

Perhumas Muda Yogyakarta's Instagram campaign: Enhancing public relations literacy among college students in Yogyakarta

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Abstract

Social media such as Instagram is now an effective way to run various campaign activities, including campaigns on public relations literacy. Public relations literacy in Indonesia remains low. This gap highlights the need for PERHUMAS Muda Yogyakarta (PMY) campaign initiatives to enhance understanding of public relations among students. This study aims to identify and analyze the campaign strategy of PMY in improving public relations literacy among Yogyakarta college students through the @perhumasmudayk Instagram account in 2023. This research uses a qualitative method with a case study approach, supported by data collection through interviews and documentation. The analysis focused on the five main aspects of the campaign management model by Antar Venus, namely planning, development, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. The results of this research show that PMY has strategically utilized Instagram features to improve public relations literacy by implementing structured educational content like *Kamis Kamus PR*, *Humas Bisa Apa*, and *Riset Isu Terkini*, as well as real-time interaction through live Instagram with the PR Talks program. However, several weaknesses are found, such as less optimum analysis of data insights, lack of alignment between content segments, too focused on using the one-way communication model, and the campaign evaluation only focused on measuring outputs. This study recommends strengthening data-based analysis, improving program development by aligning campaign programs, balancing communication methods with a two-way communication model, and expanding the campaign evaluation framework to assess campaign impact. The findings are expected to guide similar organizations in maximizing the potential of social media for literacy campaigns.

Keywords

Campaign strategy, Public relations literacy, Instagram, Campaign management model

Introduction

In this digital age, social media has become an important tool in communication and information dissemination. Information technology opens up great opportunities for organizations to reach a wider audience and deliver messages more effectively.

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PERHUMAS Muda Yogyakarta (PMY), an organization that focuses on Public Relations (PR) for students, utilizes social media, especially Instagram, to increase public relations literacy. PMY is committed to spreading PR education through campaign strategies delivered through this platform.

According to a report by the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII), internet users in Indonesia reach 215 million by 2023, with 78.19% population penetration. Of this number, users aged 19-34 years—corresponding to the typical age range of college students, contributed for 32.09%. The We Are Social report shows 139 million social media users in Indonesia, with Instagram second only to WhatsApp. This shows the great potential of Instagram as a campaign tool, especially among students.

PMY's Instagram account is the most active platform compared to other social media accounts such as X and TikTok. Instagram's interactive features, such as stories, reels and live, increase audience engagement and enable direct interaction. A study by [Suryani \(2024\)](#) found that Instagram users displayed significantly more positive sentiment toward the campaign compared to other social media platforms, with a higher proportion of positivity overall. Sentiment analysis highlights the intricate connection between campaign messages, platform dynamics, and audience interactions. Therefore, Instagram became the optimal platform to support PMY's public relations literacy campaign.

However, public relations literacy in Indonesia, especially among students, is still low. Retrieved from The Jakarta Post webpage, in 2016 UNESCO ranked Indonesia 60th out of 61 countries in reading literacy. The 2018 PISA survey ranked Indonesia 72nd out of 77 countries in student reading ability. Although Yogyakarta has the highest digital literacy index compared to 34 provinces in Indonesia ([Ministry of Communication and Information, 2021](#)), public relations literacy is still poorly understood. The low understanding of public relations can be a challenge for Yogyakarta college students to thrive in the professional world, especially in the digital era where the role of effective communication is crucial. [Nugroho \(2017\)](#) stated that PR literacy needs to be improved so that people are more critical of PR messages and increase accountability in this field. It is because there are still many people who remain skeptical of public relations and do not adopt a critical mindset, which further strengthens the irony in this field.

PMY has a strategic role in improving PR literacy among Yogyakarta students, with 375,000 students in this city ([Central Statistics Bureau, 2021](#)). PR literacy is not only relevant for communication majors, but also for students from other fields. PR literacy will add value in an increasingly competitive professional world. To achieve this, it is essential to maintain a commitment to continuous modifications and updates, ensuring adaptability to the evolving features of social media and shifting user behaviors ([Cho et al., 2024](#)).

A comparison of PMY's Instagram content between 2022 and 2023 shows a significant increase, with 22 contents in 2023 compared to 5 contents in 2022. Therefore, the 2023

period is the focus of this research, with the aim of analyzing how PMY optimizes Instagram to increase public relations literacy among Yogyakarta students. This research is expected to find innovative ways to maximize social media in PR educational campaign and provide recommendations for PMY and other PR organizations.

Method

This research methodology includes data collection, analysis, and data validity testing. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews with key informants (head/deputy head of the research and development department and creative strategist of PMY 2023) and supporting informants (Instagram followers of @perhumasmudayk since the beginning of 2023, active students in Yogyakarta, and interested in public relations issues). The documentation process involved analyzing Instagram content from @perhumasmudayk that reflected campaign strategies, relevant literature, and field notes. Specific content was selected based on its relevance to public relations literacy.

Data analysis used the Miles and Huberman interactive model which includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Sugiyono and Lestari, 2021). Data validity was tested by triangulating sources (William Wiersma in Sugiyono and Lestari, 2021). Insights from the interviews were cross-referenced with Instagram content analysis and user feedback to confirm the consistency and credibility of the findings. This approach ensured that multiple perspectives contributed to a comprehensive understanding of the campaign.

Results and Discussion

PERHUMAS Muda Yogyakarta (PMY) is a non-profit organization under the auspices of PERHUMAS Indonesia as a forum for university students in the Special Region of Yogyakarta (DIY) who have an interest in Public Relations. The purpose of the existence of this forum is so that students can share together to deepen their knowledge and improve their skills in the field of public relations. In line with its goals, PMY actively organizes campaigns with educational programs that aim to increase public relations literacy among Yogyakarta college students. One of the main strategies implemented by PMY to achieve this goal is by utilizing Instagram as the main media in disseminating educational content related to public relations literacy. This program is a work program of the research and development department and also the creative strategist department.

Based on the documental study of PMY's Instagram account, in 2023 there was a significant increase in the frequency of dissemination of public relations literacy content by PMY compared to the previous year. This reflects PMY's commitment to expanding the reach of public relations literacy through its Instagram account. To support this analysis, interviews were conducted with the Head of Research and Development

Department and Creative Strategist Department of PMY, who play a strategic role in decision-making regarding the public relations literacy campaign. Based on these interviews, it is known that this campaign strategy is carried out through five stages in the Campaign Management model according to Venus (2018), namely:

Planning

At this stage, PMY emphasizes the importance of researching program materials as a basis for setting descriptions, targets, specific objectives, and indicators of success. PMY also divides tasks based on members' expertise, such as copywriting and design, to ensure effective campaign execution. In addition, PMY developed a budget plan at this stage to efficiently manage the allocation of funds.

PMY choose Instagram as the main platform for the campaign due to its relevance to the target audience, who were mostly active Instagram users. This medium was used to disseminate public relations literacy content. PMY adjusts the frequency of upload schedule to the capacity of resources, such as the *Riset Isu Terkini* program which is uploaded three times per period, as well as *Kamis Kamus PR* and *Humas Bisa Apa* which are uploaded once a month. However, the research conducted focuses more on program materials, without a preliminary survey that identifies audience needs, which according to Mou (2020) is a crucial step to creating a targeted campaign.

The planning stage of the public relations literacy campaign by PMY can be analyzed using the eight elements of public relations planning according to Wilcox et al. (2015), namely situation, objectives, audience, strategy, tactics, timetable, budget, and evaluation. PMY started the planning with research to design the program, set measurable goals, and chose Instagram as the main platform due to its relevance to the audience. Strategies included the division of team tasks, while tactics involved programs such as *Kamis Kamus PR* and *PR Talks* with adjusted upload schedules. Limited resources led to a focus on the efficiency of the Instagram platform. The budget element is structured through budget plan for each program, while evaluation is designed using number-based indicators such as engagement and content performance to ensure the campaign is strategic and structured.

Development

In the development stage, PMY focuses on processing the substance of the content to make it informative and interesting, by utilizing secondary data such as journal articles, websites, and brainstorming with each member to improve the critical thinking skills of team members. The *Riset Isu Terkini* program is more complex as it involves primary data from interviews with informants such as academicians and members of PERHUMAS Yogyakarta.

Each material is concisely packaged with attractive visualizations to increase attractiveness, and the content material is presented concisely with easy-to-understand language. Visual content, such as infographics and videos, can present complex information effectively in a format that easy to understand (Neiger et al., 2013). This is

in line with research conducted by Januraga et al. (2020) which states that message clarity is important to increase the effectiveness of educational campaigns. PMY also utilizes social media trends in the creation of headlines, ensuring the content attracts more attention from the audience. The drafting and review process is carried out in stages by the copywriting PIC and department heads.

PMY's campaign program development stage emphasized the importance of preliminary research, as Austin and Pinkleton (2006) explain, that research is a key element in effective planning. PMY used secondary data such as journal articles and websites, as well as primary data from interviews to adjust content to trends and audience needs. This research has led PMY to produce informative, relevant, and engaging content.

Implementation

PMY's implementation of the public relations literacy campaign utilized various Instagram features to disseminate information and educate the audience. The features used by PMY in its campaign program include:

1. Feeds Post

Feeds post are used by PMY as the main medium for disseminating educational content that is permanent and can be accessed at any time. PMY utilizes this feature to create several content segments such as:

- a. *Kamis Kamus PR*: This segment comes every Thursday and aims to give the audience an understanding of the terms that are often used in the world of PR (Figure 1).
- b. *Humas Bisa Apa*: This program highlights the role and contribution of public relations practitioners in various sectors (Figure 2).
- c. *Riset Isu Terkini*: The focus of the research is to provide a comprehensive view of the current issues in society, from the perspective of a public relations (Figure 3). Once the research process is complete, the results are compiled into a research document that can be accessed by public.



Figure 1. Kamis Kamus PR Program



Figure 2. Humas Bisa Apa Program



Figure 3. Riset Isu Terkini Program

2. Instagram Story

This feature is used to increase visibility and engagement. PMY shares content feeds to stories and applies bridging to build audience curiosity before uploading the main post.

3. Instagram Live

PMY leverages Instagram Live for live discussions in its PR Talks program with speaker collaborations to reach new audiences (Figure 4). This helps to increase interaction in real-time.



Figure 4. PR Talks Program

4. Hashtag

PMY uses the hashtag feature as a strategy to expand reach and increase audience engagement on Instagram. Each campaign program has a hashtag according to the program's identity, such as #HumasBisaApa with content sequence numbers for easy audience access, as well as main hashtags such as #PERHUMASMudaYogyakarta, #WeDoGoodPR, #PERHUMASMuda, #PERHUMASIndonesia, #IndonesiaBicaraBaik, and #PemudaBicaraBaik which are used consistently as the identity of PMY and PERHUMAS Indonesia. These hashtags are designed by the Creative Strategist (CS) team and organized through SOPs to ensure consistency in every upload.

5. Instagram Insights

PMY used data from Instagram Insights to evaluate the success of the campaign. This data helped in determining the right timing of posts to maximize audience interaction.

According to Broom and Bey-Ling (2013), the implementation of effective PR communication needs to consider seven main aspects, namely: credibility, relevance, attractiveness, clarity, consistency, channel, and audience capability. In implementing public relations literacy campaign, PMY has shown success in several aspects, such as credibility through collaboration with experts in Instagram Live as well as relevance through the utilization of Instagram as the main platform. Ferdous (2023) found that real-time interactions through live chats and Q&A sessions effectively address public concerns with personalized responses, increasing the campaign's impact. However, PMY used more of a one-way communication model, which is effective for short-term awareness, but needs to be balanced with a two-way communication model to increase long-term audience engagement. Research by Wilkes-Allemann et al. (2021) shows that two-way communication is more effective in driving behavior change.

One of the ways to increase audience interaction is by increasing the frequency of PR Talks programs and integrating interactive content such as Quiz. Research by Mona et al. (2022) shows that trivia quiz content has a higher engagement rate compared to educational content. PMY can develop trivia quiz or interactive quizzes on their Instagram to increase participation and strengthen the emotional connection between PMY and its audiences.

Monitoring

To expand audience reach, PMY requires team members to repost content on personal social media accounts and share it through PMY's Instagram stories. Monitoring of metrics such as the number of likes, comments, and shares is done regularly. When the insight performance of some content is not sufficient, PMY still emphasizes the importance of consistent uploads on schedule. This shows PMY's prioritization of the continuity of content distribution as an indicator of campaign success, even though in-depth measurement has not been optimal.

While PMY monitoring focuses on the reach and consistency of posts, additional measures such as evaluating the impact of messages on audiences can strengthen campaign effectiveness. As Wilcox et al. (2015) mentioned, monitoring should ideally include baseline studies to measure changes in audience awareness and behaviors. This will help PMY identify the real impact of the content and improve understanding of the audience's response to the message.

Evaluation

Evaluation is carried out through monthly meetings that discuss work program performance, identify obstacles, and find solutions. The focus of evaluation is on technical aspects, such as the consistency of content uploads according to schedule and the flexibility of program adjustments. Success indicators are measured by quantitative

metrics, including data from Instagram Insights such as the number of followers, likes, comments, shares, views, as well as the number of uploads per month.

One of the key findings from the evaluation was the lack of alignment between content segments, such as the *Kamis Kamus PR* and *Humas Bisa Apa* programs. For improvement, PMY suggested to aligning program to be more linear and structured according to certain content pillars. In addition, internal data on the best upload time is used to improve campaign effectiveness, by determining the optimal time based on previous content performance.

Based on Lindemann's Public Relations Effectiveness Yardstick model (Watson and Paul, 2005), the PMY evaluation is at level 1, which is output measurement. This step assesses the way the campaign was presented through the media and the extent to which the message reached the audience. However, by focusing solely on output measurement, the evaluation has not fully assessed changes in audience awareness, understanding, or behaviors. To address this, PMY is suggested to expand its evaluation framework to include level 2 (outgrowth measurement) and level 3 (outcome measurement), which examine the effects on audience perception, behaviors, and overall campaign influence, to ensure a more comprehensive assessment of effectiveness.

Conclusion

This research highlights various important aspects in planning, developing, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating campaign strategies conducted by PMY on the Instagram platform. Based on the findings, the research concludes that PMY has implemented the campaign with a planned and structured strategy. The choice of Instagram as the leading platform shows the appropriate adaptation to the target audience. However, research on the campaign materials without a preliminary survey has the potential to reduce the relevance of the program.

At the development stage, PMY utilized a combination of secondary and primary data to ensure the quality and relevance of the content. The implementation of the campaign through various Instagram features is quite optimal, but the use of two-way communication models still needs to be expanded to increase audience engagement. In terms of monitoring, PMY has shown a strong effort to maintain the consistency of uploads, but the approach used is still limited to analyzing basic Instagram metrics. The evaluation tends to focus on measuring outputs, so the assessment of changes in audience awareness, understanding, and attitudes has not been fully carried out. The focus of the evaluation indicates the need to expand its evaluation methods to better understand the campaign's impact.

PMY has made significant efforts to design and execute effective social media-based PR literacy campaigns. However, PMY needs to improve the two-way communication approach and provide more structured monitoring and measurement of the impact on audiences to achieve long-term sustainable goals.

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