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SOCIAL MEDIA FOR PR IN UNIVERSITY: BUILDING COMMUNITY AND ENGAGEMENT

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Abstract

Public relations and stakeholder engagement at universities have been transformed by social media. According to several studies, colleges are using social media more and more to share information, advertise events, and project a positive image. Some claim, however, that colleges have not fully embraced the participatory features of social media and instead use it as a "spectator sport" for one-way communication. This study aims to analyze how social media helps build community and engagement for public relations purposes in the university. This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach with a case study method. Data are collected through interviews and then analyzed with pattern-matching analysis. This research finds that the faculty's social media initiatives exhibit significant shortcomings, such as a failure to engage in active listening and research, a lack of data-driven strategy, minimal monitoring, and superficial evaluation. The faculty also failed to employ crucial methodologies such as social listening, polls, and focus groups to comprehend the requirements of their target audience, resulting in disconnection and diminished involvement. The efforts are impulsive and disorganized, resulting in missed chances for efficient involvement and community development. The scope of monitoring is limited to responding to comments, lacking sophisticated capabilities for tracking key performance metrics or assessing trends. The evaluation is rudimentary, missing thorough metrics and qualitative assessments, hence failing to provide strategic insights. By adopting a systematic and data-driven strategy, it will be possible to create more effective and captivating social media campaigns, which will enhance audience engagement and improve communication efforts.

Keywords: *community engagement, public relations, public relations of university, monitoring, social media.*



INTRODUCTION

The use of social media by universities for public relations purposes has become increasingly prevalent in recent years. Universities recognize the importance of engaging with their target audiences on popular social media platforms to effectively communicate their brand, events, achievements and engage in meaningful dialogue.

Building community and engagement in university public relations is crucial and pressing due to the current lack of reciprocity and equal partnerships between universities and communities (Arrazattee, 2022). Many institutions prioritize research over community engagement, perpetuating an "ivory tower" mentality that hinders the production of reliable knowledge through responsible engagement (Tshishonga, 2020). Proactively engaged universities are needed to address contemporary challenges at local and global levels, emphasizing the importance of universities as communities of scholars that bring unique value to society (Séamus, 2019).

Universities now understand how critical it is to use social media platforms to interact with their different stakeholders in the digital age, such as students, staff, faculty, and the community at large (Adel, 2020). Social media has revolutionized university communication by enabling them to engage, converse, and engage with their audiences in fresh and creative ways. Universities have a chance to strengthen bonds and promote a sense of community through these digital platforms as more and more students use social media to share material, get information, and communicate about their lives and activities (Giglietto and Lovari, 2012).

Social media has become an integral part of modern public relations strategies, enabling organizations to engage directly with their target audiences and build strong communities around their brands (Rice and Atkin, 2001). The digital era has significantly transformed the practice of public relations, with social media emerging as a crucial tool for reaching and interacting with stakeholders (Septiyani and Sari, 2021). Social media platforms have become a new style of communication characterized by conversation and community, allowing individuals to interact with one another and build relationships (Ayman et al., 2020). Companies including universities are quickly recognizing the advantages of social media in marketing and public relations, and are increasingly emphasizing their presence on social networking sites (Barcik and Dziwiński, 2018).

However, the core of social networking sites is the active participation of network users, and creating business profiles in social media requires a constant commitment to dialogue with the audience (Barcik and Dziwiński, 2018). One study emphasizes that public relations practitioners are not fully adopting new media due to their lack of preparedness and a general apprehension towards the technology (Joo and Teng, 2016). This suggests that there is a need for public relations practitioners to develop a better understanding of the mechanisms and best practices for utilizing social media to foster meaningful community engagement.

One approach that has gained traction in the field of public relations is the concept of Social Media Newsrooms, which serve as a starting point for dialogical communication and relationship building with a variety of stakeholders (Zerfass and Schramm, 2014). These platforms allow organizations to present and discuss the full range of topics shaping their identity, while also providing a channel for two-way communication with the audience. Universities now consider social media adoption to be essential components of



their public relations campaigns. Universities can use social media platforms to disseminate information, provide services, and interact more effectively with students at every stage of their academic careers, from potential applicants to enrolled students, graduates, and alumni. Furthermore, using social media in the classroom has demonstrated the potential to improve teaching and learning and raise student engagement (Chougule, et al., 2020).

One of the primary ways in which social media can benefit higher education is through its ability to facilitate information sharing and collaboration (Iqbal et al., 2018). Students can use social media platforms to connect with their peers, professors, and experts in their field of study, enabling them to exchange valuable information, discuss course material, and even form virtual study groups. This enhanced communication and collaboration can lead to a deeper understanding of course content and better academic outcomes.

Furthermore, social media can be a valuable resource for students to conduct research and stay informed about the latest developments in their areas of interest (Hashim et al., 2015). By following relevant social media accounts, students can gain access to a wealth of information, expert opinions, and real-time updates, which can be particularly beneficial for those pursuing research-focused programs or conducting independent studies.

Social media can also play a role in fostering a sense of community and engagement among university students (Lovari & Giglietto, 2012). By providing a platform for students to share their experiences, express their thoughts, and interact with their peers, social media can help create a more inclusive and supportive campus environment. This, in turn, can lead to increased student satisfaction, improved mental health, and better overall academic performance.

The purpose of this research paper is to examine the function of social media in university public relations, with an emphasis on how it can be applied to foster a sense of community and improve participation among students, staff, and other stakeholders. By utilizing social media, universities can reach a wider and more diverse audience, increase brand visibility, and establish themselves as thought leaders in their respective fields. Additionally, social media allows universities to gather valuable feedback and insights from their stakeholders, enabling them to tailor their messaging and PR strategies accordingly. This research was conducted in Universitas Indonesia. The research questions were as follows:

- 1) RQ1: How does the head of PR in the university conduct listening and developing research, discovering data, and applying meaningful findings?
- 2) RQ2: How does the head of PR in the university strategically design a social media campaign based on data analysis observations?
- 3) RQ3: How does the head of PR in the university observe the results?
- 4) RQ4: How does the head of PR in the university assess the results?

The Role of Social Media in Public Relations

In the dynamic landscape of modern communication, the role of social media in public relations has become increasingly pivotal. The internet and related technologies have transformed the way organizations engage with their stakeholders, including the media, and public relations professionals must adapt to these changes to remain effective.



Recent studies have highlighted the mechanisms that practitioners can employ to enhance their online public relations efforts. Social media platforms have become a primary channel for creating and sharing content, presenting both new challenges and opportunities for the public relations profession. While corporate websites, email communication, and electronic news releases were once considered standard PR tools, many practitioners are still grappling with the impact of new media and are ill-equipped to fully embrace its potential (Joo and Teng, 2016). The empowering effect of social media is a key consideration, as it provides a dynamic medium for the public to voice their opinions in real-time (Yoo and Jo, 2014). This has significant implications for how organizations and issues are perceived, and social media content has become an invaluable resource for researchers studying these evolving dynamics (Yoo and Jo, 2014).

In order to improve online PR practice, scholars have suggested several strategies for practitioners. These include creating a monthly plan for social media content and making sure to post and share content on university social media platforms every day (Adel, 2020). It's crucial for modern PR professionals to have the skill to listen to and engage with stakeholders through social media. Tools like "social listening" can help them better understand audience perceptions and develop more effective communication strategies. With the continuous evolution of the digital landscape, integrating social media into PR practice is no longer a choice but a necessity. Practitioners who are slow to adapt risk being left behind, while those who embrace these new technologies can position their organizations for greater success in the digital age.

Social Media Strategies in Higher Education

The integration of social media platforms into the academic landscape has become an increasingly prevalent and essential aspect of modern higher education. As higher education institutions strive to engage with their diverse stakeholders, including current students, prospective students, alumni, and the broader community, the strategic utilization of social media has emerged as a crucial component of their marketing and communication strategies (Vorvoreanu et al., 2015; Ramadanty et al., 2020; Stewart and Lanzillo, 2018).

The proliferation of social media users, particularly in Indonesia, has had a significant impact on various sectors, including the education sector (Ramadanty et al., 2020). Social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram provide opportunities for followers to connect, interact, and engage with one another, offering higher education institutions the potential to increase recognition and involvement of their stakeholders, especially in the recruitment of new students (Ramadanty et al., 2020; Kurniawan et al., 2020).

Universities' websites have traditionally served as strategic tools in the area of university communication, playing an important role in the relationship between higher education institutions and their publics (Lovari and Giglietto, 2012). However, with the advent of social media, the dynamic between universities and their students has evolved, allowing for new ways to disseminate information, deliver services, and foster stronger engagement and dialogue throughout the student lifecycle, from perspective to enrolled students, and even alumni (Lovari and Giglietto, 2012).

Social media can represent both an opportunity and a challenge for higher education institutions as they navigate the complexities of interacting, dialoguing, and listening to students not only within their local context but also in the increasingly



globalized higher education landscape (Lovari and Giglietto, 2012). Institutions must carefully consider their social media strategies, aligning their objectives with the strategic deployment of appropriate social media channels to ensure the effectiveness of their social media content (Ramadanty et al., 2020).

As universities continue to use social media, it is important that they understand the changing landscape and learn how to effectively use these platforms to improve their marketing, communication, and student engagement. Incorporating a well-crafted social media strategy can be a powerful tool for higher education institutions to enhance their brand, increase visibility, and foster deeper connections with their stakeholders (Kurniawan et al., 2020).

Four-Step Process For Social Media Campaign

Carolyn Mae Kim's (2020) four-step process for developing a structured and purposeful social media campaign offers a comprehensive approach that professionals can leverage to design and engage with their target audiences around organizational objectives.

1) Step 1: Listening—Developing Research, Discovering Data, and Applying Meaning

This initial step emphasizes the importance of understanding the social media landscape, identifying key influencers, and analyzing audience interests and preferences. Brands should invest time in conducting thorough research to uncover insights that will inform their strategic decisions moving forward (Kumar, 2018).

2) Step 2: Strategic Design

Part A: Developing a Data-Informed Social Media Campaign

After gaining a deep understanding of the target audience, organizations can leverage the data-driven insights to develop a social media campaign that aligns with their objectives. This involves crafting a clear messaging strategy, identifying the most effective platforms, and optimizing content for maximum impact (Rowe, 2014; Roberts, 2016).

Part B: Designing Creative Engagement in Brand Communities

The strategic design phase also encompasses the development of engaging content and the cultivation of brand communities. Brands should focus on creating authentic, value-added experiences that resonate with their audience and foster meaningful interactions (Jones & Rossiter, 2002; Silva and Mazzon, 2016).

3) Step 3: Implementation and Monitoring—Joining Conversations and Creating Purposeful Interaction

With the strategic foundation in place, the campaign can be launched. This step emphasizes the importance of actively participating in relevant conversations, responding



to audience feedback, and continuously optimizing the campaign based on performance metrics (Rowe, 2014; Roberts, 2016).

4) Step 4: Evaluation—Showcasing Success and Growth Opportunities

The final step involves analyzing the campaign's effectiveness and identifying areas for improvement. By evaluating the impact of the campaign, organizations can demonstrate the value of their social media efforts and make data-driven decisions to drive future success (Jones & Rossiter, 2002; Ashley and Tuten, 2014). Kim's four-step process provides a robust framework for developing and executing effective social media campaigns that align with organizational objectives and engage target audiences in a meaningful and purposeful manner.

Building Online Communities

Universities have long been at the forefront of fostering and nurturing vibrant communities, both on-campus and within the broader academic landscape. This tradition of community-building has become increasingly important in the digital age, as universities seek to leverage online platforms and technologies to create meaningful connections between students, faculty, and the wider public (Fisher et al., 2004).

One key aspect of this shift towards online community-building is the growing emphasis on university-community engagement. As universities strive to position themselves as "engaged institutions," they are exploring new ways to collaborate with local communities, businesses, and organizations to address pressing social and economic challenges (Fisher et al., 2004; Amutuhaire, 2023). This approach recognizes that universities have a social responsibility to share their knowledge and resources in ways that benefit the broader public, and that by doing so, they can also enhance their own research and teaching missions (Winter et al., 2006).

Online platforms and digital technologies have played a crucial role in facilitating these university-community partnerships. For example, interactive web-based tools can enable real-time communication and collaboration between university researchers and community stakeholders, allowing them to co-create solutions to complex problems (Dumova, 2015). Additionally, asynchronous communication platforms can help to bridge geographic and temporal divides, enabling ongoing engagement and knowledge-sharing even when participants are not physically co-located (Dumova, 2015).

Case Studies of Successful University Social Media Campaigns

In Indonesia, universities have also recognized the power of social media to engage with their communities. A study of 30 Indonesian universities found that while most had an active presence on platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, their social media efforts were often lacking in terms of genuine engagement and dialogue with their target audiences (Lovari and Giglietto, 2012). To address this, some universities have adopted a more strategic and intentional approach to their social media use, focusing on cultivating a sense of community and fostering two-way communication with students, alumni, and the broader public.

While the benefits of university-community engagement are well-documented, the process of building and sustaining these relationships can be complex and challenging



(Hall, 2022). Universities must navigate a range of logistical, cultural, and political barriers to ensure that their community engagement efforts are truly effective and equitable.

The University of Southern California, for example, has leveraged social media to build a vibrant online community of students, alumni, and community members. By curating engaging content, fostering user-generated content, and facilitating real-time dialogue, USC has been able to create a sense of shared identity and belonging that extends far beyond the physical campus (Chile and Black, 2015).

Michigan State University has been widely recognized for its successful social media campaigns that have helped to strengthen the university's ties with its diverse community of stakeholders. By sharing compelling content, responding to user comments and questions, and actively soliciting feedback, MSU has been able to create a vibrant online community that complements and enhances its physical campus presence (Voss and Kumar, 2013).

The University of Winnipeg in Canada is a compelling example of how universities can use digital technologies to foster meaningful community connections. Over the past ten years, the university has worked to break down barriers between the institution and its local community, actively engaging residents, businesses, and organizations in collaborative projects. By using various online platforms and tools, the university has expanded the reach and impact of these partnerships, creating new opportunities for shared learning, problem-solving, and community empowerment.

As universities continue to navigate the digital landscape, the importance of building and sustaining online communities will only grow. By leveraging emerging technologies and fostering meaningful connections with local and global stakeholders, universities can position themselves as hubs of innovation, knowledge sharing, and social impact, ultimately furthering their core missions of education, research, and public service.

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach with a case study method to explore how social media is used for public relations in universities, particularly in building community and engagement. Purposive sampling is the chosen technique for selecting participants. Purposive sampling is a non-probability technique used primarily in qualitative research to select participants based on predefined criteria relevant to the study's objectives (Nyimbili and Nyimbili, 2024). While it shares similarities with convenience sampling, such as subjectivity and limited external validity, purposive sampling is more focused on specific characteristics (Andrade, 2020).

Researchers can choose from various purposive sampling types, including extreme case, maximum variation, and criterion sampling (Nyimbili and Nyimbili, 2024). The technique enhances study rigor and data trustworthiness when aligned with research methodology and objectives (Campbell et al., 2020). However, it may introduce bias and limit generalizability (Adebayo and Ackers, 2021). To improve sampling quality, researchers should consider theoretical sampling approaches and best practices, such as screening techniques for online sampling (Zickar and Keith, 2022). Ethical considerations and potential exclusions should also be addressed when using purposive sampling (Denieffe, 2020).



This research is targeting PR professionals, social media managers, and faculty members involved in social media initiatives. The interviewees of this research are three PR Officers of different faculties at Universitas Indonesia. The reason for choosing these three interviews is based on their representation of different academic areas, which guarantees a thorough comprehension of the subject matter. The initial respondent is affiliated with the Faculty of Applied Education. The second interviewee is a representative of the Faculty of Social Sciences. Lastly, the third interviewee is associated with the Faculty of Natural Sciences. The inclusion of several perspectives in the research ensures a comprehensive examination and strengthens the overall credibility of the findings. This method ensures a diverse and informative sample, providing rich insights into the various strategies and outcomes associated with social media usage in higher education.

Data collection will primarily be conducted through semi-structured interviews, allowing for flexibility while ensuring key topics are covered. Semi-structured interviews are a valuable qualitative research method used across various fields, offering in-depth insights into participants' experiences and perspectives (Junnier, 2024). They allow researchers to explore complex concepts such as health, happiness, and the built environment, bridging connections between these areas through thematic analysis (Andalib, 2024). Additionally, semi-structured interviews have been adapted to online platforms, providing flexibility and valuable insights while overcoming challenges like connectivity issues (Wakelin, 2024).

An interview guide with open-ended questions will be developed to elicit detailed responses on participants' roles, strategies for community building, engagement measurement, and examples of successful campaigns. Interviews will be conducted face-to-face or via video conferencing platforms, recorded, and transcribed for thorough analysis. This approach ensures comprehensive data collection, capturing nuanced perspectives and experiences. Pattern matching analysis will be used to analyze the collected data, comparing empirical data with predicted patterns based on the literature review and theoretical framework.

Interview transcripts will be organized and categorized according to key themes, and the data will be compared with predicted patterns to identify consistencies and discrepancies. Emerging patterns will also be noted and analyzed, allowing for a thorough understanding of effective social media strategies in university PR. Ethical considerations, including informed consent, confidentiality, and data security, will be strictly adhered to throughout the study to protect participants and maintain the integrity of the research.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Assessment of the Four-Step Process for Effective Social Media Campaigns in the University Setting

This study offers a comprehensive assessment of the implementation of The Four-Step Process for Effective Social Media Campaigns in a university's social media endeavors. The findings expose notable shortcomings in the execution of every stage of this procedure, which cumulatively diminish the efficacy and potential influence of the faculty's social media initiatives.

The qualitative data reveals a collaborative and trend-responsive approach in content creation. The brainstorming sessions, as described, involve multiple team members contributing ideas, with a notable mention of the social media admin as a key idea generator:

"...We usually brainstorm first, so what content do we want to make? It's true that many of these ideas come from Miss P...sometimes there are those who ride the wave, so we follow trends that are booming too, we usually follow what's happening on social media, or if so, that's for the content. Sometimes we also like to see or look for references..." - MBA, Head of PR from faculty 1

This approach highlights the team's adaptability and research-driven methodology, incorporating trending topics and references to produce engaging content.

The analysis of the data reveals a structured approach to managing social media content within the faculty, with a notable emphasis on approval and risk management. The process begins with the Faculty Secretary reviewing and approving content before it is posted:

"...Before posting on social media content because we have a superior, the Faculty Secretary is usually the one who sorts or determines whether this is allowed or not." This approval process involves considering the timing of posts, such as monthly events and significant days: "...we first see what holidays are there in a month. Then what big days are there and that is also a consideration for us to want, what do we want to post." - MR, Head of PR from faculty 2

This method ensures that content is aligned with relevant observances but also indicates a cautious approach to content management.

The analysis reveals a multifaceted approach to managing the faculty's social media efforts, with specific insights into the processes of research, strategic design, observation, and assessment. In terms of listening and developing research, the faculty employs basic methods to gather feedback and insights:

"...conducting surveys in the form of questionnaires or by interviewing a large number of individuals..." - TA, Head of PR from faculty 3

This approach highlights a reliance on surveys and informal inquiries to understand audience needs, although it may lack the depth and sophistication of more advanced research techniques.

The faculty lacks a methodical strategy for actively listening to their audience and formulating research based on feedback, with noticeable gaps in data gathering and analysis focused on understanding audience requirements, preferences, and perspectives. Essential techniques like social listening, surveys, and focus groups are not employed to collect insights. This deficiency in active listening and research leads to missed opportunities to gain a valuable understanding of audience behaviors and opinions, creating a significant disconnect between the faculty's social media tactics and the true needs and preferences of their target audience. Consequently, social media efforts lack customization, resulting in reduced engagement and relevance, and ultimately, this divide hampers the potential effectiveness of the faculty's social media initiatives in fostering community and promoting engagement. Engagement analysis is a critical component of their strategy, demonstrated by their manual tracking of metrics:

"...usually we will look at what content has a lot of engagement, meaning it has a lot of reactions, either likes, then reposts, or comments, yes, we usually look at it from

insight, just manually, sis, really scrolling , keep counting...”- MBA, Head of PR from faculty 1

This hands-on method indicates a commitment to understanding audience reactions in detail. By prioritizing content with high engagement, the team values direct feedback and interaction as essential indicators of success.

The faculty’s strategy reflects a risk-averse mindset, as there is a concern about potential negative perceptions:

“...So, actually if we use that, I'm worried that it will create a bad stigma for the faculty 2, right? It's actually too risky.” - MR, Head of PR from faculty 2

This concern about avoiding adverse impacts results in a selective approach to publishing content, which may limit the scope of engagement and creativity in their social media campaigns. By prioritizing risk management, the faculty may inadvertently restrict opportunities for more dynamic and engaging content.

When it comes to strategic design, the faculty's approach involves a structured but somewhat traditional method. They plan content based on significant dates and events, which guide their postings:

“...es, as I previously mentioned, we first examine the holidays and significant days occurring within the month. These considerations help us decide on the content we plan to post. For example, recently we observed World Health Day, Alzheimer’s Awareness Day, and the International Day for Non-Violence....” - TA, Head of PR from faculty 3

While this strategy ensures content relevance to notable events, it might limit the scope for more dynamic and spontaneous content creation.

The faculty's social media campaigns suffer from a lack of well-planned strategies that incorporate data analysis, resulting in efforts that are created spontaneously and without a distinct, evidence-based framework. This absence of strategic frameworks or models means their social media content and engagement strategies lack pertinent and precise information about the target audience. Consequently, campaigns fail to reach targeted outcomes, as effective strategic design is crucial for developing focused and influential social media efforts that resonate with the audience. Without it, the faculty's campaigns fall short in engagement, participation, and community building, indicating a missed opportunity to fully utilize social media platforms for fostering a sense of community and encouraging active involvement from students, staff, and other stakeholders. Moreover, the lack of strategic planning can lead to inconsistent messaging and missed opportunities for cohesive branding and communication. Strategic planning for future social media campaigns is approached both informally and proactively. The discussions often occur through casual conversations rather than formal documentation:

“... as for future program strategy, I've never heard of it, but this is once again, not what is stated in the document, it's just like chatting...” - MBA, Head of PR from faculty 1

Despite this informality, a content planner ensures that content is scheduled months in advance:

“...content planner OK, so he is planning what content will be interesting for the next 2 months or up to 3 months, so he already has a plan...” - MBA, Head of PR from faculty 1



This dual approach allows for both spontaneity and organization in maintaining a consistent content flow.

Monitoring and assessment practices are systematic and focused on improving future content strategies. The faculty regularly reviews metrics such as follower growth and demographic insights:

“...every month we see the increase in followers, we see what age group to what age group often accesses the faculty of psychology's social media... We always analyze it every month. So, what content is most often live? What time is the most accessed social media?” - MR, Head of PR from faculty 2

This ongoing analysis helps in understanding audience engagement patterns and informs decisions about what content to produce.

In terms of assessment, the faculty conducts annual reviews to evaluate their social media performance and future direction:

“... We conduct annual evaluation monitoring. During our yearly meetings to discuss the annual report, we address our problems, the trends moving forward, and the preferences of our followers?... ” - TA, Head of PR from faculty 3

This regular evaluation helps in understanding trends and setting goals, though the effectiveness of these assessments could be improved with more frequent and detailed analysis. Balancing strategic planning with real-time feedback and a broader range of content strategies could enhance the faculty's social media impact.

The monitoring efforts by the faculty are limited to engaging in conversations by replying to comments on their social media channels. While interacting with the audience in this way is beneficial, it only addresses a narrow scope of monitoring tasks. The faculty does not use advanced monitoring tools or analytics to track key performance indicators (KPIs), conduct sentiment analysis, or identify emerging trends. This limited approach hinders their ability to gain a comprehensive understanding of their social media initiatives' effectiveness and the nature of audience interactions. Effective monitoring should include a broader range of activities, such as using analytics to measure engagement rates, reach, sentiment, and identify patterns in audience behavior. The current method misses opportunities to gather detailed feedback and understand the broader impact of social media efforts, which impedes the faculty's ability to make informed adjustments and improvements based on real-time data. Additionally, the lack of advanced monitoring technologies prevents the faculty from quickly identifying and addressing potential issues or capitalizing on positive trends.

Evaluation and assessment of social media success are conducted on a case-by-case basis with an emphasis on qualitative indicators:

“... evaluation per case only, but still informal... indicators of social media success, according to Kokin, achieved positive sentiment. There is no onslaught of bad comments, once again the form is informal. Then there are no takedown posts...” - MBA, Head of PR from faculty 1

The primary indicators of success include positive sentiment and the absence of negative feedback or takedown requests. This informal but focused evaluation method underscores the importance of maintaining a positive online presence and reputation.

The insights from these assessments guide future content creation:



“...so that we know next month what other content we will create that people might be interested in. Approximately after seeing the evaluation results.”- MR, Head of PR from faculty 2

While the faculty employs a methodical approach to content approval and performance evaluation, incorporating more flexibility and creative freedom into their strategy could enhance engagement and impact. Balancing risk management with innovation may lead to more engaging and effective social media campaigns.

Observation results indicate a cautious approach to content sensitivity. The faculty is aware of the need to maintain objectivity and avoid controversial topics:

“...We recognize that this is an official channel where our subjectivity, or that of the faculty leadership, should not be present. Including such subjectivity could lead to conflicts and accusations of propaganda. Therefore, we generally avoid sensitive issues...” - TA, Head of PR from faculty 3

This careful management helps avoid potential backlash but may also restrict the ability to address important issues or engage in more varied discussions.

The faculty's evaluation of their social media initiatives is confined to basic assessments of their accounts, offering an incomplete view of the campaigns' effectiveness. This superficial evaluation method lacks comprehensive procedures that include a variety of metrics and qualitative assessments, essential for accurately determining the impact of social media marketing. Effective evaluation should analyze multiple indicators, such as engagement rates, reach, conversions, and overall sentiment, while aligning results with strategic objectives like enhancing student involvement, fostering community engagement, and cultivating a positive faculty image. The current limited evaluation approach fails to provide a thorough assessment of campaign efficacy, offering insufficient insights for strategic decision-making and future improvements. Without comprehensive assessment, the faculty cannot accurately measure success or identify areas for enhancement, leading to a cycle of ineffective campaigns.

Based on the review of the social media campaigns conducted by the faculty, numerous significant shortcomings have been identified in the implementation of The Four-Step Process for Effective Social Media Campaigns (Kim, 2020). One of the most critical findings is the lack of systematic listening and research. The faculty does not engage in detailed data gathering or analysis to understand the audience's requirements, preferences, and perceptions. This absence of foundational research creates a gap between the tactics employed by the university's PRs and the actual demands and behaviors of their primary audience.

Furthermore, there is a noticeable lack of data-informed strategic design, leading to social media campaigns that are not based on accurate and relevant data about the target audience. Instead, campaigns appear to be generated ad hoc, without the use of strategic frameworks or models to guide content development and interaction methods. This ad hoc approach results in campaigns that may not effectively address the needs and interests of the audience, reducing their overall impact and effectiveness.

The faculty's monitoring activities are also restricted, primarily limited to creating conversations by responding to comments on social media platforms. This limited scope of monitoring does not involve sophisticated tools for tracking key performance indicators (KPIs), conducting sentiment analysis, or identifying emerging trends. Such a narrow approach hinders the faculty's ability to gain comprehensive insights into the performance



of their social media efforts and to proactively address issues or capitalize on positive developments.

Finally, the evaluation of social media campaigns is superficial, restricted to basic checks on social media accounts. This shallow approach fails to provide a comprehensive assessment of the campaign's success or failure, lacking extensive evaluation methodologies that incorporate a variety of metrics and qualitative evaluations. As a result, the faculty is unable to accurately analyze campaign performance and identify areas for improvement, making it difficult to make informed strategic decisions and prepare for future initiatives.

CONCLUSION

This study identifies substantial deficiencies in the implementation of The Four-Step Process for Effective Social Media Campaigns in the faculty's social media efforts (Kim, 2020). The lack of a structured strategy for listening and conducting research, coupled with an absence of strategic, data-driven design and inadequate monitoring and evaluation activities, significantly hinders the effectiveness of their social media initiatives.

To amplify the effectiveness of their social media efforts, the faculty should adopt a more organized and data-oriented strategy for every stage of the process. This includes executing extensive listening and research activities using social listening technologies, surveys, focus groups, and other approaches to collect detailed insights into audience needs and behaviors. Additionally, creating strategic and data-driven designs by utilizing the gathered data can help develop focused, cohesive, and impactful social media plans that align with both the audience's preferences and the faculty's objectives. Expanding monitoring efforts through sophisticated tools and analytics to track various metrics, conduct sentiment analysis, and identify trends and patterns in audience engagement is also crucial.

Furthermore, employing rigorous evaluation methodologies that examine both quantitative and qualitative data will help assess the efficacy of campaigns and provide insights for future strategies. By addressing these shortcomings, the faculty can more effectively utilize social media to foster a sense of community, enhance engagement, and achieve their strategic goals. Adopting this methodical and information-based approach will empower the faculty to create more impactful and engaging social media campaigns, ultimately fostering a deeper connection with their audience and enhancing their overall communication efforts.

To improve the efficiency of their social media campaigns, the faculty should implement several recommended strategies. First, they need to organize and carry out extensive listening and research activities by using social listening tools to monitor conversations and mentions across social media platforms, conducting surveys and focus groups for direct feedback, and analyzing audience demographics, behaviors, and engagement patterns. This data can inform the development of targeted, cohesive, and impactful social media content that aligns with audience interests and faculty goals. Additionally, utilizing strategic planning frameworks and clearly defining campaign goals will ensure a structured and consistent approach.

Efforts to monitor social media activities should be expanded by employing advanced monitoring tools and analytics to track engagement rates, reach, sentiment, and

trends in audience interactions. Regular sentiment analysis will help understand the general tone and perception of the faculty's social media presence, while keeping an eye on emerging trends ensures a current and responsive approach. Comprehensive evaluation methods should also be used to assess campaign performance, including both quantitative and qualitative data.

Key metrics such as engagement rates, reach, conversions, and overall sentiment should be examined, and the evaluation should consider how well the campaign outcomes align with strategic goals like increasing student participation, enhancing community engagement, and projecting a positive faculty image. By addressing these areas and conducting further research on effective social media strategies in university public relations, the faculty can significantly enhance their social media efforts, fostering stronger connections with their audience and improving overall public relations.

This study faces several constraints that impact its findings. Limitations in data collection and analysis arise from relying on social media interactions and self-reported surveys, which may not fully capture audience preferences and behaviors. The absence of advanced data collection tools and comprehensive analytical methods could lead to incomplete or biased results. Potential biases, such as a non-representative sample and researcher bias, further affect the reliability of the findings; addressing these could involve using a larger, more diverse sample and multiple researchers for more objective analysis. Additionally, the generalizability of the findings is constrained by the particular context of the faculty's social media initiatives, as the unique audience and institutional factors might not be relevant in other settings. Future research should include comparative studies across different institutions to enhance the applicability of the proposed strategies.

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