

# Promoting Thai Dance in the Digital Age

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## Abstract

Thai dance is a form of cultural heritage that embodies the identity and way of life of the Thai people. In the digital era, technology has played a pivotal role in preserving and globally disseminating this cultural tradition. The present study aims to investigate strategies for employing online media in promoting Thai dance, drawing upon a qualitative research design encompassing document analysis and in-depth interviews. The findings reveal that online platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok are instrumental in expanding outreach and fostering engagement between content creators and audiences. Storytelling through images, audio, video, and multimedia effectively enhances both the appeal and depth of the content. Furthermore, digital technologies promote creative approaches—for instance, by integrating AR/VR into live performances. Nonetheless, the consumption of digital content may pose risks to the cultural value of Thai dance. Consequently, the use of digital technology should emphasize a balance between conservation and development, ensuring that the distinct identity of Thai dance endures and flourishes sustainably in the digital era.

**Keywords:** Thai Dance, Promoting Thai Dance, Thai Dance in the Digital Age

## 1. Introduction

Thailand is recognized as a culturally diverse country, shaped by the accumulation and collaborative development of its people and various organizations, resulting in an invaluable cultural heritage. Such heritage reflects the way of life, language, religion, and national identity. Although arts and culture may not currently be prioritized as highly as other areas, their significance for sustaining the nation cannot be denied. Arts and culture serve as the foundation that connects the country's past and future, underscoring the necessity of ongoing preservation and promotion to ensure the enduring value of these cultural assets within Thai society.

Digital technology has become a key driver of transformation in every dimension of society, including the economy, education, communication, and quality of life. It plays a crucial role in connecting people globally, enhancing operational efficiency, and expanding access to information, while also creating new opportunities in industries such as e-commerce and the digital economy. These advancements reduce geographical and resource constraints, fostering social equity. However, the appropriate and creative application of technology remains vital to achieving sustainability. In the context of arts and culture—specifically Thai performing arts and dance—digital technology serves multiple functions, from preservation and development to dissemination. Examples include virtual exhibitions, live-streaming performances via online platforms, and digital archiving of cultural data, all of which support sustainable cultural preservation and broaden audiences both domestically and internationally.

Furthermore, digital technology fosters creativity in performing arts. This is evident in the development of new forms of Thai dance that integrate technology, such as virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR), to create engaging and novel experiences for audiences. The use of artificial intelligence (AI) to design various components of performances also elevates quality and interest. High-definition audio and video recording contribute to the establishment of substantial archives for the study and research of performing arts. Additionally, easier and more extensive access to information is possible through social media platforms such as YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram, enabling performances to reach diverse target groups and facilitating cultural exchange. These platforms also serve as convenient and efficient tools for performing arts education.

From the above discussion, it is evident that digital technology plays a pivotal role in preserving and promoting Thai dance to a broader audience, especially by creating digital repositories of Thai dance knowledge. Nevertheless, potential consequences must be taken into account, such as the risk of losing cultural identity due to modifications made to suit digital media, as well as the possibility that consuming online content may diminish the depth and intrinsic value of experiencing live performances. Furthermore, employing technology without clear guidelines may lead to misrepresentation of dance traditions. The key principle is to strike a balance between preservation and development by maintaining traditional identities and respecting cultural values while adopting modern presentation methods. This balanced approach ensures that Thai dance remains relevant and continues to be valued in the digital era

### **1.1 Research Objective**

To explore strategies for promoting Thai dance through the use of online media

## **2. Body of paper**

Thai dance represents a significant cultural heritage that has continuously evolved alongside Thailand's historical and societal contexts. It embodies beliefs, rituals, morality, and everyday practices, transmitted through generations and influenced by shifts in politics, administration, economics, and social structures. Serving as an essential instrument for nurturing cultural and spiritual values, Thai dance stands out for its refined aesthetic and distinctly national identity. Efforts to modernize its practices, while maintaining tradition, have successfully engaged diverse audiences, particularly younger generations. Accordingly, Thai dance functions as a dynamic medium interconnecting history, society, and belief systems (Surapol Wirunrak, 2004). Beyond its artistic appeal, Thai dance strengthens social ethics by reflecting the meticulous lifestyle of its practitioners. In the digital age, rapid technological advancements and the rise of online media have facilitated broader accessibility to Thai dance knowledge and performances, transcending physical boundaries. This development underscores the potential for technology to both preserve and promote Thai dance in contemporary society, ensuring its lasting cultural relevance.

Social media is primarily centered around social interaction and content sharing, encompassing text, images, audio, and video (Pisek Chainirun, 2010). Its defining feature is the shift from one-to-many communication to many-to-many communication, enabling universal participation in discussions. In daily life, social media influences various sectors, such as communication, education, marketing, entertainment, and politics. Economically, it creates employment opportunities, allows individuals to showcase their talents for income generation,

and facilitates business management alongside other occupations. Moreover, social media nurtures new values among youth, offering platforms for producing and sharing art, music, animations, photography, food, agriculture, and fashion. These activities pave the way for inventing and selling products, reviewing goods, and driving innovation, all through online platforms (Angthida L, 2018). Consequently, social media has emerged as an essential tool for fostering creativity, enhancing the skills of individuals, and elevating their capabilities in various creative fields.

## **2.1 Methodology**

The study on promoting Thai dance in the digital era explores strategies for utilizing online media to enhance its visibility. This qualitative research incorporates document analysis, academic literature, research studies, and digital media, alongside in-depth interviews, to comprehensively address the research objectives. Data from various sources are analyzed and synthesized through a cause-and-effect framework. The study focuses on identifying suitable digital tools and platforms for archiving and disseminating Thai dance, as well as strategies for leveraging popular platforms for wider reach. The analysis follows a descriptive approach, leading to conclusions aligned with the study's objectives.

## **2.2 Results**

In 2024, global online media usage is expected to grow further due to increased smartphone-based internet access and digital infrastructure advancements across both developed and developing nations (We Are Social & Hootsuite, 2024). DataReportal projects 5.5 billion global internet users, representing around 68% of the world's population, with Asia, Africa, and Latin America experiencing robust growth from expanded networks and competitive service pricing (Statista, 2024). The worldwide social media user base has exceeded 4.5 billion, with Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, Instagram, and TikTok retaining their popularity. Emphasis is placed on short-form video and real-time communication like live streaming (We Are Social & Hootsuite, 2024). Users spend an average of two hours and thirty minutes per day on these platforms, boosting precise digital advertising and marketing. Moreover, AI and data analytics are increasingly utilized to improve user experiences. Nonetheless, cybersecurity risks and digital equity challenges remain critical concerns in ensuring sustainable progress. These conditions underscore the need for ongoing innovation and oversight.

Online communication is both rapid and highly efficient, allowing information to reach wide audiences in a short period of time. Moreover, social media promotes social participation, whereby users can interact, share opinions, and collectively benefit from shared content. These interactions effectively enhance understanding and increase the popularity of Thai dance in the digital age (Pimpholapat, L., & Pichayapa Y, 2019). Consequently, online media has become a pivotal tool for cultivating and exchanging perspectives among members of society. The following are examples of online media used to disseminate information on Thai dance: Facebook, Instagram, Weblogs and Wikipedia, YouTube, Pinterest, Wikipedia, TikTok.

Online media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, weblogs, Wikipedia, YouTube, Pinterest, and TikTok play a pivotal role for both content creators and consumers. For content creators, Facebook and Instagram are well-suited for marketing and public relations through images, videos, and live streaming, while weblogs like Medium and Blogger emphasize in-depth articles. Wikipedia serves as a reliable source of knowledge creation, whereas YouTube and TikTok cater to video production: YouTube is ideal for high-quality videos, while TikTok

focuses on short, creative, and entertaining content. Pinterest, meanwhile, is geared toward artistic inspiration and design. For content consumers, Facebook and Instagram act as hubs for news and entertainment, while weblogs and Wikipedia provide detailed information and references. YouTube and TikTok offer distinct video-based experiences, and Pinterest appeals to those seeking creative ideas. These platforms collectively foster engagement by tailoring content to the interests and needs of specific target audiences.

### **1. Advantages and Limitations of Online Media**

In the digital era, online media serves a vital role in disseminating Thai dance. Users should first understand the advantages and limitations of each platform before utilizing them. Facebook and Instagram are well-suited for connecting with others and presenting images or videos, though their algorithms may reduce post visibility. Weblogs, such as Medium and Blogger, are appropriate for in-depth articles but tend to attract a smaller audience in a short time. While Wikipedia is recognized as a reliable source of information, its strict guidelines and inflexible content format can pose challenges. YouTube and TikTok excel in video content: YouTube is ideal for longer, high-quality productions such as documentaries, whereas TikTok emphasizes short videos that readily engage younger audiences, though it has faced criticism regarding content quality. Pinterest stands out as a platform for creative visual inspiration, particularly in design, but its text-based content and interactive features are comparatively limited. By choosing the most appropriate platform, the dissemination and engagement of Thai dance can be effectively enhanced in the digital age.

### **2. Target Audience Analysis**

Target audience analysis is of paramount importance in the digital era due to the distinct characteristics of users across various online platforms, including Facebook, Instagram, Weblogs, Wikipedia, YouTube, Pinterest, and TikTok. For instance, students tend to exhibit high usage between 6:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m. primarily for entertainment purposes, which can be integrated into instructional processes (Bunchongkien, W. 2023). By examining age, gender, interests, behaviors, and platform usage, content creators can select the most appropriate presentation methods and thereby increase the likelihood of effectively reaching their intended audience. For example, Facebook is suitable for text-based content, videos, and live broadcasts; Instagram excels with photographs, videos, and engaging Stories; YouTube is utilized for high-quality videos, including documentaries and tutorials; Pinterest focuses on creative visuals such as infographics; whereas TikTok is well-suited for short, contemporary, and innovative video clips. Adapting content to align with the characteristics of each platform significantly enhances communication effectiveness.

### **3. Content Creation and Management Strategies**

#### **- Content Structure**

Structuring content appropriately for each platform is crucial. On Facebook, a variety of formats—such as concise text, captivating images, and interactive elements like questions or live streaming—should be emphasized to foster engagement. Instagram should prioritize high-quality photos and videos accompanied by compelling captions. Weblogs benefit from clearly defined subheadings that enhance readability, while Wikipedia focuses on systematically organized and credible information. On YouTube, content must capture viewers' attention in the initial moments, supported by eye-catching thumbnails and distinctive descriptions. Pinterest content should be designed to inspire, for example through infographics, and TikTok

emphasizes short, entertaining videos that immediately engage the viewer, frequently incorporating modern music and special effects. A well-suited structure on each platform helps maximize both reach and content appeal.

- Storytelling

Storytelling enhances interest in Thai dance through online media by intertwining it with history, literature, and local beliefs, exemplified by khon and ram mae bot. Narratives centered on individuals—such as teachers or youths who preserve and transmit this art—help foster a sense of connection. Incorporating images, videos, and audio, including recordings of live performances, further enriches the audience's experience. Contemporary presentations, such as integrating modern music or creating short videos on TikTok, effectively draw younger audiences and broaden overall accessibility.

- Multimedia

Multimedia facilitates the creation of engaging content by integrating elements such as video, audio, infographics, and animation to convey information more effectively. High-quality videos featuring subtitles, graphics, or accompanying music clearly articulate the intended narrative. Audio editing—including music or sound effects—further enhances the emotional resonance and distinctiveness of the content. Infographics simplify complex data into easily digestible formats suitable for sharing, while animation elucidates concepts or processes in a visually compelling manner. By combining these components—for example, integrating images, infographics, and audio into video presentations—the overall quality of the output is elevated, and its relevance to the target audience is strengthened.

Digital technology has impacted cultural arts, performing arts, and Thai dance in multiple dimensions. On the positive side, it enables the preservation and global dissemination of Thai culture through online platforms, including live streaming, digital content creation, and virtual exhibitions. This development also stimulates interest among younger generations in local arts and culture. Moreover, the integration of technology fosters creativity in the arts—such as combining Thai dance with augmented or virtual reality (AR/VR) or employing artificial intelligence (AI) to produce novel forms of performance.

However, digital technology also entails certain negative consequences that merit attention. Rapid access to cultural information in digital formats may lead to a superficial consumption of the arts, potentially obscuring their deeper meanings and values. Furthermore, when technology is applied without appropriate guidelines, the distinctive essence of traditional culture may be diminished or reduced to a purely commercial product lacking its spiritual dimension. Consequently, the role of digital technology in cultural arts, performing arts, and Thai dance can be likened to a double-edged sword. A judicious balance between innovation and preservation is essential to ensure that Thai cultural arts can endure and flourish in the digital age. The central principle of leveraging digital technology for Thai dance is to maintain equilibrium between advancement and conservation by safeguarding the unique identity and cultural significance inherent in Thai dance. Technology should be harnessed to strengthen understanding and participation in cultural arts, thereby enabling Thai performing arts to thrive sustainably in the digital era.

### 3. Conclusion

In disseminating Thai classical dance through online media, major platforms—such as Facebook, Instagram, weblogs, Wikipedia, YouTube, Pinterest, and TikTok—each offer distinct advantages and limitations. Analyzing target audiences is essential for selecting the most suitable platforms and designing appropriate content, taking into consideration users' age, interests, and behaviors. Strategies related to content structure, storytelling, and the use of multimedia are crucial to enhancing communication effectiveness and fostering engagement with Thai dance. The content should seamlessly combine historical context, featured artists, and the unique identity of Thai classical dance with contemporary presentation techniques to capture the attention of both domestic and international audiences, ensuring sustainable growth and heritage preservation in the digital era.

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