

Leveraging Instagram for Nonprofit Growth: A Digital Marketing Strategy for Ruang Belajar Aqil

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Abstract: In the rapidly shifting digital landscape, nonprofits like Ruang Belajar Aqil (RBA) face the dual challenge of sustaining social impact while mastering platforms such as Instagram to foster engagement, visibility, and organizational growths. An effective marketing approach enables nonprofits to articulate the social value of their activities, attract support from donors, volunteers, partners, and build trust among participants regarding the benefits provided. This study aims to design and implement a visual identity (mood board) and a six-month content plan for Ruang Belajar Aqil (RBA), a nonprofit in Malang Indonesia, to strengthen its branding and online engagement. This research using a qualitative approach, including Focus group Discussion (FGDs), interviews, direct observation, social media audits, and the use of secondary data. The study resulted in a strategic framework that enhances visual consistency, improves audience engagement, and supports Ruang Belajar Aqil (RBA) sustainability. Therefore, the development of a mood board and a six-month content plan is proposed as a strategic initiative to enhance the branding and visibility of the nonprofit organization Ruang Belajar Aqil. This approach is expected to strengthen its public image and significantly contribute to its growth and sustainability. This offers a replicable model for other resource-constrained nonprofits.

Keywords: Content Planning, Marketing Strategy, Nonprofit Organizations, Public Image, Social Media

A. Introduction

Marketing strategy is crucial not only for commercial enterprises but also for the sustainability and effectiveness of nonprofit organizations. A well-crafted marketing strategy has been positively correlated with organizational sustainability (Monica & Darma, 2022). Like commercial enterprises, nonprofit organizations rely on marketing and branding efforts to promote and maintain their programs and services (Wandari & Darma, 2021). However, the strategic planning of marketing initiatives within nonprofit organizations often encounters significant challenges, primarily due to limited resources and financial constraints. Consequently, marketing activities are frequently deprioritized in favor of other operational needs (Hanim, et. al., 2021).

Ruang Belajar Aqil (RBA) runs a variety of programs and services, aligned with its mission of literacy, learning, and empowerment. Its target audiences supports youth to develop capacities, leadership, reading/writing habits. RBA's target audience has 5 (five) main groups: participants, volunteers, donors, and users. After conducting observations, the researcher revealed that the alignment between the content produced on Instagram and the organization's core mission was not achieved properly. The findings show that the posting frequency was relatively low and the content did not consistently reflect the organization's identity. This resulted in decreased organic reach, low engagement rates, and slowed follower growth. It's also decreased engagement and public trust, and restrained the organization's strategic goals on social media (Nugraha, & Prakasa, 2022). This study contributes to the literature on nonprofit digital marketing (Fadhilah, & Pratiwi, 2021) by providing a practical, co-designed framework for visual branding and content strategy on Instagram, demonstrating its application in a real-world context.

Marketing efforts can be optimized by integrating both offline and online channels, yet this approach is often overlooked by nonprofit organizations (Ferina et al., 2021). The ability to effectively combine these marketing avenues – particularly in today's digital landscape can enhance the organization's capacity to reach a broader audience, strengthen its brand image, and unlock new funding opportunities (Chemutai & Kimeli, 2020). For instance, offline promotional events such as exhibitions, when combined with social media campaigns and other digital strategies, can help build public trust, which in turn contributes to the organization's long-term sustainability (Azmi et al., 2021).

In the increasingly dynamic world of digital content, nonprofit organizations must leverage the power of content marketing through online platforms to reach their target audience more effectively (Adam et al., 2022). A study by Andhityawati & Darma, (2022) demonstrated how a nonprofit organization utilized digital content to engage the public, resulting in increased funding contributions. By consistently publishing relevant content, the organization educated its audience on how donations were utilized and the social impact being generated (Sholeh et al., 2020). Ultimately, this approach led to enhanced public trust and visibility, which translated into greater financial support (Umiga, 2022). This highlights the growing recognition among nonprofits of marketing's role in building sustainable relationships and reinforcing brand identity (Darma & Noviana, 2020).

This research focuses on designing a social media-based marketing strategy, specifically through the Instagram platform. Instagram is an audio-visual social media application that allows users to create and share short-form videos ranging from 15 seconds to 3 minutes (Prasetyawati, 2021). Users often turn to Instagram to express creativity or share information (Utami and Yuliati, 2022). Through its dynamic mix of video, imagery, and music, the platform enables effective storytelling, which can stimulate audience interest, imitation, and content dissemination (Mulyani et al.,

2022). Nonprofit organizations are increasingly using Instagram to broaden their audience reach and foster long-term relationships (Ardhyanti et al., 2021). However, many nonprofit practitioners have yet to fully capitalize on Instagram's potential (Anggarini et al., 2020). One such organization is Ruang Belajar Aqil (RBA), a nonprofit entity engaged in education and personal development.

Given this context, this applied research proposes the development of a comprehensive mood board and a six-month content plan as a strategic solution to enhance the promotional efforts of Ruang Belajar Aqil. This study involves direct collaboration with the organization to co-design engaging and purposeful content for Instagram. The goal is to help the organization clearly communicate the social value of its activities, attract support from donors, volunteers, and partners, and reinforce participants' trust in the benefits provided. Ultimately, this marketing initiative is expected to strengthen RBA's public image and support its growth as a socially impactful nonprofit organization.

B. Methods

The activities conducted as part of this study represent a series of research-based implementations aimed at addressing real-world challenges within the community. Specifically, the initiative was designed to support the nonprofit organization Ruang Belajar Aqil in optimizing its promotional efforts through social media platforms (Nugraha, & Prakasa, 2022). The activities involved representatives from the Ruang Belajar Aqil team as key participants. This research using a qualitative approach, including Focus group Discussion (FGDs), interviews, direct observation, social media audits, and the use of secondary data. The study resulted in a strategic framework that enhances visual consistency, improves audience engagement, and supports Ruang Belajar Aqil (RBA) sustainability.

Prior to the implementation phase, preliminary discussions were held with the organization's management and a member of the public relations team to identify existing challenges. These discussions revealed that the use of social media for promotional and branding purposes had not yet been fully optimized. As a result, there was a recognized need for mentorship and capacity-building activities focused on the effective utilization of social media as a digital marketing strategy within the organization (Fadhilah, & Pratiwi, 2021).

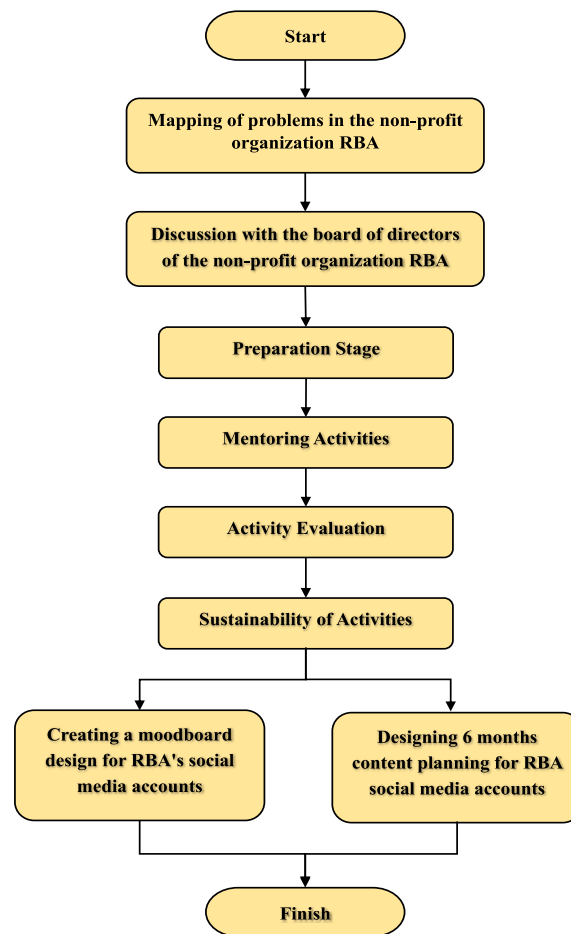


Figure 1. Stages of Implementation of Research Activities

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach with the primary aim of designing an applicable, social media-based digital marketing strategy tailored to the characteristics and needs of the nonprofit organization. This methodology was chosen to gain an in-depth and contextual understanding of the organization's digital communication practices, as well as to identify key challenges, potential opportunities, and audience preferences relevant to RBA's social campaign efforts (Kristianti & Ardian, 2022).

Data collection was conducted during the initial phase of the research and served as the foundation for developing a mood board and six-month content planning. The data aimed to provide a comprehensive overview of RBA's current social media landscape, including an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of published content, and audience perceptions of the organization's values and public image. The metrics analyzed are from Instagram insight such as engagement rate, reach, impressions, likes, and best content.

A multi-instrumental data collection strategy was employed. The FGDs involved core management members of RBA to explore internal perceptions of social media use and

the desired visual identity. Interviews were conducted with the organization's social media administrators to investigate the effectiveness of past digital campaigns (Karim & Yulianita, 2021). Interviews with the RBA marketing team, specifically the RBA Instagram team, were conducted twice. Interviews with RBA participants and volunteers were conducted three times.

In the FGD stage, there were 5 (five) participants, including the committee chair, data collector, field assistant, and person in charge from the Ruang Belajar Aqil (RBA). The research leader is responsible for conveying the research concept as a solution for designing an Instagram-based marketing strategy for RBA and acting as a liaison between the research team and RBA. The data collector is responsible for designing mood boards and content research. The field assistant is responsible for conducting initial screening of the needs and problems of RBA's Instagram content. The person in charge of RBA is the information gateway and key person who understands RBA's Instagram content.

Observations and digital media audits were used to assess the quality of visual content, message consistency, posting frequency, and user engagement levels. The researcher also reviewed the alignment between the produced content and the organization's core mission. In addition, secondary data such as social media analytics and internal organizational documents were analyzed to reinforce and triangulate findings from primary data sources.

Data analysis was carried out systematically and in multiple stages. The first stage involved data reduction, which entailed filtering and organizing raw data into more structured and relevant information. This was followed by thematic coding, wherein data was grouped into key themes such as perceptions of social media use, content alignment with organizational values, media management challenges, visual branding needs, and the effectiveness of existing content.

Findings were presented in descriptive narrative form and supported by tables or diagrams to illustrate patterns and relationships among themes. For instance, the social media audit revealed that posting frequency was relatively low and that content did not consistently reflect the organization's identity were identified from the FGDs. These findings were further analyzed by comparing them with best practices from similar nonprofit organizations.

To enhance validity, both methodological and data source triangulation were employed. Information derived from interviews, FGDs, and observations was cross verified to ensure consistency of findings. The results of this analysis were then used to develop strategic recommendations, including the design of an Instagram-specific mood board and content plan that is contextually relevant, practical, and impactful. Through a data-driven and context-sensitive analysis, this study aims to produce a digital marketing strategy that is not only informative but also capable of

strengthening the organization’s social image and supporting the sustainability of RBA as a nonprofit entity that is responsive to digital developments.

C. Results and Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that the development of a social media-based digital marketing strategy through the creation of a mood board and visual content guidelines for Ruang Belajar Aqil (RBA) plays a significant role in strengthening the organization’s image, enhancing public engagement, and improving the efficiency of digital communication. This outcome represents a practical application of strategic marketing theories emphasizing the importance of visual and narrative consistency in building long-term relationships with audiences.

TABLE 1. Instagram Content Plan

Target Audience	Content Point	Purpose
Participant	Event teaser (Reels & Stories), learning infographics, Q&A with mentor, participant testimony	Attracting new potential participants, maintaining active participant engagement through regular interactions, & strengthening the perception that RBA’s provides a quality learning experience.
Donors	Monthly impact report, donation Needs with clear visualization of what RBA’s needs	Demonstrate the real social impact of donation contributions, increase credibility through visual reports, & encourage donors to donate again or invite others.
Volunteers	Volunteer Openings & post that recognizes the best volunteers with photos, motivational quotes, and stories of their contributions to build lasting relationships.	Increase the interest of potential volunteers by showcasing real-life experiences and rewards for active volunteers, strengthening the RBA's internal community through public recognition, & demonstrate transparency and professionalism in volunteer management
Partners	Partnership portfolio, partnership call, mission & vision Infographics containing visualizations demonstrating how collaboration supports SDGs 4, 8, and 11, promoted by the RBA.	Enhance professional value and collaboration attractiveness, demonstrate the relevance of RBA programs to SDGs and global social issues, & build RBA's reputation as a credible partner in education and self-development.
General/users	FAQ (answering common questions about RBA), inspirational photos & captions, interactive polls and quizzes, & introduction to the RBA founding team/management	Increase interaction and reach through educational content and quizzes & strengthen emotional connections with the public.

According to Monica & Darma (2022), digital marketing strategy constitutes a key element in establishing organizational competitiveness within the increasingly integrated digital and metaverse ecosystems. In the context of nonprofit organizations such as RBA, the adoption of digital marketing strategies aims not only to increase

visibility but also to reinforce organizational sustainability through greater public trust and loyalty. Consequently, the mood board designed in this research functions as a strategic instrument to establish a strong and recognizable digital brand identity as in the mood board design results in figure 2. As Wandari & Darma (2021) argue, consistent management of digital behavior and brand character can shape positive public perceptions of social entities, particularly among younger generations.



Figure 2. Instagram Content Mood Board Design

Furthermore, Ferina et al (2021), highlight that the effectiveness of influencer marketing in building brand awareness and sustaining brands depends largely on the strength of narrative and visual relevance. In this regard, the visual content guideline for RBA's Instagram supports this principle by providing a clear direction for the creative team to develop authentic and emotionally resonant visual storytelling. Consistent and appealing visuals are expected to enhance user interaction through (comments, likes, and shares) which in turn organically expands the organization's social message reach. This finding aligns with the perspective of Chemutai & Kimeli (2020), who emphasize that the growth of nonprofit organizations relies heavily on their ability to foster community engagement and execute effective public communication strategies. Using social media, RBA can cultivate an active digital community in which volunteers, participants, and donors are not only recipients of information but also contributors to the dissemination of the organization's social values.

The results of this study are also consistent with the work of Andhityawati & Darma (2022), who identified transparency, consistent digital communication, and professional social media management as key factors influencing the sustainability of nonprofit organizations. The visual content guideline developed in this study addresses these needs by providing a structured framework for every visual communication element within RBA. Through deliberate choices in color palette, typography, and design style, the organization can convey its social mission in a professional and credible manner.

Table 2. Instagram Content Mood Board Design

Element	Chosen Style	Reason it was chosen
Color Palette	Red	A never-ending fire of enthusiasm for learning among young people. The color red will also create a stand-out impression.
	Yellow	It's a cheerful and inspiring learning experience for young people in Malang. Furthermore, the yellow color also aligns with the primary color of Ruang Belajar Aqil itself.
	Orange	based on the tagline owned by Rumah Belajar Aqil, namely "Making a better nation with concern through empowering Indonesian youth."
Font	Roboto	Creates an elegant and minimalist impression.
Graphic	Blurial	Enhances a modern feel and conveys a clean impression.

Moreover, Darma & Noviana, (2020) explain that effective digital marketing strategies in the new normal era are characterized by an organization's capacity to adapt to shifting digital behaviors, particularly with interactive social media. In this context, the Instagram mood board developed for RBA functions not only as a visual guide but also as a strategic adaptation tool that accommodates evolving social media user behavior. It allows RBA to adjust its communication tone and visual style to better resonate with millennial audiences (Instagram's dominant user demographic).

The selection of Instagram as the focal platform is supported by previous studies. Mulyani, et. al., (2022) and Prasetyawati (2021) affirm that audiovisual social media platforms such as Instagram and TikTok have high potential to foster emotional proximity between organizations and audiences, primarily through visual storytelling and interactive engagement. In this sense, the mood board serves as a central guideline ensuring that all RBA visual content (whether photography, short-form videos, or educational graphics) maintains coherence in tone and message, thereby reinforcing the organization's social identity.

As Ardhyanti et al (2021) argue, systematic content design and strategic use of social media enhance nonprofit promotional effectiveness by shaping a credible and relatable brand personality. The visual guideline produced in this study operationalizes this principle by providing a framework that directs RBA's creative team in every stage of content production. This framework not only increases workflow efficiency but also safeguards the quality and integrity of messages delivered to the public.

Theoretically, the results reinforce the conceptual model of digital marketing based on brand consistency, in which visual uniformity plays a crucial role in shaping public perceptions of organizational credibility. Consistency in color schemes, typography, and visual layout creates stronger brand recall, builds audience trust, and fosters loyalty toward the organization's social mission. Consequently, the visual guideline developed through this study serves not only as an aesthetic artifact but also as a strategic foundation for RBA's digital communication over the next six months.

Moreover, it offers a replicable model for other nonprofit organizations seeking to enhance their social media-based marketing strategies.

D. Conclusion

This study concludes that developing a social media-driven digital marketing strategy through the design of a mood board and Instagram visual content guideline significantly contributes to optimizing digital communication and strengthening the brand identity of the nonprofit organization Ruang Belajar Aqil (RBA). The research output functions as a strategic tool for establishing consistent brand identity, enhancing audience engagement, improving content production efficiency, and maintaining organizational credibility across digital platforms. The findings confirm that visual-based communication strategies are among the most effective approaches to expanding outreach and solidifying the positioning of nonprofit organizations in an increasingly competitive digital landscape. The visual guideline comprising color palette selection, typography, illustration style, communication tone, and post structure – serves as a comprehensive framework that enables RBA's creative team to produce professional, relevant, and value-aligned content. The visual consistency implemented across all digital materials reflects professionalism, seriousness, and institutional credibility, reinforcing RBA's image as an educational nonprofit with a strong social mission.

Theoretically, this research strengthens the literature on nonprofit digital marketing strategy (Fadhilah, & Pratiwi, 2021), emphasizing the synergy among visual communication, storytelling, and value-based engagement. The findings support previous theories (Andhityawati & Darma, 2022; Chemutai & Kimeli, 2020; Monica & Darma, 2022), which indicate that well-planned and purpose-driven social media management acts as a key determinant of nonprofit sustainability through increased public trust and community participation. Hence, the mood board functions not merely as a design aid but as a strategic instrument bridging the organization's social vision with contemporary digital communication practices. Practically, the study provides significant managerial implications for nonprofit organizations, especially those operating in education and community empowerment. First, social media management should be viewed not merely as a promotional tool but as an integral component of long-term image building and stakeholder relationship development. Second, adopting standardized visual guidelines such as a mood board enhances creative team efficiency, accelerates content production, and ensures message consistency across multiple digital channels. Third, nonprofits should conduct periodic social media audits and update their visual frameworks in response to audience dynamics and evolving digital design trends.

The study also presents broader strategic implications for building digital capacity in nonprofit organizations. Implementing the mood board and six-month content plan may serve as the foundation for a sustainable digital communication system. This

initiative can enable RBA to establish partnerships with external entities such as creative agencies, universities, and digital communities that share similar social and educational objectives. Strengthening RBA's digital branding through authentic and consistent visual content is expected to increase public trust, attract donor support, and expand social impact. From an academic perspective, this research contributes to the interdisciplinary discourse bridging digital marketing, visual communication design, and nonprofit management. The results can inform future studies examining the effectiveness of visual strategy implementation on engagement rates, brand awareness, and audience conversion in the nonprofit sector.

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