

THE USE OF SYMBOLIC CONVERGENCE IN K-POP ALBUM MARKETING (MARKETING OF 'ISTJ' ALBUM AMONG NCTZEN)

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ABSTRACT

There are many methods used in product marketing in the current digital communication era. One of them is by joining groups or online communities that are relevant to the product to be offered through active participation, making contributions, and building the reputation of the intended group. Effective marketing in this era can be done through symbolic convergence. The use of language in marketing that is creative, imaginative, and at the same time evocative and binds the intended community together.

This article describes and analyzes how marketing on NCT Dream's 'ISTJ' album is associated with Symbolic Convergence Theory. This research method is conducted qualitatively. First, analyze the content of marketing messages in digital media used in this case through Instagram social media, then continue by looking at NCTzen comments on the messages conveyed.

The research results show that the fantasy theme, which contains creative messages with the ability to dramatize in album marketing, has caused a fantasy chain reaction among the NCT Dream fan community. The power of a message containing a fantasy theme will strengthen the unity and cohesiveness of NCT Dream fans, called NCTzens, as well as being a way of digital products marketing in their latest album launch.

INTRODUCTION

Today's digital world has become the primary need for society globally. The speed and convenience resulting from the combination of internet networks and technological advances are harmonized in all areas of life. We can feel the dominant utilization in supporting communication and media facilities. According to datareportal.com in February 2023, there were 212.9 million internet users in Indonesia in January 2023. With the internet penetration rate reaching 77.0 % of the total population in early 2023. Meanwhile, Kepios analysis shows that

internet users in Indonesia increased by 10 million (+5.2 percent) between 2022 and 2023. A total of 353.8 million mobile connections were active in Indonesia by early 2023, with this figure equivalent to 128 % of the total population.

The synchronization between the development of the internet, communications, and media networks has also brought changes to the way people relate to one another. In socializing, the use of digital devices has become a practical, efficient means of choice and can reach a wide scope. This means is then consistently developed

into all media for socializing or also known as social media. Social media is a revolution that allows individuals, groups, or organizations to communicate, exchange information, collaborate, and share types of activities online, even with strangers in various parts of the world. Not only individuals, companies can also be present on social media and have the opportunity to communicate directly with their target groups and form communities as further channels for the promotion of products and services (Alassani and Göretz, 2019).

Based on Napoleon Cat data, there are 106.72 million Instagram users in Indonesia as of February 2023. This number has increased by 12.9% compared to the previous month which was 94.54 million users. Noted, the majority of Instagram users in Indonesia are from the group of 18-24 years old, which is 33.90 million. In detail, 19.8% of the application users are women, while 17.5% are men. Looking at the trend, Indonesia's social media users continue to increase yearly. Thus, the growth has fluctuated from 2014-2022 (Mayasari, 2022). Based on these data, it can be seen that users of the Instagram application are dominated by women aged 18-24 years, who are Generation Z or also known as iGeneration, which is the 'net' generation or internet generation. They have similarities with Generation Y or millennials, but they are able to apply all activities at one time, such as tweeting using a mobile phone, browsing with a PC, and listening to music using a headset.

The 'Korean Wave' phenomenon emerged with widespread exposure and digital access. 'Korean Wave' or 'Hallyu' is a popular Korean culture that is successful because it is widely followed and liked by people in Indonesia, even one of the 'Korean Wave' commodities has managed to become a trend (Gustam 2015, Wahidah et al. 2020). The utilization of the digital world and population has become a means for entertainment industry such as SM Entertainment as an agency for K-Pop idol artists in running their business and spreading the 'Korean Wave'.

This is seen as a great opportunity by SM Entertainment in maintaining its existence among competition with other K-Pop agencies.

SM Entertainment was founded in 1995 by Lee Soo Man. Previously in 1989, Lee Soo Man founded a recording studio called "SM Studio". However, along with the development of the music and entertainment industry in South Korea, the business direction of 'SM Studio' turned into an artist agency, which was able to develop an 'in-house' production system. SM Entertainment then transformed into one of the largest entertainment companies in South Korea. Today SM Entertainment operates as a record label, music and concert production company, event management, and music publishing house. SM Entertainment has so far produced many famous K-Pop artists such as BoA, S.E.S, H.O.T, TVXQ, TRAX, Super Junior, Girls Generation (SNSD), SHINee, f(x), EXO, Red Velvet, NCT, Aespa, Riize and others.

In January 2016, Lee Soo-man held a conference at SM Coex Artium in Seoul, discussing plans for a new boy group, namely Neo Culture Technology or 'NCT', with 'unlimited' members. The group is divided into several sub-units: NCT U, NCT 127, NCT Dream, WayV, and NCT DOJAEJUNG ('ARTIST' MUSIC NATION SMTOWN, 2023). Since its formation was announced, the group has a total of 20 members who belong to five different sub-units. The first unit, NCT U, debuted on 9 April 2016 with digital singles 'The 7th Sense' and 'Without You'. The second unit, NCT 127, based in Seoul, debuted on 7 July 2016 with a mini album, NCT #127. The third unit, NCT Dream, debuted on 25 August 2016 with the single entitled 'Chewing Gum'. The fourth unit, WayV, based in China, debuted on 17 January 2019 with a mini album entitled 'The Vision'. The fifth unit, NCT DoJaeJung, debuted on 17 April 2023 with the release of its mini album entitled 'Perfume'.

Among the five units, the third unit, NCT Dream, is quite interesting to observe because at the beginning of its formation, this unit was not SM Entertainment's flagship unit. With a total of 7 members, their age is still very young to be involved in the world of K-Pop idol entertainment, which is a dozen years old. But there is a unique system in this boy group that will graduate or leave the group if it is 20 years old. This makes music and K-Pop observers doubt the development and existence of this unit.

SM Entertainment remained focused on NCT Dream's development, and it was proven after some time, NCT Dream was able to top the iTunes charts worldwide with their third mini album entitled 'We Boom' in July 2019. NCT Dream also took the first position on QQ Music and secured the 90th position on the Billboard 100 Artist Chart. NCT Dream also became the first Asian Artist to be included in Billboard's 2019 '21 Under 21: Music's Next Generation' list. NCT Dream is competing with a number of other artists such as Billie Eilish, Lil Nas X, Daya, Why Don't We, and others. In 2021 during the release of the album 'Hot Sauce' pre orders were able to reach 1,7 million copies, breaking the previous album record 'Reload' with a 243% increase.

NCT Dream also succeeded ranked high on the Gaon Album Chart, and 'Hot Sauce' became the first song from an NCT sub-unit to debut on the Gaon Digital Chart at number one. Because of this, they were later dubbed "Double Million Sellers" as the album 'Hot Sauce' sold over 2 million copies on 26 May. Another achievement was NCT Dream getting 8 wins in music shows such as Music Bank, Show! Music Core, Inkigayo, and Show Champion. With this achievement, SM Entertainment finally entrusted NCT Dream to hold the first concert tour 'The Dream Show', and Indonesia became one of the concert tour destinations in 2020. Unexpectedly, concert tickets were sold out online in less than 5 minutes when the sales link was opened. At the concert, fans also expressed that NCT Dream should become a fixed unit, without any graduation system for its member. After 'The Dream Show' concert tour series, SM Entertainment finally released a statement that they will be remove the graduation system in NCT Dream. In addition, NCT Dream was decided to be a fixed group, and Mark Lee, who had previously graduated and left NCT Dream, rejoined and become the group's leader.

This moment was one of triggers for NCT Dream to gain the sympathy K-Pop fans, especially fans in Indonesia. In September 2022, NCT Dream held another concert tour entitled 'The Dream Show 2', with more cities added to the show. Indonesia became the third country after South Korea and Japan chosen by NCT Dream in this

concert tour schedule in March 2023. Although the show was already scheduled for 2 days, fan demand increased, and eventually got an additional 1 day, for a total of 3 days of concert. The increase in the number of fans is also in line with the number of followers on social media. SM Entertainment focuses on NCT Dream's Instagram social media as a means of sales promotion, marketing and communication. In addition to promotion, NCT Dream as a group also builds communication and engagement with fans through Instagram posts and live broadcasts. As of January 2024, the number of NCT Dream followers is 13.3M.

More than 10 years ago research on the 'Korean Wave' or 'Hallyu' has been conducted in Asia and Indonesia, such as: (Nugroho, 2004) 'Trend in the Spread of Korean Pop', (Yoon, 2018) 'Global Imagination of K-Pop: Pop Music Fans' Lived Experiences of Cultural Hybridity', (Nastiti, 2010) "Korean Wave" in Indonesia: Between Pop Culture, the Internet, and Fanaticism in Adolescents', (Rahmawati, 2020) 'The Massive Korean Wave in Indonesia and Its Effects in the Term of Culture', (Khairani & Rismawaty, 2019) 'Communication Behavior Of Fanatic Fans In Nctzen Bandung Communities (Descriptive Study of Communication Behavior Of Fanatic Fans In NCTZEN Bandung Community For Supporting NCT's Boygroup)', are among the limited studies. Instead of being limiting, the lack of studies on the influence of K-Pop in Indonesia can be "new field" for social science academics to develop the research from various aspects (Muhammad, 2012).

This article will try to see how social media such as Instagram is used by NCT Dream as a medium of promotion and sales, and also has the power to attract fans. Fans can comment on NCT Dream's Instagram post and also when watched Instagram Live broadcast. Social media through its social networks is also used to build relationships with other fans, and they can update with information about albums, group member activities, concerts and promotions carried out by NCT Dream. In addition, through social media it is also used by fans to describe and analyze how the marketing of NCT Dream's 'ISTJ' album is associated with Symbolic Convergence Theory.

Album Marketing on Instagram

The media is able to encourage the formation of a popular market for Korean culture in Indonesia. The opportunity for local fans in Indonesia to access information and even Korean products are also getting wider. This potential market cannot be separated from the important role of Korean celebrities such as idols, actors, actresses (Wahidah et al. 2020). In accordance with the marketing strategy of SM Entertainment, which is the one and only agency of NCT Dream, the use of the internet and social media has become the main choice for their expansion and existence within South Korea and globally. The ease and speed of introducing and marketing music content, idol groups and souvenirs can reach access to many regions and circles. Early in the debut period of their unit formation, they uploaded album promo on social media Instagram. By using hashtags on the posts, it helps the post to be included in certain algorithms and then get a response from fans. Using the right hashtags can also help users to determine which audience will see their content, very useful for online marketers to reach the right customers (Ferina, et al, 2019). Although the members of the idol group NCT Dream also have personal Instagram accounts, promotions and activities that involve fans are mostly built in posts on NCT Dream' official Instagram account. This pattern is one of NCT Dream's strategies in building business, promotions and relationships.

Symbolic Convergence

Ernest Bornmann (1972) Symbolic Convergence Theory, often known as fantasy theme analysis, is a theory that discusses how individuals in groups achieve a shared reality through communication. An individual's image of reality is guided by stories that reflect how things are believed. Often, these retold stories relate to personal, group, or community achievements and take the form of stories (Littlejohn, 2017). In this theory, a fantasy does not refer to fictional stories or erotic desires. Bornmann also describes this theory as an interactive process where humans meet by recounting individual fantasies, dreams, hopes, or fears in a shared symbol system and offers a rigid analytical framework. Dramatizing messages involve members introducing brief instances of humor, wordplay, and allusion, or

more detailed analogies, fables, or narratives (Zanin, Hoelscher, & Kramer, 2016).

Fantasy is a story or humor that contains emotions. Fantasies are events from the group member's past or future events. Fantasies do not include communication that focuses on what is happening in the group. Fantasy chains can take place repeatedly, which then leads to a fantasy themes. These themes create a shared understanding of past and future actions. Some fantasy themes can become references for similar issues, and this result in fantasy types. When a group develops several fantasy types, the group's rhetorical vision emerges. The rhetorical vision generates multiple scripts and gives members in the group a more comprehensive view.

There are five main elements in rhetorical vision, first, the dramatic personalities who are the actors or players in a story. The second is the storyline of what the group is talking about, or what situation is happening. Third, the scene that outlines descriptive details. Fourth, the sanctioning agent, which is someone who has authority, such as an agreed moral sense, and fifth, the master analog, which is the core values and cultural structure (Zanin, Hoelscher, & Kramer, 2016). (Suryadi, 2014) agreed on four of the five elements. The four important elements in this theory are the characters involved, the storyline (plot), the setting, and the agent who determines the truth of the story (sanction agent). Meanwhile, the research conducted by this author focuses on a group of fans on online social media who refer to themselves as NCTzens, who like musical works and follow news through digital media.

Communities, Fantasy Themes and Fantasy Chains

The group in this case is a community is a group of people who have a common goal who interact with each other to achieve a common goal, get to know each other, and see them as part of the group (Mulyana, 2005). A group of people who establish a community because they have the same interests and passions, for example, religion, work, ethnicity, race, or based on sexual orientation (Crow and Allan, 2002).

Such is the case among NCT Dream fans. They are called NCTzen, which are individual NCT fans. Although NCTzen are mostly from generation Z, who have same age as the member of NCT Dream, there are also many fans who are over 30 years old. They usually react with give sign 'like' or give reactions in the comment column of feed posts on social media. Because they see aspects of similarity and a sense of fate, then other fans also respond to these comments and reply to each other. From these activities, a fantasy chain is created where the stories told are related to fantasies of personal, group, or community achievements.

The research was conducted among NCT Dream fans or referred to as NCTzen using social media through a qualitative approach for in-depth understanding. NCTzen are a community of fans who come from various age, social and economic status backgrounds who unconsciously form a communication pattern by exchanging imaginary references. SM Entertainment as the agency and management of NCT Dream, tries to make posts in the form of photos or videos on social media, choosing images, colors, editing, themes and words in such a way as to attract NCTzen interest. The continuation of the effect of the message conveyed provoked NCTzen to respond to each other as if dissolved in the imagination of the theme presented. Therefore, we purpose the following research questions:

RQ1: How is the fantasy theme textual portrayed in the marketing of the 'ISTJ' album through the music video teaser?

RQ2: How did the fantasy chain form among NCTzen on teaser posts of the music video?

RQ3: How do fantasy chains shape cohesiveness within the NCTzen community (group bonding)?

METHOD

The method in this research is qualitative using a specific research design in case studies. This type of descriptive research aims to make systematic, factual and accurate description of the facts and characteristics of a particular population or object. We conducted a search in the comment column on NCT Dream's Instagram post during the 'ISTJ' album launch promo music video teaser.

Qualitative data analysis was conducted by categorizing the transcripts of comments and literature sources prepared by researchers. Once patterns emerged from the data, the most prominent points are grouped as main findings, and then aligned with theoretical studies based on other literary references. To maintain the validity of the data, the researcher drew preliminary conclusions independent of the text. Source triangulation was used as a data validity technique in this study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

a. Overview of Fantasy Themes in 'ISTJ' Album Marketing

NCT Dream fans gave feedback in the form of comments, emojis, and also in the form of reply posts. It was as if they were being carried away through a community fantasy. An example of this fantasy theme is when the marketing promo of NCT Dream's latest album entitled 'ISTJ' was published through Instagram. To attract NCTzen's attention and make the algorithm pattern work, SM Entertainment posted a music video teaser for the song 'Broken Melodies' which is the opening song on the album 'ISTJ' via feed on June 17, 2023, which is 2 days before the publication time on June 19, 2023. NCTzen community members are subconsciously invited to fantasize to get excited and welcome the release of the video clip of NCT Dream's latest single with a 20 second music video teaser.

i. Fantasy Theme Support for NCT Dream Member

“JENOO FIGHTING!!!!DREAMIESS FIGHTING!!!! 🥰💚💚”
(@jeno.in)

“I'm really looking forward to the "broken melodic" mv 🥰🥰🥰🥰🥰
💚💚💚💚💚💚💚💚💚💚💚💚
fighting for the nct dream members”
(@nova.rova2006)

“NA JAEMIN ENDING CENTER
🥰🥰👍👍”
(@nanadoongie.id)

From the comments on the 'Broken Melodies' music video teaser post on the 'ISTJ' album, it can

be categorized as a fantasy theme of support for NCT Dream members. There are NCTzen who specifically mention the name of their favorite member in the comment column, there are also mentions all NCT Dream member as a whole.

These comments are a form of communication from fans in providing support and encouragement to their idols through social media platforms. NCT Dream's official social media account on Instagram is also a form of communication and digital marketing with fans spread who are widely spread in various countries.

ii. **Fantasy Theme Support for NCT Dream's Works (Songs, Music Videos, and Albums)**

"Keren banget hue gak sabar nunggu mv nya keluar, great job uri drimi ❤️"
(@chenlepages_)

"AURANYA BIKIN CANDU 24/7 NIH LAGU 🤔🤔👏"
"DITUNGGU BGTT INIMAAAAHHH 🤔🤔👏"
(@aeirslech)

"PECAH BANGET INI NANTI PASTII!!!! GA SABARRRR WEE KAYAKNYA LAGUNYA ENAK BANGETTTTTT 🤔🏠"
(@et.lyricss)

"OMGG KERENNNNNNN AAA GASABARRR"
(@jisung.dreams)

"It has some good concepts, everything is perfect, the Teaser was really fantastic"
(@leofaviolangan)

The comments above are fantasy theme as support from NCTzen For NCT Dream's work, in this case it could be songs, music videos, the upcoming album 'ISTJ', or NCT Dream's overall performance. The fantasy theme formed through the posting of 'Broken Melodies' music video teaser with duration about 20 seconds invites NCTzen to feel the temptation to look forward to the time of the full version of the music video in the next 2 days. This can be an attraction for NCTzen because they are guided to stay as fans by their idol, NCT Dream.

b. Fantasy Chain on NCTzen's Comments on NCT Dream's Instagram Post

NCT Dream fans are mostly female, and spread across various countries. They are followers NCT Dream's Instagram account who had difference socio-cultural backgrounds. Even they also do not know each other, but have in common as NCT Dream fans called NCTzen. As active social media users, they also give likes to posts from NCT Dream, and fill in the comment column. Even comments can be replied to by other fans with various responses, expressions and purposes.

On the 'Broken Melodies' music video teaser post for the 'ISTJ' album, NCTzen responded in the comments section with various expression. After the comments form a fantasy theme, it continued into the fantasy chain stage, where the comments discussed formed a theme that was related to each other.

i. **The Fantasy Chain That Discusses NCT Dream Member**

"SUARAMU ZHONG CHENLE YA ALLAH 🤔🤔🤔"
(@chenle.nct)
(881 likes, 5 replies)

"Aku gak pandai cemburu. Malahan, kalau kamu ninggalin aku, aku gak bisa apa-apa. Bisaku cuma mencintaimu." - Renjun Dilan
(@renjun.zone)
(258 likes, 3 replies)

"FIX BAKAL JADI LAGU GANTENG SIH INI KARNA YG NYANYINYA JG GANTENG APALAGI SI RAMBUT PINK ITU TUHH 🥰"
Balasan @na.hazel : *"oknum berambut pink 🤔"*
(@nabilhddr)

The comments above are a form of NCTzen expression that is formed because of the fantasy theme that they create by themselves after seeing the post, then given a response, and continued by other fans to form a fantasy chain. This fantasy chain is shown by NCTzen discussing NCT Dream member because of their vocal abilities,

and also because appearance the visuals, then given a response of 'likes' or replies in the form of comments from other fans.

ii. Fantasy Chain Discussing NCT Dream's Works (Songs, Music Videos, and Albums)

"its giving hello future vibes ✨"

(@dnd.aph)

(1.079 likes, 10 replies)

"Your melodies are definitely not broken 🥺🥺🥺🥺🥺"

(@jw2213)

(506 likes, 1 replies)

"Tercium bau2 akan saya putar sebulan 😂"

@rnd_yellow_blue

(24 likes)

The comments above are NCTzen's assessments of the works, including songs, *music* videos and also albums from NCT Dream. After watching NCT Dream's Instagram post in the form of 'Broken Melodies' music video teaser, fans gave comments in the form of their respective fantasy theme. Their comments are then responded to by other fans by giving 'likes' or replies to comments which then form a fantasy chain. This fantasy chain is a way of communicating between fans and others, even without knowing each other beforehand. They are united by common interests and goals as NCTzen.

c. The Cohesiveness of Fantasy Chain Formed by NCTzen Community

In Symbolic Convergence Theory, community can be a key factor in shaping how individuals understand the world and form their fantasy chains. Similarities in views, values, and norms between individuals and communities can create strong fantasy chain cohesiveness, while differences in views can create challenges and conflicts. Based on the comments on the 'Broken Melodies' music video teaser post for the 'ISTJ' album, the cohesiveness that is formed can be observed from the comments that get responses from fellow fans. Usually, in the comments, they tag friends, like making an agreement on the response they convey. This group relationships

can also occur when comments are replied to by other fans, even though they don't know each other, but they have a common goal and view.

"KAPAN HARI SENIN WOYYY 🤔🤔🤔"

(chenlele.nct)

Reply @_niamami : *"@chenlele.nct sabar woy"*
(626 likes, 13 replies)

"@juanitablqsh @nrl.syahinda wajib beli album kalini"

(@afwariina)

Reply @sy.hinda : *"@afwariina aku bagitau mak aku kau hasut aku"*

"@di.ra259 akhirrnyaaaaa yanggggg w tungguuuuuu tungguuuuuu, gila sieh j"

(@faadifaaa_)

Reply @i5uckersus : *"@dipainhz ayangku ganteng bangettt kannn"*

Reply : *"@di.ra259 eits bagi 2"*

APIK BANGET CUI @onmydaily

(@s0ftcloudy)

Reply @onmydaily : *"@s0ftcloudy IHH SEPENGGAL TOK WES UENAK CUI NANG KUPING"*

"@marinarachma_k "ekspektasiku tinggi bgt ma 🤔 highnote nya chonlo udh bikin candu aja 🤔🤔🤔"

(@saturnnnad)

Reply : *"@nada_priandita samaaa, langsung candu 🤔 besok sore banget. Vibe nya kayak hello future nggaksi?"*

Reply : *"@marinarachma_k baruuuu banget mau ngmong. Iyaa kek throwback hello future 🤔 gasabarr"*

Replay : *"@nada_priandita dahlah dreamies tidak pernah mengecewakan yakan ya 🤔"*

Replay : *"@marinarachma_k yakiin dah 🤔 menanti hari seninnya jadi semangat wkw"*

Replay : “@nada_priandita wkwk hoooh senin bukan sembarang senin. Senin bersama ayangs 🥰”

The comments above are expression from NCTzen towards NCT Dream's Instagram post in the form of 'Broken Melodies' music video teaser in the 'ISTJ' album. From the various comments, researcher see that the fantasy theme are more varied, so that the fantasy chains formed also become more complex. It can be seen that a fan who left comment ask about day, where the meaning of the question was that she could not be patient to wait Monday when the full version of 'Broken Melodies' music video teaser would be released. The comment was then replied to by another fan who invited her to be patient. In addition to being given a reply to the comment, the comment was also liked by other fans, thus forming a fantasy chain from fellow NCTzen.

Then there is also a comment from NCTzens who deliberately tagged her friend to discuss the fantasy theme of how she expects one of the member's abilities to sing with high notes. The comment then got a reply from the friend she tagged, and she added another fantasy theme about the song 'Broken Melodies', which has a similar feel to the previous NCT Dream song. The fantasy chain formed here is more complex because the fantasy themes presented vary.

From the comments above, the researcher sees that the cohesiveness of the fantasy chain formed by the NCTzen community is strong. Communication patterns in this community are formed by a fantasy chain that can produce an agreement on the responses they convey. Although many of the fans formed in this NCTzen community do not know each other, they have a common goal and view which can be reflected in the comments on the Instagram post.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the purpose of writing this article, the researcher found that NCT Dream uses social media as a means to expand business and build communication with fans. Communication patterns built through mass media target individuals who act as active audiences who are able to capture, select, and adapt the information provided. Then, the individual builds new

communication with other individuals who are members of the community group based on certain similarities and goals.

The social media chosen in the research for NCT Dream's fans or NCTzen is Instagram. Although not as popular as Facebook, from several other types of social media owned by NCT Dream, Instagram has experienced significant development, as evidenced by the number of followers that has increased steadily. The large number of 'likes', and the comments column that has never been quiet. One of the features of Instagram that attracts fans is Instagram Live Broadcast, where NCT Dream members can broadcast live-in activities and be witnessed by fans wherever. Instagram is also considered a practical social media platform, easy to use, and does not need to pay for a subscription such as social media platforms Lysn.

Another impact of the community's existence is that it also creates a fantasy communication pattern that rolls on continuously among fans. Consciously, each individual who becomes a fan listens and stays on the path of the ongoing theme in order to continue to exist. Henceforth, conclusions can be drawn from observing the process of how individuals use stories, rituals, symbols and other types of activities to produce and reproduce a set of understandings that produce a group culture (Joann Keyton in Littlejohn, 2017).

This group culture of NCT Dream fans is seen as an opportunity by the SM Entertainment agency as a means of digital marketing to fans to own goods or attend events such as concerts, fan signs, or fan meetings so they can meet the K-Pop idol group. This answers research questions about digital marketing, what fantasy themes they create from this community, and forms a fantasy chain that exists in teaser posts on Instagram social media. Currently, the research materials use social media for NCT Dream fans, so it is hoped that future research can build on further studies and search from different perspectives as a whole, which can provide solutions that can be used by companies or other academics.

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