

Adaptive social media management for higher education image transformation

H. R. Prabayanti¹, Mustaji²,  E. Roesminingsih^{3*}

¹Universitas Negeri Surabaya, Indonesia; hermaprabayanti@unesa.ac.id (H.R.P.) mustaji@unesa.ac.id (M.)
ernyroesminingsih@unesa.ac.id (E.R.).

Abstract: Communication within educational institutions possesses unique characteristics, necessitating further research to identify the most suitable social media management (SMM) patterns. This study aims to develop an adaptive SMM model at Unesa, which has the potential to be replicated by other universities. The theoretical framework is based on the Circular Model of SMM (Luttrell), emphasizing the cycle of "SOME" and decentralized management principles (Blanchard), which highlight the agility of work units. Additionally, classical management theories are incorporated to support the alignment of planning and control processes. The research employs the ADDIE model, utilizing data collection techniques such as in-depth interviews, observations of faculty Instagram accounts, and surveys measuring brand image perception among 400 students. The findings reveal that the primary issue stems from the incompatibility of social media accounts across faculties with Unesa's official account, leading to fragmented institutional narratives. To address this, a solution named "Simpeten" was developed—a website-based content submission management system designed to facilitate coordination between work units and the central public relations team. The results demonstrate that the model effectively enhances the consistency of visual identity and institutional narratives. Furthermore, it is deemed suitable for replication by other campuses in Indonesia and the Southeast Asia region to bolster institutional reputation in the digital era. This research underscores the importance of integrated social media strategies and centralized content management to maintain a cohesive institutional image across multiple platforms and stakeholders.

Keywords: Brand image, Circular Model of SoMe, Higher education, Social media management, Unesa.

1. Introduction

The transformation of the digital era has changed communication patterns around the world, including among millennials and generation Z who now increasingly rely on social media as the main source of information, including regarding higher education choices [1]. Universities around the world, especially in developing countries, are faced with the challenge of adjusting to changes in order to remain relevant and competitive. Numerous studies confirm that strategic social media management not only enhances an institution's reputation, but also influences prospective students' decisions in choosing an institution [2, 3].

Indonesia is one of the developing countries that has a large population, campus, and social media users. The *We Are Social* report released in January 2025 shows that as many as 143 Indonesians are recorded as active on social media. This figure is equivalent to 50.2% of the total population [4]. Social media users in Indonesia utilize various platforms on the internet to play *games*, search for information, learn, and find entertainment [5]. This trend in Indonesia is in line with many findings that social media users around the world have multiple functions: information dissemination and academic collaboration platforms through *information seeking*, *information sharing*, and *co-creating* [6].

The urgency of structured social media management is heightened by the changing landscape of global assessments of university quality, such as *webometrics* rankings that now make *digital presence* and *engagement* important indicators [7]. A number of studies confirm the positive correlation between effective social media management strategies and increased university rankings in global ranking systems [8, 9]. Universitas Negeri Surabaya (Unesa) as a State University with Legal Status (PTN-BH) in Indonesia, in accordance with PP No. 37/2022, has a big challenge to communicate the advantages of its institution professionally and consistently.

Unesa, as well as other campuses in developing countries, need to create and implement a more structured digital communication strategy to boost visibility in the network [10]. The decentralized management of social media accounts in faculties (or units) causes the visual identity and institutional narrative to be inconsistent, so that the information presented tends to be fragmented and less effective in building the institution's image [11]. This phenomenon is prevalent in many universities in developing countries where the limitations of digital communication management systems are still a major obstacle [12].

This article aims to develop an integrated, feasible, practical, and adaptive social media management model, with a case study at Unesa, but designed with theoretical and technical frameworks that allow replication in other tertiary institutions in Indonesia, Southeast Asia, or other developing countries. By combining the framework of the *Circular Model of Social Media Management* [13] and the principle of decentralization [14] this article makes theoretical and practical contributions to the development of institutional digital communication management. This research is motivated by the need to strengthen the campus image through optimizing the management of social media accounts, especially Instagram, at the faculty level.

Through the development of a social media management model, researchers will help public relations who are also human resources managing social media to be more practical and efficient. Talent management is needed in order to provide benefits for the individual himself and the organization in increasing productivity and capability [15]. The convenience of an integrated management system helps public relations to improve the university's brand image.

This research was formulated to answer the main question: how is the social media management model to improve the *brand image of the* Unesa campus, which has the potential to be replicated by other campuses. The locus of this research is indeed Unesa, one of the large and growing campuses in Indonesia. However, the results of this study can make a scientific contribution to the development of education management science, especially in the context of social media management in higher education.

2. Literature Review

Social media management in higher education is not just a technical activity, but an integral part of institutional strategy. Management is the process of planning, organizing, coordinating, and controlling resources to achieve organizational goals effectively and efficiently Griffin [16]. Taylor [17] initiated the concept of scientific management that emphasized efficiency and standardization of work processes, while Fayol [18] complemented it by emphasizing the importance of managerial functions such as planning, organizing, directing, coordinating, and controlling [19, 20]. These two classical theories remain relevant in modern management, including in the management of organizational social media [21]. In the context of higher education, these principles translate into efforts to design content strategies, organize the role of account managers, coordinate messages between units, and control the consistency of digital identity [22].

Social media is a strategic channel for building organizational identity through interactive and collaborative content [23]. Social media reinforces social networks and social value in digital communication. Social media serves as a medium to reinforce organizational identity to the public [24]. In higher education, content on social media is not only a promotion of academic, but also a means of communicating institutional values, culture, and character [25].

Research conducted by Whisman shows that social media has an important role in supporting internal branding which ultimately strengthens the image of an institution [26]. This finding is in line with the opinion of Andrews and Shimp who emphasize that social media has a number of advantages compared to conventional mass media, especially in the aspects of broad reach, high accessibility, and interactivity that allows for a two-way dialog between the institution and its stakeholders [27].

A number of social media management models have been developed and can be a reference in designing digital communication strategies in higher education [28]. The Research, Objectives, Strategies, Tactics, Implementation, and Reporting (ROSTIR) model as a measurable digital communication campaign framework has become a reference for many parties [29]. Meanwhile, Dietrich developed a model that integrates Paid, Earned, Shared, and Owned media (PESO) to expand message reach while strengthening institutional credibility [30]. Luttrell also offers the *Circular Model of SoMe*, which emphasizes the stages of "share", "optimize", "manage", and "engage" as a strategy to build symmetrical two-way communication with the audience [13]. In addition, Blanchard proposes a *Decentralized Social Media Management Model* that encourages the autonomy of each work unit in managing its social media accounts [14].

Organizational identity consists of three main elements, namely *central character*, *distinctiveness*, and *continuity*, which must be reflected in every communication activity of the institution [31]. Meanwhile, *brand image* is formed through a consistent communication process, which represents the institution's identity and forms a collective perception in the minds of the public [32, 33]. Peruta and Shields' research shows that *brand* management in the university environment has its own complexity because it involves a variety of actors, ranging from students, alumni, parents, industry partners, to the wider community who are part of the higher education ecosystem [34, 35]. Another important indicator in assessing an institution's digital image is the *webometrics* ranking. These rankings measure the *online* visibility of universities through several indicators, such as the amount of academic content published, the number of backlinks from other sites, and social media engagement that supports information distribution and interaction [36, 37].

3. Research Methods

This research used a qualitative method with the "Analyze", "Design", "Develop", "Implement", "Evaluate" or ADDIE approach [38]. This approach was chosen to produce a practical and effective social media management model in improving the *brand image* of Universitas Negeri Surabaya (Unesa). This research method combines qualitative analysis and survey data [39, 40].

Qualitative data were obtained through in-depth interviews with Unesa leadership elements (Director of Public Relations, Rector, and Chair of the Academic Senate), Unesa's public relations team, and a team of experts to validate the research; as well as direct observation of the Instagram account activities of each faculty. Survey data were collected through distributing questionnaires to 400 students (selected through a stratified sampling method from a population of 63,356 Unesa students) to measure perceptions of the *brand image* developed. Categorization in the discussion section is divided into ADDIE as the approach used.

At the analysis stage, researchers conducted a problem analysis and needs analysis. "Analyze" is done through social media content in internal Unesa to find social media management problems. In addition, in-depth interviews were also conducted with university leaders. Governance of higher education in Indonesia universities similar to Unesa have 3 highest leaders, namely the Chancellor, Chair of the academic senate and chairman of the board of trustees.

"Design" is done by compiling a basic pattern of social media management that refers to the Circular Model of SoMe [13] the principles of decentralized social media management [14] and other social media management concepts / theories. In the design stage, researchers focus on the flow and usefulness of the website as a support for digital communication between work units.

"Develop" focuses on making social media management products, which are formulated through the results of previous analysis and basic design. In addition, a validity test was conducted by a team of

experts and a limited trial by public relations staff in internal Unesa. To perform the validity of the instrument used includes the components of brand engagement in The Marketing Science Institute by Sjöberg [41].

Table 1.
Social Media Management Validation Assessment Criteria.

No	Assessment Item
1	Identification; measuring the consistency of the website to build Unesa brand image affiliation with the audience.
2	Enthusiasm; assessing how to build audience response to Instagram content through the developed website.
3	Attention: measures the extent to which audiences give their focus and time to brand content or activities on social media through the developed website.
4	Absorption: measures the extent to which managers are directly involved in creating content to improve Unesa's brand image on Instagram.
5	Interaction: assesses the extent to which social media managers can build two-way communication with audiences through the modules and websites developed.

The data obtained from the media development process will be analyzed descriptively which is then used to determine the feasibility, practicality and effectiveness of the website that has been developed. Data from the validation results of social media management experts, public relations experts, and education management experts, as well as the response questionnaire of research subjects were analyzed to determine the feasibility of the product. To process the data, researchers used the following percentage formula:

$$\text{Score} = \frac{\sum \text{score}}{\sum \text{total score}} \times 100\%$$

Figure 1.
Determination of validation value.

The results of data processing were then analyzed using the value interpretation criteria that are generally used in university assessments. Interpretation is the meaning of the data obtained. As a guideline for interpretation, the criteria are set as shown in the following table:

Table 2.
Interpretation Criteria.

Category	Percentage	Qualification
4	86% - 100%	Very Feasible
3	76% - 85%	Feasible
2	56% - 75%	Less Feasible
1	≤ 55%	Not Feasible

Source: Sugiyono [42].

Description:

- If the tested product reaches a percentage level of 86% - 100%, then the social media management model is classified as very feasible.
- If the tested social product reaches a percentage level of 76%-85%, then the social media management model is classified as feasible.
- If the tested product reaches a percentage level of 56% - 75%, then the social media management model is classified as less feasible.

- d. If the tested product reaches a percentage level $<55\%$, then the social media management model is classified as unfit.

The findings data analyzed include: (1) Initial findings data were reduced, analyzed, and concluded for the preparation of social media management models; (2) Findings data from validation results which were then analyzed to become revision materials; (3) Findings data from limited trials which were then analyzed to become revision materials.

The next stage "Implementation" was carried out with mass trials on faculty Instagram account managers and student representatives. Data from the mass trial findings were analyzed for finalization and improvement of the final product.

"Evaluate" includes analyzing the results of mass trials on 400 students on the social media management system found by researchers. The evaluation refers to the assessment items that include aspects of *brand engagement* that include Paid, Earned, Shared, Owned Media or PESO components [41]. After the five aspects, a "Challenges and Development Implications" section is presented before the formulation of conclusions.

4. Discussion and Research Results

4.1. Analyze

The social media used by Unesa in implementing the institution's *brand image* is Instagram with the account name @official_unesa. Then, each faculty also has its own official account, including: 1) Faculty of Social and Political Sciences with the Instagram account name @fisipol_unesa; 2) Faculty of Language and Arts with Instagram account name @fbsunesa; 3) Faculty of Education with Instagram account name @fipunesa; 4) Faculty of Economics and Business with Instagram account name @feb.unesa; 5) Faculty of Sport and Health Sciences with Instagram account name @fikkunesa; 6) Faculty of Engineering with Instagram account name @info.ftunesa; 7) Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Education with Instagram account name @official_fmipaunesa; 8) Faculty of Medicine with account name @fk.unesa; 9) Faculty of Vocational Studies with Instagram account name @vokasiunesaofficial; and 10) Faculty of Law with Instagram account name @fhukum.unesa.

In the analysis of social media accounts, researchers identified that egocentric between faculties tends to be high, in contrast to the official Unesa account which is more directed. Here are some differences identified by researchers from Unesa's faculty social media accounts, first, on the social media bio of Unesa's faculty, there is no official Unesa account listed. Of the ten faculties, only one faculty, the Faculty of Law, lists @official_unesa as the parent account or main account of Unesa.

Second, the use of profile photos that are not unified, so that it does not represent that the account is an official account. Six of the ten faculty Instagram accounts have used the same profile picture, namely the institution's logo, while the other four still use different identities, namely the Instagram accounts of the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences, Faculty of Vocational Studies, and Faculty of Sport and Health Sciences. Third, the use of *usernames* that are not harmonized. Similar to the profile picture, the use of *usernames* on the Unesa faculty Instagram account is still not harmonized. Coupled with the unverified account will certainly have an important impact on the authenticity of the account.

Fourth, account activeness in uploading content is also one of the things that should be considered. Unesa's official account, @official_unesa, regularly uploads activities and college products. In contrast to faculty accounts that rarely upload activities. Fifth, on the Unesa faculty Instagram account, there is no content at all that shows Unesa as an institution with an educational spirit and excels in the arts and culture.

Social media management that has been running in Unesa uses a simple system. Rectorate public relations only conduct one-way communication with faculty public relations to deliver content ideas on social media. this condition makes the dynamics of social media at the faculty level very low. The following is the flow of social media management carried out by unesa public relations.

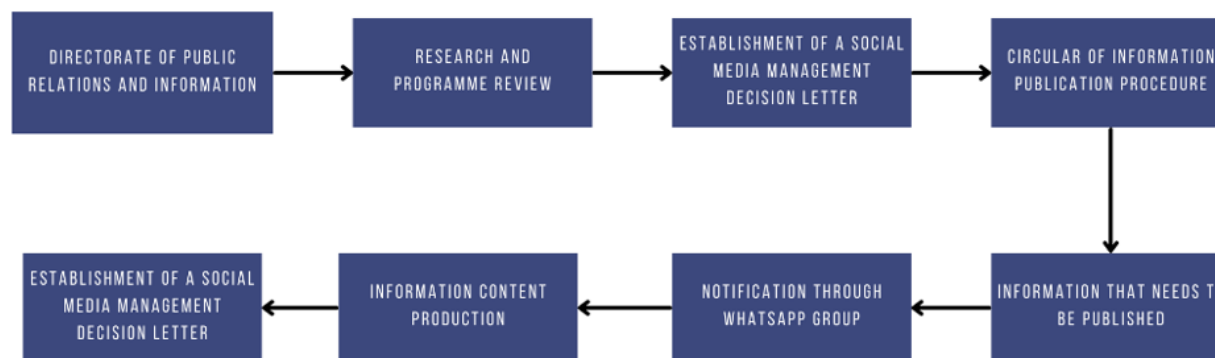


Figure 2.
The beginning of the PR social media management flow.

Based on the results of interviews with the Director of Public Relations and Public Information, it is known that promotional activities and information dissemination that has not been coherent between Unesa's official account and Instagram accounts between faculties is due to the absence of a strategic plan for digital activities involving faculty public relations groups. This is the real challenge faced by Unesa in strengthening the *brand image* so that it can compete with other universities in attracting new students. This is in line with the statement of the Rector of Unesa who was interviewed on April 20, 2024. He said that collaboration, both inside and outside Unesa, is still lacking, and institutions should be able to adapt and cooperate so that university branding can increase. The Chairperson of the Academic Senate interviewed on April 30, 2024 mentioned that Unesa needs to optimize human resources to be proficient in carrying out the operational sides of information technology, which is the basic domain of social media.

Through in-depth interviews with Unesa leaders, researchers conducted a needs analysis. The results obtained are; the need to convey Unesa's identity in improving brand image, requiring proactive public relations in digital media; requiring social media in branding strategies, requiring digital data integration. Based on these four fundamental needs, researchers developed Unesa's social media management design and made instructions through modules and communication systems with the "simpeten" website.

4.2. Design

The researcher used the main theoretical anchor, namely the decentralized social media management model [14]. The decentralized model does not rely on centralized instruction alone, but rather on faculty-level policies that support and align with university-level management and policies. This model consciously or unconsciously prioritizes local agility and relevance over centralized control and strict brand consistency. The existence of alternative models that emphasize coordination or centralization suggests that this trade-off is widely recognized. Decentralization aligns with the SoMe model or "share", "optimize", "manage", and "engage" [13].

The Circular Model of SoMe developed by Luttrell [13] emphasizes that social media management cannot be viewed as a linear activity, but rather as a mutually sustainable and dynamic cycle through four main elements. "Share" is adapted by ensuring that every shared content contains a narrative that is aligned with Unesa's vision and mission as an entrepreneurship-based educational campus, as well as paying attention to the uniqueness and value of the institution. "Optimize" is translated in the form of effective communication planning, including strategies for selecting appropriate social media platforms, timing publications, and aligning messages at all levels of the organization, from faculty to university. This content optimization is based on the basic identity that has been formulated, so that each content is able to reach a more targeted and measurable audience [43].

"Manage" is the core of strategic management that not only focuses on social media operations, but also includes the formulation of adaptive content policies according to the needs of each work unit. A number of studies have shown that in practice, the manage stage is actually the basis that must be done earlier, before "share" and "optimize", because a mature strategy is the key to the effectiveness of digital communication. "Engage" is implemented by encouraging Unesa social media managers to build authentic engagement with audiences. Through understanding interaction patterns and user preferences, engagement is focused on creating two-way communication that strengthens emotional relationships, increases public trust, and maintains the loyalty of the academic community and the wider community [44]. This engagement strategy is not only implemented through content management, but also in digital public relations functions, including efforts to anticipate and handle potential reputation crises on social media [45].

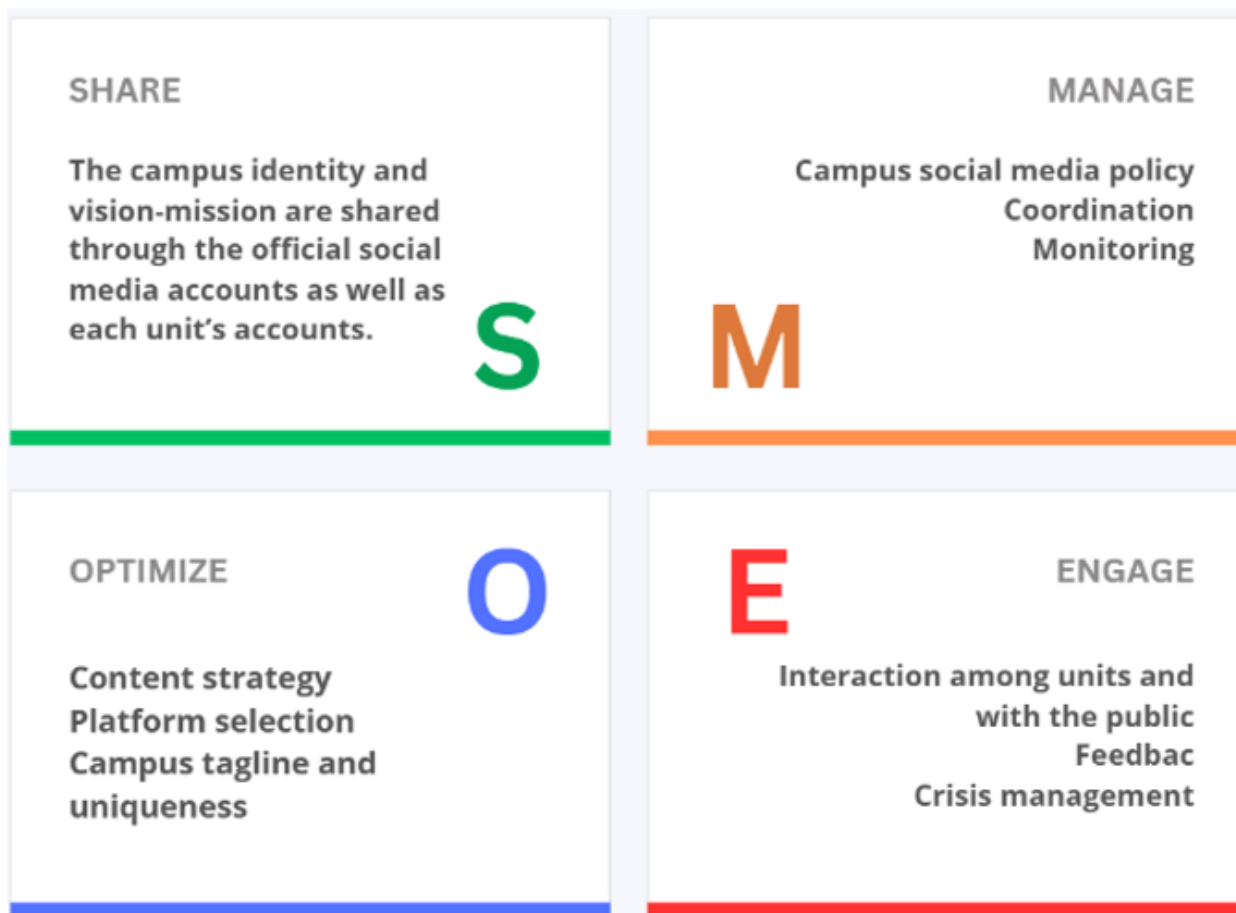


Figure 3.
SoMe in the context of campus social media optimization.

4.3. Develop

Based on the results of the analysis showing the lack of alignment and coordination in the management of social media accounts between faculties and the official university account, as well as the initial design that integrates the decentralized social media management model with the Circular Model of SoMe, researchers conducted the "develop" stage. This development was realized through a website or application-based social media management design called "Simpeten" (Content Submission

Management System). The website, which was released for a limited trial on June 1, 2024, is designed to facilitate the submission, review, and approval of content in a structured manner.

"Simpeten" is a web-based platform developed to manage social media content submissions in an integrated manner within Unesa). This system allows social media account managers at the faculty level to submit content material to the university public relations team systematically, from submission, review, to approval, so that each step is well documented. Equipped with an intuitive "interface" and dashboard for both users and admins, "Simpeten" supports more effective coordination between faculty accounts and official university accounts. The content submission process becomes more organized and faster, collaboration between units is easier, and transparency and accountability of content management increases. The existence of this platform is expected to strengthen Unesa's image by ensuring that each faculty's social media content is consistent and aligned with the university's communication strategy.

Key features include a content submission form that allows faculty social media managers to submit material with detailed titles, themes, descriptions and attachments; a user dashboard that displays submission status in real-time, supporting monitoring of content progress; and an admin panel that allows the PR team to quickly review, approve or reject content. "Simpeten" also features an evaluation page that allows feedback on each submission, so users understand why the content was accepted or rejected. A responsive interface design and intuitive navigation make it easy to access on various devices, while a role-based login system keeps access secure.

To ensure the feasibility and practicality of the developed products, researchers conducted validity tests and limited trials systematically on July 29, 2024. The validity test involved three expert validators, namely social media management experts, information technology experts who are experienced in developing website-based systems, as well as communication and public relations experts of universities. All three provided a comprehensive assessment of the development module and the "Simpeten" system, including aspects of content feasibility, design, language, and product usability.

Table 3.
Validity test.

No.	Components Assessed	Assessment Result		
	Identification			
1.	The website design is attractive and supports usage.	4	2	4
2.	The page layout makes effective use of space, not too dense or empty.	4	2	4
3.	Information is organized in a clear hierarchy, making it easy for users to find important information.	4	2	4
4.	Navigation menus are easy to find and use, with a logical structure.	4	3	4
	Absorption			
5.	The website is easy to use and has a fast load time.	4	3	4
6.	The website can be accessed by users with various abilities and has a good display on various devices.	4	3	4
7.	Each <i>tool</i> works well and makes it easy for users to get information as well as submit content.	4	3	4
	Enthusiasm			
8.	The assessment criteria for uploadable content are clearly explained on the website.	4	3	4
9.	The content assessment process is transparent and understandable to users.	4	3	4
	Attention			
10.	The website provides sample content that matches the assessment criteria.	4	3	3
11.	There are clear guidelines for users on how to upload appropriate content.	4	2	4
	Interaction			
12.	Users get clear feedback about the uploaded content, whether it is accepted or rejected, along with the reasons.	4	3	4
13.	Websites enable effective communication between institutions and users.	3	3	3
14.	The website can support the improvement of the university's <i>brand image</i> through social media integration.	4	2	4
	Total	55	37	54

In the validity test calculation, the value determination is 1 for the lowest value and 4 for the highest value. The following are the results of the calculation of product feasibility:

Table 4.
Validity test results.

No	Expert validator	Total score	Total validity score	Percentage
1	Social media field	56	55	98 %
2	Public relations field	56	37	66 %
3	Education management field	56	54	96 %

Based on the results of the first validation, the public relations validator received a score of 66% which means it is not feasible. The researcher made revisions based on the assessment results and descriptively the expert validator provided input for product revision as follows:

Table 5.
Revision of Social Media Management Website.

No.	Suggestion/Criticism	Revisions Made
1.	The <i>website</i> display needs to be packaged in a more attractive manner and adapted to the user segmentation.	Improvements have been made to the appearance of the <i>website</i> so that it is more attractive and tailored to user segmentation, namely social media account managers in each Unesa faculty.
2.	The <i>website</i> page layout needs to be refined.	Improvements have been made to the <i>website</i> page layout so that it is easier to access and more attractive.

After the revision, the researcher again submitted validation to the public relations expert validator with the same validation instrument and obtained a score of 96%. So it can be concluded that the validators of social media and education management experts have been declared very feasible with a one-time validation process. Meanwhile, for public relations expert validators, validation was carried out twice until it was declared very feasible.

Then, a limited trial was conducted involving 8 social media account managers from university public relations as subjects, representing the main potential users of the system. They followed the hands-on practice of using the website, and provided practicality feedback as evaluation material for product improvement before wider implementation. Based on the results of the limited trial, the director of public relations provided input regarding a more practical flow in using the website. The following is the flowchart of the website used:

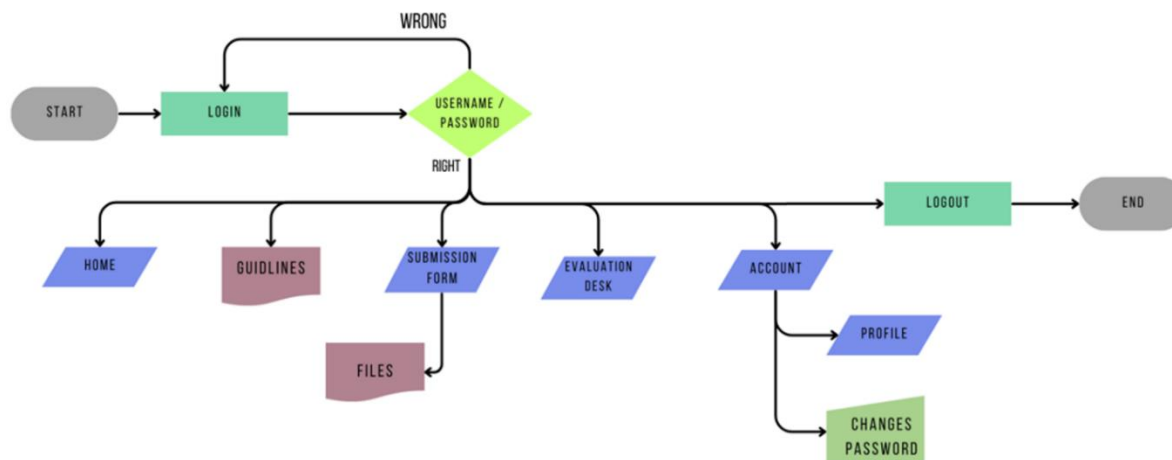


Figure 4.
Flowchart of "simpeten".

4.4. Implementation

The implementation stage is the culmination of a series of development of Unesa's social media management model, which was carried out through a mass trial on August 23, 2024 at Mövenpick Hotel Surabaya. This activity was attended by 52 participants from various university strategic units, including social media managers of faculties, directorates, autonomous institutions, and BEM UNESA, with the aim of obtaining direct experience-based feedback on development products in the form of social media management modules and the "Simpeten" website. The pilot test was designed in four integrated stages: model presentation, technical simulation, Instagram insight data analysis, and evaluation through questionnaires. At the presentation stage, participants were provided with an understanding of the development background based on the results of the needs analysis, and introduced to the two main products: the social media management module containing strategic guidelines and the "Simpeten" website as a centralized content submission platform.

The technical simulation session was conducted with practical assistance in using the module and direct access to "Simpeten", where participants were given the task of creating articles that were then uploaded as social media content, to familiarize the standard workflow of institutional information production and distribution. The next stage focused on optimizing the use of Instagram insight data, equipping participants to read performance metrics such as reach, impressions, interactions, and follower growth, and linking them to evaluation-based content strategies. The activity ended with the completion of an evaluative questionnaire designed to measure satisfaction, ease of use, and relevance of the model to the real needs of institutional social media management.

The questionnaire results showed very positive acceptance with an average of 97.76% positive response. The module is considered informative, easy to understand, relevant, and helps the strategy of improving Unesa's brand image. The "Simpeten" website also received high scores on ease of access, suitability of features to the needs of content submission, and contribution to the consistency of Unesa's visual identity and brand messages.

This response shows that the model developed is not only theoretically feasible, but also practically valid and applicable in supporting structured and standardized digital communication management. This finding is a strong basis for recommending "Simpeten" to be adopted as an official social media content management system within Unesa, in order to strengthen coordination, brand image consistency, and the effectiveness of institutional public communication in the era of digital transformation. The following are the results of the development of the most feasible, practical and effective model for Unesa.

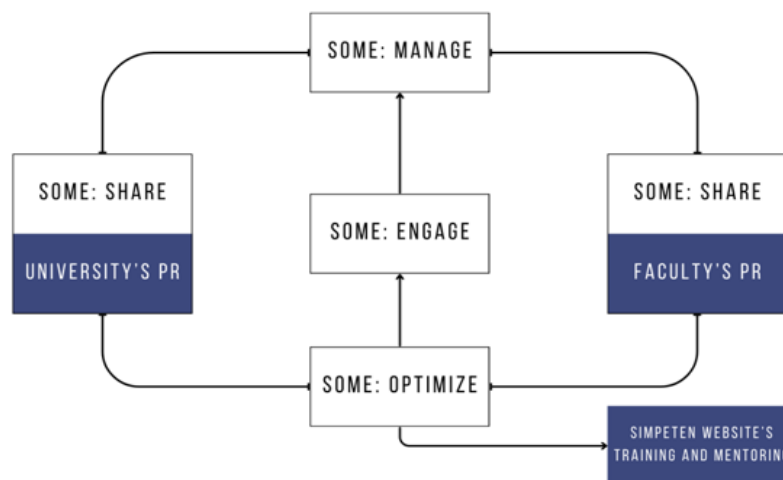


Figure 5.
Unesa Social Media Management Model.

Through the unesa social media management model, the Chancellor makes a policy that guides public relations to create content that suits the needs of the university. At the university and faculty levels have similar needs, but still have to make the creativity of each social media manager or public relations to fit the needs of the audience. The key to social media management is in training and module assistance in accordance with the rector's policy, but the creativity of The faculty level is also needed so that the specifications of the study program can also be communicated to the audience. The engage stage is the stage of evaluating the content uploaded on social media, the responses that appear both positive and negative will return to the management order to become material for evaluating other social media policies.

4.5. Evaluate

The evaluation phase is the final phase in the ADDIE framework, which focuses on assessing the effectiveness of the implementation of the social media management module and the SIMPETEN website. The evaluation was conducted in a participatory manner through collecting feedback from social media managers of various UNESA work units who had participated in the mass trial. Participants provided important inputs, such as the need for structured tutorials in the module so that users with different technical abilities can better understand the workflow. They also suggested a detailed technical guide for SIMPETEN operation, even though the interface is intuitive, so that each user can complete content submission independently and efficiently.

Responding to this feedback, the development team made substantial revisions, including improvements to the module delivery structure, navigation, and technical features of "Simpeten", so that the final product is more inclusive and supports the achievement of Unesa's brand image through standardized digital communication. In addition to feedback, the evaluation also involved direct observation of the Unesa faculty Instagram account before and after the module implementation. The observation results showed some positive and negative aspects. In terms of activeness, faculty accounts have become more routine in uploading content, resulting in a significant increase in followers, between 700 and 2,500 followers per account since the June 2024 observation. However, visual identities such as profile photos, usernames, and bios are still not uniform, and only the Faculty of Law includes the parent account @official_unesa.

The backlink strategy by including the faculty website has been implemented, but no one has linked to the official Unesa website. In terms of hashtag usage, the faculty began to consistently use typical Unesa hashtags such as #KampusParaJuara. On content, a number of accounts began to display the achievements of the academic community and service content, such as academic reminder information, fraud alerts, to complaint service contacts, showing an increase in content quality to meet the information needs of the academic community.

The evaluation also highlighted the importance of content consistency across various communication channels through a content mirroring strategy between Instagram and the official website, which effectively builds credibility and expands audience reach. An example of a real application is the upload of the Faculty of Law regarding the achievements of the Suara Hukum Journal which is published simultaneously on Instagram and the website, strengthening the narrative of Unesa's success. In addition, the evaluation noted the need for increased coordination and collaboration across faculties, so that the institutional narrative is integrated and there are no message inconsistencies. Optimization of technology such as the use of social media analytics tools and data-based content management is also proposed to support more strategic decision making.

Furthermore, the evaluation included a student perception survey to assess changes in Unesa's brand image post-implementation of the module and "Simpeten". The survey measured six brand image elements: attributes, benefits, values, culture, personality, and usage. In the attribute element, the average positive response reached 92.8%, with excellence in education gaining 96.5% approval. On the benefits element, the average approval was 91.1%, especially for the availability of college information (96.75%), although information on academic activities was only 78.5%, indicating the need for

improvement. The values element obtained an average approval of 96.4%, with the value of "Growing with Character" the highest (97%). On the culture element, the average approval was 93.5%, but visual alignment was weak (89.75%). The personality element showed an average of 97.1% with "Campus of Champions" as the strongest element (98.25%). Finally, the usage element obtained an average of 93.7%, confirming the relevance of the content to students' needs. Overall, the evaluation results show that "simpeten" has succeeded in increasing the regularity of content publication and positive student perceptions of Unesa's brand image, although there are still areas for improvement, especially in the alignment of visual identity, integration of faculty accounts with official accounts, and delivery of information on academic activities. These findings provide a strong basis for strengthening social media management at Unesa as a strategic means of strengthening reputation, transparency, and effective communication with the academic community and the wider public.

5. Development Challenges and Implications

The development of a social media management model at Unesa faces various challenges, both in terms of human resources, institutional structure, organizational culture, and the readiness of digital infrastructure that supports the transformation of technology-based public communication. Although the model developed has shown real effectiveness in improving the institution's brand image and digital audience engagement, the implementation process in the field is inseparable from the complexity of multidimensional internal challenges [46]. These challenges are not only technical and operational, but also involve cultural and structural aspects that affect the successful adoption of new systems. As in previous research, students in Indonesia have a high motivation to study at university [47] so the ease of information is a demand. However, high student involvement as an audience through two-way communication on social media can also lead to a management crisis. This opens up new opportunities for further research.

The success of digital transformation in higher education depends not solely on the technology implemented, but on the readiness of organizational culture, institutional policies, and a supportive collaborative ecosystem. Thus, the identification of the following challenges is not only an obstacle to the implementation of the model, but also provides space for critical reflection on how institutions can strengthen adaptive power and institutional capacity in the face of the digital communication era [48]. This study opens up opportunities for future research to explore more deeply the interactions between social media and various other fields of study, such as management, marketing, and information technology. The findings encourage universities to not only manage social media as a promotional activity, but also as part of a larger communication strategy that involves all elements within the institution. As such, this study emphasizes the importance of cross-disciplinary collaboration in social media management, which can ultimately help universities achieve their academic goals and improve their global ranking.

6. Conclusion

This research produces an integrated adaptive social media management model, by combining the *Circular Model of SoMe* approach and the principle of directed decentralization, through the "Simpeten" platform as a content coordination tool between faculty accounts and official university accounts. This model proves to be practical, effective, and feasible to implement, as indicated by the increase in account activeness, narrative consistency, and positive student perceptions of Unesa's brand image. The results of mass trials and evaluations show excellent acceptance from faculty social media account managers, as well as significant improvements in brand image elements such as attributes, values, and campus personality. This model allows each faculty to maintain the uniqueness of content according to local advantages, but still aligned with the university's vision and mission, thus supporting holistic institutional imaging. With a theoretical and technical framework designed contextually for higher education environments in developing countries, this model has great potential to be replicated by other

campuses in Indonesia and Southeast Asia to build structured, consistent, and effective digital communications in strengthening institutional reputation in the era of digital transformation.

Transparency:

The authors confirm that the manuscript is an honest, accurate, and transparent account of the study; that no vital features of the study have been omitted; and that any discrepancies from the study as planned have been explained. This study followed all ethical practices during writing.

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