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## MEDIA-DRIVEN PROMOTION STRATEGIES OF ISLAMIC PRODUCTS: A CASE STUDY OF THE MAJLIS AGAMA ISLAM NEGERI SEMBILAN (MAINS)

### *Strategi Promosi Produk Islam Berasaskan Media: Kajian Kes Majlis Agama Islam Negeri Sembilan (MAINS)*

Sofia Hayati Yusoff<sup>a</sup>, Rosidayu Sabran<sup>b</sup>, Rosninawati Hussin<sup>c</sup>, Safiyyah Ahmad Sabri<sup>d</sup>, Fauziah Hassan<sup>e</sup>, Suria Hani A Rahman<sup>f</sup> & Nik Suhaida Nik Abdul Majid<sup>g</sup>

<sup>abcdefg</sup> Faculty of Leadership & Management, Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia, Bandar Baru Nilai, 71800 Nilai, Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia.

Corresponding Author: [sofia@usim.edu.my](mailto:sofia@usim.edu.my)

### Abstract

Promoting products via media platforms has emerged as a formidable strategy for reaching target audiences and enhancing awareness, interest, and sales for organizations. The utilization of media has become a contemporary trend among local organizations due to its perceived advantages in discerning the desires of target demographics, crafting compelling messages or advertisements, and offering diverse media options. The State Religious Islamic Council of Negeri Sembilan in Malaysia known as Majlis Agama Islam Negeri Sembilan (MAINS) is no exception in leveraging media platforms to promote various products such as zakat, waqf, wealth management, counseling, and guidance services, among others. Consequently, to ascertain the efficacy of media-driven promotional methods, a content analysis was conducted on the media used by MAINS to promote its products. The media channels employed are Facebook, TikTok, Instagram, YouTube, MAINS website, television, and radio. The study's findings reveal that MAINS is markedly more active in uploading broadcasts and boasts significantly higher follower counts on Facebook than other media platforms. In addition, the researchers have identified some distinctive themes as the focal 'content' of broadcasts uploaded on social media belong to MAINS such as zakat, waqf, asnaf programs, and several others. In conclusion, this research is believed to be a highlight for MAINS to improve the online promotion of their products.

**Keywords:** MAINS, da'wah, online media, Islamic products, media platform.

### Abstrak

Mempromosikan produk melalui platform media telah muncul sebagai strategi yang berkesan dalam mencapai khalayak sasaran serta meningkatkan kesedaran, minat, dan jualan bagi sesebuah organisasi. Penggunaan media telah menjadi trend semasa dalam kalangan organisasi tempatan kerana kelebihannya dalam memahami kehendak demografi sasaran, merangka mesej atau iklan yang menarik, serta menawarkan pelbagai pilihan media. Majlis Agama Islam Negeri Sembilan

(MAINS) tidak terkecuali dalam memanfaatkan platform media bagi mempromosikan pelbagai produk seperti zakat, wakaf, pengurusan harta, perkhidmatan kaunseling, dan bimbingan, serta lain-lain. Oleh itu, bagi menilai keberkesanan kaedah promosi berasaskan media, satu analisis kandungan telah dijalankan terhadap media yang digunakan oleh MAINS dalam usaha mempromosikan produknya. Saluran media yang digunakan oleh MAINS termasuk Facebook, TikTok, Instagram, YouTube, laman sesawang rasmi MAINS, televisyen, dan radio. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa MAINS lebih aktif dalam memuat naik siaran dan mempunyai jumlah pengikut yang jauh lebih tinggi di Facebook berbanding platform media lain. Selain itu, penyelidik telah mengenal pasti beberapa tema utama yang menjadi fokus kandungan siaran di media sosial MAINS, seperti zakat, wakaf, program asnaf, dan beberapa lagi. Kesimpulannya, kajian ini diharapkan dapat menjadi rujukan bagi MAINS dalam meningkatkan strategi promosi dalam talian bagi produk mereka.

**Kata kunci:** MAINS, dakwah, media dalam talian, produk Islam, platform media.

## INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary digital era, media platforms have become indispensable tools for organizations aiming to effectively reach their target audiences. This trend is particularly evident in the promotion of Islamic products and services, where leveraging media channels not only enhances awareness but also fosters engagement and trust within the community (Sofia Hayati et al., 2018). The Majlis Agama Islam Negeri Sembilan (MAINS), the State Islamic Religious Council of Negeri Sembilan in Malaysia, exemplifies this approach by utilizing various media platforms to promote its offerings, including zakat (almsgiving), waqf (endowment), wealth management, counseling, and guidance services. By adopting media-driven promotion strategies, MAINS aims to fulfill its mission of serving the Muslim community more effectively and efficiently.

The integration of media in promoting Islamic products is not merely a contemporary trend but a strategic necessity. Studies have highlighted the significant impact of media representation on consumer behavior, especially among modern Muslim audiences. For instance, research indicates that the portrayal of Islamic values in media content can influence the purchasing decisions of Muslim consumers as they seek products and services that align with their religious beliefs and cultural values (Rosninawati et al., 2015). In the context of MAINS, the strategic use of media platforms serves multiple purposes: it educates the public about the importance and benefits of Islamic financial obligations like zakat and waqf, provides transparent and accessible information about available services, and fosters a sense of community and trust between the institution and its stakeholders. By analyzing the content and engagement metrics across different media channels, this study aims to assess the effectiveness of MAINS's media-driven promotion strategies and provide insights into best practices for similar organizations aiming to enhance their outreach and impact through media utilization.

Promoting products via media platforms has become a prominent strategy for reaching target audiences and enhancing awareness, interest, and sales for organizations. The utilization of media has gained popularity among local organizations due to its ability to discern the preferences of target demographics, craft compelling messages or advertisements, and provide diverse media options (Smith & Taylor, 2022; Jones, 2021). This paper aims to investigate the strategies employed by the Majlis Agama Islam Negeri Sembilan (MAINS) in leveraging social media platforms to promote its initiatives and products, focusing on the effectiveness of these approaches in reaching target audiences.

MAINS advises His Royal Highness the Yang di-Pertuan Besar of Negeri Sembilan, who serves as the head of Islamic affairs in the state (Ahmad et al., 2020). Functioning as the highest

governing body overseeing Islamic matters within the region, MAINS aligns its efforts with its vision of acting as a catalyst for the comprehensiveness of Islam and fostering a high-quality Muslim community. By prioritizing the well-being and development of the ummah, MAINS plays a pivotal role in safeguarding and elevating Islamic principles. Among the services and initiatives provided by MAINS are the management of *zakat*, including its collection, distribution, and assistance programs for targeted groups (Hassan et al., 2019). MAINS also oversees the administration of *waqf* (endowments) and Islamic assets, alongside counseling services and human development programs (Ismail, 2021). Additionally, the organization addresses educational matters concerning *muallaf* (new converts to Islam), ensuring a comprehensive approach to Islamic community development (Yusof & Abdullah, 2023).

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Social Media and Promotion*

Social media is a technological platform utilised by contemporary society. This channel functions as a crucial instrument for daily communication, facilitating both personal and professional contacts (Mohd Hamizi, 2023). Social media platforms include Facebook, Instagram, X, YouTube, TikTok and more. In this technological era, social media is employed by many demographics in Malaysia. Commencing with the monarchy, His Majesty and the royal family. Research conducted by Abu Hasan and Sukimi (2023) indicates that social media serves as a mass medium to illustrate the notion that ‘The Monarch and The Populace are Interconnected’, as the presence of Her Majesty Tunku Azizah, the King Queen, encourages the nobility to engage with the public via social media, particularly during the reign of His Majesty, Al-Sultan Abdullah.

Government entities, including the Prime Minister, Chief Minister, prominent politicians, governmental institutions, and non-governmental organizations, also utilize social media (Cheung et al., 2021). The government's engagement in social media facilitates access to current news updates. The authorities can more swiftly ascertain the issues or challenges confronting the populace. In addition, politicians can acquire the attention and support of the community (Musammat, 2023). The study conducted by Khalid et al. (2019) found that the use of social media Instagram is able to draw the interest of individuals by sharing photographs and videos posted by politicians. However, politicians are becoming highly cognizant of the relevance and requirements of today's society, which is becoming increasingly present on social media.

Social media facilitates connections with friends and family. Certain individuals utilize social media to create networks for employment prospects, connect with worldwide users, express their thoughts, feelings, opinions, and emotions, and participate in virtual social activities (Cheung et al., 2021). Moreover, the emergence of new professions, such as influencers which endorse and display diverse products on social media platforms, further amplifies the use of social media throughout the community, particularly among entrepreneurs in Malaysia. Influencer marketing has emerged as a preferred strategy among online advertising professionals and business entrepreneurs (Serojai, 2023). This indicates that the evolution of social media is advancing rapidly and is utilised by communities as a cost-effective means of communication (Effendi et al., 2023).

Social media serves as a platform for the expedited and extensive promotion of products. It's boost community awareness regarding the presence of a product or service. Elements like trust, communication, enjoyment, and digital involvement are key factors that impact brand loyalty in social media marketing endeavors (Kumaradeepan et al., 2023). Prioritizing importance to the quality of content and engaging with customers on social media in order to build stronger connections and encourage loyalty to the products (Mufadhol et al., 2024).

The usage of social media is on the rise. Users are increasingly turning to social media as a significant platform for virtual discussions and communication. In 2024, it was projected that around 5.17 billion people globally will be utilizing social media, as per data. It is anticipated that



da'wah can reach a broader and more diverse audience without geographical limitations. Ultimately, an optimal approach to da'wah in the contemporary era necessitates mastering social media as a primary tool for disseminating religious messages, especially in engaging the millennial generation, which is the key focus in this digital age.

Furthermore, Rahmadhani et al. (2024) discuss the role of social media platforms, particularly TikTok, in propagating Islamic da'wah in the digital era. Their study underscores how technological transformation has reshaped the communication methods used in da'wah, enabling broader and more interactive access. Millennials are recognized as agents of change who can leverage social media to disseminate da'wah messages in a simple yet inclusive manner.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A content analysis was conducted on the social media used by MAINS to promote its products. The social media platforms employed are Facebook, TikTok, Instagram, YouTube, and the MAINS website. These Web 2.0 applications allow users to stay in touch through popular social networking sites. For example, Twitter, known as X, was founded in 2006 and is the fastest-growing site because it offers a micro-blogging service that allows users to post or tweet their updates (Zahia, 2020; Azudin et al., 2023).

The period of the data collection for this study was between 20 December 2023 and 20 January 2024. Content analysis is a qualitative research method that systematically examines communication materials, such as social media posts and website content, to identify patterns, themes, and trends (Krippendorff, 2018; Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). By focusing on the textual, visual, and multimedia content shared by MAINS, this method facilitates an in-depth understanding of how the organization engages with its target audience and communicates its messages. The analysis involved coding and categorizing data to uncover recurring themes, strategies, and the overall effectiveness of the media platforms utilized. This approach ensures a comprehensive evaluation of MAINS' media strategies and their alignment with its organizational goals.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of the content analysis reveal significant engagement on Facebook with a total of 117 postings distributed across ten key themes, as presented in Table 1. The theme of **Zakat** was the most frequently addressed, accounting for 33 postings, followed by **Asnaf** with 22 postings, and **News about MAINS** and **Waqf**, each with 15 postings. Other notable themes included **Other Issues/Events Related to MAINS** (13 postings), **Infraq** (6 postings), and two categories of Tazkirah: **Quran & Hadith** (6 postings) and **Prayers (Dua)** (3 postings). Entrepreneurship programs were the least covered theme, with 4 postings. These data demonstrate Facebook's role as a vital platform for disseminating religious, educational, and programmatic content by MAINS, with a focus on financial and social welfare topics like Zakat and Asnaf.

**Table 1: Facebook Findings**

No	Themes	No of Posts
1	Zakat	33
2	Asnaf	22
3	News about MAINS	15
4	Waqf	15
5	Other Issues/Events Related to MAINS	13
6	Infraq	6
7	Tazkirah on Quran & Hadith	6
8	Entrepreneurship Programs	4
9	Tazkirah on Prayers (Dua)	3
10	TOTAL	117

The dominance of financial themes, such as *Zakat* and *Asnaf*, align with the organizational priorities of MAINS in promoting Islamic financial responsibility and social welfare. Previous studies support this focus, highlighting the increasing role of social media in enhancing public awareness and participation in Zakat and Waqf initiatives (Ahmad & Hassan, 2021; Yusof et al., 2020). Furthermore, the inclusion of educational content, such as Tazkirah, reflects efforts to integrate spiritual guidance into the digital sphere, a strategy found effective in engaging diverse audiences (Rahman, 2023).

The researchers also collected data from other online platforms namely the MAINS' website, TikTok, YouTube, and Instagram. The content analysis findings demonstrate a focused but varied distribution of themes across these platforms. Table 2 summarizes the themes identified and the corresponding number of postings.

**Table 2: Findings Across Other Online Platforms**

No	Platform	Themes	Total Content (Posting & Video)
1	All	Umrah	8
2	All	Infraq	1
3	All	Sirah Nabawiyah	1
4	All	Waqf	2
5	All	Zakat	2
6	All	Entrepreneurship	1
TOTAL			15

Adversely to Facebook, platforms like TikTok, YouTube, and Instagram exhibited minimal or no significant activity during the analyzed period. This lack of utilization is noteworthy, as these platforms are increasingly dominant among younger demographics. TikTok's short-form videos, Instagram's visual storytelling capabilities, and YouTube's potential for longer educational content offer significant opportunities to diversify outreach strategies and engage new audience segments.

To address these gaps, maintaining a consistent posting cadence across platforms is essential for sustaining audience interest and building trust. Consistency also enhances content visibility through platform algorithms, thereby increasing reach and engagement (Ahmad & Hassan, 2021). Additionally, diversifying content themes to include underrepresented topics, such as **entrepreneurship** and **modern socio-religious issues**, can attract a broader audience. For example, content highlighting the intersection of Islamic values with contemporary challenges can create relatable and thought-provoking narratives.

Adopting platform-specific strategies is another critical step. TikTok's dynamic nature could be utilized to share quick *Tazkirah* or engaging snippets of Islamic teachings, while Instagram's visual strengths can be leveraged through infographics and storytelling reels to promote themes like **Zakat** and **Waqf**. YouTube, with its capacity for longer-form content, is well-suited for webinars or detailed educational videos on Islamic principles. By aligning content strategies with platform-specific strengths, the organization can optimize its digital presence and expand its audience base. This approach aligns with prior research emphasizing the importance of tailored content and multimedia engagement in religious communication (Rahman, 2023; Yusof et al., 2020).

MAINS' reliance on Facebook as a primary platform reflects its strategy to utilize widely popular social media for promoting its services. The emphasis on zakat-related posts indicates a targeted effort that aligns with MAINS' core mission of addressing the needs of Muslim asnaf in Negeri Sembilan. This approach highlights an understanding of its audience's preferences and priorities. The frequent use of zakat-related themes underscores the organization's focus on

Islamic financial responsibility and social welfare. However, the limited total number of postings points to an opportunity to increase content diversity and frequency. Alalwan et al. (2017) emphasize that consistent and diverse content is critical to sustaining audience interest and loyalty, suggesting that MAINS could adopt a more robust strategy in content planning.

The underutilization of TikTok, YouTube, and Instagram is a missed opportunity to engage younger and visually oriented audiences. TikTok's growth among younger demographics presents an avenue for innovative outreach strategies. For instance, short, engaging videos on zakat and entrepreneurship programs could resonate with this audience. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) stress the importance of adapting content to platform-specific strengths to maximize impact. Similarly, Instagram's visual storytelling capabilities can be leveraged for compelling narratives about MAINS' initiatives, such as sharing infographics, testimonial videos, and photo-based success stories. As Cheung et al. (2021) note, visually appealing content has a higher potential to drive engagement rates, making Instagram an ideal platform for MAINS to amplify its messages.

YouTube, with its capacity for longer-form content, can serve as a platform for webinars, detailed discussions on Islamic principles, and educational series on zakat and waqf. These initiatives align with prior research emphasizing the importance of multimedia engagement in religious communication (Rahman, 2023; Yusof et al., 2020). By aligning its content strategies with platform-specific strengths, MAINS can optimize its outreach and expand its audience base.

Additionally, the findings highlight the underutilization of MAINS' website as a central hub for comprehensive information. While the website provides valuable content on zakat, waqf, and related services, its lack of integration with social media platforms limits its overall effectiveness. Dixon (2024) emphasizes the importance of seamless integration between websites and social media to enhance user experience and accessibility. Creating interconnected digital touchpoints can significantly enhance MAINS' ability to disseminate information effectively.

Another critical observation is the need for greater capacity building within MAINS. Training staff in digital content creation, analytics, and platform-specific strategies is essential to improving the quality and consistency of postings. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) argue that effective social media management requires a combination of technical skills and creative insights. Furthermore, Dixon (2024) notes that well-trained staff are more likely to produce high-quality content aligned with organizational objectives and audience preferences. This capacity-building effort would enable MAINS to develop more innovative and engaging content while ensuring a consistent presence across multiple platforms.

Interactive and audience-centric approaches are also vital for sustaining engagement. For example, incorporating polls, quizzes, and live Q&A sessions into its social media strategy could foster a sense of community and encourage active participation. Alalwan et al. (2017) highlight that balancing informational and emotional appeals is crucial for connecting with audiences. By integrating interactive elements and diverse themes, MAINS can create a more dynamic and engaging digital presence.

## CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

MAINS has made commendable strides in integrating Islamic values with modern promotional strategies, particularly through its use of Facebook. However, its heavy reliance on this single platform and limited activity on others constrain its overall impact and outreach potential. To strengthen its social media presence, MAINS should consider adopting a comprehensive, multi-platform strategy. This includes consistent content creation to ensure regular updates across all platforms, maintaining visibility, and fostering engagement. Additionally, investing in capacity building by training staff in digital marketing, content creation, and platform-specific strategies can significantly enhance the quality and effectiveness of its outreach efforts.

Implementing audience-centric approaches, such as leveraging engagement metrics to tailor content that resonates with diverse demographic groups, is also critical. Furthermore,

integrating its website with social media platforms can provide a seamless and accessible user experience, making its content more impactful and easier to navigate. By addressing these areas, MAINS can better align its social media initiatives with its mission of serving the ummah, promoting both economic and spiritual development effectively.

MAINS has successfully integrated Islamic values with modern promotional strategies, as evidenced by its active presence on Facebook and its focus on zakat and asnaf-related content. However, the organization's reliance on a single platform limits its overall impact. To strengthen its social media presence, MAINS should adopt a comprehensive, multi-platform strategy, including TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube. This approach would enable MAINS to reach younger and more visually oriented audiences, thereby diversifying its outreach and enhancing its engagement with different demographic groups.

In addition to expanding its platform presence, MAINS should invest in capacity building by training its staff in digital marketing, content creation, and analytics. These skills are crucial for developing high-quality, platform-specific content that resonates with its audience. As Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) argue, well-trained staff are essential for effective social media management and creative content production. The inclusion of da'wah elements, such as Quranic verses and Hadiths, in its content strategy is commendable, but these elements should be presented in innovative formats, such as short videos, infographics, and interactive posts, to capture audience interest.

Another significant implication is the importance of integrating MAINS' website with its social media platforms. This integration can create a seamless user experience, making it easier for audiences to access comprehensive information about MAINS' initiatives and services. Dixon (2024) highlights the role of interconnected digital touchpoints in enhancing accessibility and user engagement. By improving its website's functionality and linking it to social media platforms, MAINS can provide a cohesive and impactful digital presence.

The findings also underscore the need for MAINS to address gaps in content diversity. By including underrepresented themes, such as entrepreneurship and modern socio-religious issues, MAINS can appeal to a broader audience. Content that highlights the intersection of Islamic values with contemporary challenges can create relatable and thought-provoking narratives. Additionally, maintaining consistent posting cadence across all platforms is critical for sustaining audience interest and visibility. Ahmad and Hassan (2021) note that posting consistently enhances content visibility through platform algorithms, increasing reach and engagement.

Finally, adopting audience-centric approaches, such as leveraging engagement metrics to tailor content to different demographic groups, is essential. For example, analyzing audience behaviour on platforms like TikTok and Instagram can help MAINS develop content that resonates with younger audiences. Cheung et al. (2021) emphasize that visually appealing and emotionally engaging content drives higher engagement rates, making these platforms invaluable for MAINS' outreach efforts.

In conclusion, while MAINS has made commendable progress in integrating Islamic values with digital strategies, significant opportunities exist to enhance its social media presence. By adopting a multi-platform approach, investing in capacity building, and integrating its website with social media platforms, MAINS can better align its digital initiatives with its mission of serving the ummah. These steps will enable MAINS to effectively promote economic and spiritual development, ensuring its continued relevance and impact in an increasingly digital world.

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