



Analysis Of Instagram's Social Media Development Needs As A Promotional Medium For The Japanese D4 Study Program Takumi Polytechnic Business And Professional Communication

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ABSTRACT

Abstract: The development of digital media has changed how prospective students search for information and has encouraged higher education institutions to adapt their communication strategies. This study aims to analyze the development needs of Instagram as a promotional medium for the D4 Japanese Language Business and Professional Communication Study Program at Politeknik Takumi. The study employed a descriptive qualitative approach and positioned the research within the needs-analysis stage of development. Data were collected through observation, documentation, literature review, and benchmarking of Instagram accounts of Japanese Language study programs at several Indonesian higher education institutions. Data were analyzed through data reduction, data display, conclusion drawing and verification, supported by source and technique triangulation. The findings indicate that Politeknik Takumi already uses Instagram to communicate institutional information; however, its use for promoting the D4 study program still requires improvement in content variety, posting consistency, feature optimization, visual identity, and audience interaction. Priority information includes the study program profile and advantages, learning activities, student activities, competencies, Japanese culture, achievements, and graduate career opportunities. Benchmarking indicates that comparison accounts tend to present more varied content, more consistent visual identities, and more active interaction patterns. The study recommends planned use of Feed, Story, Reels, and Highlight, a content calendar, stronger visual identity, and information tailored to prospective students. The study provides a development-recommendation basis rather than measuring post-implementation impact. This is an open access article under the [CC BY-SA](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/) license.



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1. INTRODUCTION

Urethral The development of information and communication technology has changed the way people obtain, choose, and share information. Universities no longer rely only on conventional media to introduce institutions and study programs, because prospective students can obtain information through digital channels quickly and can compare various options in a relatively short time. In this context, social media is one of the relevant communication channels for higher education institutions because it allows the delivery of information as well as interaction with the public. Irwan and Misidawati (2025) show that social media can expand the reach of institutional communication, support the delivery of academic information, and build engagement with the public. These findings confirm that social media not only functions as a publication channel, but also as a two-way communication space.



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This need is increasingly important because university information on social media can be part of the process of searching for information for prospective students. Research by Oktivera, Wirawan, and Jaya (2024) on high school students in the DKI Jakarta and Bekasi areas shows that academic and non-academic information of universities on social media plays a role in fulfilling the information needs of prospective students. Thus, the existence of social media that is managed in a targeted manner can help institutions provide an overview of the study program before prospective students make educational decisions. For study programs that are still in the development stage, social media can also be used to explain the identity, competencies, learning experiences, and prospects of graduates in a more accessible manner.

Instagram has visual characteristics that are suitable for this purpose. This platform provides Feeds, Stories, Reels, and Highlights that can be used to convey information in the format of images, videos, and short communications. Septiana, Murtiningsih, and Astagini (2025) found that social media is effectively used in the promotion of vocational-based higher education and Instagram obtained a prominent effectiveness assessment compared to other platforms in the context of their research. Prabowo and Absor (2019) also show that Instagram can be a form of digital promotion for higher education institutions through the delivery of visual and audiovisual information. Therefore, Instagram is relevant as one of the promotional media for the D4 Japanese Study Program in Business and Professional Communication at Takumi Polytechnic.

The D4 Japanese Study Program in Business and Professional Communication at Takumi Polytechnic is a development of the field of Japanese language education that integrates Japanese language skills with business and professional communication. Based on the final project report, this study program is still in the development stage and needs a media that is able to explain the characteristics of the study program to prospective students. However, at the time of the research, there was no official Instagram account that was specifically directed as a promotional medium for the study program. Study program information still needs to be conveyed through institutional channels with more targeted development. This condition creates the need to identify what information needs to be displayed, what types of content are relevant, what features need to be optimized, and how visual identity and consistency of content management can be designed.

The research problem is not placed on the question of whether Instagram can be used at all, but on the need for development so that Instagram can carry out its promotional function in a more targeted manner. This is important because the existence of an account alone does not guarantee the quality of communication. Content management needs to consider the needs of the audience, message form, consistency, visuals, and interaction. Kusuma, Darna, and Sari (2023), for example, emphasize the importance of looking at indicators such as engagement rate, impression, and reach in assessing Instagram performance. Although this study did not conduct a quantitative measurement of account insights, the concept is a consideration that content development should be directed at creating interactions and reach that can be evaluated at the next stage.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Previous studies have shown that education promotion through social media has been carried out a lot, but the focus and context are different. Syafganti and Pratiwi (2022), in a study of polytechnic Instagram accounts in Indonesia, highlighted the importance of content categories in reaching various vocational education stakeholders. Sitinjak (2021) discusses the use of Instagram content to build brand awareness in educational institutions and shows that content strategies need to pay attention to visual elements, copywriting, and suitability with the character of the audience. Meanwhile, Jonathan and Valentina (2023) show that changes in the visual elements of content are related to the performance of university Instagram. These findings provide the basis that digital promotion is not enough just to publish information, but requires content planning and visual identity.

The research of Tambunan, Anggoro, and Santikarama (2025) shows the relationship between new student admission content, Instagram engagement, and prospective student interest in the context of Jenderal Achmad Yani University. The study uses a quantitative approach, while this study uses a qualitative approach to identify development needs before the implementation of a new strategy. This difference is important because this study does not claim that the recommendations prepared have increased interest or engagement. Recommendations are the results of needs analysis based on account conditions, documentation, literature studies, and benchmarking.

The novelty of the research lies in the context of the Japanese language study program at vocational universities that is being developed, as well as the use of benchmarking as one of the basis for the preparation of recommendations. Benchmarking was carried out to obtain an overview of the account management practices of other Japanese study programs in Indonesia, with the aspects being compared including the type of content, consistency of uploads, use of features, visual identity, and audience interaction. This approach allows development needs to be formulated based on



a combination of internal conditions and comparative account practices, not just based on general theories about social media.

Based on this background, the formulation of the research problem is: (1) how the need for the development of Instagram social media as a promotional medium for the D4 Japanese Language Study Program in Business and Professional Communication at Takumi Polytechnic; (2) what information and type of content are needed in the development of Instagram for the study program; and (3) how to recommend the development of Instagram as a promotional medium for the study program. The purpose of the research is to analyze the needs of development, identify the information and type of content needed, and prepare recommendations for the development of Instagram based on the results of observation, documentation, literature studies, and benchmarking.

Practically, the results of the research are expected to be considered for study programs and social media managers in developing content strategies. Academically, this research can add to the study of Instagram management for higher education promotion, especially in the context of vocational education and Japanese language study programs. The scope of research is limited to the analysis of Instagram development needs, including content, features, visual identity, management consistency, and promotion strategies. The research did not reach the stage of full implementation of recommendations and measurement of changes in engagement after implementation.

Table 1. Research Position on Past Literature

Researcher	Focus	Contributions to this research
Oktivera dkk. (2024)	Fulfillment of information for prospective students through social media	Strengthening the importance of academic and non-academic information for prospective students.
Septiana et al. (2025)	The effectiveness of social media for the promotion of vocational education	Supporting the relevance of Instagram as a vocational education promotion channel.
Kusuma et al. (2023)	Engagement rate, impression, reach	It is a conceptual basis to see engagement as an aspect of performance.
Sitinjak (2021)	Instagram content and brand awareness	Reinforcing the importance of relevant content and visual elements.
Jonathan & Valentina (2023)	Visual changes to Instagram content	Support consistent visual identity needs.
Tambunan et al. (2025)	PMB content, engagement, interest of new students	Showing the relevance of content and engagement in the context of education promotion.
This research	Analysis of Instagram development needs of Takumi's D4 Japanese Study Program	Combine observation, documentation, literature, and benchmarking to formulate development needs.

2.1 Social Media in Educational Communication

Social media can be understood as a digital communication channel that allows users to create, receive, and respond to information. In higher education institutions, social media can be used to build communication with students, alumni, the community, and prospective students. Irwan and Misidawati (2025) explained that social media allows for rapid two-way communication and can support the formation of institutional image, engagement, and the dissemination of academic information. Therefore, the use of social media in education needs to be seen as part of an institution's communication strategy, not solely as a publication activity.

Interactive characteristics are one of the main differences between social media and one-way promotional media. Responses in the form of likes, comments, shares, saves, direct messages, or responses to Stories can be a sign that the audience is interacting with the message being conveyed. In the context of college promotion, these interactions can help institutions understand information that attracts the audience's attention. However, engagement should not be understood only as the number of likes. Kusuma et al. (2023) show that Instagram analysis can consider engagement rate, impression, and reach. This study uses engagement as a supporting concept in designing content needs, while numerical measurements can be carried out in follow-up research.

2.2 Instagram as a Higher Education Promotion Media

Instagram is a platform that is oriented towards visual content so it is suitable for showing educational experiences and environments. Feeds can be used for information that needs to be available on profiles, Stories for actual information and interactions, Reels for short videos, and Highlights to store important information so that it remains easy to find. Prabowo and Absor (2019) show that Instagram changes the form of university promotion from conventional delivery to visual and audiovisual forms. Adilla et al. (2023) also show the use of Instagram as a medium for delivering information and services in the university environment.



In educational promotion, content can be directed to several information needs. First, identity information such as the profile, vision, characteristics, and advantages of the study program. Second, information on learning experiences such as classroom activities, practices, student activities, and facilities. Third, information on learning outcomes in the form of competencies, achievements, certifications, or student experience. Fourth, future information such as career prospects and fields of work. Fifth, content that shows culture or values relevant to the field of study. This grouping helps that accounts not only contain announcements, but also provide a comprehensive picture of the experience of being a student.

2.3 Content Marketing and Visual Identity

Content marketing on social media emphasizes the provision of useful and relevant content for the audience. In higher education, informative content can be in the form of study program information and student admissions, educational content can be in the form of knowledge of Japanese, inspirational content can be in the form of student or alumni experiences, while documentation content can show real activities. Indriansyah et al. (2025) show that content-based and engagement strategies in campus promotion can prioritize creative, informative, and close content to the audience's experience. These findings are relevant to the needs of study programs to show the learning atmosphere and student activities authentically.

Visual identity serves to make accounts easily recognizable. Elements such as color, typography, composition, and consistent layout can create a unified appearance. Jonathan and Valentina (2023) place visual elements as an important part of the university's Instagram performance. Therefore, visual identity in this study is positioned not as a mere decoration, but as a communication element that helps the audience recognize the content of the study program.

2.4 Benchmarking

Benchmarking is the process of comparing the practices of an organization with other organizations to obtain improvement references. In this study, benchmarking is not intended to copy the comparator account, but rather to identify patterns that can be adjusted to the character of the D4 Japanese Study Program in Business and Professional Communication at Takumi Polytechnic. Comparative aspects include the type of content, consistency of uploads, use of features, visual identity, and audience interaction. The results of the benchmarking are then combined with the results of internal observations so that recommendations do not only come from external examples.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

Benchmarking is carried out through several stages. The first stage is to determine the goal, which is to obtain relevant Instagram management references for the Japanese language study program. The second stage is to choose a comparison account based on the suitability of the field, account activity, content variation, and social media management. The third stage is to observe content and management patterns based on the indicators that have been set. The fourth stage is to identify practices that can be adapted. The adaptation process is carried out by taking into account the characteristics of Takumi Polytechnic and the objectives of the study program promotion.

It is important to emphasize that the benchmarking in this study is referential. The study did not rank the comparator accounts and did not state that one account as a whole was better than another. The results used were common patterns that emerged, such as content diversity, consistency of visual identity, utilization of some Instagram features, and more active forms of interaction. This approach is in accordance with the purpose of needs analysis, which is to find aspects that need improvement in the research object based on available evidence and references.

The observation data and documentation in the research report show that Takumi Polytechnic's Instagram account has been used to convey educational information, campus activities, academic activities, and student activities. However, information that specifically describes the D4 Japanese Study Program in Business and Professional Communication still needs to be developed. Therefore, the data is not directed to conclude that the account is not working, but rather to identify parts that are not optimal for the promotion needs of the study program.

The methodological limitations of the research need to be considered. First, the research uses a qualitative approach so that the results are contextual. Second, the final project report does not present a complete numerical dataset of Instagram insights, so the study does not calculate engagement rates quantitatively. Third, benchmarking was carried out on several accounts of the Japanese study program, but the name of the comparator account is not detailed in this article because the focus of the article is on the pattern of needs, not the ranking of the account. Fourth, the research stops at recommendations so that the impact of recommendations on engagement or interest in registration cannot be concluded.

Table 3. Stages of Data Analysis

Stages	Activities	Exodus
Data reduction	Selecting and grouping observational findings, documentation, literature, and benchmarking	Data is focused on content, features, visuals, consistency, interaction, and information



Data presentation	Organize findings in breakdowns and tables by aspect	The pattern of account conditions and differences in needs is visible
Conclusion drawing	Connect internal and external findings	List of development needs
Verification	Comparing between sources and between techniques	Consistent findings as a basis for recommendations

Ethics and Accuracy of Digital Data Use

Because the object of the research is social media, the data used should be limited to information that is publicly available and relevant to the purpose of the research. Screenshots and examples of content are used as academic documentation, not to alter or reproduce the content of other parties as belonging to the researcher. For journal articles, information that is the identity of the peer account can be displayed according to the needs and policies of the journal, while the analysis is directed at management patterns. This principle helps to maintain the focus of the research while avoiding judgments that are not supported by the data.

4. RESEARCH RESULTS

4.1 General Conditions of Social Media as a Promotional Media

Takumi Polytechnic is a vocational college in Bekasi Regency that has a field of Japanese language education. The D4 Japanese Language Study Program in Business and Professional Communication is prepared as a program that combines Japanese language skills with business and professional communication. This character needs to be introduced to prospective students because the name of the study program alone is not enough to provide an overview of the learning experience and competence of graduates.

The results of observations in the final project report show that Takumi Polytechnic's Instagram has been used to convey information about institutions and campus activities. The content available includes educational information, academic activities, student activities, and study program information. Thus, Instagram already has a function as an information channel. However, the use still needs to be directed so that the information of the D4 Japanese Study Program in Business and Professional Communication can appear more systematic and easy to find.

This condition indicates a difference between the general function of the institutional account and the specific communication needs of the study program. The institutional account has a wide scope of information, while the study program requires more specific content: what the student learns, the competencies acquired, the activities performed, the relevant Japanese culture or language, achievements, and career opportunities. Therefore, the need for development not only increases the number of posts, but also clarifies the information architecture.

4.2 Content Observation Results

In terms of content type, Takumi Polytechnic's Instagram account has published information on education and institutional activities. However, specific information for the D4 Japanese Study Program in Business and Professional Communication still needs to be expanded and deepened. The content of the profile and excellence of the study program can be basic content, while the content of learning activities can show how competencies are built. Student activities can provide an overview of campus life, while student achievements and experiences can strengthen information about learning outcomes.

Japanese cultural and Japanese content can function as content that suits the character of the field of study while attracting the attention of audiences who have an interest in Japan. Job prospect content can answer prospective students' questions about the relevance of education to the world of work. In the context of a study program that combines Japanese and business-professional communication, information about communication competencies and the work environment also needs to be packaged in an easy-to-understand manner.

This result is in line with Oktivera et al. (2024) who place academic and non-academic information as an important part of the search for university information. Thus, content development needs to include rational information about the study program as well as the real experience of students.

4.3 Upload Consistency

Observations show that the consistency of uploads still needs to be considered. The frequency and timing of unplanned publication can cause study program information to not appear in a sustainable manner. For prospective students, the sustainability of communication can help form a more complete picture of the study program. Therefore, development needs include a content calendar, the division of themes per week or month, and the determination of publication time that can be evaluated based on audience responses.

4.4 Utilization of Instagram Features

Observation results show that Feed, Story, Reels, and Highlights have been used. However, the functionality of each feature can still be optimized. Feeds can be directed as a primary information archive that explains the program's



identity, strengths, competencies, and important information. Stories can be used for actual activities, such as lecture atmospheres, activity reminders, polls, questions, or quizzes. Reels can be used for short videos that show student activities, Japanese tips, facility introductions, or an overview of learning activities. Highlights can serve as a menu of information that remains available on your profile.

Targeted use of features is important because prospective students don't always consume content in the same pattern. Feeds help with relatively permanent information searches, Stories help with short-term interactions, Reels help with more dynamic audiovisual presentations, while Highlights help group information so that it can be accessed again. With these settings, accounts can form a clearer information structure.

4.5 Visual Identity

Visual identity is one of the needs found in observation and benchmarking. Some aspects that need to be considered are the use of color, typography, layout, illustration style, and design patterns. Consistency does not mean that every upload has to be identical, but there are elements that make the audience recognize that the content is part of the program's communication. Jonathan and Valentina (2023) show that visual elements are related to the university's Instagram performance, so the design aspect is worth placing as part of the communication strategy.

For the D4 Japanese Study Program in Business and Professional Communication, visual identity can be developed while maintaining a connection with the identity of Takumi Polytechnic. The elements chosen should support the readability of the information, not just decoration. Templates for profile content, activities, achievements, Japanese education, Japanese culture, and career can be created with a consistent structure so that managers can more easily maintain visual quality.

4.6 Interaction and Engagement

Audience interaction on an account can be seen through likes, comments, shares, and other responses. Based on the research report, interactions still need to be developed through more relevant, engaging, and interactive content. These findings do not mean that a certain number of interactions should be achieved, as the study did not set numerical targets. The focus is on providing conditions that allow audiences to respond, for example through questions, polls, quizzes, invitations to comment, or topics that are close to the needs of prospective students.

The literature shows the importance of engagement in educational digital communication. Kusuma et al. (2023) discussed engagement rate, impression, and reach as indicators of Instagram performance analysis, while Tambunan et al. (2025) found that PMB content and engagement were related to the interest of new students in the context they were researching. These findings support the need to make engagement an evaluation indicator at the next stage of implementation, but are not used to claim causal outcomes in this study.

4.7 Documentation Results

Documentation in the form of uploads and screenshots helps to show the types of information that are already available and the parts that are not adequately represented. Information on campus institutions and activities is already available, while more specific information about the profile and advantages of the study program, competencies, Japanese culture, achievements, and job prospects still needs to be developed. Thus, the documentation reinforces the observation that the main need is not just to increase frequency, but to enrich the information structure.

Benchmarking Results of Japanese Language Study Program Accounts

Benchmarking was conducted on several Instagram accounts of the Japanese Language Study Program in Indonesian universities. Benchmarking accounts were selected based on the suitability of the field, account activity, content variation, and social media management. The comparison was not intended to provide rankings, but to find patterns that could be used as references. The aspects observed included content type, consistency, features, visual identity, and interaction.

In terms of content types, comparative accounts show a wider variation. Content is not only academic information or announcements, but also student activities, Japanese culture, achievements, program introductions, and content aimed at prospective students. This pattern shows that study program communication can be built through a combination of informative, educational, documentary, and inspirational content.

In terms of visual identity, comparison accounts tend to have more consistent color patterns, typography, layout, and design. Visual consistency makes content more easily recognizable as part of the study program account. These results support the findings of Jonathan and Valentina (2023) regarding the importance of visual elements in university Instagram management.

In terms of engagement, the research report noted that the comparison account showed more active interaction than the Takumi Polytechnic account. However, because the study did not collect quantitative insight data and did not set the same measurement period for all accounts, the findings were understood descriptively. This means that the basis for the recommendation is the character of the content and the interaction patterns that are seen, not the comparison of the absolute engagement numbers.

Table 4. Summary of Benchmarking Results

Aspects	Identified conditions on objects	Patterns on the comparator account	Development needs
Content type	Information on institutions and activities is available; the specific content of the study program needs to be expanded	More diverse: academic, student, cultural, achievement, program of study, career	Create more diverse content pillars
Consistency	Not optimal and needs planning	More organized and planned uploads	Content calendar and publication schedule
Features	Feed, Story, Reels, Highlights are already used but need optimization	Features are used according to the content character	Assign the function of each feature
Visual	Colors, typography, layouts are not yet completely uniform	More consistent visual identity	Create visual guidelines/templates
Interaction	Needs to be improved through interactive content	Audience response looks more active	CTA, polling, quiz, question box, dan respons admin
Study program information	Not complete for the needs of prospective students	More specific and easy to find information	Build the information structure of the study program

Adaptable Practices

From the benchmarking, six main practices can be adapted: (1) creating diverse and relevant content to prospective students; (2) maintaining schedule consistency; (3) optimizing Feeds, Stories, Reels, and Highlights; (4) using a consistent visual identity; (5) developing interactive content; and (6) conveying study program information in a concise, clear, and engaging manner. These practices are not applied mechanically, but need to be adapted to the character of the D4 Japanese Study Program in Business and Professional Communication.

These findings are in line with the research of Septiana et al. (2025) which shows the relevance of social media in the promotion of vocational education, and Indriansyah et al. (2025) which emphasizes the importance of content-based and engagement-driven strategies. In the context of this study, both approaches are translated into the need for content that is informative, visual, close to the student experience, and has interaction opportunities.

Information Needs

Based on the integration of observation, documentation, literature, and benchmarking, information needs can be grouped into six parts. First, the profile and advantages of the study program. This section serves to answer basic questions about the identity and character of the study program. Second, learning activities and student activities, which provide an overview of the learning experience. Third, competencies acquired during lectures, especially Japanese language skills and business-professional communication. Fourth, Japanese activities and culture relevant to the field of study. Fifth, student achievements and study programs. Sixth, opportunities and job prospects of graduates.

These six groups of information can be used as a content architecture. With a structure, managers can avoid dominating one type of post. For example, an account not only contains announcements of activities, but periodically shows competencies, student experiences, culture, achievements, and careers. The structure also helps prospective students find answers to different questions in one account.

Content Type Requirements

Content needs can be divided into informative, educational, documentary, inspiring, and interactive content. Informative content includes study program profiles, admission pathways, facilities, competencies, and job prospects. Educational content can be in the form of Japanese vocabulary, study tips, Japanese business terms, or cultural knowledge that is appropriate to the competency of the study program. Documentary content displays lecture activities, practices, organizations, and campus activities. Inspirational content can be student experiences, achievements, or alumni stories. Interactive content can be in the form of polls, quizzes, questions, and invitations to give opinions.

The grouping is also in line with Sitinjak's (2021) research on the importance of Instagram content in building brand awareness of educational institutions. Informative and interesting content can help build an introduction to the institution, while real-life experience content helps audiences get a more concrete picture.

Feature Requirements

The feed needs to be the main and permanent information space. Stories need to function as a more actual and interactive communication space. Reels can be used to reach the audience through short videos, while Highlights function like an information menu. This division of functions makes each feature have a different role, so managers can choose a format based on communication objectives.



Visual Identity Requirements

Visual identity requires simple guidelines that can be used repeatedly. Guidelines can include color palettes, font pairs, title sizes, logo positions, photo styles, icon usage, and carousel structures. The goal is to maintain consistency while providing room for creativity. Visual identity should remain aligned with Takumi Polytechnic's identity so that the study program is not visually separated from its parent institution.

Management and Consistency Needs

Content management requires an editorial calendar that contains themes, formats, target audiences, captions, call-to-action, features, production schedules, and publication schedules. Managers also need to conduct periodic evaluations of content performance through the data available on Instagram. Evaluations can include reach, impressions, interactions, saves, shares, profile visits, and follower growth. These measurements have not been taken in this study, but they are an important recommendation for the implementation phase.

Instagram Development Recommendations

Content Pillar

Based on the results of the needs analysis, the design of the content pillar can be organized into six main categories: Study Program Profile, Learning Activities, Student Activities, Japanese Language and Culture, Achievement, and Career Prospects. The Study Program Profile pillar describes identity, excellence, competencies, and facilities. The Learning Activity Pillar displays practices, classes, assignments, and learning experiences. The Student Activities pillar displays organizations, events, and social activities. The Japanese Language and Culture pillar provides educational content that matches the character of the study program. The Achievement Pillar shows achievements. The Career Prospects pillar connects competencies with the world of work.

Table 5. Design of Content and Format Pillars

Pillar	Example topics	Recommended formats	Purpose of communication
Study Program Profile	Advantages, competencies, facilities	Carousel/Feed, Highlight	Provide a basic understanding
Learning Activities	Classes, practices, assignments	Photo, Carousel, Reels, Story	Visualize the learning experience
Student Activities	Organization, event, daily life	Reels, Story, Feed	Showing student life
Japanese Language & Culture	Vocabulary, culture, language tips	Carousel, Reels, Story quiz	Provide educational and interactive value
Performance	Student achievements/study programs	Feed, Story, Highlight	Delivering achievements
Prospek Karier	Field of work, alumni experience	Carousel, Reels, Feed	Explain the relevance of competencies to the world of work

Content Calendar and Consistency

Content calendars can be organized monthly with weekly theme breakdowns. Examples of simple patterns are the first week focusing on the introduction of the course of study, the second week on learning activities, the third week on Japanese language and culture, and the fourth week on achievements and careers. Stories can be used between main uploads to maintain actual communication. The pattern is not a mandatory schedule, but a framework that can help managers maintain continuity.

Consistency should be measured not only by the number of uploads, but also by regularity, quality, and relevance. A schedule that is too dense without production resources can result in immature content. Conversely, a schedule that is too infrequent can make information unsustainable. Therefore, the calendar needs to be adjusted to the capacity of the management team and the academic calendar.

Interaction Strategies

Content needs to provide space for the audience to respond. In Stories, managers can use polls, question boxes, quizzes, or sliders. In Feeds and Reels, captions can be closed with simple questions that are relevant. Managers also need to respond to comments and messages in a timely manner. Interaction is not just a technique to increase engagement rates, but a two-way communication that can help prospective students gain additional information.

Data-Driven Evaluation

After the recommendations are implemented, evaluations can be carried out periodically. Indicators that can be monitored include reach, impression, likes, comments, shares, saves, profile visits, link clicks, and follower growth. To compare content more systematically, managers can calculate the engagement rate according to the methods used



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in the relevant research, paying attention to consistent definitions and denominators. This stage is a follow-up research agenda because the research now stops at needs analysis.

Discussion

The results of the study show that the need for Instagram development in the D4 Japanese Study Program in Business and Professional Communication is not only a matter of the quantity of uploads. The main need is in the quality and structure of communication: information must be complete, content types must be diverse, features are used according to function, visuals are consistent, and interactions are actively managed. These findings reinforce the view that social media of educational institutions is part of strategic communication. Irwan and Misidawati (2025) show that the effectiveness of social media is influenced by content strategies, communication consistency, and responsiveness to audiences.

The information needs found can also be understood from the perspective of searching for information of prospective students. Oktivera et al. (2024) show that social media can be a source of academic and non-academic information in the process of choosing a university. Therefore, the content of the study program needs to answer questions that may arise before registration: what the program learns, how the student activities, what competencies are obtained, and what field they can work in after graduation. This information structure makes Instagram function more as an information medium as well as promotion.

In the context of vocational education, the findings of this study are in line with Septiana et al. (2025) who show the effectiveness of social media to promote vocational-based higher education. The vocational character of Takumi Polytechnic makes the content of learning experiences, practices, student activities, and the relevance of competencies to the world of work important. This content can provide visual evidence of the character of the education offered.

In terms of content marketing, the need to display real activities and content that is close to the experience of prospective students has relevance to Indriansyah et al. (2025). The study shows that campuses can combine content-based marketing with engagement-driven strategies through creative, informative, and relatable content. In this study, these principles are translated into recommendations to display learning activities, student life, Japanese culture, achievements, and careers in a planned manner.

The visual aspect is also supported by the research of Jonathan and Valentina (2023). A consistent visual identity helps build a unified account display. In the context of a study program, visual consistency can make a series of content easily recognizable and help prospective students distinguish key information, educational content, activities, and achievements. It can also make it easier for managers because content production can use templates that have been prepared.

Meanwhile, the benchmarking results showed that the observed Japanese language program account practices tended to be more diverse and interactive. These findings were not used to assert the superiority of an account, but as a source of learning. Benchmarking helps to transform abstract concepts such as "interesting content" into observable practices, such as theme variation, use of Reels, interactive Stories, informative highlights, and consistent visual identity.

Engagement is an aspect that needs to be placed proportionally. This study found the need to increase interaction, but did not measure the cause-and-effect relationship between the type of content and the interests of prospective students. Tambunan et al. (2025) provide quantitative evidence in the context of other universities that PMB content and engagement are related to the interest of new students. The findings can be a reference for further research at Takumi Polytechnic, but cannot be directly generalized as a result of this study.

The limitations of the research also have implications for how to read the results. First, the research was conducted in the context of one institution so that the recommendations are contextual. Second, the main data in the form of observation, documentation, literature studies, and benchmarking have not been completed by direct surveys of prospective students. Third, there has been no longitudinal measurement of insights to determine changes in reach and engagement. Fourth, recommendations have not been tested through implementation. Therefore, the results of the research should be seen as a design of initial needs that can be continued with the design, development, implementation, and evaluation stages.

However, the combination of data sources is beneficial because development needs are not determined based solely on the opinions of the researcher. Observation provides an overview of the state of the account, documentation provides evidence of content, literature studies provide a conceptual basis and comparison of research results, while benchmarking shows adaptable practices. Triangulation helps to see the consistency of findings among these sources. Patterns that appear repeatedly are the need for content variation, more complete study program information, consistent visual identity, use of features, and more planned management.



The first practical implication is the need to divide management responsibilities. Study programs can determine priority information, while social media teams can develop visual formats and publication schedules. Coordination is needed to keep content academically accurate as well as digitally communicative. Second, a material bank is needed in the form of photos of activities, short videos, lecturer profiles, achievements, student experiences, and career information. A material bank will reduce dependence on content production suddenly.

The third practical implication is the need for data-driven evaluation after implementation. Managers can group content by pillar and compare their performance. For example, whether student activity content gets more shares than informative content; whether Reels gain a wider reach; or whether career content generates saves and profile visits. These questions can be empirically tested after the study program account is developed. The results of the evaluation can then be used to update the content calendar.

The academic implication of the research is that there is an opportunity to develop a social media management model that is more specific to the Japanese language study program. The model can combine educational communication, content marketing, visual identity, and engagement. The next research can use mixed methods with prospective student surveys, Instagram insight analysis, manager interviews, and content experiments. Thus, the qualitative recommendations of this study can be tested quantitatively.

7.1 Synthesis of Findings

Key findings	Interpretasi	Development direction
The information on the study program is not specific enough	The institution's account has not fully become a source of information on a structured study program	Create a series of profiles, competencies, activities, achievements, and career content
A variety of content needs to be added	Content needs to reach the information needs and interests of prospective students	Implement six content pillars
Features are available but not yet directed	Each feature has a different communication character	Set the Feed, Story, Reels, Highlight function
Visuals need to be consistent	Visual unity facilitates content recognition	Build templates and visual guidelines
Interaction needs to be developed	Two-way communication can still be strengthened	Interactive content and admin responses
Consistency needs to be planned	Regular publication supports continuity of communication	Content calendar and periodic evaluations

5. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the results of the research, it can be concluded that Instagram has the potential as a promotional medium for the D4 Japanese Language Study Program in Business and Professional Communication at Takumi Polytechnic, but it still needs development so that the promotion function is more directed. Development needs include information, content variation, feature utilization, visual identity, management consistency, and interaction with the audience. The findings were obtained through observation, documentation, literature studies, and benchmarking.

Priority information needs include the profile and excellence of the study program, learning and student activities, competencies, Japanese culture, achievements, and job opportunities and prospects of graduates. This information needs to be presented through diverse, informative, interesting, and appropriate content for prospective students. With a clear information structure, Instagram can function not only as a publication channel, but also as an initial source of information for prospective students.

Benchmarking of Japanese Language Study Program accounts at other universities showed adaptable practice patterns, especially content diversity, visual consistency, use of Instagram features, and more active forms of interaction. The benchmarking results were not used to rank accounts, but to identify practices that are relevant to the needs of Takumi Polytechnic. Based on these findings, the main recommendations are the implementation of six content pillars, the use of Feed, Stories, Reels, and Highlights according to function, strengthening visual identity, preparing a content calendar, and evaluating performance based on insight data.

This study has not tested the impact of recommendations after implementation. Therefore, an increase in engagement, interest in enrollment, or changes in the perception of prospective students cannot be concluded from this study. The conclusions of the study are limited to the analysis of needs and the preparation of development recommendations.

8.2 Suggestions

- For the D4 Japanese Study Program in Business and Professional Communication, the research results can be used as a basis for digital communication planning and the development of Instagram accounts that more specifically describe the character of the study program.



- For social media managers, a content calendar, material bank, visual identity guidelines, and the division of functions of each feature are needed to make content production more consistent.
- For study program managers, information about competencies, student activities, achievements, and career prospects needs to be prepared regularly so that the content remains accurate and relevant.
- After implementation, managers are advised to conduct periodic evaluations using data reach, impressions, likes, comments, shares, saves, profile visits, and follower growth. Measurement should use consistent periods and definitions.
- Researchers can then develop mixed methods research to measure the response of prospective students and test for changes in engagement after recommendations are implemented.

Research Contributions

The practical contribution of this research is to provide a map of Instagram development needs for the Japanese language study program that is being developed. The methodological contribution is to combine internal observation and external benchmarking as a basis for recommendations. The academic contribution is to enrich the discussion on the promotion of vocational higher education through Instagram with a focus on needs analysis before implementation.

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