

Optimizing Social Media Engagement through HRM Practices in DPRD Kota Surabaya

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Abstract

Social media is a critical tool for public institutions to enhance transparency, accountability, and citizen engagement. This study analyzes the effectiveness of the social media team at DPRD Kota Surabaya, focusing on content strategy, team competencies, and compliance with Law No. 14/2008 on Public Information Disclosure (UU KIP). Using a mixed-methods approach, quantitative data from Virol analytics and qualitative insights from interviews and document analysis were examined. Findings reveal an overreliance on image posts (202 posts, 12 likes, 1 comment per post), despite videos (30 likes per post) and albums (23 likes per post) demonstrating significantly higher engagement. This misalignment between content strategy and audience preferences is compounded by skill gaps, workload imbalances, and reliance on interns for content creation. However, the recent recruitment initiative for specialized content controllers marks a strategic shift toward professionalization. The study recommends prioritizing high-performing content formats (videos and albums), implementing structured training programs, balanced task distribution, and data-driven decision-making. Aligning social media practices with analytics insights and institutional objectives is essential to transform @setwankotasby's Instagram into a platform that fosters trust, transparency, and meaningful public engagement.

Keywords

Social Media Management; Content Strategy; Team Effectiveness; Public Sector Communication; Public Engagement

INTRODUCTION

In an era where digital connectivity has become synonymous with institutional transparency, social media platforms have evolved into indispensable instruments for public sector communication. Among these platforms, Instagram stands out as a dynamic conduit for fostering engagement, disseminating information, and building trust between governmental institutions and their constituents (Sfetcu, 2024). Its visually compelling interface, paired with interactive features, offers governments an unparalleled opportunity to humanize bureaucratic processes and present them in a format digestible to the digital audience.

However, the mere presence of a government institution on Instagram does not guarantee effective communication or meaningful engagement. Behind every post, story, and comment lies the orchestrated effort of a social media management team, whose competencies and strategic choices dictate the success of this

digital outreach (Zaiats, 2024). These teams are tasked not only with content creation but also with interpreting analytics, fostering interactions, and navigating the delicate balance between institutional authority and digital relatability (Bossio et al., 2020).

Studies have consistently emphasized that the competence of social media management teams is a cornerstone of effective communication in public institutions. It encompasses not only technical proficiency in digital tools and analytics but also soft skills such as audience empathy, tone calibration, and crisis management (Tursunbayeva et al., 2017). At the same time, the strategic planning behind content dissemination is equally vital. Without a well-defined strategy—anchored in consistency, relevance, and audience-centric messaging—efforts often fall flat, reducing engagement to passive scrolling rather than active interaction (Kharisma & Kurniawan, 2018).

In the context of @setwankotasby, the official Instagram account of the Secretariat of the Regional

People's Representative Council (DPRD) of Surabaya, these dynamics become particularly relevant. The account serves as the digital face of the institution, broadcasting updates on legislative activities, public policies, and community engagement initiatives. However, beneath the polished visuals and carefully worded captions lies a complex web of planning, execution, and reflection carried out by the social media team.

Initial observations suggest potential gaps in the alignment between team capabilities and the strategic objectives of the platform. Are the individuals behind @setwankotasby equipped with the necessary digital literacy and communication finesse to navigate Instagram's ecosystem effectively? Is there a coherent content strategy in place, or is the approach reactive rather than proactive? These questions are not trivial, for the effectiveness of social media management directly influences public trust, institutional reputation, and the overall success of digital governance efforts (Carboni & Maxwell, 2015).

Scholars have underscored that well-managed social media platforms can bridge the chasm between bureaucratic opacity and citizen clarity, transforming sterile announcements into participatory dialogues (Milde & Yawson, 2017). Yet, the reverse is equally true: poorly managed accounts risk becoming echo chambers, devoid of meaningful two-way communication and perpetuating disengagement (Wukich, 2020).

Against this backdrop, this study aims to scrutinize two critical dimensions of Instagram management at @setwankotasby: the competencies of its social media management team and the strategic planning behind its content dissemination. By delving into these dimensions, this research seeks to uncover strengths, identify bottlenecks, and propose actionable recommendations for enhancing the platform's role as an effective communication tool for DPRD Kota Surabaya.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In today's digital era, social media strategy and Human Resource Management (HRM) have become interdependent tools in shaping organizational performance, employee engagement, and institutional visibility. Social media has transcended its initial role as a communication platform to become a strategic driver of organizational objectives, while HRM remains the foundational element in ensuring the human capital driving these platforms is effectively managed. This chapter explores the symbiotic relationship between

social media strategies and HRM practices, analyzing how they intersect to influence organizational culture, employee engagement, innovation, and overall performance.

Social media has revolutionized organizational communication, knowledge dissemination, and public engagement. For public institutions, it serves as both an engagement tool and a transparency mechanism. However, the effectiveness of these platforms relies heavily on the alignment of content strategies with organizational goals and the competencies of the teams managing them. Research by Zubielqui et al. (2017) emphasizes that organizations leveraging social media to access external knowledge flows—be it from stakeholders, citizens, or employees—are better positioned to drive innovation and improve institutional performance (Zubielqui et al., 2017).

However, social media strategies are only as effective as the teams implementing them. Without well-defined HRM frameworks to train, motivate, and evaluate team members, social media risks becoming an underutilized or mismanaged tool. Research has shown that platforms like Instagram and Twitter have immense potential for fostering transparency and communication, but these outcomes are contingent on how well human resources are equipped to execute such strategies (Norliani et al., 2024).

Human Resource Management (HRM) plays a pivotal role in empowering social media teams. Effective HRM ensures that employees managing organizational social media platforms are equipped with technical skills, strategic insight, and analytical proficiency. HRM practices, such as training programs, performance evaluations, and incentive structures, act as enablers for social media teams to function optimally.

Training remains one of the most significant HRM functions in the context of social media management. Research by Mohammad et al. (2020) highlights the importance of structured training programs that focus on both technical and strategic aspects of social media management, including content creation, analytics interpretation, and crisis communication (Mohammad et al., 2020). Without regular upskilling, social media teams risk becoming outdated, unable to adapt to platform changes or evolving audience preferences.

Employee motivation is another critical element. Teams tasked with managing social media often face pressure to deliver consistent engagement metrics while navigating public scrutiny and algorithm changes. Research by Glaister et al. (2018) suggests that HRM practices focused on

recognition and performance-linked incentives have a direct impact on employee motivation and retention in digital communication roles (Glaister et al., 2018).

Leadership oversight is essential for aligning HRM with social media objectives. Research indicates that strategic alignment between HRM and organizational goals improves the efficiency of social media teams. Without this oversight, there is often a disconnect between analytics insights, team priorities, and institutional objectives (Chowhan, 2016).

Social media platforms are not just external communication tools; they also play a vital role in shaping internal organizational culture. Employees use internal social networks and collaborative platforms to share knowledge, build relationships, and express ideas, contributing to a more cohesive workplace environment.

Research by Norliani et al. (2024) shows that social media fosters an inclusive and participative organizational culture, enabling employees to feel connected and valued. This sense of belonging directly influences employee satisfaction and performance (Norliani et al., 2024).

However, social media usage within organizations can also expose gaps in communication, task clarity, and leadership effectiveness. In rigid organizational structures, these platforms often fail to achieve their potential due to bureaucratic restrictions and limited cross-departmental collaboration (Vermeeren et al., 2014).

The integration of social media strategy and HRM practices represents a dynamic intersection with significant implications for organizational performance, transparency, and engagement. When HRM practices prioritize training, motivation, and strategic oversight, social media becomes a powerful tool for institutional goals. However, misalignment, lack of training, and inconsistent evaluation mechanisms can undermine these efforts.

To achieve sustainable success, organizations must view social media and HRM not as separate silos, but as interconnected drivers of organizational excellence.

METHOD

This study employs a mixed-methods approach to examine how HRM factors influence the effectiveness of the social media team managing @setwankotasby's Instagram account. By integrating quantitative analysis of performance metrics with qualitative insights from team members, this method ensures a comprehensive

understanding of the relationship between team competencies, training, workload management, and content performance (Benthaus et al., 2016; Cresswell, 2018).

The study focuses on data collected over the period 4 September 2024 to 5 January 2025, providing a robust timeframe to analyze trends and gather meaningful insights. The quantitative analysis evaluates Virol analytics, focusing on content type performance, and posting time frequency. This analysis provides a foundation to map patterns in these metrics to HRM variables such as team skills, task distribution, and strategic planning (Agostino & Arnaboldi, 2017).

The competencies of the social media management team will be analyzed in terms of their ability to create engaging content, adapt to evolving trends, and effectively utilize tools like Virol analytics for performance optimization. Specific focus will be placed on technical proficiency, creativity, and collaborative efforts within the team to achieve content objectives.

The strategic planning behind content dissemination will examine how well the team schedules posts, optimizes the use of hashtags, and designs content to align with audience preferences. The study will also assess the alignment of the content strategy with organizational goals, ensuring the team's efforts contribute to broader engagement and reach objectives.

The qualitative analysis employs semi-structured interviews and surveys with team members to capture insights on training adequacy, workload balance, task clarity, and performance incentives. These responses will undergo thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns and align them with quantitative findings (Tafesse & Korneliussen, 2020).

To ensure validity and reliability, data will be triangulated across analytics, interviews, and surveys. Ethical standards will be upheld through informed consent, data anonymity, and secure storage protocols (Todisco et al., 2020).

This methodology aims to deliver actionable insights into how HRM factors—team competencies, training, workload distribution, and motivation—affect social media effectiveness. The results will guide strategic improvements in team management and content strategy to enhance overall performance outcomes.

Results and Discussion

At first glance, the dominance of image posts seems to suggest an active and consistent social media presence. With 202 image posts, the team appears

to maintain regular updates and content flow. However, the data exposes a stark reality: images generate the least engagement with an average of 12 likes and 1 comment per post.

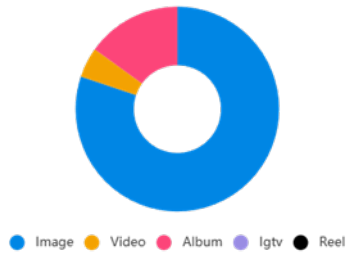


Figure 1 content type performance

Herein lies the paradox—despite the ease of creation and frequency of posting, image content fails to deliver meaningful engagement outcomes. This over-reliance on static visuals signals a preference for volume over impact and routine over strategy. Research by Annamalai et al. (2021) supports this observation, noting that static image posts often struggle to sustain audience attention compared to more dynamic formats like videos (Annamalai et al., 2021).

Content Type	Number of Posts	Average Likes per Post	Average Comments per Post
Image	202	12	1
Video	12	30	-
Album	38	23	-

Table 1 Content Distribution

The narrative contradiction is clear: quantity dominates the strategy, but quality dictates the results. Despite being the most engaging content type with an average of 30 likes per post, only 12 video posts were published during the analyzed period. Videos offer dynamic storytelling opportunities, emotional connection, and immersive experiences, all of which contribute to their higher engagement rates (Bai & Yan, 2020). Underutilization of video content represents a critical strategic oversight. The team is not leveraging the content type with the highest return on engagement, which limits their potential reach and audience connection.

The album content format, consisting of image carousels or multi-slide posts, has shown promising engagement rates with an average of 23 likes per post. Despite this, only 38 album posts were shared during the analyzed period, highlighting another underutilized content type.

Current State of Social Media Management: A Reactive Approach

The role of social media in public sector communication has evolved from being a supplementary communication tool to becoming a critical platform for transparency, accountability, and citizen engagement. In the context of DPRD Kota Surabaya, social media management remains underdeveloped, constrained by structural, strategic, and human resource limitations. This discussion explores the current challenges, gaps, and opportunities within the Secretariat's social media management framework, grounded in empirical evidence and supported by relevant academic literature.

Social media platforms under DPRD Kota Surabaya's management, particularly Instagram, have primarily functioned as digital documentation archives rather than interactive platforms for public engagement. Content predominantly focuses on recording activities and events, with limited effort toward fostering two-way communication with the audience. This approach aligns with findings by Agostino & Arnaboldi (2017), who highlighted that many public sector organizations reduce social media platforms to broadcast channels rather than tools for meaningful citizen participation (Agostino & Arnaboldi, 2017).

Furthermore, social media tasks are often delegated to interns rather than dedicated professionals. This reliance on temporary, inexperienced personnel suggests an absence of institutional commitment to building a sustainable social media strategy. Research by Tafesse & Korneliussen (2020) found that teams with fragmented staffing structures and informal task delegation often experience inconsistencies in content quality and audience engagement (Tafesse & Korneliussen, 2020).

As a result, posting schedules are inconsistent, with content clustered around certain days and times. Analytical data from Virol indicates that while peak engagement occurs at 19:00 and 15:00, posting remains highly concentrated on specific weekdays, leaving weekends and non-peak hours underutilized.

The Law on Public Information Disclosure (UU KIP No. 14/2008) mandates that public sector institutions ensure transparent, accessible, and timely dissemination of public information. Social media serves as a pivotal tool in fulfilling this mandate by enabling real-time communication and feedback loops with citizens. However, DPRD Kota Surabaya's current approach falls short of these legal requirements.

Instead of utilizing social media for proactive communication, content remains primarily archival

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and non-dialogic. Research by Lai et al. (2020) underscores that government social media accounts must prioritize dialogic engagement to ensure transparency and foster trust among constituents (Lai et al., 2020).

Without a dedicated team trained in regulatory compliance and public engagement strategies, the potential of social media as a transparent governance tool remains largely unrealized. In an effort to address the structural deficiencies, the announcement under NOMOR: 01/PANSEL PENGADAAN PEGAWAI ASN/08/2024 marks an important milestone. The recruitment drive includes hiring Pengendali Konten Internet (Content Controllers) with educational backgrounds in Communication Science (S-1 Ilmu Komunikasi) or Information Systems and Technology (S-1 Sistem dan Teknologi Informasi).

Key Responsibilities of the Role Include coordinating, verifying, and classifying digital content; Managing public complaints and feedback on digital platforms; Ensuring compliance with legal and institutional policies; developing content aligned with organizational goals and audience needs. This initiative reflects an acknowledgment of the growing strategic importance of social media management in public sector communication. Research by Benthaus et al. (2016) suggests that organizations with dedicated social media professionals demonstrate significantly better engagement outcomes due to structured workflows, skill specialization, and data-driven decision-making (Benthaus et al., 2016).

Strategic Roadmap for Social Media Improvement

Focus Area	Action Plan	Expected Outcome
Content Mix	Increase video and album posts	Improved audience engagement
Posting Schedule	Optimize posting for peak hours	Higher content visibility
Workload Balance	Evenly distribute tasks	Sustained team productivity
Team Training	Multimedia and analytics workshops	Enhanced team performance
Performance Metrics	KPI-linked evaluations	Increased team motivation

Table 2 Proposed Strategic Roadmap for Social Media Improvement

To optimize the performance of @setwankotasby's Instagram account, five key focus areas have been identified, each addressing

critical gaps in content strategy, team productivity, and performance evaluation.

First, in terms of Content Mix, there is a clear need to increase the frequency of video and album posts, as these formats consistently show higher audience engagement rates compared to static images. By prioritizing dynamic and interactive content, the team can capture audience attention more effectively and foster stronger connections with followers.

Second, the Posting Schedule must align with peak audience activity hours (e.g., 15:00 and 19:00). Optimizing the timing of posts ensures maximum visibility and reach, allowing content to perform at its highest potential during periods of active audience engagement.

Third, achieving Workload Balance is essential for sustaining productivity and preventing burnout. Tasks should be evenly distributed across team members and throughout the week to avoid clustering activities on certain days while neglecting others. A well-balanced workload supports consistent content delivery without compromising quality.

Fourth, Team Training should become a regular initiative, focusing on multimedia skills, video editing, and analytics interpretation. Workshops and professional development sessions will equip the team with the tools needed to produce high-quality content and make data-informed decisions.

Finally, Performance Metrics must be integrated into the team's workflow through KPI-linked evaluations. Setting clear performance indicators tied to engagement rates, content reach, and responsiveness will not only provide measurable outcomes but also boost team motivation and accountability.

CONCLUSION

The analysis of @setwankotasby's Instagram content strategy reveals critical imbalances in content utilization, resource allocation, and strategic oversight. The dominance of image posts—despite their low engagement rates—stands in stark contrast to the underutilization of videos and albums, which demonstrate significantly higher audience interaction. This inconsistency highlights a deeper paradox: while data-driven insights are available, they are not being effectively translated into actionable strategies.

The over-reliance on interns and temporary personnel for content creation further underscores structural weaknesses in team competencies, workload distribution, and strategic planning. Social

media is treated primarily as a documentation platform rather than a dynamic tool for dialogue, transparency, and engagement, limiting its potential to fulfill the mandates of Law No. 14/2008 on Public Information Disclosure (UU KIP).

However, the recent recruitment initiative under NOMOR: 01/PANSEL PENGADAAN PEGAWAI ASN/08/2024, which aims to bring in Content Controllers (Pengendali Konten Internet) with specialized expertise, represents a significant step toward addressing these challenges. This institutional commitment signals a shift toward professionalization, accountability, and data-driven decision-making in social media management.

Suggestion

To improve the effectiveness of @setwankotasby's Instagram strategy, a holistic approach is essential. First, content planning must shift focus from overused image posts to high-performing videos and albums, guided by a structured content calendar aligned with peak engagement hours (15:00 and 19:00).

Second, team training and specialization are crucial. Regular workshops on content creation, video editing, and analytics interpretation will equip staff with the necessary skills, while clear role delegation will prevent task overlap and reliance on interns for critical responsibilities.

Third, data-driven decision-making must become standard practice. Tools like Virol analytics should guide strategy, with monthly performance reviews ensuring continuous optimization.

Fourth, workload must be evenly distributed across the week using tools like Trello or Asana, ensuring consistency and avoiding burnout.

Finally, institutional leadership must provide adequate resources, strategic oversight, and alignment of social media goals with broader organizational objectives, fostering a culture of accountability and continuous improvement.

These steps will enable DPRD Kota Surabaya to transform its social media presence into an engaging, transparent, and impactful communication platform that builds public trust and institutional credibility.

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