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Information Needs on TikTok: Between Followers and Viewers

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Abstract

The development of communication technology is growing rapidly along with the breadth of information and knowledge needs of the global community. The presence of the internet has brought big changes to society from various aspects of life, one of the concrete proofs is the birth of social media. Many mass media companies use social media as a medium for disseminating information. TikTok is one of the social media used to practice online journalism. One media company that uses the Tik Tok application as a platform to convey news is Kompas with the username @kompastvnews. Kompas has a special division in charge of online media, namely the digital division. This study uses message packaging theory to see how @kompastvnews actively packages information to be conveyed to the audience and wants to see the factors of the unbalanced number of viewers, likes, comments, and shares on videos uploaded on TikTok @kompastvnews. This research is qualitative with descriptive method. The results of the study show that Kompas actively takes the essence of the news that is distributed, prioritizes trending topics, can move the emotions of the audience so that the audience can get as much information as possible in the shortest possible time.

Keywords: Social Media, TikTok, Message Packaging, Audience

1. Introduction

The development of communication technology is growing rapidly along with the breadth of information and knowledge needs of the global community. The presence of the internet has brought major changes to society from various aspects of life. Social relations, political behavior, business models, and journalism practices today are much different compared to the early 2000s. One of the real evidence is the birth of online media. Online media provides information that is fast and easy to access anywhere and anytime as long as we have an internet network. Along with the rapid development of online media without control, online journalism is often under scrutiny because it is considered not to prioritize objectivity (accuracy, fairness, completeness and impartiality) only to pursue instantaneousness. This is the problem, on the one hand online media allows the dissemination of information much faster than conventional media, but on the other hand online media often overrides the basic principles of journalism (Juditha, 2013). Mike Ward (Romli, 2012, 15) mentions several characteristics of online

journalism that distinguish it from conventional journalism, namely immediacy (freshness or speed of delivery of information; Multiple Pagination (hundreds of pages related to each other); Multimedia (presenting a combination of images, text, audio, video). and graphics, as well); Archiving (archived, can be grouped by category/rubric or keywords, also stored for a long time and can be accessed at any time); Relationship with Reader (you can interact with readers through the comments column).

According to the results of a survey conducted by the Asosiasi Penyelenggara Jasa Internet Indonesia (ADJII) in 2022, out of a total of 272.68 million Indonesians, 210.02 million or 77.2% of the total population are connected to the internet. Of that number, 191.4 million Indonesians actively use social media. This very large number certainly results in changes in habits or culture in society in various fields including in the process of fulfilling information. One of the most popular social media to date is TikTok. In Indonesia alone, in April 2022 there were around 99.1 million TikTok users. This makes Indonesia the second largest TikTok user worldwide. TikTok is not a new social media in Indonesia, since 2018 this application has been widely known by the public.

TikTok is an application that comes from China. This TikTok application is included under the auspices of Bytedance. However, this application was blocked by the Ministry of Communication and Informatics because it was considered to produce negative content that could have a negative impact, especially for children. However, along with the development of technology, TikTok also developed by launching new features such as TikTok, Music, and others. With these developments, the mass media is also slowly turning to TikTok. @kompastvnews is one of the media that uses TikTok as a platform to disseminate information to the public.

The TikTok platform is still relatively new in the world of journalism, but from here we can see that online journalism now has many forms. If in the past online journalism was only limited to news portals or websites containing news text, now we can access news in video form through various social media platforms such as TikTok. This is also a challenge for journalists and the media how to package news into information that is of interest to all groups. The social media that emerged recently has succeeded in changing the face of journalism in Indonesia, especially regarding the process of gathering news, the process of making news, and the process of spreading news.

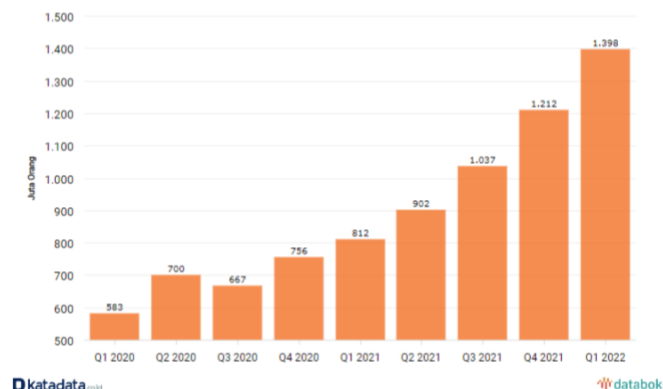


Figure 1: TikTok global monthly active users (1st quarter 2020- 1st quarter 2022)

Source: TikTok global monthly active users katadata

Popular culture is a culture that is liked by many people and is not tied to a particular social class, popular culture has a greater impact in today's digital era, because ease of access to information has a significant impact on popular culture in a country (Sorrels, 2015). The development of popular culture in Indonesia today cannot be separated from the role of the millennial generation. We cannot deny that millennials are currently very active and intense with the latest technology such as TikTok. The Tik Tok application is a social media that provides a place or space for its users to be free to be creative and express. Knowledge about the proper use of social media is very important to help make the use of the internet and technology more optimal and useful (Rahardaya & Irwansyah, 2021). The number of followers on social media TikTok is a good indicator of market potential or marketing opportunities.

Therefore, to strengthen the relationship with the audience, increasing the number of audience is important. In the message production process it can be said that individuals make interpretations based on their social rules. Individuals in social situations are primarily driven by a desire to understand what is going on and apply rules to know things (O'Keefe, 2002, 115). Message is a symbol sent by the sender (Philip Kotler dan Kevin Lane Keller, 2012). In addition, according to Effendy (2006, 18), the message is a meaningful set of signs conveyed by the communicator to the communicant. A message packaging strategy is needed so that the message to be conveyed can be well received by the audience. According to Kotler (1997, 121), there are three absolute components that need to be considered in packaging a message to be conveyed, namely:

1. Message content

In determining the content of a message, the communicator needs to look for attractions, ideas, themes, or unique suggestions that can attract the attention of the audience. Attraction is divided into three, namely: rational appeal, emotional appeal and moral appeal. Rational appeals try to increase one's interest so that the audience has knowledge of the content being viewed. Emotional appeal tries to evoke the emotions of the audience, whether it's positive emotions or negative emotions that will trigger the audience to periodically view the content uploaded by the communicator.

2. Message structure

There are three problems in the message packaging structure process. The first is whether the contents of the media content will draw a conclusion or leave it to the viewers. Second, the strongest point of view is presented first or last by the marketer. The third is whether the communicator or in this case the marketer will provide a one-sided argument about the strength of the product or the point of view from both parties, such as praising the advantages of the product while blaspheming its shortcomings.

3. Format the message

The message format is where a media develops a strong format in its advertisement, such as being strengthened in the title, illustrations, colors used, body language, and words that can make the audience interested in the uploaded content.

News content is a type of content that is popular on various social media platforms. Currently, many media companies are utilizing social media TikTok as a medium for online journalism. TikTok popularizes short videos and develops a recommendation algorithm that makes it one of the strongest competitors in the video app competition in the world. In the TikTok application, there is a For Your Page page that immediately appears when you open the TikTok application. In contrast to Instagram, which goes directly to following feeds. This makes TikTok interesting because one video can have more or less views than the number of followers.

One media company that uses the Tik Tok application as a platform to deliver news is Kompas with the username @kompastvnews. Kompas has a special division in charge of online media, namely the digital division. It is this digital division that makes short videos which are then converted to various social media platforms including TikTok. This is a form of media convergence by utilizing existing technological advances. Content uploaded by Kompas on TikTok contains news of a short duration. Various issues are raised as news content on @kompastvnews on TikTok, such as political, economic, criminal, environmental issues and many more. TikTok is not only used as an entertainment medium but is also used as a tool for promotion and as a medium for presenting information like what Kompas did. The TikTok platform is still relatively new in the world of journalism, but from here we can see that online journalism now has many forms. If in the past online journalism was only limited to news portals or websites containing news text, now we can access news in video form through various social media platforms such as TikTok. This is also a challenge for journalists and the media how to package news into information that is of interest to all groups. This study aims to find out how Kompas media packs the information needed by the audience in the shortest possible duration but the information can be conveyed properly. This study uses message packaging theory, in which this message packaging theory is one of the realms of communication theory. Delivery of messages carried out through communication media is packaged using ideas and values to be communicated to audiences (Suyati, 2014, 86) . Message packaging is made to pay attention to the contents of the message and the media used. Messages packed with language and media that can meet the needs of the audience (Cangara, 2011, 126). in other words, the media needs to pay attention to how the attention of the audience and from there can be used as a message content. Communication elements such as sources, media, messages, recipients, feedback, and effects are needed in managing TikTok content as an information medium because these

communication elements are very useful when delivering content, the aim is to create effective communication (Valiant, 2016).

2. Method

The research method that will be used in this study is a qualitative method with a descriptive approach. In this study, researchers made observations on TikTok content uploaded by the @kompastvnews account. Descriptive qualitative approach aims to be able to explain in detail about the research object under study. In terms of design, the qualitative method is more complex, flexible, detailed and always evolving. This qualitative research method was also carried out to gain an understanding of the meaning contained in the object under study (Shania & Glorya Agustiningasih, n.d.). Primary data sources are data sources that directly provide data to data collectors, while secondary data sources are data sources that do not directly provide data to data collectors but through third parties such as other people or documents (Sugiyono, 2017, 255). The types of data used are primary data and secondary data. In qualitative research, there are several data collection techniques (Sugiyono, 2017, 308), data collection techniques are the very first steps in research, because the main purpose of research is to obtain data. Data collection can be done in various sources, and in various ways. In this study, researchers used two data collection techniques, including:

1. Online observation

Observation or commonly known as observation is a form of data collection. According to Sugiyono (2017, 309), scientists can only work based on data, which are facts about the world obtained through observation. The type of observation used in this study is online observation. The procedure for conducting a data search via the internet allows the writer to utilize information about data online (Bungin, 2011). Observations in this study were carried out online by taking several samples of news uploads on the @kompastvnews TikTok account.

2. Literature study

Literature studies are related to theoretical studies related to values, culture, and norms that develop in the social situations studied (Sugiyono, 2016, 239). Literature study is an important part of a research. The researcher collects data obtained from data that is relevant to the problem under study using literature such as journals, books, previous research and articles, this aims to be able to support the main data from this research.

3. Results

In the process of marketing communications, there are several important things that need to be considered. Like how to convey the message to the audience. The type of message to be conveyed must be adjusted to marketing objectives. The message must contain information that will be conveyed by the communicator in a form adapted to the packaging of an attractive message in order to achieve the objectives of the promotion or marketing itself.

There are several aspects to determining the content of the message, including:

1. Rational appeal

Rational appeal is a logical message content as a compass conveys things that are objective, such as not bringing down one party and lifting up another party that is rational or logical. In designing the contents of the message, the attractiveness of the audience is something that needs to be considered. Rational appeal is needed to be able to provide knowledge to the audience regarding the content or message to be conveyed. If the information conveyed is well received by the audience, the audience can recognize Kompas media as a good and balanced medium.

2. Emotional appeal

Emotional appeal here tries to evoke the audience's emotions, both positive emotions and negative emotions. In this case, Kompas has succeeded in evoking the emotions of the audience with the news it has uploaded. Kompas packs its news in such a way that makes the audience get the emotions they want.

3. Moral appeal

Morah's appeal is shown to encourage the audience to support a social action such as cleaning the environment, better inter-ethnic relations, equal rights for women, and so on.

Message structure, there are three important aspects that really need to be considered when the communicator composes a message structure, such as conclusions, strongest opinions, and arguments. The conclusion designed by the compass is that they let the audience as the recipient of the message form their own conclusions. The

strongest opinion at the beginning of the video is carried out with the aim of giving the audience an overview of the contents of the video presented. This strongest opinion can come from internal and external parties, this depends on the need for content whose purpose is in terms of e-marketing activities packaged in video form. If the uploaded video is non-endorsement, then the strongest opinion made by Kompas comes from the communicator who packs the message itself. Furthermore, the argumentation is that in marketing communications, most communicators play a role in prioritizing the advantages of their products, in this case uploaded content, this aims to create a positive image for the company. In message marketing, Kompas presents arguments not only from one side, originating from the communicator himself as the maker of the message, but from two sides, namely as a communicator and also as a communicant. This aims to get an image of no partiality in the Kompas media.

In the process of designing a message, the message format is closely related to how a communicator conveys the message he wants to convey symbolically. This is supported by prioritizing the advantages, uniqueness, and characteristics of each uploaded video.

1. Title

The video thumbnail uploaded by the TikTok @kompastvnews account displays brief information about the contents of the video being displayed. This aims to make it easier for the audience to choose what information they want to see and need. Thumbnails made by the TikTok account @kompastvnews are made with the same visuals so that the video layout looks neat

2. Narration

Kompas has a special message format, namely the delivery of messages that are reported within the initial three seconds. This is used to be able to attract the audience's attention to the contents of the uploaded content, this is done so that the audience can watch the video until the end and pay attention to each message that will be conveyed through the video. Apart from having a special message format, Kompas also has a certain format in which it includes captions for each uploaded video. The caption used must match the content of the video and Kompas also always uses a hashtag in each video. This is used so that the audience can search for the video content through hashtag searches.

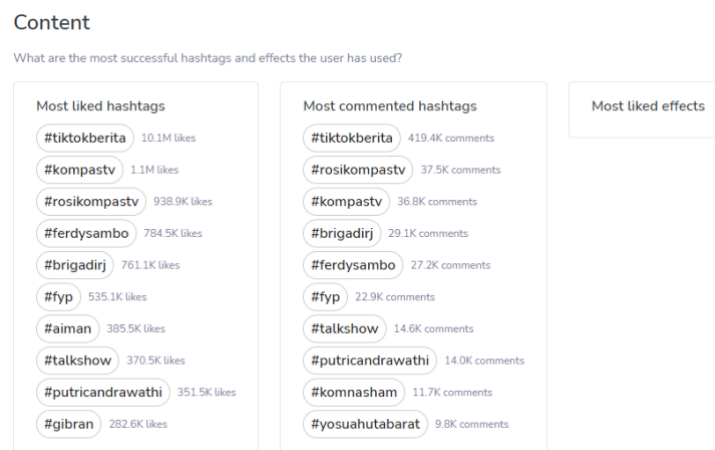


Figure 2: List of hashtags used by @kompastvnews

Source: <https://exolyt.com/user/tiktok/kompastvnews>

Hashtags are metadata tags that start with the hast symbol, #. Hashtags are often used in micro-blogging and photo services, such as many uploaded on Twitter, Instagram and other social media as a form of marker specifically made by the user according to the subject or theme of the post (Izzati et al., 2016). In the process of delivering the message, the source of the message conveyed to the audience aims to be able to provide information to the public and also to build audience awareness about the information conveyed. The source of messages on the TikTok @Kompastvnews account is also innovative, educative and there are also several entertaining posts. One of the strategies needed so that video content can enter TikTok users' fyp is by uploading videos during peak hours (Siregar, 2022).

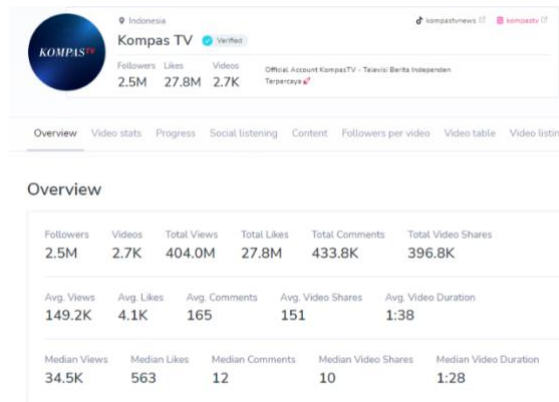


Figure 3: Overview of the TikTok account @kompastvnews

Source: <https://exolyt.com/user/tiktok/kompastvnews>

If reviewed based on the image analysis above, followers on the TikTok account @kompastvnews as of September 29 2022 have reached 2.5 million followers. With that many total followers, Kompas has uploaded 2.7 thousand videos with a total number of likes on all videos reaching 27.8 million, 433.8 thousand comments, and a total of 369.8 thousand shares. But it is very unfortunate, with that many followers, the number of likes, shares and viewers for each video is classified as not in accordance with the number of existing followers.

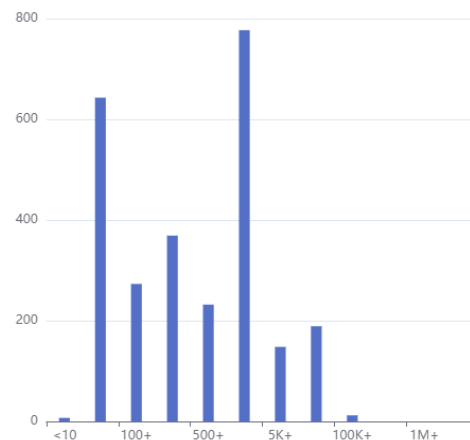


Figure 4: Distribution of video likes in TikTok account @kompastvnews

Source: <https://exolyt.com/user/tiktok/kompastvnews>

From the picture above it can be seen that there is an instability in the number of likes on each post uploaded by Kompas on its TikTok account. There are many factors that can cause a TikTok video not to be watched by many people, such as, the video posted is less attractive, not using trending hashtags and in accordance with the topics discussed in the video, apart from that, the use of music is also very influential in determining the number of people who watch the video. From the results of the analysis carried out, the content uploaded by Kompas on the TikTok @Kompastvnews account actively takes the essence of the news being disseminated, puts forward trending topics, can move the emotions of the audience so that the audience can get as much information as possible in the shortest possible time. This can be seen from the large number of followers and viewers in each video. Even though there are still videos that don't get audience attention, in general Kompas has succeeded in compiling the message to be conveyed and interesting to the audience.

4. Discussion

To be able to achieve a goal, an appropriate strategy is needed in packaging content on social media, the TikTok @kompastvnews account determines topics that will later be made into visual content. The content uploaded by Kompas on TikTok contains news in a format like on TV but in a short duration. Various issues are raised as news content on TikTok @kompastvnews, such as political, economic, criminal, environmental issues and many more. Basically, the format of social media content and conventional media, such as television, has quite a significant difference. On social media, uploaded content is more interesting, not monotonous, and of course of short duration. This is different from TV, the news or content broadcast on TV is more formal in nature and with a longer video duration. The existence of Kompas presents news that is packaged in video form to the point so that the audience gets all the information in a short time. Packaging news on online media, especially TikTok, which does not only use text but uses audio and video to make the news presented look more attractive. Even though not all of them are worthy of being made into news, here Kompas first verifies the data so that they can ensure that the information they are spreading is based on facts and contains news values. This can be seen from the post on the TikTok @kompastvnews account.

The preparation of the message is managed in such a way that the approach is persuasive which can be followed without any element of coercion which will result in the submission of information to paying audiences who follow the intent and purpose of the post (Mukaromah, 2022). The renewal of an issue is something that can affect the number of viewers, likes, comments, and shares in every uploaded video. When a media uploads news that is trending, the video will appeal to the audience and make many people comment, like, and share the video. On TikTok, the more people who watch and share uploaded videos, the more these videos will appear on TikTok users' fyp, this causes an increase in viewers for each video. In a previous study conducted by Dana Rizki Dwi Prastiwi with the title "content division strategy in packaging social media content on the Kompas.com Instagram account" explained that the compass continues to follow the trend of its users (Dana Rizki Dwi Prastiwi, n.d.). This is in line with the results of the researcher's analysis of the social media account TikTok @kompastvnews. Currently, Kompas not only uploads news videos but also uploads educational videos, tips and tricks, food recommendations, and many more. This is a form of content development designed by Kompas. With the development of the content created, it looks interesting which makes the audience regularly watch videos uploaded by Kompas. With the increase that has occurred, of course this can be said to be a form of progress obtained by the Kompas.

When a video is fyp, there are several factors why with a high number of viewers, the number of likes, comments, and shares is not too many. The thing that causes them to just watch without liking and sharing is because the videos uploaded by Kompas do not attract the attention of the audience. There are several videos that are fyp and have a large number of likes, comments, and shares. After being examined, the video that received quite a lot of attention from the audience is a video that raises issues that are currently trending, for example the issue of the murder committed by Ferdi Sambo. Light coverage with social media formats is more attractive to the audience. This is because social media users prefer light news. The news that is reported on social media must be different from the news that is reported on TV, because social media is entertainment in nature. The main purpose of the audience opening the tiktok application is for entertainment, if cyber media uploads a video in a formal format, then the video will be considered monotonous.

Based on the findings of a study conducted by researchers on the TikTok account @kompastvnews regarding how the message packaging process works. In the process of designing a message, things that need to be considered are the content of the message to be conveyed, how the message is structured, how the message format can be said symbolically and the source of the message. If a message design has been made, then the next step is to choose the desired communication channel. Arranging an appropriate communication element is an important step in an effort to achieve the goal of effective communication. The contents of the contents uploaded by Kompas on the TikTok @kompastvnews account are very varied, starting from food recommendations, tips and tricks, and others. But of course it remains in one outline, namely news content. Various kinds of content are uploaded by prioritizing aspects of structured message packaging, namely Kompas takes the essence of the news that is disseminated. Apart

from that, Kompas also uses interesting and informative news titles, so that when viewers glance at the uploaded news content, they are immediately interested in continuing the video until the video is finished.

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