

## Interactivity on Government Social Media to Improve Public Services

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### ABSTRACT

Social media is considered to be able to support public service activities by the government by encouraging transparency, creating interaction with citizens, and building collaboration with citizens. The key must be to build an interactive relationship between the government (the organizer of the state authority) and the community. The problem is that our social media has not been used enough for interaction or even only aims to communicate one way. This research is an advanced stage of various previous studies on the use of social media for the Government, especially local governments. There is a tendency to direct the object not on the main government account to become a more specific agency/agency in charge of public services. The novelty of this research lies in the management process implemented by the Regional Government to build synergy as a part of build interactivity. The researcher wants to see the interactive pattern that occurs on Instagram @dishubsurabaya which is managed by the Surabaya transportation service in order to provide better service. The research was conducted using a case study method by extracting data from interviews with both the government and citizens. Various instruments used to complete the data include notes and recording devices. The results show that agencies and citizens benefit together when they can connect. To achieve this, the first step is to build a new creative message and then seek interactivity with the availability of a team that is always ready to respond to questions and complaints.

Keywords: Interactivity; Social media; Public service; Government Public Relations; Message

## *Interaktivitas pada Media Sosial Pemerintah untuk Meningkatkan Pelayanan Publik*

### ABSTRAK

Media sosial dinilai mampu mendukung kegiatan pelayanan publik oleh pemerintah dengan mendorong transparansi, menciptakan interaksi dengan warga dan membangun kolaborasi dengan warga. Kuncinya, harus membangun hubungan interaktif antara pemerintah sebagai penyelenggara kekuasaan negara dan masyarakat. Masalahnya, media sosial kita belum cukup digunakan untuk berinteraksi atau bahkan hanya ditujukan untuk komunikasi satu arah. Penelitian ini merupakan tahap lanjutan dari berbagai penelitian sebelumnya yang membahas tentang pemanfaatan media sosial bagi pemerintah khususnya pemerintah daerah. Ada kecenderungan untuk mengarahkan objek bukan pada akun utama pemerintah yang menjadi badan atau badan yang lebih spesifik membidangi pelayanan publik. Kebaharuan penelitian ini terletak pada proses manajemen yang diterapkan oleh Pemerintah Daerah untuk membangun sinergisitas sebagai bagian dalam membangun interaktivitas. Peneliti ingin melihat pola interaktif yang terjadi pada Instagram @dishubsurabaya yang dikelola oleh Dinas

*Perhubungan Surabaya agar dapat memberikan pelayanan yang lebih baik. Penelitian dilakukan dengan menggunakan metode studi kasus dengan penggalan data melalui wawancara dengan kedua belah pihak yaitu pemerintah dan warga. Berbagai instrument yang digunakan untuk melengkapi data meliputi catatan dan alat rekam. Hasilnya menunjukkan bahwa Lembaga dan warga mendapat manfaat bersama ketika antara pemerintah dan warga saling terhubung. Penelitian ini menemukan bahwasanya, guna mencapai hal tersebut, Langkah pertama adalah membangun pesan kreatif lalu mengupayakan pembangunan interaktivitas dengan tersedianya tim yang selalu siap menjawab pertanyaan dan keluhan.*

**Kata kunci:** *Interaktivitas; Media Sosial; Pelayanan Publik; Humas Pemerintah; Pesan*

## INTRODUCTION

From the beginning, the presence of social media was seen as having the opportunity to support government activities and public services. Since the early days of the development of social media for the government, various researchers have tried to explore the benefits of social media. There are various ways social media is used based on its objectives, namely developing one-way communication, sending public information to increase transparency and increasing trust and accountability (push-Transparency), creating space for interaction to generate engagement with citizens, improving decision-making and gaining feedback from them (Pull-Participation); generate networks for citizen collaboration and the possibility to generate shared public services. (Network-Building Networks) (Mergel & Bretschneider, 2013)

Furthermore, (Khan, 2017) through his various writings explains the main purpose of the government's own social media is to utilize social media technology in the public sector so that the government can be more transparent, open, accessible, and collaborative. To achieve these goals, Khan emphasized the creation of a new culture in social media-based government activities carrying the concepts of a culture of sharing (S), transparency (T), openness (O), and collaboration (C) or called it the STOC culture.

Various studies show one first step is to improve the quality of public services by using social media is interactivity. A Research stated that the essence of government social media management is an interactive relationship between the government (the organizer of the state authority) and the community (Hastrida, 2021). This interactivity can be realized because social media is an alternative medium of communication between the government and the community and business actors when users can interact with each other, including the community and the government or vice versa (Dedi Rianto Rahadi, 2019).

The problem is that social media has not been used enough for interaction or is still one-way. This was found by Ika Karlina Idris in her research using the social network analysis method, he found that the power of social media to produce two-way symmetrical communication has not been implemented optimally (Idris, 2018). A similar fact was found by Yulisprianto and Aji, who in their research showed that efforts to create two-way communication with the Government still needed to be pursued (Yulisprianto & Aji, 2018). There have been efforts to open channels but the management of the response is still not balanced compared with a lot public responses. Several other studies even show that social media is only used for one-way

communication, both for the purpose of socializing government programs (Dwi Ajeng Widarini, 2019), (Tulung et al., 2021), promotion and marketing, mainly tourism (Hidayah et al., 2021) (Dhani Aristyawan, 2021), or branding both at the local and national levels (Widyaranti et al., 2020) (Ferbida et al., 2020).

This research is an advanced stage of various previous studies on the use of social media for the government, especially local governments. Based on tracing previous research, researchers see an empty niche to direct objects not to the main account of the local government but to become a more specific service agency in charge of public services. The selection of research objects for the Surabaya City Transportation Service was based on several considerations. First, regarding statistics and account profiles in the form of active uploads and the number of followers. This is accompanied by a variety of content produced by the Department of Transportation. Based on initial investigations, it is known that the Transportation Agency has an integrated IT management team with a traffic monitoring system called the e-dishub team.

The next reason is related to the choice of agency which has become the object of research in various regions. The Department of Transportation is seen as a unit that has attempted communication activities through social media in recent years. This use was recorded in several studies. In Bandung, Department of Transportation Service utilize social media as the one of medium to socialize electronic parking machines. Social media was chosen as one of the tools because of its advantage in being able to disseminate information quickly, easily and with a wider range (Pribawana & Kurniadi, 2018). Another research in Bojonegoro Regency showed that the use of social media is able to build two-way communication. Through interactions in uploads and comments, this public participation shows the role of social media as a public space so that people can contribute their thoughts while also being able to monitor public programs and services (Mustaqbirin et al., 2020). There is also research in Aceh which looks at the role of Public Relations of the Aceh Transportation department in the use and management of Instagram (@Dishub\_Aceh) as a segmented communication medium for the millennial generation or Gen-Z. With such an audience character, it is necessary to package messages in an interactive, educative and communicative way and utilize various Instagram features through captions, hashtags, mentions (Muktariza.r, Dr. Rahmawati Dra., M.Si, Nadia Muharman, 2023).

Research on the social media of the Surabaya City Transportation Service is not the first to be conducted. Previously, A Research the role of social media as a digital archiving effort that made it easier to record people's aspirations. Digital communication will encourage interactivity to improve public services (Febriannur Rachman, 2021). Another research who saw social media as an effort to promote the Suroboyo bus program. Good promotion and branding could attract public interest in accessing the transportation program (Taqiyah & Zuhri, 2022). By referring to and looking at the unfilled niche from the various studies above, this study tries to look at the use of social media at the Surabaya City Transportation Service through the Instagram account @dishubSurabaya in seeking interactivity to run better public services.

## **METHOD**

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method on the use of social media for government activities, especially in public services. The uniqueness of this research is shown by two aspects. In order to complete the analysis in this study, data were taken from interviews and social media observations at the Surabaya City Transportation Service. Case study data research was chosen to present a thorough description of the uniqueness that occurs in the research object. First, the choice of object, namely the service, no longer an account belonging to the local government, which is the next stage of a series of research conducted on the use of social media. Furthermore, there is the context of the mission of using social media which so far is usually for one-way communication, so this study tries to look at interactive practices. Data were obtained through in-depth interviews with representative informants. The research was conducted for several months by carrying out in-depth interviews and analysis of the content and captions uploaded on the Instagram social media of the Surabaya City Transportation Service. They come from two sides, both from the government side and cross check from the citizens. The process of extracting data is also carried out through observation, especially on interactions on social media accounts to strengthen research results. Data analyzed through the stages of data collection, data selection and data analysis according to the Miles & Huberman technique. Thus, it is hoped that there will be complete and saturated data.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Developed by Agency Coordinated by The Center**

Social media in form of Instagram which is created by the Transportation Department of Surabaya was initiated by two factors, are internal and external. Internal factors is initiated by the urge of the transportation department to be able to interact better with the society, It is also supported by the Head of the Surabaya Transportation Department. Meanwhile, externally, there are demands from the Ministry of State Apparatus Empowerment and Bureaucratic Reform of the Republic of Indonesia for each Department to upload performance reports that must be uploaded on social media, so that it is expected to create transparency and increase awareness about the performance carried out by each government department.

Now, the Instagram of the Surabaya Transportation Department has 5,850 uploads and 207,000 followers, this number of followers is the highest for official Instagram in the Surabaya government Social Media. To provide types of information on other *platforms* managed by the Surabaya Transportation Department, in the Instagram profile bio/caption, the Transportation Department also connects it with youtube accounts and websites to facilitate public information with various form, if Youtube prioritizes content such as videos, the website prioritizes completeness of information in news while Instagram as a gallery that provide a brief explanation with attractive visuals to be able to connect easily with the community. This is because Instagram is one of the social media with the most users and allows its followers, to get information continuously related to the information presented by the Surabaya Transportation Department.

Social media managed by the Department of Transportation is standard for the agency in Surabaya and be a big part of social media management at the City Government level. So far,

the *Bangga Surabaya* and *Sapawarga* accounts have been the main and most popular sources of information. Both are managed by the Office of Communication and Informatics as the communication coordinator at the city level. However, they asked the agency to help build social media and build coordination between social media managers.

In terms of content, *Bangga Surabaya* is specifically intended to update information on the main programs and tell about the mayor's activities, although there is also general information about the city of Surabaya. Meanwhile, agencies are asked to develop more specific information related to the specific program they are implementing. For example, the Department of Transportation prepares content that discusses more technical aspects of transportation in the field. The management of social media is connected to a traffic system called the Surabaya intelligent traffic system (SITS) which is managed by the Department of Transportation.

As a large part of the City Government's integrated communication unit, the social media of these agencies occasionally have a joint agenda coordinated by the Office of Communication and Informatics. This joint agenda aims to create positive branding for the City of Surabaya by presenting the role of the Service on one of the main agendas of the City Government.

One example of the case is about Small and Medium Enterprise (MSMEs). The Mayor of Surabaya, Eri Cahyadi has a program to advance MSMEs, so the Transportation Agency supports the program by providing promotions about Suroboyo Buses and bicycle lanes to support the stretching of MSMEs in Surabaya through the ease of reach provided by the Surabaya City Government, as well as Kominfo which launched an application for MSME branding.

Determination of the agenda setting is determined from the center. For example, when setting PPKM level 1 where many tourist attractions have been opened, so that each agency can follow what is trending among the community. This trend is then discussed in a coordination meeting between service heads, so that the public relations department of each agency can carry out according to the program set by the agency head.

### **Connecting Government and Citizen**

The development of social media is carried out in stages and implements a number of strategies to be able to connect with the community. If at first, the content presented by the Department of Transportation was limited to the uploading of photographs only. So, after the evaluation, it is considered that this strategy is not suitable because the community needs informative content and allows to answer questions or acquire new knowledge. So, over time, the social media management team realized the importance of managing educational content. Therefore, the social media management team is required to always follow the trends management implemented by the public relations world, so the Surabaya Transportation Development creative team is developing to produce creative content and be able to increase interaction with the community.

The community involvement in the content which is produced by Surabaya Transportation Department is using likes and comments on posts. The speed and creative content that reflects the rapid response of Surabaya Transportation Department in responding to an issue is also aimed at creating positive branding.

Content production to create connectedness with the community is also adjusted to the vision and mission and programs launched by the Surabaya City Government. This is because each Regional Apparatus Organization (OPD) has an important role to virtualize information that is adjusted to the objectives of each OPD by forming a *setting agenda* between OPDs. This coordination is also carried out on an ongoing basis between OPDs while the determination of this agenda setting is set from the center to create a trend of information about the government to grow public *awareness* regarding an issue or program formed by the government. This trend is then discussed in a coordination meeting between service heads, so that the public relations department of each OPD can carry out in accordance with the program set by the Head of Service.

The presence of social media in the Transportation Agency provides many benefits, both for the department and the community because it is able to become a media that brings together the department with the community quickly to provide public services. Bureaucratic flows, which often require time and follow-up processes, have now become more effective and efficient. The social media formed by the Transportation Agency is also able to answer various questions related to the formulation of policies, guidelines and technical standards, development, development, coaching, monitoring, controlling and evaluating the transportation system without a third party being an intermediary between the Surabaya Transportation Department and the community.

The use of social media can also be evidence of accountability from a service to the community. This is because the public can find out the goals and work programs implemented by the Surabaya Transportation Department every day in actual terms. The explanation of performance through captions on Instagram is also proof of the transparency of information and activities carried out by the agency.

With the presentation of information about the program and the comment feature on social media, Surabaya Transportation Department is also able to provide the public with the opportunity to respond or provide complaints directly and allow it to be answered directly by Surabaya Transportation Department. Complaints submitted to Surabaya Transportation Department can also be more quickly conveyed and responded to, this is based on the ease of conveying information from the public to the relevant agencies. In addition, the publication of the Surabaya Transportation Department work program through creative and educational content also allows information to be conveyed more effectively to the public.

Through comments given by the public on content uploaded by Surabaya Transportation Department, it allows public relations to get data on responses and evaluation materials regarding a policy, thereby facilitating the implementation of coordination to improve services as well as conveying evaluations to related sections for Surabaya Transportation Department

Not only for public information services, but the social media is also aimed at creating positive branding through information service skills and follow-up evaluation of policy improvements as well as the creation of other programs that are in accordance with the needs of the citizen so that it is hoped that through the content presented and response to community participation, it will be able to increase public confidence to participate in supporting programs launched by the government.

### **Three Message Characteristics: Public Service, Education, and Branding**

Based on the research, it can be concluded that there are three characteristics of messages created in social media managed by the Surabaya Transportation Department.

First, the content which is created as a public service to support the effectiveness of responsive policy socialization. In order to reach the wider public, the content presented is made attractive and follows trends that are popular in society. This is based on the challenges of managing social media content which is often based on the public's need for actual information and strong awareness of trending content, so it takes a creative process to find out the trends that are going viral on social media as long as they do not conflict with official ethics in society.

Second, the content produced by Surabaya Transportation Department is used to provide education. This is based on the fact that many people do not understand and often mis-address in submitting complaints. The messages are also aimed at providing an understanding of the basis of government policy making so as to be able to build *mutual understanding* with the public, education about the meaning of road markings and explanations about traffic laws. In maintaining the credibility of social media management related to service and education functions, coordination is also carried out between agencies. This is based on the fact that the information conveyed is appropriate and can be applied by the public. So as to create a match between what is conveyed on social media and policies on the ground.

Third, creativity for attractive visuals and content creation strategies based on popular trends is also used as a means of branding. So, to support this goal, various features are utilized optimally, for example the reels feature and IGTV from Instagram. Even though it follows the trend that is currently popular, the message conveyed must still follow information related to the goals for Surabaya Transportation Department, which is related to information about in Surabaya.

The availability of adequate Human Resources also needs to be realized by involving experts in content production. The Social Media Management Team consists of a design team, IT and photographers. The recruitment process is carried out by taking 1-2 people who are experts in their fields, experienced people and together the team deepens their knowledge by self-taught and with high field flying hours, adding content management expertise.

In the three key messages presented by Surabaya Transportation Department, there are various variations of content on social media, including:

- Provide Question Frequently Asked Box - Contains a variety of questions that many people ask. One of them is regarding the application of the latest tariffs from Suroboyo Bus. Second, Questions regarding signs and procedures for boarding the Suroboyo Bus submitted by followers. Often, the selection of questions is based on questions that correspond to certain momentum or questions that are asked the most by followers.
- On The Spot Reports - Is the latest update on road conditions around the city of Surabaya. Such as information on road closures during PPKM and weather conditions today and warnings to be careful in driving and mobilizing.
- Commemoration of the Big Day- Although it is a common content that is applied throughout the institution in commemorating a certain day, the visuals or messages conveyed are adjusted to the goals for Surabaya Transportation Department.
- Information Update Provides the latest information about the latest programs, policies and updates on activities carried out by Surabaya Transportation Department.
- Trivia Is a light content that soft selling invites the public to participate to support the program implemented by the Surabaya Transportation Department.
- Education In accordance with the established branding, namely to carry out the educational function of the Surabaya Transportation Department, one of which is realized to provide information about the weather in the Surabaya area and its surroundings
- Information Update from CCTV The Transportation Agency also has access to CCTV throughout the city of Surabaya, information as well as education about the latest situation of the City of Surabaya is also conveyed through this content.
- Incidental Information - Contains information at any time and must be conveyed actually to the people of Surabaya. For example, Surabaya's success in obtaining awards.
- Route Update Discussed about route updates, especially from public transportation, such as the Suroboyo Bus and the Suroboyo WaraWiri. Apart from being announced via Instagram, the latest routes can also be accessed via the Gobismu application.
- Tips discuss on how to drive safely and comfortably. Often these tips are also related to a certain momentum. For example, when a heat wave hit Surabaya, the Surabaya City Transportation Service made tips for safe driving during a heat wave and when the homecoming season comes, the Surabaya City Transportation Service also discusses tips for safe transportation.
- Picture describes the activities of the Surabaya City Transportation Service in an effort to discipline motorists in a humane way, the latest traffic conditions, Surabaya City public transportation activities, especially promotions related to the latest transportation from Surabaya, namely Wara Wiri.
- Instagram Reels This is the newest feature from Instagram in the form of a short video and is used by the Surabaya City Transportation Service to provide more detailed visual information and reach a wider audience due to a wider algorithm setting. An example of the content is in the form of Traffic Engineering and Parking Locations at the Rujak Uleg Festival and instructions for waiting for the bus at the bus stop or bus stop according to the intended route.



- Special Day is a greeting related to commemoration of holidays and other special days with visuals associated with services and activities from the Surabaya City Transportation Service.

### **The Standby Team to Respond Questions and Handle Complaints**

The public also feels the need to get information from the platform managed by the transportation agency Surabaya. Based on interviews with a few followers conducted by researchers, there are several reasons for people to follow the Surabaya Transportation Department account, that updating information about development in Surabaya, content that often appears on Instagram and has interesting content to follow. For the public, it is hoped that the content uploaded from social media of Surabaya Transportation Department will receive additional education about activities, policies and programs from Surabaya Transportation Department, more creative content that appears, more interaction and question and answer.

The questions raised by the public through social media accounts are not without reason. The development of technology and the sophistication of technology are one of the reasons. Not only that, the delivery through comments or direct messages on social media accounts is also considered as one of the direct communications delivered to the of Surabaya Transportation Department. In addition, the answers submitted to questions related to the work program from the Surabaya Transport Department can also be responded to or answered more quickly.

Surabaya Transportation Department prioritizes the interactiveness of public services through uploading content that is used to answer public complaints on social media. This starts from the number of complaints that enter its account and if a good response is not given, the number of complaints increases and expands to the goals that are not the responsibility of the Department. Therefore, services for complaints submitted by the community in soft selling are also manifested in educational content.

Besides if this information service is not delivered properly by the relevant agencies, then the possibility of the public to providing a 'digital attack' will increase and will gradually reduce public trust in the relevant government. Meanwhile, community participation in content management from the Transportation Agency plays an important role for the sustainability of digital services from Surabaya Transportation Department because the community has a role to provide control over the policies issued.

The systematics of complaints services ranges from 4-7 complaints every day, but some complaints have also begun to be directed to go through WargaKu. Meanwhile, some of the complaints submitted to the Transportation Department usually revolve around questions that are general in nature.

In handling complaints, Surabaya Transportation Department has three persons in charge of handling about four until seven complaints. In order to further optimize the service, sometimes these personnel also respond to the service until the early hours of the morning. The challenge in answering each of these complaints is that there is a miscommunication from the community regarding the duties and functions of the Surabaya Transportation Department. So, many complaints were submitted but they were actually the duty of other agencies. Likewise with the

submission of complaints that are not on target, such as complaints about signs, maintenance of stops and streamlining of trees which are often submitted not to the relevant agencies.

In the future, content management will also be improved through collaboration with young people to produce creative content. However, this collaboration process must also be coordinated by Surabaya Transportation Department so that it remains in accordance with the characteristics and objectives of conveying the message that Surabaya Transportation Department wants to convey.

This creatively processed content is the hope of the public who follow the social media accounts of the Surabaya Transportation Department while still educating the public. Not only that, in the future the Surabaya Transportation Department can also take advantage of the features issued by Instagram such as using the Question Box feature to be shared on Instagram stories so that people will find it easier to convey problems and the Surabaya Transportation Department will also be easier to answer questions, because they can be directly shared.

## CONCLUSION

This study confirms that the use of social media has potential benefits not only for promotion or socialization (one way communication). The perceived benefits apply to both the department and the community because it is able to become a media to mediate the two parties. The communication process that usually takes time and the follow-up process can be cut and become more effective and efficient. The social media of the Surabaya Transportation Service is able to answer various questions related to the formulation of policies, technical guidelines and standards, development, development, guidance, monitoring, control and evaluation of the transportation system directly without intermediaries. To be able to reach the interactive stage, there are two important points that need to be achieved, namely first, the formulation and production of messages must be done in such a way that it is able to attract citizens' interest, not just photos like in common government social media. Second, after being able to build citizen participation, the availability of a team to receive messages and answer residents' questions so that interactivity can be realized. As a continuation of this research, it is necessary to search from the perspective of citizens in this interactive communication pattern through social media. This is crucial because to find the right pattern, what needs to be done is to understand the citizens wishes and behaviour.

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