

Utilizing Instagram for Digital Government Public Relations by Diskominfo Jatim

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ABSTRACT

In addressing the challenges of the PR 4.0 era, the East Java Communication and Information Office (Diskominfo) utilizes the Instagram account @jatimpemprov to carry out Digital PR activities. The account serves as a communication platform to present essential information and is expected to be a solution, particularly for the people of East Java. These activities have proven successful in conveying information, aspirations, and programs that reach the public. Therefore, this research aims to understand how Digital PR activities are carried out by Diskominfo Jatim through the Instagram account @jatimpemprov. The theoretical framework used to examine the phenomena in this study is the principles of the 7-Cs PR communication model, which includes credibility, context, content, clarity, continuity & consistency, channel, and the capability of the audience. This research employs a descriptive qualitative method. Data collection was carried out through structured interviews and document studies. The results show that the digital PR activities of @jatimpemprov apply the principles of the 7-Cs PR Communications model by utilizing Instagram features. These activities provide informative, educational, and entertaining content to the public. The main functions of disseminating information and fostering cooperation between other organizations within the East Java Provincial Government are carried out effectively.

Keywords: Government Public Relations; Digital Public Relations; Diskominfo Jatim

ABSTRAK

Dalam menjawab tantangan era PR 4.0, Dinas Komunikasi dan Informatika (Diskominfo) Jawa Timur memanfaatkan Instagram @jatimpemprov untuk melakukan kegiatan Digital PR. Akun tersebut digunakan sebagai media komunikasi untuk menyajikan informasi yang dibutuhkan dan diharapkan dapat menjadi solusi, khususnya bagi masyarakat Jawa Timur. Kegiatan yang dilakukan terbukti berhasil dalam menyampaikan informasi, aspirasi, dan program-program yang mengena bagi masyarakat. Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk memahami bagaimana aktivitas digital PR yang dilakukan oleh Diskominfo Jatim melalui akun Instagram @jatimpemprov. Kerangka teori yang digunakan untuk mengkaji fenomena dalam penelitian ini adalah prinsip-prinsip Komunikasi PR (7-Cs), yang meliputi kredibilitas, konteks, konten, kejelasan, kontinuitas & konsistensi, saluran, dan kapabilitas khalayak. Metode dalam penelitian ini menggunakan deskriptif kualitatif. Pengumpulan data dilakukan dengan cara wawancara terstruktur dan studi dokumen. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa aktivitas digital PR @jatimpemprov menerapkan prinsip-prinsip 7-Cs PR Communications, dengan memanfaatkan fitur-fitur Instagram. Berbagai kegiatan tersebut menyajikan konten yang informatif, edukatif, dan menghibur kepada masyarakat. Fungsi utama penyebaran informasi dan kerja sama antar organisasi lain di lingkungan Pemerintah Provinsi Jawa Timur, juga dapat dijalankan dengan baik.

Kata Kunci: Humas Pemerintah; Humas Digital; Diskominfo Jatim

INTRODUCTION

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In carrying out its functions, the government needs to share various information with its public (Chen et al., 2024). This includes educating, persuading, and clarifying important matters. In a democratic country, where transparency, public participation, and open access to public information are essential to the democratic process (Rossi et al., 2024), the role of Public Relations (PR) within government institutions becomes crucial. PR is essential for helping the government meet the public's demand for information (Dong et al., 2023) and for constructing public perceptions, opinions, and behaviors, which are necessary for creating order and ensuring public welfare. This makes the establishment of an institutional PR division inevitable (Kriyantono et al., 2022).

In democratic nations, community engagement is vital to maintaining the democratic system. Community engagement refers to the process by which the government and its officials address the aspirations, concerns, needs, and values of the community (Brents et al., 2024). These are then used as the basis for policy development, planning, decision-making, service delivery, and assessment (Afieroho et al., 2024). This process inherently requires communication channels, which are provided by government PR efforts.

Alongside the rapid development of communication patterns within society, the ability of Government PR to respond to the challenges of an evolving media landscape has become more important (Dong et al., 2023). Currently, PR has entered the 4.0 era, with a shift from traditional media to social media. Furthermore, the rise of artificial intelligence and big data has begun to play a significant role in managing public relations communications (Galloway & Swiatek, 2024). This development gives PR a dual responsibility—fulfilling its traditional functions while adhering to ethical standards in an age of sophisticated technologies such as AI (Bowen, 2024).

With this development, anyone can be a source of information. This of course makes many hoaxes circulate (Park & Rim, 2019). Hoaxes are false, outdated, or unverified information that spontaneously spread on social media. Many people deliberately spread messages to lead users to wrong thinking, hatred, and violence (Tchakounté et al., 2022). Government institutions are not immune to the impact of such hoaxes. For instance, during the pandemic, Government PR had to address approximately 137,829 hoaxes related to COVID-19 (Naryoso et al., 2021). These hoaxes can cause public unrest and erode public trust in the government, making PR efforts even more critical (Park et al., 2024).

Public trust can be defined as the public's confidence in how government officials manage government operations. A higher level of trust indicates that people believe the government is functioning effectively and fairly. The use of digital technology in government operations has been shown to increase public trust (Virnandes et al., 2024). This is especially important in crisis situations. If PR fails to provide easily accessible and timely information, the public may turn to other sources, which may spread false information. Therefore, government PR must understand how and why individuals evaluate, adopt, or share information amid rapidly evolving technology (Tam & Kim, 2023).

Previous studies indicate that the use of social media for government PR in Indonesia is beginning to gain traction. For example, the Ministry of Cooperatives and Small and Medium Enterprises of the Republic of Indonesia (KEMENKOPUKM-RI) uses Instagram to introduce its nine flagship programs through the @KemenkopUKM account. However, the management of this account still faces limitations due to insufficient staff, ideas, and time. A key weakness of the digital PR activities on the @KemenkopUKM Instagram account is the lack of active interaction with the target audience (Margaretha & Sunarya, 2017). A similar issue was observed in the Sumedang Regional Secretariat, where a study analyzing the stages of dissemination, optimization, management, and involvement formation on the @humas_sumedang account revealed a lack of creativity and activity in content creation, resulting in a low engagement rate. The account management was also too rigid and not sufficiently active in delivering information, leading to slow responses from the audience and failing to serve as a forum for audience engagement (Achmed et al., 2019).

In Medan city, a similar situation was found, where Instagram accounts are used as one-way communication tools rather than platforms for community participation. This made Instagram an ineffective communication medium, despite its potential (Siregar et al., 2023). This problem is common in many government institutions in Indonesia, where PR departments often lack adequate structural support. As a result, these divisions may not have the necessary information and face miscommunication challenges (Kriyantono, 2019).

Despite these challenges, there have been successes. For instance, the PR of Bandung City Government has had positive results. A study found that the use of Instagram @humasbdg positively influences the fulfillment of community information needs (Sutrisno & Mayangsari, 2022). The PR management system for Bandung City's Instagram was further examined through three key aspects: planning, activation & supervision, and optimization (Pratiwi & Abdurrahman, 2021).

Based on the phenomena described earlier, the study of government PR remains essential for building good public-government communication. Most of the previous studies, as mentioned above, highlight that government PR has not been successful in managing and utilizing social media. For those studies that show successful management, they still focus on only three aspects: planning, activation & supervision, and optimization. Therefore, this study aims to introduce novelty by exploring the success of Government PR in executing Digital PR through social media, particularly Instagram. The theory used to examine this phenomenon is the 7-Cs PR Communications framework. It is expected that the results of this study will provide a more in-depth understanding, thus contributing to additional research in the field of PR, especially government PR.

The subject of this study is the East Java Communication and Information Office (Diskominfo Jatim). As the implementer of the PR function for the East Java Provincial Government, Diskominfo Jatim has utilized Instagram and received positive responses from the public. Diskominfo Jatim serves as the agency responsible for disseminating information about government institutions. The agency's ability to manage social media is crucial because social media encourages government institutions to be more responsive and transparent, fosters more efficient government partnerships, and empowers citizens by making knowledge and other resources more directly accessible (Furqon et al., 2018). The Instagram account owned by Diskominfo Jatim has been active since February 2019, under the username @jatimpemprov. Choosing Instagram as a platform for communication and information dissemination is a strategic decision. This is because Instagram is a rapidly developing social media platform widely used by the public (Harahap & Adeni, 2020).

Social media provides government agencies with the opportunity to enhance the effectiveness of their institutions, especially in challenging situations such as crises (Husain et al., 2014). The main target audience for this account is the younger generation and digital natives, as these two groups are highly active on Instagram (Hajati et al., 2018). Diskominfo Jatim manages its account effectively, which results in strong interaction with the public. The engagement with content can be seen not only through the number of likes and comments but also via Instagram's insights feature, which provides data on the reach and impressions of each post. Reach refers to the number of unique accounts that view a single post. Even if the same account views the post multiple times, it is counted only once in the reach. Impressions, on the other hand, refer to the total number of times a post is seen by various accounts, including both followers and non-followers (Essig et al., 2020).

For example, during the pandemic, posts about providing free oxygen reached 80,383 accounts and had 101,482 impressions. This post received 3,591 likes, 68 comments, 1,008 shares, and 624 saved content. General information, such as updates on which areas were previously red zones, reached 115,630 accounts and had 189,543 impressions. Even content not directly related to public interest, such as appreciation for champion athletes, garnered good interaction—44,244 impressions and reaching 33,986 accounts.

Based on the background described, the problem formulation of this research is: How does Diskominfo Jatim manage Instagram as a Digital PR platform to communicate with the public? The objective of this research is to describe the communication management strategies employed by Diskominfo Jatim, as part of their Digital PR efforts, and to analyze them using the 7 aspects of PR communication: credibility, context, content, clarity, continuity & consistency, channel, and capability of the audience.

METHODS

The research method is basically a scientific approach to collecting data for specific purposes and applications (Vaarst et al., 2024). This study employs a descriptive qualitative research design, which relies on descriptive data obtained from written or oral information from sources. This research can also incorporate data on the behaviors of research subjects (An & Bauldry, 2023). Descriptive research is defined as research where the main results are not in the form of quantifiable numbers. Rather, it involves data presented in words and images (Sevilla-Liu, 2023).

The subject of this research is the East Java Communication and Information Office (Diskominfo Jatim). Diskominfo Jatim is responsible for disseminating information about activities, appeals, news, and other matters related to the East Java Provincial Government. It is also tasked with managing the Instagram account @jatimpemprov. The object of this research is the digital PR activities conducted by Diskominfo Jatim through Instagram @jatimpemprov. As the growth and popularity of digital PR continue to rise, it remains an intriguing subject of study (Ki et al., 2024). Public relations (PR) serves to connect an institution or organization with its public, which is essential for the institution's survival. PR is a critical function needed by every organization, whether in the governmental, private, social nonprofit sectors, or emerging sectors where business and social matters intersect (Avidar, 2017). Specifically in the government sector, PR can function in various services, such as those from the Governor's office, the Regent/Mayor's office, and government agencies (Aghazadeh, 2024). The demand for PR is substantial because it plays a vital role as a communication channel between the public and the organization (Ginting & Rahmalinda, 2018).

The primary data sources for this research are the public information officer of Diskominfo Jatim and two followers, Nuafal and Yunita, who actively participate in the Instagram account @jatimpemprov's projects. Additionally, secondary data were gathered from posts and insights available on the @jatimpemprov Instagram account.

Qualitative data in this study were collected through interview techniques and document analysis. The type of interview used in this research is an in-depth narrative interview, which aims to explore participants' perspectives and experiences of a phenomenon through storytelling. The purpose of the interview is to capture the participants' recollections or accounts of events. To ensure accuracy, triangulation with different stakeholders was employed to gather a comprehensive perspective on information flows (Fulton, 2022). Meanwhile, Document analysis was also used to complement primary data collection. This process involves identifying reliable sources, organizing, and systematically storing documents (Kayesa & Shung-King, 2021).

Data analysis for this research was conducted using a descriptive approach, both before entering the field, during fieldwork, and after completing the research in the field. The descriptive approach is essential for analyzing behavior and the surrounding culture (Himeline, 2018). The stages involved in data analysis include data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing and verification. During the data reduction stage, the collected data was sifted through, with irrelevant information such as greetings, jokes, or pleasantries from interviews being omitted. In the data presentation stage, the data was grouped according to the themes derived from the theoretical framework and organized by importance. In the final stage, drawing conclusions and verification, the researchers verified the data based on each interviewee's perspective. The data was further complemented with secondary data and reviewed in light of the theoretical framework. From these results, the conclusions were drawn.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Management of Instagram Features of @jatimpemprov Account

Based on interviews with officers from Diskominfo Jatim, it was found that the management of the @jatimpemprov Instagram account effectively utilizes various Instagram features. These features include upload, camera, photo effects, captions, geotagging, arroba (tagging), hashtags, stories, followers, mutual friends, likes, shares, comments, social networking, and the popular & explore sections. The primary feature used is the upload function. Instagram is well-known as a photo-based social networking platform (Kim & Kim, 2018). This feature allows for the upload of various types of content, including photos, videos, and live broadcasts. To maximize the effectiveness of these uploads, additional devices that enhance the quality of photos and videos are used. While Instagram has built-in camera and photo effect features, these are mainly reserved for live broadcasts, as they often require higher resolutions and more advanced editing to ensure high-quality visuals.

Diskominfo Jatim's approach aligns with best practices. According to Miles Instagram's features can all be leveraged to enhance communication through PR. However, the upload feature is foundational. If the content uploaded is not engaging, utilizing other features will have little impact. The resolution and quality of photos and videos reflect the agency's commitment to delivering interesting, educational, and informative content. The quality of these visuals is crucial for boosting public engagement (Dhanesh et al., 2022).

In addition to uploading content, features like captions, geotagging, and arropa (tagging) are used to complement the posts. According to interviewees, these features work together to optimize the @jatimpemprov account's presentations. Captions provide context and explanations for the content presented visually. It's important for officers to ensure that captions are clear and accessible to a broad audience. The geo-tagging feature is used when information relates to a specific location, making it easier for followers to find the location of events or incidents. As Yunita, one of the active followers, mentioned, geo-tagging helps her locate areas affected by disasters, enabling her to avoid risky zones or check on relatives in the impacted areas. In addition to geo-tagging, officers use the arropa feature to tag relevant people or accounts. For example, when posting about an athlete's victory, the athlete's Instagram account can be tagged. This increases interactivity and provides additional context about the individuals featured in posts. The hashtag feature (#) is also used strategically. Hashtags act as keywords, enabling users to search for posts by topic. The Diskominfo officers set mandatory hashtags, such as #wargajatim, #jatimpemprov, #optimisjatimbangkit, and #Jawatimur, which are included in almost every post. Additional hashtags are chosen based on the content being shared.

The use of features for explanations is of course crucial. Given the limitations in the main content, the utilization of explanatory features such as those carried out on the @jatimpemprov account certainly helps netizens in finding and getting clear information. A study has proven that to improve satisfaction and mood, a content should include a combination of images and captions (Cowles et al., 2023). The use of these features also makes it easier for the @jatimpemprov account to be found. The arropa feature can connect followers of the tagged account with the @jatimpemprov account. While the hashtag feature can bring people who search for information through keywords to posts on the account. A study shows that hashtags provided by content creators are able to direct users to their posts more accurately (Giannoulakis & Tsapatsoulis, 2016). Therefore, it's essential for Instagram account managers to optimize these features to their fullest potential.

Another popular feature among Instagram users is *Stories*. This feature allows accounts to share temporary content that disappears after 24 hours. While the upload feature provides permanent content on the account page, *Stories* offer a dynamic way to keep the account active and engage followers more frequently. Naufal and Yunita, active followers of @jatimpemprov, expressed that the *Story* feature encourages them to check the account more often. The quick, ephemeral information meets their need for up-to-date news. However, the officers mostly use this feature to repost content from the main page or reels, which lacks additional background or design. This limits the potential of *Stories*, as they could be more visually appealing with special designs. Despite disappearing after 24 hours, *Stories* can still capture attention, and enhancing their visuals could improve engagement.

This is one of the unfortunate things about the management of @jatimpemprov account. Although it disappeared within 24 hours, the story feature can still attract public attention. Users like it because the information provided is fast and diverse, meeting their needs for information and entertainment. Therefore, this feature can be maximized by creating better visuals. If repost is needed, special design can be applied to make the story more appealing.

In addition to using features to provide information, officers also leverage features like followers, mutual friends, likes, shares, comments, social networking, and the popular & explore sections to boost interaction. As of October 2024, the account had over 284,000 followers. According to the officers, increasing the number of followers organically involves actively uploading relevant content and interacting with followers. Additionally, the "mutual friends" feature, which shows accounts followed by people in a user's network, plays a role in attracting new followers. Naufal and Yunita, for instance, became followers because many of their colleagues followed the account, and it appeared on their Instagram feeds. After following the account, they began interacting with the content through likes, shares, and comments.

The officers encourage engagement by posting useful information accompanied by appealing visuals. Followers are more likely to like and share content that they find valuable or interesting. Sharing is not limited to Instagram, as the social networking feature allows content to be shared across different platforms. However, the officers noted that due to limited personnel and time, they have not been able to fully maximize the social networking potential of the @jatimpemprov account. The comment feature also plays a role in engagement. Followers can provide feedback or ask questions, and the officers make an effort to respond to comments, either directly or via private messages. This helps capture public sentiments and concerns, which can be valuable for the East Java government

The interactions that occur on the account also help drive the popular & explore feature. Increased engagement boosts content visibility, which can result in more people discovering the account, ultimately leading to more followers. This creates a cycle: effective content management and interaction increase followers, which in turn improves visibility and engagement.

This demonstrates how Instagram's features are interconnected. Effective content management and fostering interactions lead to increased followers, and the mutual friends feature further amplifies this effect. However, there is room for improvement in areas such as social networking. While additional resources are required to manage multiple platforms effectively, cross-platform integration has become essential, as each platform caters to different segments of users.

Digital PR Communication with 7Cs Principles

The use of social media has significantly reshaped how society communicates, interacts, and cooperates. It offers public relations (PR) professionals the opportunity to manage various social media platforms to engage with the public without the limitations of time and distance (Avidar & Roth-Cohen, 2023). Government PR has also recognized the importance of integrating social media as a tool for digital PR. Social media has proven to be a powerful platform for capturing the audience's attention effectively (Teguh et al., 2023). The implementation of communication strategies on social media by PR is often framed through the 7-Cs of PR Communications

The first strategy is Credibility, which emphasizes that communication must be built on mutual trust. Communicators must engage with the public confidently and respectfully. The second is Context, where the message should be relevant to real-life situations, making it more relatable and meaningful to the target audience. The third is Content, where the message is processed into information that provides value and benefits to the audience receiving it. The fourth is Clarity, ensuring the message is clear and easily understood by both the communicator and the audience. Both parties should share a common understanding of the message's goals, themes, and intentions.

Next is Continuity and Consistency, which suggests that communication is an ongoing process. It should occur repeatedly and periodically, with varying messages, yet maintaining the same underlying context. The fifth is Channel, which involves selecting the right and trusted media channels based on public preferences. PR professionals must understand how to effectively disseminate information through various channels, catering to different audiences. Finally, Capability of the Audience emphasizes that communicators must understand the audience's ability to process and interpret communication materials (Margaretha & Sunarya, 2017).

Based on the data collected, the following provides an overview of the implementation of the 7-Cs strategy on the @jatimpemprov account.

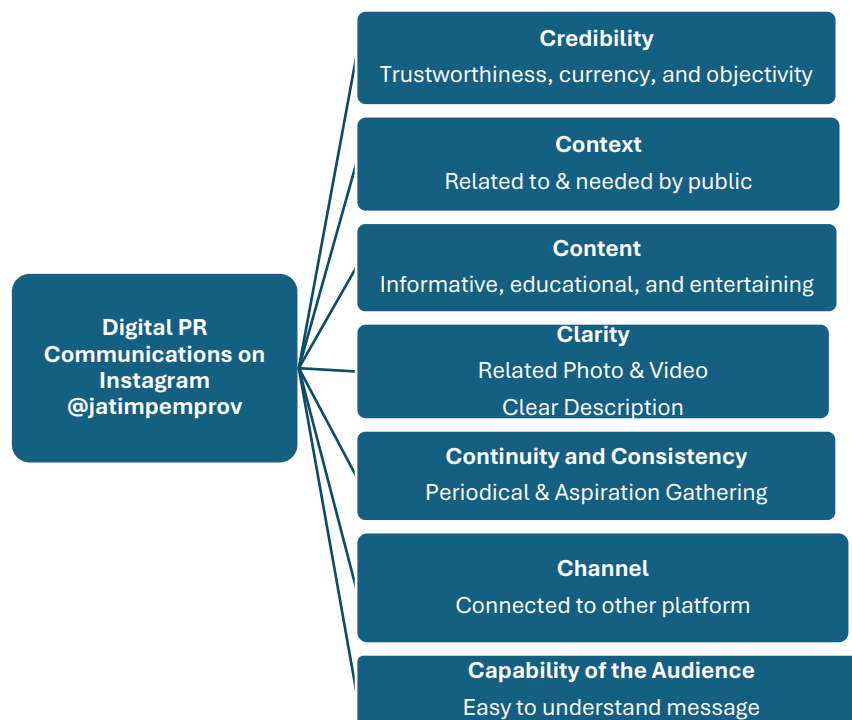


Figure 1. Overview Digital PR Communications of Diskominfo Jatim
 Source: Obtained by Researchers, 2024

To uphold credibility, the officer managing the @jatimpemprov Instagram account uploads content that features data graphics, designs, and symbols that enhance information reliability. Posts often include the source of information by tagging (@mentioning) the relevant accounts or institutions, allowing followers to validate the content. Followers agree that the information on @jatimpemprov is trustworthy, as most posts originate from official East Java government sources. Additionally, information from external institutions, like investment trends from the Investment and One-Stop Integrated Service Office, is always cited. This allows followers to verify the data directly with primary sources. For community-related information—such as event details—dates, times, locations, and other specifics are included accurately to avoid misleading the public.

Credibility is essential for fostering public engagement and effective communication on social media. According to Pangaribuan (2017), credibility consists of three main dimensions: trustworthiness, currency, and objectivity. Trustworthiness is emphasized on the @jatimpemprov account, where information sources are credible and traceable to primary sources, such as other government agencies or public officials. The information presented is also objective, factual, and verifiable. Currency is evident as the account prioritizes information relevant to the general public, rather than solely promoting East Java government interests.

In implementing the next principle—*context*—the officer ensures that posts are relevant to the community's social landscape, particularly the East Java public, who are the main audience. Posts address current social issues and government programs that impact daily life. For instance, the account promotes MSMEs to support economic growth in East Java. This approach aligns with the government's interest in boosting the region's GRDP, while also benefiting MSMEs through exposure. Naufal, a follower, appreciates @jatimpemprov's contextual awareness, noting that posts are well-tuned to community needs. For example, a post about a speech on the 79th anniversary of East Java might typically feel formal and distant, yet it effectively encourages public openness to technology and highlights the potential advantages of the Indonesian capital's relocation to IKN.

It must be recognized that social media plays a critical role in the information age. Account managers have the power to curate and distribute knowledge about current realities and lived experiences, transforming them into accessible public information(Sulaiman, 2018). This is well-executed by the officer managing the @jatimpemprov account, where government objectives are

thoughtfully presented to meet community needs. Ensuring posts are relevant, necessary, and relatable fosters stronger interaction with the public, promoting voluntary engagement in government initiatives.

For the *Content* principle, the officer ensures that the @jatimpemprov Instagram account displays content that is informative, educational, and entertaining. Posts are managed in an engaging format, aiming to communicate messages effectively to followers by highlighting various activities and the latest societal updates, particularly those relevant to East Java. Feedback from netizens' comments often serves as a source of ideas for future posts. One example of engaging content is the 79th-anniversary message from East Java's acting governor, who was depicted as an AI character—a current trend. This approach makes the post entertaining while still providing valuable information and education for the public. By presenting creative and varied content, the account successfully captures audience interest.

Follower Yunita shared that the visual appeal of posts is crucial in motivating people to follow updates. In a digital landscape filled with entertaining, eccentric content, official government accounts risk appearing monotonous. However, @jatimpemprov manages to keep followers engaged by using diverse formats—showing data with graphs, adding humor, covering events, and more. Follower Naufal also noted that the account presents local knowledge in a unique way, like in a post on the solar culmination that explains temperature increases. The post begins with a question in Javanese, then provides information on culmination hours in East Java cities, creating a relatable, informative experience.

Content from @jatimpemprov aims to make a positive impact and reinforce a good public image by keeping people informed about government programs, policies, and developments in East Java. The officer's approach reflects the government's evolving role in information dissemination, shifting from solely broadcasting government needs to considering the preferences of the public. Content that aligns with public interests garners greater attention, facilitating effective communication.

In line with the *Clarity* principle, the officer focuses on clear and comprehensible language paired with relevant visuals. Descriptions are brief, concise, and straightforward, helping followers interpret posts with ease. Several criteria guide the officer's approach to content clarity: first, posts should include visuals, like photos or videos, to illustrate messages realistically. The message should also convey the situation accurately and align with the branding of the East Java government. This clarity is demonstrated through visually appealing images and easy-to-understand language, ensuring posts are well understood by Instagram users.

Follower Yunita expressed appreciation for the clarity of information on East Java tourism from @jatimpemprov posts, which always include visuals and descriptions of tourist destinations, making it easy for her to learn about places to visit. Clear messages encourage effective feedback (Bajri & Irwansyah, 2019), and posts are designed to be interactive, avoiding repetitive templates and adapting designs and language to suit specific themes and objectives. Clarity in content means each post is visually and textually accessible, helping the public to understand information easily. When crafting messages for the public, clarity remains a priority, with a clear focus and accessible language ensuring that the message's purpose is understood.

Furthermore, the *Continuity* and *Consistency* principles highlight the importance of maintaining an active social media presence. In this case, the officer follows a content schedule, detailing ideas and posting times, to keep the account continuously updated. This ensures regularity and relevance in the shared messages. To reinforce the account's activity, the officer also reposts content on the Insta Story feature, which automatically disappears after 24 hours. According to Naufal, a follower, the @jatimpemprov account appears consistently active, with new posts daily. However, Yunita, another follower, noted a lack of comment replies, which the officer addressed, citing limited personnel as the main challenge. While not all comments can be replied to, the officer records feedback from comments and direct messages as public input.

Consistency and *sustainability* in social media are crucial, especially for an organization, to maintain an engaging presence and foster a sense of community impact. While the @jatimpemprov account has generally managed its consistency well, some areas, like Instagram Stories and comment replies, still need improvement. Though Stories are uploaded regularly, they mainly consist of reposts, which could be enhanced for more engaging and diverse content. Limited replies to comments, though understandable due to staffing constraints, can still affect user perception of responsiveness. Two-way interaction through comments could strengthen PR efforts by improving continuous feedback.

The Channel principle underscores the value of multi-platform connectivity. Each social media platform has unique advantages that, when interconnected, can reach a broader audience. Beyond Instagram, the officer also manages Facebook and X (formerly Twitter) to expand content accessibility. However, Instagram remains the primary focus due to resource limitations. Naufal expressed appreciation for this approach, noting that he sometimes switches platforms to avoid monotony. Multiple channels make information more accessible and can cater to diverse user preferences.

Using multiple communication channels can expand reach, especially given the wide variety of social media platforms with distinct features and interaction styles (Setyanto & Anggarina, 2017). For now, focusing on Instagram is practical given limited personnel, ensuring quality management over quantity. Currently, content can be mirrored across platforms, but as the audience and resources grow, platform-specific content strategies could cater to different user demographics more effectively.

The *Capability* principle, or understanding the audience's knowledge level, involves tailoring messages to maximize clarity and comprehension, fostering effective communication between the account manager and users. The officer ensures that most content is accessible to a general audience by using familiar language and following trends that resonate with the public. Follower Yunita noted that the @jatimpemprov account's content, captions, and copywriting are generally easy to understand, enhanced with visuals, graphics, sources, and clear links.

Audience knowledge plays a crucial role in shaping posts that are accessible and engaging. Using complex language or industry-specific terms might appear sophisticated but can alienate broader audiences. For government accounts aiming to reach diverse groups, simple language paired with visual aids makes information more inclusive, ensuring that messages resonate effectively with a wider audience.

CONCLUSION

The use of social media has become an essential component of Digital PR, even for government entities. The public's growing demand for accessible information has encouraged government PR to adapt to these new forms of media. The East Java Communication and Information Office (Diskominfo Jatim) stands out as a successful example, effectively using its Instagram account, @jatimpemprov, to manage public communication in line with the 7C communication principles (*credibility, context, content, clarity, channel, capability of the audience, and continuity and consistency*).

The implementation of these principles is evident in their approach. Diskominfo Jatim establishes *credibility* by presenting clear visuals, such as well-designed graphics, along with messages from verified sources to build trust among followers. Through the *context* principle, they ensure that the information shared is relevant and timely, directly meeting the needs of the East Java community. *Content* posted on the account is crafted to be both informative and entertaining, while *clarity* is maintained with detailed descriptions supported by relevant photos and videos that make the messages easily understandable.

Diskominfo Jatim also effectively utilizes the *channel* principle by linking Instagram with other platforms, including Facebook and X (formerly Twitter), to expand the reach of their communications. In consideration of their audience's *capability*, they ensure content is accessible and understandable for people from diverse backgrounds, using language and visuals that resonate with a broad demographic. Furthermore, they demonstrate *continuity* and *consistency* by posting regularly and maintaining interactions with their followers, which sustains engagement over time.

Digital PR activities on @jatimpemprov have been well-received, evidenced by high engagement levels and positive feedback from users regarding the quality of content and account management. However, there is still potential for further development, such as making Insta Stories more engaging and increasing responses to user comments to foster stronger interaction and connection.

This research, however, is not without limitations. It focuses solely on Digital PR activities conducted on Instagram, specifically through the lens of the 7C communication principles. Future research could consider other frameworks, such as Computer-Mediated Communication or Social Integration theories, to offer additional perspectives. Moreover, examining Digital PR strategies across multiple interconnected social media platforms would allow for a more comprehensive understanding of government PR in a digital environment.

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