Personal Branding Strategy of Food Vlogger Serly Ansim Through TikTok Account @onebitebigbite

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ABSTRACT

The rapid development of social media, particularly TikTok, has created new opportunities for content creators to build their personal image through fast, creative, and easily accessible visual content. One emerging phenomenon is the increasing number of food vloggers who use TikTok as a medium for developing personal branding. This study aims to examine the personal branding strategy employed by Serly Ansim through her TikTok account @onebitebigbite, known for her humorous, expressive, and bold characteristics. Using a qualitative approach with Krippendorff's content analysis method, the study is based on non-participant observation of 12 videos with the highest engagement from March to August 2025, supported by audience comments and relevant literature. The findings reveal that Serly Ansim's personal branding is constructed through three key characteristics proposed by McNally & Speak (2004): (1) Distinctiveness, reflected in her spontaneous and humorous communication style, signature expressions such as "DAR DER DOR," dynamic and detailed visuals, and strong storytelling techniques; (2) Relevancy, shown through her ability to adapt content to TikTok trends, audience culinary preferences, viral moments, and relatable humor for younger viewers; and (3) Consistency, demonstrated through a stable tone of voice, presentation style, video format, and commitment to honest food reviewers. These three aspects have enabled Serly Ansim to build a strong personal brand, increase audience trust, and position herself as a prominent food vlogger on TikTok. This study is expected to contribute theoretically to the study of personal branding in new media and serve as a practical reference for content creators, creative industry practitioners, and food vloggers in developing effective digital communication strategies.

INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of digital technology has fundamentally transformed communication, information consumption, and self-expression across all societal aspects. This shift has elevated personal branding from conventional media channels such as radio and television to contemporary social media approaches (Firamadhina & Krisnani, 2021). Social media content has emerged as an effective mechanism for constructing personal image, building audience trust, and reflecting individual character and values (Yusanda et al., 2021). In Indonesia, social media users have reached 139 million people, representing 49.9% of the population (GoodStats, 2025). Among rapidly growing platforms, TikTok stands out due to its short-form video format, accessibility, and ability to deliver concise yet information-rich content (Rusmini, 2023).

Food vlogging has become a prominent content category on TikTok, with creators sharing culinary reviews, cooking tutorials, and restaurant assessments. Food vloggers significantly influence audience perspectives toward culinary topics and possess

substantial impact on the food industry (Saiful & Rachmawati, 2024). Compared to longer-form culinary content on YouTube, TikTok's short-form format sustains viewer engagement and encourages continued interaction (Carolin & Kurniawati, 2025). Successful food vloggers must master multiple content dimensions visual composition, editing techniques, and storytelling to construct distinctive character and imagery that differentiate them from competitors (Shadrina & Sulistyanto, 2022).

Most contemporary food vloggers adopt formal, ethical presentation styles that emphasize sensory assessment and culinary standards. Examples include Bondan Winarno's detailed historical narratives, MgdalenaF's persuasive casual approach, and Sibungbung's gentle, positive presentation. However, Serly Ansim (@onebitebigbite) employs a distinctly unconventional storytelling approach characterized by bold, expressive, and humorous narratives. Since launching her content in 2022, Serly has evolved from rigid English-language narration to humorous Indonesian-language content, achieving 743,000 followers and a TikTok Award nomination for Food Creator of the Year 2024. Her signature phrase "DAR DER DOR" denoting delicious, high-quality food combined with confident vocal delivery and creative visual cinematography has established her as a trendsetter within the food vlogging community (Janson, 2023).

Serly's personal branding extends beyond narrative elements to encompass distinctive visual characteristics, including creative cinematography, strategic hand positioning, zoom techniques, close-up details, and facial expressions that create a shared dining experience. Her consistent 30-60 second videos feature rapid pacing and smooth transitions, delivering densely packed visual information. Notably, Serly maintains authenticity through honest product assessments and consistent selection of quality establishments, building substantial audience trust. Her use of humor functions as an effective engagement hook, combining linguistic wordplay with confident delivery to create memorable and shareable content that resonates with younger audiences (Jayana & Putu Wijana, 2023).

According to McNally and Speak (2004), effective personal branding requires three characteristics: distinctiveness, relevance, and consistency. Serly exemplifies these characteristics through her unique storytelling style, carefully constructed values and

identity, and consistent content production aligned with audience preferences. Her substantial follower base, consistent "For You Page" visibility, and influence on other food vloggers demonstrate successful personal brand establishment. However, existing research has primarily examined food vlogging through traditional presentation styles, leaving a research gap regarding unconventional personal branding strategies that employ humor, bold narratives, and visual distinctiveness within the food vlogging sphere.

This study addresses this gap by analyzing Serly Ansim's personal branding strategies through her TikTok account @onebitebigbite. The research seeks to understand how unconventional storytelling approaches, humor, visual composition, and narrative authenticity contribute to personal brand success in food vlogging contexts. This research contributes to scholarly understanding of personal branding mechanisms on social media platforms while providing practical insights for content creators seeking to establish distinctive and engaging personal brands within competitive digital environments.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Personal Branding

Personal branding is a process through which individuals control others' perceptions and establish recognition through distinctive characteristics (Yusanda et al., 2021). It functions to build credibility, enhance expertise perception, and strengthen public trust (Firmansa & Huda, 2025). A strong personal brand delivers significant value and creates meaningful relationships, whereas weak brands lack clear identity (Mcnally & Speak, 2004). Personal branding encompasses three dimensions: internal (values, character, competencies), process (self-reflection, communication, evaluation), and external (audiences, competitors, environment) (Firmansyah, 2024).

McNally and Speak (2004) identify three essential characteristics for establishing strong personal brands: distinctiveness (authentic, recognizable differentiation), relevancy (alignment with audience needs and expectations), and consistency (sustained alignment of actions with values and identity). Key components include competence, target audience understanding, storytelling capability, and creativity Hanindharputri (2019) in (Hutabarat, 2021). These

three elements are fundamental to building credible, memorable personal brands that establish long-term reputation and public trust.

Social Media

Social media is a digital platform facilitating identity formation, social interaction, and information exchange (Aqila & Ardina, 2021). It exhibits seven characteristics: network infrastructure, information distribution, digital archiving, interactive features, virtual social simulation, user-generated content, and content dissemination (Herdiyani et al., 2022). These establish social media as identity formation and information dissemination platforms beyond mere communication channels.

TikTok distinguishes itself through short-form video format requiring concise, engaging messaging, the "For You" algorithm expanding audience reach, interactive affordances including duets and challenges strengthening creator-audience relationships, and emotionally-oriented content creating affective bonds (Huang & Zuraidah Zainol, 2025). These characteristics make TikTok particularly conducive to personal branding strategy development and digital reputation formation.

Food Vlogger

Food vlogging has emerged as a prominent content category on social media platforms, driven by technological advancement and online food distribution systems. Content success is measured through viewer counts, likes, comments, and shares (Kim, 2024), with Indonesia ranking third in Asia-Pacific as a major social media market (Taslaud, 2025). Food-related content has gained significant global attention, evidenced by trending food items on TikTok resulting from content virality (Castrodale, 2022). Food vlogging is defined as creating and uploading video content related to food and culinary topics on social media platforms (Safitri et al., 2023), with food vloggers functioning as culinary influencers (Aulia & Kusumaningrum, 2022).

Food vloggers generate professional opportunities through restaurant partnerships and promotional collaborations; however, such opportunities depend upon establishing audience trust through engagement metrics and follower counts (Safitri et al., 2023). Each food vlogger develops distinctive characteristics and identities in promoting and exploring culinary experiences, enabling audiences to develop preferences and trust toward specific creators. These distinctive identities and personal branding approaches differentiate food vloggers in competitive landscapes while influencing audience purchasing decisions and culinary interestinguishes itself through short-form video format requiring concise, engaging messaging; the "For You" algorithm expanding audience reach; interactive affordances including duets and challenges strengthening creator-audience relationships; and emotionally-oriented content creating affective bonds (Huang & Zuraidah Zainol, 2025). These characteristics make TikTok particularly conducive to personal branding strategy development and digital reputation formation.

Content Analysis

Content analysis is a research method that focuses on an in-depth examination of message content presented in written or printed media, aiming to draw conclusions by identifying specific characteristics of messages in an objective, systematic, and generalizable manner (Rohani, 2024). Objectivity refers to the use of clear rules or procedures that allow different researchers to reach similar conclusions, while systematic analysis requires consistent categorization based on predetermined criteria, and generalizability demands that findings be theoretically grounded so that the results can be linked to other relevant documents and attributes (Rohani, 2024).

Methodologically, content analysis is divided into quantitative content analysis, which examines the tendencies of media content related to specific issues, and qualitative content analysis, which emphasizes the interpretation of media content within its contextual and processual background (Rohani, 2024). This method enables researchers to understand human behavior indirectly through the study of communication embodied in various linguistic forms such as novels, books, magazines, articles, short stories, dramas, advertisements, and images (Rohani, 2024). Krippendorff (2018) in (Dyah Lestari et al., 2024) further states that the purpose of content analysis is to draw conclusions about the meanings of texts through procedures that are reliable, replicable across different contexts, and valid.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach because it seeks to understand and describe in depth the personal branding strategies implemented by Sherly Ansim based on phenomena occurring on social media. Qualitative research focuses on developing a deep understanding of human behavior and social

phenomena and is often used to explore perceptions, experiences, and the meanings individuals attribute to particular events or situations. According to Woods (1999) in (Waruwu, 2023), qualitative research is characterized by its naturalistic setting and its emphasis on the search for meaning, perspectives, and understanding, as it aims to observe behavior and subsequently construct abstractions, concepts, hypotheses, and even theory. Denzin and Lincoln (2011) in (Hasan Hanif et al., 2025) further note that qualitative research is an adaptive and flexible technique, allowing researchers to combine multiple data collection methods such as non-participant observation, documentation, and literature study.

This study employs content analysis methodology based on Krippendorff's (2018) framework consisting of six systematic stages. First, unitizing designates each TikTok video from the @onebitebigbite account as an individual unit of analysis. Second, sampling applies purposive sampling to select 12 videos Third, recording/coding involves complete transcription of all verbal narrative and systematic coding of content elements into three personal branding pillars according to McNally & Speak (2004): distinctiveness indicators, consistency indicators, and relevancy indicators. Fourth, reducing synthesizes data from 12 videos into significant patterns by eliminating redundant data and prioritizing elements representative of the three pillars. Fifth, inferring interprets identified patterns within personal branding theory context to explain how communication elements function effectively in audience reception. Sixth, narrating presents findings in coherent academic narrative form, supported by direct quotations, concrete examples from content, and engagement data as empirical evidence integrated with relevant theory.

This study focuses on the research object of personal branding in the food review content of Serly Ansim (@onebitebigbite) on TikTok, with the food vlogger herself serving as the research subject whose uploaded videos become the primary data source (Pujiati, 2024). The data are obtained through non-participant observation of selected TikTok content specifically videos with the highest engagement (views and comments) within a six-month period (March–August) complemented by documentation and literature study involving previous research, posts, and audience responses on the @onebitebigbite account (Abubakar Rifa'i, 2021). Research data were

collected only 12 videos with highest engagement, with no interviews or surveys conducted because video content represents objective evidence of personal branding as actually communicated to audiences, engagement metrics (viewers, likes, comments) provide objective proof of branding strategy effectiveness.

Data collection relies on systematic observation in which the researcher does not directly participate in the subject's activities but observes publicly available content as research material (Abubakar Rifa'i, 2021). Data analysis in this qualitative study follows Miles' model in (Rita Fiantika et al., 2022), which includes three stages: data reduction, where data are simplified, classified, and focused into themes; data display, where reduced data are presented in narrative form and, if needed, supported by charts or matrices; and verification or conclusion drawing, where the researcher formulates findings that clarify previously unclear phenomena, in line with the notion of new findings as articulated by Sugiyono (2012) in (Rita Fiantika et al., 2022).

RESULT

The results of this study show that Serly Ansim's personal branding on the TikTok account @onebitebigbite is systematically constructed through three core dimensions: distinctiveness, consistency, and relevancy, which appear repeatedly across 12 high-engagement videos selected from March to August 2025 using views, likes, and comments as engagement indicators (Kim, 2024). These videos represent the most interacted-with content in each month and thus are considered the most representative of her effective personal branding performance. The analysis confirms that high-engagement content tends to display stronger and clearer patterns of personal branding expression, making it suitable as primary research corpus.

Distinctiveness

First, in terms of distinctiveness, the findings reveal that Serly builds a highly recognizable narrative identity through consistent use of Jakarta slang ("lu," "gua," "bro," "lah," "sih," "dah"), informal direct address, and a humorous, blunt tone that makes her appear more like a close friend than a distant expert (Febriana et al., 2025). Across videos such as the review of Legita Cakes, Rindu Rasa, Juru Sambal, and various donut brands, she introduces neologisms and expressive phrases to describe taste and texture, such

as "nyemek-nyemek," "gurihnya nyolot," "ceplak-ceplok," or humorous hyperboles like "kalau gua bisa mandi pakai kuah ayam pop, gua mandi dah," which make complex sensory experiences easy to imagine and emotionally engaging.

Distinctiveness is also reinforced through a consistent hook strategy often provocative, humorous, or linked to current issues (for example, references to "kecebong in cakes," expensive crab prices, or Pinkan Mambo's donut) that immediately captures attention in the first seconds of the video. Furthermore, the signature tagline "DAR DER DOR" functions as an audio identity that recurs throughout the corpus, operating as a sonic logo that signals strong approval and has become tightly associated with her persona. On the visual side, distinctiveness is expressed through dynamic editing (fast cutting, zoom in/zoom out to emphasize food textures), expressive body language and facial expressions when eating, and close-up shots that create an immersive "eating together" experience for the audience.

Consistency

Second, regarding consistency, the results indicate that these distinctive elements are not occasional but appear repeatedly and systematically across the 12 analyzed videos, forming a stable pattern of personal branding expression. Serly consistently adopts a similar structural format in her videos: a strong hook, followed by descriptive and often comparative evaluation of the food, and closed by a clear evaluative signal, frequently marked by the "DAR DER DOR" tagline when the food is positively endorsed. Her verbal style slang-based, humorous, expressive, and sometimes hyperbolic remains stable across different types of food (street food, high-end seafood, donuts, fusion restaurants), indicating that her "voice" as a brand is not determined by product category but by her chosen identity as a reviewer. Visual consistency is also evident in the recurrent use of fast-paced editing aligned with TikTok's short-video format, dominant close-ups on food, and framing that frequently highlights both the food and her facial reactions in the same sequence. Additionally, the corpus shows that she consistently positions herself as an "honest reviewer" by explicitly stating when a product is not sponsored and by openly acknowledging her personal preferences and biases (for instance, her skepticism toward restaurants carrying a "master chef" name or her initial dislike of fruity donuts before tasting them). This repeated emphasis on honesty and independence

becomes part of her consistent brand promise to the audience.

Relevancy

Third, in terms of relevancy, the results show that Serly's content is closely aligned with the interests, habits, and cultural references of her target audience, primarily Indonesian Gen Z and urban millennials. She frequently reviews accessible and trending culinary spots, such as warteg-style food served by "Oppa Korea," popular sambal places, donuts that are part of viral trends, or restaurants associated with well-known chefs, thereby embedding her content in the wider social media and urban lifestyle context.

Her scripts routinely incorporate everyday concerns of viewers price comparisons, value for money, portion size, and uniqueness of menu while also tapping into cultural moments such as Lebaran gift-giving when reviewing cakes, or viral TikTok phenomena like Donat Pinkan Mambo. Relevancy is further strengthened by her interactive engagement techniques, using rhetorical questions ("Jangan ngaku doyan Padang kalau ini aja lu belum coba"), challenges ("coba ngomong 10 kali cepat"), and direct prompts that invite viewers to reflect on their own experiences or comment their preferences (e.g., "kalian kalau makan sambal gini doyan makan sama apa?").

These strategies help her content resonate with viewers' everyday experiences, making her reviews feel relatable and personally meaningful. Overall, the empirical results demonstrate that Serly's personal branding is not only visible but also systematically operationalized in her language, structure, performance, and content choices across the selected videos.

DISCUSSION

Serly Ansim (@onebitebigbite) is an Indonesian food vlogger who operates a TikTok account dedicated to food exploration and review. She is distinguished by her characteristic communication style unfiltered, humorous, and authentic which sets her apart from other food vloggers. Serly began through personal interest in food, exploring diverse culinary offerings from various locations, ranging from traditional local cuisine to modern dining experiences, which she documents in short-form video format on TikTok.

Her core characteristic is consuming food with large bites, which defines the @onebitebigbite brand identity. Her speech style is spontaneous and expressive with natural facial expressions, creating audience intimacy. Her signature tagline "DAR DER DOR" functions as a distinctive brand signal immediately recognizable to audiences. Visually, her content employs dynamic framing and quick editing. Serly's positioning emphasizes honesty and transparency, with a genuine and unconstructed character that builds audience trust in her reviews. With high engagement rates and steadily growing followers, Serly has built a loyal community attracted not only to her food content but also to her authentic and distinctive personality that resonates strongly with TikTok's young demographic.

The findings above strongly support McNally and Speak's theoretical claim that a strong personal brand is built upon three pillars distinctiveness, relevancy, and consistency and that these must be expressed in a coherent and integrated manner in all audience touchpoints (Mcnally & Speak, 2004). In terms of distinctiveness, Serly's branding illustrates how linguistic and performative innovation can serve as the core differentiator in a saturated field like food vlogging. Her use of Jakarta slang, invented sensory vocabulary, and hyperbolic, humorous analogies transforms ordinary food review discourse into a distinctive narrative style that is immediately recognizable and emotionally engaging (Febriana et al., 2025). This is consistent with the literature on personal branding, which emphasizes that uniqueness does not always come from the product itself but from how the individual communicates and frames that product in ways that reflect their personality and values (Mcnally & Speak, 2004). Compared with more formal food reviewers such as Bondan Winarno or persuasive-yet-softer styles like MgdalenaF and Sibungbung, Serly's bold, comedic, and sometimes "vulgar" approach stands out as an example of a deliberately unconventional persona designed to resonate with younger audiences.

From a consistency perspective, Serly's content confirms theoretical expectations that repeated delivery of the same "brand signals" builds familiarity, trust, and expectation in the minds of audiences (Firmansa & Huda, 2025). The recurrence of hooks referencing trending issues, the stable use of the "DAR DER DOR" tagline as a positive verdict marker, and the persistent "honest, unsponsored" stance establish a clear, predictable communication pattern that audiences can anticipate and rely upon. This aligns with research showing that consistent personal branding strengthens perceived credibility and influences behavioral intentions such as continued viewing, sharing, and following. In Serly's case, the high engagement metrics of the 12 selected videos suggest that consistency in style and stance does not create boredom; instead, it functions as a reassuring frame within which variation in topics, locations, and products can occur. Her case illustrates that consistency does not mean repetition of identical content, but rather stable identity markers voice, values, and core behaviors across different situational contexts.

With regard to relevancy, the discussion of findings indicates that Serly's success is tied to her ability to continuously align her content with the evolving interests, cultural references, and emotional needs of her audience. She selects topics that sit at the intersection of everyday practicality (affordable warteg, sambal, street food), aspirational experiences (premium crab, curated donuts), and digital culture (viral menu items, TikTok trends), thus embodying what McNally and Speak describe as "meaningful relevance" to the audience's life context (Mcnally & Speak, 2004). This strategic relevance is not only topical but also emotional: by combining entertaining storytelling, humor, and dramatization with useful information about taste, price, and uniqueness, she satisfies both hedonic and utilitarian motivations for consuming food-related content. Previous studies on TikTok content have highlighted the importance of short, emotionally engaging videos in driving visibility and engagement (Huang & Zuraidah Zainol, 2025), and Serly's format fast-paced, emotionally expressive, visually rich fits precisely within this platform logic.

Furthermore, the way Serly integrates trends such as Donat Pinkan Mambo without abandoning her existing narrative style and honesty principle demonstrates a sophisticated balance between adaptation and authenticity. This supports the view that sustainable personal branding in social media requires not only responsiveness to trends but also a stable value base, so that the brand does not appear opportunistic or inconsistent over time (Rosadina & Prasetio, 2025). Her explicit skepticism toward celebrity-chef branding, followed by fair and nuanced evaluation when the food proves better than expected,

further illustrates how a clear value position (prioritizing taste and authenticity over reputation) can enhance both relevance and credibility.

In summary, the discussion suggests that Serly Ansim's personal branding strategy on TikTok embodies a concrete, contemporary illustration of McNally and Speak's framework, where distinctiveness is achieved through linguistic and performative innovation, consistency through stable narrative and visual patterns, and relevancy through context-sensitive topic and tone selection. Rather than being a spontaneous by-product of "being herself," the patterns observed across the 12 videos indicate a strategically coherent branding practice that aligns theory and practice in the context of food vlogging on short-video platforms.

CONCLUSION

It The findings of this study conclude that Serly Ansim's personal branding on TikTok is constructed through three interrelated pillars distinctiveness, consistency, and relevancy which operate as an integrated whole to form a memorable and clearly differentiated identity compared to other food content creators on the platform.

In terms of distinctiveness, Serly successfully combines a highly recognizable narrative style, innovative interactive engagement strategies, and a unique audio-visual identity. Her consistent use of Jakarta slang, spontaneous and humorous manner of speaking, and the creation of new, memorable expressions to describe taste and texture transform technical culinary information into lively, entertaining, and easily understood narratives, while her signature tagline "DAR DER DOR," dynamic editing (dramatic zooms, strategic framing, rhythmic cuts), and natural facial expressions and body language further reinforce her unique persona in the minds of audiences.

Consistency emerges as another central strength of her personal branding, as evidenced by her regular content presence during the March–August 2025 period, the relatively uniform video structure, and the repeated use of the same verbal, visual, and audio markers, which make her content easily recognizable even before viewers see the account name.

Relevancy is reflected in her ability to continuously align content themes with audience needs and everyday realities, including entertaining yet informative culinary reviews, integration of socio-cultural elements, and strategic use of viral phenomena as content inspiration, thereby ensuring that her videos remain close, relatable, and meaningful for her viewers. Overall, Serly Ansim's personal branding construction on TikTok can be understood as a synergy between authentic personality, consistent delivery, and sensitivity to trends and audience needs, which together establish her as a distinctive, trustworthy creator with a strong position in the audience's memory and perception.

This research offers some practical implications for key stakeholders. For content creators, successful TikTok personal branding is built through unique linguistic innovation (local slang, distinctive vocabulary), authentic performative elements, and brand signal consistency not perfect visual aesthetics. For F&B marketing practitioners, KOL selection strategy must shift from follower focus toward authentic narrative credibility while granting creative freedom to enhance endorsement effectiveness among Gen Z audiences. For culinary enterprises, product quality represents the most effective marketing investment because quality products gain organic promotion from integrity-focused creators, proving more cost-effective than paid endorsements. Overall, this research affirms that in the short-form video content era, authenticity, consistency, and relevancy constitute concrete strategic foundations for building sustainable and commercially viable personal brands.

Based on these conclusions, several suggestions and future research directions can be proposed. For audiences and the general public, it is important to cultivate critical media literacy by understanding that personal branding content is the result of deliberate and strategic communication choices, so that viewers can become more selective, reflective, and less easily influenced by persuasive narratives that are entertaining but potentially biased. For content creators and communication practitioners, this study suggests the importance of developing personal branding through the integration of distinctive narrative style, consistent delivery across verbal, visual, and structural elements, and sustained relevance to audience needs and cultural context, rather than relying solely on trends or virality. Future research may extend this work by comparing personal branding strategies of different food vloggers across platforms, examining audience reception through interviews or surveys to complement content analysis,

or exploring how personal branding evolves over time in response to algorithm changes, market saturation, and shifting audience preferences.

Author contribution

Serly Ansim's Personal Branding Strategy on TikTok (@onebitebigbite) was conducted by Elvita Octavia Br Surbakti who performed conceptualization and research design, data collection from selected TikTok videos (March–August 2025), content analysis methodology development, complete data analysis using McNally and Speak's framework, writing of the entire research paper, and final editing and formatting. Dr. Syafrida N. Febriyanti M.Med.Kom provided supervision, guidance on theoretical framework, and critical review of the manuscript. All authors have reviewed and approved the final version of this paper.

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