



## Between Breakthrough and Rumor of Bankruptcy: Net TV

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**Abstract:** *This case study aims to raise the issue of Indonesian television companies that are plagued by bankruptcy rumors and major layoffs. In one of the Twitter timelines owned by netizens, which was later clarified by the company, bankruptcy rumors appeared and this also appeared later in many social media as a form of concern for netizens including Instagram, in addition to Twitter. On the other hand, there is news of the departure of the key official, who is also the founder of this firm, which then exacerbates the problem of the company.*

Keywords: Net TV, Bankruptcy, Indonesia

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### INTRODUCTION

Wearing his dark blue uniform, Wisnutama sat casually in his office in the East, Kuningan-Jakarta-Indonesia, looking like his "baby" in front of him, NET TV office. He completely acknowledges that there is not much that he can get from society as a baby, but at least his "baby" has embraced Indonesian effectively as an alternative television station offering new value and diverse media minds. Wisnutama believes that, like his baby, NET TV will never rely on ratings, but he will emphasize on engaging viewers and their experiences. Interestingly, relative to other news stations, this was something different.

### NET TV'S VISION AND MISSION:

#### **The Vision:**

"To build an interesting media company that able to create positive contribution to Indonesian livelihood."

#### **The Mission:**

"Providing creative, innovative and quality shows through various platforms, attract, develop and retain the best talents in the industry, and are committed to always providing innovation in various media platforms for its viewers."

Well, it is true that because NETTV broadcast their programs differently with any other Indonesian TV station in 2013, they decline the presence of gossip shows, forbid harsh comedy shows, try to balance their data when it is news program, and we will never find streaming soap opera, and many other programs that prioritize airing only update details, within and outside Indonesia, NET TV's assumptions will be beneficial to Indonesians and will be able to help Indonesians acquire new information. NET TV also illustrates its identity through its participation as an official television affiliate, in addition to its desire to be different. They became the official television

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partner for the England Open Badminton Championship and the Indonesian Preference Award in the same year in 2014, a year after their first appearance. In 2015, they became sponsors of the local soccer team, the Indonesia Bandung Football Association and the Indonesia Jakarta Football Association.

In addition to their participation as an official television partner, they were also identified as Asian Television Awards nominators. In 2014, in three categories (best comedy program, best entertainment (on-off/annual), best music program), NET TV won six nominations. Then two years later, under three categories (best entertainment (one-off/annual), best music show, best adaptation of an existing format), NET TV won four nominations in 2016.

### **ISSUE OF MASSIVE LAYOFFS**

“Can somebody save NET TV, NET TV is literally the only TV that gives good quality to their audience... Please survive guys” (h@chimchimddaeng/Instagram)

Please, Survive? TV on the Net? Why? Why? It has led to a crowd, whoever starts the rumor, it has actually managed to make individuals respond. The fine day was interrupted by Twitter-based results. All of a sudden, out of nowhere, there was a crowd sharing or even responding on Twitter to NET TV about mass turnover. Who made this rumor begin? Okay, maybe we're not sure, but when news was rapidly spread across the internet, it triggers public responses. The response was represented as #savenettv, a Twitter hashtag.

In April 2015, #savenettv first appeared on Twitter, when a Twitter user wrote #FoxSportBut @FoxSportPHP #SaveNETTV written by @thomas fauzi. Since the hashtag #SaveNettv, which is connected to the broadcast of a sporting event, emerged later in the same year, the hashtag was also linked to a complaint by one of the Twitter users about the broadcast on the TV station. The hashtag #savenettv reappeared in 2017, or two years later, this time affiliated with Twitter users protesting the broadcast of an event on this television channel. Then, two years later, in 2019, the hashtag #savenettv reappeared, which was more linked to Twitter users' exposure to issues that supposedly happened on the internal TV station. In January 2019, when one of the Twitter users linked #savenettv to a Facebook page, it first appeared that there was no details in the form of text when opened, but there was only an image showing one of the TV station shows.

Then, on June 16, 2019, #savenettv appeared in a row that was then linked without any other details by a Twitter user to the station's CEO account @wisnutama in June 2019. Then there was a Twitter user on June 24, 2019 who raised the issue of the declining output of the broadcast of the television station and listed a number of shows that Twitter users found very popular but were replaced by cartoons and short plays of local productions. Then, in addition to #savenettv, an additional hashtag emerged on July 16, 2019, namely #savemoral and #savewisnutama, without any explanation of exactly what that hashtag meant. Then, on August 8, 2019, the topic of closing (operating) was not followed by any details except for a news page on law-justice.co that wrote the headline "Unable to compete, NET TV preparing for mass lay off" For more than 57,000 times, #NETTV was tweeted on Friday, 9 August 2019, and it was first level on trending subject, after the headline "Unable to Compete. NET TV prepared a Bulk Mass Layoffs Option." This title appears from a news and investigative

portal, the link law-justice.co (2019). This title appears from the link. It was clarified in the article that there was anxiety among NET TV workers, then the portal quoted news from another portal, namely Celebestopnews.com, that there was a reduced number of broadcast hours to just one hour. Interestingly, these two portals were responsible for triggering the NET TV problem and prompted net people, one of them on Twitter, to respond in a variety of ways.

A huge layoff (PHK) for its workers is allegedly going to be carried out by PT Net Mediatama Televisi alias NET TV. On Twitter, the news of mass layoffs has become a hot subject. Azuan Syahril, PT Net Mediatama Chief Executive Officer, did not deny that his company had reduced staff. He was hesitant, however, to term the reduction of personnel a mass layoff.

"So, actually, the news of mass layoffs is not true," said Azuan when contacted by merdeka.com, on Friday, 9<sup>th</sup> August 2019.

He clarified that employee performance is carried out as a step in the plan for the future of the business. The management of the company also provides workers with the required compensation to withdraw or resign.

"But, in accordance with that, we provide workers who wish to leave internally with opportunities. We open up opportunities. We will provide employees with benefits, so we don't do that unilaterally and we also do deliberation and consensus, there is an agreement between the two parties whether we want it to be taken or not by the employee," "So, in connection with that, we do provide opportunities internally to employees who want to resign. We open opportunities. We will provide benefits to employees, so we don't do it unilaterally and we also do deliberation and consensus, there is an agreement between the two parties whether we want it as the employee's right to take it or not.

Azuan said the resignation offer had been made since the beginning of August before the management felt it was satisfactory in terms of the future growth of the company. So far, thousands of workers are involved in resigning, according to Azuan.

There are hundreds of interested people already. They just gave a statement and it was written, there are no mass layoffs. It's not true at all, I don't know where it could have come from," "There are already dozens of people interested. They just gave a statement and it was written, there is no mass layoffs. It's not true at all, I don't know where it could have come from.

#### **ARE WE REALLY BANKRUPT?**

*The account owner @fyckrich tweeted, "If NET TV goes out of business, it is very, very unfortunate. NET TV is the reason why I still want to watch television,"*

Previously, information circulated on social media that youngest TV media in Indonesia is facing financial problems.

*"This is true! Because my aunt's boyfriend happens to be working on the net and he said yes, if Net TV is in difficult times. That's why there are many programs. those who are packaged. Sadly real. "*

With several NET TV bankruptcies circulated on social media, a major layoff of NET TV workers was reportedly carried out by PT NET Mediatama Indonesia. From

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Thursday 8 August 2019 to Friday of August 2019, news related to the mass layoffs of NET TV has also become a trending topic on Twitter in Indonesia. At 19:55 on that Friday, the news of the mass layoff of net tv and the hashtag #NET TV were tweeted over 57,000 times and ranked first on the trend of Indonesian Twitter.

### **THE EXPLANATION BY NET TV MANAGEMENT**

A clarification emerged on 9 August 2019 from Wisnutama and NET TV management, which was released on the news site [cnbcindonesiacom](http://cnbcindonesiacom) (2019). Wisnutama, who changed his position to become Chief Commissioner in August 2019, gave a rebuttal to the news of mass layoffs at the TV station he had created. The term of dismissal still exists, however, and was disclosed at the time by the Chief Operating Officer of PT NET Mediatama, Azuan Syahril, who gave a clarification related to the triggering of the problem, since there was indeed a "efficiency" on NET TV. Due to the insistence of the television industry and the procedure undertaken by NET TV management, this efficiency was carried out. And through that process, 20 workers were offered voluntary turnover.

*We have no mass cuts, we have none. Actually, what we have is like that, yeah, we're also in an era now where competition is getting harder, so we're doing a company plan. So we've developed new techniques, so you know that. Also linked to our plan for human resources now (As mentioned by Azuan Syahril - 10th August 2019)*

Nine days later, following official confirmation from NET TV management, there is still a website on [tribunnews.com](http://tribunnews.com) that published news on August 19, 2019 and raised the question of the decision to terminate mass jobs in its workforce by NET TV management. In reality, there was never any evidence based on the hashtag #savenettv that there was a problem on NET TV regarding mass termination of jobs. There was, however, a fact from the news website [tribunnews.com](http://tribunnews.com) (2019) that Wisnutama apparently resigned from his role as NET TV CEO. This is what many have prompted the hashtags to surface on Instagram social media alongside a post from Wisnutama that featured his photo with a greeting explanation for his followers and wrote the following sentence.

*We were grateful this afternoon for the 6th birthday of @netmediatama and bukber with the workers that I love and are very proud of.*

*It was also announced on this occasion that I had been formally appointed President Commissioner of @netmediatama in compliance with the shareholders' decision as of 5 April 2019.*

*In addition, the role of CEO will continue with my friend Deddy Sudarjanto. Having worked with friends at @netmediatama is an enormous pride for me. It was really an unforgettable experience. We are sorry if there are many flaws and wrongs while leading.*

*Thank you, I say from the deepest heart, for the infinite. Hopefully, NET will be more advanced and enjoyed by the audience in the future. Keep the spirit! (As mentioned by Wisnutama in his personal Instagram)*

### **WISNUTAMA, BEHIND NET TV**

Who is Wisnutama, exactly? And why does the #savenettv problem seem incessantly connected to the fact that Wisnutama resigned as NET TV CEO? Wisnutama began his career in the television industry in 1993 after graduating from Emmerson College in New England Cable News USA. He returned to Indonesia in 1994, after becoming an assistant director on air promotion at WHDH-TV, he began his first debut in Indonesian private television, Indonesia as Supervisor On Air Promotion. After 8 years at Indosiar, he moved to Trans TV in 2001 and then became Head of Production Division and subsequently Director of Operations, then became Vice President in 2006 and then CEO of Trans TV until 2012.

In 2013, Wisnutama took a business step together with one of Indika Group officials, Agus Lasmono, to change the television business map in Indonesia, namely by acquiring a channel owned by Spacetoon TV and converting the television station into NET TV. Since it was first founded, Wisnutama's own role as President Operator, lasts for six years or ending in 2019. Therefore, it is not shocking that NET TV would be closely linked to something that happens with Wisnutama. Wisnutama aims to shift the viewpoint of advertising agencies and businesses that have already seen the event's ranking, or cost per rating point. Wisnutama, thinking that it should be evident who is the object of the ad, conditions, and activities used to produce ads for advertising.

### **OVERVIEW OF INDONESIAN TELEVISION STATIONS**

When it became the most popular information medium for all, television had witnessed glory. Television is a medium that uses visuals to convey information, and in its heyday, television also became a medium for receiving all kinds of messages, so it is not surprising that television has a special place in every family-inhabited home. Television is known as a unifier of individuals in the family, and people gather to watch together with programs that are broadcast on television, and sometimes television shows are the basis for motives someone uses to mix with others.

However, television is now almost inferior to the internet as technology advances, but it still retains a wide audience. The data from Nielsen in 2019 shows that Indonesian viewers spend 5 hours watching TV. Television-owned restrictions that do not allow interactive functions as can be done on the internet and television are not personal, since many individuals can only watch one show and not everyone likes it. Viewers are considered people that watch television.

The first television station in Indonesia was TVRI, which was born at that time to the Minister of Information following the direction of President Soekarno, so that Decree No. 20/SK/M/1961 of the Minister of Information concerning the establishment of the Television Planning Committee was issued (P2T). First on air in the early 60s. The Asian Games were organized at that time in conjunction with the hosting of a sports party in Asia.

## **PRIVATE OWNED TELEVISION STATION ESTABLISHMENT IN INDONESIA**

The age of private television stations, namely RCTI in 1989, was authorized by the government to operate after the birth of TVRI, which is a state-owned television station. The birth of RCTI in Indonesia is also a landmark in the end of the Indonesian monopoly on television broadcasting held by TVRI.

Four types of television channels have been adopted by Indonesia: terrestrial, satellite, cable and cellular. This case study, however, aims to lift the terrestrial problem as a form of television station. There are 22 types of television stations in this category of terrestrial station which are paid, which charge the audience a subscription fee and those which are free to air or, in other words, do not charge the audience a subscription fee. The way this TV station supports itself is through advertising, the importance of which may vary greatly, especially on advertisements broadcast during prime-time hours.

Regardless of how this TV channel finances itself, any TV channel in Indonesia can literally be divided into particular genres. There are genres that categorize a television station based on Wikipedia.com (2019): government, general entertainment, news and general entertainment, news and sports, news, women, motivation, and lifestyle. TV stations known for their specificity emerged in its growth, such as TPI, which is short for Indonesian Education Television, then Metro TV, which appeared in the early 2000s focusing on news, and other television stations with a particular emphasis.

## **THE BIRTH OF NET TV AS AN ALTERNATIVE TELEVISION STATION**

Net television station owned by Net Visi Media is one of the television stations in Indonesia which is interesting to discuss. NET.TV stands for News and Entertainment Television, which first appeared on May 26, 2013 in the community and has a general entertainment genre. Thanks to the format and quality of programming claimed by television stations, Net.TV refers to itself as a progressive television, which is distinct from most televisions but is nevertheless free-to-air. This TV station was founded as part of the INDIKA GROUP with the vision of establishing and developing entertainment media and information technology companies.

In 2015, NET TV in Indonesia crossed 25 cities. Then, in February 2015, NET TV had broadcasting rights and had the right to air one of the most prestigious soccer competitions in Indonesia, the Indonesian Super League (ISL). In 2015, NET TV celebrated two years of age and accepted its birthday at the time, and the TV station held the NET 2.0 Presents Indonesian Choice Awards, which is an award program targeted at entertainment world artists that the station claims to be fair because it prioritizes standards such as consistency, social media sales, sales records and performances by successful entertainment artists.

NET TV followed the trend of other television stations in 2016, which adopted the streaming approach, using Zulu to position broadcast content as a video streaming platform. While NET TV still claims that the idea provided by Zulu is slightly different, the principle of Zulu, similar to video on-demand services, is that the content broadcast is the product of television broadcasts that have been deemed censored by the Indonesian Broadcasting Commission (KPI), so that it is believed to be a secure platform for consumption by all classes.

In 2017, NET TV received a reprimand from the Indonesian Broadcasting Commission (KPI) because it considers breaching P3 and SPS KPI, in a program titled "This Talk Show" broadcast by NET TV on March 8, 2017, at 20.07 WIB there are words of condescension to others, namely "... what animal is this?" referring to someone and the words "... this is rice sack or ..." intended for a woman.

NET TV announced plans to execute an Initial Public Offering (IPO) in 2018 and released one billion shares corresponding to 4.88 percent of the capital placement, which was also deposited by NET TV. The aim of an IPO for NET TV is to get around Rp. 200 billion, which will be used to finance expansion as well.

### UNANSWERED QUESTION

NET TV still brings the group interest after the crowd on Twitter and clarification from the board, so what happened? Is it likely that the management of the company made rumors because they wanted to make the public remember them in the television station market rivalry in Indonesia? How can people be curious in order to answer via Twitter? Or, the problem as long as the management of NET TV produces it? But why?

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are the big problems that Net TV faces?
2. Who plays a part in these problems?
3. What steps does this corporation take to avoid bankruptcy problems?

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