



Utilization of Instagram Social Media in Public Relations Activities of PT Berau Coal to Enhance Corporate Image

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Abstract : This study aims to examine how PT Berau Coal leverages Instagram as a social media platform within its Public Relations (PR) practices to enhance corporate image. Employing a library research method combined with content analysis of the official Instagram account @beraucoal.id, the study reveals that PT Berau Coal strategically utilizes Instagram as a primary communication channel to disseminate information related to operational activities, corporate social responsibility (CSR) programs, and environmental sustainability efforts. The digital communication strategy is delivered through a consistent visual approach, incorporating the AIDA (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action) model and narrative elements that reinforce the company's branding. The findings indicate that Instagram effectively increases public engagement, strengthens corporate reputation, and shapes a favorable public perception of the company. Nevertheless, challenges persist, particularly in the innovation of CSR content, which tends to be repetitive. This study underscores the pivotal role of social media in adaptive, two-way communication strategies within digital PR.

Keywords: Instagram, Public Relations, Corporate Image, CSR, Digital Communication

Abstrak : Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis bagaimana PT Berau Coal memanfaatkan media sosial Instagram dalam kegiatan Public Relations (PR) untuk meningkatkan citra perusahaan. Melalui pendekatan studi kepustakaan dan analisis isi terhadap akun Instagram resmi @beraucoal.id, penelitian ini menemukan bahwa PT Berau Coal secara strategis menggunakan Instagram sebagai kanal komunikasi utama untuk menyampaikan informasi operasional, program tanggung jawab sosial perusahaan (CSR), dan pelestarian lingkungan. Strategi komunikasi digital ini dikemas dengan pendekatan visual yang konsisten, menggunakan prinsip AIDA dan narasi yang memperkuat branding perusahaan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Instagram efektif meningkatkan engagement publik, memperkuat reputasi, serta membentuk persepsi positif masyarakat terhadap perusahaan. Namun, tantangan tetap ada, khususnya dalam inovasi konten CSR yang cenderung repetitif. Penelitian ini menegaskan bahwa media sosial berperan penting dalam strategi PR digital yang adaptif dan berbasis interaksi dua arah.

Kata kunci: Instagram, Public Relations, Citra Perusahaan, CSR, Komunikasi Digital

1. INTRODUCTION

Social media has become one of the essential technologies integrated into everyday human life, including the business sector (Herdiani et al., 2022). The advancement of information technology has transformed the structure of Indonesia's economic system. From a conventional economic model, the system has gradually shifted toward a digital-based economy. Although it cannot yet be fully categorized as a comprehensive economic system, the digitization of the economic sector has compelled both consumers and producers (traders) to adapt to this digital trend. The fundamental shift in economic activities urges business actors to swiftly embrace digital transformation. One of the major

benefits of digitalization in the economic domain is its ability to reduce operational costs for business entities. Furthermore, digitalization facilitates better, cheaper, and faster services while enabling access to broader and more remote areas (Arianto, 2022).

The development of communication and information technology has become an inseparable aspect of human life, including in business activities. The emergence of the internet and digital technologies has reshaped how people interact and communicate, providing new opportunities for the business world (Saputra & Pulungan, 2024). Social media is not only instrumental for product marketing but also plays a significant role in corporate image building—particularly for companies operating in industrial sectors such as mining. Digital technology has transformed the landscape of organizational communication, positioning social media as a key channel in Public Relations (PR) strategies. Instagram, as a visually-oriented platform, offers opportunities for companies to build image and reputation through engaging and interactive content. PT Berau Coal, one of the largest coal mining companies in Indonesia, utilizes Instagram to strengthen its public engagement and enhance its corporate image.

Studies have shown that the use of social media in PR can improve public engagement and shape positive perceptions of companies. For instance, research by Nisar & Saleem (2024) reveals that companies active on digital platforms like Instagram are more capable of fostering harmonious relationships with consumers through effective two-way communication. Moreover, research by Alhadid & Qaddomi (2018) highlights the role of social media as a moderating variable between PR efforts and corporate image, suggesting that social media amplifies the impact of PR on public perception. Additionally, the use of visual elements in Instagram content has proven effective in increasing user engagement. Dhanesh & Rahman (2021) argue that compelling visual content enhances interaction and fosters stronger relationships between organizations and their audiences. This aligns with the findings of Manikonda et al. (2014), who note that Instagram possesses a unique social network structure, where users tend to share locations and activities—creating opportunities for companies to connect more personally with their audiences.

In the Indonesian context, a study by Teguh et al. (2022) on PT PLN Nusantara Power demonstrates that an effective Cyber Public Relations strategy on Instagram can enhance a company's popularity and image in digital media. Similarly, research by Rismawati (2018) on PT Len Industri (Persero) indicates that PR management through social media contributes significantly to the formation of a positive corporate brand.

Given this background, this study aims to examine how PT Berau Coal utilizes Instagram as part of its PR activities to enhance corporate image, as well as to identify the strategies, impacts, and challenges involved in managing its social media presence.

2. METHOD

This study employs a library research method aimed at comprehensively examining how social media particularly Instagram is utilized in the public relations (PR) activities of PT Berau Coal to enhance its corporate image. According to Salmaa (2023), literature review is a crucial process for exploring in-depth references and reinforcing the theoretical foundation of research.

Magdalena et al. (2021) emphasize that in library research, data collection must be conducted systematically. Key aspects to consider include: compiling literature relevant to the research theme and objectives; classifying data sources based on their level of relevance; citing data in accordance with the research focus along with appropriate scholarly references; cross-verifying sources to ensure data validity and reliability; and organizing the data in line with the structure of the study. Additional supporting data were obtained from the official Instagram account of PT Berau Coal (@beraucoal.id), accessible via <https://www.instagram.com/beraucoal.id>, as well as from documentation, previous research articles, and internal company reports related to social media activities. The analytical technique applied is qualitative content analysis, which involves identifying communication messages, image-related narratives, and interaction strategies used in the company's Instagram posts. The focus of the analysis is directed at how the company constructs strategic messages to build positive public perception through social media. Through this approach, the study aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the role of Instagram in PT Berau Coal's digital PR strategy.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The analysis reveals that social media serves as a vital tool in corporate public relations due to its ability to enhance public engagement and build corporate image. According to Jumalik & Oktaviany (2024), social media contributes to "improving corporate image through efficiency, effectiveness, and applied strategies," and enables rapid responses to public complaints or feedback. PT Berau Coal recognizes this role; its official Instagram account, @beraucoal.id, is utilized as a communication channel to

strengthen public relations and improve audience engagement. Fredy & Vanel (2025) emphasize that Instagram has become a popular platform for sharing information about corporate activities particularly Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives thus enhancing interaction with the public.

The profile of PT Berau Coal's Instagram account demonstrates the success of the company's digital strategy. The account @beraucoal.id, managed by the Corporate Communication team since 2017, has been verified since 2020 and has amassed 137,000 followers (Fredy & Vanel, 2025). The content is regularly updated and includes informative photos and videos covering various company activities: from modern mining processes and technological achievements, post-mining land reclamation, CSR programs and community empowerment (in education, infrastructure, health, and environmental preservation), to positive moments of interaction between the company and its employees, surrounding communities, government, and other stakeholders (Fredy & Vanel, 2025). The primary types of content uploaded to the account include (Fredy & Vanel, 2025):

- a. Operational Activity Reports: Documentation of mining processes, technological innovations, and corporate achievements.
- b. CSR and Community Empowerment Programs: Social activities that support education, health, infrastructure development, and community empowerment in operational areas.
- c. Environmental Preservation: Initiatives for reclaiming post-mining land and implementing environmental sustainability programs.
- d. Corporate Interaction: Positive moments showcasing the company's engagement with employees and local communities (e.g., social service events or aid distribution efforts).



Figure 1. Instagram profile of PT Berau Coal (@beraucoal.id)

The official Instagram account of PT Berau Coal (@beraucoal.id) is a verified account and serves as a primary channel for the company's Public Relations (PR) activities. With over 151,000 followers, 1,740 posts, and following only 24 other accounts, the profile demonstrates a high level of professionalism and focus on corporate information dissemination. The account's bio emphasizes CSR activities, company updates, and job opportunities, and includes a direct link to the official website (www.beraucoalenergy.co.id) as well as the company's headquarters in Tanjung Redeb, East Kalimantan. The account's active and consistent management is reflected through its use of Instagram Highlight Stories, categorized under themes such as HOAX, BC Update, KOBARA, and CSR representing both strategic segmentation and the company's commitment to transparency and public education (PT Berau Coal, 2025).

According to the company's 2023 official report, the social media management strategy focuses on two key objectives: enhancing corporate reputation and mitigating critical issues commonly associated with the mining industry, including environmental, occupational safety, and social concerns. These goals are addressed through positive content dissemination and issue monitoring. PT Berau Coal organizes its content into several key categories: CSR and community empowerment (PPM), internal HR activities, OHS, operational and technological innovation, environmental reclamation, local wisdom, sports events, educational campaigns, and hoax clarifications (PT Berau Coal, 2023).

Content development follows a professional approach, guided by an annual content calendar and the application of the AIDA model (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action) in crafting captions (PT Berau Coal, 2023). Instagram was selected as the main platform due to its superior reach, with 93% follower share and 77.4% engagement—surpassing other social media channels managed by PT Berau Coal. Visual materials are presented in various formats, including photographs, videos, infographics, carousels, and reels, combined with hashtags such as #MajuBersamaBerauCoal and #BetterEnergyBrighterFuture to strengthen brand visibility (PT Berau Coal, 2023).

The report also highlights the effectiveness of digital PR management, noting a significant increase in Instagram followers from 78,476 in December 2022 to 124,175 by July 2023 indicating growing public trust and engagement with the company's digital image (PT Berau Coal, 2023). Overall, the digital communication strategy via Instagram has become a foundational component in reinforcing PT Berau Coal's public reputation, serving as a responsive and adaptive PR model in the information era. This strategic use

of Instagram reflects a transformation in corporate communication aligned with the expectations of the modern public (PT Berau Coal, 2025).

The narrative style of PT Berau Coal's content is generally informative and focused on promoting corporate social responsibility (CSR), with the strategic goal of cultivating a positive corporate image in light of the mining industry's often negative public perception. The strategic aim of managing this Instagram account is to enhance public perception and engagement through likes, comments, and follower growth—where increased public interaction is expected to generate greater awareness and positive support (Jumalik & Oktaviany, 2024; Fredy & Vanel, 2025).

In terms of visual strategy and branding, PT Berau Coal ensures consistency across all posts by using the company's signature colors, typography, logo, watermark, and official hashtags. As a visual-based platform, Instagram facilitates compelling content delivery and user interaction (Fredy & Vanel, 2025). The company leverages multiple features, including posts, Instagram Stories and Highlights, and Reels. The use of mentions (@) to acknowledge partners or stakeholders (e.g., local media or government agencies) helps build credibility through collaboration. Meanwhile, relevant hashtags improve brand visibility and campaign reach. This visual approach aligns with visual communication theory, which underscores the importance of design in supporting communication goals and brand identity (Jumalik & Oktaviany, 2024; Fredy & Vanel, 2025).

At the Engage stage, PT Berau Coal emphasizes active interaction with the public. Interactive content (such as quizzes, polls, or follower story reposts) and Stories as dialogic tools are found to be effective in “enhancing engagement between users and @beraucoal.id” (Fredy & Vanel, 2025). The company adopts the Circular Model of Social Media Engagement (Share, Optimize, Manage, Engage), with a focus on Instagram during the Share phase due to its broad audience reach. During the Optimize/Manage phase, visual consistency and branding are prioritized. In the Engage phase, PT Berau Coal actively collaborates with strategic accounts (e.g., local media or relevant ministries) to expand communication reach and deepen public involvement (Fredy, 2024; Fredy & Vanel, 2025). This two-way strategy aligns with modern PR principles, emphasizing reciprocal dialogue with the public (Bajaj, 2023; Jumalik & Oktaviany, 2024).

Content analysis reveals both achievements and areas for improvement. Instagram has become a vital “communication bridge” between the company and its stakeholders (Fredy & Vanel, 2025), reinforcing the view that social media can enhance corporate reputation through the strategic dissemination of accurate information and positive image-

building (Bajaj, 2023; Jumalik & Oktaviany, 2024). PT Berau Coal's engagement level is relatively high, as seen in positive interactions such as likes, comments, and follower growth, which are indicators of increased public awareness and support (Jumalik & Oktaviany, 2024; Fredy & Vanel, 2025). However, the analysis also identifies a limitation: despite high engagement compared to other platforms, CSR content presentation remains relatively monotonous and lacks creative diversity (Fredy & Vanel, 2025). This suggests a need for visual and narrative refinement to further optimize digital communication (Fredy, 2025; Fredy & Vanel, 2025).

Overall, the integration of empirical findings and digital PR theory illustrates that PT Berau Coal strategically utilizes Instagram to build its corporate image. The company's consistent branding and communicative transparency reinforce its reputation, supporting the foundational PR theory that social media—when strategically managed can serve as a powerful tool for shaping public perception (Bajaj, 2023; Jumalik & Oktaviany, 2024).

Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that social media particularly Instagram serves as a strategic tool in the Public Relations (PR) activities of PT Berau Coal. This aligns with Herdiani et al. (2022), who argue that the advancement of information technology has significantly transformed both the economic system and business communication practices in Indonesia. Social media no longer functions solely as a promotional tool, but has become a primary channel for image-building, enhancing public engagement, and conveying corporate social responsibility (CSR) narratives. This is further supported by Saputra & Pulungan (2024), who state that social media opens new opportunities in business communication through direct, two-way interactions that are both personal and immediate.

The official Instagram account of PT Berau Coal, @beraucoal.id, is actively used to disseminate information related to the company's operations, CSR programs, and community empowerment initiatives. The steadily increasing follower count reaching 151,000—demonstrates the effectiveness of the company's digital communication strategy. This approach is consistent with the theories of Nisar & Saleem (2024) and Alhadid & Qaddomi (2018), who assert that social media can enhance PR influence over public perception, especially in the context of building reputation and trust. PT Berau Coal consistently presents visual content in the form of photos, videos, infographics, and reels,

which are professionally packaged using the AIDA principles (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action) in narrative and caption development (PT Berau Coal, 2023).

The content types include operational activity reports, CSR programs, environmental sustainability initiatives, and corporate-community interactions. This pattern reflects an adaptive and accountable PR approach. As Dhanesh & Rahman (2021) suggest, compelling visual content can significantly strengthen engagement and organizational-public relationships. The use of Instagram features such as Highlight Stories, campaign hashtags (#MajuBersamaBerauCoal, #BetterEnergyBrighterFuture), and collaborations with external stakeholders indicates that PT Berau Coal is not merely engaging in one-way information dissemination, but is also fostering constructive public dialogue. This is in line with the circular communication model encompassing the phases of Share, Optimize, Manage, and Engage (Fredy, 2024), and supports Jumalik & Oktaviany's (2024) theory that social media plays a key role in fostering efficiency, responsiveness, and a positive corporate image.

The effectiveness of this strategy is evidenced by internal data showing a significant increase in Instagram followers and improved public perception of the company's governance, social responsibility, and environmental sustainability efforts. As highlighted in the PR Excellence Awards 2023 report, PT Berau Coal's social media strategy aims to shape public opinion through the dissemination of positive information, while also mitigating negative issues often associated with the mining industry (PT Berau Coal, 2023). These findings reinforce the studies by Teguh et al. (2022) and Rismawati (2018), which confirm that digital PR strategies via Instagram can strengthen corporate branding and improve reputation within the digital space.

However, the analysis also reveals a key challenge—CSR-related content tends to be repetitive and lacks innovation in visual presentation. This suggests the need for more creative strategies in packaging visual narratives to make them more appealing and capable of establishing emotional connections with the audience. Overall, Instagram has proven to be a strategic communication bridge between PT Berau Coal and the public, consistent with the notion that social media is an essential tool for building goodwill and corporate image in the digital era (Manikonda et al., 2014; Bajaj, 2023).

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the analysis, it can be concluded that Instagram has proven to be an effective medium in supporting the Public Relations activities of PT Berau Coal. The company utilizes this platform not merely as a channel for information dissemination but also as a strategic tool to build a positive public image through engaging visual content, communicative narratives, and consistent branding strategies. PT Berau Coal's digital communication strategy via Instagram reflects a modern PR approach grounded in two-way interaction, the application of effective visual communication principles, and the circular communication model (Share, Optimize, Manage, Engage). The success of this strategy is evidenced by the significant increase in followers and engagement, as well as the positive audience response to the company's programs. These findings reinforce existing theories that highlight the pivotal role of social media in shaping corporate reputation in the digital era.

In light of these findings, it is recommended that PT Berau Coal continue to innovate in its content packaging, particularly within its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives, to avoid monotony and foster emotional connections with audiences through more creative and narrative-driven visual approaches. Additionally, the company should consider diversifying its use of social media platforms, such as TikTok and YouTube, to reach broader and more diverse public segments, especially younger generations. Strategic collaborations with influencers, local media, or digital communities could further amplify message reach and public interaction. Regular evaluation of the effectiveness of digital communication strategies is also essential, leveraging key metrics such as engagement, reach, and public sentiment to assess impact. Finally, enhancing the digital literacy capacity of the Public Relations team should be prioritized to ensure adaptability to the evolving dynamics of communication technologies and emerging social media trends.

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