

## CONTENT MARKETING STRATEGY IN INCREASING FOOTBALL SCHOOL STUDENTS INTERACTION THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

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### Abstract

Football School (SSB) is a place for students to learn and develop their football talents. In this digital era, social media has become an effective platform to reach and attract the interest of new and existing students to join SSB. The aim of this research is to analyze effective content marketing strategies in increasing SSB student interaction on social media. This research uses a qualitative research method with a case study approach. Data collection techniques in this research are observation, interviews and document analysis. The data that has been collected is then analyzed in three stages, namely data reduction, data presentation and drawing conclusions. The research results show that an effective content marketing strategy can increase SSB student interaction on social media. This can help SSB to attract new students and increase the loyalty of old students. SSB needs to create interesting, informative and interactive content to encourage students to engage and participate in SSB activities.

**Keywords:** content marketing, interaction, football school students, social media

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### INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is the country with the largest number of internet users in Southeast Asia, and the internet has become a primary need for its people. This phenomenon has been behind the change from conventional communication to modern all-digital communication. This change also affected business strategies, where various organizations began to take advantage of the advantages of the internet in their marketing strategies, especially through the use of websites and social media. Social media has now become the most popular platform for marketing activities. This is because social media is considered a secondary communication medium that is very effective in introducing products or services (Fathurrohman, 2016).

Marketing through social media can be integrated by Football Schools (SSB) as a strategy to increase their visibility and attract potential students. SSB is an institution that facilitates students to learn and develop their potential and talent in football. The presence of SSB is important because it is an alternative for prospective young soccer athletes to obtain education and training that suits their needs.

As stated by Fitri (2022), SSB plays an important role in fostering the talents and achievements of young soccer athletes. SSB provides structured and targeted training, as well as an environment conducive to the development of their talents. The main goal of SSB is to create a golden generation in the sport of football, where these young athletes are expected to be a great potential for the progress of Indonesian football in the future.

Football Schools (SSB) can utilize social media as an effective platform to reach and attract both new and existing students to join SSB. This is driven by the fact that the use of the internet, especially social media, has become very widespread among Indonesians. Preliminary data for 2024 shows that the number of internet users in Indonesia reaches 185.3 million people, or around 66.5% of the total population. Meanwhile, the number of social media users reached 139 million, or equivalent to 49.8% of the total population (Yonatan, 2024). Based on these facts, a large number of social media users can be a very effective marketing strategy for SSB. However, to make optimal use of that potential, SSBs need to

have an effective content marketing strategy. This strategy aims to increase interaction between new and existing students with SSB through social media.

Previous research by Suryadi et al. (2023), examined SWOT analysis in determining marketing strategies at Al Hudud Karawang football school, it was concluded that the right marketing strategy for Al Hudud Football School is to maintain consumer trust or parents of students. This can be achieved by improving the quality of service, providing good quality assurance of trainers to students or parents, expanding marketing through social media, and always innovating the facilities offered. In addition, it is also important to intensify promotion in the intended consumer market, improve management quality to create solid management, and increase cooperation to create consumer trust. The implementation of these strategies, it is hoped that Al Hudud Football School can increase its competitiveness in the market and gain the trust of consumers.

Another study by Adam & Ali (2021) which examined Persib Bandung's integrated marketing communication strategy in building a brand image as a professional football club, the results showed that Persib Bandung uses various integrated marketing communication strategies, including interactive, direct marketing, public relations, personal sales, and advertising. In addition, there are several aspects that influence Persib Bandung in transforming into a professional football club, such as sports, infrastructure, personal, administrative, legal, and financial aspects. The club pays attention to every aspect of it to maintain their image as a trusted professional football club.

This research brings novelty with a focus on effective content marketing strategies to increase student interaction in Football Schools (SSB), which has never been researched before. The results of this study are expected to provide insight for other SSBs in understanding the most effective strategies to increase student interaction through social media, then SSBs can also improve their content marketing strategies and achieve more effective marketing goals. This research is also expected to enrich the literature on the development of marketing strategies on social media, a very important aspect in this digital era. So this study aims to analyze in depth content marketing strategies that are effective in increasing SSB student interaction on social media, both for long-joined students and newly joined students.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This research uses qualitative research methods with a case study approach. Data collection techniques used here are observation, interviews and document analysis. The data were collected from different sources discussing football schools and were then analyzed in three stages, namely data reduction, data presentation and conclusions.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

Football today has become a very popular and loved sport not only in Indonesia but also all over the world. Its popularity covers different walks of life, from young to old, from different social backgrounds, and from different countries and cultures. This phenomenon can be seen in the high enthusiasm of the fans who throng the stadium, watch on television, or follow the latest news and developments through the internet. In many cases, soccer is not only considered as just a sport, but also as a unifying tool. Football matches are often moments that bring unity among different groups of people, ignoring the social, economic, and political differences that may exist between them.

Soccer is a game in which players use their feet to punt with the aim of putting it into the opponent's goal by defending their own goal so as not to concede the ball (Fadli, 2019). In the game of soccer, every player is allowed to use his entire limb, except the goalkeeper who is only allowed to use his hands and feet to save goals.

The sport of football has high demands in terms of achievement. Sports goals themselves can be divided into four forms according to their goals, including for education, recreation, improvement of certain physical abilities, and achievement. However, focusing on improving achievement is not an easy thing, but requires continuous efforts to overcome various obstacles and challenges that may arise (Agussalim, 2018). To improve achievements in football, various efforts need to be made. One of the efforts made is to build a special education system that focuses on learning about football.

*Sekolah Sepak Bola* (SSB, Football School) is a sports organization that specifically focuses on developing the potential of athletes, especially in the field of football. According to the PSSI Basic Guidelines, especially Article 35 Paragraphs 1 and 2, it is stated that children's growth and development are not only determined by the school environment, but also involve the role of families, communities, and other organizations in charge of fostering growth and development, such as youth organizations, students, and other educational institutions such as Football Schools (SSB) (Fadli, 2019).

SSB is a coaching forum for early childhood children who are most suitable in football development. The role of SSB is considered as the root of coaching national football achievements that can provide players to clubs in need. SSB serves as a place to nurture football talents from an early age. Through SSB, students have the opportunity to develop their potential in the sport of football. In addition, SSB also plays a role in providing an understanding of game techniques and tactics, as well as fostering competitive spirit and teamwork (Susanto & Lismadiana, 2016).

The components in SSB include the person in charge, certified trainers, curriculum, and adequate training tools and facilities. The main objective of SSB is to provide opportunities to its students to develop their potential and talent in football so that they can become quality players. This allows them to compete with other SSBs, be accepted by the community, and maintain the continuity of the organization. In addition, SSB also provides a strong foundation on how to play football properly, including forming good attitudes, personalities, and behaviors, while achieving achievements is a long-term goal (As'ari, 2022).

SSB has a big responsibility in developing the achievements of Indonesian football in the future. Through the existence of SSB, many excellent seeds in the world of football were found and fostered. At SSB, children are taught various basic exercises in the game of football. This includes physical exercises, kicking exercises, muscle exercises, flexure exercises, breathing exercises, and various other technical aspects required in playing football (Yola & Rifki, 2020). Quoting Pambudi (2022), here are 7 Football Schools (SSB) that have produced famous players in Indonesia:

- 1) Persib Bandung Academy: Known as one of the best SSBs that produce the best players in Indonesia, Persib Bandung Academy was formerly known as Diklat Persib, and is now known as Persib U-16. Established in 2018, the academy accepts participants ranging in age from 10 to 16 years. Players from this academy can have the opportunity to join the Persib U-16 team and participate in the Liga 1 U-16 competition. Some talented young players from Persib Bandung Academy include Gian Zola, Abdul Aziz, Beckham Putra Nugraha, and Febri Hariyadi.
- 2) Mitra Surabaya: Mitra Surabaya is one of the best SSBs in Surabaya and even in Indonesia. Although Mitra Surabaya FC club plays in Liga 3 East Java, they have SSB which produces many great players. SSB was founded by former Mitra Surabaya club players who existed in 1990. One of the famous graduates from SSB Mitra Surabaya is Evan Dimas Darmono, who is currently one of Indonesia's best young midfielders.
- 3) Salatiga Training: Although Salatiga City does not have a very famous football club, there is a football academy that has managed to produce many prospective

national players. Diklat Salatiga was established in 1973 and is considered to inspire the emergence of Ragunan Training. This academy has produced legendary players of the Indonesian national team, such as Bambang Pamungkas and Kurniawan Dwi Yulianto.

- 4) Makassar Football School (MFS): MFS 2000 from Makassar is one of the SSBs that has recorded international achievements, including reaching the top four in the Danone football championship. MFS managed to become one of the teams with the best defense and became a semifinalist of the Danone Nations Cup U-12 in 2006. Danone Nations Cup is a 10-12 year old children's soccer competition participated by countries around the world. Some of the best graduates of MFS 2000 include Syamsul Bachri Chaeruddin, Zulkifli Syukur, Hamka Hamzah, Rasyid Bakri, and Rahmat Latief.
- 5) Ragunan Sports School Jakarta: SKO Ragunan is one of the SSBs that has produced the best soccer players in Indonesia. Some famous names such as Ismed Sofyan, Erol Fx Iba, Andritany Ardhiyasa, and Kurnia Meiga are graduates from this academy. The latest generation also gave birth to players such as Egy Maulana Vikri. SKO Ragunan is famous for providing complete facilities with regular schools ranging from elementary, junior high, to high school. This SSB also has a relegation system, where students whose achievements decline will be replaced by other students who have better sports achievements.
- 6) ASIOP APACINTI (Jakarta): SSB ASIOP Apacinti is one of the football academies whose quality is beyond doubt. The orientation is to nurture players to be sent to Spain. SSB ASIOP is managed by PT Batavia Sports Group (BSG) which recently acquired Spanish club C.D Polillas Ceuta. Some famous players from ASIOP include Adam Alis, Andritany Ardhiyasa, Egy Melgiansyah, and Achmad Jufriyanto.
- 7) Tulehu Putra Maluku: SSB Tulehu Putra is a famous football academy from Tulehu Land, Central Maluku. The land of Tulehu is known for its strong football tradition from an early age. Many great players who have achieved national achievements come from this village. Some famous names such as Hendra Adi Bayauw, Fandi Ahmad Lestaluhu, Alfin Tuasalamony, and Rizky Ahmad Sanjaya are graduates from this academy.

Based on these facts, SSB's role in producing superior seeds in football is very large. SSB not only creates players who contribute to its regional clubs, but also is able to produce athletes who can represent the national team and bring changes in the achievements of Indonesian football in the international arena. However, SSB is also faced with various challenges, one of which is the lack of public knowledge about the existence of SSB. This shows the need for effective marketing efforts to increase interaction between new and existing students in order to increase the popularity of SSB. The interaction between new and existing students at SSB plays an important role in building public understanding and awareness about SSB.

The importance of interaction between new and old students has several fundamental reasons among which are the formation of a solid community within SSB, supporting the adaptation of new students in the SSB environment, creating opportunities for learning and knowledge exchange, and building valuable connections and networks in the world of football. The relationships established at SSB can help students in finding new opportunities, such as joining a club or national team, or getting scholarship opportunities or professional contracts. Therefore, strengthening the interaction between new and old students at SSB is one of the important steps in advancing SSB and developing football talents in Indonesia.

In response to the challenges faced, SSB can utilize social media as an alternative to raise public awareness about the existence and benefits of SSB. Social media has an important role to play in expanding reach and creating engagement with a wider audience. Social media platforms allow SSB to build social networks, share information, and interact with people who have an interest in the sport of football. As mentioned by Ayub & Sulaeman (2021), social media is an online platform that allows individuals to build social networks and interact with others who have similar interests or activities. Therefore, SSB can utilize various social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube to introduce the activities, achievements, and programs they offer to the public.

The most prominent feature that distinguishes social media from other information media is its ability as an interactive information media that allows users to interact without having to meet in person (Larasati, 2021). This makes it possible for SSB to communicate with prospective students and their parents, answer questions, provide information about available programs, and even host recruitment sessions online.

Social media as an online platform that allows users to participate, share, and create content, including through blogs, social networks, wikis, forums, and virtual worlds. For individuals who want to be known by the wider community, social media such as Instagram, Facebook, Line, or Twitter are often used because they provide space for users to interact freely and openly. Therefore, the number of status updates and posts owned by someone on social media is often considered an effort to gain widespread recognition (Purbohastuti, 2017).

In the context of football clubs, branding or identity formation has a very important role. Sports teams, including football clubs, do branding with the aim of forming a strong identity so that fans can identify themselves with the club. This identity can be reflected through mascots, logos, uniforms, and other elements. A strong brand allows the club to introduce new products or services, as well as create opportunities to increase the club's revenue. In addition, a strong brand also reflects the club's competence to consumers, bringing quality, image, and prestige that are positive for them (Ariyanto & Supriyono, 2024). This concept of branding through social media can also be applied by SSB to effectively increase the interaction of new and old students by means of engaging content marketing.

Social media includes a variety of applications that allow consumers to perform various activities such as posting, tagging, and blogging. Content generated by social media is a new information resource that is created, disseminated, and used by users who want it (Qurniawati, 2018). The appeal of promotion on social media lies in promotional content that is attractive and provides added value for potential buyers so that they are interested in seeing the content and ultimately decide to buy. According to the Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI), "content" is defined as information available through media or electronic products. With interesting content, social media users can interact with each other (Sholeh et al., 2020).

A successful content marketing strategy is one that is able to present interesting, informative, and interactive content for students. According to Mere et al. (2024), interactive content, which includes various elements such as polls, quizzes, interactive videos, and content that stimulates active user participation, is considered an effective means of creating a deep connection between brands and consumers. In the context of Football Schools (SSBs), interactive content marketing strategies can be key to increasing interaction between new and old students on social media. One effective way is to present content that invites student participation, such as quizzes, polls, or challenges. For example, SSB can create quizzes about football history, post interactive practice videos that allow students to vote for the type of drills they want to participate in, or conduct polls about their favorite players.

Through this approach, students will feel more engaged and connected to their SSB brand. They will feel that SSB is not only a place to practice football, but also an interesting

and relevant community for them. Interesting content can also include up-to-date information about SSB activities, inspiring stories from students or trainers, and various other things that can invite student participation. This means that engaging and interactive content within SSB can strengthen their brand identity, increase student engagement in SSB activities, and build student loyalty to SSB. This will have a positive impact on SSB's image and reputation in the eyes of the public, as well as help in retaining students and attracting new students to join SSB.

Based on this, the implementation of effective content marketing strategies can result in increased interaction of SSB students on social media. Therefore, a good content marketing strategy can play an important role in increasing the interest of new students to join SSB as well as strengthening old students' loyalty to that SSB. By presenting interesting and relevant content, SSB can create an environment that motivates students to actively participate in SSB activities, both in the virtual world and in the real world. This not only helps SSB to expand its reach and increase its influence within the football community, but also builds strong and sustainable relationships with students, which can bring long-term benefits to SSB's development.

## CONCLUSION

The results showed that implementing an effective content marketing strategy can result in increased interaction of soccer school students (SSB) on social media. Thus, this can play an important role in increasing the interest of new students to join and strengthen the loyalty of old students to the SSB. A successful content marketing strategy is one that is able to present interesting, informative, and interactive content to students. Interesting content may include up-to-date information about SSB activities, inspiring stories from students or trainers, as well as content that may invite student participation, such as quizzes, polls, or challenges. Therefore, ensuring relevant and engaging content, SSB can encourage students to actively engage in SSB activities in cyberspace, which in turn can have a positive impact on SSB's overall reputation and growth.

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