



PUBLIC RELATIONS MANAGEMENT IN OPTIMIZING SOCIAL MEDIA AS A BRANDING MEANS IN MADRASAH ALIYAH NEGERI (MAN) BONDOWOSO

MANAJEMEN HUMAS DALAM MENGOPTIMALKAN MEDIA SOSIAL SEBAGAI SARANA BRANDING DI MADRASAH ALIYAH NEGERI (MAN) BONDOWOSO

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Abstract

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Penguatan hubungan antara lembaga pendidikan dengan masyarakat terus dikembangkan dengan memanfaatkan media daring sebagai sarana komunikasi dan edukasi. Pemanfaatan media sosial sebagai sarana branding di lembaga pendidikan juga semakin gencar dilakukan oleh beberapa lembaga pendidikan, salah satunya MAN Bondowoso. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui strategi manajemen hubungan masyarakat (PR) dalam mengoptimalkan pemanfaatan media sosial sebagai sarana branding madrasah di MAN Bondowoso. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode penelitian lapangan dengan jenis penelitian kualitatif. Pengumpulan data dilakukan dengan menggunakan teknik wawancara, observasi dan dokumentasi. Serta teknik analisis data yang digunakan melalui tiga prosedur, meliputi kondensasi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan simpulan. Data yang telah diperoleh diperiksa keabsahannya menggunakan teknik triangulasi. Temuan dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa MAN Bondowoso telah memanfaatkan media sosial sebagai sarana branding selain secara umum menjadi media informasi, komunikasi, edukasi dan dakwah. Terdapat empat media sosial yang dikelola dan dikembangkan di MAN Bondowoso, meliputi Instagram, Facebook, YouTube dan Website. Perkembangan pengelolaan media sosial di MAN Bondowoso beberapa tahun terakhir mengalami peningkatan, dikarenakan adanya strategi manajemen hubungan masyarakat dalam proses pengelolaannya, mulai dari tahap perencanaan, pengorganisasian, pelaksanaan dan pengawasan.

Kata Kunci: Branding, Manajemen, Hubungan Masyarakat, dan Media Sosial

Abstract

Strengthening relations between educational institutions and the community continues to develop by utilizing online media as a means of communication and education. The use of social media as a means of branding in educational institutions is also increasingly being carried out more intensively by several educational institutions, one of which is MAN Bondowoso. The aim of this research is to determine public relations management (PR) strategies in optimizing the use of social media as a means of madrasah branding at MAN Bondowoso. This research uses field research methods with a qualitative type of research. Data collection is carried out using interview, observation and documentation techniques. As well as data analysis techniques used through three procedures, including data condensation, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The data that has been obtained is checked for validity using triangulation techniques. The findings from this research show that MAN Bondowoso has utilized social media as a means of branding in addition to generally being a medium for information, communication, education and preaching. There are four social media managed and developed at MAN Bondowoso, including Instagram, Facebook, YouTube and Website. The development of social media management at MAN Bondowoso in recent years has increased, due to the



existence of a public relations management strategy in the management process, starting from the planning, organizing, implementing and monitoring stages.

Keywords: Branding, Management, Public Relations, and Social Media

INTRODUCTION

One measure of success in managing an educational institution is the level of community participation in its development. Community involvement plays a critical role in helping institutions grow and achieve their goals (Dian A., 2022). Without active participation from the community, educational institutions may struggle to progress and may take ineffective actions. The support from the community enhances the institution's decision-making process. Thus, community participation is an essential factor in the success of educational institutions (Laily Nuril, 2022: 59-72).

Community participation in the development of educational institutions does not occur by chance. It requires deliberate efforts and strategies to foster meaningful engagement. One of the key strategies is the management of community relations, often through public relations activities (David A. Aaker, 1996). These activities are aimed at building a strong connection between the institution and its surrounding community. Public relations management in educational institutions ensures that the institution's image is well-regarded (Dian A., 2022).

The role of a public relations manager is pivotal in providing information and serving as a communication bridge between the institution and the public. Public relations managers use various communication channels to ensure that the institution's achievements and activities are well-publicized (Ahmed A.). Through strategic communication, the manager builds relationships with the community and stakeholders. This helps create trust and transparency between the institution and the public. The public relations manager's role is crucial in maintaining a positive image for the institution (Laily N., 2022).

A public relations strategy in building an institution's image consists of methods tailored to specific situations. These strategies help shape public opinion to ensure that the institution is seen positively (Andreas M., 2010: 59-68). Public relations efforts must be adaptive to changing circumstances to be effective (Xueming Luo). An institution's image directly influences the perception and trust of the community. A well-planned public relations strategy helps maintain a favorable public image (Laily N., 2022).

The image built by a school can significantly influence public interest and improve the quality of school resources. Schools with a strong public image often attract more students and community support. Public trust in schools must increase to foster better community engagement. Schools also need to differentiate their identity from other institutions to stand out. This unique identity helps schools establish a strong brand (Elyus dan Soleh, 2021).

Building a brand for an educational institution is not an easy task. It requires a thoughtful approach and continuous efforts. The competitive environment among educational institutions forces schools to focus on their branding strategies. One effective approach is to strengthen school branding through online media platforms. Branding efforts must consistently reflect the institution's values and mission (Khalilah Ramadhani, 2022).

The use of online media, including social media, has grown significantly in recent years. The Covid-19 pandemic accelerated the adoption of online platforms, particularly for educational



purposes. Educational institutions increasingly rely on social media to communicate with students, parents, and the broader community (Elyus dan Soleh, 2021). Social media platforms provide schools with an effective way to promote their programs and activities. This helps schools maintain visibility and engagement (Amir Hamzah, 2019).

Social media also plays an essential role in supporting schools' branding efforts. Through social media, schools can reach a wider audience and engage more effectively with their stakeholders (Zulkifli Hasan). Public relations management that effectively utilizes digital platforms helps schools achieve their goals. Schools must integrate social media strategies into their overall public relations plan. This approach helps schools optimize their communication and branding efforts (Tutut Sholihah, 2018).

Public relations management plays a vital role in improving school quality by leveraging social media. Previous research has explored social media's role in education, communication, and information dissemination (Andreas M, 2012:101-104). However, there is a lack of comprehensive studies on public relations management in branding, especially in madrasas. This gap in research highlights the need for a deeper understanding of branding strategies (Tutut Sholihah, 2018).

This research aims to explore the public relations management strategies employed by MAN Bondowoso in branding through social media. The school's social media presence has grown significantly in recent years. MAN Bondowoso continues to expand both in content creation and audience reach. Understanding the strategies behind this growth can provide insights into effective branding practices. This study seeks to fill the gap in understanding how madrasas use public relations management for branding.

RESEARCH METHODS

The research method used in this study is qualitative, specifically employing a field research approach. The research was conducted at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri (MAN) Bondowoso. Data collection involved three main techniques: interviews, observation, and documentation. The interviews were conducted with the Head of MAN Bondowoso and the Editorial Team, who serve as representatives of the school's Public Relations department.

The data analysis followed a three-step procedure: data condensation, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. After collecting the data, the validity of the findings was tested using triangulation techniques. Finally, the results were analyzed and presented in the research findings and discussion section.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

Social media continues to evolve rapidly, expanding both in terms of its platforms, functions, and features. Initially created as a tool for communication, social media has grown into a multipurpose platform that supports various activities, including branding, promotion, and public relations (Khalilah Ramadhani, 2022). This evolution has opened new avenues for organizations, including educational institutions, to leverage social media for engaging their audience, extending their reach, and shaping their public image (W. Glynn Mangold, 2009: 357-365).



For educational institutions such as madrasas, social media offers a critical opportunity to connect with broader audiences. Traditionally, madrasas relied on direct community engagement and reputation built through local networks (Tutut Sholihah, 2018). However, with the rise of digital communication, institutions can now engage not only their local communities but also a much larger audience, including alumni, prospective students, parents, and supporters from other regions. In this context, social media has become an indispensable tool for madrasas to enhance their public relations (PR) efforts and manage their institutional image effectively (Meerman S, 2020).

Building a strong institutional image requires strategic management of social media. For madrasas like MAN Bondowoso, managing social media effectively means going beyond simply creating accounts or posting content. It involves using social media as a deliberate and coordinated tool for branding. Branding through social media entails not just showcasing achievements but also creating a consistent and positive image of the madrasa that resonates with the values and interests of its audience. This task requires a specialized team, often managed under the supervision of the head of the madrasa, in collaboration with the public relations department. By aligning the content with institutional goals and values, public relations management ensures that branding and promotional messages are crafted thoughtfully and disseminated effectively through social media channels.

At MAN Bondowoso, the integration of social media into its PR strategy has been a key factor in expanding the madrasa's influence and engagement. Through creative and strategic use of various social media platforms, MAN Bondowoso has been able to promote its academic programs, extracurricular activities, religious events, achievements, and the learning environment. This multifaceted approach allows the institution to maintain a dynamic and vibrant online presence, catering to different segments of its audience while also enhancing its brand. Moreover, MAN Bondowoso has recognized the importance of using social media to build a sense of community. Its platforms provide a space not only for madrasa residents but also for alumni, community leaders, and the broader public to engage with the institution.

The school primarily focuses on four social media platforms—Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, and its website. Each of these platforms is employed strategically, with content tailored to the specific needs and interests of different audience segments. Instagram and Facebook are primarily used for sharing images and updates on current events, which are highly engaging for younger audiences and parents. The visual and interactive nature of these platforms makes them ideal for broadcasting daily activities, events, and news. Instagram, for example, often features real-time updates on student activities, community events, and achievements, allowing for high levels of engagement with its audience. Facebook, on the other hand, tends to attract a slightly broader demographic, including parents and community members who prefer a more detailed overview of the madrasa's programs.

YouTube plays a pivotal role in showcasing long-form content, such as videos of school activities, academic lectures, religious ceremonies, and interviews with influential community members. Video content is a powerful tool for engagement, as it allows MAN Bondowoso to present more in-depth insights into the madrasa's programs and values. YouTube also allows the madrasa to reach alumni and others who may not be able to visit in person, creating a virtual connection that can sustain long-term relationships. The website, meanwhile, functions as the institution's official



portal for news, announcements, and detailed information about the madrasa's offerings. It serves as a static repository of information, complementing the dynamic content on the other platforms.

Initially, MAN Bondowoso's social media outreach was limited to madrasa residents, including students, teachers, and staff members. However, over time, the audience has expanded to include alumni, prospective students, and the Bondowoso community at large. This growth can be attributed to the consistent and engaging content shared on social media, which has resonated with a broader audience. The inclusion of alumni has been particularly significant, as they play an important role in amplifying the madrasa's online presence. Alumni are often proud of their connection to MAN Bondowoso and actively participate by sharing content and providing testimonials about their experiences at the madrasa. Their involvement has helped expand the madrasa's reach and enhance its reputation beyond its immediate community.

In terms of follower growth, MAN Bondowoso has seen a steady increase in engagement across its platforms. For example, Instagram has attracted over 1,300 followers, Facebook has more than 2,100 followers, and YouTube boasts over 2,200 subscribers. The website also receives regular traffic, particularly from those seeking official information about the madrasa's programs, events, and admissions process. These numbers reflect the growing popularity of MAN Bondowoso's social media platforms and the institution's ability to maintain a consistent and engaging online presence.

One of the key findings from interviews with the Head of the Madrasa and the Editorial Team from the Public Relations Department is the identification of three main functions of social media at MAN Bondowoso. These functions are essential to the madrasa's public relations strategy and contribute significantly to its branding efforts. They include social media as: 1) a facility for education and information, 2) a platform for da'wah (religious outreach), and 3) a tool for branding.

The table below shows MAN Bondowoso's social media accounts and follower counts, which reflect this growth:

Table 1. MAN Bondowoso Social Media Account

Social Media	Account	Follower/Subscriber
Instagram	manbo_news	1.794
Facebook	manbondowoso	2.149
Youtube	Manbo Offical	3.040
Website	manbondowoso.sch.id	

1. Social Media as an Educational and Information Tool

Social media platforms have evolved beyond simple communication tools, now serving as valuable resources for educational and informational dissemination. At MAN Bondowoso, these platforms are leveraged to share a variety of educational materials and updates that are easily accessible to a broad audience. This approach aligns with Fitriani (2021), who emphasizes the importance of social media in delivering digital learning content to diverse audiences. The ability to provide educational resources through social media allows the madrasa to reach beyond traditional classroom settings, making learning accessible to students, teachers, and even the wider public.



The Editorial Team at MAN Bondowoso carefully tailors the content to suit the strengths of each platform. For instance, YouTube is primarily used to post videos, including learning materials, student creative projects, and event coverage, ensuring that visual and dynamic content is delivered to those who prefer or benefit from video-based learning. The madrasa's website, meanwhile, integrates with YouTube to act as a centralized hub for news and other general information, extending its reach to the broader public. This approach not only facilitates the distribution of educational content but also ensures that it is available as a resource for other madrasas in Bondowoso and the surrounding areas.

On platforms like Instagram and Facebook, the focus is more on sharing timely updates about ongoing activities at the madrasa. These posts are designed to be visually engaging and are often aimed at appealing to the younger generation, which forms the primary user base of these platforms. Instagram, in particular, is used for snapshots of daily madrasa life, including student activities, achievements, and extracurricular events, while Facebook reaches a slightly broader demographic, including parents and community members. By utilizing these platforms effectively, MAN Bondowoso ensures that educational and informative content is engaging and accessible to various community segments.

In this way, MAN Bondowoso has expanded its role in education, using social media not only as a tool for communication but also as a powerful platform for knowledge dissemination. Through careful content management, the madrasa has been able to provide resources that can be accessed by anyone interested in learning more about the institution, its academic offerings, and its religious values. This approach has significantly increased the institution's visibility, allowing it to serve as a model for how madrasas can use digital tools to enhance their educational mission.

By adopting this digital strategy, MAN Bondowoso has aligned itself with global educational trends that emphasize the importance of digital learning platforms. The madrasa's approach demonstrates the potential of social media to act as an inclusive educational tool, offering continuous learning opportunities to both students and the community at large. This demonstrates how madrasas, traditionally seen as limited to classroom-based instruction, can innovate by incorporating modern technologies into their educational frameworks.

2. Social Media as a Platform for Da'wah

Beyond its educational role, social media serves as an essential platform for da'wah, or religious outreach, at MAN Bondowoso. As Nurfitriya points out, when social media is used for da'wah, it is crucial to adhere to proper ethics and norms to ensure that the content promotes spiritual growth and remains aligned with Islamic teachings (Syintia N, 2022:1-10). In this respect, MAN Bondowoso uses social media as a means to share religious content that both informs and inspires its audience, promoting Islamic values in line with the madrasa's vision.

The madrasa's commitment to its vision of "Excellence in Achievement, Ready to Compete, and Islamic Spirit" is reflected in how it integrates religious activities into its social media strategy. The regular posting of religious studies, events, and Islamic practices, such as shalawat burdah, istighasah, and murattal, are examples of how the madrasa uses these platforms to maintain a connection with its religious community. These activities are not only conducted



live at the madrasa but are also broadcasted via YouTube, enabling a broader audience—including alumni and community members who cannot attend in person—to participate remotely. This expands the reach of the madrasa's religious mission beyond the immediate vicinity of Bondowoso.

The Head of MAN Bondowoso emphasizes that using social media for da'wah not only strengthens the Islamic identity of the institution but also builds a spiritual bridge between the madrasa and the community. Social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube are used to highlight these religious activities, offering a variety of content tailored to different audiences. YouTube, for instance, broadcasts religious lectures and ceremonies, while Instagram shares more frequent updates about ongoing religious activities, making it easier for the younger generation to stay engaged with the madrasa's religious offerings.

The success of programs like the Monthly Koran with KH Imam Barmawi Burhan and the Study at Ustad Zainullah's residence on the Manbo Official YouTube channel illustrates the power of social media in promoting religious outreach. These platforms have made it possible for people outside the madrasa's immediate circle to access and benefit from the institution's spiritual guidance. In the future, MAN Bondowoso plans to extend this reach further by broadcasting religious competitions such as Musabaqah Tilawatil Quran (MTQ), which will serve to reinforce its role as a center of Islamic learning and religious practice.

By utilizing social media for da'wah, MAN Bondowoso successfully fosters a digital spiritual community, reflecting its broader mission of promoting Islamic values. This strategy not only supports the religious development of its students but also contributes to the broader Islamic community, offering a model for how other madrasas might use digital platforms to extend their religious outreach. This multi-channel approach ensures that the madrasa remains a relevant and dynamic force in the promotion of Islamic education.

3. Social Media as a Branding Tool

In addition to education and religious outreach, MAN Bondowoso has recognized social media as a powerful tool for branding. Branding plays a vital role in building a positive public image, and for MAN Bondowoso, the use of social media has become an integral part of these efforts. Branding at the madrasa is not limited to the work of the Editorial Team; it also involves contributions from teachers, who create digital learning content that is shared across social media platforms. This collaborative approach ensures that the madrasa's branding is not only consistent but also representative of the institution's collective values and achievements.

The social media platforms used by MAN Bondowoso are regularly updated with content that highlights the institution's academic achievements, extracurricular activities, and community involvement. These updates showcase the madrasa's dedication to academic and religious excellence, which is a key part of its public image. Additionally, the madrasa's alumni play an important role in expanding the reach of this content. Many alumni voluntarily share the madrasa's posts on their personal social media accounts, further increasing visibility and engagement with the broader community. This form of organic engagement is a testament to the strong sense of loyalty and pride that alumni feel toward the institution.



Each social media platform used by MAN Bondowoso has its own strengths when it comes to branding. For instance, YouTube is an excellent platform for showcasing student creativity through videos of extracurricular activities, such as theater performances, sports competitions, and religious events. These videos not only engage current students but also serve as a promotional tool for prospective students and their families. Instagram, on the other hand, is used to provide regular updates about the madrasa's daily activities, including events like the PKL-A program, which highlights the institution's religious and academic strengths.

By taking a multi-platform approach, MAN Bondowoso has been able to maximize the reach and impact of its branding efforts. Each platform serves a different audience, but together they create a unified and cohesive brand image. The strategic use of these platforms ensures that the madrasa's message is consistent across all channels, reinforcing its reputation as a leading educational institution in the region. This branding strategy not only elevates the madrasa's image locally but also extends its influence nationally and internationally.

Through its effective use of social media for branding, MAN Bondowoso has demonstrated how educational institutions can build and maintain a strong public image in the digital age. By combining academic excellence with religious values and a commitment to community service, the madrasa has created a brand that resonates with a wide range of audiences. As the institution continues to grow its online presence, its branding efforts will likely play an increasingly important role in attracting new students, engaging alumni, and strengthening its community ties.

DISCUSSION

The public relations management strategy employed by MAN Bondowoso for building its branding through social media can be analyzed using the POAC (Planning, Organizing, Actuating, and Controlling) model as proposed by Terry (2005). Each stage of this process is critical in ensuring that social media is used effectively as a branding tool, helping to maintain a strong image for the madrasa.

1. Planning

Planning is the first step in public relations management and involves outlining the goals and strategies that MAN Bondowoso aims to achieve through its social media branding efforts. At this stage, the madrasa conducted a comprehensive situation analysis, which included an evaluation of its internal conditions, such as available resources and the target audience. The analysis helped to identify the platforms most suitable for their goals: Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, and the website. This strategic choice was made to ensure that each social media platform could fulfill specific functions based on its user demographics and capabilities.

A key aspect of this planning process was determining the type of content that would be shared on each platform. For example, YouTube was chosen to showcase videos related to student achievements, madrasa activities, and religious events, while Instagram and Facebook were used for more frequent, visual updates aimed at engaging younger users. This segmentation of content across different platforms is consistent with branding strategies that prioritize tailoring messages to the right audience. According to Keller's Brand Equity Model, it is essential to create and deliver content that resonates with the target audience to build a strong brand identity (Keller,



dkk, 2013).

Moreover, the planning stage involved setting long-term goals for social media development. MAN Bondowoso has plans to launch "MAN Bondowoso TV" on YouTube, where they will produce podcasts and broadcast madrasa news. This forward-thinking approach reflects the institution's commitment to expanding its digital presence and enhancing its reputation. By planning ahead, MAN Bondowoso ensures that its branding efforts remain dynamic and aligned with its long-term vision. This aligns with Grunig and Hunt's Excellence Theory, which emphasizes the importance of strategic planning in public relations (Grunig J.E., 1984).

Another important element of the planning process is the integration of alumni testimonials into the content strategy. Testimonials from former students not only strengthen the madrasa's image but also enhance emotional connections with potential new students and their families. In branding theory, testimonials play a significant role in building trust and credibility, as they provide authentic, positive experiences from real individuals who have benefited from the institution.

In summary, the planning phase at MAN Bondowoso is grounded in a comprehensive analysis of internal and external factors. The madrasa's approach to planning not only focuses on current needs but also anticipates future developments. This aligns with the idea of continuous adaptation in public relations, ensuring that the institution remains relevant in a competitive educational landscape.

2. Organizing

After the planning phase, the organizing stage is essential for implementing the strategies developed. At MAN Bondowoso, the Deputy Head of Public Relations oversees the execution of the social media strategy, and an Editorial Team has been established to manage the production and publication of content. This team is responsible for ensuring that the content aligns with the madrasa's branding goals and is consistently posted on the chosen platforms. Effective organization is critical to managing the multiple tasks involved in public relations, particularly in the digital space where timely content delivery is key.

One of the challenges encountered during the organizing phase was the lack of digital talent. This is a common issue in educational institutions, where teaching staff are primarily focused on their academic responsibilities. MAN Bondowoso addressed this by assigning individuals with specific media expertise to the Editorial Team, ensuring that those managing the social media accounts had the necessary skills. This aligns with the Resource-Based View (RBV) theory, which posits that organizations should utilize their unique internal resources, such as skilled personnel, to gain a competitive advantage (Barney, 1991).

In addition to recruiting skilled staff, the organizing stage at MAN Bondowoso involves a clear delegation of responsibilities within the Editorial Team. Each team member is assigned specific tasks related to content creation, editing, and publication. This division of labor ensures that the workflow is efficient and that content is produced in a timely manner. By organizing the team in this way, the madrasa can maintain a consistent social media presence, which is critical for sustaining its branding efforts.



Furthermore, the madrasa plans to involve students in the content production process. This not only helps to alleviate some of the workload but also provides students with valuable hands-on experience in media production. Involving students in the branding process also creates a sense of ownership and pride in the madrasa's image, reinforcing its brand identity from within. This approach is consistent with the Stakeholder Theory (Freeman, 1984), which emphasizes the importance of involving all stakeholders in the organization's strategic initiatives.

The organizing stage also requires strong leadership to ensure that the branding strategy is carried out effectively. The Deputy Head of Public Relations plays a crucial role in coordinating the team's efforts and ensuring that the content aligns with the overall branding strategy. This level of organization helps to streamline the process and ensures that the social media strategy is executed as planned.

3. Actuating

The actuating stage involves putting the plans into action, which in this case means executing the content creation and publication strategy on social media. At MAN Bondowoso, the Editorial Team works to ensure that content is regularly posted across all platforms. This stage requires not only creativity but also discipline in maintaining a consistent posting schedule. Consistency is crucial for building brand recognition and trust, as it ensures that the madrasa remains visible and engaged with its audience.

One of the key components of actuating is the creation of high-quality content that reflects the madrasa's values and achievements. This includes videos of religious activities, student performances, and educational content. MAN Bondowoso has invested in the necessary infrastructure, including video recording equipment and a designated space for shooting podcasts, to ensure that the content produced is of professional quality. This investment in infrastructure is aligned with the idea that brand performance is closely tied to the quality of the brand's offerings (Meerman S., David, 2020).

The actuating stage also involves collaboration with external partners. For example, MAN Bondowoso has partnered with the State University of Malang to develop learning media that can be shared on social media. This collaboration allows the madrasa to leverage external expertise while enhancing its own branding efforts. According to the Stakeholder Theory, collaboration with external stakeholders is essential for achieving organizational goals and creating value (Merrilees dkk., 2012: 1032-1047).

In addition to producing regular content, the actuating phase at MAN Bondowoso also includes ongoing engagement with the audience. This is done through interactive posts, responses to comments, and sharing user-generated content, which helps to build a sense of community around the madrasa's brand. Engaging with the audience in this way fosters a two-way communication channel, which is essential for building strong relationships with stakeholders.

Finally, actuating also involves adapting the content strategy based on real-time feedback and social media trends. The Editorial Team closely monitors which types of content resonate most with the audience and adjusts the strategy accordingly. This adaptive approach is crucial in the fast-paced world of social media, where trends can change rapidly. By staying flexible, MAN



Bondowoso ensures that its branding strategy remains relevant and effective.

4. Controlling

The controlling stage involves monitoring and evaluating the success of the social media strategy. At MAN Bondowoso, this is done through regular reviews of social media analytics, such as follower growth, engagement rates, and the reach of individual posts. The Editorial Team uses these metrics to assess the effectiveness of their branding efforts and make adjustments as needed. Controlling is a critical part of the management process, as it allows the madrasa to ensure that its branding goals are being met and that resources are being used efficiently.

Internal monitoring is complemented by external oversight from the Head of the Madrasa and the Deputy Head of Public Relations. This ensures that the content aligns with the madrasa's overall branding goals and that any issues are addressed promptly. According to Grunig and Hunt's Excellence Theory, effective public relations management requires continuous evaluation and adaptation (Grunig, JE., 1984). This is particularly important in the context of social media, where audience preferences can shift quickly.

The controlling stage also includes qualitative feedback from the community. MAN Bondowoso actively seeks input from students, parents, and alumni about the content shared on social media. This feedback helps the madrasa to better understand its audience's needs and preferences, which in turn informs future content planning. In branding theory, customer feedback is a key element in maintaining brand loyalty, as it allows organizations to adjust their offerings to meet changing expectations (Tutut Sholihah, 2018).

Another aspect of controlling is ensuring that the content aligns with the madrasa's values and mission. Each post is reviewed to ensure that it reinforces the madrasa's identity as an institution that upholds Islamic values and promotes academic excellence. This alignment between content and values is essential for maintaining a coherent brand image, which is critical for long-term success in branding (Keller, 2013).

Finally, the controlling stage involves evaluating the long-term impact of the social media strategy on the madrasa's reputation and enrollment rates. By tracking trends over time, MAN Bondowoso can assess whether its branding efforts are translating into tangible benefits, such as increased student enrollment or greater community engagement. This long-term evaluation is essential for ensuring that the madrasa's branding efforts are sustainable and continue to deliver value.

CONCLUSION

The use of social media for branding has become essential for educational institutions in today's increasingly digital world. MAN Bondowoso has effectively utilized platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, and its official website to develop a strong, cohesive brand identity that resonates with its diverse audience. These platforms have allowed the madrasa to showcase its academic excellence, promote its religious values, and engage actively with both the local community and a broader audience, including alumni and prospective students. The structured use of social media at MAN Bondowoso is part of a broader public relations management approach, following the POAC (Planning, Organizing, Actuating, and Controlling) model, ensuring that



content is strategically planned, well-organized, effectively executed, and consistently monitored.

The findings of this research highlight the importance of thoughtful planning, effective organization, timely execution, and ongoing control in implementing a successful social media branding strategy. By integrating these management functions with established branding theories such as Keller's Brand Equity Model and public relations theories like Grunig and Hunt's Excellence Theory, MAN Bondowoso has been able to enhance its visibility and reputation both regionally and beyond. The madrasa's ability to engage a wider audience, strengthen community ties, and maintain a positive image demonstrates how the strategic use of digital platforms can benefit educational institutions.

This case study offers insights into how madrasas can modernize their branding and public relations strategies using digital tools, while still maintaining their core religious and educational values. Future research could explore the long-term impacts of social media branding on student recruitment, community relations, and alumni engagement, offering a roadmap for other institutions seeking to enhance their digital presence.

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