The Influence of Social Media on the Profile of the Diploma 3 Air Traffic Controller Study Program at Surabaya Aviation Polytechnic

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore the role of social media in shaping the image and appeal of the Diploma 3 Air Traffic Control Study Program at the Surabaya Aviation Polytechnic. Using a qualitative approach, the research focuses on a deep understanding of the experiences, perceptions, and responses of various stakeholders, including current students, prospective students, alumni, and institutional social media managers. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations of Instagram content, and documentation of the study program's ongoing digital communication activities. The findings reveal that social media particularly Instagram plays a significant role in forming a positive perception of the study program through engaging, interactive, and consistent visual content tailored to the characteristics of today's digital audience. This research contributes to the formulation of relevant communication strategies in the digital era and recommends the optimized use of social media as an effective and adaptive educational promotion tool in response to ongoing developments in information technology.

Keywords: *Social Media, Branding, Instagram, Study Program, Air Traffic Controller, Surabaya Aviation Polytechnic.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of digital technology has positioned social media as a vital instrument in shaping the image and identity of higher education institutions. Platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube not only provide opportunities for universities and polytechnics to reach wider audiences but also serve as strategic tools for showcasing academic excellence, strengthening engagement with alumni, and building trust among the public (Lestariani & Fadila, 2024). In today's competitive digital era, social media marketing has shifted from being an optional tool to becoming an essential strategy for attracting prospective students. Creative content such as campus profile videos, student experiences, and academic as well as non-academic achievements plays an important role in capturing interest. Moreover, analytical tools embedded in social media enable institutions to identify trends, measure campaign effectiveness, and adapt communication strategies more precisely to their target audience.

Politeknik Penerbangan Surabaya, particularly the Diploma Three (D3) Air Traffic Controller Study Program, needs to optimize the use of social media to highlight academic strengths, available facilities, and career prospects for its graduates. The official Instagram account (@llu_poltekbangsby) serves as the main platform to build a positive image, enhance credibility, and strengthen public confidence in the quality of education provided. Recent studies have emphasized that digital marketing through social media significantly influences public perception and brand awareness of educational institutions (Lubis & Hidayat, 2023). Interactive content such as infographics, short campus-life videos, alumni testimonials, live sessions, and polls not only extend promotional reach but also create dynamic engagement with prospective students. In addition, social media analytics help determine the most engaging types of content, the optimal posting time, and the overall responsiveness of audiences, thereby improving the effectiveness of branding strategies.

This study adopts a qualitative approach to gain deeper insights into the dynamics of digital strategies in

strengthening institutional branding. By exploring the perspectives and experiences of students, prospective students, and related stakeholders, the research seeks to examine how social media contributes to shaping the image and attractiveness of the D3 Air Traffic Controller Study Program. Specifically, the study aims to understand the extent of social media's role in branding, the challenges faced in its application, and the strategies that may optimize its effectiveness. Instagram is chosen as the primary platform due to its strength in delivering engaging visual content that resonates with younger audiences, as evidenced by the active role of the institution's main account (@poltekbangsby) in sharing admission announcements, academic activities, and student life. Building a dedicated account for the study program is expected to strengthen its identity and presence, while collaboration with the institution's official account can further extend reach and attract students interested in aviation and air traffic control.

Overall, this research aspires to contribute both practically and academically. For the institution, it provides strategic recommendations to improve the effectiveness of branding through social media. For academia, it enriches the literature on digital branding in higher education by offering insights into the role of social media in shaping institutional credibility and attractiveness. Ultimately, the findings are expected to serve as a reference for other institutions in designing adaptive, data-driven, and user-oriented digital communication strategies, ensuring competitiveness and relevance in the rapidly evolving digital era.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW
2.1 The Concept of Branding in Higher Education

Branding in higher education plays an important role in attracting prospective students while building a strong and trustworthy institutional image. In the digital era, social media has become a key medium for expanding reach and strengthening institutional identity. Platforms such as Instagram have been proven effective in enhancing brand awareness, image, and perception, particularly among younger generations . Effective management of social media can also increase public trust, which is a crucial factor in building reputation and competitiveness (Wiradharma et al., 2023). Therefore, branding strategies should reflect institutional core values, academic excellence, and distinctive characteristics. A consistent positive image not only attracts new students but also strengthens relationships with alumni, industry partners, and the wider community.

2.2 Honeycomb Model Theory by Kietzmann

Social media has become an essential platform for building and monitoring brand identity in the current internet era (Kietzmann et al., 2011). They introduced the Honeycomb Model, which consists of seven functional blocks explaining how organizations can utilize social media to interact with customers. These seven blocks are:
1. Identity, the extent to which users reveal their identities in the social media environment, including information such as name, age, gender, profession, and location.
2. Conversations, the platform's ability to facilitate communication between users, enabling discussion and information exchange.
3. Sharing, the degree to which users exchange, distribute, and receive content such as texts, images, videos, and links.
4. Presence, the ability of users to know whether others are available online, as well as their location.
5. Relationships, the extent to which users can relate to one another, such as through friends lists, followers, or connections.
6. Reputation, the degree to which users can identify their relative position within the social media community, often through rating or review systems.
7. Groups, the ability of users to form communities and sub-communities within the social media environment.

This model provides a strong foundation for understanding the dynamics of interaction on social media and how these aspects can be leveraged in branding strategies. For educational institutions such as the Air Traffic Controller D3 Study Program, applying the Honeycomb Model can assist in developing social media strategies. For instance, expressing identity through content that showcases campus life and student achievements, enabling discussions through online Q&A sessions, and building reputation through testimonials from industry partners and alumni. Institutions can enhance attractiveness and build a positive image by creating more interactive and meaningful social media experiences for their audiences. This can be achieved by understanding and applying the seven functional blocks.

2.2.1 The Role of Social Media in Higher Education Branding
1. Enhancing Brand Awareness. Social media enables higher education institutions to introduce their identity more broadly and consistently to the public. Through engaging content, campuses can build a strong and unique image, making them more recognizable to prospective students and other stakeholders (Iqbal, 2024).
2. Building Interaction and Audience Engagement. Interactive features such as comments, direct

messages, polls, and Q&A sessions allow institutions to communicate directly with prospective students. This helps increase engagement and strengthen the relationship between the university, the academic community, and the public (Agustin et al., 2024).

3. Strengthening Trust and Institutional Reputation. Prospective students' and parents' trust in universities can be reinforced through transparent information shared on social media. Content such as student testimonials, academic achievements, and collaborations with industry and successful alumni can enhance institutional credibility (Fatat, 2018).

4. Supporting Differentiation and Institutional Competitiveness. Every university has unique values that distinguish it from others. Social media can highlight academic excellence, campus culture, and innovations promoted by the institution, thereby improving

5. competitiveness in attracting new students and industry partners (Anjeli & Betris, 2022).

2.2.2 Instagram

Instagram is one of the most effective social media platforms for building the image of higher education institutions, particularly in attracting the interest of younger generations who dominate its user base. With various visual-based features such as feed, stories, reels, and IG Live, universities can deliver both academic and non-academic information in a more engaging and easily understood manner for prospective students (Anjeli & Betris, 2022).

Content types may include infographics, short videos, student testimonials, campus activity coverage, and institutional academic achievements. Instagram's key strength as a branding medium lies in its visual appeal and interactivity. Posts in the form of images and videos allow universities to create a professional and attractive image while maintaining consistent visual aesthetics (Pavlou & Stewart, 2019). Furthermore, Instagram Stories and IG Live features enable institutions to directly interact with prospective students through Q&A sessions, virtual webinars, and online campus tours. These features help improve information transparency and audience engagement, ultimately strengthening trust and student interest in the institution.

Therefore, universities need to manage Instagram accounts consistently by presenting informative, inspiring, and interactive content to increase institutional attractiveness and credibility in the eyes of prospective students and the wider community.

2.3 Digital Marketing Strategies in Higher Education

Digital marketing in higher education serves not only as a promotional tool but also as a means of fostering stronger engagement and interaction with prospective students. Social media is highlighted as an effective medium for building personal branding, which can also be applied to institutional branding strategies in education (Zain & Dwivayani, 2024). With the right approach, institutions can strengthen their academic image and enhance their attractiveness to prospective students and the wider community.

To achieve these goals, several digital marketing strategies can be implemented, including:

1. Creating Engaging Content
Institutions can present various high-quality content such as promotional videos showcasing program excellence, testimonials from students and alumni sharing their learning experiences, as well as academic information packaged creatively to capture the attention of prospective students.

2. Enhancing Audience Interaction
By optimizing interactive features on social media, such as polls, live streaming, and Q&A sessions, institutions can increase audience engagement. This provides a more active communication space where prospective students not only receive one-way information but can also directly interact with the campus, active students, and alumni.

3. Collaboration with Alumni, Respondents, and Public Relations of Poltekbang
Engaging successful alumni in professional fields or influential figures in education to share experiences and testimonials can help strengthen institutional credibility. Their involvement in digital marketing strategies increases prospective students' trust while providing a real picture of career prospects after graduation.

The success of digital marketing in higher education depends on three main aspects: consistency in branding and messaging, the quality of content produced, and the institution's ability to evaluate the effectiveness of its marketing strategies (Wiradharma et al., 2023). Therefore, a data-driven approach is an essential element to ensure that digital marketing strategies deliver optimal results in enhancing the competitiveness of higher education institutions.

3. METHOD
3.1 Research Method

The term "research method" is derived from two words: "method" and "research." The word "method" originates from the Greek *methodos*, meaning a way or path to achieve a specific goal. In general, a method can be defined as a structured and systematic scientific stage used to understand an object or phenomenon, with the aim of obtaining valid and scientifically accountable answers. Meanwhile, research is a systematic process carried out to collect and analyze data to achieve certain objectives, using scientific approaches such as

quantitative, qualitative, or experimental methods (Prayitno et al., 2023).

This study applies an applied research method using a design-based approach. According to (Sugiyono, 2017), Research and Development (R&D) is a research method aimed at producing a product while simultaneously testing its effectiveness. Based on this definition, the R&D method is an approach used to create and refine a product to meet predetermined standards and criteria. The stages of this method include the processes of validation and testing. Before entering the development stage, researchers first collect the required data, then proceed to the design, testing, and evaluation stages of the developed system or product (Sripayuni et al., 2023).

3.2 Research Design

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach to analyze public communication strategies through social media in shaping the image of the Diploma 3 Air Traffic Controller Program at Politeknik Penerbangan Surabaya. The research focuses on the use of Instagram as a medium to disseminate information, attract prospective students, and strengthen program identity. Data collection was conducted through interviews, content observation, and documentation of digital activities.

The research adopts the ADDIE model, consisting of Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation. The analysis phase explores the information needs of the public and audience responses to existing content. The design stage involves planning visual concepts, content formats, captions, posting schedules, and success indicators. In development, various contents such as short videos, posters, and infographics were produced and validated by experts. The implementation stage distributes content via Instagram and collects audience feedback through questionnaires. Finally, the evaluation stage measures effectiveness through quantitative data and Instagram insights.

Integrating the ADDIE model into social media branding strategies ensures that the developed content is visually appropriate, engaging, and impactful in enhancing audience understanding and perception. The model provides a systematic framework to produce consistent, professional, and audience-oriented content, thereby strengthening the program's academic branding and digital identity.

3.3 Hardware and Software Components

The use of Instagram for branding the Diploma Three Air Traffic Controller Study Program requires adequate hardware and software support to ensure smooth operation. On mobile devices, the minimum specifications include a dual-core 1 GHz processor, 2 GB RAM, Android 5.0/iOS 12.0 or later, and stable 3G/4G connectivity. On desktop devices, at least an Intel Core i3 CPU, 4 GB RAM, Windows 10/macOS Mojave, and a 1280×800 resolution is required for optimal performance.

For software, Instagram operates on Android (9.0+) and iOS (12.0+) with features such as photo/video uploads, Stories, Reels, Live, and direct messaging. Desktop access via browsers (Chrome, Firefox, Safari, Edge) also supports feed browsing, posting, messaging, and insights. Adequate specifications ensure the effectiveness of Instagram as a digital branding medium.

3.4 Data Collection Technique

This study applies Miles and Huberman's interactive data analysis model (Rony, 2022), conducted continuously until reaching data saturation. The process includes three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification.
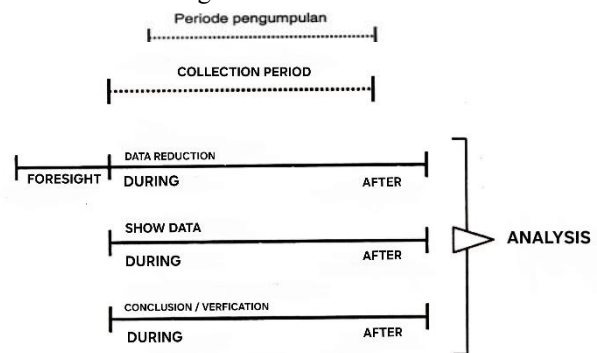

Figure 1 Miles and Huberman's Data Analysis

Based on Figure 1, after data collection, the researcher anticipates before reducing data. This anticipatory reduction occurs when defining the conceptual framework, research location, research questions, and data collection methods.
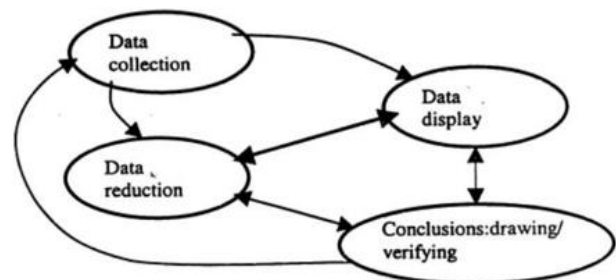

Figure 2 Components of Interactive Data Analysis

The interactive model in Figure 3.2 shows three main steps:
1. Data Reduction

Field data are usually extensive; thus, reduction is needed by summarizing and selecting relevant information. In this study, interview, observation, and

documentation data related to Instagram branding strategies were processed.

2. Data Display

   As stated by Miles and Huberman (P & Prastawa, 2023), qualitative data are best presented in narrative form. The researcher presents interview results descriptively and supports them with figures for decision-making.

3. Conclusion Drawing/Verification

   Conclusions are drawn after reduction and display. Initial findings remain tentative until validated by evidence. This stage clarifies Instagram branding strategies in the Diploma 3 Air Traffic Controller Study Program at Politeknik Penerbangan Surabaya.

3.5 Research Location and Time
3.5.1 Research Location

This study will be conducted at Politeknik Penerbangan Surabaya, specifically in the Diploma 3 Air Traffic Controller Study Program. The research site is located at Jl. Raya Juanda No. 19, Surabaya. The study focuses on analyzing the influence of social media on the branding of the Diploma 3 Air Traffic Controller Program by involving active students, prospective students, and followers of the program's official social media account. Data will also be obtained through the program's official social media platforms, which serve as a medium for audience engagement and information dissemination.

3.5.2 Research Time

The research activities, including literature review and data collection, will take place from December 2024 to June 2025.

Table 1 Research Schedule

No	Type of Activity	Month							
		Des	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul
1	Literature Review	■							
2	Submission of Final Project Title		■						
3	Thesis Proposal Supervision		■	■					
4	Preparation of Final Project Report				■				
5	Final Project Proposal Examination					■			
6	Submission of Final Project Proposal					■			
7	Final Project Supervision					■	■	■	
8	Final Project Examination								■

1. Interview Preparation and Pilot Test

   In April, the researcher will prepare interview guidelines and conduct a pilot test to ensure clarity and relevance of the questions.

2. Data Collection

   Interviews will be held from June to July, either face-to-face or online, based on respondents' availability.

3. Data Analysis

   By the end of July, all interviews will be transcribed and analyzed, with research findings prepared in August.

3.6 Research Approach

This study applies a Research and Development (R&D) approach using the ADDIE model (Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, Evaluation) combined with a qualitative approach. Data was collected through interviews, observations, and documentation to capture perceptions, experiences, and interactions with the study program's social media. Respondents include active students, prospective students, and academic staff involved in social media management and branding strategy development.

3.7 Research Population and Sample

The study population comprises groups directly related to the branding of the Diploma III Air Traffic Controller Study Program at Politeknik Penerbangan Surabaya. These include active students, prospective students following the official Instagram account (@llu_poltekbangsby), academic staff managing social media, and external stakeholders engaging with the account. Their perspectives are expected to provide insights into the effectiveness of branding strategies and suggestions for improving digital communication to strengthen the program's image and attractiveness.
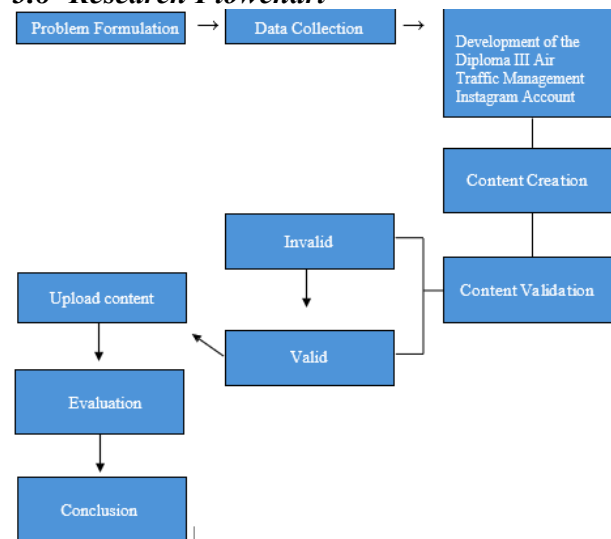
3.8 Research Flowchart

Figure 3 Research Flowchart

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
4.1 Research Results

This section presents the results of developing a strategic approach to enhance the public image and communication of the Diploma III Air Traffic Controller Study Program at Politeknik Penerbangan Surabaya. The approach utilizes Instagram as the main platform, involving content planning, visual communication strategies, and audience engagement principles to increase the program's visibility, attractiveness, and credibility among prospective students, parents, and aviation sector stakeholders.

4.2 Results of the Analysis Stage
4.2.1 Overview of Instagram @llu_poltekbangsby

Figure 4 Instagram @llu_poltekbangsby

The Instagram account @llu_poltekbangsby is the official platform of the Diploma III Air Traffic Controller Study Program (LLU) at Politeknik Penerbangan Surabaya. It shares program information, student activities, and strengthens the program's image among prospective students, parents, and aviation stakeholders.

Management involves coordination with the program head, staff, and PR team to ensure content is accurate, informative, and aligned with institutional values. The account uses visually appealing content, Instagram features like Stories and Reels, and a clear username (@llu_poltekbangsby) to enhance branding and accessibility. Verified accounts and a concise bio with links to official channels further increase trust and engagement.


Figure 5 LLU Study Program Logo

The profile picture displays the official LLU logo, representing air traffic Controller. The account is confirmed as official under Politeknik Penerbangan Surabaya and the Ministry of Transportation.

Primary data were collected through purposive interviews with three informants involved in social media management, providing insights into the effectiveness of the program's branding strategy.

4.3 Design Stage Results
4.3.1 Social Media Usage Pattern for Branding

Social media serves as an effective communication and marketing tool, including in higher education. For the Diploma III Air Traffic Controller Study Program, it plays a key role in introducing the program, building a
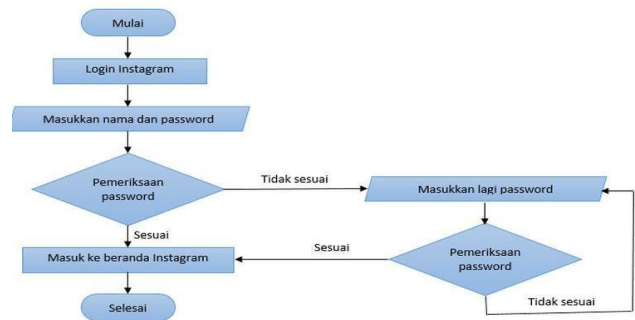
positive image, and enhancing appeal to prospective students, parents, and the public.

Figure 6 Social Media Usage Pattern

Figure 7 Add Instagram Account

Initial Instagram Account Setup: The first step in

managing the Instagram account for the Diploma III Air Traffic Controller Study Program is adding the official account (@llu_poltekbangsby) to the app. Users select "Add Account" on the main page and log in with the correct username and password to ensure smooth access and verification.

Figure 8 Instagram Login Screen

Account Login and Management: The first step in managing the social media account for branding the Diploma III Air Traffic Controller Study Program is logging into the specially prepared Instagram account, @llu_poltekbangsby. Prior coordination and approval from the Study Program ensured alignment with its vision, mission, and communication needs. Login is performed using the agreed username and password, with

security measures in place to prevent unauthorized access. The account is used to publish information, build

a positive image, and enhance the program's appeal through planned content strategies, serving as an effective communication channel with prospective students, parents, and the public.

Figure 9 Instagram @llu_poltekbangsby

Once logged into the Instagram account @llu_poltekbangsby, users are directed to the home screen, indicating that the account is active and ready for content management. The illustration above shows the account interface immediately after a successful login.

4.4 Development Stage Results

The Instagram account @llu_poltekbangsby was developed over four months, starting without content or followers. Initial efforts focused on promoting the account to attract a foundational audience. Once engagement grew, the researcher shared educational and engaging content reflecting the identity and values of the Diploma III Air Traffic Controller Study Program to strengthen its image for prospective students and stakeholders.

Figure 10 First Post and Content Development Plan for Instagram @llu_poltekbangsby

The first post on @llu_poltekbangsby, published two months ago, marked the start of the program's digital branding. Initial content focused on clear, visually appealing information to engage prospective students.

Subsequent development emphasized interactive videos, including program profiles, student testimonials, activity documentation, and admission guides. These aim to make the account both a promotional platform and a reliable information source, strengthening the positive image of the Diploma III Air Traffic Controller Study Program.

The following figure shows the Instagram usage pattern.

Table 2 Instagram Features and Their Usage

Instagram Feature	Usage
Feed Post	Main branding; high-quality visuals
Reels	Short videos of OJT, fun activities, behind-the-scenes
Story	Daily updates, polls, event reminders
Highlight	Permanent categories: Profile, OJT, Achievements, Admission Info
IGTV (optional)	Long-form videos: webinars, admission socialization

4.5 Implementation Results
4.5.1 Implementation of Social Media Usage Pattern

The Instagram account @llu_poltekbangsby was activated and promoted internally to faculty, students, and staff, and externally to alumni, prospective students, and the public. Initial content introduced the study program, student activities, and campus environment to create a positive first impression and build audience trust.

Instagram features were utilized strategically: feed for long-term informative posts, stories for real-time interaction (polls, Q&A), reels for engaging short videos, and highlights for permanent categories like "Profile," "Admission," "Testimonials," and "Activities." Content was posted 2–3 times per week at peak hours (11:00–13:00 and 19:00–21:00) and aligned with key events such as admissions and aviation observances.

Monitoring indicators included follower growth, reach and impressions, engagement (likes, comments, shares), and audience feedback via comments, DMs, and polls. The results showed that the implemented social media strategy effectively enhanced visibility, audience engagement, and professional image of the Diploma III

Air Traffic Controller Study Program, supporting ongoing content development.

Figure 11 Instagram Account Visits – @llu_poltekbangsby

The figure above illustrates the visit or view statistics (insights) of the Instagram account @llu_poltekbangsby over the past 30 days. This data is obtained through Instagram Insight, which is available for professional or business accounts, and serves as an important tool for evaluating the effectiveness of the implemented content strategy.

The displayed data shows the number of impressions, indicating how often the account's content has been viewed by Instagram users. These insights also serve as a basis for decision-making in developing future content. High-performing content can be optimized, while less-engaging content can be improved in terms of format, posting time, or presentation style. By regularly utilizing this data, the account can be strategically developed to continuously enhance the visibility, appeal, and engagement of the Diploma III Air Traffic Controller Study Program on social media.

Figure 12 Development of Instagram Account @llu_poltekbangsby in the Last Two Months

The image above documents the activities and content of the Instagram account @llu_poltekbangsby, which has been actively managed for approximately the past two months. During this period, the account has shown significant development in both content quality and follower growth.

4.6 Evaluation Results

4.6.1 Impact of Social Media on Program Image and Appeal

In the digital era, social media has become a strategic tool for building and maintaining the image of educational institutions. For the Diploma III Air Traffic Controller Study Program, social media plays a crucial role in shaping public perceptions of the program's quality, credibility, and uniqueness.

Platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, and X (Twitter) enable rapid and wide information dissemination, using engaging visual and interactive formats that attract young prospective students. The image conveyed through social media reflects key values such as professionalism, discipline, technology, and aviation spirit, which are central to the Air Traffic Control (ATC) field.

The program's appeal is further enhanced when content showcases:
a. Modern learning environments
b. Student practical activities
c. Testimonials from active students
d. Character-building and leadership activities
e. Career opportunities in aviation

Thus, social media serves not only as a promotional channel but also as a tool for shaping public perception (brand perception), directly influencing prospective students' decisions to enroll.

Figure 13 Activity Documentation

The image above documents the activities of Politeknik Penerbangan Surabaya students participating in the Marshaller Training, a technical field training conducted over approximately one week.
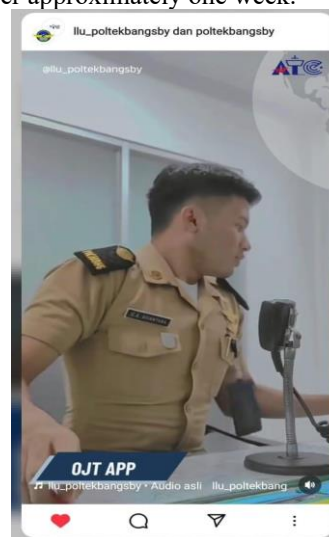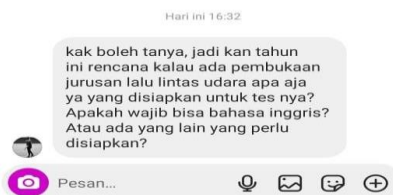

Figure 14 Collaborative Video Content

This post showcases the activities of Diploma III Air Traffic Controller students during their On-the-Job Training (OJT) at the airport, specifically in the Tower Control unit. This six-month field of training is a crucial

stage in developing students' competencies as future air traffic controllers (ATC). In the Tower, students practice in a real operational environment, learning to manage aircraft movements on the runway, taxiway, and apron, while ensuring smooth and safe air traffic operations in real-time.

Figure 15 Direct Messages from Prospective Students

In recent months, the official Instagram account @llu_poltekbangsby has actively shared informative and documentary content about the activities of Diploma III Air Traffic Controller students at Politeknik Penerbangan Surabaya. Prospective students have shown interest by asking questions about the program and campus activities, indicating a positive impact on the program's image.

This demonstrates that Instagram effectively builds public trust and provides a clear, reliable, and engaging view of both academic and extracurricular life. The account serves as a key tool for shaping positive perceptions of the program and as an effective communication bridge between the institution and prospective students.

4.6.2 Content Strategies for Building LLU Program Image via Instagram

In the digital era, social media is a key tool for higher education branding. The Diploma III Air Traffic Controller (LLU) Program at Politeknik Penerbangan Surabaya uses Instagram (@llu_poltekbangsby) to share its identity, values, and activities.

Three content approaches were analyzed: organic posts, paid ads, and collaborative content. Currently, the account primarily uses organic posts. Effectiveness was assessed based on audience reach, trust, and engagement. All content types were published under consistent timing and visual style to ensure fair comparison. Findings provide insights into optimizing Instagram strategies to enhance LLU's image and attractiveness.

1. Organic Content

Figure 16 Organic Content

The post was published independently without paid promotion or collaboration. All engagement is organic, allowing an objective assessment of its effectiveness in building audience awareness and interaction.

Figure 17 Insight data from one organic content post.

Content titled "The Important Role of ATC Today" was uploaded on June 23 at 19:44 WIB. The post aimed to educate audiences about the role of Air Traffic Controllers and promote the Diploma III Air Traffic Controller program.

   a) Impressions: 51
   b) Interactions: 13 (primarily likes)
   c) Profile Visits: 5

Audience Breakdown:
   a) Followers: 58.8%
   b) Non-followers: 41.2%

The data indicates that organic content effectively engages existing followers while reaching new potential audiences. However, further interaction (comments, shares, saves) was minimal, suggesting the need to enhance visual appeal or call-to-action elements. Combining organic content with paid or collaborative strategies could further optimize engagement and reach.

2. Collaborative Content

Figure 18 Collaborative Content Post

The Instagram post, published on July 19 via @llu_poltekbangsby in collaboration with @poltekbangsby, features a Diploma III Air Traffic Controller student performing On the Job Training (OJT) in the Approach Control (APP) unit at an airport. Using Instagram's collaboration feature, the post appears on both the program and institutional accounts, aiming to expand reach, enhance credibility, and strengthen the institutional relationship.

The 21-second Reels video highlights authentic moments of students managing real-time communications in APP, showcasing competence, discipline, and professionalism. The narrative *"From classroom to control room!!"* emphasizes the transition from academic learning to practical, professional experience, reinforcing the program's image and preparing students for real-world aviation work.
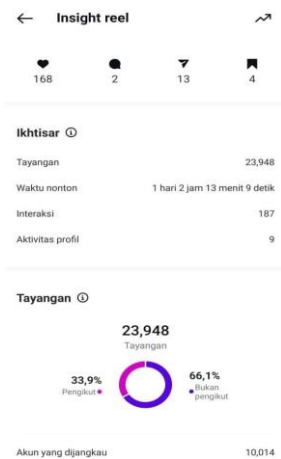

Figure 19 Content Performance Achievement

Table 3 Content Performance Achievement

Component	Result
Publication Date	19 July
Impressions	23.948
Watch Time	1 day 2 hours 13 minutes 9 seconds
Interactions	187 (168 likes, 2 comments, 13 shares, 4 saves)
Profile Activity	9

Content Performance Analysis – Collaborative Reels

The collaborative Instagram Reels posted on 19 July achieved 23,948 impressions, indicating strong audience reach and high content appeal. The 21-second video, depicting D3 Air Traffic Controller students during On-the-Job Training (OJT) at the airport, generated a total watch time of 94,389 seconds, equivalent to approximately 4,495 full views. Notably, 66.1% of viewers were non-followers, demonstrating effective outreach to new audiences.

The collaborative format expanded reach across both @llu_poltekbangsby and @poltekbangsby accounts,
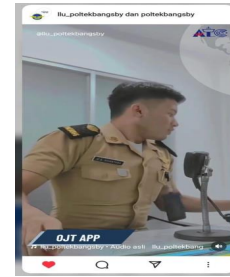
enhancing credibility and reinforcing the academic and professional image of the program. High engagement (187 interactions) highlights the effectiveness of short-form, experiential content in capturing interest and building trust.

This case illustrates that real-field, human-interest content is highly effective for awareness, engagement, and emotional branding, serving as a best-practice model for future social media strategies.

3. Ads/Promoted Posts

Figure 20 Paid Advertisement Content – Figure 19

Figure 19 shows a sponsored post from the official Instagram account @llu_poltekbangsby as part of the digital promotion strategy for the D3 Air Traffic Controller Study Program. Using Instagram Ads, the content reaches a broader audience, including prospective students and aviation enthusiasts.

The post features an ATC–pilot communication challenge, presented as a simulated flight interaction. This approach provides an educational and engaging

insight into real-world ATC operations while enhancing audience interest. Paid promotion enables wider visibility, positioning the account as both an informative and strategic branding tool that strengthens the program's professional image and attracts prospective students.
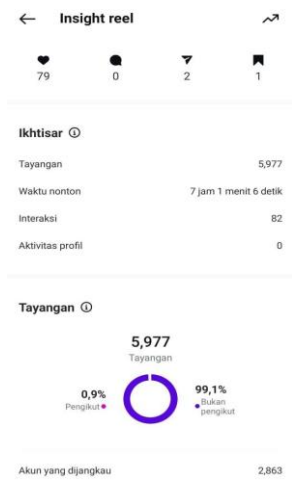

Figure 21 ADS content interaction insight

Table 4 ADS content interaction insight

Category	Presentase	Notes
3-Second Views	31,7%	Percentage of users who watched at least the first 3 seconds of the content
Total Interactions	82	All forms of engagement on the post.
Total Likes	79	Engagement from both followers and non-followers.
Total Shares	2	Instances where the content was shared to others or to stories.
Total Saves	1	Content saved by users to view later.
Total Comments	0	No comments on this content
Follower	7,1% interactions from followers	Engagement originating from account followers.
Non-Follower	92,9% interactions from non-followers	Engagement from users who are not following the account.
Accounts Interacting	84 accounts	Unique accounts that engaged with the content at least once.

One analyzed content from the official Instagram account @llu_poltekbangsby showed eighty-four interactions, including one save and seventy-nine likes. This indicates that although overall engagement remains relatively low, there is tangible audience interest in the content.

Among the interacting accounts, the majority were non-followers, accounting for approximately seventy percent, demonstrating the content's effectiveness in reaching audiences beyond the core followers. This suggests that the promotional strategy or Ads implementation effectively expanded reach.

The content received no comments or shares, highlighting an area for improvement in engagement.

However, the presence of a save indicates that the content was perceived as valuable or relevant.

Overall, this suggests that educational and interactive Reel content, such as the ATC-to-pilot communication challenge, has potential to reach new target audiences and could be further enhanced by encouraging active participation, including comments and shares.

Figure 22 ADS content interaction insight

Based on the data, the analyzed Ads content demonstrated satisfactory basic engagement, such as likes and saves, but showed limited follow-up actions like shares, comments, or follows. This indicates a need for more creative content strategies, such as incorporating collaborative elements with students, alumni, or public figures, which can enhance reach and message effectiveness.

For optimal results, the @llu_poltekbangsby account should combine informative organic content with engaging collaborative content, thereby not only capturing attention but also fostering interaction and sustainably expanding the program's visibility.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS
5.1 Conclusion

Based on the research and analysis of social media's impact on the image and attractiveness of the D3 Air Traffic Control Study Program at Politeknik Penerbangan Surabaya, the following conclusions can be drawn:

a. Social media, particularly Instagram, plays a crucial role in shaping and enhancing the program's image. Strategically designed content effectively communicates the program's identity, activities, and strengths to the public in an engaging and informative manner.

b. Collaborative content strategies prove to be the most effective compared to organic or paid content. This is demonstrated by the performance of the Reel titled *"From Classroom to Control Room!!"*, which achieved over 16,000 views, more than 20 hours of total watch time, and a majority (64.8%) of non-follower audience. Collaboration with the official campus account (@poltekbangsby) successfully expanded audience reach and strengthened program credibility.

c. Visual content based on field practice, such as On-The-Job Training (OJT), significantly attracts audience interest and boosts engagement. Showcasing students' real-world activities enhances appeal while reinforcing the professional image of program graduates.

d. Using the R&D (ADDIE) approach, the stages of Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation were systematically applied in managing the program's Instagram account. Evaluation results indicate a significant improvement in social media

performance following the implementation of these strategies.

5.2 Recommendations

1. For Program Study Managers
   It is recommended to continuously develop content strategies that are relevant, informative, and collaborative. Emphasizing visualizations of real student activities, such as simulations, OJT, and extracurricular activities, can provide prospective students with a clear understanding of the program's educational quality.
2. For the Institution
   Full support from the institution is essential to strengthen the study program's branding through official social media. Collaborative content across official accounts can enhance institutional identity and competitiveness among vocational aviation higher education institutions.
3. For Future Research
   This study can serve as a foundation for further research on social media effectiveness in higher education promotion, expanding to broader platforms such as TikTok, YouTube Shorts, or professional networks like LinkedIn.

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