



Implementing Project-Based Learning to Develop Digital Branding Media for the Center of Excellence AFINTEC at Politeknik Negeri Batam

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Abstract

This study explores the implementation of Project-Based Learning (PBL) as a pedagogical approach to enhance students' digital and collaborative competencies through the development of digital branding media for the Center of Excellence (COE) in Accounting and Financial Technology (AFINTEC) at Politeknik Negeri Batam. The project involved students in creating a logo, designing a website, and producing Instagram content to strengthen the digital identity of AFINTEC. Using a qualitative descriptive method, data were collected through observation, documentation, and student reflections. The results show that the PBL approach effectively fostered students' creativity, digital literacy, teamwork, and time management skills. In addition, the tangible outputs—logo, website, and curated social media content—successfully contributed to the visibility and branding of AFINTEC. This project illustrates how practical, real-world tasks can provide meaningful learning experiences and institutional value. Recommendations are offered for expanding the model to other academic units and integrating interdisciplinary collaboration.

Keywords

Project-based learning, Digital branding, Student engagement, Center of Excellence, AFINTEC, Higher education

INTRODUCTION

In the era of digital transformation, Centers of Excellence (COE) in higher education institutions are expected to have strong, professional, and recognizable digital branding. The Center of Excellence in Accounting and Financial Technology (AFINTEC) at Politeknik Negeri Batam plays a vital role in developing students' competencies in accounting, finance, and digital technology.

To enhance the digital presence and identity of AFINTEC, a Project-Based Learning (PBL) approach was implemented involving students in creating a logo, website, and Instagram content as part of a collaborative project. This

article aims to describe the implementation of PBL in this context, analyze the learning outcomes, and evaluate the impact of the project on both students and the institution.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Participants

The project involved undergraduate students from the Department of Management and Business who were enrolled in Design and Marketing courses. The project was designed as an integrative task that allowed students to apply the learning outcomes from both subjects. Through this initiative, students were able to implement branding strategies and visual communication concepts in a real-world context by developing digital media for the AFINTEC Center of Excellence.

Project Implementation

The project was structured into three main phases, as outlined in the official Project Implementation Plan (*Rencana Pelaksanaan Proyek – RPP*), issued by Politeknik Negeri Batam. The phases are as follows:

1. Initial Planning Phase

This phase focused on establishing a strong foundation for the project through the following steps:

- Defining project goals, scope, targets, and deadlines, aligned with the learning outcomes of the Design and Marketing courses.
- Conducting a kick-off meeting to communicate the project framework and synchronize understanding among all participants.
- Drafting a detailed project plan, including objectives, project phases, timeline, milestones, and success indicators.
- Creating a comprehensive timeline, which outlined key activities and deliverables across each stage of the project.

2. Project Execution Phase

During this phase, students applied their knowledge in a real-world context by producing tangible branding media:

- Logo Design: Students developed multiple drafts before finalizing a logo that symbolically represents AFINTEC's identity in accounting and financial technology.
- Website Development: A simple, informative, and responsive website was built to display AFINTEC's vision, activities, and achievements.
- Instagram Content Creation: Visual content was produced and curated using tools such as Canva, following consistent branding themes to engage the public via social media.

3. Project Evaluation Phase

After implementation, students and lecturers collaboratively evaluated both the process and outcomes:

- Assessing the outputs based on design quality, message clarity, and consistency with AFINTEC's goals.
- Gathering student reflections on the learning experience, including challenges faced and skills gained.
- Measuring the effectiveness of the PBL approach in bridging theory with real-world application.

The project period was carried out over four months, from October 2024 to January 2025.

RESULTS

The implementation of the project resulted in three main outputs that contributed directly to the branding and digital presence of the Center of Excellence in Accounting and Financial Technology (AFINTEC):

1. Logo Design

The finalized logo represents AFINTEC's core identity, integrating visual elements related to accounting, finance, and modern technology. The design emphasizes clarity, professionalism, and adaptability for both digital and printed media.



Fig. 1 Finalized logo of COE AFINTEC

2. Instagram Content Development

The student team created a series of visual posts aimed at promoting AFINTEC's programs and engaging the student community. The content was categorized into three main types:

- Informational posts (e.g., tips about financial technology and accounting)
- Activity-based posts (e.g., documenting events or collaborations)
- Inspirational or promotional quotes related to fintech and education

3. Website Development

The website was developed using the official domain provided by Politeknik Negeri Batam: <https://afintec.polibatam.ac.id>

The site includes sections such as:

- Organizational profile (vision, mission, structure)
- News and updates
- Activity gallery
- Contact information

The website serves as a digital gateway for stakeholders, collaborators, and prospective participants interested in AFINTEC's activities.

DISCUSSION

The implementation of Project-Based Learning (PBL) to develop digital branding media for AFINTEC has proven to be an effective approach for enhancing students' digital, collaborative, and practical skills. The project not only allowed students to apply their theoretical knowledge in real-world contexts but also bridged the gap between classroom learning and industry demands, aligning with the goals of modern higher education.

The results indicate that the students successfully created a cohesive and professional branding identity for AFINTEC, including a logo, website, and curated Instagram content. These outputs not only enhance AFINTEC's visibility and digital presence but also serve as a valuable learning experience for the students involved. The iterative process of logo design, website development, and content creation demonstrated the students' ability to collaborate, solve problems, and manage time effectively. They were able to understand and apply key design principles, branding strategies, and digital tools that are crucial in today's competitive business environment.

One significant aspect of this project was the opportunity for students to engage in interdisciplinary work, combining design, marketing, and communication skills to achieve a common goal. This collaboration mirrored the real-world dynamics of the professional world, where teamwork and the integration of various disciplines are essential for success. Moreover, the use of digital tools such as Canva for Instagram content and web development platforms for the website allowed students to gain hands-on experience with technologies that are highly relevant in the digital age.

The evaluation phase provided valuable insights into the effectiveness of the PBL approach. Students reflected on their learning process, acknowledging both the challenges and the skills they gained. This feedback highlighted the importance of structured project planning, clear communication, and continuous assessment throughout the project lifecycle. Furthermore, the tangible outputs—logo, website, and social media content—served as concrete evidence of the learning outcomes achieved, demonstrating the value of PBL in fostering creativity and professional development.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of Project-Based Learning (PBL) to develop digital branding media for the Center of Excellence in Accounting and Financial Technology (AFINTEC) at Politeknik Negeri Batam has successfully met its objectives. The project not only contributed to enhancing the digital identity of AFINTEC but also provided students with an opportunity to develop essential skills in digital literacy, teamwork, time management, and real-world problem-solving.

In conclusion, this project highlights the value of integrating PBL into academic curricula, particularly in fields where digital skills and collaborative work are paramount. Future endeavors can expand this model to other academic units within Politeknik Negeri Batam and beyond, promoting interdisciplinary collaboration and enhancing student learning experiences. The project serves as a model for other institutions seeking to strengthen their digital branding while simultaneously enriching their students' educational journeys.

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DECLARATION OF CONFLICT

We have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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