communicate their impact-driven stories, fostering engagement and supporting fund-raising efforts (Reyes & Lim, 2017). This dynamic is accentuated by the accessibility of online marketplaces like Lazada and Shopee, which expand market reach and operational efficiency, particularly

for remote regions (Gonzalez, 2018). Moreover, the emergence of localized digital platforms tailored to the Philippine social enterprise's context, such as Investagrams and the Social Enterprise Development Partnerships, Inc. (SEDPI), underscores the trend toward digital community building and collaboration (Mirandilla-Santos, 2019).

The role of digital media in enhancing operational efficiency through technological tools, from e-commerce solutions to digital payment systems like GCash and PayMaya, cannot be overstated. These innovations allow social enterprises to streamline transactions and extend their services more effectively, encapsulating a significant shift towards digital integration within the sector (Cortez & Beltran, 2018).

However, the shift towards a digital-centric operational model presents its own set of challenges. Issues of digital literacy and the persisting digital divide pose potential barriers to uniform adaptation and engagement. Regions with inadequate digital infrastructure risk being sidelined, exacerbating disparities within the social enterprise ecosystem (Mirandilla-Santos, 2019). Furthermore, the algorithm-driven nature of digital spaces prioritizes content virality, potentially diverting focus from the depth of impact to the 'shareability' of narratives, which may dilute the substantive message social enterprises aim to convey (Reyes & Lim, 2017).

This digital transformation of social enterprises in the Philippines illustrates a broader trend toward technological embracement, reflecting the sector's adaptability and commitment to leveraging modern tools for social impact. The balance between harnessing digital media's potential for broader reach and engagement against the backdrop of inherent challenges such as digital literacy gaps and infrastructure disparities delineates a critical area for further research and policy development (Aneja & Sarte,

2020; Gonzalez, 2018; Cortez & Beltran, 2018). The evolving digital media landscape offers a fertile ground for social enterprises to innovate and grow. Still, it also necessitates a concerted effort to ensure inclusivity and depth in digital engagement strategies.

Digital Social Marketing Strategies of Social Enterprises in the Philippines

The digital landscape in the Philippines offers a fertile ground for social enterprises to leverage modern marketing strategies, given the high internet and social media usage rate among its population. These enterprises have embraced digital social marketing strategies to enhance visibility, engage stakeholders, and drive societal impact. Using platforms like Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, and X, social enterprises in the Philippines have developed content-centric campaigns that focus on storytelling to illustrate their mission, impact, and products or services. As detailed by Reyes & Lim (2017), the narrative approach underscores the importance of authenticity and emotional connection, aiding social enterprises in building trust and community among their audience. Moreover, leveraging user-generated content and influencer partnerships amplifies their reach and engagement, tapping into existing networks and communities to foster a broader understanding and support for their social causes.

Content diversification has been a critical strategy, from informative posts about their social impact to engaging videos showcasing their products or services. This approach, as outlined by Gonzalez (2018), addresses the need for social enterprises to maintain a dynamic online presence that captures the multifaceted nature of their work and the communities they serve. Furthermore, the strategic use of hashtags and participation in trending conversations have allowed these organizations to increase their

visibility and discoverability on social media platforms, attracting a broader and more diverse audience base.

Integrating e-commerce functionalities into social media platforms and using digital marketplaces like Lazada and Shopee, as identified by Aneja & Sarte (2020), represent another significant digital marketing strategy. This enables social enterprises to promote their products and streamline the purchasing process, making it more convenient for consumers to support their causes. This dual functionality serves both commercial and social goals, enhancing the operational efficiency of social enterprises while broadening their market reach.

Collaboration with digital platforms specialized in social enterprise stories and impacts, such as Investagrams and the Social Enterprise Development Partnerships, Inc. (SEDPI), has been noted by Mirandilla-Santos (2019) as a pivotal strategy. These platforms provide social enterprises with storytelling, networking, and fundraising avenues, reinforcing the sector's ecosystem and support structure.

While digital social marketing offers immense potential, challenges such as digital literacy and the digital divide necessitate a nuanced approach, ensuring strategies are inclusive and accessible to all stakeholders, including those in remote or underprivileged areas. As cautioned by Cortez & Beltran (2018), the inclination towards content's 'virality' over depth suggests that social enterprises must remain vigilant in prioritizing their core mission and impact in their digital marketing efforts, avoiding the dilution of their message in the pursuit of online popularity.

Social enterprises in the Philippines have strategically harnessed the power of digital social marketing to amplify their impact, engage with diverse audiences, and foster

community around their social missions. However, the evolving digital landscape presents opportunities and challenges, requiring these enterprises to adapt and innovate consistently, ensuring their strategies are practical and aligned with their overarching goals of societal betterment.

The Role of Founders in Social Enterprises

The role of founders in social enterprises is multifaceted and pivotal, extending far beyond the initial establishment of the organization. Founders serve as the primary architects of the enterprise's mission, vision, and operational strategies, shaping the organization's trajectory from inception through various stages of growth and development. Their influence permeates every aspect of the social enterprise, from organizational culture to strategic decision-making, and plays a crucial role in determining the enterprise's success and impact.

Influence on Organizational Culture and Strategy

Founders exert a profound influence on the organizational culture and strategic direction of social enterprises. As the originators of the enterprise's mission and vision, founders imbue the organization with their personal values, beliefs, and aspirations, which become deeply ingrained in the organizational DNA. Smith and Besharov (2019) argue that founders' imprinting on social enterprises is particularly strong due to the mission-driven nature of these organizations. The founders' commitment to social impact often

becomes a central belief of the organizational culture, influencing everything from hiring practices to decision-making processes.

The strategic orientation of social enterprises is similarly shaped by founders' perspectives and experiences. Founders bring their unique blend of skills, knowledge, and networks to bear on the enterprise's strategic choices, often drawing on their prior experiences in both the social and business sectors. Dees (2012) notes that many social enterprise founders come from diverse backgrounds, including nonprofit management, business entrepreneurship, and social activism, which informs their approach to strategy formulation. This diversity of experience can lead to innovative hybrid models that blend social mission with market-based approaches.

Founders' influence on organizational culture and strategy is particularly evident in the early stages of the social enterprise's development. During this critical period, founders often take on multiple roles, from strategic visionary to operational manager, leaving an indelible mark on the organization's practices and norms. Battilana and Dorado (2010) observe that founders of social enterprises face the unique challenge of creating organizational cultures that can sustain the dual objectives of social impact and financial sustainability. Their study of microfinance organizations revealed how founders' choices in hiring and socialization practices significantly influenced the organization's ability to balance these competing demands.

Moreover, founders play a crucial role in shaping the enterprise's external relationships and positioning within the broader ecosystem. Their personal networks and reputation often serve as critical assets in attracting resources, forming partnerships, and gaining legitimacy for the nascent social enterprise. Santos (2012) argues that founders'

ability to navigate the complex landscape of stakeholders, including beneficiaries, funders, and policymakers, is essential for the social enterprise's success and impact.

Founder-led Social Marketing Strategies and Theories

In the realm of social marketing, founders of social enterprises often take a leading role in developing and implementing strategies that align with their organization's mission and values. Founder-led social marketing strategies are characterized by a deep integration of the enterprise's social mission into its marketing efforts, often resulting in innovative approaches that challenge traditional marketing paradigms.

Yunus, Moingeon, and Lehmann-Ortega (2010) propose a framework for social business models that emphasizes the role of founders in crafting marketing strategies that prioritize social value creation over profit maximization. They argue that founder-led marketing strategies in social enterprises often focus on educating consumers about social issues, fostering community engagement, and promoting behavior change aligned with the enterprise's mission.

Founder-led social marketing strategies often leverage storytelling as a powerful tool for engaging audiences and communicating impact. Dacin, Dacin, and Matear (2010) note that founders' personal narratives and passion for their cause can be compelling elements in social marketing campaigns, helping to build emotional connections with stakeholders and differentiate the enterprise in crowded markets.

Digital platforms have become increasingly important in founder-led social marketing strategies, allowing for direct communication with audiences and real-time engagement. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) highlight how social media platforms enable

founders to share their vision, interact with supporters, and build communities around their social missions. This direct engagement allows founders to maintain authenticity in their marketing efforts and respond quickly to stakeholder feedback.

Balancing Personal Vision with Market Demands

One of the most significant challenges faced by founders of social enterprises is balancing their personal vision and commitment to social impact with the realities of market demands and financial sustainability. This tension is at the heart of social entrepreneurship and requires founders to navigate complex trade-offs and make difficult decisions that can have far-reaching consequences for their organizations.

Smith, Gonin, and Besharov (2013) describe this challenge as "managing competing demands," where founders must find ways to integrate social welfare logic with commercial logic. Their research suggests that successful founders develop cognitive and behavioral strategies to manage these tensions, such as accepting paradoxes, creating differentiating structures, or finding synergies between social and commercial objectives.

Founders often face pressure to prioritize financial sustainability over social impact, particularly as the enterprise grows and seeks to scale its operations. Battilana and Lee (2014) argue that founders play a crucial role in maintaining the organization's commitment to its social mission while adapting to market realities. They suggest that founders can use various strategies to balance these competing demands, such as selective coupling of practices from both social and commercial domains or developing innovative hybrid models that align social impact with market opportunities.

The personal vision of founders can sometimes conflict with market demands, requiring difficult compromises or creative solutions. Renko (2013) notes that founders of social enterprises often have strong personal motivations and emotional attachments to their social missions, which can make it challenging to adapt to changing market conditions or pivot strategies when necessary. Successful founders, however, demonstrate the ability to remain flexible and open to feedback while staying true to their core values and vision.

Stakeholder management becomes increasingly complex as social enterprises grow, with founders needing to balance the expectations of diverse groups including beneficiaries, employees, funders, and customers. Dees (1998) emphasizes the importance of founders developing a clear theory of change that can guide decision-making and help prioritize among competing demands. This approach allows founders to make strategic choices that align with their vision while responding to market realities.

The role of founders in social enterprises is multifaceted and critical to the organizations' success and impact. Their influence on organizational culture and strategy, leadership in social marketing efforts, and ability to balance personal vision with market demands shape the trajectory of social enterprises from inception through various stages of growth. As the field of social entrepreneurship continues to evolve, understanding the unique challenges and opportunities faced by founders remains an important area of research and practice.

Authentic Digital Storytelling in Social Enterprises

As social enterprises continue to evolve in their approach to digital marketing and community engagement, an emerging concept that bridges the gap between existing theories and practices is authentic digital storytelling. This approach extends beyond traditional digital marketing strategies by emphasizing the genuine, mission-driven narratives of social enterprises, particularly those shaped by founders' experiences and values. Authentic digital storytelling represents a confluence of several key elements: the strategic use of digital platforms, the incorporation of cultural and cognitive factors in communication, and the emphasis on authenticity in conveying an organization's social mission.

The concept of authentic digital storytelling builds upon existing frameworks in digital marketing, such as those outlined by Tuten and Solomon (2017), who emphasize the importance of leveraging online tools to drive social change. However, it goes further by integrating the personal narratives and cultural backgrounds of founders, recognizing their pivotal role in shaping the organization's mission and communication strategies. This aligns with Dees' (2012) assertion that founders are instrumental in determining the strategic direction of social enterprises, including their marketing endeavors.

Authentic digital storytelling also draws from Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT), as proposed by Giles, Taylor, and Bourhis (1973). In the context of social enterprises, this theory suggests that founders who authentically adapt their communication styles to resonate with their target audiences are more likely to foster engagement and build rapport. For instance, a social enterprise focused on sustainable

fashion might adjust its messaging across different digital platforms to cater to various audience segments, using a casual tone on Instagram for younger consumers while adopting a more professional approach on LinkedIn for potential investors (Solomon, 2008).

Moreover, the concept incorporates elements of Cultural-Cognitive Theory (CCT), rooted in the work of Scott (2001) and DiMaggio (1997). CCT posits that individuals' thoughts, feelings, and behaviors are shaped by their cultural schemas and shared understandings. In the context of social enterprises, this implies that founders' cultural orientations and cognitive frames significantly influence how they approach digital marketing and engage with their audiences. For example, a founder from a collectivistic culture might prioritize community-building and collaborative messaging in their digital marketing strategies, reflecting the cultural value of interdependence (Hofstede, 1980).

Authentic digital storytelling extends beyond mere adaptation of communication styles or cultural sensitivity. It emphasizes the genuine representation of the social enterprise's mission and values through digital narratives. This approach aligns with the findings of Peattie and Peattie (2003), who highlight the importance of fostering sustainable relationships with target audiences by extending the organization's mission and vision through marketing strategies.

The concept also builds upon the work of Kozinets (2015) in digital ethnography, recognizing the importance of immersive examination of digital marketing practices within the unique setting of social enterprises. By incorporating elements of digital ethnography, authentic digital storytelling allows for a deeper understanding of how founders navigate the complexities of digital engagement while staying true to their social missions.

Authentic digital storytelling in social enterprises goes beyond traditional storytelling methods by leveraging digital technologies to create more immersive and interactive narratives. This approach aligns with the findings of Chaffey and Smith (2017), who emphasize the transformative potential of digital technology in social marketing. For instance, social enterprises might use virtual reality experiences to transport audiences to the communities they serve, creating a more visceral understanding of their impact.

Furthermore, authentic digital storytelling recognizes the evolving landscape of digital communication, where organizations are no longer in full control of brand perception. As noted by Andreasen (2002), social enterprises must navigate a complex digital ecosystem where third-party reviews, employee testimonials, and stakeholder feedback all contribute to shaping the organization's image. Authentic digital storytelling provides a framework for social enterprises to maintain a consistent and genuine narrative amidst this complexity.

The concept also addresses the unique challenges faced by social enterprises in balancing commercial viability with social impact. Mair and Marti (2006) highlight the dual objectives of social enterprises in pursuing both financial sustainability and social welfare. Authentic digital storytelling offers a means to communicate this delicate balance effectively, allowing founders to articulate how their business models create value both economically and socially.

In practice, authentic digital storytelling might manifest in various forms. For example, a social enterprise focused on providing clean water solutions might create a series of short documentaries showcasing the personal stories of community members whose lives have been impacted by their work. These narratives would be shared across

digital platforms, incorporating interactive elements that allow audiences to explore additional information about the enterprise's approach and impact metrics.

Another application might involve leveraging user-generated content to amplify the voices of beneficiaries and stakeholders. This approach not only provides authentic testimonials but also fosters a sense of community and shared ownership in the enterprise's mission. Such strategies align with the findings of Hoffman and Novak (2018), who emphasize the importance of participatory platforms in engaging digital audiences.

Authentic digital storytelling also addresses the ethical considerations inherent in representing marginalized communities or sensitive social issues. It emphasizes the importance of informed consent, respectful portrayal, and empowerment of subjects in the storytelling process. This ethical framework builds upon the work of scholars like Robin (2016), who highlight the transformative potential of digital storytelling in empowering individuals to become active creators rather than passive consumers of media.

The concept of authentic digital storytelling in social enterprises represents a significant evolution in how mission-driven organizations communicate their value and impact in the digital age. It offers a framework for founders to leverage their personal experiences, cultural insights, and genuine commitment to social change in crafting compelling digital narratives. As social enterprises continue to play an increasingly important role in addressing global challenges, authentic digital storytelling provides a powerful tool for engaging audiences, building trust, and driving meaningful social impact.

As this concept continues to evolve, future research may explore how authentic digital storytelling influences key performance indicators for social enterprises, such as

donor engagement, volunteer recruitment, and social impact metrics. Additionally, investigating how this approach can be adapted across different cultural contexts and social causes will be crucial in developing a more comprehensive understanding of its potential and limitations.

In conclusion, authentic digital storytelling emerges as a promising concept that bridges the gap between existing theories and practices in digital social marketing for social enterprises. By integrating elements of communication adaptation, cultural cognition, and founder-driven strategies, it offers a holistic approach to digital engagement that aligns with the unique needs and objectives of mission-centric organizations. As social enterprises continue to navigate the complex digital landscape, authentic digital storytelling provides a framework for maintaining authenticity, fostering meaningful connections, and ultimately driving greater social impact.

Digital Ethnography in Research

Digital ethnography represents a pivotal methodological advancement in qualitative research, adapting the traditional ethnographic toolkit to explore digital spaces, where social interactions, cultural expressions, and community formations are increasingly migrated. This digital shift is not merely a change in the location of social life but also implicates the methods, ethics, and theoretical perspectives that guide research. In studying social enterprises, digital ethnography offers unique insights into how these organizations navigate online spaces to mobilize resources, foster community engagement, and articulate their social missions. The work of Pink, Horst, Postill, Hjorth,

Lewis, and Tacchi (2016) underscores the methodological adaptability required in digital ethnography, emphasizing not just the observation of online behaviors but the understanding of the interplay between online and offline worlds. This approach is essential when exploring how social enterprises utilize digital platforms for storytelling, audience engagement, and value articulation. The insights from such investigations contribute to a nuanced understanding of social entrepreneurship in the digital age, capturing the dynamics of innovation, community building, and social impact in complex digital ecosystems.

Digital ethnography's applicability extends to examining the digital-social marketing strategies employed by social enterprises. As outlined by Kozinets (2015), this involves immersing oneself in the target digital communities to uncover the norms, values, and practices that shape interactions and engagements. Through such immersion, researchers can articulate how social enterprises craft narratives that resonate with their digital audiences, their strategies to maintain authenticity and trust, and how digital content facilitates social impact. This methodological perspective is particularly relevant given the increasing prevalence of digital platforms in mediating the relationship between social enterprises and their stakeholders, as noted by Varman, Skålén, and Belk (2012), who explore the complex narratives within these digital interactions, illuminating the performative aspects of social entrepreneurship in digital contexts.

Furthermore, as discussed by Markham (2018), the ethical considerations essential in digital ethnography highlight the need for reflexivity in navigating digital fields, where privacy, consent, and representation take on new dimensions. These ethical challenges require researchers to continuously negotiate their positioning and approach,

ensuring that their investigations respect their subjects' digital autonomy and privacy. This moral framework is crucial when examining social enterprises' digital footprints, ensuring that research practices do not infringe upon the participatory ethos that often characterizes these organizations.

Digital ethnography's contribution to understanding the scope and impact of social enterprises extends beyond methodological innovation. It offers a lens through which the intricate textures of digital social entrepreneurship are rendered visible and intelligible. By engaging deeply with the digital manifestations of social enterprises, researchers can contribute to a greater understanding of how digital technologies are harnessed for social change. This aligns with the broader disciplinary goals of ethnography, which are to surface the lived experiences, societal impacts, and cultural dynamics at play within specified contexts (Hine, 2015).

Digital ethnography is a critical methodological approach to investigating social enterprises, offering profound insights into the digital strategies, ethical considerations, and community engagements that characterize these organizations. By adopting an immersive, reflexive, and ethically grounded approach, researchers can uncover the nuanced ways social enterprises navigate, contribute to, and are shaped by the digital landscape. This research expands the methodological horizon of ethnographic study. It enriches our understanding of social entrepreneurship in the digital era, highlighting the innovative practices, challenges, and opportunities that digital contexts engender.

Gaps in Current Research

The examination of existing literature reveals several significant gaps in understanding authentic digital storytelling within social enterprises and its intersection with founder communication strategies. These gaps warrant further investigation to advance both theoretical frameworks and practical applications in the field.

Limited Theoretical Understanding of Authentic Digital Storytelling in Social Enterprises

The current theoretical landscape lacks comprehensive frameworks for understanding how authentic digital storytelling functions specifically within social enterprises. While digital storytelling has been extensively studied in traditional business contexts (McNab, 2019), its unique application and dynamics within mission-driven organizations remain underexplored. The existing literature primarily focuses on general marketing communication strategies, overlooking the distinct challenges and opportunities that arise when storytelling must align with both social impact goals and business sustainability objectives.

Social enterprises operate in a complex environment where traditional marketing metrics may not fully capture their success. The theoretical gap becomes particularly evident when examining how authentic storytelling intersects with social impact measurement and mission fulfillment (Thompson & MacMillan, 2020). Current frameworks fail to adequately address how authenticity in digital narratives contributes to building trust and credibility while simultaneously advancing social missions.

Empirical Gap in Founder Authenticity and Digital Storytelling

A significant void exists in empirical studies examining the intersection of founder authenticity and digital storytelling in social impact communication. While research has explored leadership communication in traditional businesses, the unique position of social enterprise founders, who must balance personal authenticity with social mission advocacy, remains understudied (Anderson & Dees, 2018). This gap is particularly notable in understanding how founders' personal values and experiences shape their digital communication strategies while maintaining authenticity in their messaging.

The limited empirical evidence on how founders navigate the tension between authentic self-expression and strategic communication needs creates a barrier to developing effective guidelines for social enterprise communication. Research has not adequately addressed how founders maintain authenticity while adapting their communication to diverse stakeholder groups, including beneficiaries, donors, and customers.

Assessment Frameworks for Authentic Digital Storytelling

Current literature lacks robust frameworks for evaluating community engagement and mission-market alignment through authentic digital storytelling in achieving social enterprise missions. While traditional marketing metrics exist, they often fail to capture the nuanced impact of authentic storytelling on social mission advancement (Kumar & Brooks, 2021). The absence of comprehensive assessment tools makes it challenging for social enterprises to measure and optimize their digital storytelling strategies.

The gap extends to understanding how different storytelling approaches impact various stakeholder groups and contribute to both social and financial objectives. Current evaluation methods often focus on either business metrics or social impact measures, failing to integrate both aspects in assessing how authentic digital storytelling creates meaningful community connections and advances mission-driven outcomes.

Cultural-Cognitive Factors in Digital Storytelling

The role of cultural-cognitive factors in shaping authentic digital storytelling strategies remains largely unexplored. While Cultural-Cognitive Theory has been applied in organizational studies, its specific application to digital storytelling in social enterprises lacks thorough investigation (Zhang & Chen, 2019). This gap is particularly significant given the global nature of many social enterprises and the need to communicate authentically across cultural boundaries.

Research has not adequately addressed how founders' cultural backgrounds influence their storytelling approaches and how these cultural elements contribute to or challenge authentic communication in digital spaces. The intersection of cultural cognition with digital storytelling techniques represents an important area for future study.

Authenticity-Strategy Balance in Communication

A critical gap exists in understanding how founders balance authenticity with strategic communication needs. While authenticity is recognized as crucial for building trust, research has not sufficiently examined how social enterprise founders maintain this authenticity while meeting various stakeholder expectations and strategic objectives

(Peterson & Liu, 2022). This gap becomes particularly evident in digital contexts, where communication must often be both authentic and strategically crafted.

Literature lacks comprehensive frameworks for understanding how founders can maintain personal authenticity while adapting their communication style to different platforms and audiences. This gap impacts the development of effective guidelines for authentic digital communication in social enterprises.

Integration of Theoretical Frameworks

The limited integration of Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) and Cultural-Cognitive Theory (CCT) with authentic digital storytelling represents a significant theoretical gap. While these frameworks have been studied separately, their combined application to social enterprise communication remains unexplored (Wilson & Chang, 2021). This gap hinders the development of comprehensive models for understanding how founders can effectively adapt their communication while maintaining authenticity and cultural sensitivity.

The lack of integrated theoretical frameworks makes it difficult to understand how cultural-cognitive factors influence communication accommodation in digital storytelling contexts. This gap affects both theoretical development and practical application in social enterprise communication strategies.

Theoretical Underpinning

Exploring social enterprises through the lenses of Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) and Cultural-Cognitive Theory (CCT) necessitates clearly articulating how these theories will be applied in analyzing digital marketing strategies. CAT, initially proposed by Giles, Taylor, and Bourhis (1973) and further elaborated by Giles (2008), posits that individuals adjust their communication styles to seek approval or establish distinctiveness from those they are interacting with. This theory has profound implications for the digital communication strategies employed by social enterprises, as it encourages a deep examination of how these entities adapt their messaging to resonate with various audience segments, including beneficiaries, donors, and the general public (Giles, 2008).

In digital marketing, CAT provides a framework for understanding the strategic language choices, nonverbal cues, and other communicative adaptations social enterprises make in their digital interactions to build rapport, trust, and influence with their target audiences (Giles & Ogay, 2007). For instance, a social enterprise focused on promoting sustainable fashion might adapt its messaging across different digital platforms to cater to the preferences of various audience segments. The founder might use a casual, conversational tone and visually appealing content on Instagram to connect with younger, fashion-conscious consumers. In contrast, the same founder might adopt a more professional, data-driven approach to engage with potential investors or industry partners on LinkedIn. By strategically adjusting their communication style to match the expectations and norms of each platform and audience, the founder can enhance

community engagement through authentic digital storytelling and build stronger relationships with key stakeholders (Dragojevic et al., 2016).

Moreover, CAT suggests that accommodating communication is not just about linguistic adjustments but also involves paralinguistic and nonverbal adaptations (Giles & Ogay, 2007). In digital social marketing, this could manifest in using culturally relevant visuals, emojis, or multimedia content to enhance the relatability and appeal of the messaging. For example, a social enterprise working with indigenous communities might incorporate traditional art or symbols into their digital content to show cultural sensitivity and build trust with their target audience.

Cultural-Cognitive Theory (CCT), rooted in the work of Scott (2001) and DiMaggio (1997), suggests that founders' cultural backgrounds and cognitive representations influence the conception and implementation of digital marketing strategies, where cultural values may emphasize certain marketing practices over others. CCT posits that individuals' thoughts, feelings, and behaviors are shaped by their cultural schemas and shared understandings (Scott, 2014). In the context of social enterprises, this theory implies that founders' cultural orientations and cognitive frames significantly influence how they approach digital marketing and engage with their audiences.

For example, a social enterprise founder from a collectivistic culture might prioritize community-building and collaborative messaging in their digital marketing strategies, reflecting the cultural value of interdependence. This could manifest in user-generated content campaigns, online communities, or partnerships with local influencers to foster a sense of shared identity and purpose among the target audience. In contrast, a founder from an individualistic culture might focus more on highlighting the unique selling points

of their products or services and emphasizing personal benefits in their digital marketing communications (Hofstede, 2001).

Furthermore, CCT suggests that cultural-cognitive factors shape the content of digital marketing strategies and influence the channels and platforms that social enterprise founders engage with (Hoffman & Novak, 2018). For instance, founders might prioritize more formal, hierarchical communication channels like official websites or email newsletters in cultures with high power distance. In contrast, cultures with low power distance might favor more informal, participatory platforms like social media or instant messaging apps.

The interplay between CAT and CCT in the context of digital social marketing is particularly relevant for social enterprises operating in diverse cultural settings, such as the Philippines. By understanding how cultural-cognitive factors shape communication preferences and adapting their digital marketing strategies accordingly, social enterprise founders can effectively navigate cultural differences, build trust with their target audiences, and drive social impact across various communities (Defourny & Nyssens, 2010).

To illustrate the application of CAT and CCT in practice, consider a scenario where a Philippine-based social enterprise that supports local artisans adapts its digital marketing strategy to better engage its audience on social media platforms. The founder, deeply influenced by the collectivistic culture of the Philippines, recognizes the importance of fostering a sense of community and shared purpose among their followers. To achieve this, they launched a user-generated content campaign on Instagram, inviting customers to share photos of themselves using artisanal products and telling their

personal stories about how these items have positively impacted their lives. By encouraging user participation and showcasing real-life examples of the social enterprise's impact, the founder leverages the cultural value of interdependence to build a robust and engaged community around their brand (Hofstede, 2001).

Moreover, the founder adapts their communication style on Instagram to match the preferences of their target audience, which primarily consists of younger, socially conscious consumers. They use a warm, conversational tone in their captions, incorporating local slang and emojis to create a sense of familiarity and relatability. The founder also shares behind-the-scenes content, such as videos of artisans at work or personal anecdotes about the challenges and rewards of running a social enterprise. By accommodating their language and content to the norms and expectations of their Instagram audience, the founder builds trust, fosters emotional connections, and enhances community engagement through authentic digital storytelling (Giles, 2008).

In addition to Instagram, the founder also maintains a presence on LinkedIn to engage with potential investors, partners, and industry professionals. Recognizing that LinkedIn is a more formal, business-oriented platform, the founder adapts their communication style accordingly. They share data-driven insights about the social enterprise's impact, highlight key milestones and achievements, and use a more professional tone in their posts and interactions. By tailoring their communication to match the expectations of their LinkedIn audience, the founder establishes credibility, builds strategic relationships, and attracts support for their social mission (Giles & Ogay, 2007).

This example demonstrates how CAT and CCT can be applied to analyze and inform digital marketing strategies for social enterprises. By understanding the cultural-

cognitive factors that shape communication preferences and adapting their messaging and content accordingly, social enterprise founders can effectively engage their target audiences, build strong communities, and drive social impact across various digital platforms.

The integration of CAT and CCT in analyzing digital social marketing strategies offers a comprehensive framework for understanding the complex interplay between communication, culture, and cognition in social entrepreneurship. This theoretical underpinning provides a foundation for examining authentic digital storytelling and community engagement in digital marketing practices. It offers practical insights for social enterprise founders seeking to navigate the challenges and opportunities of the digital landscape while building meaningful connections with their communities.

Ontology and Epistemological Stands

Exploring social enterprises through the lenses of Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) and Cultural-Cognitive Theory (CCT) necessitates clearly articulating the research approach's ontological and epistemological foundations. Ontology, concerning the nature of reality and what is considered as truth within a research framework, and epistemology, examining the nature of knowledge and how it can be acquired or understood, are crucial philosophical underpinnings that shape the study's design, execution, and interpretation (Crotty, 1998).

From an ontological perspective, examining social enterprises via CAT and CCT implies a belief in a constructed reality. This stance acknowledges the multiplicity of realities shaped by human interactions and perceptions, particularly in digital

communication and cultural cognition (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). CAT, with its focus on adaptive communication practices to either converge or diverge from another's communication style, suggests that the reality of social interactions is shaped by these accommodations (Giles, Coupland, & Coupland, 1991). Such adaptations indicate that the reality of communication processes is not fixed but is instead constructed through interpersonal dealings. This ontological position aligns with the constructionist paradigm, which posits that reality is socially constructed and multiple, often conflicting realities can coexist (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Similarly, CCT operates on the premise that organizational behaviors and societal norms are constituted through shared cultural schemas and cognitive frames, underscoring a reality that is collectively constructed and understood (Scott, 2014). This theory emphasizes the role of cultural-cognitive elements in shaping organizational reality, where shared conceptions and frames of understanding guide behavior and decision-making (DiMaggio, 1997). By applying CCT to the study of social enterprises, the research acknowledges the constructed nature of organizational reality, where shared cultural understandings and cognitive frameworks shape the development and implementation of digital strategies.

Epistemologically, both CAT and CCT lean toward interpretivism, emphasizing the understanding of subjective meanings and experiences of individuals within their social contexts. Interpretivism, as an epistemological stance, holds that knowledge is socially constructed and that the researcher's role is to interpret and understand the participants' subjective experiences (Schwandt, 2000). In the case of CAT, research seeks to comprehend the nuances of communication strategies social enterprises employ to

engage with diverse stakeholders in the digital realm. This requires an interpretive approach to grasp the subjective experiences of both the communicators and recipients of these digital communications. The emphasis is on understanding how social enterprises perceive and react to their communicative environment and how their strategic accommodations influence stakeholder engagement (Giles et al., 1973).

CCT also endorses an interpretive epistemological position, focusing on deciphering the cultural and cognitive frameworks that inform and are informed by organizational practices. Such an approach involves delving into the shared understandings and meanings that underpin organizational behaviors and strategies, particularly in how social enterprises navigate and embody digital cultural norms (Scott, 2003). Interpreting these cultural-cognitive structures requires engaging with the subjective perspectives of organizational members and their stakeholders and exploring how these shared schemas influence and are reflected in the enterprise's digital presence.

Integrating CAT and CCT within an interpretive epistemological framework allows for a comprehensive understanding of the complex dynamics in social enterprises' digital engagement strategies. By acknowledging the constructed nature of reality and the subjective experiences that shape it, the research can delve into the nuanced ways in which communication accommodations and cultural-cognitive frameworks intersect to influence community engagement and mission-market alignment through authentic digital storytelling approaches (Giles, 2008; Scott, 2014).

To illustrate the ontological and epistemological foundations in practice, consider a social enterprise that promotes sustainable tourism in the Philippines. The founder, a

native of the country, profoundly understands the local culture and the importance of community engagement in driving social change. To effectively communicate its mission and attract support from local and international stakeholders, the founder adapts their digital marketing strategy to accommodate the preferences and expectations of these diverse audiences.

From an ontological perspective, the founder recognizes that the reality of their social enterprise is not fixed but is constructed through their stakeholders' interactions and perceptions. They understand that how they communicate their mission and values on digital platforms will shape how their audiences perceive and engage with their brand. By adapting their messaging and content to resonate with their target audiences' cultural backgrounds and cognitive frames, the founder actively constructs a shared reality that aligns with their social mission (Berger & Luckmann, 1966).

Epistemologically, the founder adopts an interpretive approach to understand the subjective experiences and meanings their stakeholders ascribe to sustainable tourism and community development. They engage in open dialogues with local communities, seeking to understand their perspectives, challenges, and aspirations. The founder also analyzes the interactions and feedback they receive on digital platforms, interpreting the subjective experiences of their followers and using these insights to refine their communication strategies (Schwandt, 2000).

For instance, the founder might notice that their Instagram followers respond more positively to posts that showcase local community members' personal stories and sustainable tourism's impact on their lives. By interpreting these subjective experiences and adapting their content strategy accordingly, the founder demonstrates an interpretive

epistemological approach to knowledge creation. They recognize that community engagement through their digital marketing efforts is not an objective reality but is instead constructed through the shared understandings and meanings that emerge from the interactions between the social enterprise and its stakeholders (Giles et al., 1973).

Moreover, the founder's cultural background and cognitive frames play a significant role in shaping their approach to digital marketing. As a native of the Philippines, the founder deeply understands the collectivistic culture and the importance of building strong, trust-based relationships with local communities. This cultural-cognitive framework influences their decision to prioritize community engagement and collaborative partnerships in their digital marketing strategy, reflecting the shared values and understandings that underpin their social mission (Scott, 2014).

By applying CAT and CCT within an interpretive epistemological framework, the founder can authentically navigate the complex dynamics of digital social marketing, adapting their communication strategies to resonate with their diverse stakeholders' subjective experiences and cultural-cognitive frames. This approach allows for a comprehensive understanding of how communication accommodations and cultural-cognitive factors intersect to influence community engagement and mission-market alignment through the social enterprise's digital storytelling efforts.

Chapter III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides comprehensive information on the various methods to be employed for the study. Each research project is unique, and it comes with its own specific set of requirements. This chapter will begin with an overview of research design, detailing the qualitative approach that strategically combines digital ethnography and case study methods. Followed by the discussion of the purposive sampling for selecting diverse mission-centric social enterprise founders, giving an overview of the selected participants of the study. Then, the ethical considerations will be discussed, emphasizing the importance of informed consent, digital privacy, cultural sensitivity, and potential harm. It will then describe the data collection procedures, semi-structured interviews to gain rich insights into their experiences and perspectives, digital artifact analysis to examine the manifestation of communication accommodation and cultural-cognitive influences in their digital marketing strategies, and non-participant observation to capture the real-time dynamics of their digital engagement practices.

The chapter will also explain the data analysis techniques employed, such as thematic analysis to identify patterns and themes, narrative analysis to construct comprehensive accounts of each founder's unique approach, and comparative analysis to discern similarities and differences across cases. The integration of Communication Accommodation Theory and Cultural-Cognitive Theory in the theoretical framework will be elaborated, demonstrating how these theories guide the exploration of the complex dynamics of digital engagement in social enterprises.

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research design, strategically combining digital ethnography and a case study approach to offer an in-depth understanding of how founders' cultural-cognitive orientations and communication accommodation practices shape digital marketing strategies in social enterprises. This design was deliberately chosen for its strength in detailing the complex, nuanced interactions and strategy within the digital ecosystem.

Digital ethnography served as a leading methodological framework, enabling the researchers to immerse themselves in the digital environments where social enterprises operate. This approach aligns with Kozinets's (2015) recommendation for netnography, an adaptation of ethnography for online communities, providing a guideline for engaging, observing, and analyzing digital cultures and communications. By applying digital ethnography, the research captured real-time interactions, engagements, and content strategies across various digital platforms (Pink et al., 2016), offering a live portrayal of Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) and Cultural-Cognitive Theory (CCT) at work.

The case study approach complemented digital ethnography by facilitating a deep dive into selected instances of social enterprises. Yin (2018) posits the case study as a comprehensive research strategy suitable for exploring complex phenomena within their real-life contexts. This study employed purposive sampling to select varied cases representing diverse cultural-cognitive orientations among founders. Through in-depth semi-structured interviews, a technique supported by Rubin and Rubin (2012) for eliciting

rich, detailed insights and examination of digital artifacts, the research unearthed how founders integrate CAT and CCT into their marketing strategies.

Participants Profile

This study employed purposive sampling to select participants who could provide rich insights into mission-centric social enterprises' digital social marketing strategies in the Philippines. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling technique in which researchers rely on their judgment to choose participants who meet specific criteria and can offer valuable information to address the research objectives. A total of five founders were purposively selected, representing a diverse range of social enterprises in terms of their mission, sector, and digital marketing approaches. This sample size allowed for an in-depth exploration of each founder's unique perspectives and experiences while also enabling the identification of common themes and patterns across cases.

Stephen Co (Worth the Health Foods)

Stephen Co is the founder and CEO of Worth the Health Foods and Nipa Brew Craft Beers. Stephen's academic background and professional trajectory define a deeply concealed figure in leveraging local biodiversity for global sustainability and health. His entrepreneurial story is a compelling testament to the interplay between passion for science and the drive for sustainable food innovation in the Philippines.

Worth The Health (WTH) Foods: Under the shadow of a global pandemic, WTH Foods emerged as a beacon of innovation in the plant-based food sector, directed at reshaping Filipinos' culinary preferences towards sustainable protein alternatives. The inception of WTH Foods, anchored on the flagship brand Umani, represents Stephen's

venture into addressing a trifecta of modern societal challenges: health consciousness, sustainable protein production, and animal welfare. By capitalizing on his academic expertise spanning biology, technology management, and bioscience enterprise, Stephen crafts a venture that redefines the axis of the food industry in the Philippines towards a more health-centric and environmentally sustainable direction.

The brand's philosophy and product line are predicated on a simple realization: the future of food sustainability lies in the heart of science and innovation. Through WTH Foods, Stephen navigates the intricate dance of introducing a novel food category to a traditional market with finesse. Utilizing digital platforms, WTH targets a demography keen on exploring healthful alternatives without compromising taste or cultural familiarity. This approach points to a nuanced understanding of market dynamics and consumer behavior, emphasizing introducing meat alternatives that resonate with the local palate yet push the envelope on health and sustainability.

Nipa Brew Craft Beers: Contrasting the health-focused narrative of WTH Foods, Nipa Brew reflects Stephen's exploration of creativity within the craft beer segment. This venture allowed him to channel his love for science and entrepreneurship and positioned Nipa Brew as a cultivator of Filipino creativity and food innovation. Despite the initial success and the joy derived from brewing, Stephen felt a more profound calling towards leveraging his entrepreneurial efforts to showcase Filipino ingenuity in utilizing local ingredients for global problems, particularly in the food and health sectors.

The transition from Nipa Brew to WTH Foods underscores an entrepreneurial journey marked by adaptability, a deep-seated commitment to sustainability, and a visionary outlook on the food industry's role in societal health and environmental

stewardship. It reflects a conscious pivot from celebrating Filipino brewing talent to championing a broader cause: advocating for a sustainable, healthful future through innovative food solutions.

Based on Stephen Co's profile as a founder presents a multifaceted view of modern entrepreneurship where passion, purpose, and impact converge. It embodies the quintessence of using science and innovation as tools for commercial success and, more importantly, for social good and environmental sustainability.

The case of Stephen Co and his endeavors with WTH Foods and Nipa Brew Craft Beers epitomize the transformative potential of aligning entrepreneurial vision with sustainable practices and health-centric innovations. As Stephen continues to redefine the boundaries of the Filipino food industry, his story serves as an inspiring blueprint for future entrepreneurs worldwide. This narrative demonstrates the feasibility of integrating business acumen with scientific expertise and highlights the profound impact such a synthesis can have on society and the environment.

Patrick Dulay (The Spark Project)

Patrick "Patch" Dulay's journey as a technology and innovation enthusiast has significantly shaped the entrepreneurial landscape in the Philippines through The Spark Project. This endeavor, which he started in 2013, leveraged his keen insight into the potential of crowdfunding combined with his academic background and experiences to create a platform uniquely attuned to the needs and aspirations of Filipino entrepreneurs. The Spark Project has distinguished itself as an invaluable resource for creatively

conscious ventures in the Philippines, emphasizing its role as a crowdfunding platform and an Entrepreneurship Support Organization (ESO).

Before laying the groundwork for The Spark Project, Patch honed his skills and knowledge in the field of Management Information Systems at the Ateneo de Manila University, subsequently enriching his expertise with a Master's degree in Global E-business in France and Social Enterprise and Development at the Ateneo Graduate School of Business. These academic achievements provided a solid foundation for Patch's entrepreneurial journey, equipping him with a broad understanding of both the technical aspects of the digital world and the social dimensions of business and entrepreneurship. His earlier engagements as an IT consultant and lecturer further augmented his capabilities, setting the stage for the innovative venture that The Spark Project would become.

Since its inception, The Spark Project has championed the cause of Filipino entrepreneurs by facilitating connections between project creators and backers from all over the globe. It has successfully generated funds to support over 60 projects, contributing to a thriving innovation, creativity, and social impact ecosystem. Patch's vision for The Spark Project transcends the conventional bounds of crowdfunding, grounded in the belief that supporting entrepreneurial initiatives extends beyond mere financial assistance. It involves nurturing a community where creators can thrive, learn from each other, and collectively contribute to the nation's growth.

What sets The Spark Project apart is its tailored approach to addressing the unique challenges and opportunities within the Philippine context. Patch's adeptness in identifying and integrating these elements into The Spark Project's operations has been

pivotal. By curating a platform that is both a catalyst for funding and a hub for entrepreneurial growth, The Spark Project has been instrumental in showcasing Filipino talent and innovation to a broader audience.

Furthermore, Patch's endeavors have received local and international recognition, manifesting the profound impact of his work not only in elevating startups, influencing policy, and fostering a more vibrant entrepreneurial culture in the Philippines. His participation in the Professional Fellows Program (PFP) and receiving awards highlight the global resonance of his contributions to entrepreneurship and social change.

Under Patch's leadership, The Spark Project continues to evolve, embracing opportunities to expand its reach and impact through initiatives like the annual Spark Fest conferences. These gatherings are pivotal in bringing together creative entrepreneurs and change-makers, reinforcing the essence of community central to The Spark Project's mission. Patch's endeavor takes on a new dimension through these conferences, merging online interactions with real-life connections and learning opportunities.

Patch's work through The Spark Project underlines a multifaceted approach to entrepreneurship deeply rooted in community, collaboration, and innovation. By leveraging the power of crowdfunding in a manner that goes beyond financial transactions to foster a sense of collective endeavor, Patch has not only contributed to the success of numerous projects but has also inspired a more significant movement towards sustainable and socially conscious business practices in the Philippines and beyond.

The Spark Project stands as a beacon of how technology can be a powerful tool for economic and social empowerment when applied with a clear vision and an understanding of local contexts. Patch's journey and achievements underscore the critical

role of leadership and innovation in creating platforms that support individual projects and nurture a thriving entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Camille Escudero (Lily of the Valley)

Camille Escudero is the founder and driving force behind Lily of the Valley, a social enterprise based in the Philippines that aims to empower and uplift underprivileged women through sustainable livelihood opportunities. With a solid commitment to social responsibility and a passion for making a difference, Camille has created an organization that provides employment and fosters a sense of community and personal growth among its beneficiaries.

Lily of the Valley was born out of Camille's desire to address the challenges faced by women from disadvantaged backgrounds, particularly those who have experienced abuse, exploitation, and lack of access to education and employment. Recognizing the transformative power of economic independence, Camille established the organization to provide these women with the skills, resources, and support they need to build a better future for themselves and their families.

At the heart of Lily of the Valley's mission is the belief that every woman deserves the opportunity to reach her full potential and live a life of dignity and purpose. The organization offers a comprehensive program that combines skills training, personal development, and employment opportunities to achieve this goal.

The journey begins with a carefully designed skills training program that equips women with the knowledge and expertise to create high-quality, marketable products. Lily of the Valley produces handcrafted jewelry, accessories, and home décor items made

from sustainable and locally sourced materials. The training program focuses on technical skills and emphasizes the importance of creativity, innovation, and attention to detail.

Beyond the technical aspects, Lily of the Valley strongly emphasizes personal development and empowerment. Through workshops, mentoring sessions, and group activities, the women are encouraged to build their self-confidence, communication skills, and leadership abilities. The organization recognizes that true empowerment goes beyond providing a job; it fosters a sense of self-worth, resilience, and the belief that one can shape one's destiny.

One of the unique aspects of Lily of the Valley is its commitment to creating a supportive and inclusive community. The women who join the organization become part of a tight-knit sisterhood where they can find encouragement, inspiration, and a support network. This sense of belonging is crucial for women who often face isolation and marginalization.

As the women progress through the program, they are provided employment opportunities within Lily of the Valley's production workshop. Here, they can practice their newly acquired skills and earn a fair wage for their work. The organization ensures that the working conditions are safe, dignified, and conducive to personal and professional growth.

The impact of Lily of the Valley extends beyond the individual lives of the women it serves. By empowering these women to become self-sufficient and confident, the organization contributes to the broader goal of gender equality and social justice. When women are given the tools and opportunities to succeed, they improve their lives and become agents of change in their families and communities.

Camille's leadership and vision have been instrumental in the success and growth of Lily of the Valley. Her unwavering commitment to the cause and her entrepreneurial spirit and compassion have inspired others to join the movement and support the organization's mission. Through partnerships with local businesses, government agencies, and non-profit organizations, Lily of the Valley has expanded its reach and impact.

Looking to the future, Camille and her team at Lily of the Valley remain dedicated to empowering women and creating positive social change. They continue to innovate and adapt their programs to meet the evolving needs of their beneficiaries and the wider community. By providing sustainable livelihood opportunities, fostering personal growth, and building a supportive network, Lily of the Valley is planting the seeds of hope and transformation in the lives of countless women.

Camille Escudero and Lily of the Valley are inspiring examples of how social entrepreneurship can be a powerful tool for addressing social issues and creating lasting change. Through their tireless efforts and unwavering commitment, they empower individual women and contribute to the broader movement toward a more just and equitable society.

Anya Lim (ANTHILL Fabric Gallery)

Joy Anya T. Lim's journey as the co-founder, managing, and creative director of ANTHILL Fabric Gallery is a remarkable testament to the power of social entrepreneurship in uplifting marginalized communities and preserving cultural heritage. Through her visionary leadership and unwavering commitment to empowerment, Anya

has transformed the lives of countless indigenous artisans, particularly women, across the Philippines.

ANTHILL Fabric Gallery, founded by Anya and her mother, Annie Tan Lim 2010, emerged as a beacon of hope amidst the challenges of poverty and unemployment faced by indigenous communities in the Philippines. The enterprise's name, an acronym for Alternative Nest and Trading / Training Hub for Indigenous Little Livelihood Seekers, encapsulates its mission to create sustainable livelihoods and preserve the rich traditions of Indigenous craftsmanship.

Anya's journey with ANTHILL began with a profound realization of the untapped potential within the weaving and craft industry. Despite the inherent value of these skills, indigenous artisans often struggled with low profitability and limited market access, leading to forced urban migration. Determined to address these issues, Anya embarked on a mission to harness the power of these undervalued skills and create an enabling environment for community enterprises to thrive.

In 2014, ANTHILL introduced the Community Enterprise Development Program (CEDP), a collaborative effort with artisan partners from Abra, Bukidnon, and Cebu. The program's foundation lies in providing sustainable livelihoods and fostering an environment conducive to the independent growth of community enterprises. Alongside this, Anya pioneered the movement of everyday weave-wearing, establishing a solid market presence for the artisans' products.

As CEDP evolved, it adapted to the unique needs of each community, offering tailored support in business systems development, supply chain management, upskilling, and market access. The program's beneficiaries include WMSME owners, culture

bearers, community managers, and active members, all contributing to the holistic development of their communities.

The impact of CEDP is far-reaching, with ANTHILL currently collaborating with 20 textile weaving and craft communities, five of which are direct partners. The enterprise also works with independent makers, artisans, and 14 community-based production partners, serving approximately 750 artisans across Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao. Notably, 95% of these artisans are women and mothers, highlighting Anya's dedication to women's empowerment.

CEDP's success stories encompass various aspects, including cultural preservation, leadership development, economic growth, social empowerment, and environmental sustainability. The Master and Apprentice Program ensures cultural continuity by engaging the younger generation in the craft while appointing community managers to strengthen leadership and good governance.

Economically, CEDP has expanded market access through digital platforms, launching the first community-owned fabric store and crowdfunding campaigns. Socially, women artisans have gained a stronger voice in decision-making processes, taking pride in their skills and expressing gratitude for the positive impact on their lives as mothers.

Environmental sustainability is a core focus of ANTHILL's initiatives. The enterprise upcycles textile waste through innovative practices, prolonging product life cycles and reducing waste. Anya's mission to serve even more weaving communities is driven by the realization that there are 450 weaving communities in the Philippines, with 5,000 artisans living below or at the poverty line, 90% of whom are women.

The impact of CEDP is meticulously assessed through monitoring and evaluation systems and the use of trackers. The data reflects significant progress in augmenting partner artisans' income by over 200% within three years, enabling access to loans and savings for further ventures. Productivity has increased by over 300%, and ANTHILL's circularity initiatives have upcycled over 6,000 kg of textile waste, providing additional income opportunities for the artisans.

Under Anya's visionary leadership, ANTHILL Fabric Gallery has become a driving force for positive change in the lives of indigenous communities. With a passion for preserving culture, empowering women, and fostering sustainability, Anya's work exemplifies the true spirit of social entrepreneurship. As ANTHILL continues to expand its reach and impact, it stands as a shining example of how business and social responsibility can come together to create a brighter and more inclusive future for all.

Jan Bernard Tan (iVolunteer and The Good Store PH)

Jan Bernard Tan is a social entrepreneur and volunteer advocate based in the Philippines. He is the founder of two purpose-driven organizations, iVolunteer and The Good Store PH, which aim to promote volunteerism and support local social enterprises.

iVolunteer is an online platform that connects volunteers with non-profit organizations and social welfare institutions in the Philippines. Established in 2009, it serves as a bridge between people who want to donate their time and skills and groups that need volunteer support for their advocacies and programs. Through iVolunteer, JB hopes to make volunteerism more accessible, inclusive, and impactful in the country.

The Good Store PH, on the other hand, is a retail shop and e-commerce site that curates and sells products made by local social enterprises. Launched in 2017, it provides market access to small businesses that are working to address social issues such as poverty, lack of education, and environmental degradation, among others. By supporting these social enterprises, The Good Store PH contributes to building an ecosystem where business and social impact can thrive together.

JB's journey as a social entrepreneur began when he was still a college student. He volunteered for various school organizations and non-profit groups and realized how volunteerism can be a powerful tool for personal development and social change. However, he also saw the challenges that volunteers and volunteer organizations face, such as lack of information, limited resources, and difficulty in matching skills with opportunities.

This led him to conceptualize iVolunteer as a platform that can help address these gaps. With the help of some friends, JB built the website and started reaching out to non-profit partners. They also organized volunteer activities and training programs to engage more people and build a community of volunteers.

Over the years, iVolunteer has grown into a leading volunteer portal in the Philippines, with over 30,000 registered users and 200 partner organizations. It has facilitated thousands of volunteer connections and supported various causes such as education, environment, health, and disaster response, among others. iVolunteer has also expanded its programs to include corporate volunteering, youth development, and capacity building for non-profits.

JB's experience with iVolunteer exposed him to the world of social enterprises and the challenges they face in terms of sustainability and scale. He saw an opportunity to support these businesses by providing them with a market platform and connecting them with conscious consumers.

This vision gave birth to The Good Store PH, which JB. The store offers a wide range of products from local social enterprises, including eco-friendly home goods, artisanal food products, handcrafted accessories, and many more. Each product has a story behind it, from empowering persons with disabilities to supporting indigenous communities to promoting a zero-waste lifestyle.

Aside from selling products, The Good Store PH also organizes events and campaigns that raise awareness about social entrepreneurship and conscious consumerism. It has partnered with schools, corporations, and government agencies to promote the concept of "shopping for good" and encourage more people to support social enterprises.

Through iVolunteer and The Good Store PH, JB has shown that businesses can be a force for good and that everyone has the power to contribute to social change through volunteerism and conscious consumption. His story inspires us to find our own purpose and use our talents and resources to make a positive impact in our communities.

Table 1*Profiles of the selected Mission-Centric Social Enterprises and their Founder*

| Participant Name | Organization/s | Mission of Social Enterprise | Overview of Social Enterprise |
|-------------------------|------------------------------------|---|--|
| Stephen Co | Worth the Health Foods (WTH Foods) | Address health, sustainability, and animal welfare through plant-based meat alternatives showcasing Filipino flavors. | Stephen founded WTH Foods to create healthy, sustainable plant-based proteins as alternatives to meat, utilizing his background in biology, technology, and bioscience. Previously founded Nipa Brew to showcase Filipino creativity and innovation in craft brewing. |
| Patch Dulay | The Spark Project | Empower Filipino entrepreneurs through crowdfunding and support as an Entrepreneurship Support Organization (ESO) | Founded The Spark Project in 2013 as a crowdfunding platform and ESO uniquely supporting creative Filipino entrepreneurs. Provides funding, community, and growth opportunities. Recognized locally and internationally for fostering entrepreneurship and social change in the Philippines. |
| Camille Escudero | Lily of the Valley | Empower underprivileged women through sustainable livelihood opportunities, skills training, and personal development. | Founded Lily of the Valley to provide disadvantaged women, especially abuse survivors, with employment, skills training, mentoring, and a supportive community to help them gain independence and reach their potential. Focuses on handcrafted products made from sustainable local materials. |
| Anya Lim | ANTHILL Fabric Gallery | Preserve cultural heritage and provide sustainable livelihoods to indigenous weavers and artisan communities, especially women. | Co-founded ANTHILL to support Indigenous textile weaving and craft communities through the Community Enterprise Development Program - providing market access, training, leadership development, and sustainable livelihood opportunities. 95% of artisan partners are women. Promotes circular economy through upcycling. |
| JB Tan | iVolunteer The Good Store PH | Promote volunteerism and support social enterprises through an online volunteer platform and curated social enterprise marketplace. | Founded iVolunteer as an online portal connecting volunteers and non-profits. Started The Good Store PH as an e-commerce site selling products from social enterprises. Supports building an ecosystem for business and social impact to thrive together in the Philippines. |

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were paramount throughout the research process. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, with clear explanations of the study's purpose, the voluntary nature of their involvement, and the confidentiality of their responses. Adherence to ethical guidelines ensured the research's integrity and respected the participants' rights and privacy (American Psychological Association, 2020).

Given the digital aspect of the study, special attention was paid to digital ethics, including privacy concerns. When analyzing digital artifacts, such as social media posts or website content, the researcher discerned what was considered public domain information and what may infringe on personal or organizational privacy (Markham & Buchanan, 2012). This necessitated a carefully balanced approach to data collection and analysis, ensuring that any publicly available information used in the study did not compromise the privacy or confidentiality of the individuals or entities involved.

The ethical implications of cultural sensitivity and respect were also considered. Given the study's emphasis on cultural-cognitive orientations, it was imperative to approach these aspects with a profound respect for cultural differences and to ensure that research practices did not inadvertently perpetuate stereotypes or cultural insensitivity (Tillmann-Healy, 2003). This included being mindful of language use, avoiding cultural appropriation, and ensuring that interpretations and analyses were conducted with cultural competence and an awareness of one's cultural biases.

The potential for harm was another critical ethical consideration. While qualitative studies on digital social marketing strategies may not present obvious risks of physical

harm, there was a potential for psychological discomfort or damage, particularly when discussing personal beliefs, failures, or challenges encountered within the participants' social enterprises. The research design included evaluations to mitigate this risk, such as allowing participants to skip questions, ensuring no pressure to divulge sensitive information, and offering support resources if discussions evoked distress or discomfort (Birch, Mauthner, & Jessop, 2012).

Data's ethical use and representation stood as a pillar of ethical research. Ensuring accuracy in data presentation, avoiding misinterpretation, and respecting the participants' intentions in sharing their experiences were essential. This aligned with the moral principle of fidelity and responsibility, urging researchers to be truthful and responsible for managing the data entrusted to them by their participants (American Psychological Association, 2020).

The dissemination of research findings involved ethical considerations, particularly when sharing results that could impact the reputation or operations of the social enterprises involved. Furthermore, sharing the results with participants before publication allowed them to review the portrayal of their contributions and provide feedback (Israel & Hay, 2006).

The ethical considerations, including informed consent, digital privacy, cultural sensitivity, potential for harm, ethical data use, and responsible dissemination, were carefully navigated to ensure the integrity of the research and respect for the participants. The reflexive approach adopted by the researcher further enhanced the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings.

Data Collection

Data collection involved a multi-faceted approach, incorporating semi-structured interviews, analysis of digital artefacts, and non-participant observation.

Semi-structured interviews with founders delved into their perceptions of digital social marketing strategies, communication adjustments inspired by CAT, and the influence of their cultural-cognitive orientations, drawing on recommendations by King and Horrocks (2010). The interviews were guided by a flexible protocol that allowed for open-ended responses and follow-up questions, enabling the researcher to explore emerging themes and capture the unique insights of each founder (Edwards & Holland, 2013). Purposive sampling was used to identify and recruit founders of mission-centric social enterprises who met the inclusion criteria, ensuring a diverse range of cultural-cognitive backgrounds and digital marketing experiences (Palinkas et al., 2015). Interviews were conducted via video conferencing that lasted between 30 to 45 minutes. All interviews were audio or video recorded with the participant's consent and transcribed verbatim for analysis (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015).

Digital artifact analysis served as a systematic examination of static content posted by social enterprises across their digital platforms. This methodological approach focused on analyzing fixed digital content elements that represent the enterprises' strategic communication efforts. The analysis encompassed various digital artifacts including social media posts, profile descriptions, website content, and digital marketing materials published between January 1, 2023, and June 30, 2023. The artifact analysis process followed a structured framework to ensure comprehensive data collection and systematic documentation. Each digital artifact was cataloged using a standardized labeling system

to maintain organizational clarity and enable easy retrieval for analysis. This systematic approach allowed for tracking the evolution of communication strategies and identifying patterns in content creation across different platforms. The analysis specifically focused on examining how founders' cultural-cognitive orientations manifested in their digital content creation. This included scrutinizing the choice of imagery, language use, messaging tone, and overall brand presentation across platforms. The examination of these static elements provided insights into how founders intentionally crafted their digital presence to align with their mission while accommodating their target audience's preferences.

Non-participant observation was employed to examine the dynamic aspects of digital engagement, focusing on ephemeral content like stories, interactive elements, and real-time engagement through comments and sponsored advertisements. This method involved systematic observation without direct participation in digital interactions, allowing for an unobtrusive examination of natural engagement patterns. The observation period spanned from May 1, 2024, to May 31, 2024, during which 60 hours were dedicated to monitoring digital activities across selected social media platforms. This approach aligned with established principles of non-participant observation, where the researcher maintains a separate and distant role while building trust and developing empathy with the observed community. Throughout the observation period, detailed field notes were maintained to document engagement patterns, audience responses, and the evolution of digital interactions. The researcher paid particular attention to how founders adapted their communication strategies in response to audience engagement, focusing on both successful and unsuccessful attempts at community building.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

At its core, *thematic analysis* identified patterns of meaning and themes within the data, following Braun and Clarke's (2006) framework for analyzing qualitative data systematically. This foundational technique facilitates the conversion of raw data into a coherent, logical narrative, which is pivotal in the ever-changing digital environment. This method helped highlight how CAT and CCT manifest in the digital marketing strategies of mission-centric social enterprises. The analysis process involved an iterative approach, moving between the digital artifacts and the interview data to identify convergences and divergences and to develop a comprehensive understanding of how founders navigate the digital landscape while staying true to their values and missions (Saldaña, 2015).

Narrative analysis, as detailed by Riessman (2008), constructed in-depth narratives around the founders' strategies, capturing the unique synthesis of communication accommodation and cultural-cognitive orientations. This approach involved collecting and interpreting stories to understand how individuals perceive and articulate their experiences (Riessman, 2008). Through this lens, the analysis focused on the sequence of events, the motivations behind digital strategy decisions, and the impact of cultural-cognitive orientations on these strategies.

Comparative analysis was employed to discern patterns and variances across cases, guided by the comparative method described by Ragin (1987). This analytical approach examined the data across case studies to identify similarities and dissimilarities in applying theoretical concepts and assessment of community engagement outcomes. Comparative lens was critical in addressing the overarching research questions, enabling an examination of how different social enterprises look into the capability of their

mission-market alignment in digital social marketing and how these assessments align with or diverge from theoretical expectations. In this context, success was dual-faceted, encompassing the community response to digital social marketing strategies from a business perspective and their alignment with social missions. This dual approach considered engagement and conversion rates, stakeholder feedback, and alignment with social missions, reflecting the multifaceted objectives of social enterprises.

The cross-analysis process began by establishing connections between the three primary data sources: semi-structured interviews, digital artifacts, and non-participant observation field notes. This integration followed a systematic approach where findings from each methodology were first analyzed independently and then cross-referenced to identify patterns, convergences, and divergences across the data sets.

The process started with thematic analysis of interview transcripts, following Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase framework. Initial codes were generated from the raw data, focusing on founders' expressions of their cultural-cognitive orientations and communication adaptation strategies. These codes were then grouped into preliminary themes that captured recurring patterns in founders' approaches to digital social marketing.

These initial themes were subsequently enriched through narrative analysis of the digital artifacts, employing Riessman's (2008) approach to examining how founders' stories unfolded across their digital platforms. This step involved analyzing the sequential development of marketing narratives and their alignment with the themes identified from the interview data. The narrative analysis particularly focused on how founders' cultural backgrounds and values manifested in their digital storytelling approaches.

The final layer involved comparative analysis across cases, following Ragin's (1987) method of systematic comparison. This step examined how different founders approached similar challenges in digital social marketing, identifying patterns in their strategic decisions and implementation approaches. The comparative analysis particularly focused on variations in how cultural-cognitive orientations influenced digital marketing strategies across different social enterprise contexts.

Figure 1.

Flow Chart depicting the Data Collection and Analysis Process

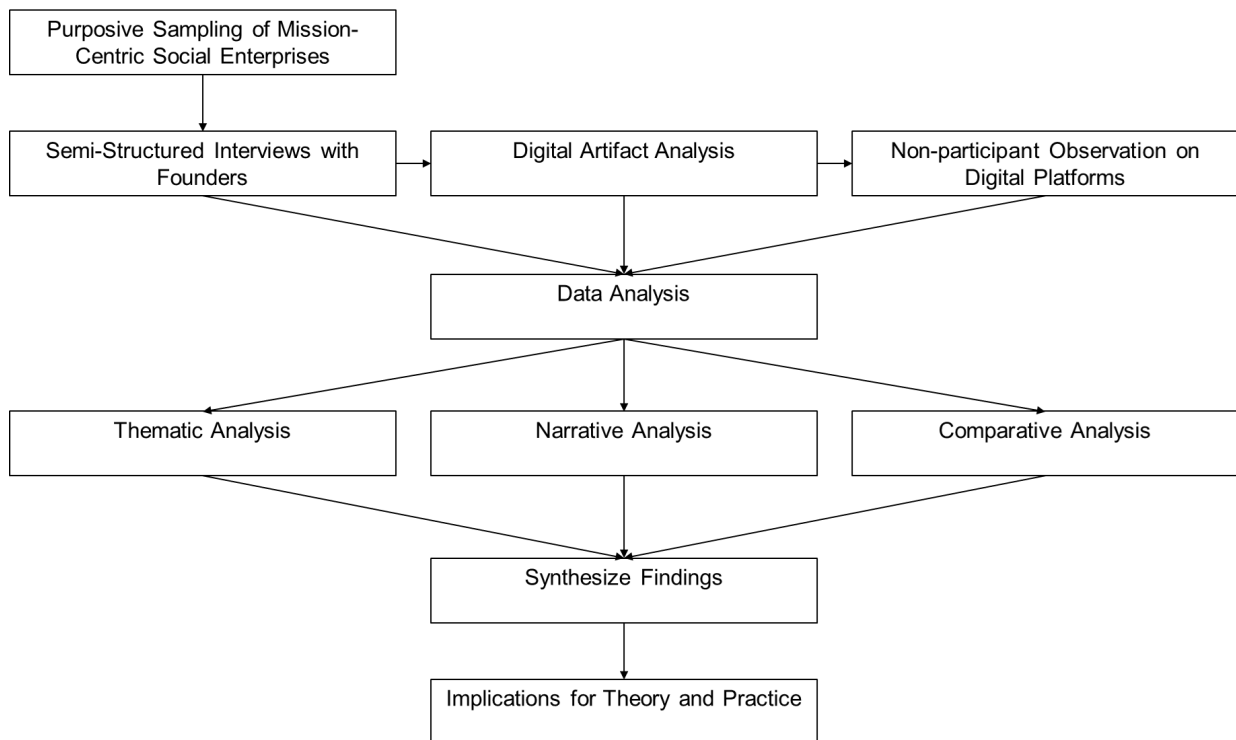


Figure 1 depicts the data collection and analysis procedures employed in this study. The flow chart illustrates the primary data collection methods: semi-structured interviews, digital artifact analysis, and non-participant observation. The data collected through these methods were then subjected to thematic, narrative, and comparative analyses. The thematic analysis followed Braun and Clarke's (2006) framework, identifying patterns and themes related to the application of CAT and CCT, the influence of founders' cultural-cognitive orientations, and the alignment of digital marketing strategies with social missions. The narrative analysis, guided by Riessman (2008), constructed comprehensive accounts of each founder's unique approach to integrating

these theories into practice. The comparative analysis, informed by Ragin's (1987) comparative method, examined commonalities and differences across cases in assessing success and aligning theoretical concepts with real-world implementation. The insights derived from these analyses were then synthesized to address the research questions and contribute to understanding digital social marketing in mission-centric social enterprises.

The researcher maintained a reflexive approach throughout the research process, acknowledging their biases and assumptions and striving to create a safe and non-judgmental space for participants to share their experiences (Berger, 2015). Reflexivity involves continuously examining the researcher's preconceptions and how these might influence the interpretation of data (Finlay, 2002). This reflexive stance ensured the research findings were grounded in the participants' subjective experiences and meanings rather than the researcher's assumptions or impositions.

The methodology employed in this study, grounded in digital ethnography and case study approaches, provided a comprehensive framework for exploring the complex dynamics of digital social marketing in mission-centric social enterprises. The integration of Communication Accommodation Theory and Cultural-Cognitive Theory guided the data collection and analysis methods, illuminating the interplay between founders' communication strategies, cultural-cognitive orientations, and their authentic digital storytelling approaches in community engagement.

The multi-faceted data collection approach, encompassing semi-structured interviews, digital artifact analysis, and non-participant observation, enabled a rich and nuanced understanding of how founders navigate the digital landscape while staying true

to their values and missions. The thematic, narrative, and comparative analyses offered insights into the application of CAT and CCT in digital social marketing strategies, the influence of founders' cultural-cognitive orientations, and the alignment of these strategies with social missions.

Semi-structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews served as the primary data collection method, providing an opportunity for in-depth conversations with founders about their experiences, perspectives, and strategies related to digital social marketing. This approach aligns with the purpose of semi-structured interviews, which is to gain an understanding of participants' thoughts, feelings, and beliefs about a particular topic (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). The interviews were guided by a flexible protocol that allowed for open-ended responses and follow-up questions, enabling the researcher to delve deeper into emerging themes and capture the unique insights of each founder (Edwards & Holland, 2013).

The semi-structured interview guide was developed based on research questions and theoretical framework, focusing on key areas such as the founders' understanding of digital social marketing, their application of Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) and Cultural-Cognitive Theory (CCT), the influence of their personal beliefs and cultural backgrounds on their strategies, and their evaluation of success. The guide was piloted with a small sample of participants to ensure clarity, relevance, and flow and was refined based on feedback (Kallio et al., 2016).

Purposive sampling was used to identify and recruit founders of mission-centric social enterprises who met the inclusion criteria, ensuring a diverse range of cultural-cognitive backgrounds and digital marketing experiences (Palinkas et al., 2015). Interviews were conducted via video conferencing and lasted between 30 and 45 minutes. All interviews were audio or video recorded with the participant's consent and transcribed verbatim for analysis (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015).

Throughout the interview process, the researcher maintained a reflexive approach, acknowledging their own biases and assumptions and striving to create a safe and non-judgmental space for participants to share their experiences (Berger, 2015). The semi-structured nature of the interviews allowed for a conversational flow, building rapport and trust between the researcher and participants, which is essential for eliciting rich and authentic data (Josselson, 2013).

The open coding process involved examining the semi-structured interview data and assigning descriptive labels or codes to segments that encapsulated the core meaning of the content. These codes were derived from a combination of the participants' own words, the researcher's interpretations, and the theoretical concepts of Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) and Cultural-Cognitive Theory (CCT) (Saldaña, 2021). The coding process followed an iterative approach, constantly comparing and refining the codes to ensure they accurately represented the data's essence (Charmaz, 2014). These codes will guide the subsequent digital artifact analysis and non-participant observation, enabling a more focused and theoretically grounded exploration of the social enterprises' digital marketing practices (Kozinets, 2020).

Table 2.

Summary of the Semi-structured Interview

| Participant | Semi-structured Interview Excerpts | Founder CCT and CAT Strategies | Descriptive Label |
|--------------------------------|--|---|--|
| Stephen Co, Worth the Health | <p>"We've identified distinct target demographics and adapted our communication to cater to their preferences. We tried to attack them on different channels. One, of course, is your typical social media like Instagram or Facebook. And then there are middle-aged, more of like Viber groups where we try to connect with them."</p> <p>"We emphasize the authenticity and user-generated content over my personal agenda of promoting scientific innovation, ensuring our marketing voice aligns with market trends and consumer behavior."</p> <p>"We evaluate our digital marketing's success by both sales growth and user engagement. Although it's challenging to link social media engagement with immediate sales directly, we value the insights gained from online interactions and the visibility they provide."</p> <p>"We also plan to balance our digital strategy with on-the-ground activations to enhance customer experience and engagement. We are also exploring the use of AI in content creation to maintain an authentic yet efficient digital presence"</p> <p>"The messaging was not super, since we are constrained by budget, we did not separate. But the messaging is not too far away. It's still like the health benefits. It's still delicious and versatile."</p> <p>"It's essential for reaching the adventurous, health-conscious demographic that's open to innovative food products like plant-based meats. And that's the younger generation. And we have to be where they are."</p> | <p>Adapts communication to target distinct demographics on different channels (e.g. Instagram, Facebook for younger audience; Viber groups for middle-aged)</p> <p>Emphasizes authenticity and user-generated content over personal agenda of promoting scientific innovation</p> <p>Evaluates success by both sales' growth and user engagement insights from online interactions</p> <p>Plans to balance digital with on-the-ground activations and explore AI for content creation</p> <p>Focuses messaging on health benefits, deliciousness and versatility, constrained by budget</p> <p>Uses digital marketing to reach adventurous, health-conscious younger demographic open to innovative food products like plant-based meats</p> <p>Evaluates success by engagement indicators (likes, comments, saves) but lacks formal KPIs</p> | <p>Demographic-Specific Channel Strategy</p> <p>Authentic User-Generated Content Emphasis</p> <p>Holistic Success Evaluation</p> <p>Omnichannel Activation Planning</p> <p>Value Proposition Messaging</p> <p>Innovative Product Digital Marketing</p> <p>Informal Engagement Evaluation</p> |
| Patch Dulay, The Spark Project | <p>"We evaluate the success of our digital marketing by engagement indicators like likes, comments, and saves, which offer insights into our content's impact and relevance. Although these indicators provide valuable feedback, the challenge lies in translating this engagement into concrete outcomes."</p> <p>"We plan to enhance our strategies by focusing more on intentional, strategic content that leverages our rich community stories, aiming to engage our audience through both digital and experiential interactions effectively."</p> <p>"My personal beliefs significantly shape our digital marketing strategies. By focusing on social issues like Women's Month and Pride Month, we embed a strong cultural narrative into our content, reflecting our commitment to inclusivity and community support."</p> <p>"Our social media strategy is designed to showcase the success of the enterprises we support, aligning our communication to resonate with our audience's aspirations. This strategic alignment, inspired by CAT, helps us foster a strong community-centric identity, enhancing our brand's connection with its followers."</p> | <p>Plans more intentional, strategic content leveraging community experiential engagement</p> <p>Infuses personal beliefs into content, highlighting social issues during pivotal months</p> <p>Aligns social media content with success of supported enterprises to foster community-centric brand identity</p> | <p>Balancing Community Story Leveraging</p> <p>Personal Beliefs Infusion</p> <p>Enterprise Success Alignment</p> |

Camille Escudero, Lily of the Valley

"Lily of the Valley recognizes the importance of fostering communities around its health categories, particularly for topics like menopause and transgender health that lack mainstream discourse. The brand aims to create digital platforms that connect and educate users while also exploring partnerships with established communities to amplify its reach and impact."

"In terms of how we're communicating the brand, we are education-led. It's really about health and how these products, though they are clothes, how they take care of you, how they support your health."

"At the end of the day, will end up in the sales aspect of it. Whether more people are starting to understand the product, and more people are receptive and, of course, are buying. But the qualitative, one thing that we still like to do, we're very connection oriented. We like to talk to people, both the audiences. It's a great success that people will give feedback on the products. People come back to buy again."

"We are fundamentally an online brand, and digital communication is our primary means of reaching diverse markets. Our audience, I don't want to say it's getting younger, but it's growing. With our audience expanding across different life stages, from puberty to menopause, it's crucial that we maintain a strong digital presence to engage with the younger, digitally-inclined generation."

"Our engagement with the transgender community in co-creating products exemplifies the influence of cultural-cognitive orientations on our marketing strategies. This collaborative effort reflects our deeper commitment to understanding and addressing the unique needs of diverse groups, ensuring our products are not only relevant but also culturally sensitive."

"Our digital strategy is meticulously tailored to accommodate diverse groups, from nursing mothers to transgender individuals. By adjusting our communication style to match the specific needs and preferences of each group, we not only enhance our audience's understanding of our products but also strengthen our rapport with them."

"Instagram was basically used for storytelling and to me it was so powerful because you're able to really build community around the stories you put out and the stories you put out would resonate to people who have the same values with you and then you're able to establish relationship through engagement using that tool."

"The strategy around cultural preservation in terms of communication was establishing the problem. So when we started Anthill, we would spotlight our artisans and then establish narratives that focuses on the problem so that the audience understand that the issue is really cultural continuity, that a lot of the artisans are in their elder years."

"The strategy is to really pound in more on impact storytelling and advocacy and less on the products because that's what we're good at. And use the platform really more for community engagement even if it's an intimate community."

Plans to foster digital communities around health topics and explore partnerships

Health Community Building

Employs education-led approach to communicate health benefits of products
Evaluates success by sales, repeat purchases, and qualitative feedback from audiences

Education-Driven Health Communication

Holistic Success Evaluation

Primarily uses digital communication to reach expanding audience across life stages

Life Stage Digital Communication

Engages transgender community in co-creating products, reflecting commitment to cultural sensitivity

Inclusive Co-Creation

Tailors' digital strategy to diverse groups (nursing mothers, transgender individuals), adjusting communication style

Diverse Group Communication Tailoring

Previously used Instagram for powerful storytelling to build community around shared values

Values-Based Instagram Storytelling

Spotlighted artisans and narratives focusing on cultural continuity issues

Cultural Continuity Narrative Spotlight

Aims to focus on impact storytelling, advocacy and community engagement over products

Impact-Centric Engagement Shift

Anya Lim, ANTHILL Fabric Gallery

JB Tan, The Good Store

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| <p>"In the past we were more focused on the sales performance. We really looked at the numbers when we do our reviews.... But now since the algorithm has shifted so much, the mindset that we want to carry in Anthill is quality over quantity. What we want to really be able to achieve is even if you only have 30,000 followers, those are actually quality followers that are very highly engaged with your brand."</p> | <p>Shifted from focusing on sales numbers to quality over quantity in followers and engagement</p> | <p>Engagement Quality Focus Shift</p> |
| <p>"I feel like if you're not putting something out there that really reflects your core values and mission, then entirely you know, you're not going to attract the right community."</p> | <p>Believes reflecting core values and mission attracts the right community</p> | <p>Values-Driven Community Attraction</p> |
| <p>"So we have a basic understanding of what their needs are. But at the same time, with the youth probably, with the younger audience, there's a lot of trends that you cannot predict. So you always have to be on the watch out. What are the trends? Benchmark with other bigger influencers what they're doing. And then experiment if those will also work with your brand. So we're constantly trying to innovate, re-invent ourselves on how we communicate things. Then after that, you evaluate using the analytical tools that are available in the platforms to see how to adjust."</p> | <p>Constantly innovates communication based on audience needs and trends, evaluating with analytics</p> | <p>Adaptive Communication Strategy</p> |
| <p>"Not yet firm but one of our, I always joke with my partners that maybe now that I have more time, I'll probably do live selling. So live selling is another hot way to engage platforms. I forgot to mention that we're also in Shopee and Lazada as platforms. And now TikTok shop. So those are the other marketplaces that we look into but we're not actively promoting those platforms because one, they have, I mean we lose margin in those platforms. They have a big service cut or service fee versus if people go to our website then it's a better margin for us."</p> | <p>Considering live selling and expanding to other marketplaces like Shopee, Lazada, TikTok shop</p> | <p>Marketplace Expansion Consideration</p> |
| <p>"The unique thing about The Good Store compared to other businesses is we are trying to also educate a lot of people about the stories of the communities and the advocacy behind the things that we are selling. That's the primary purpose. So when we do any marketing, whether it's digital or non-digital, it's always anchored on that strategy that more than selling something or more than informing people that they're selling something, it's about telling the stories behind these items or products first so that consumers understand that they're not just buying products, but there's a bigger purpose into it."</p> | <p>Anchors marketing on educating about stories and advocacy behind products</p> | <p>Advocacy-Centric Marketing</p> |
| <p>"Because we're a small business, our focus is really on reach. Reach and then eventually going to the site for conversion. So those are the two basic indicators. So regardless if you are in Facebook or in Instagram or in TikTok or in YouTube, reach and engagement is defined differently. So those are the two basic things. How much of this traffic is converted or redirected to our site for conversion?"</p> | <p>Evaluates success by reach, engagement (defined differently per platform) and website traffic conversion</p> | <p>Platform-Specific Engagement Impressions</p> |

Digital Artifact Analysis

Digital artifact analysis served as a comprehensive methodological approach to systematically examine the digital content strategies of mission-centric social enterprises. Grounded in the theoretical frameworks of Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) and Cultural-Cognitive Theory (CCT), this method provided a nuanced exploration of how founders strategically communicate their organizational missions through digital platforms (Kozinets, 2015).

The analysis focused on digital artifacts collected from the social enterprises' primary digital channels, specifically Facebook and Instagram pages, spanning a six-month period from January 1, 2023, to June 30, 2023. This timeframe ensured the capture of contemporary digital communication strategies while providing sufficient chronological depth for meaningful analysis. The selected digital artifacts included social media posts, profile descriptions, website content, and digital marketing materials that represented the enterprises' strategic communication efforts (Krippendorff, 2013).

The analytical approach employed a mixed-method strategy combining content analysis and thematic analysis techniques. Content analysis examined the manifest content, focusing on explicit language use, visual elements, and communication patterns. Simultaneously, thematic analysis delved into the latent content, uncovering underlying themes that reflected founders' cultural-cognitive orientations and communication adaptation strategies (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Each digital artifact underwent systematic cataloging using a standardized labeling system, enabling comprehensive documentation and facilitating nuanced interpretation.

The analysis process was iterative, continuously moving between digital artifacts and interview data to identify convergences, divergences, and emerging patterns in communication strategies (Saldaña, 2015). Specific analytical focuses included examining the choice of imagery, linguistic nuances, messaging tone, and overall brand presentation across platforms.

This methodological approach allowed for a deep exploration of how founders intentionally craft their digital presence, accommodating target audience preferences while maintaining alignment with their social missions. By triangulating digital artifact analysis with interview data, the research captured a holistic understanding of founders' communication strategies in digital social marketing contexts.

Figure 2.

Worth The Health's Umani Facebook and Instagram



Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/eat.umani>

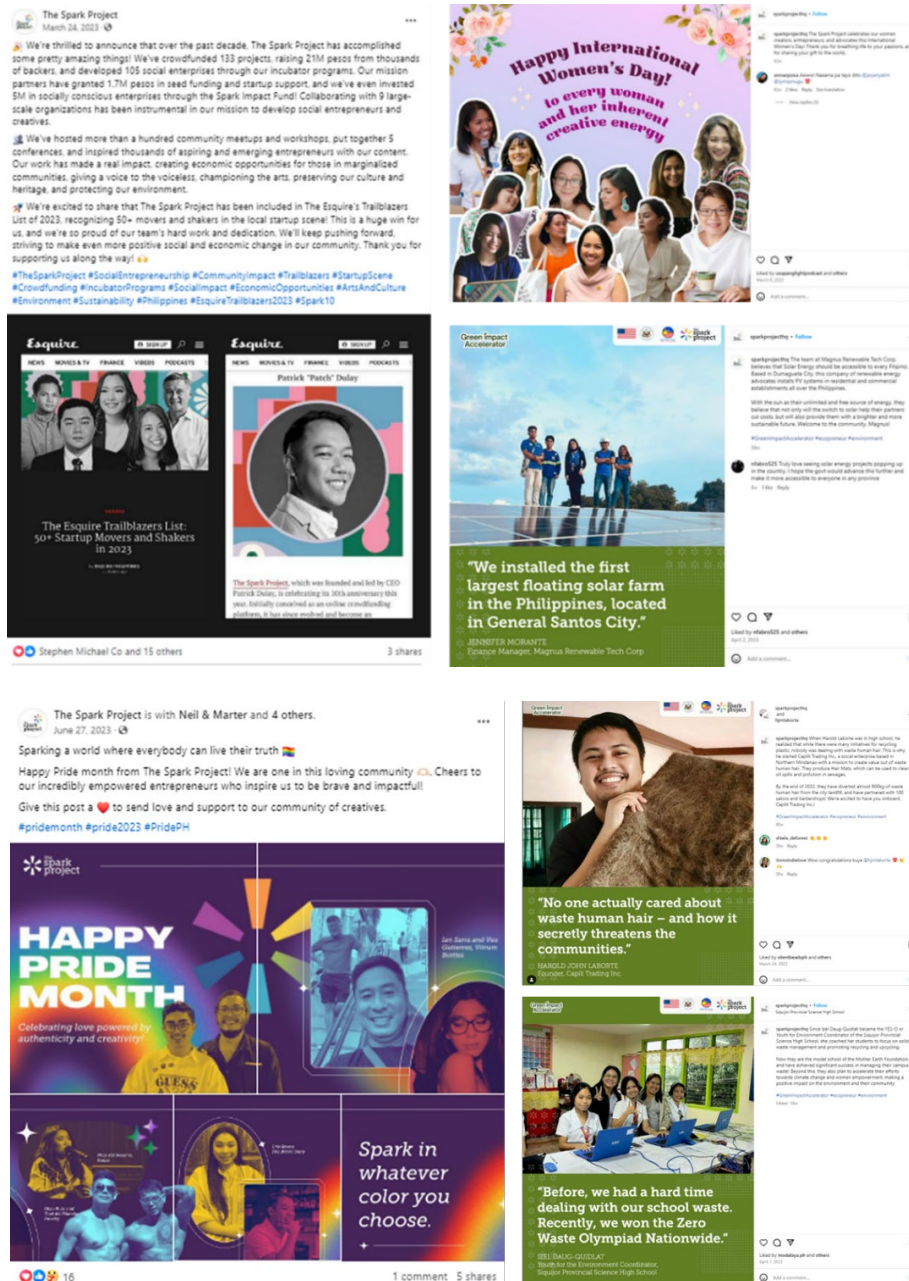
Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/eat.umani/?hl=en>

Stephen Co (Worth The Health)

The digital artifacts from Stephen Co's Worth The Health Foods' Umani brand demonstrate a strategic application of Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) and Cultural-Cognitive Theory (CCT) in their digital marketing efforts. The brand successfully adapts its communication style to cater to different target demographics on Facebook and Instagram. On Facebook, Worth The Health employs an informative approach, sharing content about the nutritional benefits and sustainability of their plant-based products, which aligns with the preferences of their older target audience. In contrast, their Instagram feed features a more casual and visually engaging style, with appetizing visuals that resonate with the younger, health-conscious audience. The emphasis on scientific innovation behind the brand's products reflects Stephen Co's personal beliefs, showcasing the influence of his cultural-cognitive orientations on the brand's messaging. However, the brand lacks consistency in post frequency across platforms and the core messaging remains largely unchanged, potentially missing opportunities for further tailoring to audience segments. Additionally, there is a lack of community-building specific to customers who share the same social mission as the brand, and an absence of an education-led approach to help the audience understand the social mission. To enhance their digital presence, Worth The Health should improve consistency in posting frequency, further tailor messaging to the unique preferences and interests of each audience segment, include quotes from the founder's speaking engagements and interviews, and let the founder share their experiences and points of view specific to the organization's mission.

Figure 3.

The Spark Project Facebook and Instagram



Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/sparkprojectHQ>

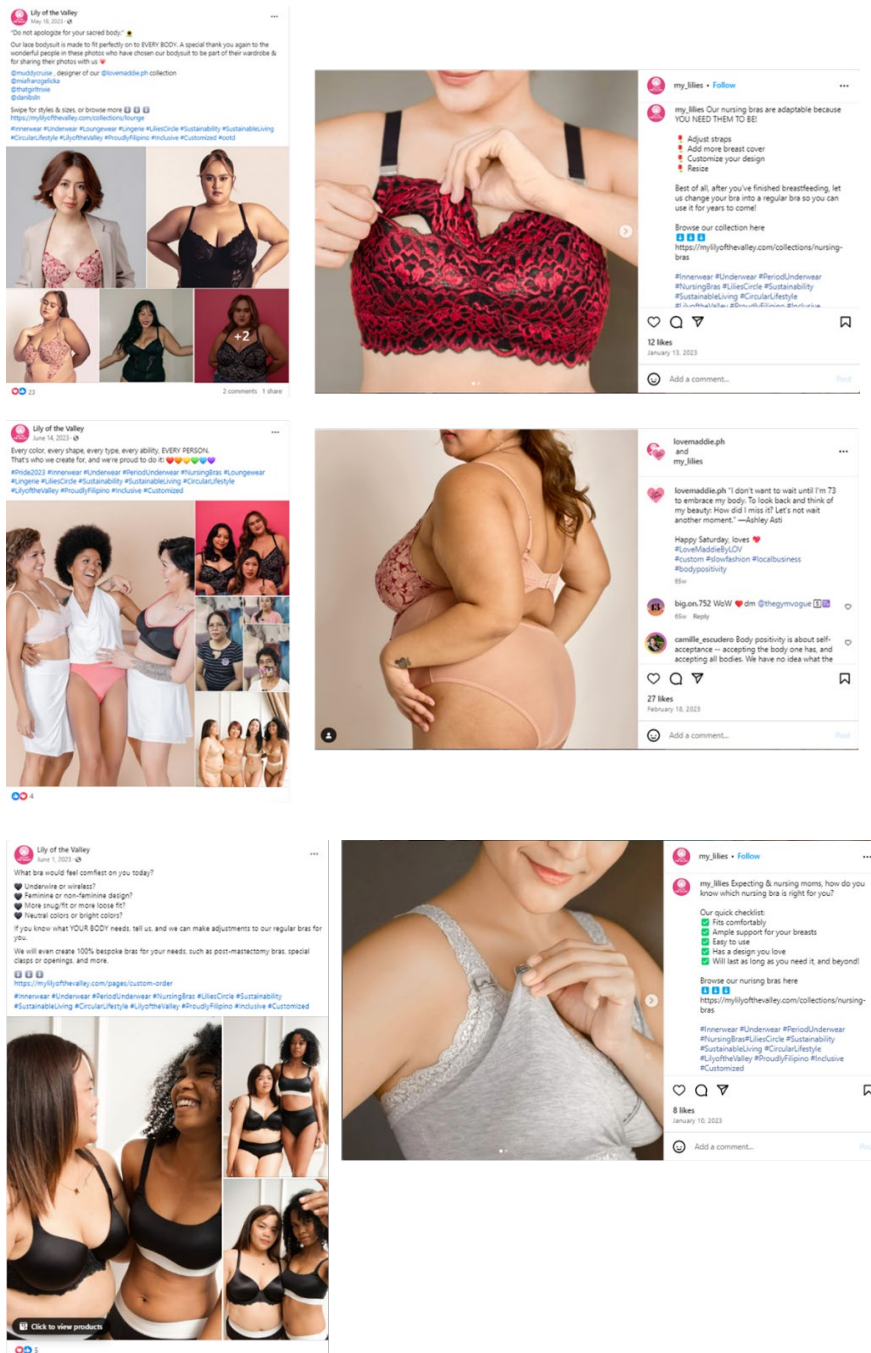
Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/sparkprojecthq/?hl=en>

Patch Dulay (The Spark Project)

Patch Dulay's The Spark Project exhibits a strong application of Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) and Cultural-Cognitive Theory (CCT) in its digital marketing strategies. The organization consistently showcases success stories of supported enterprises on Facebook and Instagram, fostering a sense of community among their followers. The content is carefully curated to align with the audience's aspirations and values, reflecting a deep understanding of CAT principles. The brand's encouraging and community-centric communication style mirrors Patch Dulay's commitment to nurturing Filipino creativity and entrepreneurship, highlighting the influence of his cultural-cognitive orientations on the marketing strategies. The founder's hands-on presence in the digital content, along with the brand's co-branding efforts with other social enterprises, further strengthens the sense of community. The Spark Project excels at community-building and storytelling, employing both storytelling and educational approaches in their content. However, there is a potential over-reliance on organic content, with limited use of paid advertising to expand reach. Some content also lacks clear calls-to-action, which could hinder audience involvement and understanding of how to support the brand's social mission. To enhance their digital presence, The Spark Project should incorporate paid advertising and promotional strategies to expand their reach and provide more actionable resources and support for aspiring entrepreneurs. By diversifying their content strategy and offering tangible ways for their audience to engage with and contribute to their mission, The Spark Project can further solidify its position as a catalyst for social entrepreneurship in the Philippines.

Figure 4.

Lily of the Valley Facebook and Instagram



Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/mylilies.me>

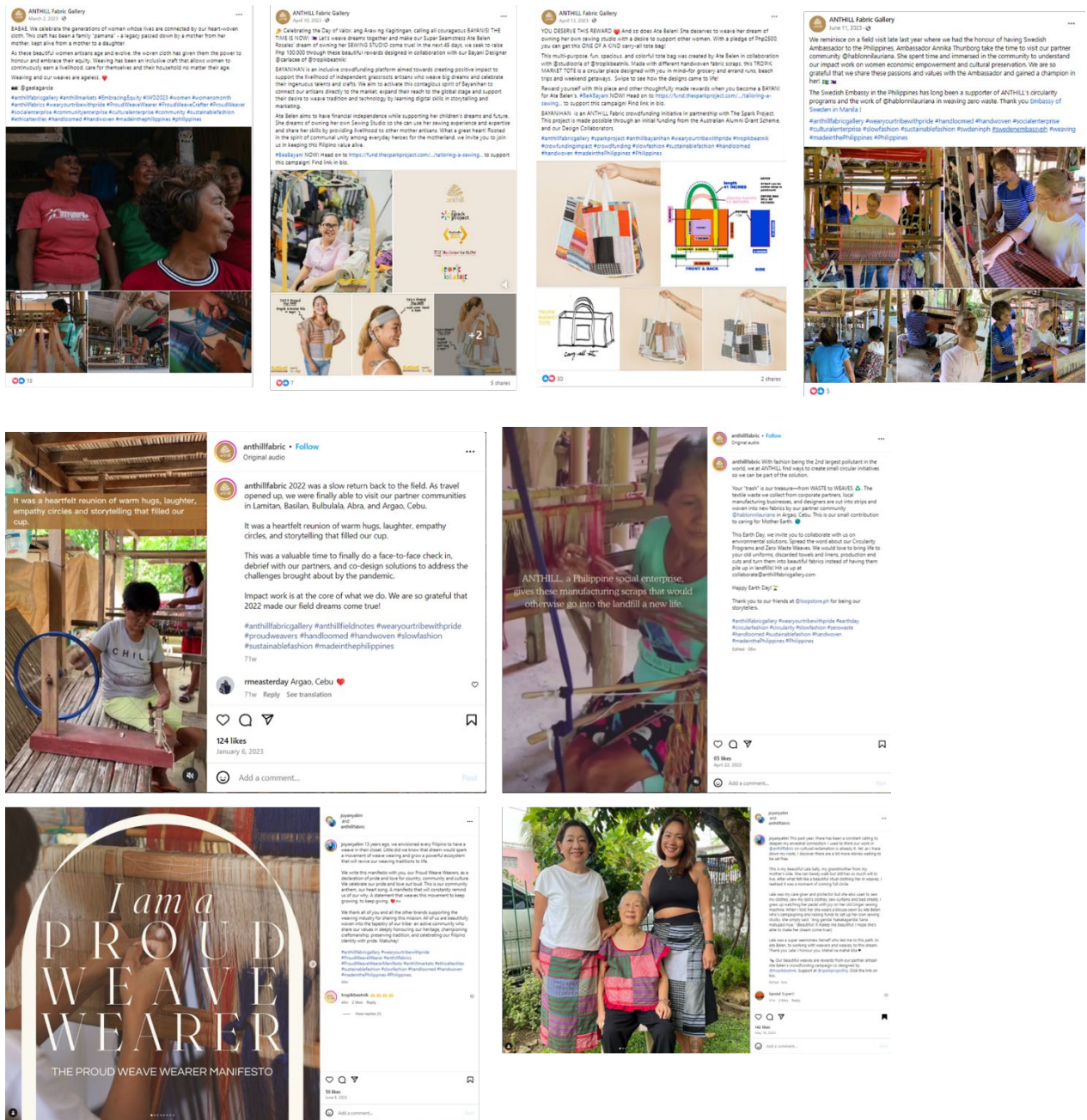
Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/my_lilies/?hl=en

Camille Escudero (Lily of the Valley)

Camille Escudero's Lily of the Valley demonstrates a strategic implementation of CAT and CCT in its digital marketing efforts. The brand uses Facebook and Instagram as primary channels for educating their audience and fostering a strong sense of community among their diverse customer bases. The content is meticulously tailored to accommodate the unique needs and preferences of various target groups, from nursing mothers to the transgender community, showcasing a deep understanding and application of CAT principles. The brand's collaboration with the transgender community in co-creating products reflects Camille Escudero's commitment to inclusivity, highlighting the influence of her cultural-cognitive orientations on the brand's marketing strategies. Lily of the Valley successfully adapts its communication style to resonate with different target groups and showcases the diversity of the groups they cater to. The founder's presence in the brand's campaign photos and videos further strengthens the brand's message. However, there is a potential challenge in balancing educational content with promotional messaging, and the Facebook and Instagram content could benefit from more information to encourage the audience to visit the website and learn more. Additionally, there is room for improvement in communicating the brand's social mission and the gratification of supporting the brand. To enhance their digital presence, Lily of the Valley should find a balance between educational content and sales-oriented messaging, further differentiate content across platforms to optimize engagement, and provide more information to help their audience understand and connect with the brand's social mission.

Figure 5.

ANTHILL Fabric Gallery Facebook and Instagram



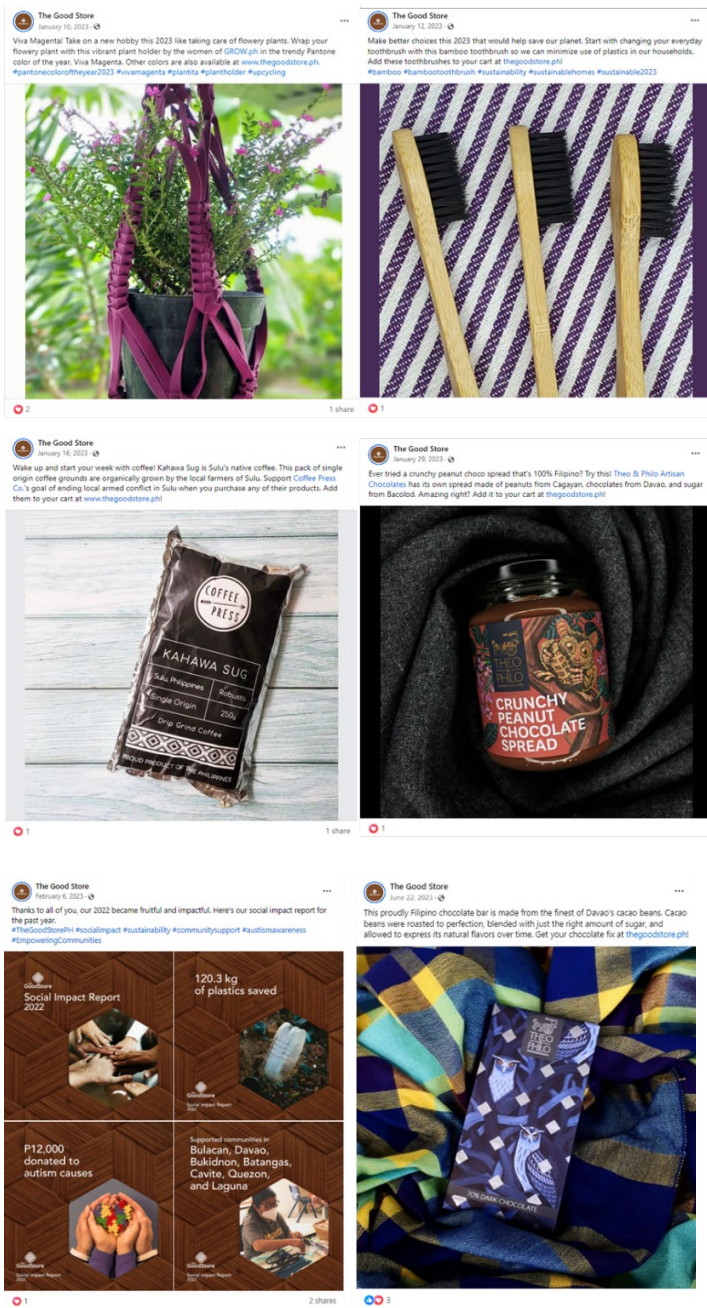
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/AnthillFabricGallery>
 Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/anthillfabric/?hl=en>

Anya Lim (ANTHILL Fabric Gallery)

Anya Lim's ANTHILL Fabric Gallery demonstrates a compelling application of CAT and CCT in its digital marketing strategies. The brand uses Facebook and Instagram as powerful storytelling platforms, showcasing the artisans, communities, and cultural heritage behind their handcrafted products. The content is carefully curated to establish a strong emotional connection with the audience, reflecting a deep understanding of CAT principles. Anya Lim's passion for cultural preservation and women's empowerment is deeply reflected in the brand's digital presence, underscoring the influence of her cultural-cognitive orientations on the marketing strategies. ANTHILL Fabric Gallery's social media posts highlight weave wearers, giving customers a view of how the products is worn, and introduce representatives of the partner communities, providing background on their condition and the weaves they produce. The founder's presence in the communication materials and her expression of her point of view and experiences working with the partner community further strengthen the brand's message. However, there is a potential shift in focus to community-building and advocacy over product promotion, which may require a delicate balance to ensure the sustainability and growth of the business. Additionally, the brand could provide more details about the products and their uses to better inform consumers. To enhance their digital presence, ANTHILL Fabric Gallery should balance community-building and advocacy with product promotion, showcase more behind-the-scenes content and artisan stories to humanize the brand, and deepen the storytelling about the community to provide a wider perspective for their audience to understand the story behind the weaves and the partner community they are supporting.

Figure 6.

The Good Store Facebook and Instagram



Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/thegoodstoreph>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/thegoodstore.ph/?hl=en>

JB Tan (The Good Store)

JB Tan's The Good Store exhibits a strong application of Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) and Cultural-Cognitive Theory (CCT) in its digital marketing strategies. The brand prioritizes storytelling and education on Facebook and Instagram, focusing on the social impact and advocacy behind the products they offer. The content is designed to resonate with a socially conscious audience, reflecting a deep understanding of CAT principles. JB Tan's commitment to volunteerism and social entrepreneurship is evident in the brand's digital presence, highlighting the influence of his cultural-cognitive orientations on the marketing strategies. The Good Store excels at storytelling and education, featuring the products of their partner social enterprises. The brand's digital content effectively communicates the positive impact of supporting these products and the causes they represent. However, there is a potential challenge in adapting to emerging platforms and trends to reach younger audiences. The brand could benefit from utilizing other e-commerce platforms as calls-to-action in their social media posts to drive sales and expand their reach. To enhance their digital presence, The Good Store should focus on improving their e-commerce experience to convert engagement into sales. This could involve streamlining the purchasing process, offering incentives for first-time buyers, and providing detailed product information. Additionally, the brand should leverage user-generated content and influencer partnerships to expand their reach and build a stronger sense of community among their followers. By showcasing how customers are using and benefiting from their products, The Good Store can create a more engaging and relatable digital presence that inspires others to support their mission.

Table 3

Summary of the Digital Artifact Analysis

| Participant | Founder CCT and CAT Strategies | Descriptive Label |
|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| Stephen Co, Worth the Health | Employs an informative approach on Facebook for older demographic and a casual, visually engaging style on Instagram for younger audience Emphasis on scientific innovation behind products reflects founder's personal beliefs Core messaging remains largely unchanged, potentially missing opportunities for further tailoring to audience segments Applies CAT principles by aligning content with audience's aspirations and values | Demographic-Specific Platform Approach Scientific Innovation Emphasis Core Messaging Consistency |
| Patch Dulay, The Spark Project | Communication style is encouraging and community-centric, reflecting founder's commitment to nurturing Filipino creativity and entrepreneurship Facebook and Instagram consistently showcase success stories of supported enterprises, fostering sense of community Potential over-reliance on organic content, limited use of paid advertising to expand reach | Aspirational Content Alignment Community-Nurturing Communication Style Enterprise Success Showcasing |
| Camilie Escudero, Lily of the Valley | Uses Facebook and Instagram to educate audience and foster community Needs improvement in balancing educational content with promotional messaging Collaboration with transgener community in co-creating products reflects founder's commitment to inclusivity Content meticulously tailored to accommodate diverse target groups like nursing mothers and transgener community Applies CAT principles by carefully curating content to establish strong emotional connection with audience Potential shift in focus to community-building and advocacy over product promotion | Organic Content Over-Reliance Educational Community Building Educational-Promotional Content Balance Inclusive Co-Creation Inclusive Content Tailoring Emotional Resonance Content Curation |
| Anya Lim, ANTHILL Fabric Gallery | Founder's passion for cultural preservation and women's empowerment deeply reflected in digital presence Facebook and Instagram serve as powerful storytelling platforms, showcasing artisans, communities, and cultural heritage Potential challenge in adapting to emerging platforms and trends to reach younger audiences | Community/Advocacy Shift Founder's Values Integration Social Media Utilization Storytelling |
| JB Tan, The Good Store | Facebook and Instagram prioritize storytelling and education, focusing on social impact and advocacy behind products Founder's commitment to volunteerism and social entrepreneurship evident in digital presence Applies CAT principles by designing content to resonate with socially-conscious audience | Emerging Platform Adaptation Challenge Impact-Focused Storytelling Prioritization Founder's Commitment Reflection Socially-Conscious Content Design |

Non-participant Observation

Non-participant observation served as a critical methodological approach to systematically examine the dynamic digital engagement strategies of mission-centric social enterprises. This method provided an unobtrusive yet comprehensive lens into the natural digital interactions and communication practices of social enterprise founders across their digital platforms (Hine, 2015). By maintaining a detached observational stance, the researcher could capture authentic digital engagement patterns without influencing or disrupting the organic communication ecosystem.

The observation was strategically focused on the social enterprises' Facebook and Instagram pages, selected for their prominence in digital marketing communication. Over a dedicated 60-hour observation period from May 1, 2024, to May 31, 2024, the researcher meticulously documented the nuanced digital interactions, content strategies, and community engagement dynamics (Kozinets, 2015). This extended timeframe enabled a comprehensive exploration of ephemeral content, including stories, interactive elements, sponsored advertisements, and real-time audience interactions.

Methodologically, the non-participant observation aligned with established ethnographic research principles, emphasizing detailed field note documentation and reflexive interpretation (Emerson et al., 2011). The researcher maintained a structured yet flexible approach, capturing detailed observations about communication strategies, audience responses, and the evolving digital narrative. Specific attention was directed toward understanding how founders adaptively communicate, the types of content that generate meaningful engagement, and the subtle ways cultural-cognitive orientations

manifest in digital storytelling. By maintaining a neutral observational stance, the researcher could objectively analyze the intricate communication practices without introducing researcher bias, thus ensuring the authenticity and reliability of the collected data.

Stephen Co (Worth The Health Foods)

The non-participant observation of Stephen Co's Worth The Health Foods' digital presence on Facebook and Instagram provided valuable insights into the real-time execution of their digital marketing strategies and the dynamics of their online community. The observation revealed a consistent emphasis on educating followers about the health benefits and sustainability of their plant-based products, with posts frequently featuring informative content and engaging visuals. The brand's communication style was observed to be adaptable, with a more casual and conversational tone used on Instagram to connect with younger audiences, while Facebook posts maintained a slightly more informative approach catering to an older demographic. User-generated content, such as customer reviews and photos, was prominently featured, fostering a sense of authenticity and community. However, the observation also noted instances where the brand's responses to customer inquiries or concerns were delayed or inconsistent, potentially impacting engagement and trust within the online community. Additionally, while the brand's content consistently highlighted the nutritional aspects of its products, there was a notable absence of posts addressing the environmental impact of plant-based diets, which could be an area for improvement in their digital marketing strategy. The brand also missed opportunities to fully leverage features like stories and reels on both platforms

and did not appear to invest in sponsored advertising. Overall, the non-participant observation provided a nuanced understanding of how Worth The Health Foods navigates the challenges and opportunities of digital marketing, offering valuable insights that complement other research methods.

Patch Dulay (The Spark Project)

Through non-participant observation of The Spark Project's digital presence on Facebook and Instagram, a deep understanding of the real-time implementation of their digital marketing strategies and the dynamics of their online community was gained. The observation revealed a strong focus on showcasing the success stories of the enterprises and projects supported by the platform, with posts often featuring inspiring narratives and visually compelling content. The brand's communication style was consistently encouraging and community-centric, reflecting Patch Dulay's commitment to nurturing Filipino creativity and entrepreneurship. The observation also noted the brand's active engagement with its followers, promptly responding to comments and inquiries, and fostering a sense of dialogue and collaboration within the online community through online and physical events. However, the observation revealed instances where the brand's posts lacked information on the challenges faced by the social enterprises in achieving their missions. The brand also did not fully utilize features like stories, reels, or sponsored advertising on Facebook and Instagram. Additionally, there was a lack of post-event communication sharing learnings and insights from community gatherings. Despite these areas for improvement, the non-participant observation offered a rich understanding of how The Spark Project leverages digital marketing to build a vibrant

community of supporters and drive social impact, complementing insights gathered from other research methods.

Camille Escudero (Lily of the Valley)

The non-participant observation of Camille Escudero's Lily of the Valley's digital presence on Facebook and Instagram yielded rich insights into the real-time execution of their digital marketing strategies and the dynamics of their online community. The observation revealed a strong commitment to tailoring content and communication style to accommodate the unique needs and preferences of diverse target groups, such as nursing mothers and the transgender community. Posts often featured educational content, product demonstrations, and user-generated content that fostered a sense of inclusivity and authenticity. The brand's engagement with its followers was observed to be highly responsive and empathetic, with Camille and her team actively participating in conversations and offering support and advice. The brand effectively utilized sponsored advertisements and included clear calls-to-action leading to a well-developed website for interested audiences to access more information. However, the observation also noted instances where the brand's posts featured products that could have clearly communicated the benefits or unique selling points on social media, with most product information contained on the website. Balancing the call-to-action across all e-commerce platforms such as TikTok, Lazada, and Shopee could further enhance the brand's community engagement and mission-market alignment. Overall, the non-participant observation provided valuable insights into how Lily of the Valley leverages authentic

digital storytelling to foster an inclusive and engaged community while promoting its products.

Anya Lim (ANTHILL Fabric Gallery)

Through non-participant observation of Anya Lim's ANTHILL Fabric Gallery's digital presence on Facebook and Instagram, a deep understanding of the real-time implementation of their digital marketing strategies and the dynamics of their online community was gained. The observation revealed a strong emphasis on storytelling, with posts often featuring the artisans, their crafts, and the cultural significance behind the products. The brand's communication style was observed to be deeply respectful and appreciative of the artisans and their communities, reflecting Anya's commitment to cultural preservation and empowerment. The observation also noted the brand's active engagement with its followers, inviting them to attend its selling event activations and featuring user-generated content like customer reviews and photos to foster authenticity and community. However, the observation revealed instances where the brand's posts lacked clear information about the availability or pricing of featured products, potentially creating barriers for interested customers. Additionally, while the brand excelled at showcasing the beauty and cultural significance of the artisans' work, there was a notable absence of posts addressing the challenges and realities faced by the artisans and their communities. The brand could also benefit from investing in sponsored advertising on Facebook or Instagram. Despite these areas for improvement, the non-participant observation offered a rich understanding of how ANTHILL Fabric Gallery leverages digital marketing to build a community of supporters and drive social impact.

JB Tan (The Good Store)

The non-participant observation of JB Tan's The Good Store's digital presence on Facebook and Instagram provided valuable insights into the real-time execution of their digital marketing strategies and the dynamics of their online community. The observation revealed a consistent focus on storytelling and education, with posts often featuring the social impact and advocacy behind the products they offer. The brand's communication style was observed to be engaging and informative, reflecting JB's commitment to promoting conscious consumerism and supporting local communities. The observation also noted instances of active community engagement, with followers sharing their own experiences and feedback on the featured products and initiatives. However, the observation revealed instances where the brand's posts lacked a clear and consistent visual identity, potentially diluting the brand's recognition and impact. The founder also had seldom visibility in posts, lacking messaging about the social mission from their perspective. The brand did not fully utilize features like stories, reels, or sponsored advertising on Facebook and Instagram. Additionally, while the brand excelled at showcasing the positive impact of the products and initiatives they support, there was a notable absence of posts addressing the challenges and limitations of ethical consumerism. Despite these areas for improvement, the non-participant observation provided a nuanced understanding of how The Good Store navigates the challenges and opportunities of digital marketing to foster a community of conscious consumers and drive social impact.

Table 4

Summary of the Non-participant Observation

| Participant | Founder CCT and CAT Strategies | Descriptive Label |
|---|---|---|
| Stephen Co, Worth the Health | Adapts communication style to different platforms and demographics (casual on Instagram for younger audiences, informative on Facebook for older audiences) Educates followers about health benefits and sustainability of plant-based products Features user-generated content like customer reviews and photos to foster authenticity and community Fosters dialogue and collaboration through online and physical community events Showcases success stories of supported enterprises and projects with inspiring narratives and visuals Uses encouraging, community-centric communication style reflecting commitment to nurturing Filipino creativity and entrepreneurship Actively engages with followers, responding to comments and inquiries | Involves tailoring content and tone to suit the preferences and expectations of different target groups on various platforms. Focuses on providing informative content to raise awareness and knowledge among the target audience. Leverages user-generated content to build trust, credibility, and a sense of community among followers. Combines digital and physical activations to create opportunities for deeper engagement and relationship-building with the community. Uses storytelling to highlight the positive impact and outcomes of the organization's initiatives, engaging and motivating followers. Involves adopting a supportive and inclusive communication approach that aligns with the organization's mission and values. Prioritizes two-way communication and responsiveness to foster a sense of connection and trust with the online community. Involves proactive, caring, and personalized communication to build strong relationships and provide value to the online community. Combines informative and user-generated content to educate, engage, and build trust with diverse target audiences. Leverages paid advertising and optimized website content to drive traffic, conversions, and deeper engagement with interested audiences. Involves understanding and addressing the specific needs and preferences of different audience segments to create relevant and inclusive content. Uses storytelling to showcase the human stories and cultural heritage behind the products, creating an emotional connection with followers. Involves adopting a communication approach that honors and elevates the artisans and their communities, aligning with the organization's mission and values. |
| Camille Escudero, Lily of the Valley | Highly responsive and empathetic engagement, actively participating in conversations and offering support Features educational content, product demos, and user-generated content fostering inclusivity and authenticity Utilizes sponsored ads and clear calls-to-action leading to informative website Tailors content and communication to needs of diverse target groups like nursing mothers and transgender community Emphasizes storytelling, featuring artisans, their crafts and cultural significance Uses deeply respectful communication style reflecting commitment to cultural preservation and empowerment | Combines online and offline community engagement tactics to foster participation, loyalty, and advocacy among followers. Involves adopting a communication approach that encourages mindful consumption and highlights the benefits of supporting local and ethical businesses. Uses storytelling and informative content to raise awareness about the social and environmental issues addressed by the products, appealing to conscious consumers. Involves fostering two-way communication and featuring user-generated content to build social proof, trust, and a sense of community among followers. |
| Anya Lim, ANTHILL Fabric Gallery | Actively engages followers, inviting them to events and featuring user-generated content Uses engaging, informative communication style promoting conscious consumerism and supporting local communities | |
| JB Tan, The Good Store | Focuses on storytelling and education around social impact and advocacy behind products Instances of active community engagement with followers sharing experiences and feedback | |

The data collected through non-participant observation were analyzed using an inductive approach, enabling themes and patterns to emerge organically from the field notes (Saldaña, 2015). The analysis process involved systematic coding of the data, identifying recurrent themes and patterns, and comparing the observations across the different social enterprises and platforms.

By triangulating the findings from the non-participant observation with the insights gathered from the semi-structured interviews and digital artifact analysis, the researcher obtained a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the social enterprises' digital marketing practices and the influence of founders' cultural-cognitive orientations on these practices (Denzin, 2017).

Incorporating non-participant observation into the research design added depth and richness to the study, capturing the real-time dynamics of digital social marketing and the interactions between founders and their online communities. This method provided valuable insights into how founders' cultural-cognitive orientations and authentic storytelling manifest in their digital communication strategies and how these strategies are received and engaged with by their target audiences (Kozinets, 2015). By observing the social enterprises' digital presence in real-time, the researcher gained a firsthand understanding of community engagement through their marketing strategies and the impact of founders' cultural-cognitive orientations on their digital engagement practices.

Chapter IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This chapter presents the research results and discusses the findings. This section objectively presents the results to answer the specific research questions and achieve the study's aims. This study tried to address the following questions:

1. How do founders' cultural-cognitive orientations influence their digital social marketing narrative and community engagement?
2. How do founders adapt their communication practices to align with their mission and target audience?
3. How do founders design and assess their digital social marketing strategies through authentic digital storytelling?

The following sections present the findings of this research, organized around the key themes and patterns that emerged from the data analysis. The discussion of these findings situates them within the broader context of existing literature, highlighting their contributions to social entrepreneurship and digital marketing. Implications for practice are explored, offering guidance for mission-driven enterprises seeking to optimize their digital presence for social impact. The chapter concludes with a reflection on the study's limitations and directions for future research, underscoring the importance of continued inquiry into the evolving landscape of digital social marketing in pursuing positive social change.

Founder and Mission-centric Social Enterprise Case Studies

This study delved into the unique digital social marketing strategies employed by five mission-centric social enterprises in the Philippines, each led by a visionary founder committed to driving social change. Through in-depth case studies, we explore how these enterprises leverage digital platforms to advance their missions, engage stakeholders, and evaluate success in the context of their social impact goals.

Stephen Co (Worth The Health Foods)

Stephen Co's digital social marketing approach for Worth The Health Foods (WTH Foods) exemplifies a sophisticated integration of Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) and Cultural-Cognitive Theory (CCT), demonstrating how founders can strategically leverage their personal backgrounds to create meaningful digital engagement. As a professional with expertise in biology, technology, and bioscience, Stephen has developed a nuanced digital marketing strategy that transcends traditional promotional techniques by embedding cultural narratives and educational content within the enterprise's communication framework.

The digital marketing strategy reveals a deliberate application of CAT through platform-specific communication adaptation. On Instagram and Facebook, Stephen employs a more conversational and accessible language style, making complex nutritional information digestible for a broader audience. Conversely, when targeting business-to-business (B2B) customers, communication adopts a more professional and technical tone, showcasing the enterprise's scientific credibility (Giles et al., 2008). This

strategic linguistic accommodation ensures that WTH Foods' messaging resonates across diverse audience segments, from health-conscious consumers to potential corporate partners.

Simultaneously, Stephen 's approach strongly reflects CCT principles by intentionally embedding Filipino cultural values into the digital storytelling narrative. Recognizing the deep-rooted cultural significance of food and wellness in Filipino society, WTH Foods' content strategically connects plant-based nutrition with traditional health perspectives. The enterprise's digital content goes beyond mere product promotion, instead offering educational narratives that align with Filipino cultural understanding of holistic health and sustainable living (Scott, 2014). By creating content that respects and reflects local cultural cognition, Stephen transforms digital marketing into a meaningful cultural dialogue.

The digital artifact analysis reveals that WTH Foods' content strategy is meticulously designed to achieve multiple objectives. Educational videos explaining plant-based protein benefits, recipe demonstrations showcasing Filipino flavors, and user-generated content featuring community experiences collectively create a comprehensive digital storytelling approach. This multifaceted strategy not only promotes products but also builds a community around shared values of health, sustainability, and environmental consciousness.

Engagement metrics serve as a critical indicator of the strategy's success. WTH Foods monitors qualitative and quantitative indicators, including engagement rates, website traffic, community feedback, and sales performance. The founders' reflexive approach allows for continuous adaptation of their digital marketing strategies,

demonstrating an iterative process of communication refinement based on community response and evolving market dynamics.

The enterprise's digital social marketing strategy represents more than a commercial endeavor; it is a nuanced cultural mediation process. By authentically integrating scientific expertise, cultural understanding, and adaptive communication techniques, Stephen has transformed digital marketing into a powerful tool for social impact and community engagement.

Patrick Dulay (The Spark Project)

Patrick Dulay's strategic approach to digital social marketing at The Spark Project exemplifies a sophisticated integration of communication adaptation and cultural cognitive principles, demonstrating how entrepreneurship support organizations can leverage digital platforms to create meaningful community engagement. By strategically navigating digital communication landscapes, Patch has transformed crowdfunding from a transactional process into a narrative-driven, culturally resonant experience that deeply connects with Filipino entrepreneurial ecosystems.

Patch's digital marketing approach reveals a nuanced application of Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) through platform-specific communication modulation. On social media platforms, he employs storytelling techniques that emotionally engage potential project backers, utilizing a conversational and inspirational tone that humanizes entrepreneurial journeys. Conversely, when engaging with corporate and governmental stakeholders, his communication adopts a more formal, professional register that emphasizes credibility and strategic alignment (Giles et al., 2008). This

strategic linguistic adaptation ensures that The Spark Project's messaging resonates across diverse audience segments, from individual supporters to institutional partners.

The enterprise's digital storytelling strategy profoundly reflects Cultural-Cognitive Theory (CCT) by intentionally embedding Filipino cultural values into its narrative framework. By leveraging the concept of *bayanihan*, a traditional Filipino value emphasizing community cooperation and collective action Patch transforms crowdfunding from a mere financial transaction into a meaningful social movement. The digital content strategically connects entrepreneurial support with broader societal narratives of mutual assistance and collective progress, thereby creating a digital platform that transcends conventional funding mechanisms (Scott, 2014).

The Spark Project's digital marketing strategy extends beyond traditional metrics by incorporating multidimensional engagement indicators. While tracking quantitative measures such as funding goals and backer participation rates, Patch simultaneously prioritizes qualitative assessments of community impact. This approach allows the organization to evaluate success not merely through financial lens but through the transformative potential of supported entrepreneurial initiatives. The digital platforms serve as dynamic spaces for storytelling, community building, and social innovation documentation.

Maintaining sustained engagement beyond initial funding phases represents a significant strategic challenge for The Spark Project. Patch's response involves developing a comprehensive digital ecosystem that provides continuous value to entrepreneurs and supporters. By offering post-funding resources, sharing success

stories, and creating opportunities for ongoing community interaction, the organization ensures that digital engagement remains dynamic and meaningful.

The Spark Project's digital social marketing approach represents more than a promotional strategy; it exemplifies a sophisticated cultural mediation process. By authentically integrating technological platforms, cultural understanding, and adaptive communication techniques, Patch has transformed digital marketing into a powerful tool for entrepreneurial ecosystem development and social empowerment.

Camille Escudero (Lily of the Valley)

Camille Escudero's strategic approach to digital social marketing at Lily of the Valley exemplifies a sophisticated integration of Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) and Cultural-Cognitive Theory (CCT), demonstrating how social enterprises can leverage digital platforms to create meaningful social impact through authentic storytelling and inclusive communication strategies.

Camille's digital marketing approach reveals a nuanced application of CAT through platform-specific communication modulation. On social media platforms, she employs a personalized communication strategy that adapts messaging to resonate with diverse audience segments, including customers, potential partners, and marginalized communities. By utilizing behind-the-scenes content and community narratives, Lily of the Valley creates a transparent and authentic digital presence that accommodates different audience expectations and preferences (Giles et al., 2008).

The enterprise's digital storytelling strategy strategically showcases the personal journeys of individuals from underrepresented communities, particularly focusing on

transgender men, individuals with diverse body types, and those with specialized physical needs. This approach goes beyond traditional marketing by creating a narrative that validates individual experiences and challenges societal stigmas surrounding body diversity, menstruation, and gender identity.

Camille's approach profoundly reflects Cultural-Cognitive Theory by intentionally embedding cultural understanding and social consciousness into the enterprise's digital marketing framework. By co-creating products with marginalized communities, particularly transgender individuals, Lily of the Valley demonstrates a deep commitment to understanding and addressing the unique cultural and emotional needs of its target audiences (Scott, 2014).

The digital content strategically connects product development with broader social narratives of inclusivity, empowerment, and human rights. For instance, the enterprise's period underwear designed specifically for transgender men represents more than a product, it is a powerful statement of recognition, respect, and cultural sensitivity. This approach transforms digital marketing from a mere transactional communication strategy to a meaningful platform for social dialogue and community building.

Sustainability and Holistic Impact Measurement

Lily of the Valley's digital social marketing strategy extends beyond traditional engagement metrics by incorporating comprehensive sustainability indicators. The enterprise evaluates its impact through a multidimensional lens that includes sales performance, social media engagement, and qualitative assessments of community well-being and empowerment.

The repair service and take-back program integrated into the digital marketing strategy further demonstrate the enterprise's commitment to sustainable consumption. By educating customers about prolonging product life and reducing waste, Lily of the Valley creates a digital narrative that goes beyond product promotion to advocate for conscious living and environmental responsibility.

Camille Escudero's digital social marketing approach represents more than a commercial strategy; it is a sophisticated cultural mediation process. By authentically integrating technological platforms, cultural understanding, and adaptive communication techniques, Lily of the Valley has transformed digital marketing into a powerful tool for social change, challenging existing narratives and creating space for marginalized communities.

Anya Lim (ANTHILL Fabric Gallery)

Anya Lim's strategic approach to digital social marketing at ANTHILL Fabric Gallery exemplifies a sophisticated integration of Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) and Cultural-Cognitive Theory (CCT), demonstrating how social enterprises can leverage digital platforms to preserve cultural heritage while creating sustainable economic opportunities for indigenous communities.

Anya's digital marketing approach reveals a nuanced application of CAT through strategic linguistic and communicative adaptation. By employing a multilingual communication strategy that seamlessly integrates English and Filipino, ANTHILL creates a digital narrative that resonates across diverse audience segments. This linguistic flexibility allows the enterprise to communicate with both local indigenous communities

and global consumers, demonstrating a sophisticated approach to audience engagement (Giles et al., 2008).

The platform-specific communication modulation is particularly noteworthy. On Instagram, the content adopts a more visually immersive and storytelling-driven approach, utilizing vibrant imagery and personal narratives that highlight the artisans' experiences. Conversely, on professional platforms like LinkedIn, the communication style shifts to emphasize the economic and social impact of ANTHILL's work, presenting a more data-driven and strategic narrative.

ANTHILL's digital storytelling strategy profoundly reflects Cultural-Cognitive Theory by intentionally embedding indigenous cultural narratives into its marketing framework. By showcasing the intricate details of traditional weaving techniques, the enterprise does more than market products, it creates a digital platform for cultural education and preservation (Scott, 2014).

The digital content strategically connects product development with broader narratives of cultural sustainability, women's empowerment, and indigenous knowledge preservation. Each digital artifact becomes a medium for storytelling, where traditional textile patterns are not merely decorative elements but powerful representations of cultural identity and historical continuity.

ANTHILL's approach to measuring digital marketing success extends beyond traditional metrics. The enterprise evaluates its impact through a holistic framework that considers social media engagement, sales performance, and qualitative assessments of community well-being and cultural preservation.

The digital platforms serve as dynamic spaces for documenting and celebrating indigenous craftsmanship, creating a global audience that appreciates the cultural and economic significance of traditional weaving. By positioning indigenous artisans as creative professionals rather than passive subjects, ANTHILL challenges existing narratives about traditional crafts.

Anya Lim's digital social marketing approach represents more than a commercial strategy; it is a sophisticated cultural mediation process. By authentically integrating technological platforms, cultural understanding, and adaptive communication techniques, ANTHILL has transformed digital marketing into a powerful tool for cultural preservation and economic empowerment.

JB Tan (The Good Store)

JB Tan's strategic approach to digital social marketing at The Good Store exemplifies a sophisticated integration of Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) and Cultural-Cognitive Theory (CCT), demonstrating how social enterprises can leverage digital platforms to create meaningful engagement while promoting ethical consumption.

JB's digital marketing approach reveals a nuanced application of CAT through strategic communication modulation across different stakeholder groups. On social media platforms, the enterprise employs a conversational and relatable communication style that resonates with socially conscious consumers, particularly millennials (Giles et al., 2008). This approach involves crafting narratives that are simultaneously informative and emotionally engaging, breaking down complex social impact concepts into accessible, compelling stories.

When engaging with corporate partners or B2B stakeholders, The Good Store strategically shifts to a more professional communication register. This adaptive approach ensures that the messaging maintains credibility and depth while appealing to different audience segments' communication expectations. The linguistic and tonal flexibility demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of communication accommodation principles, allowing the enterprise to build rapport across diverse stakeholder groups.

The digital storytelling strategy profoundly reflects Cultural-Cognitive Theory by intentionally embedding Filipino cultural values of *malasakit* (compassion) and *damayan* (mutual aid) into its narrative framework. By showcasing how individual purchasing decisions can create collective social impact, The Good Store transforms ethical consumption from an abstract concept to a tangible expression of cultural values (Scott, 2014).

The enterprise's content strategically connects product narratives with broader social responsibility themes, highlighting how each purchase contributes to community empowerment. This approach goes beyond traditional marketing by creating a digital platform that educates consumers about the interconnectedness of economic choices and social welfare.

The Good Store's approach to measuring digital marketing success extends beyond conventional metrics. By integrating qualitative assessments of social impact alongside traditional engagement indicators, the enterprise creates a comprehensive evaluation framework. This methodology allows for a nuanced understanding of how digital storytelling translates into tangible social change.

The curation strategy becomes a critical mechanism for maintaining narrative coherence. Each product is carefully selected not just for its aesthetic or functional qualities, but for its alignment with the enterprise's social impact criteria. This meticulous approach ensures that the digital marketing strategy remains authentic and mission-driven.

JB Tan's digital social marketing approach represents more than a commercial strategy; it is a sophisticated cultural mediation process. By authentically integrating technological platforms, cultural understanding, and adaptive communication techniques, The Good Store has transformed digital marketing into a powerful tool for promoting ethical consumption and social entrepreneurship.

Through these case studies, I gained valuable insights into the unique approaches mission-centric social enterprises in the Philippines take to digital social marketing, tailoring their strategies to their specific missions, target audiences, and cultural contexts. By leveraging the power of storytelling, visual narratives, and culturally resonant messaging, these enterprises not only drive sales and engagement but also foster a deeper connection between their audiences and the social impact they seek to create. As these social enterprises continue to navigate the challenges and opportunities of the digital landscape, their experiences offer valuable lessons for other mission-driven organizations seeking to harness the power of digital social marketing to drive positive change.

Cross-Case Analysis

The cross-case analysis of the five mission-centric social enterprises in the Philippines reveals striking patterns, similarities, and differences in how founders' cultural-cognitive orientations and communication styles shape their digital social marketing strategies. By examining the application of Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) and Cultural-Cognitive Theory (CCT) principles across these cases, we gain valuable insights into the complex interplay between founders' backgrounds, values, and their authentic digital storytelling approaches in community engagement.

Comparative Analysis

The analysis reveals that founders' personal backgrounds and experiences significantly shape their approach to digital storytelling and community engagement. Their role as cultural mediators emerges naturally through their communication practices rather than through conscious application of theoretical frameworks. This mediation manifests in how they naturally adapt their messaging to resonate with different audience segments while maintaining authenticity in their social mission communication.

Stephen Co's scientific background naturally influences Worth The Health Foods' educational content approach, demonstrating how founders' expertise shapes their storytelling style. Similarly, Patrick Dulay's technology and entrepreneurship background informs The Spark Project's community-driven narrative approach. These patterns show how founders' backgrounds naturally influence their digital marketing strategies without conscious theoretical application (Giles et al., 2008).

The analysis reveals a pattern of authentic digital storytelling emerging as the primary strategy across all cases. Founders naturally develop their storytelling approaches based on their understanding of their communities' needs and values rather than following prescribed marketing formulas (Scott, 2014). This authentic approach creates deeper connections with their audiences and strengthens their brand identity.

For instance, Camille Escudero's personal commitment to inclusivity naturally shapes Lily of the Valley's emotionally resonant content, while Anya Lim's deep connection to indigenous communities influences ANTHILL Fabric Gallery's culturally sensitive digital narratives. These examples demonstrate how founders' personal values and experiences naturally inform their authentic storytelling approaches.

The cross-case analysis reveals that founders assess their digital marketing success through qualitative indicators focused on community engagement and mission alignment rather than traditional marketing metrics. This approach reflects a deeper understanding of social enterprise success that goes beyond conventional business measures.

JB Tan's approach at The Good Store exemplifies this trend, where success is measured through community feedback and social impact rather than purely financial metrics. This pattern appears consistently across all cases, suggesting that authentic digital storytelling naturally leads to stronger community engagement and better mission-market alignment.

This analysis contributes to understanding how founders naturally develop effective digital social marketing strategies through authentic storytelling. Rather than consciously applying theoretical frameworks, founders act as cultural mediators who

naturally adapt their communication styles based on their backgrounds and values. This finding suggests that authentic digital storytelling emerges as a natural bridge between founders' personal experiences and effective community engagement in social enterprises.

Application of CAT and CCT Principles in Digital Social Marketing

The analysis reveals how founders naturally integrate communication adaptation and cultural understanding in their digital social marketing strategies, demonstrating the complex interplay between personal background, cultural values, and authentic storytelling approaches. This integration manifests through strategic communication choices and cultural mediation practices that enhance brand identity and community engagement.

The founders demonstrate natural communication adaptation across digital platforms, tailoring their messaging to resonate with diverse audience segments. Their approach reflects an intuitive understanding of audience expectations rather than conscious theoretical application. For instance, Worth the Health Foods adjusts its tone from casual, relatable content on Instagram to data-driven presentations on LinkedIn, while The Spark Project modulates between inspiring storytelling for millennial backers and professional proposals for corporate partners.

The analysis reveals how founders' cultural backgrounds naturally shape their digital marketing approaches, influencing both content creation and community engagement strategies. This cultural integration manifests in unique ways across each enterprise, contributing to distinctive brand identities that resonate with their respective

communities (Scott, 2014). ANTHILL Fabric Gallery's incorporation of indigenous motifs and languages in digital content exemplifies how cultural understanding enhances authentic storytelling and community trust-building.

The founders' approach to digital storytelling demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of platform-specific communication needs while maintaining cultural authenticity. Their content strategies go beyond traditional marketing metrics to focus on building meaningful connections with their communities. This is evident in how Lily of the Valley crafts emotionally resonant narratives for social media while maintaining informative, professional content on their website.

The analysis shows how founders naturally develop distinct brand voices that reflect their personal values and cultural understanding. This authentic approach to communication helps create stronger connections with target audiences and enhances community engagement (Scott, 2014). The Good Store's adaptation of product descriptions and impact stories for different customer segments demonstrates how cultural understanding influences content strategy and brand voice development.

Presentation of Key Themes

The presentation of key themes in this dissertation is the culmination of the multi-faceted research process that combined semi-structured interviews, digital artifact analysis, and non-participant observation to gain a comprehensive understanding of the digital marketing practices employed by mission-centric social enterprises in the Philippines. Through the triangulation of findings from these diverse data sources, the researcher identified main themes and sub-themes that shed light on the complex interplay between founders' cultural-cognitive orientations and the strategies they employ to navigate the digital landscape while staying true to their social missions (Denzin, 2017). This chapter presents a synthesis of these themes, illuminating the nuanced ways in which Communication Accommodation Theory (Giles, 2016) and Cultural-Cognitive Theory (Scott, 2013) manifest in the digital marketing practices of social enterprises and how founders' personal beliefs, values, and cultural backgrounds shape their approach to digital engagement. By weaving together, the insights gathered from the lived experiences of social enterprise founders with the theoretical frameworks that guide this research, this chapter offers a rich and contextualized understanding of the factors that influence authentic digital storytelling and community engagement in digital social marketing strategies in the pursuit of social change (Riessman, 2008). The themes presented here contribute to the growing body of knowledge on social entrepreneurship and digital marketing and provide valuable insights for practitioners seeking to harness the power of digital technologies to advance their social missions.

Table 5

Qualitative Matrix: Founders as Cultural Mediators

| Data Collection | Participant | Semi-structured Interview Excerpts | Founder CCT and CAT Strategies | Descriptive Label | Sub-Themes | Main Themes |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|---|---|---|---|--------------------------------|
| Semi-structured Interview | Patch Dulay, The Spark Project | "My personal beliefs significantly shape our digital marketing strategies. By focusing on social issues like Women's Month and Pride Month, we embed a strong cultural narrative into our content, reflecting our commitment to inclusivity and community support." | Infuses personal beliefs into content, highlighting social issues during pivotal months | Personal Beliefs Infusion | Incorporating Personal Beliefs and Values | Founders as Cultural Mediators |
| Semi-structured Interview | Anya Lim, ANTHILL Fabric Gallery | "I feel like if you're not putting something out there that really reflects your core values and mission, then entirely you know, you're not going to attract the right community." | Believes reflecting core values and mission attracts the right community | Values-Driven Community Attraction | | |
| Digital Artifact | Stephen Co, Worth the Health | | Emphasis on scientific innovation behind products reflects founder's personal beliefs | Scientific Innovation Emphasis | | |
| Digital Artifact | Patch Dulay, The Spark Project | | Communication style is encouraging and community-centric, reflecting founder's commitment to nurturing Filipino creativity and entrepreneurship | Community-Nurturing Communication Style | | |
| Digital Artifact | Anya Lim, ANTHILL Fabric Gallery | | Founder's passion for cultural preservation and women's empowerment deeply reflected in digital presence | Founder's Values Integration | | |
| Digital Artifact | JB Tan, The Good Store | | Founder's commitment to volunteerism and social entrepreneurship evident in digital presence | Founder's Commitment Reflection | | |

Founders as Cultural Mediators

The role of founders as cultural mediators emerged as a central theme in the exploration of digital social marketing strategies employed by mission-centric social enterprises in the Philippines. Through the lenses of Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) and Cultural-Cognitive Theory (CCT), it became evident that founders play a pivotal role in navigating the complex cultural landscapes within which their enterprises operate. The semi-structured interviews revealed how founders actively incorporate their personal beliefs and values into their digital communication strategies, adapting their messaging to resonate with diverse stakeholders while remaining true to their core missions. This cultural mediation was further evident in the digital artifact analysis, which showcased how founders strategically tailor their content across various platforms to engage different audience segments effectively. The non-participant observation corroborated these findings, highlighting the real-time adaptations and cultural sensitivity demonstrated by founders in their digital interactions. As Patch Dulay of The Spark Project noted, *"My personal beliefs significantly shape our digital marketing strategies. By focusing on social issues like Women's Month and Pride Month, we embed a strong cultural narrative into our content, reflecting our commitment to inclusivity and community support."* This sentiment was echoed by other founders, underscoring the critical role they play in mediating cultural values and beliefs through their digital social marketing efforts. The findings suggest that founders' ability to effectively navigate cultural complexities and adapt their communication strategies accordingly is a key determinant of success in mission-centric social enterprises.

- *Incorporating Personal Beliefs and Values*

The incorporation of founders' personal beliefs and values into their digital social marketing strategies emerged as a significant sub-theme within the broader context of founders as cultural mediators. The semi-structured interviews provided rich insights into how founders' deeply held convictions and experiences shape their approach to digital communication and engagement. Anya Lim of ANTHILL Fabric Gallery articulated this sentiment, stating, *"I feel like if you're not putting something out there that really reflects your core values and mission, then entirely you know, you're not going to attract the right community."* This perspective was shared by other founders, who emphasized the importance of authenticity and alignment between personal values and organizational messaging. The digital artifact analysis further supported this finding, revealing how founders infuse their personal beliefs into the content and aesthetics of their digital platforms, creating a distinct brand identity that resonates with their target audiences. The non-participant observation captured instances where founders' values manifested in their real-time interactions with followers, demonstrating a consistent commitment to their principles across various digital touchpoints. This example illustrates how founders strategically incorporate their personal beliefs, such as the importance of health and sustainability, into their digital marketing efforts, even when faced with resource constraints.

Table 6

Qualitative Matrix: Adaptive Digital Engagement

| Data Collection | Participant | Semi-structured Interview Excerpts | Founder CCT and CAT Strategies | Descriptive Label | Sub-Themes | Main Themes |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|--|---|---|-----------------------------|
| Semi-structured Interview | Stephen Co, Worth the Health | "We've identified distinct target demographics and adapted our communication to cater to their preferences. We tried to attack them on different channels. One, of course, is your typical social media like Instagram or Facebook. And then there are middle-aged, more of like Viber groups where we try to connect with them." | Adapts communication to target distinct demographics on different channels (e.g. Instagram, Facebook for younger audience; Viber groups for middle-aged) | Demographic-Specific Channel Strategy | Adapting Content and Platform-Specific Content Creation | Adaptive Digital Engagement |
| Semi-structured Interview | Stephen Co, Worth the Health | "We emphasize the authenticity and user-generated content over my personal agenda of promoting scientific innovation, ensuring our marketing voice aligns with market trends and consumer behavior." | Emphasizes authenticity and user-generated content over personal agenda of promoting scientific innovation | Authentic User-Generated Content Emphasis | | |
| Semi-structured Interview | Stephen Co, Worth the Health | "It's essential for reaching the adventurous, health-conscious demographic that's open to innovative food products like plant-based meats. And that's the younger generation. And we have to be where they are." | Uses digital marketing to reach adventurous, health-conscious younger demographic open to innovative food products like plant-based meats | Innovative Product Digital Marketing | | |
| Semi-structured Interview | Camille Escudero, Lily of the Valley | "Lily of the Valley recognizes the importance of fostering communities around its health categories, particularly for topics like menopause and transgender health that lack mainstream discourse. The brand aims to create digital platforms that connect and educate users while also exploring partnerships with established communities to amplify its reach and impact." | Plans to foster digital communities around health topics and explore partnerships | Health Community Building | | |
| Semi-structured Interview | Camille Escudero, Lily of the Valley | "We are fundamentally an online brand, and digital communication is our primary means of reaching diverse markets. Our audience, I don't want to say it's getting younger, but it's growing. With our audience expanding across different life stages, from puberty to menopause, it's crucial that we maintain a strong digital presence to engage with the younger, digitally-inclined generation." | Primarily uses digital communication to reach expanding audience across life stages | Life Stage Digital Communication | | |

| | | | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|---|---------------------------------------|
| Semi-structured Interview | Camille Escudero, Lily of the Valley | "Our digital strategy is meticulously tailored to accommodate diverse groups, from nursing mothers to transgender individuals. By adjusting our communication style to match the specific needs and preferences of each group, we not only enhance our audience's understanding of our products but also strengthen our rapport with them." "Instagram was basically used for storytelling and to me it was so powerful because you're able to really build community around the stories you put out and the stories you put out would resonate to people who have the same values with you and then you're able to establish relationship through engagement using that too!" | Tailors' digital strategy to diverse groups (nursing mothers, transgender individuals), adjusting communication style | Diverse Group Communication Tailoring |
| Semi-structured Interview | Anya Lim, ANTHILL Fabric Gallery | "So we have a basic understanding of what their needs are. But at the same time, with the youth probably, with the younger audience, there's a lot of trends that you cannot predict. So you always have to be on the watch out. What are the trends? Benchmark with other bigger influencers what they're doing. And then experiment if those will also work with your brand. So we're constantly trying to innovate, re-invent ourselves on how we communicate things. Then after that, you evaluate using the analytical tools that are available in the platforms to see how to adjust." "Not yet firm but one of our, I always joke with my partners that maybe now that I have more time, I'll probably do live selling. So live selling is another hot way to engage platforms. I forgot to mention that we're also in Shopee and Lazada as platforms. And now TikTok shop. So those are the other marketplaces that we look into but we're not actively promoting those platforms because one, they have, I mean we lose margin in those platforms. They have a big service cut or service fee versus if people go to our website then it's a better margin for us." | Previously used Instagram for powerful storytelling to build community around shared values | Values-Based Instagram Storytelling |
| Semi-structured Interview | JB Tan, The Good Store | Constantly innovates communication based on audience needs and trends, evaluating with analytics | Adaptive Communication Strategy | |
| Semi-structured Interview | JB Tan, The Good Store | Considering live selling and expanding to other marketplaces like Shopee, Lazada, TikTok shop | Marketplace Expansion Consideration | |

| | | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| Digital Artifact | Stephen Co, Worth the Health | Employs an informative approach on Facebook for older demographic and a casual, visually engaging style on Instagram for younger audience | Demographic-Specific Platform Approach |
| Digital Artifact | Stephen Co, Worth the Health | Core messaging remains largely unchanged, potentially missing opportunities for further tailoring to audience segments | Core Messaging Consistency |
| Digital Artifact | Camille Escudero, Lily of the Valley | Content meticulously tailored to accommodate diverse target groups like nursing mothers and transgender community | Inclusive Content Tailoring |
| Digital Artifact | Anya Lim, ANTHILL Fabric Gallery | Facebook and Instagram serve as powerful storytelling platforms, showcasing artisans, communities, and cultural heritage | Social Media Utilization Storytelling |
| Non-participant Observation | Stephen Co, Worth the Health | Adapts communication style to different platforms and demographics (casual on Instagram for younger audiences, informative on Facebook for older audiences) | Platform-Specific Communication Style |
| Non-participant Observation | Stephen Co, Worth the Health | Features user-generated content like customer reviews and photos to foster authenticity and community | Authentic User-Generated Content Featuring |
| Non-participant Observation | Camille Escudero, Lily of the Valley | Tailors content and communication to needs of diverse target groups like nursing mothers and transgender community | Diverse Group Content Tailoring |

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|--|--------------------------------------|--|
| Non-participant Observation | Anya Lim, ANTHILL Fabric Gallery | "We also plan to balance our digital strategy with on-the-ground activations to enhance customer experience and engagement. We are also exploring the use of AI in content creation to maintain an authentic yet efficient digital presence" | Actively engages followers, inviting them to events and featuring user-generated content | User-Generated Content Featuring | Balancing Digital and Physical Activations |
| Semi-structured Interview | Stephen Co, Worth the Health | "We plan to enhance our strategies by focusing more on intentional, strategic content that leverages our rich community stories, aiming to engage our audience through both digital and experiential interactions effectively." | Plans more intentional, strategic content leveraging community stories for digital and experiential engagement | Balancing Community Story Leveraging | |
| Non-participant Observation | Patch Dulay, The Spark Project | "Our engagement with the transgender community in co-creating products exemplifies the influence of cultural-cognitive orientations on our marketing strategies. This collaborative effort reflects our deeper commitment to understanding and addressing the unique needs of diverse groups, ensuring our products are not only relevant but also culturally sensitive." | Fosters dialogue and collaboration through online and physical community events | Community Engagement Facilitation | |
| Semi-structured Interview | Camille Escudero, Lily of the Valley | | Engages transgender community in co-creating products, reflecting commitment to cultural sensitivity | Inclusive Co-Creation | Co-creating Products with Diverse Communities |
| Digital Artifact | Camille Escudero, Lily of the Valley | | Collaboration with transgender community in co-creating products reflects founder's commitment to inclusivity | Inclusive Co-Creation | |
| Digital Artifact | Patch Dulay, The Spark Project | | Potential over-reliance on organic content, limited use of paid advertising to expand reach | Organic Content Over-Reliance | Strategic Advertising and Website Optimization |
| Non-participant Observation | Camille Escudero, Lily of the Valley | | Utilizes sponsored ads and clear calls-to-action leading to informative website | Sponsored Ads Utilization | |

Adaptive Digital Engagement

The adaptive digital engagement theme emerged as a central pillar in the exploration of digital social marketing strategies employed by mission-centric social enterprises in the Philippines. Founders demonstrated a keen awareness of the need to tailor their digital communication and content to the unique preferences and characteristics of their target audiences across various platforms. As Stephen Co of Worth the Health noted, *"We've identified distinct target demographics and adapted our communication to cater to their preferences. We tried to attack them on different channels. One, of course, is your typical social media like Instagram or Facebook. And then there are middle-aged, more of like Viber groups where we try to connect with them"*. This strategic adaptation aligns with the principles of Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT), which posits that effective communication involves adjusting one's style to match the expectations and norms of the audience. Founders also recognized the importance of platform-specific content creation, leveraging the unique features and user behaviors of each digital channel to maximize engagement and impact. Anya Lim of ANTHILL Fabric Gallery articulated this approach, stating, *"Instagram was basically used for storytelling and to me it was so powerful because you're able to really build community around the stories you put out and the stories you put out would resonate to people who have the same values with you and then you're able to establish relationship through engagement using that tool"*. The adaptive digital engagement theme underscores the strategic agility and audience-centric focus that characterize the digital social marketing efforts of mission-centric social enterprises in the Philippines.

- *Adapting Content and Platform-Specific Content Creation*

Adapting content and platform-specific content creation emerged as a significant sub-theme within the broader context of Adaptive Digital Engagement. Founders emphasized the importance of tailoring their messaging and content formats to resonate with the unique preferences and behaviors of their target audiences across different digital platforms. Camille Escudero of Lily of the Valley articulated this approach, noting, *"Our digital strategy is meticulously tailored to accommodate diverse groups, from nursing mothers to transgender individuals. By adjusting our communication style to match the specific needs and preferences of each group, we not only enhance our audience's understanding of our products but also strengthen our rapport with them"*. This strategic adaptation aligns with the principles of Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT), which suggests that effective communication involves adjusting one's style to build rapport and foster understanding with the audience. Founders also recognized the importance of leveraging the unique features and affordances of each digital platform to create engaging and impactful content. As JB Tan of The Good Store observed, *"So we have a basic understanding of what their needs are. But at the same time, with youth probably, there's a lot of trends that you cannot predict. So you always have to be on the watch out. Benchmark with other bigger influencers what they're doing. And then experiment if those will also work with your brand"*. This platform-specific approach to content creation reflects an understanding of the distinct user behaviors and expectations associated with each digital channel, allowing mission-centric social enterprises to optimize their engagement and impact.

- *Balancing Digital and Physical Activations*

Balancing digital and physical activations emerged as a sub-theme within the adaptive digital engagement theme, with founders recognizing the importance of integrating online and offline strategies to maximize engagement and impact. As Stephen Co of Worth the Health explained, *"We also plan to balance our digital strategy with on-the-ground activations to enhance customer experience and engagement. We are also exploring the use of AI in content creation to maintain an authentic yet efficient digital presence"*. This approach reflects an understanding of the complementary nature of digital and physical touchpoints in building relationships with audiences and driving social impact. Founders also emphasized the importance of leveraging digital platforms to support and amplify physical activations and events. As Patch Dulay of The Spark Project noted, *"We plan to enhance our strategies by focusing more on intentional, strategic content that leverages our rich community stories, aiming to engage our audience through both digital and experiential interactions effectively"*. This integration of digital and physical strategies aligns with the principles of Cultural-Cognitive Theory (CCT), which suggests that shared experiences and interactions shape individual and collective understandings and behaviors. By creating opportunities for audiences to engage with their mission and impact both online and offline, mission-centric social enterprises can foster deeper connections and drive more meaningful social change.

- *Co-creating Products with Diverse Communities*

Co-creating products with diverse communities emerged as a sub-theme within the adaptive digital engagement theme, with founders emphasizing the importance of collaborating with their target audiences and beneficiaries in the development and promotion of their products and services. As Camille Escudero of Lily of the Valley explained, *"Our engagement with the transgender community in co-creating products exemplifies the influence of cultural-cognitive orientations on our marketing strategies. This collaborative effort reflects our deeper commitment to understanding and addressing the unique needs of diverse groups, ensuring our products are not only relevant but also culturally sensitive"*. This approach aligns with the principles of Cultural-Cognitive Theory (CCT), which suggests that shared understandings and values are shaped through social interactions and collaborations. By involving diverse communities in the co-creation process, mission-centric social enterprises can ensure that their products and services are culturally relevant and responsive to the needs and preferences of their target audiences. Founders also recognized the importance of leveraging digital platforms to facilitate co-creation and collaboration with diverse communities. This collaborative approach to product co-creation reflects a commitment to empowering and amplifying the voices of diverse communities, ensuring that the social impact of mission-centric social enterprises is grounded in the lived experiences and perspectives of their target audiences.

- *Strategic Advertising and Website Optimization*

Strategic advertising and website optimization emerged as a sub-theme within the adaptive digital engagement theme, with the digital artifact analysis and non-participant observation revealing the importance of leveraging paid advertising and website design to maximize reach and impact. Mission-centric social enterprises that invested in targeted advertising campaigns were able to expand their reach and engage new audiences, driving increased awareness and support for their social mission. As Camille Escudero of Lily of the Valley noted, the brand *"Utilizes sponsored advertisements. Content has a clear call-to-action when it comes to selling the product. Interested audiences can access the link leading to the website that provides more information"*. This approach reflects an understanding of the importance of strategic advertising in amplifying the impact of mission-centric social enterprises, leveraging the power of digital platforms to reach and engage new audiences. The digital artifact analysis and non-participant observation also revealed the importance of website optimization in supporting the digital marketing efforts of mission-centric social enterprises. Well-designed and user-friendly websites that provided clear and compelling information about the social mission and impact of the organization were able to drive increased engagement and conversions. As noted in the analysis of Lily of the Valley, *"Call-to-action leads to a well-developed website"*. This approach reflects an understanding of the importance of creating seamless and integrated digital experiences for audiences, ensuring that the website serves as a powerful tool for driving social impact and change.

Table 7

Qualitative Matrix: Mission-Market Alignment

| Data Collection | Participant | Semi-structured Interview Excerpts | Founder CCT and CAT Strategies | Descriptive Label | Sub-Themes | Main Themes |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|--------------------------|
| Semi-structured Interview | Stephen Co, Worth the Health | "We evaluate our digital marketing's success by both sales growth and user engagement. Although it's challenging to link social media engagement with immediate sales directly, we value the insights gained from online interactions and the visibility they provide." | Evaluates success by both sales' growth and user engagement insights from online interactions | Holistic Success Evaluation | Balancing Sustainability and Social Impact | Mission-Market Alignment |
| Semi-structured Interview | Carmille Escudero, Lily of the Valley | "At the end of the day, will end up in the sales aspect of it. Whether more people are starting to understand the product, and more people are receptive and, of course, are buying. But the qualitative, one thing that we still like to do, we're very connection oriented. We like to talk to people, both the audiences. It's a great success that people will give feedback on the products. People come back to buy again." | Evaluates success by sales, repeat purchases, and qualitative feedback from audiences | Holistic Success Evaluation | | |
| Semi-structured Interview | Anya Lim, ANTHILL Fabric Gallery | "In the past we were more focused on the sales performance. We really looked at the numbers when we do our reviews.... But now since the algorithm has shifted so much, the mindset that we want to carry in Anthill is quality over quantity. What we want to really be able to achieve is even if you only have 30,000 followers, those are actually quality followers that are very highly engaged with your brand." | Shifted from focusing on sales numbers to quality over quantity in followers and engagement | Engagement Quality Focus Shift | | |
| Digital Artifact | Carmille Escudero, Lily of the Valley | | Needs improvement in balancing educational content with promotional messaging | Educational-Promotional Content Balance | | |
| Digital Artifact | Anya Lim, ANTHILL Fabric Gallery | | Potential shift in focus to community-building and advocacy over product promotion | Community Advocacy Shift | | |
| Semi-structured Interview | Patch Dulay, The Spark Project | "We evaluate the success of our digital marketing by engagement indicators like likes, comments, and saves, which offer insights into our content's impact and relevance. Although these indicators provide valuable feedback, the challenge | Evaluates success by engagement indicators (likes, comments, saves) but lacks formal KPIs | Informal Engagement Evaluation | Linking Digital Engagement to Tangible Outcomes | |

| | | | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|--|--|--|
| Semi-structured Interview | JB Tan, The Good Store | lies in translating this engagement into concrete outcomes. " "Because we're a small business, our focus is really on reach. Reach and then eventually going to the site for conversion. So those are the two basic indicators. So regardless if you are in Facebook or in Instagram or in TikTok or in YouTube, reach and engagement is defined differently. So those are the two basic things. How much of this traffic is converted or redirected to our site for conversion?" | Evaluates success by reach, engagement (defined differently per platform) and website traffic conversion | Platform-Specific Engagement Impressions |
| Non-participant Observation | Patch Dulay, The Spark Project | | Actively engages with followers, responding to comments and inquiries | Active Follower Engagement |
| Non-participant Observation | JB Tan, The Good Store | | Instances of active community engagement with followers sharing experiences and feedback | Experience Sharing Engagement |

Mission-Market Alignment

Mission-market alignment emerged as a central theme in the exploration of digital social marketing strategies employed by mission-centric social enterprises in the Philippines. Founders grappled with the challenge of balancing their social impact objectives with the need for financial sustainability, recognizing that the success of their digital marketing efforts hinged on effectively navigating this tension. As Stephen Co of Worth the Health noted, *"We evaluate our digital marketing's success by both sales growth and user engagement. Although it's challenging to link social media engagement with immediate sales directly, we value the insights gained from online interactions and the visibility they provide"*. This sentiment underscores the dual focus on market performance and mission alignment that characterizes social enterprises' approach to digital marketing. Camille Escudero of Lily of the Valley further emphasized this point, stating, *"At the end of the day, will end up in the sales aspect of it. Whether more people are starting to understand the product, and more people are receptive and, of course, are buying. But the qualitative, one thing that we still like to do, we're very connection oriented"*. This balance between financial sustainability and social impact evaluations of success reflects the unique challenges faced by social enterprises in aligning their digital strategies with both market demands and social impact goals. The findings suggest that achieving mission-market alignment requires a nuanced understanding of the interplay between sustainability and social value creation, as well as a willingness to adapt digital marketing strategies to serve both objectives effectively.

- *Balancing Sustainability and Social Impact*

Balancing sustainability and social impact emerged as a significant sub-theme within the broader context of mission-market alignment. Founders emphasized the importance of ensuring that their digital marketing strategies not only drove financial success but also effectively communicated and advanced their social missions. As Stephen Co of Worth the Health explained, *"The messaging was not super; since we are constrained by budget, we did not separate. But the messaging is not too far away. It's still like the health benefits. It's still delicious and versatile"*. This example illustrates how social enterprises strive to maintain consistency in their messaging, even when faced with resource constraints, to ensure that their digital marketing efforts align with their core values and social impact goals. Camille Escudero of Lily of the Valley further highlighted the importance of balancing sustainability and social impact, noting, *"At the end of the day, will end up in the sales aspect of it. Whether more people are starting to understand the product, and more people are receptive and, of course, are buying. But the qualitative, one thing that we still like to do, we're very connection oriented"*. This dual focus on sales performance and building meaningful connections with stakeholders reflects the unique challenges faced by social enterprises in balancing financial sustainability with their social impact objectives. The findings suggest that achieving this balance requires a strategic approach to digital marketing that prioritizes authentic storytelling, community engagement, and the effective communication of the enterprise's social mission alongside its products or services.

- *Linking Digital Engagement to Tangible Outcomes*

Linking digital engagement to tangible outcomes emerged as another critical sub-theme within mission-market alignment. Founders recognized the importance of translating online interactions and engagement into tangible results that support their social missions and business objectives. As Patch Dulay of The Spark Project explained, *"We evaluate the success of our digital marketing by engagement indicators like likes, comments, and saves, which offer insights into our content's impact and relevance. Although these indicators provide valuable feedback, the challenge lies in translating this engagement into concrete outcomes"*. This sentiment highlights the difficulty faced by social enterprises in connecting digital engagement impressions to tangible outcomes that advance their social missions. JB Tan of The Good Store further emphasized the importance of linking digital engagement to measurable results, stating, *"Because we're a small business, our focus is really on reach. Reach and then eventually going to the site for conversion. So those are the two basic indicators. So regardless if you are in Facebook or in Instagram or in TikTok or in YouTube, reach and engagement is defined differently. So those are the two basic things"*. This example illustrates how social enterprises prioritize reach and conversion as key indicators recognizing the need to translate online engagement into tangible actions that support their business and social impact goals. The findings suggest that effectively linking digital engagement to tangible outcomes requires a data-driven approach that leverages analytics and insights to inform strategy, as well as a clear understanding of how online interactions contribute to the enterprise's overall mission and objectives.

Table 8

Qualitative Matrix: Authentic Digital Storytelling

| Data Collection | Participant | Semi-structured Interview Excerpts | Founder CCT and CAT Strategies | Descriptive Label | Sub-Themes | Main Themes |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|---|---|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Digital Artifact | Patch Dulay, The Spark Project | | Applies CAT principles by aligning content with audience's aspirations and values | Aspirational Content Alignment | Empathetic and Supportive Approach | Authentic Digital Storytelling |
| Digital Artifact | Anya Lim, ANTHILL Fabric Gallery | | Applies CAT principles by carefully curating content to establish strong emotional connection with audience | Emotional Resonance Content Curation | | |
| Non-participant Observation | Patch Dulay, The Spark Project | | Uses encouraging, community-centric communication style reflecting commitment to nurturing Filipino creativity and entrepreneurship | Community-Centric Communication Style | | |
| Non-participant Observation | Anya Lim, ANTHILL Fabric Gallery | | Emphasizes storytelling, featuring artisans, their crafts and cultural significance | Artisan Storytelling Focus | | |
| Non-participant Observation | Anya Lim, ANTHILL Fabric Gallery | | Uses deeply respectful communication style reflecting commitment to cultural preservation and empowerment | Respectful Cultural Communication | | |
| Semi-structured Interview | Camille Escudero, Lily of the Valley | "In terms of how we're communicating the brand, we are education-led. It's really about health and how these products, though they are clothes, how they take care of you, how they support your health." | Employs education-led approach to communicate health benefits of products | Education-Driven Health Communication | Education-led Approach | |
| Semi-structured Interview | Anya Lim, ANTHILL Fabric Gallery | "The strategy around cultural preservation in terms of communication was establishing the problem. So when we started Anthill, we would spotlight our artisans and then establish narratives that focuses on the problem so that the audience understand that the issue is really cultural continuity, that a lot of the artisans are in their elder years." | Spotlighted artisans and narratives focusing on cultural continuity issues | Cultural Continuity Narrative Spotlight | | |
| Digital Artifact | Camille Escudero, Lily of the Valley | | Uses Facebook and Instagram to educate audience and foster community | Educational Community Building | | |

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|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|--|--|
| Digital Artifact | JB Tan, The Good Store | | Facebook and Instagram prioritize storytelling and education, focusing on social impact and advocacy behind products | Impact-Focused Storytelling Prioritization |
| Non-participant Observation | Stephen Co, Worth the Health | | Educates followers about health benefits and sustainability of plant-based products | Health and Sustainability Education |
| Non-participant Observation | Camille Escudero, Lily of the Valley | | Features educational content, product demos, and user-generated content fostering inclusivity and authenticity | Inclusive Content Mix |
| Semi-structured Interview | Patch Dulay, The Spark Project | "Our social media strategy is designed to showcase the success of the enterprises we support, aligning our communication to resonate with our audience's aspirations. This strategic alignment, inspired by CAT, helps us foster a strong community-centric identity, enhancing our brand's connection with its followers." | Aims to focus on impact storytelling; advocacy and community engagement over products | Enterprise Success Alignment Impact-driven Storytelling |
| Semi-structured Interview | Anya Lim, ANTHILL Fabric Gallery | "The strategy is to really pound in more on impact storytelling and advocacy and less on the products because that's what we're good at. And use the platform really more for community engagement even if it's an intimate community." | | Impact-Centric Engagement Shift |
| Digital Artifact | Patch Dulay, The Spark Project | | Facebook and Instagram consistently showcase success stories of supported enterprises, fostering sense of community | Enterprise Success Showcasing |
| Non-participant Observation | Patch Dulay, The Spark Project | | Showcases success stories of supported enterprises and projects with inspiring narratives and visuals | Impact Storytelling Showcasing |
| Non-participant Observation | JB Tan, The Good Store | | Focuses on storytelling and education around social impact and advocacy behind products | Impact Storytelling Focus |

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|---|---|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Semi-structured Interview | Stephen Co, Worth the Health | "The messaging was not super; since we are constrained by budget, we did not separate. But the messaging is not too far away. It's still like the health benefits. It's still delicious and versatile." | Focuses messaging on health benefits, deliciousness and versatility, constrained by budget | Value Proposition Messaging | Conscious Consumerism Advocacy |
| Semi-structured Interview | JB Tan, The Good Store | "The unique thing about The Good Store compared to other businesses is we are trying to also educate a lot of people about the stories of the communities and the advocacy behind the things that we are selling. That's the primary purpose. So when we do any marketing, whether it's digital or non-digital, it's always anchored on that strategy that more than selling something or more than informing people that they're selling something, it's about telling the stories behind these items or products first so that consumers understand that they're not just buying products, but there's a bigger purpose into it." | Anchors marketing on educating about stories and advocacy behind products | Advocacy-Centric Marketing | |
| Digital Artifact | JB Tan, The Good Store | | Applies CAT principles by designing content to resonate with socially-conscious audience | Socially-Conscious Content Design | |
| Non-participant Observation | JB Tan, The Good Store | | Uses engaging, informative communication style promoting conscious consumerism and supporting local communities | Conscious Consumerism Promotion | |

Authentic Digital Storytelling

Authentic digital storytelling emerged as a central theme in the exploration of digital social marketing strategies employed by mission-centric social enterprises in the Philippines. Founders recognized the power of genuine, emotionally resonant narratives in engaging audiences and communicating their social impact across digital platforms. As Patch Dulay of The Spark Project articulated, *"Our social media strategy is designed to showcase the success of the enterprises we support, aligning our communication to resonate with our audience's aspirations"*. This strategic alignment, inspired by Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT), enables social enterprises to foster a strong community-centric identity and enhance their brand's connection with followers. Founders also emphasized the importance of education and impact-driven storytelling in their digital marketing efforts. Camille Escudero of Lily of the Valley noted, *"In terms of how we're communicating the brand, we are education-led. It's really about health and how these products, though they are clothes, take care of you, how they support your health"*. By prioritizing informative content and highlighting the tangible impact of their initiatives, social enterprises can build trust and credibility with their digital audiences. Moreover, the digital artifact analysis and non-participant observation revealed the significance of empathetic and supportive engagement in fostering authentic connections with stakeholders. Through responsive, compassionate interactions and user-generated content, social enterprises create a sense of belonging and shared purpose within their online communities.

- *Empathetic and Supportive Approach*

The empathetic and supportive approach emerged as a crucial sub-theme within the broader context of authentic digital storytelling. The digital artifact analysis and non-participant observation revealed the importance of fostering caring, inclusive interactions with audiences across digital platforms. Mission-centric social enterprises demonstrated a commitment to creating safe, welcoming spaces for their communities, responding to inquiries and concerns with compassion and understanding. This approach aligns with the principles of Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT), which suggests that effective communication involves adjusting one's style to build rapport and foster trust with the audience. By engaging with their audiences in an empathetic and supportive manner, mission-centric social enterprises can create a sense of belonging and connection, encouraging more meaningful and sustained connection with their social mission. The digital artifact analysis and non-participant observation also highlighted the significance of active listening and responsiveness in nurturing empathetic and supportive connection. Social enterprises that prioritized timely, thoughtful responses to audience feedback and inquiries were able to build stronger relationships with their communities, demonstrating a genuine commitment to their well-being and success. This approach reflects an understanding of the importance of two-way communication in building trust and credibility with audiences, ensuring that the social impact of mission-centric social enterprises is grounded in the needs and experiences of their target communities.

- *Education-led Approach*

The education-led approach emerged as a prominent sub-theme within authentic digital storytelling, with founders emphasizing the importance of informative content in their digital marketing strategies. As Camille Escudero of Lily of the Valley noted, *"In terms of how we're communicating the brand, we are education-led. It's really about health and how these products, though they are clothes, take care of you, how they support your health"*. This focus on educating audiences about the social and environmental impact of their products and services reflects a commitment to fostering conscious consumerism and driving meaningful change. By providing valuable, informative content, mission-centric social enterprises can build trust and credibility with their digital audiences, positioning themselves as thought leaders and change agents within their respective fields. The education-led approach also aligns with the principles of Cultural-Cognitive Theory (CCT), which suggests that shared understandings and values shape individual and collective behavior. By educating their audiences about the social and environmental issues they address, mission-centric social enterprises can foster a sense of shared purpose and encourage more conscious, sustainable consumption patterns. Moreover, the digital artifact analysis revealed that social enterprises employing an education-led approach often leverage a variety of content formats, posted to engage their audiences and convey complex information in an accessible, engaging manner.

- *Impact-driven Storytelling*

Impact-driven storytelling emerged as a vital sub-theme within authentic digital storytelling, with founders recognizing the power of showcasing their social and environmental impact to engage and inspire their digital audiences. As Patch Dulay of The Spark Project explained, *"Our social media strategy is designed to showcase the success of the enterprises we support, aligning our communication to resonate with our audience's aspirations"*. By highlighting the tangible outcomes and transformative potential of their initiatives, mission-centric social enterprises can build an emotional connection with their stakeholders and demonstrate the value of their work. Anya Lim of ANTHILL Fabric Gallery further emphasized the importance of impact-driven storytelling, stating, *"The strategy is to really pound in more on impact storytelling and advocacy And use the platform more for community engagement even if it's an intimate community"*. This approach reflects an understanding of the power of storytelling in fostering a sense of shared purpose and driving social change, aligning with the principles of Cultural-Cognitive Theory (CCT). By focusing on the human stories behind their products and initiatives, mission-centric social enterprises can create a more compelling narrative that resonates with their audiences on a deeper level. Moreover, the digital artifact analysis revealed that impact-driven storytelling often incorporates a range of multimedia elements, such as photos, videos, and testimonials, to bring the stories to life and create a more immersive, engaging experience for digital audiences.

- *Conscious Consumerism Advocacy*

Conscious consumerism advocacy emerged as another notable sub-theme within the authentic digital storytelling theme. Founders emphasized the importance of educating and engaging their audiences around the social and environmental impact of their purchasing decisions, leveraging digital platforms to promote more sustainable and ethical consumption patterns. As JB Tan of The Good Store explained, *"The unique thing about The Good Store when we do any marketing, whether it's digital or nondigital, it's always anchored on that strategy that more than selling something or more than informing people that they're selling something, it's about telling the stories behind these items or products first so that consumers understand that they're not just buying products, but there's a bigger purpose into it"*. This focus on storytelling and education reflects a commitment to fostering a more conscious and engaged consumer base, aligning with the principles of Cultural-Cognitive Theory (CCT), which suggests that shared understandings and values shape individual and collective behavior. Founders also recognized the importance of consistency in their messaging around conscious consumerism, ensuring that their digital marketing efforts aligned with their broader social and environmental mission. As Stephen Co of Worth the Health noted, *"The messaging is still like the health benefits consumers will get from the product, while it still being delicious and versatile"*. This consistency in messaging reflects an understanding of the importance of building trust and credibility with audiences around the social and environmental impact of their products and services.

Summary of Key Findings

The analysis of five Philippine mission-centric social enterprise founders reveals how they naturally develop authentic digital storytelling approaches that reflect their personal backgrounds and values while building meaningful connections with their communities. This study demonstrates how founders serve as cultural mediators who naturally adapt their communication styles to engage diverse stakeholders while maintaining authenticity in their social missions.

The research reveals that founders naturally shape their digital marketing strategies through their personal experiences and cultural understanding rather than conscious theoretical application. Their role as cultural mediators emerges organically through their communication practices, demonstrating how individual backgrounds influence authentic storytelling approaches (Scott, 2014). This mediation magnifies in how they naturally adapt their messaging to resonate with different audience segments while maintaining consistency in their social mission communication.

The analysis shows that authentic digital storytelling emerges as the primary strategy across all cases, with founders naturally developing their approaches based on their understanding of their communities' needs and values. This authentic approach creates deeper connections with their audiences and strengthens their brand identity. For instance, founders naturally adapt their communication styles across different digital platforms, using more casual, relatable language on social media while maintaining professional tones for business partnerships.

The study demonstrates that founders assess their digital marketing success through qualitative indicators focused on community engagement and mission alignment rather than traditional marketing metrics. This approach reflects a deeper understanding of social enterprise success that goes beyond conventional business measures (Scott, 2014). The findings show how founders naturally integrate their social missions into their digital storytelling, creating authentic narratives that resonate with their communities while advancing their social objectives.

Four key themes emerged from the analysis: founders as cultural mediators, adaptive digital engagement, authentic digital storytelling, and mission-market alignment. These themes encapsulate the complex dynamics of navigating the digital landscape while staying true to social missions, leveraging cultural insights, and fostering meaningful connections with stakeholders.

The findings contribute to the growing body of knowledge on digital social marketing in the context of mission-centric social enterprises, offering practical insights for founders seeking to optimize their digital strategies for both business sustainability and social impact. The study highlights the importance of integrating communication accommodation and cultural-cognitive perspectives in digital social marketing, providing a foundation for future research and practice in this evolving field.

Chapter V

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK PRESENTATION

Founder-Driven Authentic Digital Storytelling Framework

The research highlights how social enterprise founders naturally develop authentic digital storytelling approaches that harmonize their personal values with their organization's social mission. This descriptive framework explains how founders' backgrounds and lived experiences organically shape their digital social marketing strategies, revealing a deeper understanding of mission-centric social enterprises' communication practices.

Social enterprises are uniquely positioned between traditional businesses and nonprofit organizations, combining market-oriented approaches with social welfare objectives. Defourny and Nyssens (2010) emphasize that these organizations use business tools to address social issues while focusing on community interests. Within this context, founders emerge as key architects of their organizations' digital presence, naturally weaving their personal narratives and cultural understanding into their marketing strategies.

The framework demonstrates how founders' authentic digital storytelling creates a deeper brand identity and consistent voice that genuinely reflects their passion for social change. This approach develops organically as founders share their journey, challenges, and vision through digital platforms, fostering trust and emotional connections with their

communities. The use of this authentic storytelling lies in its ability to resonate with diverse audience preferences while maintaining alignment with the organization's social mission.

Dees (2012) notes that social entrepreneurs often pivot towards market-oriented approaches to catalyze social change, driven by their frustration with traditional charitable sector limitations. This framework builds on this understanding by showing how founders naturally integrate their personal experiences and cultural knowledge into their digital marketing strategies, creating authentic narratives that bridge their social mission with market demands.

The descriptive nature of this framework emphasizes observation and understanding rather than prescription, focusing on how founders naturally develop their storytelling approaches to build meaningful connections with their communities. This perspective acknowledges that effective digital social marketing in social enterprises emerges from founders' intuitive understanding of their communities rather than conscious theoretical application.

Through authentic digital storytelling, founders create narratives that resonate with their target audiences while maintaining consistency with their organization's social mission. This process involves naturally adapting communication styles to match audience preferences while staying true to the organization's core values and objectives. The framework reveals how this authentic approach leads to stronger community engagement and mission-market alignment, with founders assessing success through qualitative indicators like community response and mission advancement rather than traditional metrics.

The framework's significance lies in its recognition of founders as natural cultural mediators who bridge their personal experiences, cultural understanding, and social mission through digital storytelling. This mediation process occurs organically as founders draw from their lived experiences to create authentic connections with their target audiences, contributing to the development of unique brand identities for their mission-centric social enterprises.

This theoretical framework provides a descriptive understanding of how founders naturally influence digital social marketing through authentic storytelling, rather than prescribing specific practices or conscious theoretical application. It emphasizes the organic development of marketing strategies that align with both the founder's values and the organization's social mission, creating a foundation for sustainable community engagement and social impact.

Founders as Cultural Mediators

In social enterprises, founders emerge as natural cultural mediators who intuitively bridge their personal experiences, cultural understanding, and social mission through digital storytelling approaches. This mediation role manifests organically through their lived experiences and deep connection to their social causes, significantly shaping how they craft narratives and engage with diverse communities in the digital space.

The research reveals that founders' backgrounds and personal values fundamentally influence their approach to digital social marketing. Defourny and Nyssens (2010) emphasize that social enterprises uniquely combine market-oriented approaches with social welfare objectives, and founders naturally integrate these dual purposes

through their communication strategies. Their personal experiences and cultural knowledge become essential tools in crafting authentic narratives that resonate with their target audiences.

This cultural mediation process develops naturally as founders draw from their experiences to create meaningful connections. Dees (2012) notes that social entrepreneurs often pivot towards market-oriented approaches due to their frustration with traditional charitable sector limitations. This frustration, combined with their personal commitment to social change, drives founders to develop authentic communication approaches that bridge their mission with market demands.

The cultural mediation aspect manifests in how founders naturally adapt their communication styles to align with diverse audience preferences while maintaining authenticity in their messaging. Rather than consciously applying theoretical frameworks, this adaptation emerges from the founders' intuitive understanding of their communities and mission. Their personal advocacy and cultural background significantly influence how they shape their organization's digital presence and brand identity.

Founders' role as cultural mediators extends beyond simple message crafting to encompass deeper aspects of brand identity development. Yunus, Moingeon, and Lehmann-Ortega (2010) discuss how social businesses prioritize social impact while maintaining sustainable operations. Founders naturally integrate these priorities into their digital storytelling, creating narratives that authentically reflect their social mission and market objectives.

Founders' success as cultural mediators lies in their ability to naturally develop reflexive practices that contribute to authentic storytelling and community engagement.

This reflexivity enables them to adapt to their communication strategies while aligning with their social mission. Their mediation role helps create a deeper brand identity and consistent voices that genuinely reflect their passion for social change.

Through their role as cultural mediators, founders naturally develop marketing approaches that resonate with their target audiences while staying true to their organization's core values and objectives. This natural mediation process contributes to stronger community engagement and mission-market alignment, with founders assessing success through qualitative indicators like community response and mission advancement rather than traditional metrics.

Emergence of Authentic Digital Storytelling

The research reveals authentic digital storytelling as the primary strategy through which social enterprise founders naturally express their mission and values in the digital space. This approach emerges organically as founders share their personal experiences, challenges, and vision through digital platforms, creating deeper brand identities that authentically reflect their passion for social change.

Authentic storytelling in digital marketing has become increasingly vital as social enterprises seek to differentiate themselves in an increasingly crowded digital landscape. Geneske and Hattaway (2014) emphasize that digital storytelling is a powerful tool for social impact, enabling organizations to educate and inspire their audiences while maintaining authenticity in their messaging. This authenticity becomes crucial as founders naturally incorporate personal narratives and experiences into their digital content.

The usefulness of authentic digital storytelling lies in its ability to build trust and create emotional connections with audiences. Social enterprise founders who share genuine stories about their journey, including both successes and challenges, foster deeper relationships with their communities. This transparency in storytelling helps build credibility and trust with stakeholders, as audiences appreciate and respond positively to authentic narratives that demonstrate vulnerability and genuine commitment to social mission (Ossisto, 2021).

The storytelling process develops organically as founders naturally adapt their communication styles to resonate with their target audiences while maintaining authenticity in their messaging. This natural adaptation process emerges from founders' intuitive understanding of their communities rather than conscious theoretical application. Through authentic digital storytelling, founders create narratives that reflect both their personal values and their organization's social mission, leading to stronger community engagement and mission-market alignment.

Digital platforms provide founders with various channels to share their authentic stories and engage with their communities. The integration of authentic storytelling across these platforms helps create a consistent brand voice that genuinely reflects the founder's passion for social change. This consistency in messaging strengthens the organization's identity and helps build stronger connections with target audiences (Markivis, 2021).

The impact of authentic digital storytelling extends beyond mere marketing objectives. It serves as a bridge between the social enterprise's mission and its market presence, helping stakeholders understand and connect with the organization's social purpose. NextBillion (2018) notes that authentic storytelling can significantly boost a

social enterprise's development by enabling founders to share both their successes and challenges in ways that demonstrate resilience and commitment to their mission.

Through authentic digital storytelling, founders naturally create narratives that resonate with their communities while maintaining alignment with their social mission. This approach helps build deeper relationships with stakeholders who share similar values and are committed to supporting the organization's social impact objectives. The authenticity in storytelling helps create a stronger brand identity that reflects the founder's genuine commitment to social change.

Community Engagement and Mission Alignment

The research reveals how authentic digital storytelling naturally leads to stronger community engagement and mission-market alignment in social enterprises. This relationship emerges through founders' intuitive development of digital content that resonates with their target audiences while maintaining consistency with their social mission.

Social enterprises uniquely position themselves between commercial and social objectives, requiring careful balance in their digital engagement strategies. Geneske and Hattaway (2014) emphasize that digital storytelling serves as a powerful tool for social impact organizations to educate and inspire their audiences while maintaining authenticity in their messaging. This authenticity becomes particularly crucial as founders naturally incorporate their personal narratives and experiences into their digital content.

The framework demonstrates how founders naturally assess their digital marketing success through qualitative indicators rather than traditional metrics. This evaluation

process develops organically as founders observe how their authentic storytelling approaches resonate with their communities. The assessment focuses on engagement quality and mission advancement rather than purely quantitative measures, reflecting social enterprises' dual objectives in creating social and economic value.

Community engagement manifests through interactive digital content that encourages audience participation and feedback. Social enterprise founders who share genuine stories about their journey, including successes and challenges, foster deeper community relationships. This transparency in storytelling helps build credibility and trust with stakeholders, as audiences appreciate and respond positively to authentic narratives that demonstrate vulnerability and genuine commitment to social mission (Ossisto, 2021).

Integrating authentic storytelling across digital platforms helps create a consistent brand voice that genuinely reflects the founder's passion for social change. NextBillion (2018) notes that authentic storytelling can significantly boost a social enterprise's development by enabling founders to share their successes and challenges in ways that demonstrate resilience and commitment to their mission. This consistency in messaging strengthens the organization's identity and helps build stronger connections with target audiences.

Mission-market alignment emerges naturally through founders' authentic digital storytelling approaches. Defourny and Nyssens (2010) emphasize that social enterprises uniquely combine market-oriented approaches with social welfare objectives, and founders naturally integrate these dual purposes through their communication strategies. Their personal experiences and cultural knowledge become essential tools in crafting

authentic narratives that resonate with their target audiences while maintaining alignment with their social mission.

The framework shows how founders naturally adapt their communication strategies based on community response while aligning with their social mission. This adaptation process emerges from founders' intuitive understanding of their communities rather than conscious theoretical application. Through authentic digital storytelling, founders create narratives that reflect both their personal values and their organization's social mission, leading to stronger community engagement and mission-market alignment.

Theoretical Integration

The research reveals a natural alignment between founders' intuitive communication approaches and established theoretical frameworks, particularly Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) and Cultural-Cognitive Theory (CCT), though founders may not consciously apply these theories. This alignment emerges organically through their digital storytelling practices and community engagement strategies.

Communication Accommodation Theory, as developed by Giles, Taylor, and Bourhis (1973), suggests that individuals naturally adapt their communication styles to increase or decrease social distance with their audiences. In social enterprises, founders unconsciously demonstrate these accommodation practices as they adjust their digital communication to resonate with diverse stakeholder groups. This natural adaptation

process emerges from founders' intuitive understanding of their communities rather than conscious theoretical application.

The cultural-cognitive aspects of founders' approaches align with Scott's (2001) framework, which emphasizes how shared understanding and cultural schemas influence organizational behavior. Social enterprise founders naturally integrate their cultural knowledge and personal experiences into their digital marketing strategies, creating authentic narratives that bridge their mission with market demands. This integration occurs organically as founders develop their storytelling approaches to build meaningful connections with their communities.

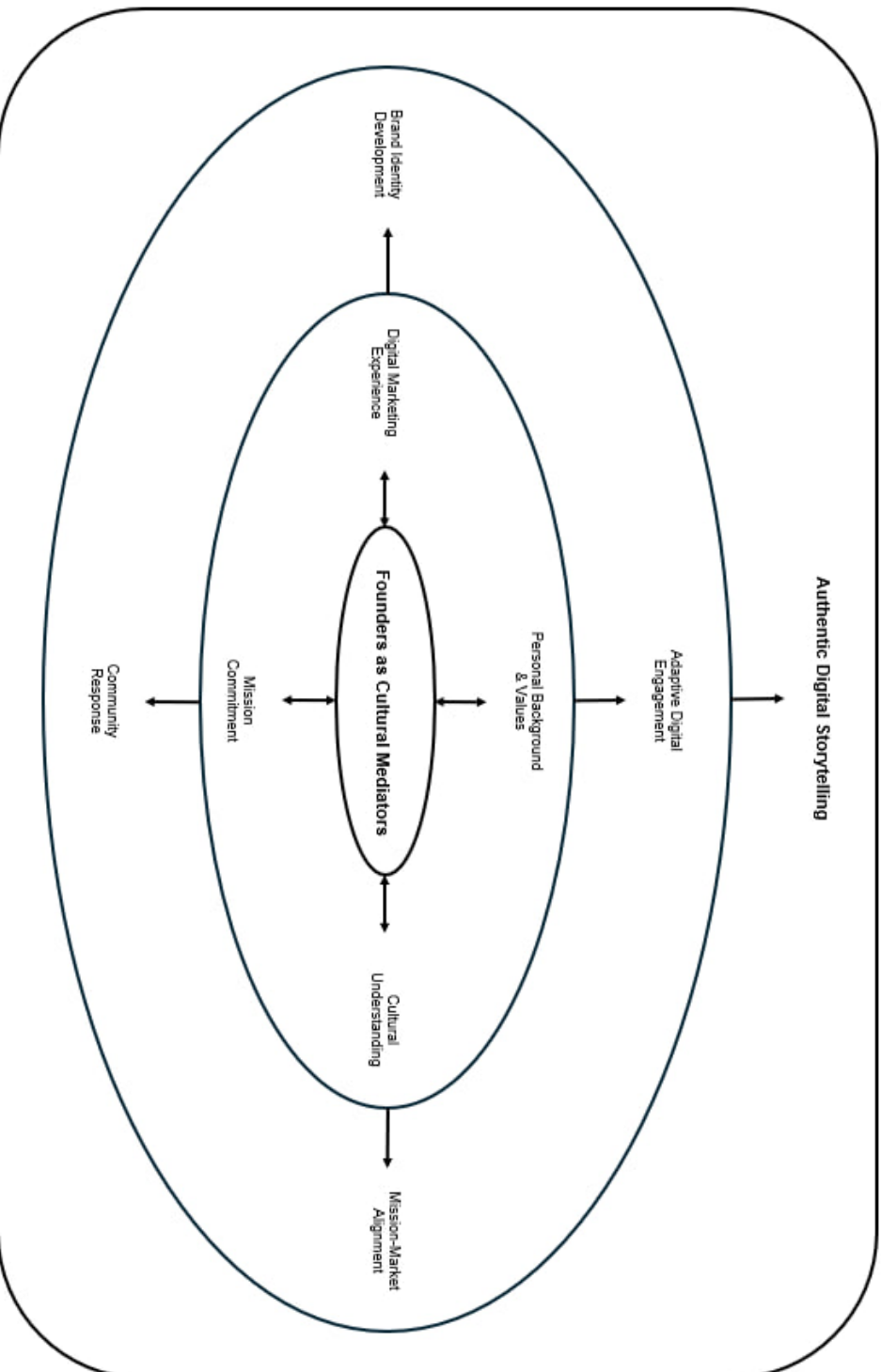
Founders naturally develop reflexive practices that contribute to authentic storytelling development, though they may not consciously frame these practices within theoretical constructs. Defourny and Nyssens (2010) note that social enterprises uniquely combine market-oriented approaches with social welfare objectives, and founders naturally integrate these dual purposes through their communication strategies. Their personal experiences and cultural knowledge become essential tools in crafting authentic narratives that resonate with their target audiences.

The framework reveals how founders' reflexive practices naturally evolve to support communication strategy adaptation and community engagement. As noted by Yunus, Moingeon, and Lehmann-Ortega (2010), social businesses prioritize social impact while maintaining sustainable operations. Founders naturally integrate these priorities into their digital storytelling, creating narratives that authentically reflect both their social mission and market objectives.

This theoretical integration provides a descriptive understanding of how founders naturally influence digital social marketing through authentic storytelling, rather than prescribing specific practices. The framework emphasizes observation and understanding rather than prescription, focusing on how founders naturally develop their storytelling approaches to build meaningful connections with their communities.

The value of this integration manifests in how founders naturally adapt their communication styles while maintaining authenticity in their messaging. This adaptation process emerges from founders' intuitive understanding of their communities rather than conscious theoretical application, leading to stronger community engagement and mission-market alignment.

Figure 7.
Founder-Driven Authentic Digital Storytelling Framework



Theoretical Framework Analysis: Founder-Driven Authentic Digital Storytelling

The theoretical framework illustrates how founders of social enterprises naturally develop authentic digital storytelling approaches through their role as cultural mediators. This descriptive framework emerged from analyzing how founders' backgrounds and experiences organically shape their digital social marketing strategies. The bidirectional arrows between the core element and primary elements indicate the reflexive nature of founders' cultural mediation. This reflexivity enables continuous adaptation of communication strategies while maintaining alignment with their social mission. The single directional arrows from primary to secondary elements show how founders' characteristics naturally influence outcomes, while the convergence arrows demonstrate how these elements collectively contribute to authentic digital storytelling.

Core Element: Founders' Cultural Mediation

At the center of the framework lies the founders' role as cultural mediators, representing their natural ability to bridge personal experiences, cultural understanding, and social mission through digital storytelling. Defourny and Nyssens (2010) emphasize that social enterprises uniquely combine market-oriented approaches with social welfare objectives, and founders naturally integrate these dual purposes through their communication strategies. This central position reflects how founders' cultural mediation naturally influences all aspects of their organization's digital presence and brand identity.

Primary Elements: Foundational Influences

The inner ring comprises four interconnected elements that represent the foundational influences shaping founders' approach to digital social marketing:

- *Personal Background & Values*

Founders' personal experiences and values significantly influence their approach to digital social marketing. Dees (2012) notes that social entrepreneurs often pivot towards market-oriented approaches due to their frustration with traditional charitable sector limitations. This personal background naturally shapes how they craft narratives and engage with their communities.

- *Cultural Understanding*

The cultural understanding element reflects founders' intuitive grasp of their communities' cultural contexts. This understanding enables them to naturally adapt their communication styles to resonate with diverse audience preferences while maintaining authenticity in their messaging.

- *Mission Commitment*

Yunus, Moingeon, and Lehmann-Ortega (2010) discuss how social businesses prioritize social impact while maintaining sustainable operations. The mission commitment element represents founders' dedication to their social mission, which naturally influences their digital marketing strategies and community engagement approaches.

- *Digital Marketing Experience*

Founders' experience with digital platforms shapes how they leverage these tools for social impact. This experience develops organically as they learn to use digital platforms effectively while maintaining alignment with their social mission.

Secondary Elements: Strategic Outcomes

The outer ring represents the strategic outcomes that emerge from founders' cultural mediation:

- *Adaptive Digital Engagement*

Geneske and Hattaway (2014) emphasize that digital storytelling serves as a powerful tool for social impact organizations to educate and inspire their audiences. This element represents how founders naturally adapt their digital engagement strategies to resonate with their target audiences while maintaining authenticity.

- *Mission-Market Alignment*

This element reflects how founders naturally balance social impact objectives with market demands. The alignment emerges through founders' authentic digital storytelling approaches, which help stakeholders understand and connect with the organization's social purpose.

- *Community Response*

Community response manifests through interactive digital content that encourages audience participation and feedback. NextBillion (2018) notes that authentic

storytelling can significantly boost a social enterprise's development by enabling founders to share both their successes and challenges.

- *Brand Identity Development*

The development of brand identity occurs naturally through founders' authentic digital storytelling. This process creates a consistent brand voice that genuinely reflects the founder's passion for social change and resonates with their target audiences.

Outcome Element: Authentic Digital Storytelling

The framework culminates in authentic digital storytelling as the primary strategy through which founders naturally express their mission and values. This outcome represents how founders' cultural mediation, influenced by their personal backgrounds and experiences, naturally leads to authentic digital storytelling that creates deeper brand identity and consistent voice.

Theoretical Implications

The research findings contribute significant theoretical insights to understanding digital social marketing in social enterprises, particularly through the lens of authentic digital storytelling. The study reveals how founders naturally develop their storytelling approaches, challenging traditional assumptions about strategic communication planning in social enterprises.

The emergence of authentic digital storytelling as the primary strategy extends existing theoretical frameworks in social marketing. While Defourny and Nyssens (2010) emphasize social enterprises' dual focus on social and market objectives, this research demonstrates how founders naturally integrate these objectives through authentic storytelling rather than conscious theoretical application. This finding refines our understanding of how social enterprises naturally develop their communication strategies.

The study's theoretical framework builds upon but also challenges aspects of Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) and Cultural-Cognitive Theory (CCT). While Giles, Taylor, and Bourhis (1973) suggest conscious communication adaptation, this research reveals that founders naturally adapt their communication styles based on intuitive understanding of their communities. This finding suggests a more organic approach to communication adaptation in social enterprise contexts.

The role of founders as cultural mediators presents a novel theoretical perspective in social enterprise communication. This extends beyond traditional views of founder influence (Dees, 2012) to demonstrate how founders' personal backgrounds and values naturally shape digital marketing strategies and community engagement. This theoretical

contribution provides a new lens for understanding how social enterprises develop their digital presence and brand identity.

Practical Implications

The research findings offer substantial practical implications for social enterprise founders and practitioners in digital social marketing. The emergence of authentic digital storytelling as a primary strategy suggests practical approaches for developing effective digital marketing strategies that align with social mission objectives.

Social enterprise founders can benefit from understanding how their personal backgrounds and values naturally influence their digital marketing approaches. Yunus, Moingeon, and Lehmann-Ortega (2010) discuss how social businesses prioritize social impact while maintaining sustainable operations. This research extends this understanding by showing how founders can naturally integrate their personal narratives into their digital marketing strategies while maintaining authenticity.

The findings suggest practical approaches for developing community engagement through authentic digital storytelling. Rather than focusing solely on traditional marketing metrics, social enterprises can assess their success through qualitative indicators like community response and mission advancement. This aligns with Geneske and Hattaway's (2014) emphasis on digital storytelling as a powerful tool for social impact.

The research also provides practical insights for developing brand identity through authentic digital storytelling. Social enterprise founders can leverage their personal experiences and cultural understanding to create deeper connections with their target audiences while maintaining alignment with their social mission.

The research findings can be applied to improve digital social marketing practices in social enterprises through several key areas. The framework of authentic digital storytelling provides a practical model for developing effective digital marketing strategies that resonate with target audiences while maintaining mission alignment.

Social enterprise founders can apply these findings to develop more authentic digital marketing approaches. By recognizing their role as cultural mediators, founders can more effectively integrate their personal narratives and cultural understanding into their digital marketing strategies. This application aligns with NextBillion's (2018) observation that authentic storytelling can significantly boost a social enterprise's development.

The findings can be applied to develop more effective community engagement strategies. By focusing on authentic digital storytelling, social enterprises can build stronger connections with their communities while maintaining alignment with their social mission. This application extends beyond traditional marketing metrics to include qualitative indicators of success.

The research also provides applications for developing a stronger brand identity through authentic digital storytelling. Social enterprises can apply these findings to create more authentic and engaging digital content reflecting their social mission and market objectives.

Chapter VI
RESEARCH SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS
AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Research Summary

The study investigated the complex interplay between founders' cultural-cognitive orientations and their communication accommodation practices in shaping authentic digital storytelling approaches within mission-centric social enterprises. Through comprehensive analysis, the research addressed three fundamental questions examining the intersection of founders' backgrounds, communication practices, and digital marketing strategies. Through a comprehensive analysis using digital ethnography and case studies, the research addressed three key questions:

1. How do founders' cultural-cognitive orientations influence their digital social marketing narrative and community engagement?
2. How do founders adapt their communication practices to align with their mission and target audience?
3. How do founders design and assess their digital social marketing strategies through authentic digital storytelling?

Cultural-Cognitive Influence

The research revealed that founders' personal backgrounds and cultural orientations significantly shape their digital marketing narratives and community engagement approaches. As Scott (2001) noted, individual actions and strategic choices are deeply influenced by cultural norms and cognitive patterns, which is evident in how founders naturally embed their cultural values and experiences into their organizations' digital presence. This creates authentic brand identities that resonate with their target audiences. The study found that founders authentically incorporate their cultural backgrounds into their digital storytelling to create deeper connections with their communities. For instance, those from collectivistic cultures emphasized community-building and collaborative messaging in their digital marketing strategies, while those from individualistic backgrounds focused on unique value propositions and personal benefits, aligning with Hofstede's (1980) cultural dimensions theory.

Communication Adaptation

The research demonstrated that founders naturally develop storytelling approaches to build meaningful community connections through digital engagement. This process involves a reflexive examination of their communication styles and strategic adaptation to match audience preferences. According to Giles, Taylor, and Bourhis (1973), this adaptation process is crucial for increasing engagement and building rapport with target audiences. The findings showed that founders adapt their communication across different digital platforms, using varied tones, visual elements, and content formats to resonate with different audience segments. This adaptation extended beyond linguistic

adjustments to include cultural symbols, multimedia content, and platform-specific engagement strategies, as supported by Tuten and Solomon's (2017) work on social media marketing.

Community Response Assessment

The study identified that founders evaluate their digital marketing success through qualitative indicators focused on community building and mission alignment rather than traditional metrics. Defourny and Nyssens (2010) emphasize that social enterprises require unique evaluation approaches considering both social impact and market engagement. The research revealed that founders shifted from purely quantitative metrics like sales and follower counts to more nuanced assessments of community response and mission achievement. This aligns with Andreasen's (2002) perspective on social marketing evaluation, which emphasizes the importance of measuring behavioral and social impact outcomes.

Theoretical Framework Integration

The findings demonstrate the interconnected nature of the Cultural-Cognitive Theory and Communication Accommodation Theory in digital social marketing. Integration creates a framework where authentic digital storytelling is social enterprises' primary digital marketing strategy. This framework, as suggested by DiMaggio (1997), emphasizes how founders' reflexive practices contribute to the development of authentic storytelling approaches, strategic adaptation of communication strategies, and evolution of community engagement practices. The research employed a combination of digital

ethnography and case study approaches, as Kozinets (2015) advocated, to examine founders' digital marketing practices. This methodology provided rich, contextual insights into how founders naturally develop and implement their digital social marketing strategies.

The findings suggest that successful digital marketing in mission-centric social enterprises requires a deep understanding of cultural dynamics, authentic communication practices, and strategic adaptation to audience preferences. This understanding enables founders to create meaningful connections with their communities while advancing their social missions, as supported by Mair and Marti's (2006) work on social entrepreneurship impact.

Conclusions

The research findings highlight the complex interplay between founders' cultural-cognitive orientations and communication practices in shaping mission-centric social enterprises' digital marketing strategies. Through careful analysis, this study reveals that authentic digital storytelling emerges as the cornerstone of effective digital social marketing, serving as a crucial bridge between organizational mission and community engagement.

The study demonstrates that founders significantly influence their social enterprises' brand identity creation through their backgrounds and values. Their cultural orientations and lived experiences fundamentally shape how they craft and communicate their organization's narrative. As evidenced in the research of Defourny and Nyssens (2010), social enterprises uniquely combine marketing strategies with social purpose, and this research confirms that founders' authentic voices are central to this combination. Founders' personal values and cultural backgrounds directly inform their approach to digital storytelling, creating marketing narratives that resonate with their target communities while maintaining fidelity to their social mission.

Cultural mediation emerges as a critical factor in digital marketing success. The research reveals that founders successfully adapt their communication styles to align with their audience's cultural context to achieve higher engagement levels. This finding aligns with Giles, Taylor, and Bourhis's (1973) Communication Accommodation Theory, demonstrating how strategic communication adaptation enhances message reception and community building. The study shows that founders who demonstrate cultural

sensitivity in their digital marketing approaches create more meaningful connections with their stakeholders.

The research establishes a clear connection between authentic storytelling and community engagement. Social enterprises that maintain consistency between their mission and digital marketing narratives foster stronger community relationships. This alignment supports Peattie and Peattie's (2003) assertion that effective social marketing strategies build sustainable relationships with target audiences. The findings demonstrate that authentic digital storytelling, when properly executed, is a powerful tool for mission advancement and community building.

Digital social marketing in mission-centric social enterprises requires a delicate balance between commercial viability and social impact. The study reveals that founders who successfully navigate this balance do so through transparent and authentic communication about their dual objectives. This finding supports Mair and Marti's (2006) observation about social enterprises' unique positioning in addressing societal challenges through innovative solutions.

The research also highlights the importance of cultural-cognitive factors in shaping digital marketing strategies. Founders' understanding of their cultural context influences their choice of communication channels and content creation approaches. This insight extends Scott's (2001) Cultural-Cognitive Theory into the digital marketing sphere, demonstrating how cultural values inform marketing practices. The study reveals that founders who successfully integrate cultural understanding into their digital marketing strategies achieve better engagement and mission alignment.

These conclusions contribute significantly to both theoretical understanding and practical application in social enterprise marketing. They provide a comprehensive framework for understanding how personal authenticity, cultural sensitivity, and mission alignment combine to create compelling digital social marketing strategies. The findings offer valuable insights for social enterprise founders seeking to enhance their digital marketing success while maintaining authenticity in their mission-driven work. Through the lens of Communication Accommodation Theory and Cultural-Cognitive Theory, the research demonstrates how founders can strategically adapt their communication approaches while staying true to their cultural values and organizational mission.

The study's implications extend beyond theoretical contributions to practical applications. Social enterprise founders can use these insights to develop more effective digital marketing strategies that authentically reflect their mission while engaging their target communities. The research suggests that successful digital social marketing in mission-centric social enterprises requires a deep understanding of cultural context, authentic storytelling, and strategic communication adaptation.

Applications

Developing Authentic Digital Storytelling

The development of authentic digital storytelling represents a critical component for social enterprise founders seeking to communicate their mission and engage with their target communities effectively. Defourny and Nyssens (2010) emphasize that social enterprise founders must carefully consider their cultural-cognitive orientations and communication practices when crafting digital marketing narratives that resonate with their audiences while staying true to their organizational mission. The process begins with founders conducting a thorough self-assessment of their cultural background, values, and communication preferences, as these elements significantly influence their storytelling approach and ability to connect with diverse stakeholder groups. According to Scott (2001), this reflective process allows founders to recognize potential biases and adapt their communication strategies, ensuring their digital narratives remain authentic while effectively reaching their intended audiences.

The implementation of digital storytelling should incorporate multiple elements that reflect the founder's authentic voice and the enterprise's social mission. Mair and Marti (2006) suggest that this includes developing consistent messaging across various digital platforms while adapting the tone and style to match each platform's unique characteristics and audience expectations. Founders should create narratives highlighting their connection to the social mission, share impact stories, and demonstrate transparency in their operations and decision-making processes. Dees (2012) notes that

storytelling should emphasize the organization's social impact while maintaining professional credibility and authenticity in all communications.

Strategies for Community Engagement and Mission-Market Alignment

Effective community engagement and mission-market alignment require a strategic approach that balances social impact objectives with sustainable business practices. According to the research by Giles, Taylor, and Bourhis (1973), social enterprise founders should develop comprehensive engagement strategies that facilitate meaningful interactions with their stakeholders while ensuring their marketing efforts remain aligned with their social mission. This involves creating multiple touchpoints for community interaction across digital platforms, establishing clear metrics for measuring engagement success, and regularly evaluating the alignment between marketing activities and social impact goals. The research emphasizes that successful community engagement strategies must be rooted in authentic communication and cultural understanding.

The engagement strategy should focus on building long-term relationships rather than pursuing short-term marketing gains, emphasizing authentic connections and meaningful interactions that support the enterprise's social mission. Scott's (2001) cultural-cognitive theory suggests that founders should consider how their cultural backgrounds and cognitive frameworks influence their approach to digital marketing and community engagement. This understanding helps ensure that engagement strategies are culturally sensitive and effectively resonate with diverse stakeholder groups. The

theory also emphasizes adapting communication styles to match audience preferences while maintaining authenticity in all interactions.

Mission-market alignment requires continuous monitoring and adjustment of digital marketing strategies to ensure they effectively serve business sustainability and social impact objectives. Defourny and Nyssens (2010) emphasize that founders should establish clear indicators for measuring the success of their digital marketing efforts, including both quantitative metrics and qualitative assessments. Regular evaluation of these indicators helps ensure marketing activities remain consistent with the organization's social mission while effectively supporting its sustainability goals. This alignment process should be dynamic and responsive to changing community needs and market conditions, allowing social enterprises to maintain their efficacy in both social impact and market performance.

Integrating authentic digital storytelling with effective community engagement strategies creates a robust framework for social enterprises to achieve their dual social impact and financial sustainability objectives. By carefully considering cultural-cognitive factors and communication accommodation practices, founders can develop digital marketing approaches that resonate with their target audiences while staying true to their organizational mission. This integrated approach, supported by regular evaluation and adjustment, enables social enterprises to build strong community relationships and drive meaningful social change while maintaining operational sustainability.

Recommendations for Future Research

Limitations

While yielding valuable insights, this study's examination of digital social marketing strategies in mission-centric social enterprises encountered several noteworthy methodological limitations that warrant careful consideration. The primary constraint stems from the study's concentrated focus on mission-centric social enterprises, which necessarily narrowed the scope of the investigation and limited the generalizability of findings across the broader spectrum of social enterprise types. As Defourny and Nyssens (2010) emphasize, social enterprises exist along a continuum of organizational forms, each with distinct approaches to balancing social impact and economic sustainability. While this focused approach enabled deep insight into mission-driven organizations, it potentially overlooked valuable perspectives from other social enterprise models that might employ different techniques for digital marketing.

The reliance on founders' perspectives as the primary data source presents another significant limitation. Though founders provide crucial strategic insights, as Dees (2012) noted, this singular viewpoint may not fully capture the multifaceted nature of digital marketing implementation and its impact across different organizational levels. The absence of perspectives from other stakeholders, including employees, beneficiaries, and community members, potentially limits our understanding of how digital marketing strategies resonate with and impact various audience segments. This limitation becomes particularly relevant when considering Tuten and Solomon's (2017) assertion that effective digital marketing requires a comprehensive understanding of diverse stakeholder perspectives.

While valuable for understanding online interaction patterns, the study's emphasis on digital engagement metrics may not fully capture the broader impact of social marketing strategies on actual behavioral change and social impact. This limitation becomes particularly evident when attempting to evaluate the long-term success of digital marketing initiatives in achieving social enterprise missions beyond immediate online engagement indicators. As Kozinets (2015) suggests in his work on digital ethnography, measuring true social impact requires looking beyond mere engagement metrics to understand more profound behavioral and social changes.

Future Research Directions

The limitations identified in this study open several promising avenues for future research that warrant exploration. First, researchers should investigate the cross-cultural applications of the theoretical framework developed in this study. The integration of Communication Accommodation Theory and Cultural-Cognitive Theory could be examined across different cultural contexts to understand how cultural nuances influence digital marketing strategies in social enterprises. This expansion would provide valuable insights into the adaptability and usefulness of digital social marketing approaches across diverse cultural settings, as suggested by Giles, Taylor, and Bourhis's (1973) foundational work on communication accommodation.

Future studies should also investigate the impact of digital social marketing strategies on actual consumer behavior and social change outcomes. While this study focused primarily on digital engagement metrics, subsequent research could examine the relationship between online engagement and tangible social impact indicators. This could

involve longitudinal studies tracking how digital marketing initiatives translate into measurable social change within target communities, building on the work of Andreasen (2002) in social marketing impact assessment.

Additionally, future research should broaden the scope to include different types of social enterprises beyond the mission-centric model. Examining how various social enterprise models adapt and implement digital marketing strategies could provide a more comprehensive understanding of the sector's marketing practices. This expanded focus would help identify the best practices and challenges across different organizational structures and business models within the social enterprise spectrum, as highlighted in the work of Mair and Marti (2006) on social enterprise diversity.

Concluding Remarks

Social enterprises represent a unique intersection of business and social impact, where founders' personal narratives and strategic approaches significantly shape organizational success. This dissertation advances our understanding of how social enterprise founders develop and implement digital marketing strategies through their distinct backgrounds, values, and communication approaches. The research reveals that founders' cultural orientations and cognitive frameworks profoundly influence their digital marketing narratives and engagement strategies. As Defourny and Nyssens (2010) emphasize, social enterprises operate in a complex landscape where organizational success depends on effectively balancing social impact with sustainable business practices. The findings demonstrate that social enterprise founders develop unique approaches to digital storytelling that authentically reflect their personal experiences while strategically adapting their communication to resonate with target audiences. This dynamic interplay between personal authenticity and strategic adaptation creates distinctive digital marketing practices that set social enterprises apart from traditional businesses, aligning with Mair and Marti's (2006) observation that social enterprises require innovative approaches to achieve their dual objectives.

The research findings provide crucial insights for social enterprise founders navigating the complexities of digital marketing in mission-driven organizations. The study reveals that founders authentically incorporate their values and experiences into their digital storytelling while strategically adapting their communication approaches to achieve more robust community engagement and mission alignment. As Dees (2012) notes,

successful social enterprises must balance social impact with market viability, and this research demonstrates that effective digital marketing plays a vital role in achieving this balance. The findings suggest that digital marketing success in social enterprises requires careful consideration of how personal narratives and organizational values are communicated across various digital platforms. Tuten and Solomon (2017) emphasize the importance of strategic digital communication in building sustainable relationships with target audiences, and this research extends their work by highlighting how founders' authentic voices contribute to these relationships. The study shows successful founders maintain organizational identity while accommodating audience preferences through appropriate digital channels and engagement strategies. This balanced approach helps social enterprises build stronger connections with their communities while staying true to their mission objectives.

Authentic digital storytelling emerges as a fundamental element in social enterprise marketing success, extending beyond conventional content creation to encompass a deeper understanding of how personal narratives connect with social mission objectives. The research demonstrates that effective digital storytelling requires founders to integrate authentic experiences and values into their marketing strategies thoughtfully. This approach aligns with Scott's (2001) perspective on how cultural and cognitive factors influence organizational practices and communication. Social enterprise founders who successfully integrate their authentic experiences and values into their digital marketing strategies create more compelling and engaging content that resonates with their audiences. This authentic approach helps build trust and credibility while fostering stronger connections with stakeholders with similar values and aspirations for social

change. The research shows that authentic digital storytelling bridges the founder's vision and the community's needs, creating a powerful platform for social impact and sustainable growth.

This research contributes to understanding how digital marketing practices influence social enterprise development and success in an increasingly digital world. The findings suggest that effective digital marketing strategies, grounded in authentic storytelling and strategic communication adaptation, can significantly enhance a social enterprise's ability to achieve both social impact and financial sustainability. As DiMaggio (1997) highlighted, organizational success often depends on effectively navigating cultural and cognitive frameworks, and this research demonstrates how these elements manifest in digital marketing practices. The study reveals that social enterprises can leverage digital platforms to amplify their social mission while building sustainable business models, creating a powerful synergy between impact and income. This dual focus on mission and market alignment through digital engagement represents a crucial evolution in how social enterprises approach their marketing strategies and organizational development, contributing to the broader understanding of social enterprise success factors in the digital age.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER FOR INTERVIEW RESEARCH

April 15, 2024

Participant Name

Designation
Mission-Centric Social Enterprise

Dear Participant Name,

I hope you are doing well. I am currently conducting my dissertation research at the University of the Philippines. I'm writing to invite you to participate in a study exploring the intricacies of digital social marketing strategies deployed by mission-centric social enterprises through the perspective of their founders.

The dissertation, titled "*Communication Adaptation in Mission-Driven Endeavors: A Qualitative Study of Digital Social Marketing Strategies in Social Enterprises*," seeks to provide a nuanced understanding of how cultural-cognitive orientations and adherence to Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) influence the effectiveness of digital social marketing strategies within organizations like yours. This research is designed to delve into the alignments of founders' personal beliefs, communication strategies, and the overall impact these have in advancing social missions through digital platforms.

Your insights and experiences as a founder of a mission-centric enterprise would be invaluable to this study, offering a unique perspective on implementing communication theories in digital marketing and assessing their success in achieving organizational goals.

I am eager to conduct an interview with you via Zoom, which I anticipate will last approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour. This discussion will primarily focus on your perspectives on digital social marketing strategies, any communication adjustments you've made following CAT, and how your cultural-cognitive orientations have affected these strategies. Please be assured that your participation will be treated with the utmost confidentiality, and the information gathered will be used solely for academic purposes. I have included an overview of the dissertation topic and interview questions with this letter.

With your acceptance, I hope to schedule the interview over the next few weeks. I am flexible and would happily schedule the interview at your convenience. You can reach me at jnsantos4@up.edu.ph or via mobile at [redacted]. Your consideration and potential involvement in this research is highly appreciated.

Thank you very much for considering this invitation. Your participation could significantly contribute to a deeper understanding of digital social marketing in mission-centric enterprises and provide valuable insights for future researchers and practitioners.

Sincerely,

Joseph Emil Santos

Doctoral Candidate
University of the Philippines

Appendix B

LETTER ATTACHMENT DISSERTATION OVERVIEW

Dissertation Title:

Communication Adaptation and Cultural Cognition in Digital Social Marketing: Exploring Founders' Influence and Strategies in Philippine Mission-Centric Social Enterprises

Abstract:

This qualitative study delves into the digital social marketing strategies of mission-centric social enterprises, unraveling how founders' adherence to Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) and Cultural-Cognitive Theory (CCT) shapes their digital engagements. It investigates the intersection of founders' personal beliefs, cultural backgrounds, and strategic communication within the digital domain, aiming to illuminate the efficacy of digital social marketing in fulfilling social missions. It seeks to identify thematic patterns and narratives that underline the integration of CAT and CCT in digital strategies, assessing how cultural-cognitive orientations and communication accommodation practices influence the development, execution, and success evaluation of these strategies. This study contributes groundbreaking insights into the dynamic interplay of social entrepreneurship and digital marketing, highlighting the pivotal role of founder orientations in digital social marketing success.

Research Question:

How do the cultural-cognitive orientations and communication accommodation practices of founders influence the formulation and effectiveness of digital social marketing strategies in mission-centric social enterprises?

Theoretical Framework:

- Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT): This theory posits that individuals adapt their communication styles to bridge gaps with their audience, ensuring effectiveness and fostering mutual understanding. The study will explore how founders adapt their messaging and digital engagement practices to resonate with diverse audience segments in line with CAT.
- Cultural-Cognitive Theory (CCT): This framework delves into how sociocultural contexts and cognitive schemas influence organizational behavior and decision-making processes. It will be used to understand how founders' cultural backgrounds and cognitive beliefs shape the development and implementation of digital social marketing strategies.

Measures of Success:

Founders' metrics for success will be a critical focus of the study, encompassing both quantitative aspects (e.g., engagement rates, conversion rates) and qualitative dimensions (e.g., audience feedback, perceived brand alignment with social mission). The study will investigate how these metrics align with founders' cultural-cognitive orientations and their application of CAT in digital spaces.

Significance of the Study:

By integrating Communication Accommodation Theory and Cultural-Cognitive Theory within the digital ethnography and case study methodologies, this research framework offers a comprehensive understanding of how mission-centric social enterprises navigate the complexities of digital social marketing. It seeks to uncover how the interplay between founders' cultural-cognitive orientations, communication styles, and digital strategies facilitates the achievement of social missions, contributing valuable insights to social entrepreneurship and digital marketing.

Appendix C

LETTER ATTACHMENT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interview Questions:

1. How do you see digital platforms playing a role in achieving this mission?
2. Can you share an overview of your current digital social marketing strategies?
3. How do you consciously adapt your communication strategies to accommodate your digital audience's diverse backgrounds or preferences?
4. Can you provide examples of your digital content specifically tailored to meet the needs or expectations of different audience segments?
5. How has your personal understanding of digital platforms, beliefs, and values influenced the development and execution of your digital social marketing strategies?
6. Discuss how your personal understanding of digital platforms, beliefs, and values may have been reflected in your decision-making processes regarding digital marketing initiatives.
7. Can you recall any digital campaigns or content that were particularly shaped by cultural considerations or your cognitive perspectives?
8. How do you assess the success of your digital social marketing strategies in advancing your social mission?
9. What quantitative or qualitative metrics do you find most valuable in measuring the impact of your digital engagement?
10. Have there been any instances where your digital social marketing efforts led to unexpected outcomes or learnings?
11. Looking back, what would you say has been your biggest challenge in leveraging digital platforms for social marketing?
12. What future directions do you foresee for your digital social marketing strategies? How do you plan to adapt to evolving digital landscapes or audiences?