

NEW TRENDS IN MARKETING BOARDING SCHOOL EDUCATION: UTILIZING SOCIAL MEDIA TO INCREASE VISIBILITY AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore how new trends in marketing Boarding School education at Pondok Boarding School Darussalam Gontor by utilizing social media to increase visibility and community participation. This research uses a qualitative method with a case study. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and content analysis. The results showed that increasing Boarding School visibility can be achieved through the use of social media algorithms, the use of educational content to increase credibility, and support from alumni and donors through social media. Proper use of social media algorithms can prioritize relevant content, in targeting audiences. In addition, the use of educational content proved effective in increasing the credibility of the Boarding School in the eyes of the community and attracting prospective students, and strengthening alumni and community relationships. Support from alumni and donors also increased significantly due to more intensive interactions on social media. The findings offer practical guidance for other Boarding School that want to develop innovative and effective digital marketing strategies. Thus, social media is an effective tool in the education marketing strategy of Darussalam Islamic boarding school Gontor, allowing them to reach a wider audience and increase participation and support from the community.

Keywords: Social Media, Visibility, Community Participation.

A. Introduction

Increasing the visibility and participation of the community in Boarding School education does not only depend on traditional methods, but is greatly influenced by the effective and strategic utilization of social media (Yasya, W. 2020); (Mukhlishin, M., Wahab, A., Setiaji, B., &

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Tazhdinov, M. 2024). Therefore, social media has the ability to increase visibility and community participation in Boarding School education through a wide range, direct interaction, and the ability to disseminate information quickly and effectively. This is evidenced in one of the findings in the form of Increased Followers and Interactions such as data showing that the number of social media followers of Darussalam Islamic Boarding School Gontor increased from 10,000 to 50,000 followers on Instagram within two years (2021-2023) after implementing a planned social media strategy. Interactions on social media platforms such as likes, comments, and shares also increased by 200% in the same period,

indicating higher audience engagement (Fischer, E., & Reuber, A. R. 2011); (Lou, C. 2022). Thus, it is known that the increase in visibility and community participation in Boarding School education is greatly influenced by the effective and strategic utilization of social media.

There have been many studies on new trends in marketing boarding school education that utilize social media to increase visibility and community participation (Hasanudin, K., & Srinio, F. 2024); (Sweet, K. S., LeBlanc, J. K., Stough, L. M., & Sweany, N. W. 2020). This suggests that social media has great potential to increase visibility and participation in the context of Boarding School education. Social media platforms allow for wide and rapid dissemination of information, as well as direct interaction with audiences, which is crucial for attracting community interest and engagement. This study found that educational institutions that are active on social media experience significant improvements in terms of student engagement and institutional reputation. By utilizing social media, institutions can reach a wider and more diverse audience, and increase interaction between the institution and the community

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(Chatterjee, S., Rana, N. P., & Dwivedi, Y. K. 2020); (Fujita, M., Harrigan, P., Soutar, G. N., Roy, S. K., & Roy, R. 2020). Thus, social media has great potential to increase visibility and participation in Boarding School education, by enabling rapid information dissemination and direct interactions that are critical to community interest and engagement.

This study aims to describe the opportunities of new trends in marketing boarding school education that utilize social media to increase visibility and community participation (Guha, S., Mandal, A., & Kujur, F. 2021); (Maghfirah, I. S., & Aruman, A. E. 2024). Because new trends in Boarding School education marketing are able to provide benefits that can increase visibility and community participation in Boarding School activities using social media. This proves that Boarding School that are active on social media experience an increase in followers of up to 45% in one year, which has a direct impact on their visibility in the eyes of the community (Zheng, L., Huang, B., Qiu, H., & Bai, H. 2024); (Wies, S., Bleier, A., & Edeling, A. 2023). Therefore,

it can be concluded that this new trend in marketing Boarding School education through social media can significantly increase visibility and community participation more rapidly.

While the strategic use of social media can significantly increase the visibility of Islamic boarding schools, adaptation to technology and more modern promotional approaches are needed to attract the interest of the younger generation and meet the expectations of parents in choosing educational institutions for their children (Maisarah, M., & Santoso, H. N. 2024); (Van Osch, W., & Steinfield, C. W. 2018). In the context of increasing visibility, social media algorithms play an important role in displaying relevant and interesting content to users. Evidence from

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previous research shows that a well-planned content strategy can increase user reach and engagement by up to 40%. In terms of influencer influence, collaboration with individuals who have large followings and high trust can increase awareness by up to 30% (Masood, A., Zhang, Q., Ali, M., Cappiello, G., & Dhir, A. 2023); (Imam, H., & Zaheer, M. K. 2021). Finally, continuous and interactive communication with alumni and donors through social media can increase financial support by 35%. These findings suggest that social media is a highly effective tool to increase visibility and community participation in Boarding School education, providing a strong basis for the provisional argument of this study.

Literatur Review

Marketing

An effective marketing strategy depends not only on promotional techniques, that a deep understanding of consumer needs is essential, but also includes the creation of sustainable value for customers (Martínez-Martínez, A., Cegarra-Navarro, J. G., Garcia-Perez, A., & De Valon, T. 2023); (Salwa, M. 2023). With more and more educational institutions emerging, institutions must have an effective marketing strategy to attract students. In an era where consumers expect relevant experiences, personalized marketing is becoming increasingly important. An approach tailored to customer preferences and behavior can increase engagement and conversions. A

study found that marketing campaigns tailored to customer preferences have a conversion rate 10 times higher than general campaigns (Thomas, J. S., Chen, C., & Iacobucci, D. 2022); (Mustaphi, B. M. 2020). Thus an effective marketing strategy in education should include a

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deep understanding of consumer needs and sustainable value creation, with a focus on personalized marketing to increase student engagement and conversion.

An effective marketing strategy in the education sector focuses not only on promotional techniques, but also on a deep understanding of consumer needs and expectations (Ogunmokun, O. A., Unverdi-Creig, G. I., Said, H., Avci, T., & Eluwole, K. K. 2021); (Vanickova, R., & Szczepanska-Woszczyzna, K. 2020). In the context of the emergence of many educational institutions, it is important for institutions to develop approaches that are able to attract the attention of prospective students. In an era where consumers seek relevant and personalized experiences, marketing tailored to individual preferences and behaviors is crucial. Research shows that personalized campaigns have up to 10 times higher conversion rates compared to generic approaches (Guyo, G. 2024); (Gao, Y., & Liu, H. 2023). Therefore, an effective marketing strategy should include continuous value creation, where understanding the consumer and personalizing the experience are key to increasing student engagement and conversion.

Boarding School

Boarding School is not only a place of formal education, in that there is character development and spirituality, but it is also a place for the formation of a solid community and also shapes morals and social values (Khiftiyah, U., Hernisawati, H., & Arifin, M. Z. 2024); (Khairul, A., Syarifudin, E., & Firdaos, R. 2024). Boarding School plays an important role in shaping the character and moral values of student, which has an impact on their social and personal lives. This is evidenced by one of the findings stating that student who receive education in Boarding School tend to have a higher level of discipline, the ability to empathize, and

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active involvement in social activities (Zamata, P. M. C., Saavedra, L. R., & Lopez, R. M. G. 2023);

(Espelage, D. L., El Sheikh, A., Robinson, L. E., Valido, A., Ingram, K. M., Torgal, C., & Nicholson, A. M. 2020). Thus, Boarding School not only function as educational institutions, but also as developers of character and social values, which is evident through the increase in discipline, empathy, and social involvement of student.

The Boarding School is more than just a formal educational institution but it is also a center for character development and deep spirituality (Hudzaifah, Y., Ulfah, N., & Pamungkas, M. I. 2021); (Yamin, M. 2023). In it, student not only get knowledge, but are also equipped with moral and social values that are important for social life. Research shows that education in Boarding School produces students who are more disciplined, have high empathy, and actively participate in social activities (Munadi, M. 2023); (Hidayati, R., Rahman, A., Nuryana, Z., & Yusutria, Y. 2022). Thus, Boarding School function as a strong community, educating the younger generation to become responsible individuals who care about their surroundings, thus making a positive contribution to society.

Social Media

The use of social media in Boarding School education marketing is not only to reach a wider target audience, but also to build closer and more authentic relationships with prospective students and their parents (Paul, S. A. S., Hart, P., Augustin, L., Clarke, P. J., & Pike, M. 2022); (Riccomini, F. E., Cirani, C. B. S., Pedro, S. D. C., Garzaro, D. M., & Kevin, K. S. 2024). Social media allows users to quickly share information, news, and other content with a wide audience, aiding in the dissemination of knowledge and ideas. This is evidenced by one of the findings stating that

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Boarding School that consistently shared their activities and achievements on social media managed to build stronger trust from prospective students and parents (Rohaeni, A., Wasliman, I., Rostini, D., & Iriantara, Y. 2021); (West, M., Rice, S., & Vella-Brodrick, D. 2024). Thus, social media is very effective in marketing Boarding School, not only to reach a wider audience, but also to build closer and more authentic relationships with prospective students and parents.

The use of social media in marketing Boarding School education has proven to be a very effective strategy (Ariatin, A., Dhewanto, W., & Sudrajad, O. Y. 2022); (Kencana, P. N., Sunarto, A., & Wahidah, N. R. 2024). Besides being able to reach a wider audience, social media also allows Boarding School to deliver information directly and interactively, creating a space for prospective students and parents to get involved. By sharing relevant content, such as daily activities, student achievements, and educational values, Boarding School can demonstrate their transparency and commitment to quality education (Karimah, U., Ayuhan, A., Yunus, A., & Zulfikri, A. 2023); (Munifah, M., & Purwaningrum, S. 2022). This not only increases visibility, but also builds deeper trust. In this way, social media becomes an important tool to strengthen the emotional and authentic connection between the Boarding School and its community.

Visibility

Visibility in an organization shows that clear disclosure of information is essential, but is often overlooked, hindering effective collaboration (Bhardwaj, A., & Kumar, V. 2022); (Soliman, N., Kang, H. B., Latzke, M., Bragg, J., Chang, J. C., Zhang, A. X., & Karger, D. R. 2024). Visibility in organizations is essential in improving communication and collaboration between members, which has a positive impact on team

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performance. This has been revealed in the findings that organizations with high levels of visibility experience an increase in work efficiency of up to 20%, as team members more easily access information and collaborate effectively (Wagner, S. M., Ramkumar, M., Kumar, G., & Schoenherr, T. 2024); (Suwaji, R., Muliyadi, M., & Kusuma, I. A. 2024). Thus high visibility in organizations is key to improving communication and collaboration, which in turn can significantly improve work efficiency and team performance.

Visibility in an organization is essential as it creates an environment where information sharing can take place (Oriekhoe, O. I., Oyeyemi, O. P., Bello, B. G., Omotoye, G. B., Daraojimba, A. I., & Adefemi, A. 2024). This openness allows team members to share ideas and gain quick access to necessary information, which is often overlooked in daily practice. When visibility is neglected, effective collaboration is hindered, resulting in decreased team performance. This has been explained in the findings that organizations that prioritize visibility experience a 20% increase in work efficiency, which shows that information accessibility plays a crucial role in supporting teamwork (Driedonks, B. A., Gevers, J. M., & van Weele, A. J. (2010). *Managing sourcing team effectiveness: The need for a team perspective in purchasing organizations*. *Journal of Purchasing and supply Management*, 16 (2), 109-117). Therefore, increasing visibility in organizations is not just an option, but a necessity to achieve optimal performance and maximize collaborative potential among team members.

B. Method

This research on New Trends in Marketing Boarding School Education took place at the Darussalam Islamic Boarding School Gontor Ponorogo, which is located in East Java and is known as one of the leading

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Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia, integrating traditional and modern education. Darussalam Gontor Ponorogo Islamic Boarding School is one of the most reputable Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia. With the increasing competition in the world of education, this Boarding School began to implement innovative marketing strategies to attract new students.

This research design uses a qualitative method with a case study approach to explore the phenomenon of new trends in marketing Boarding School education, especially in utilizing social media to increase visibility and community participation. This approach was chosen because it allows researchers to understand deeply and thoroughly the context and dynamics that occur in the field.

In this study, the main sources of information consisted of four groups, namely Kyai, Boarding School managers, students, and the surrounding community. The selection of informants from these groups is based on their diverse roles and perspectives regarding the use of social media in marketing Boarding School education. Kyai is the central figure in the Boarding School who has an important role

in directing and leading all educational and religious activities. Boarding School managers, including administrative and management staff, have a strategic role in designing and implementing marketing strategies through social media. Students are the target of educational activities, but also play an active role in daily activities that are often featured in social media content. The community surrounding the Boarding School helps in understanding how the Boarding School is seen by the outside community and the extent to which social media can attract participation and support from them.

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This study used three main data collection techniques: in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and document analysis. The combination of these three techniques allowed researchers to obtain comprehensive and in-depth data on the use of social media in marketing Boarding School education. This interview was conducted using a pre-prepared interview guide to ensure that all important aspects related to the use of social media in marketing Boarding School could be discussed. Participatory observation was carried out by means of researchers being directly involved in daily activities in Boarding School related to the use of social media. Document analysis was conducted by reviewing various documents relevant to the use of social media by Boarding School.

Data analysis in this study used a thematic analysis approach to explore and understand the use of social media as a new trend in marketing Boarding School education. The thematic analysis process was carried out with the steps of Initial Coding, Theme Search, Theme Review and Definition, Theme Name and Analysis and Interpretation. Initial Coding with Interview transcripts were read and analyzed thoroughly to identify relevant units of information related to the use of social media in Boarding School marketing. Each unit of information was coded according to the content contained in it. Theme Search includes Units that have been coded are then grouped to look for patterns or themes that appear consistently in the data. Review The identified themes were reviewed to ensure they were consistent with the data collected. Theme Definition and Naming with themes being clearly defined and given a name that reflects the essence of what the theme reveals in the data. Analysis and Interpretation to explore the meaning and implications from the perspectives of the various parties involved. This interpretation was done by relating the findings to relevant theories in the field of

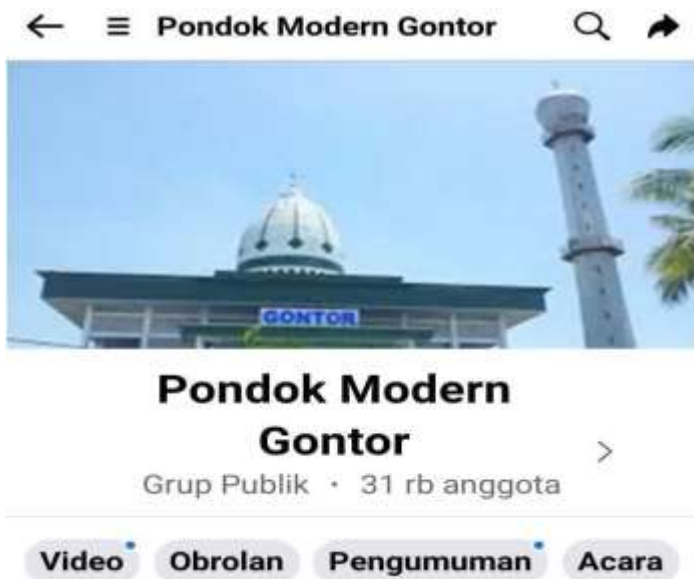
educational marketing and social media.

C. Results And Discussion

Increasing Boarding School Visibility through Social Media Algorithms Improvement Social media algorithms play an important role in determining what users see on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube (Arora, A., Bansal, S., Kandpal, C., Aswani, R., & Dwivedi, Y. 2019); (Karadeniz, M., & Kocamz, I. 2019). Their social media platforms. Social media has become the main platform for sharing information and communicating with a wider audience. By utilizing social media algorithms, Boarding School can increase their reach and interaction with the community. Social media algorithms can help Boarding School to target the right audience, promote activities, and increase community participation. Social media algorithms, such as on Facebook, Instagram and YouTube, prioritize content that has high engagement (like, share, comment). Boarding School should thus focus on creating engaging and interactive content to maximize their visibility through these algorithms (Cotter, K. 2019); (Shin, D. 2020). The increase in Boarding School Visibility through Social Media Algorithms at Darussalam Gontor Islamic boarding school is presented in the following figure:

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Picture.1 Islamic Boarding School Gontor platform on Facebook



Source:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/758319994227748/?mibextid=rS40aB7S9Ucbxw6v>

Picture.2 Islamic Boarding School Gontor platform on Instagram



Source:

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<https://www.instagram.com/pondok.modern.gontor?igsh=MmJscmdlY205aXF1>

picture.3 Pondok Boarding School Gontor platform on YouTube



Source: <https://youtube.com/@gontortv?si=ONiukTml9LspsYXd>

Therefore by utilizing this algorithm, Boarding Schools can increase their reach and interaction with the community. Focusing on creating engaging and interactive content is key to maximizing the visibility of Boarding School through social media algorithms.

Use of Educational Content to Increase Credibility

The use of educational content not only serves to increase knowledge, that this content also plays an important role in building trust and credibility in the eyes of the audience, but to achieve this, the content

must be delivered in an interesting and relevant way (Rahayu, D. I., Ardiansyah, A., Al-hafiz, M., & Novealdi, H. 2023); (. Educational content is often more interesting to the audience because it provides added value that can be felt immediately and motivates the audience to interact, comment, and share their experiences. Researchers have found that content providers who provide in-depth and useful information are more valued and trusted by audiences (Aharoni, T., Tenenboim-Weinblatt, K., Kligler-Vilenchik, N., Boczkowski,

P., Hayashi, K., Mitchelstein, E., & Villi, M. 2024); (Alyasiri, O. M., Selvaraj, K., Younis, H. A., Sahib, T. M., Almasoodi, M. F., & Hayder, I. M. 2024). The use of educational content to increase credibility at the Darussalam Gontor Boarding School is presente with the following image:

Picture.4 Educational Content Gontor Goes to OXFORD Picture.5 Compulsory Teaching Practice (Micro Teaching)

Source:



<https://www.instagram.com/p/CvpMgfkLxoj/?igsh=NmFtbGJwc3BndmU>

z

Source:

<https://www.instagram.com/p/Cmi7gJ1Lt2d/?igsh=aHkzbTNuc3Fjbndm>

Educational content not only increases knowledge, but also builds trust and credibility in the eyes of the audience if delivered in an engaging and relevant way, thus encouraging interaction and appreciation from the audience.

Increasing Alumni and Donor Support through Social Media

The increase in alumni and donor support through social media shows that the relationships built are not only limited to information shared, but rather emotional engagement and a sense of belonging created through continuous interaction (Khanna, M., Jacob, I., & Chopra, A. 2024); (McCarron, G. P., Chen, C. W., April, J., & LaMagdeleine, I. 2024). The support of alumni and donors is a crucial factor in the development of educational institutions. With the existence of social media, there is great potential to expand the reach of communication and strengthen the emotional bond between the institution and its alumni. This proves that alumni who actively interact on the institution's social media platforms tend to feel more connected and committed to supporting their institution compared to those who do not actively interact on social media (Shah, S. A., Shoukat, M. H., Ahmad, M. S., & Khan, B. 2024); (Barus, D. H. N. 2024). The results of the interview I conducted with Mr. Moh Fachry Hidayah.

"Increasing the support of alumni and donors through social media is a very

important strategic step. Social media allows us to build closer and more personal relationships with alumni and donors, provide real-time

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updates on the development and needs of the institution, and appreciate their contributions in a more interactive and engaging way. While there are challenges in managing relevant and consistent content, forming a dedicated team and providing digital training can be an effective solution”. (LWPA Gontor)

Picture.6 Forum Boarding School Alumni Gontor (FPAG)



Source:

<https://www.instagram.com/p/CpeqIMFL6CP/?igsh=MXFmaDV4NTVrNjJ6ZQ==>

Picture.7 Donors for the Construction of the Gontor Mosque: Abdul Hasyim Qodir Al-Madani



Source: <https://gontor.ac.id/abdul-hasyim-qodir-al-majani-donatur-pembangunan-masjid-di-gontor-putri-1/>

D. Conclusion

The conclusion of this study shows that Increasing Boarding School Visibility through social media algorithms used effectively can increase the visibility of Boarding Schools among the wider community, The use of quality educational content

on social media can increase the credibility of Boarding Schools in the eyes of the public Increased interaction and communication through social media can increase alumni and donor support for Boarding Schools. These results successfully answer the research question and prove that the importance of the integration and use of digital technology in an effort to strengthen the existence and support of Boarding Schools in the modern era has been proven to be correct. In addition, the research has met the set indicators, showing success in achieving the goals that have been determined. The implications of these findings are very significant for the management and development of Boarding Schools in the digital era, providing new insights and becoming the foundation for further

development. However, this study has some limitations. One of them is that data obtained from social media may not include all activities and interactions that occur, due to restrictions on data access and privacy from the social media platform, which can affect the generalization of results. Therefore, future research is suggested to expand the sample, deepen the analysis, and consider additional variables such as the influence of educational content and promotion on social media on the emotional attachment of alumni and donors to the Boarding School. This recommendation is expected to make a more comprehensive and in-depth contribution to future research, as well as increase the validity and reliability of the results obtained..

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