Jurnal Ekonomi, Syariah dan Studi Islam
Vol. 5 No. 1 November – April
E-ISSN: 2986-2981

The Development and Strategies of the Digital Media Industry from the Perspective of Maqasid al-Shari'ah

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ABSTRACT

Digital platforms have become the primary gateway for news access in Indonesia; however, they render media outlets vulnerable to platform dependency, financial fragility, declining trust, misinformation, and pressure on editorial independence. Previous research has addressed media convergence, broadcasting, press ethics, and maqasid (the higher objectives of Islamic law) separately, leaving digital media strategies unevaluated within a comprehensive maqasid framework. This article identifies the opportunities and risks of developing digital media and formulates a strategic orientation aimed at the public good. Using a qualitative methodology, the study conducts an integrative literature review drawing on foundational maqasid scholarship (al-Shatibi, Ibn Ashur, Auda), peer-reviewed studies on Indonesian media, literature on digital platforms, UNESCO guidelines, and the Reuters Institute Digital News Report, interpreted through the protection of religion, life, intellect, lineage, and property. The findings indicate that digital distribution expands reach and fosters innovation, yet increases platform dependency, creates imbalances in data control, exerts economic pressure, and facilitates misinformation. Consequently, a maqasid-oriented strategy must integrate editorial integrity, user protection (especially children), responsible religious communication, secure data management, fair monetization, and accountability. Media performance should reflect public good and harm prevention, not reach or revenue.

Keywords: *Digital Media Industry; Maqasid Al-Shari'ah; Media Ethics*

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Introduction

The Indonesian media environment illustrates why digital development must be examined together with questions of public benefit and ethical responsibility. The Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2026 reports that 64% of Indonesian respondents in its online survey obtained news through social-media platforms, that only 17% said they paid for online news, and that the overall level of trust in news was 32% (Egan et al., 2026). These figures are survey-based indicators rather than a census of the entire population, but they show the central place of platforms in news access and the continuing difficulty of sustaining public trust and paid journalism. Social and video platforms make information available quickly and give media organisations new routes to audiences. At the same time, the distribution of attention, advertising, data, and editorial visibility increasingly depends on systems managed by private platforms (van Dijck et al., 2018). The problem is therefore not digitalisation itself, but how innovation can be pursued without weakening reliable information, public accountability, and access to plural perspectives.

Digitalisation has changed more than the channels through which media content is delivered. It affects ownership, work routines, monetisation, audience measurement, and the relationship between media organisations and technology companies (Mujiati, 2022). Platform-based distribution can broaden access, but it can also redirect advertising income, make publishers dependent on algorithms, blur the distinction between verified journalism and republished content, and encourage sensational material that generates engagement (Gillespie, 2018; Napoli, 2019; van Dijck et al., 2018). Studies of the Indonesian context show that technological adaptation is inseparable from questions of power and public interest, whether in the convergence strategies of large media groups (Mujiati, 2022), the influence of conglomerates on digital broadcasting policy (Habibi, 2023), or the legal and ethical challenges of press freedom in the digital age (Maharani, 2024). Media strategy consequently requires criteria beyond operational efficiency and market share.

Maqasid al-shari'ah provides a normative framework for analysing these tensions because it evaluates action in light of the purposes of Islamic law and the benefits or harms that follow. In the classical formulation associated with al-Shatibi, the protection of religion, life, intellect, lineage, and wealth identifies the essential human interests that the law seeks to safeguard (Al-Shatibi, 2003). Ibn Ashur expanded the discussion by emphasising the broader purposes of law and

the social conditions necessary for human welfare (Ashur, 2006). Auda further argued for a systems approach in which legal and social questions are assessed holistically, with attention to interdependence, context, openness, and purpose (Auda, 2008). Applied to digital media, these works do not provide a ready-made checklist for platform management. Rather, they offer a set of principles that this article interprets in relation to information accuracy, user safety, religious communication, children's interests, data protection, and fair economic practices. This interpretive step is important: the article uses maqasid as an analytical lens and does not claim that classical scholars directly discussed contemporary media platforms.

Previous studies have approached parts of this issue but have not integrated them. Mujiati's study, "Konvergensi dan Digitalisasi Media: Tantangan Industri Media (Konvergensi Media MNC Grup dan Kompas Gramedia di Indonesia)," explains the structural and production changes brought about by media convergence (Mujiati, 2022). Habibi's study, "Penyiaran Digital di Indonesia: Kebijakan dan Pengaruh Kepentingan Konglemerasi Media," highlights the political-economic concentration that shapes digital broadcasting policy (Habibi, 2023). Maharani's study, "The Fourth Estate Unbound: Examining Press Law and Ethics in the Digital Age in Indonesia," foregrounds press law, rights, and professional ethics (Maharani, 2024). On the maqasid side, Thoriquttyas and Rohmawati's study, "Maqasid al-Sharia and the Digital Data Ownership: From al-Shatibi to Jasser Auda," examines unequal control of digital data (Thoriquttyas & Rohmawati, 2026), while Khasanah et al.'s study, "Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah and the Digital Transformation of Islamic Law: A Normative and Ethical Framework for Addressing Global Digital Challenges," discusses digital transformation in Islamic law more broadly (Khasanah et al., 2026). The resulting gap is the lack of a single conceptual synthesis that relates the development and business strategies of the digital media industry to the five maqasid objectives.

This article was written to fill that gap. It aims to identify the structural opportunities and risks that characterise the digital media industry and to formulate how its strategies can be oriented toward maqasid-based public benefit. It argues that an ethically defensible strategy must combine technological innovation and financial sustainability with reliable information, accountable governance, user protection, and equitable treatment of content and data. The contribution is an integrative framework for interpreting media strategy, rather than an empirical evaluation of any particular company.

Literature Review

A. Previous Studies on Digital Media Development and Governance

A study titled "Konvergensi dan Digitalisasi Media: Tantangan Industri Media (Konvergensi Media MNC Grup dan Kompas Gramedia di Indonesia)," published in *Jurnal Studi, Sosial, dan Ekonomi*, examines how major Indonesian media groups respond to convergence through multiplatform production (Mujiati, 2022). Its contribution is to show that digitalisation changes the organisation of production and distribution, not merely the technical format of content (Mujiati, 2022). A second study, "Penyiaran Digital di Indonesia: Kebijakan dan Pengaruh Kepentingan Konglemerasi Media," published in *Al-I'lam: Jurnal Komunikasi dan Penyiaran Islam*, shifts attention to broadcasting policy and the influence of conglomerate interests (Habibi, 2023). The two studies are complementary: the first foregrounds organisational adaptation, whereas the second foregrounds policy and power (Habibi, 2023; Mujiati, 2022). Neither develops a detailed normative framework for evaluating these strategies in relation to information integrity, the protection of users, and the equitable use of data. This article builds on both by treating the industry as a connected technological, economic, and social system.

A study titled "The Fourth Estate Unbound: Examining Press Law and Ethics in the Digital Age in Indonesia," published in *Indonesia Media Law Review*, discusses the implications of online platforms and social media for press freedom, law, ownership, misinformation, and journalistic ethics (Maharani, 2024). Its emphasis on legal and professional responsibility complements the *Guidelines for the Governance of Digital Platforms*, which call for a multistakeholder approach that protects freedom of expression and access to information while addressing disinformation and other harms (UNESCO, 2023).

The Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2026 adds current evidence on platform use, trust, and the economic position of news providers in Indonesia and other markets (Egan et al., 2026). Together, these works establish that platform governance is not solely a technical issue: it affects media pluralism, the viability of journalism, and public access to reliable information (Egan et al., 2026; Maharani, 2024; UNESCO, 2023). However, they do not themselves provide a specifically maqasid-based model for linking those concerns to the strategic choices made by media organisations.

Recent maqasid scholarship helps narrow that gap. A study titled "Maqasid al-Sharia and the Digital Data Ownership: From al-Shatibi to Jasser Auda,"

published in the *Journal of Islamic Law on Digital Economy and Business*, examines the unequal control of digital data and proposes a framework drawing on classical and systems-based maqasid (Thoriquttyas & Rohmawati, 2026). Another study, "Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah and the Digital Transformation of Islamic Law: A Normative and Ethical Framework for Addressing Global Digital Challenges," published in *Asy-Syari'ah*, discusses maqasid as a normative and ethical framework for digital transformation, including data protection and artificial intelligence (Khasanah et al., 2026).

Other studies extend maqasid to adjacent digital-economy questions: "Implementasi Digital Marketing sebagai Strategi Pemasaran Industri Pariwisata Halal Perspektif Maqashid Syariah" evaluates digital marketing in the halal tourism industry (Azizah, 2024); "Digital Marketing dalam Perspektif Hukum Islam: Pendekatan Maqashid Shariah Index" assesses digital marketing through a maqasid-based index (Gustanto, 2022); "Implementasi Teori Maqashid sebagai Upaya Penguatan Kompetensi Hakim dalam Mengadili Perkara Ekonomi Syariah Digital" applies maqasid to adjudication in the digital Islamic economy (Asmuni & Arifin, 2024); and "Analisis Maqashid Syariah dalam Pengembangan Hukum Industri Halal di Indonesia" examines industry regulation (Sulistiani, 2018).

These studies show how maqasid can be applied to emerging digital and economic problems, but their main focus is data ownership, the transformation of Islamic law, or sectors other than the media. They do not address the whole digital media industry, including editorial quality, platform dependency, public trust, content moderation, and business sustainability. The present article therefore synthesises media-industry studies, governance guidance, current industry evidence, and maqasid theory to develop a more integrated interpretation of strategy.

Maqasid al-Shari'ah as an Analytical Framework

The classical maqasid framework is associated with the idea that Islamic law protects essential human interests and promotes welfare rather than treating legal rules as isolated commands. Al-Shatibi's *al-Muwafaqat fi Usul al-Shariah* places the purposes of law at the centre of legal reasoning and identifies the essential interests commonly described as the protection of religion (hifz al-din), life (hifz al-nafs), intellect (hifz al-'aql), lineage or progeny (hifz al-nasl), and wealth (hifz al-mal) (Al-Shatibi, 2003). Ibn Ashur's *Treatise on Maqasid al-Shariah* develops a wider account of the purposes of law and their relationship to social

welfare (Ashur, 2006). These foundational texts are used here as normative sources: they provide the conceptual direction for assessing whether a media strategy promotes benefits or produces harm (Al-Shatibi, 2003; Ashur, 2006). The framework should not be reduced to a mechanical list, because the five interests can overlap in practice. For example, an inaccurate religious claim can affect religious understanding, the quality of public reasoning, and social safety at the same time.

Auda's systems approach, set out in *Maqasid al-Shariah as Philosophy of Islamic Law: A Systems Approach*, is especially useful for translating the classical framework into a contemporary industry analysis. It encourages attention to the whole system, the relationships among its parts, contextual openness, and the purposes that should guide outcomes (Auda, 2008). In this article, the five objectives are connected to media practice through an interpretive bridge. Hifz al-din is applied to accuracy and responsibility in religious content; hifz al-nafs to avoiding foreseeable harm and protecting users; hifz al-'aql to verification, transparency, and media literacy; hifz al-nasl to the interests of children and future generations; and hifz al-mal to data stewardship, fair compensation, and transparent monetisation. These applications are analytical proposals derived from the theory and the contemporary digital-governance literature, not claims that the classical texts explicitly prescribe modern platform rules (Auda, 2008; UNESCO, 2023).

Synthesis and Research Gap

The literature can be arranged into three related but distinct strands. The first documents structural change in the media industry, especially convergence, multiplatform distribution, and broadcasting policy (Habibi, 2023; Mujiati, 2022). The second analyses public-interest concerns, including press freedom, misinformation, platform governance, and data asymmetry (Egan et al., 2026; Maharani, 2024; UNESCO, 2023). The third applies maqasid to digital data ownership, digital transformation, or digital-economy practice (Asmuni & Arifin, 2024; Azizah, 2024; Gustanto, 2022; Khasanah et al., 2026; Thoriquttyas & Rohmawati, 2026). The similarity across these strands is the recognition that digital technology changes who controls information and who receives its benefits. Their difference lies in their principal unit of analysis: media structures, governance and rights, or Islamic legal norms. The research gap is thus integrative rather than an absence of prior work. This article brings those strands together to ask how an industry strategy can be evaluated simultaneously for

technological adaptability, economic continuity, information quality, protection from harm, and public benefit.

Research Method

This article uses qualitative library research in the form of an integrative literature review. The purpose is conceptual synthesis, not measurement of audience behaviour or assessment of a single media company. The sources fall into five groups, each with a distinct role in the analysis. The first group comprises foundational maqasid works, which are treated as primary texts for constructing the normative framework: al-Shatibi's *al-Muwafaqat fi Usul al-Shariah* (Al-Shatibi, 2003), Ibn Ashur's *Treatise on Maqasid al-Shariah* (Ashur, 2006), and Auda's *Maqasid al-Shariah as Philosophy of Islamic Law: A Systems Approach* (Auda, 2008). The second group comprises contextual documentary sources: the UNESCO *Guidelines for the Governance of Digital Platforms* (UNESCO, 2023) and the Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2026 (Egan et al., 2026). The third group comprises peer-reviewed studies on Indonesian media convergence, digital broadcasting, and press law and ethics (Habibi, 2023; Maharani, 2024; Mujiati, 2022). The fourth group comprises studies that apply maqasid to digital data ownership, digital transformation, and digital-economy practice (Asmuni & Arifin, 2024; Azizah, 2024; Gustanto, 2022; Khasanah et al., 2026; Sulistiani, 2018; Thoriquttyas & Rohmawati, 2026). The fifth group comprises scholarship on platforms, algorithmic accountability, digital communication, and the public interest (Couldry & Mejias, 2019; Gillespie, 2018; Horneber & Laumer, 2023; Napoli, 2019; Nurrahmah et al., 2025; van Dijck et al., 2018). Distinguishing these groups identifies each source's role in the analysis rather than presenting all references as an undifferentiated list.

Literature was located through searches of Google Scholar, journal websites, and available publisher or institutional repositories, with DOI and publication metadata checked where available. Search terms combined English and Indonesian phrases, including “digital media industry,” “media convergence Indonesia,” “digital broadcasting and media conglomerates,” “press ethics digital age,” “maqasid al-shari'ah digital,” “digital data ownership,” and “digital platform governance.” Contemporary media studies and reports published from 2022 through October 2026 were prioritised, while foundational maqasid works were retained regardless of publication date because they supply the theoretical basis. Because the maqasid tradition contains many classical references, three works were selected and named explicitly: al-Shatibi's *al-Muwafaqat fi Usul al-*

Shariah for the classical formulation of the five essential interests, Ibn Ashur's *Treatise on Maqasid al-Shariah* for the broader social purposes of law, and Auda's *Maqasid al-Shariah as Philosophy of Islamic Law: A Systems Approach* for the systems perspective. Other classical works in the maqasid tradition were not analysed directly, since the article does not trace the historical development of maqasid theory. Sources were included when their subject, method, and bibliographic identity could be traced and when they directly contributed to at least one of the study's themes. Duplicate, tangential, and bibliographically incomplete entries from the earlier draft were not carried forward. Because this is an integrative review rather than a systematic review with a preregistered protocol, the article does not claim an exhaustive census of all publications or report invented screening counts.

The analysis followed three steps. First, bibliographic and substantive information was extracted for each source: research focus, type of evidence, principal finding, limitation, and relevance to media strategy or maqasid. Second, the material was grouped into themes: industry structure and platform dependence; information quality and public trust; media governance and economic sustainability; and maqasid-based protection of human interests. Third, the themes were compared and interpreted through the five maqasid objectives and the systems perspective on maqasid (Auda, 2008). The descriptive stage reports what the sources discuss; the interpretive stage explains how their findings relate to one another and to the article's research aims. Cross-source comparison was used to check whether the conceptual interpretation was supported by classical theory, media research, and institutional evidence. This triangulation strengthens the logic of the synthesis, although it does not substitute for empirical testing in newsrooms or platform companies.

Results And Discussion

A. Digital Media Development: Opportunity, Dependence, and Public Risk

The review indicates that the digital media industry is developing through a shift from distribution controlled mainly by publishers and broadcasters toward a platform-centred environment. Social networks, video platforms, messaging services, websites, apps, and AI-enabled interfaces all mediate how people encounter news. The Reuters Institute's 2026 report records that 64% of Indonesian survey respondents get news from social platforms and that overall trust in news stands at 32% (Egan et al., 2026). These indicators make visible a

strategic tension: platforms enable rapid reach, but news organisations do not fully control the ranking, visibility, audience data, or terms of distribution of their content on third-party services. Platform dependence also means that a technical or commercial policy change can affect the economic position of publishers. In a platform society, communication infrastructure and market mechanisms shape public visibility together (van Dijck et al., 2018).

Convergence creates real opportunities. A media organisation can adapt a report into a written article, short video, podcast, infographic, livestream, or messaging-channel update. This can help diverse audiences access information in formats that fit their needs and allow smaller outlets to build communities without establishing a traditional broadcast infrastructure. The case of MNC Group and Kompas Gramedia shows how multiplatform production became a central organisational response to digitalisation (Mujiati, 2022). Yet production across platforms does not automatically guarantee pluralism or public value. Where large groups enjoy extensive capital, audience data, and distribution capacity, smaller providers may struggle to gain visibility. The analysis of digital broadcasting policy illustrates that technology adoption remains conditioned by regulatory choices and the influence of media conglomerates (Habibi, 2023). The strategic question is therefore not only whether a media firm can distribute content efficiently, but also whether its strategy supports fair competition and a diverse information environment.

The shift also raises questions about editorial quality and the integrity of public information. When attention is monetised through clicks, views, and engagement, media organisations can face incentives to prioritise speed, emotional headlines, or repetition over verification and context. Third-party pages may reproduce or alter original journalism, while audiences may struggle to distinguish professional reporting from misleading or unattributed material. Research on press law and ethics connects the digital environment to legal and ethical challenges involving ownership, press freedom, misinformation, and journalistic independence (Maharani, 2024). Platform-governance guidance similarly argues that responses to disinformation should not undermine freedom of expression or access to information (UNESCO, 2023). A maqasid-informed interpretation treats these as connected concerns: information integrity supports the protection of intellect, user safety, and public welfare, while transparency and editorial independence help prevent concentrated economic interests from undermining the public function of media.

Economic sustainability is another pressure point. The 2026 Reuters Institute report notes that only 17% of Indonesian respondents pay for online news, alongside financial difficulties affecting parts of the news sector and continued reliance on platform-based channels (Egan et al., 2026). A sustainable strategy therefore cannot depend on expanding reach alone. Advertising, subscriptions, memberships, events, syndication, partnerships, and public-interest funding may diversify revenue, but every model carries governance risks. Advertising may create pressure on editorial independence; subscriptions may exclude audiences unable to pay; sponsored content may blur the boundary between journalism and promotion; and data-driven monetisation may reduce users to sources of behavioural information. Research on platforms and the public interest highlights the need to examine these choices as power relationships, not merely revenue decisions (Couldry & Mejias, 2019; Napoli, 2019). The maqasid framework helps evaluate whether a revenue strategy preserves wealth fairly while protecting other public interests.

B. Interpreting Digital Media Strategy Through the Five Maqasid

The five maqasid objectives provide an integrated way to evaluate media activities across editorial policy, audience relations, platform governance, and business models. Table 1 maps each objective to its main media-industry risk and strategic implication. The mapping is an analytical application of classical and contemporary maqasid scholarship to the current digital context. It should not be read as a claim that each media practice has a one-to-one counterpart in classical jurisprudence. A single issue may affect several objectives at once: the circulation of false religious information may affect hifz al-din and hifz al-'aql, while exposure of a child's private information may affect hifz al-nasl, hifz al-nafs, and hifz al-mal. The systems orientation of Auda's approach supports this relational approach (Auda, 2008), while digital-data research shows why control over information and the distribution of risk and benefit must be considered together (Khasanah et al., 2026; Thoriquttyas & Rohmawati, 2026).

Table 1. Maqasid-Based Interpretation of Digital Media Strategy

Maqasid objective	Media-industry risk	Strategic implication
Hifz al-din	Misleading or decontextualised religious content; exploitative use of religious identity.	Verify religious claims, disclose sources and sponsorship, and avoid content designed to inflame hostility.
Hifz al-nafs	Content that foreseeably causes panic, harassment, exposure to violence, or other harm.	Use risk-sensitive editorial standards, clear complaint routes, and safeguards for vulnerable users.
Hifz al-'aql	Misinformation, unlabelled synthetic content, sensationalism, and weak verification.	Apply fact-checking, source transparency, correction notices, and media-literacy initiatives.
Hifz al-nasl	Inappropriate content for children and invasive profiling of minors.	Adopt age-appropriate content and privacy protections, and assess foreseeable impacts on children and families.
Hifz al-mal	Opaque monetisation, misuse of user data, unfair content appropriation, and fragile revenues.	Disclose commercial relationships, minimise data collection, fairly license content, and diversify revenue.

Source: Authors' analysis based on (Al-Shatibi, 2003; Ashur, 2006; Auda, 2008; Couldry & Mejias, 2019; Egan et al., 2026; Maharani, 2024; Napoli, 2019; Thoriquttyas & Rohmawati, 2026; UNESCO, 2023).

Hifz al-din (protection of religion) is relevant where media content concerns Islamic teachings, religious institutions, or interreligious relations. The principle does not require a media organisation to promote one interpretation or silence legitimate debate. It requires responsible handling of religious claims, clear differentiation between reporting and promotional content, and avoidance of deliberate distortion that could manipulate religious sentiment. Sources with relevant expertise should be consulted when reporting complex religious issues, and corrections should be visible when errors occur. This application follows the

broader purpose-oriented understanding of maqasid (Al-Shatibi, 2003; Ashur, 2006; Auda, 2008), while professional verification standards are developed through contemporary media practice and ethics (Maharani, 2024).

Hifz al-nafs (protection of life) points to foreseeable harm caused by media production and distribution. Examples include exposing private details that put an individual at risk, publishing unverified claims that may trigger panic, or distributing violent material without a public-interest justification. The appropriate response is not to remove all difficult or disturbing information, since journalism may need to document serious wrongdoing. Rather, media organisations should assess necessity, proportionality, privacy, and likely consequences before publication. Platform-governance guidance is relevant because it places the response to harmful content within a wider system of rights, accountability, and stakeholder participation (UNESCO, 2023). A maqasid-based approach should therefore balance harm prevention with freedom of expression and the public's right to know (Al-Shatibi, 2003; UNESCO, 2023).

Hifz al-'aql (protection of intellect) is especially connected to the quality of information and the conditions under which audiences form judgements. News presented without sufficient verification, synthetic media that is not labelled, misleading headlines, or the deliberate removal of context can undermine informed understanding. Strategies derived from this objective include editorial fact-checking, traceable sourcing, correction procedures, transparent labels for sponsored or AI-generated material, and public media-literacy programmes. This does not mean that every error is evidence of malicious practice; it means that an accountable media system must make it possible to identify, correct, and learn from error. The concern is heightened by the growth of platform-based news access and by evidence of public uncertainty about the reliability of online information (Egan et al., 2026; UNESCO, 2023).

Hifz al-nasl (protection of lineage and progeny) can be extended cautiously to media strategies that affect children, families, and future generations. Children encounter news, entertainment, advertising, and user-generated content through interconnected platforms, often without understanding how recommendations or data collection work. Media organisations and platforms should therefore consider age-appropriate design, privacy by default for minors, careful use of images and identifying information, and clear procedures for reporting harmful content. These measures are an applied interpretation of the broader objective of protecting progeny and family welfare, rather than a direct rule stated in classical

maqasid texts. The systems approach also implies that responsibility cannot be assigned only to parents or individual users: publishers, platforms, regulators, educators, and civil society all shape the environment in which young audiences participate (Auda, 2008; UNESCO, 2023).

Hifz al-mal (protection of wealth) applies to the economic arrangements through which media content is financed, distributed, and monetised. It encompasses the fair treatment of users, journalists, creators, and rights holders, as well as the sustainability of organisations that provide public-interest information. Maqasid-based analysis has already been used to assess economic regulation in other sectors, such as the halal industry (Sulistiani, 2018). Unclear sponsored-content labels, excessive collection of personal data, unfair reuse of original journalism, or a business model fully dependent on a single platform can create unequal allocation of value and risk (Couldry & Mejias, 2019; Napoli, 2019). A maqasid-based response would support transparent advertising and sponsorship, responsible data governance, fair licensing arrangements, financial diversification, and clear employment practices. Research on digital data ownership connects maqasid with the problem of asymmetrical control over data (Thoriquttyas & Rohmawati, 2026), while platform scholarship shows how infrastructure owners can shape visibility and economic outcomes (Couldry & Mejias, 2019).

C. An Integrated Strategy for a Maqasid-Oriented Digital Media Industry

The synthesis suggests four mutually reinforcing strategic priorities. The first is editorial integrity: media organisations need visible verification routines, transparent sourcing, correction policies, separation of reporting from advertising, and careful labelling of AI-generated material. These measures align most directly with hifz al-'aql and hifz al-din, but they also protect public trust and the long-term reputation of media organisations (Egan et al., 2026; Maharani, 2024). The second is user protection and inclusion. Privacy-conscious design, accessible complaint channels, safeguards for minors, and proportionate moderation can reduce foreseeable harm without turning content governance into unaccountable censorship. These priorities are consistent with the rights-based, multistakeholder orientation of the UNESCO guidelines (UNESCO, 2023). They should be accompanied by clear explanations of moderation decisions and avenues for appeal, because opaque rules may undermine trust as much as harmful content does (Gillespie, 2018).

The third priority is economic fairness and sustainability. Media organisations should reduce excessive dependence on any single source of revenue or platform, consider direct relationships with readers, and disclose the commercial conditions attached to content. Maqasid-based studies of digital marketing show that promotional practices can be evaluated for transparency and fairness (Azizah, 2024; Gustanto, 2022). Licensing and content-sharing arrangements need to recognise the work involved in producing original journalism, while data collection should be limited to purposes that are understandable and proportionate. No single model (advertising, subscription, membership, donation, events, or syndication) will suit every outlet. The strategic test is whether the model is transparent, sustains the organisation, and avoids transferring disproportionate costs to users, journalists, or smaller publishers. This approach brings hifz al-mal into dialogue with the other objectives rather than treating economic performance as a goal that overrides information quality or safety (Auda, 2008; Napoli, 2019; Thoriquttyas & Rohmawati, 2026).

The fourth priority is system-level accountability. A maqasid perspective requires strategy to be evaluated at more than one level: editorial teams must follow professional standards; management must monitor commercial and employment effects; platforms must provide meaningful transparency about content distribution and moderation; regulators must protect rights and pluralism; and audiences need access to media-literacy resources (Auda, 2008; UNESCO, 2023). An organisation could translate these priorities into indicators such as the timeliness and visibility of corrections, disclosure of sponsorships and AI use, user complaint handling, safeguards for minors, privacy practices, revenue concentration, fair content licensing, and investment in original reporting. Maqasid-based indices have been proposed in other digital-business settings, such as digital marketing (Gustanto, 2022), which suggests that indicator-based evaluation is feasible. The indicators proposed here are not a validated measurement scale, and they would need to be refined and tested against different types and sizes of media organisations. Algorithmic accountability research reinforces the value of documenting decisions and making responsibility traceable, especially where automated systems influence the visibility of content (Horneber & Laumer, 2023).

The integrated model differs from a technology-first strategy because it evaluates innovation by both its operational outcomes and its contribution to public benefit. Maqasid theory has been proposed as a standard for

strengthening professional competence in digital Islamic economic disputes (Asmuni & Arifin, 2024), and changes in digital communication are reshaping promotional strategy in ways that call for comparable evaluative standards (Nurrahmah et al., 2025). Platform diversification, multimedia production, data analysis, and AI-assisted workflows can support organisational resilience, but only if editorial responsibility remains clear and harms are actively managed. A systems-based maqasid approach also discourages treating the five objectives as isolated boxes: a privacy violation may threaten both wealth and life; misinformation may harm intellect, religion, and social safety; and a financially fragile newsroom may struggle to sustain accurate reporting. The industry should therefore conduct periodic reviews that connect content standards, user safeguards, data governance, and financial performance. This interpretation brings the concerns raised in research on Indonesian media structures into one framework with the normative purpose of maqasid, while remaining open to empirical verification (Auda, 2008; Khasanah et al., 2026; Maharani, 2024).

Conclusion

This article set out to identify the opportunities and risks of the digital media industry and to formulate how its strategies can be oriented toward maqasid-based public benefit. The review finds that the development of the digital media industry is characterised by expanded reach, multiplatform production, new formats, and opportunities for audience engagement, alongside platform dependence, economic uncertainty, data asymmetry, misinformation, and challenges to media independence. These issues are interconnected rather than separate: distribution arrangements influence revenue, revenue can influence editorial decisions, and platform governance shapes the information audiences can see. The five maqasid objectives provide a coherent normative lens for interpreting these relationships. Hifz al-din calls for responsible handling of religious material; hifz al-nafs highlights the prevention of foreseeable harm; hifz al-'aql supports verification and media literacy; hifz al-nasl draws attention to children and future generations; and hifz al-mal supports fair, transparent, and sustainable economic arrangements. The article's central argument is that an effective digital-media strategy should be evaluated not only by audience reach and revenue, but also by the public benefit it creates and the harms it prevents.

The practical implication is an integrated strategy that combines editorial integrity, user safety and inclusion, fair monetisation and data stewardship, and

system-level accountability. The proposed framework is conceptual and based on a targeted integrative literature review; it does not empirically test specific companies, algorithms, or outcomes, and the proposed indicators should not yet be treated as a validated index. Future research should apply the framework to a comparative set of Indonesian news organisations or platforms, interview editors and audience members, and test whether the proposed indicators can measure the relationship between commercial strategy and maqasid-based public benefit. Such research could also examine how different interpretations of maqasid inform concrete decisions about moderation, AI use, data governance, and media financing.

Author's Contribution

Nabilah Ambarwati contributed to conceptualisation, literature searching, source curation, analysis, and drafting the manuscript. Mela Tri Khasanah contributed to literature searching, source curation, interpretation of findings, and review and editing. Naerul Edwin Kiky Aprianto contributed to conceptual guidance, academic supervision, and critical review of the argument and its alignment with maqasid al-shari'ah. All authors reviewed and approved the final manuscript and take responsibility for its content.

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