

# Designing Promotional Media for “Dolas Songket Silungkang” in Sawahlunto City

Arya Primanda\*, Harissman

Institut Seni Indonesia Padangpanjang, Sumatera Barat, Indonesia

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\*Correspondence: Arya Primananda

Email: [aryaprimanda52@gmail.com](mailto:aryaprimanda52@gmail.com)

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**Abstract:** Despite the uniqueness of its handmade process, use of natural dyes, and rich Minangkabau cultural symbolism, this enterprise faces challenges in market visibility due to ineffective promotional strategies. This design based research aims to develop an integrated visual communication strategy to enhance brand awareness, customer engagement, and market expansion for Dolas Songket Silungkang. Employing qualitative methods observation, interviews, questionnaires, and SWOT analysis the project identifies key obstacles in current promotional media. The creative solution involves producing an audiovisual advertisement enriched with motion graphics and storytelling, supported by print and digital media such as catalogs, posters, social media content, and merchandise. The visual concept combines traditional and modern aesthetics through the use of elegant typography, cultural color palettes, and fashion-forward product displays. This approach not only promotes the brand but also contributes to preserving the cultural heritage of Minangkabau textile art. The project demonstrates how design interventions can improve promotional effectiveness and reinforce local identity in contemporary markets.

**Keywords:** Visual Communication Design, Songket Silungkang, Cultural Promotion, Audiovisual Media, Branding, Minangkabau Heritage

## Introduction

Indonesia is widely recognized for its rich cultural diversity, encompassing ethnic traditions, art forms, and unique crafts such as woven textiles. One of the most notable traditional crafts is *Songket Silungkang*, a handwoven fabric made using traditional looms with cotton mixed with viscose rayon threads. As stated in the document, “*Songket Silungkang* is traditionally worn during ceremonial events and formal occasions, reflecting cultural values and the identity of Minangkabau weaving communities”.

In Sawahlunto, West Sumatra, *Dolas Songket Silungkang* has emerged as a creative industry focused on preserving this heritage while adapting to modern market demands. Founded in 2014, the brand integrates traditional craftsmanship with contemporary fashion elements. However, despite its unique use of natural dyes from local materials such as *putri malu* leaves, *surian* powder, *mangosteen* rind, *jengkol*, and *pacar* air the business faces significant challenges in terms of promotion and market reach. The document highlights

that “the lack of effective promotional strategies has resulted in low engagement on platforms like Instagram, limiting brand awareness and competitiveness”.

Current promotional efforts rely heavily on word-of-mouth and underdeveloped digital content. Survey results further confirm the issue, with 83.5% of respondents unaware of the brand’s existence. Yet, the same survey revealed a high level of interest in traditional *Songket* among young audiences, with 94.5% expressing interest in wearing Songket. This indicates a strong potential market if the promotional strategy is improved.

In recent years, the importance of promotional design and digital media in supporting local crafts and creative industries has grown significantly. According to Kotler and Keller (2016), effective marketing communication, especially through visually engaging media, can increase brand awareness and stimulate consumer interest in niche cultural products. Additionally, the application of visual communication design principles in the form of audiovisual content has proven effective in storytelling and emotional branding (Landa, 2021). This is particularly important in promoting traditional products that require the transmission of cultural values alongside commercial messaging (Sutrisno et al., 2024).

The novelty of this study lies in its focus on integrating motion graphics and audiovisual storytelling within a promotional framework tailored to local heritage textiles. Previous studies have explored the role of digital campaigns in promoting Indonesian textiles (Widodo & Santosa, 2020; Kurniawan, 2022), but few have examined how audiovisual strategies can be customized to reflect both the cultural values and contemporary appeal of Songket Silungkang. By applying design thinking to create immersive and culturally rooted promotional media, this study aims to elevate the brand identity of Dolas Songket Silungkang, reaching not only local markets but also national and international audiences.

Thus, this research focuses on designing a comprehensive promotional media strategy for Dolas Songket Silungkang using digital tools, visual storytelling, and culturally embedded design. The expected outcomes include increased audience engagement, enhanced brand visibility, and the preservation of Minangkabau cultural identity through modern visual communication.

## Methodology

This study employs a qualitative-descriptive methodology using a practice-based design research approach. The research process consists of data collection, analysis, conceptual development, and the execution of visual communication strategies tailored to the promotion of *Dolas Songket Silungkang* in Sawahlunto. Several data collection techniques were employed: observation, interviews, questionnaires, and literature review, followed by SWOT analysis to assess internal and external factors affecting the enterprise.

Data collection began with direct field observations of the production site and showroom of *Dolas Songket Silungkang*. The findings confirmed that “the entire production process is still carried out using traditional hand-weaving techniques inherited through generations”. Thirty three weavers are involved, with 15 working onsite and the rest working from home using equipment and materials provided by the enterprise.

In depth interviews were conducted with the business owner, Anita Dona Asri, who emphasized the cultural mission of the enterprise: “*Songket* is not only valued for its aesthetics but also for the deep philosophical meanings embedded in each motif”. However, she also noted logistical challenges: “The remote location of the workshop makes it difficult for customers to visit directly”.

To further understand audience perception, an online questionnaire was distributed, receiving 109 responses. The results revealed that 94.5% of respondents are interested in using *Songket*, but 83.5% have never heard of *Dolas Songket Silungkang*. Moreover, “99.1% of respondents agree that the brand needs improved promotional media”, reinforcing the need for a new promotional strategy.

The design process involved the creation of audiovisual content, printed materials (such as catalogs, posters, and X-banners), and digital content for social media. As stated in the file, “The promotional design will emphasize visual messaging through audiovisual media, supported by posters, brochures, catalogs, and social media, to introduce the brand as a creative MSME in the traditional textile industry”. In addition, a SWOT analysis was conducted to identify internal strengths and weaknesses as well as external opportunities and threats. This analysis was critical in shaping a targeted promotional strategy that aligns with the enterprise’s cultural values and business goals.

The literature review provided theoretical grounding in visual communication design, audiovisual media, typography, color theory, and branding, forming the basis for visual and verbal design decisions. For instance, in alignment with the chosen color identity, the dominant palette included maroon, navy blue, and gold colors rooted in *Songket* tradition and representative of cultural luxury and elegance. This methodological framework ensures that the promotional design is not only aesthetically compelling but also contextually relevant, culturally respectful, and strategically effective.

## Result and Discussion

The design project successfully produced a set of promotional media for *Dolas Songket Silungkang*, which includes both audiovisual and visual communication materials:

### 1. Audiovisual Media

A 1 minute 18 second promotional video was produced. The video showcases the natural beauty of Silungkang, traditional weaving activities, natural dyeing techniques, and models presenting ready to wear *Songket* outfits in modern public spaces. The file notes that “this audiovisual media is uploaded on social platforms such as Instagram and TikTok to fulfill the brand’s promotional needs”.

### 2. Product Catalog

Designed in B5 size, the catalog presents a collection of *Dolas* products with clear descriptions and photographs. It is tailored to provide customers with easy access to product details in both physical and digital formats.

### 3. Poster and X-Banner

The poster (A2) and X-Banner (60 × 160 cm) were created using visual assets from the photoshoot, aimed to catch attention in physical spaces such as exhibitions and retail outlets.

### 4. Social Media Content

Instagram feed designs in 4:5 ratio were created to optimize mobile viewing. The content incorporates product images, behind-the-scenes visuals, and storytelling captions.

### 5. Stickers and Paper Bags

Supporting merchandise such as stickers (5 × 5 cm) and paper bags (21 × 30 × 8 cm) were designed with the brand's visual identity, contributing to customer retention strategies.

All visual elements use a consistent color palette (maroon, navy blue, gold) and typography (Trajan and Nunito Sans), in line with the product's cultural and aesthetic values

## Discussion

The results of the project reflect the effectiveness of design thinking in addressing real world promotional challenges faced by traditional craft businesses. The audiovisual advertisement was strategically chosen as the primary medium due to its ability to convey both information and emotional value. As described, "This medium is chosen for its capacity to highlight the aesthetic and cultural narrative of *Songket* through cinematic storytelling".

Through visual storytelling, the video promotes not only the products but also the values of authenticity, heritage, and craftsmanship. This aligns with the brand's vision to "preserve and elevate the cultural legacy of *Songket Silungkang* while adapting to modern market demands". The inclusion of supporting media catalogs, banners, and social media content creates a cohesive brand identity across both digital and physical platforms. By utilizing consistent visual elements, the campaign improves brand recall and strengthens emotional connection with the audience, especially among younger consumers who are more responsive to visual communication.

The campaign is also built on empirical findings: the online survey revealed that "94.5% of respondents are interested in using *Songket*", while "83.5% have never heard of *Dolas Songket Silungkang*". This significant gap between interest and awareness highlights the urgent need for targeted, high-quality promotional content precisely what this design project seeks to provide. Overall, the integration of cultural aesthetics with contemporary design tools enables *Dolas Songket Silungkang* to reposition itself in a competitive market without losing its traditional essence.

## Conclusion

The promotional media design for Dolas Songket Silungkang demonstrates how visual communication can play a vital role in addressing branding and market visibility challenges faced by traditional craft enterprises. This project confirms that the lack of engaging promotional materials particularly in digital formats has limited the brand's exposure and consumer engagement, despite its strong cultural and artistic potential.

The audiovisual advertisement, supported by a range of print and digital media, successfully communicates the brand's values, such as authenticity, craftsmanship, and cultural heritage, while presenting its products in a modern and fashion-forward context. The consistent application of typographic choices, culturally rooted color palettes, and visual storytelling enhances both emotional and informational appeal.

This design project not only serves to increase the attractiveness and competitiveness of Dolas Songket Silungkang, but also contributes to the preservation and revitalization of Minangkabau cultural heritage through media that resonate with contemporary audiences. For practical application, it is recommended that Dolas Songket Silungkang actively distribute and optimize the audiovisual promotional video across multiple digital platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, and an official website. This will help the brand reach wider audiences, especially younger demographics who are highly responsive to visual media.

Additionally, the brand should integrate supporting media catalogs, posters, banners, and merchandise as part of a cohesive branding strategy to strengthen its presence at exhibitions, stores, and cultural events. For future research and design development, it is suggested to explore the impact of interactive media formats (e.g., augmented reality or virtual showrooms) to further enhance customer engagement. Regular feedback collection from audiences through social media metrics or online surveys is also important for evaluating the effectiveness of the promotional tools and for adapting to shifting market trends.

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