

Constructing Corporate Image on Instagram: The @rahmahtravel.id Communication Strategy

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Abstract

This research examines the paradigm shift of corporate communication to digital platforms, highlighting Instagram's strategic role in building trust within the religious travel industry. This study aims to analyze the communication strategy of the @rahmahtravel.id account, identify the visual and narrative elements shaping its corporate image, and explain Instagram's contribution to this image formation. Employing a qualitative approach with a constructivism paradigm, data gathered via upload observation, documentation, and literature review were analyzed using qualitative content analysis based on integrated visual-verbal discourse. The research results systematically categorize two main dimensions: (1) visual aesthetics, which represent collective piety and professional facilities; and (2) linguistic narratives, which utilize spiritual metaphors, trust lexicons, and warm imperative structures. Furthermore, Instagram successfully transforms monological communication patterns into participatory interactions (co-creation of meaning). Practically, this study provides a tactical framework for digital communication practitioners to optimize intersemiotic integration on social media, which is proven effective for mitigating industry-wide trust crises and sustainably projecting a credible digital corporate identity to secure long-term customer loyalty.

Keywords: digital corporate identity, religious branding, digital discourse, Instagram, religious travel

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INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of information and communication technology in the digital era has caused a fundamental paradigm shift in corporate communication practices. Previously, companies relied heavily on traditional media such as newspapers, television, radio, and magazines, which had limitations in interactivity, regional reach, and high production costs. The presence of social media offers new opportunities, enabling companies to reach audiences quickly while opening up spaces for intensive two-way interaction. Creative and innovative social media strategies allow companies to develop brand awareness, ultimately forming a strong corporate image in consumers' minds (Pamungkas et al., 2024).

Instagram, as a highly popular platform in Indonesia, plays a strategic role due to its prominent visual characteristics. The combination of text, images, and videos published simultaneously provides a more

persuasive and immersive communication experience. High-reputation international studies assert that Instagram's interactive features—like photos, videos, stories, reels, and live streaming—profoundly drive corporate brand management by facilitating brand value co-creation and establishing emotional proximity with the public (Tajvidi et al., 2021). From an applied linguistics perspective, this practice can be analyzed not only visually but also through its linguistic and discursive aspects. Diction, narrative structure, and rhetorical strategies in Instagram captions are crucial in constructing meanings that shape corporate identity.

This linguistic aspect becomes increasingly critical for companies operating in value-laden sectors, such as the Umrah and Hajj travel industry, which sells spiritual experiences and religious trust. The use of specific religious lexicons like "amanah" (trustworthy), "ikhlas" (sincere), and "berkah" (blessing) contains ideological meanings that reinforce Islamic values and service professionalism. Recent empirical studies on religious communication and halal tourism underscore that authentic visual narratives and spiritually resonant discourses on social media are vital for mitigating perceived risks, inspiring potential clients, and cultivating deep-rooted public trust (Ali et al., 2021; Feizollah et al., 2021). In this context, corporate branding transcends mere marketing; visual narratives and customer testimonials become acts of religious engagement that solidify corporate credibility.

Despite the extensive body of literature on social media corporate communication, the majority of prior studies have predominantly focused on the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG), fashion, or general tourism sectors (Sthapit et al., 2022). There remains a significant gap in the academic literature regarding how Islamic-based religious travel agencies employ multimodal digital discourse—integrating visual aesthetics with spiritual linguistics—to navigate industry-specific trust crises. This study offers novelty by bridging digital corporate communication and multimodal discourse analysis within the under-researched context of the religious travel industry, highlighting how corporate trust is discursively constructed and collectively negotiated on social media.

One active company utilizing Instagram for corporate communication is @rahmahtravel.id, a travel agency focusing on Umrah, Hajj, and halal tourism. The account leverages Instagram to promote travel packages while simultaneously displaying religious values, social care, and service quality. This research specifically aims to: (1) analyze the communication strategies used by @rahmahtravel.id on Instagram, (2) identify the visual and narrative elements shaping the corporate image, and (3) explain Instagram's contribution to forming this corporate image.

METHOD

Design and Paradigm

This research employs a qualitative approach designed to deeply interpret the visual and verbal content of corporate communications, avoiding mere quantification. Framed within a constructivism paradigm, this study assumes that social reality and corporate image are constructed through symbols, narratives, and interactions. Emphasizing digital discourse analysis, the study examines how religious diction, narrative structures, metaphors, and rhetorical strategies in captions interact with visual elements. To ensure methodological transparency, data selection was conducted using a purposive sampling technique, focusing specifically on uploads that generated the highest engagement rates (likes and comments) and contained a distinct integration of promotional and spiritual narratives. Through this selection process, a total of 45 specific Instagram posts were gathered and comprehensively analyzed to represent the company's digital discourse.

Data Sources and Object of Study

The primary data source is the official Instagram account @rahmahtravel.id, chosen for its active publication of promotional, religious, social, and interactive content. The object of study encompasses the digital communication strategy, specifically analyzing visual elements (photos, videos, reels, stories) and verbal elements (captions, hashtags, religious narratives, and chosen lexicons).

Data Collection and Timeframe

The research period spans from September 2025 to July 2026. Academically, this timeframe was selected because it captures the peak cyclical phases of the Islamic travel industry in Indonesia, encompassing the high-intensity Umrah season, the holy month of Ramadan, and the culmination of the Hajj departure season. This specific window guarantees a rich, dense, and highly varied corpus of digital discourse, allowing for a comprehensive observation of how corporate messaging dynamically adapts to different spiritual and commercial contexts. Data collection techniques included: (1) Observation: Systematically observing themes, communication styles, audience interactions, and linguistic patterns on the account. (2) Documentation:

Archiving visual and text uploads (photos, videos, captions, hashtags) and public interaction metrics (likes, comments, shares) to facilitate multimodal discourse analysis. (3) Literature Study: Reviewing previous research and theoretical frameworks concerning digital communication and applied linguistics.

Data Analysis and Validity

Data were processed using qualitative content analysis focused on visual-verbal discourse. The analysis steps commenced with data reduction, where uploads were systematically categorized into three main themes: spiritual motivation, social proof (e.g., pilgrim testimonials), and service professionalism. The analysis further utilized specific linguistic indicators, tracking the use of trust-based lexicons (e.g., *amanah*, *berkah*), spiritual metaphors, and warm imperative structures. This was followed by data presentation (grouping by visual/verbal dimensions) and conclusion drawing (interpreting narrative meanings and linking them to corporate communication theories).

Data validity was rigorously ensured through both source triangulation and theory triangulation. Source triangulation was applied by cross-verifying information across multiple digital artifacts (comparing photos, videos, captions, and user comments), while theory triangulation involved examining the findings through the combined lenses of multimodal discourse analysis and corporate communication theories. Finally, this study acknowledges certain methodological limitations, primarily its exclusive focus on a single platform (Instagram) and its reliance on public-facing digital texts without conducting in-depth interviews with the travel agency's management. These limitations serve as an avenue for future studies, which could incorporate cross-platform analyses or internal organizational interviews to further enrich the literature on digital corporate communication.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Integration of Visual Strategy and Linguistic Narrative

The communication strategy implemented by @rahmahtravel.id focuses heavily on combining Instagram's interactive features with the power of storytelling to build emotional proximity. The platform serves not merely as a digital brochure but as a structured narrative space. Success is determined by visual content (photos/videos) triggering emotional engagement, which is then contextually framed by the linguistic narrative in the captions.

Viewed through the lens of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), this synergy creates an intersemiotic relationship where verbal texts do not just reinforce spiritual messages, but actively execute an ideological maneuver. For example, documentation of pilgrim departures is accompanied by narratives like "Escorting the guests of Allah to the Baitullah". Using the diction "guests of Allah" is a discursive practice that strategically shifts the consumer's position from a mere business client to a spiritual subject facilitated by a trustworthy agent. This linguistic reframing effectively masks the commercial nature of the transaction behind a sacred duty, providing crucial social proof while simultaneously legitimizing the company's authority in the religious travel sector. Furthermore, the account routinely uploads spiritual motivation and prayer quotes using clean and elegant typography. By integrating religious lexicons such as "amanah" (trustworthy), "ikhlas" (sincere), and "berkah" (blessing), the company discursively positions itself not just as a service provider, but as an indispensable spiritual companion.

Visual and Narrative Elements in Shaping Corporate Image

The analysis of uploads between September 2025 and March 2026 revealed specific elements consistently forming the corporate image:

Visual Elements (Non-Verbal): The representation of collective piety is depicted through photos of pilgrims praying or weeping before the Kaaba. For instance, a highly engaged Instagram Reel uploaded in December 2025 showcased a slow-motion, close-up shot of a pilgrim weeping during *Tawaf*, seamlessly transitioning to high-definition footage of a premium 5-star hotel lobby. This specific visual juxtaposition effectively transmits emotional intensity while concurrently showcasing aesthetic professionalism and operational smoothness.

Narrative Elements (Verbal): Strategic hashtags like #UmrahBarengRahmah, #PerjalananSuci, and #BersamaDalamDoa are employed to expand algorithmic reach and categorize discourse. Captions frequently feature spiritual metaphors ("holy journey towards closeness to Allah") and imperative structures ("Come realize your holy dream with Rahmah Travel"). The informal pronoun "Yuk" (Come) dismantles traditional corporate hierarchy, fostering a warm, egalitarian tone. Moreover, a lexicon of trust highlighting "best service"

and "amanah" serves as a calculated preventive response to the collective public trauma regarding past travel agency frauds.

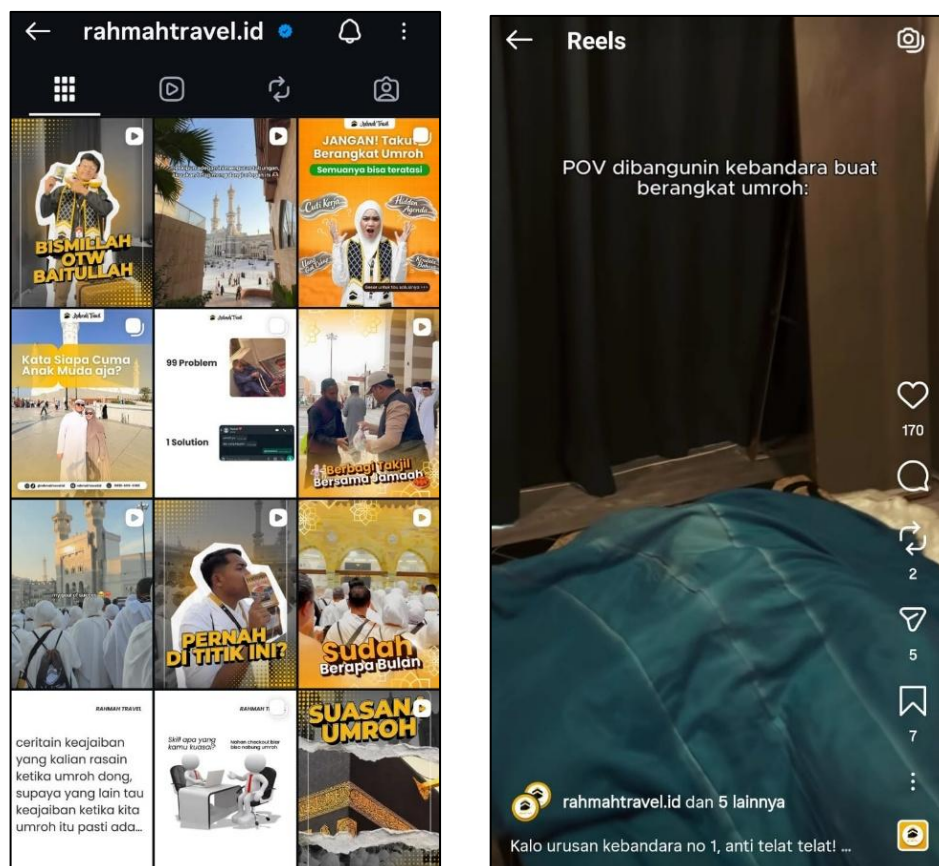
The Contribution of Instagram to Corporate Image

Instagram profoundly transforms corporate communication from a monological format to a dialogic and participative one. Through social media, the company and its audience become co-creators of meaning. Comments, direct messages, and polite, rapid responses from the administrators containing reciprocal prayers dictate how the corporate image is collectively reproduced. The Highlight Stories feature, for instance, serves as a permanent discursive arena showcasing testimonials, legalities, and educational content.

This dynamic significantly enriches the theoretical concept of *co-creation of meaning* in digital environments. While previous research by Armayani et al. (2021) posited that Instagram's interactive features primarily function to drive transactional sales through emotional proximity, the current research aligns with and extends the findings of Tajvidi et al. (2021). Tajvidi et al. emphasized that brand value in social commerce is co-created through strong social ties and interactions. In the specific context of the religious travel industry, this study demonstrates that *co-creation* transcends mere social engagement; it manifests as a collective spiritual validation. When audiences leave comments such as "Amen" or share their own spiritual desires, and the company responds empathetically, the corporate image of being "amanah" is no longer a unilateral corporate claim, but a democratically validated reality.

Theoretically, this research makes a distinct contribution to digital corporate communication studies by demonstrating that the shift from monological to participatory communication redefines corporate branding. Social media is no longer just a promotional channel, but a negotiated discursive arena where corporate credibility is continuously contested and constructed by both the brand and its community. By consistently exposing audiences to authentic spiritual narratives and facilitating mutual interactions, the company successfully builds parasocial bonds that crystallize into firm trust and long-term customer loyalty.

Figure 1. Post related to the Departure of Umrah Pilgrims



CONCLUSION

The communication strategy of @rahmahtravel.id on Instagram operates through a harmonious synergy between visual aesthetics and the power of linguistic storytelling. Rather than utilizing hard-sell promotions, the company constructs a spiritual discourse that positions it as a reliable facilitator of religious journeys. This corporate image is supported by visuals of collective piety and premium facilities, tightly bound by verbal elements such as spiritual metaphors, warm imperative structures, lexicons of trust, and consistent hashtags. Instagram fundamentally serves as a discursive arena that transforms marketing into participative interaction; through features like comments, audiences engage in the co-creation of meaning, collectively safeguarding the company's reputation against trust crises common in the religious travel industry. To further enhance transparency and authenticity, it is recommended that the company optimize the use of Live Streaming features during Umrah rituals or virtual tours in the Holy Land. Increasing User-Generated Content (UGC) directly from the pilgrims' perspectives can also elevate the authenticity of the corporate narrative. For future academic research, utilizing qualitative methodologies like Netnography to explore follower communities, or conducting cross-platform comparative studies (e.g., comparing Instagram with TikTok), will significantly enrich the literature on digital corporate communication.

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