

# Transformation of the Indonesian National Police's Communication Strategy in Building a Public Narrative through Platform X

*Lontar: Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi, 2025  
Vol. 13 (2), 2025  
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DOI: 10.30656/lontar.v13.i2.11503*

<https://ejurnal.lppmunsera.org/index.php/LONTAR/article/view/11503>

*Article History  
Submission: Nov 13<sup>th</sup> 2025  
Revised: Dec 25<sup>th</sup> 2025  
Accepted: Dec 31<sup>st</sup> 2025*

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## ABSTRACT

*The acceleration of digital transformation has reshaped how institutions communicate with the public. To remain relevant, both governmental and private organizations must adapt to these shifts—so too must the Indonesian National Police (POLRI). Through the strategic use of social media, particularly Platform X (Twitter), POLRI seeks to cultivate closeness with a public that is increasingly critical, responsive, and participatory. This study investigates how POLRI has transformed its communication strategy to construct a coherent public narrative on Platform X. It focuses on three dimensions: the evolution of work models, new collaboration patterns between the Public Relations Division of POLRI and external digital partners, and the strategic management of hashtags as part of an integrated digital-communication approach. Employing a descriptive-qualitative method, data were collected through interviews with policy-level officials, field implementers, and external partners. The findings reveal a paradigm shift from one-way, hierarchical communication toward an open, two-way participatory dialogue that allows the public to offer feedback, criticism, and direct engagement. This shift is not merely technical but reflects an institutional reconfiguration of strategic communication practices within an algorithm-driven platform environment. By explicitly linking empirical findings with Strategic Communication Theory, this study contributes to the understanding of how public institutions negotiate legitimacy, authority, and visibility within platform-based communication ecosystems. The study concludes that the success of POLRI's online communication rests not only on message quality but also on institutional synergy, adaptability to algorithmic change, and the capacity to maintain meaningful dialogue with citizens. Strategic communication, when integrated with digital innovation, enables the institution to strengthen trust and legitimacy in the era of participatory media. This study recommends that POLRI enhance its strategic digital communication capacity through algorithm literacy, data-driven engagement, sustained collaboration with external partners, and the development of ethical guidelines to strengthen public trust and institutional legitimacy in digital platforms.*

**Keywords:** Communication Strategy, POLRI, Public Narrative, Platform X, Digital Communication.

## INTRODUCTION

### Background

The rapid development of information and communication technology has transformed the fabric of life, making it more dynamic and digital. In the era of digital transformation, the way people communicate and seek information no longer relies solely on waiting for news from the media; individuals can now become producers of information and disseminate it across various social media platforms. This ultimately impacts the work patterns of various

institutions, both private and government, which must effectively carry out their public communication functions. Likewise, the Indonesian National Police (POLRI), as a law enforcement and public service institution, must adapt to these changes in accordance with the characteristics of a digital society (Hajizah, 2024)

Before digitalization, communication within the Indonesian National Police (POLRI) has often been criticized by the public for being rigid. POLRI only communicated one-way through traditional media, such as television and newspapers, holding press conferences when there was important information for the public. However, this communication model took too long to respond to emerging public issues. With the development of digital media with various platforms, POLRI has improved its public communication patterns by utilizing various social media platforms to be more responsive to emerging issues. Social media has become a strategic space for governments and political actors to disseminate messages, build institutional images, and respond directly to public opinion dynamics (Ningrim & Syarah, 2018). Social media has become a dominant arena for shaping public perception, where viral narratives often gain greater credibility than official institutional information, thereby influencing public trust toward law enforcement agencies (Ibrahim et al., 2025)

Platform X is a social media platform used by the Indonesian National Police (POLRI) due to its fast, real-time nature and its ability to shape public opinion through digital narratives. X offers a variety of features, including Tweets (short posts), Retweets (re-shares), Likes (likes), Replies, Direct Messages (DMs), and Hashtags (#). Hashtags themselves can help algorithms connect content with audiences interested in similar topics in tweets, making it easier to search for specific topics or categorize specific campaigns. Hashtag management is crucial in social media management, consolidating messages, building targeted public conversations, and promoting certain topics as trending topics. Hashtags are genre-defining contests for hegemony over meaning, where users align meanings with a hashtag in a way that is inherently competitive (Pond & Lewis, 2019)

The use of social media, which offers freedom of communication and comment, on the one hand, creates room for criticism of the Indonesian National Police (POLRI). For example, the hashtag #percumalaporpolisi (CumulativePolice Report) that became a trending topic due to public dissatisfaction with the POLRI's actions, which are often considered slow in responding to public complaints. Institutional crises faced by the Indonesian National Police often develop into reputational crises when communication responses are perceived as slow, defensive, or lacking transparency (Makdin et al., 2023).

Several studies have shown that POLRI's public communication is considered inconsistent and lacks a strategic communication strategy. According to (Supriyanto et al., 2021), POLRI's public communication tends to be reactive and slow in anticipating developing issues. Furthermore, (Supriyanto et al., 2021) found that the level of public trust in POLRI on social media is still in the medium category, which indicates the need to improve the quality of digital narratives to be more persuasive and humane. Previous studies on POLRI 4.0 indicate that digital infrastructure and inter-organizational collaboration are critical for improving institutional performance and public trust in the digital era

If this issue is not addressed, public trust in the Indonesian National Police (POLRI) could further erode. Challenges in government institutions often stem from complicated procedures, slow services, and weak communication practices, which directly affect public perception and institutional legitimacy (Yuliawati et al., 2019). Therefore, the Indonesian National Police (POLRI) continues to improve its public service and strive to improve its image, one of which is through more serious social media management. In managing social media, the POLRI does not only manage internally by the Indonesian National Police (POLRI), but it also collaborates with external partners to strengthen its digital media strategy (Supriyanto et al., 2021), particularly in terms of hashtag management to improve algorithm optimization, narrative planning, and the use of paid features like Trend Takeover.

This transformation in communication strategy demonstrates a paradigm shift from one-way, instructive communication to a more participatory one. The Indonesian National Police (POLRI) now not only delivers messages but also creates a dialogue with the public through direct responses, interactions in the comments section, and open public feedback and criticism. Digital transformation within POLRI is not merely technological, but also involves changes in organizational culture, human resources, and governance structures to enhance transparency and accountability (Supriyanto et al., 2021). This demonstrates POLRI's efforts to build a more humane, participatory, and open public narrative without neglecting publicly disclosed data. However, this strategic shift is certainly not easy, as it requires intense coordination across units, a division of roles between POLRI and partners, and adaptation to dynamic changes in digital platform algorithms. Therefore, POLRI is engaging partners who are proficient in digital media management to make digital communication more measurable and strategic.

Previous studies on government public relations have examined the strategic use of social media in public-sector communication. (Rachmawati, 2023; Supriyanto et al., 2021) highlights the role of social media as a key instrument for government public relations in disseminating information and engaging with the public, while (Lestari & Ramadan, 2025) emphasize the formation of public narratives and discourse dynamics within social media platforms. However, empirical evidence suggests that structural reforms alone are insufficient to resolve public trust issues. Despite continuous bureaucratic reform efforts, public complaints and negative perceptions toward the Indonesian National Police (POLRI) persist, indicating that communication gaps remain a significant challenge in strengthening institutional legitimacy and public trust (Yuliawati et al., 2019)

Unlike previous research that primarily focuses on external communication outputs and public narratives, this study emphasizes the process of change in work patterns and internal communication strategies within government institutions. Specifically, this research examines collaborative communication practices between the National Police Public Relations Division and external digital partners in managing platform-mediated communication. This internal-external collaboration dimension remains underexplored in institutional communication studies. By analyzing how strategic communication is operationalized through collaboration with external digital actors, this study contributes to the literature on public-sector strategic communication in platform-based environments.

By using a descriptive qualitative research method, the research will be more in-depth because qualitative research aims to find and describe an activity carried out (Perreault, 2011). In light of this background, the research question is: "How is the Transformation of the National Police's Communication Strategy in Building a Public Narrative through Platform X?" While the purpose of this research is "to analyze the National Police's Communication Strategy in Building a Public Narrative through Platform X."

## RESEARCH METHODS

In this study, the researcher used a descriptive qualitative research method, which is part of the qualitative research method that aims to provide a systematic and factual description of social phenomena based on the perspectives of the research informants. The study involved policy-level officials within the Indonesian National Police Public Relations Division, field implementers responsible for daily social media operations, and representatives from external digital partners. Informants were selected using purposive sampling based on their direct involvement in the planning, execution, and evaluation of communication strategies on Platform X. To ensure data credibility, triangulation was conducted across data sources (interviews, observations, and documentation) and informant categories. Member checking was applied by confirming key interpretations with selected informants to enhance analytical validity.

(Perreault, 2011) stated that qualitative descriptive research is an approach to explore

and understand the meaning given by individuals or groups to a social or humanitarian problem (Rongcai et al., n.d.). Meanwhile, (Hidayat, 2002) stated that descriptive qualitative research aims to understand the phenomena experienced by research subjects holistically and through descriptions in the form of words and language.

In this study, the researchers conducted interviews with informants from the Indonesian National Police (POLRI), namely the Head of Digital Information Dissemination Division, Senior Commissioner Rahmanto Sujudi, S.I.K., field implementers (IPTU Ida Bagus Made Yuda, S.Kom.), and an external partner, Syauqi, who manages issues and hashtags on POLRI's social media platforms.

The data collection technique in (Sugiyono, 2020) qualitative research was through interviews to directly explore the views, experiences, and interpretations of the informants. Furthermore, the researcher conducted observations by observing the empirical context of the collected data. The researcher also documented the data to obtain secondary data that could strengthen the interview and observation results. The data analysis technique used was Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña (Engle, 2015; Lestari & Ramadan, 2025), namely:

a. Data Reduction

The process of selecting, simplifying, and focusing on relevant raw data

b. Data Presentation

The reduced data is presented in the form of matrices, charts, or thematic narratives to facilitate understanding.

c. WithdrawalConclusion and Verification

Conclusions are made in stages, verified with field data through member check techniques (confirmation with informants), and compared with previous theories or research.

The next stage is, The researcher collects the same or similar data from different informants, documents, or contexts, and then compares them. Both differences and similarities in the findings become important materials for analysis

In this study, the researchers used the Strategic Communication Theory, which states that communication is not merely the delivery of messages but can also be used as a strategic tool to achieve organizational goals (Tyma, 2008). The theoretical assumption developed by Hallahan et al. is that communication in an organization is a managerial and tactical process, which plays a role in:

1. Building relationships with target audiences;

2. Directing public perception and opinion;

3. Achieving the organization's long-term goals, such as reputation, legitimacy, and public trust.

In this study, the use of strategic communication theory can be used as an analytical tool to examine the digital transformation of the Indonesian National Police (POLRI), which is a form of communication strategy adaptation to changes in media transformation. The use of platform X demonstrates a shift from informative communication using legacy media to participatory communication, which requires strategic planning and management. The theory enables an examination of how institutional goals, platform logics, and collaborative practices intersect in shaping public narratives and organizational legitimacy.

In this study, Strategic Communication Theory is used as an analytical framework to understand how the Indonesian National Police (POLRI) design, manage, and evaluate their digital communication practices on platform X as part of media transformation. This theory views communication not merely as an activity of information delivery, but as a managerial and strategic instrument directed toward achieving specific institutional goals.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Transformation of the Indonesian National Police's Communication Strategy in the Digital Era

The massive development of the internet and social media has transformed the ecosystem for information distribution and consumption. In this era of rapid communication development, virality, and audience intelligence in using social media require public institutions to adapt. The Indonesian National Police (POLRI), as a state institution whose authority and duties directly interact with the public, is required to be responsive and adaptive in carrying out its work. Responsiveness indicates that the POLRI must quickly respond to various issues related to its duties in maintaining public security and order. Issues that are not managed properly can escalate into crises, therefore government public relations must continuously monitor and manage public issues (Rachmawati, 2023). Without responsiveness, the POLRI will always be late in dealing with the dynamics of society. The POLRI will consistently fail to understand and resolve the problems faced by the community. Meanwhile, adaptability requires the POLRI to always adjust its various services to the public to these dynamics society itself and technological advances in various areas of life. Without adaptive capabilities, the Indonesian National Police (POLRI) will struggle to help the community resolve the various problems they face.

The Indonesian National Police (POLRI) must have responsive and adaptive capabilities in relation to the process of conveying information related to policies or explanations that must be conveyed by the POLRI to the public or vice versa, the POLRI can quickly receive various information from the public, both problems they face or various things that are input from the public to the POLRI. The duties and responsibilities for this message exchange process at the central level are mostly carried out by the POLRI Public Relations Division. The Public Relations Division of POLRI functions as the main actor responsible for coordinating crisis communication, ensuring message consistency, and maintaining institutional legitimacy (Makdin et al., 2023)

The POLRI Public Relations Division is required to have responsive and adaptive capabilities in the message exchange process involving the POLRI institution. One of the efforts made by the POLRI Public Relations Division is by managing various communication channels through various social media platforms, including managing social media X, as a POLRI communication strategy in building a public narrative. This requirement reflects not only operational necessity but also a form of institutional negotiation with public expectations and platform-driven communication norms

Therefore, the Indonesian National Police (POLRI), as an institution engaged in law enforcement, must be present in the digital space to monitor issues circulating in the public domain and respond to issues related to POLRI's performance on social media. The results of an interview with Inspector General Gatot Repli Handoko showed that the transformation of POLRI's communication strategy was driven by an awareness of changes in public behavior in consuming information. Social media is considered the most effective channel for reaching a wide audience quickly and interactively. Government public relations utilizes various media to maximize agenda building, such as big data, press conferences, websites, releases, Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube live streaming (Rachmawati, 2023). But, Platform X (Twitter) was chosen because of its real-time, open character, and its great potential in shaping public opinion through hashtags and online conversation trends. Networks assemble and mobilise through the activation of discourse within a wider media sphere of competing discourses.(Pond & Lewis, 2019)

According to Senior Commissioner of Police. Rahmanto Sujudi, SIK, Head of the Digital Information Dissemination Division of the Indonesian National Police Public Relations, social media utilization by the Indonesian National Police is not only a means of disseminating information, but also part of a public communication strategy to build trust and closeness with the community. In the context of Strategic Communication Theory, this step represents the organization's efforts to convey messages that are planned, consistent, and aligned with institutional goals (Hallahan et al., 2007). This finding supports the argument that contemporary public institutions must negotiate their authority within algorithm-driven environments, where public narratives are continuously co-produced by institutions, platforms, and audiences. In this

context, responsiveness and adaptability function not only as operational capacities, but as symbolic indicators of institutional credibility and trustworthiness.

This collaboration also reveals a shift in institutional power dynamics, where algorithmic visibility becomes a critical factor in public authority. While POLRI retains control over narrative substance, external partners play a strategic role in navigating platform logics that shape message reach and visibility. Such dynamics illustrate how public institutions increasingly operate within hybrid governance structures, where authority is co-produced through institutional legitimacy and platform-based algorithmic control.

The Indonesian National Police views its presence on platform X as part of a transformation towards two-way communication. The public is now not only a recipient of messages, but also plays an active role in shaping the narrative through interactions, responses, and criticisms that can be addressed by directly by the institution. Theoretically, this study extends Strategic Communication Theory by demonstrating how public institutions strategically adapt communication practices within algorithm-driven platforms. Practically, it offers insights into communication governance, cross-sector collaboration, and narrative management for public institutions navigating participatory digital environments.

#### **Management POLRI's Hashtag collaborates with External Partners.**

In the post-truth era, public institutions such as the Indonesian National Police face significant challenges in managing public opinion due to the rapid spread of misinformation, disinformation, and hoaxes through social media platforms (Ibrahim et al., 2025). The management of social media X carried out by the Indonesian National Police Public Relations Division aims to ensure that the hashtags they create and upload on social media can reach or be read by more people. This indicates that as much as possible the hashtag launched by the Indonesian National Police Public Relations Division must be able to enter the trending topic, or enter the ranks of hashtags that are widely read, discussed and retweeted by the public or netizens.

According to (Tolan, 2017) a good manner of communication within POLRI allows the public to form positive evaluations of the institution. For this reason, the process of planning, launching, monitoring, and evaluating the POLRI hashtag on the X social media platform must be carried out properly and regularly. Without good and regular hashtag management, of course a hashtag will be difficult to be read, discussed or retweeted by the public or netizens more widely or more. Without good and regular hashtag management, it will be very difficult for the POLRI hashtag on X social media to become a trending topic.

From an analytical standpoint, this collaboration also reveals changing power relations in public-sector communication. Algorithmic visibility emerges as a new form of symbolic power that influences how institutional authority is perceived and negotiated in digital spaces. Although POLRI maintains formal authority as a state institution, its ability to shape public narratives increasingly depends on its capacity to navigate platform logics that are largely controlled by private digital infrastructures. This condition aligns with broader discussions on platform governance, where public institutions operate within ecosystems that they do not fully control. As a result, communication strategies must balance institutional autonomy with algorithmic dependence, highlighting a new dimension of governance in digital public communication.

X's social media management within the Indonesian National Police Public Relations Division has been integrated, utilizing communication technology and a data management system. In this regard, the Indonesian National Police (POLRI) has partnered with PT. Cipta Sistem Integrasi (CSI) since 2024. PT Cipta Sistem Integrasi is a company experienced in information technology and systems integration, focusing on the public sector and across industries.

Based on an interview with Senior Commissioner of Police Rahmanto Sujudi, SIK, partner involvement is necessary because they possess technical expertise in digital optimization, an understanding of social media algorithms, and the ability to prepare communication materials quickly and strategically. This collaboration allows the Indonesian National Police (POLRI) to maintain message quality while expanding public reach. Researchers' findings from the field also indicate that through collaboration with external partners who are experts in their fields, the

Indonesian National Police (POLRI) can develop a co-creative approach that emphasizes collaboration in data analysis, content strategy development, and campaign reporting.

External partners play a role in providing analytical insights, audience segmentation, and digital campaign management, while the Indonesian National Police Public Relations Division retains control over the substance of the message and institutional values. This collaboration is regulated through an official procurement mechanism (LPSE), which ensures accountability and transparency. According to sources from the Public Relations Division, this working model not only improves technical efficiency but also helps the Indonesian National Police adapt to changing algorithms and the dynamics of public opinion on social media. This aligns with the findings of (Hallahan et al., 2007), which emphasize that an effective communication strategy requires cross-actor coordination and institutional synergy.

Poorly managed crisis communication can have long-term consequences for institutional reputation, even after the crisis itself has subsided (Makdin et al., 2023). A resource person from the partner explained that with the new workflow, it is easier for partners to provide input on narratives that are in line with the X algorithm. This makes the communication process more efficient and the results more effective. This collaboration reflects the practice of strategic co-creation as proposed by (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004) where the value of public communication is formed through interactions between institutions, partners, and the public. In the context of the Indonesian National Police (POLRI), this collaboration helps create relevant, adaptive, and data-driven narratives. In addition, this collaboration marks a shift in organizational culture within the POLRI from a hierarchical model to a networked communication model, where communication strategies are produced through synergy across internal and external actors.

In managing X's social media, external partners consistently plan, create, launch, monitor, and evaluate each hashtag based on a data management system. This indicates that the hashtags planned, created, launched, monitored, and evaluated are not solely based on the subjectivity of those involved in X's social media management, but rather on data analysis calculations based on communication technology. However, coordination with the Indonesian National Police's public relations division is essential.

### **Transformation of Police Communication and Public Narrative**

The transformation of Indonesian National Police (POLRI) communications in the digital era is not only related to changes in channels and technology, but also closely related to how the institution builds a public narrative, namely efforts to construct image, meaning, and trust through strategic and planned digital communications. Within the framework of Strategic Communication Theory, communication is considered a strategic organizational instrument for influencing public perception and establishing social legitimacy (Hallahan et al., 2007).

Likewise, the Indonesian National Police (POLRI) often creates narratives aimed at building positive public opinion and image for the institution. It not only contains institutional information, but also attempts to define social realities regarding police professionalism, transparency, and humanism in the digital space. This change reflects a paradigm shift from bureaucratic communication to participatory and dialogue-based communication. Platform X (Twitter) has become the primary arena through which the Indonesian National Police (POLRI) builds and maintains its public narrative through three pillars of digital strategy: organic, paid, and co-creative. As explained by (Tolan, 2017), institutions are judged based on their ability to communicate effectively, demonstrate proper behavior, and deliver excellent service to society.

Based on the results of interviews with the Indonesian National Police Public Relations Division, the Division of Cooperation and Responsibilities between the Indonesian National Police and External Partners in Managing the POLRI Hashtag on the Social Media Platform "X" there is a division of tasks where the Indonesian National Police Public Relations Division is responsible for the direction of the narrative, communication themes, and implementation supervision. Partners are tasked with assisting in the development of technical strategies, preparing digital materials, conducting optimization, and providing reports on the results of hashtag performance analytics. In carrying out activities, various obstacles occurred. This is suspected to be due to the need for intense communication between the Indonesian National Police Public Relations Division and external partners. Communication plays a central role in

organizational change, as strategic communication connects institutional culture, decision-making processes, and adaptation to environmental change (Hallahan et al., 2007).

The main obstacle is related to the coordination time in determining urgent narratives or adjusting content formats to changes in social media algorithms. However, these obstacles can be overcome through intensive communication and real-time coordination between the Indonesian National Police team and partners. According to (Ibrahim et al., 2025) proactive communication strategies, including the use of data analytics and continuous narrative building, are essential for public relations units to anticipate misinformation rather than merely reacting to viral issues.

Comparing public opinion on social media with official government perspectives is essential to assess the alignment between policy priorities and public expectations toward the police institution. It causes communication failures within law enforcement institutions reflect not only technical issues but also deeper organizational and structural challenges that affect public credibility (Pamungkas, 2022). Based on interviews with field implementers and partners, the Indonesian National Police (POLRI) positioned an organic strategy as the primary foundation for building a public narrative. This strategy was implemented through:

1. Identifying public issues and emerging conversations,
2. Crafting a narrative that is easily accepted by the platform's algorithm, and
3. Engage authentic accounts to strengthen engagement.

For example, when negative hashtags like #PercumaLaporPolisi emerged, the Indonesian National Police (POLRI) responded with counter-narratives like #POLRISesuaiProsedur. POLRI not only produced counter-messages but also shifted the direction of public conversation through organic participation and direct dialogue with users. These findings suggest that public narratives are effective when they are able to "connect institutional values with public experiences and aspirations." In this context, POLRI strives to present itself as an institution that is open to criticism and responsive to public aspirations, thus establishing a narrative of trust and social closeness. Furthermore, POLRI monitors public conversations and sentiments in real time to adapt the narratives it constructs to the dynamics of discourse on social media. This process demonstrates a transformation from one-way communication to algorithm-based communication and public participation.

*"We monitor public conversations constantly, especially on topics involving institutional names. From there, we determine the appropriate time to promote a positive narrative."* (interview with Sigit, an executive from the Indonesian National Police Public Relations Division).

Thus, the Indonesian National Police's organic strategy is not only about content, but also about how the Indonesian National Police become part of the digital social conversation and build a sense of presence among the online community.

### **POLRI Communication Strategy by Creating Organic Audiences and Paid Media**

Based on interviews with field implementers and partners, the Indonesian National Police (POLRI) positions organic strategies as the primary foundation for building a public narrative. These findings demonstrate that POLRI's public narrative connects institutional values with public experiences and aspirations. Strategic communication is defined as the purposeful use of communication by organizations to influence audiences in order to advance organizational missions and objectives (Hallahan et al., 2007). In this context, POLRI strives to present itself as an institution open to criticism and responsive to public aspirations.

This creates a narrative of trust and social closeness. Efforts to restore institutional image cannot rely solely on clarification or symbolic messaging, but require consistent public communication and transparent engagement with society (Pamungkas, 2022). Furthermore, the National Police's public relations division implements a control system by monitoring conversations and public sentiment in real time, ensuring the narrative can be adapted to the dynamics of social media discourse. This process demonstrates a transformation from one-way communication to algorithm-based communication and public participation (Rachmawati, 2023).

*"We monitor public conversations constantly, especially on topics involving institutional names. From there, we determine the right time to promote a positive narrative." (Interview with Sigit, Field Officer from the National Police Public Relations Division)*

The determination of a topic or issue to be raised as a Polri hashtag on social media X is indeed based on algorithmic data about conversations or issues that are trending on X at that time. Based on (Tolan, 2017), the public generally receives police-related information through mass media, including print, electronic, and internet-based platforms. Typically, the algorithmic data about the issue is provided by partners in the form of several suggestions about what is trending at that time. Armed with this data, the message the Polri wants to convey is then packaged into a hashtag by looking at the trend of issues that are currently trending topics. Thus, the determination of the hashtag and the editorial of the Polri hashtag on social media X, usually close to or can be linked to hashtags that are trending topics at that time.

*"We always provide data on what's trending on X when the Indonesian National Police launch their hashtag. Then, we also submit suggestions, several hashtag ideas based on the trending issues." (Interview with Syauqi, external partner).*

Once the hashtag is determined and produced, the hashtag launch strategy is also carried out by calculating existing algorithmic data, especially related to the timing of the hashtag launch. Indeed, the Indonesian National Police (Polri) usually has its own agenda, where the hashtag launch time is adjusted to when the message must be conveyed according to the Polri agenda. Nevertheless, hashtag managers still strive for the right time to launch the hashtag based on algorithmic data, the needs of the public or netizens, when the audience is usually most likely to view or consume social media X. Determining the right timing allows the hashtag launch strategy to become a trending topic and can be prepared more optimally beforehand. "The time to upload the hashtag, usually consult with friends in the Polri Public Relations Division. However, we also provide more appropriate times, with various considerations. It is proven that the right timing is based on

*"With the existing algorithm, it will be easier for hashtags to become trending topics"* (Interview with Syauqi, external partner managing the X POLRI social media platform).

However, a stronger strategy in managing the Polri hashtag on social media X is a monitoring system that began in 2025. The Polri Public Relations Division as an internal party and partners as external parties in managing Polri's X social media, jointly monitor the performance of the hashtags they launched on the X social media platform. Monitoring is carried out by looking at the algorithm and data of both the POLRI hashtag, as well as other hashtags that exist at the same time as the POLRI hashtag is circulating, then analyzing whether it is necessary to improve the strategy, to boost the performance of the POLRI hashtag.

*"We may make changes to our existing hashtag strategy if, based on performance monitoring, the hashtag isn't strong enough to become a trending topic. Typically, such a change in strategy can boost the hashtag's performance afterward." (Interview with Syauqi, X Polri's social media management partner)*

Thus, the Indonesian National Police's organic strategy is not only about content, but also how the Indonesian National Police (POLRI) becomes part of the digital world conversation and builds a sense of presence within the online community. Sense of presence itself is a person's subjective feeling or experience that they are truly present or involved in an environment, even if that environment is mediated (mediated by digital, virtual, or long-distance communication). (Hallahan et al., 2007) argue that strategic communication is widely adopted not only by corporations but also by government institutions and public organizations to manage public discourse, legitimacy, and trust. Therefore, even though communicating through digital media, the Indonesian National Police (POLRI) hopes that the audience is indeed present to communicate with the POLRI and build understanding on emerging issues.

In addition to organic audience management, the Indonesian National Police (POLRI) also utilizes paid media strategies to strengthen the public narrative's exposure. Through the Trend Takeover feature and ad placements, the Indonesian National Police Public Relations Division ensures that strategic messages reach a broader and more segmented audience. However, the

use of paid media is not only about message amplification, but also about managing meaning. By placing POLRI messages in trending topics, the POLRI institutional narrative gains a visibility advantage, helping shape public perception in the early stages of opinion formation. Its related to (Kusumayantie, 2005) statement that building a positive police image cannot rely solely on structural authority, but must be supported by transparent communication and constructive engagement with the community.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis above, this study reveals that the transformation of the Indonesian National Police (POLRI) communication strategy in the digital era is the result of institutional adaptation to the dynamics of the new media ecosystem that demands openness, interactivity, and speed in the dissemination of information. Through the X platform (Twitter), the Indonesian National Police (POLRI) has shifted the communication paradigm from a bureaucratic one-way model to a participatory two-way communication based on public dialogue. This strategy demonstrates that the Indonesian National Police (POLRI) is not only striving to be present digitally but also to build a strong sense of presence in the virtual public space. Through fast, responsive, and data-driven interactions, the Indonesian National Police (POLRI) has succeeded in establishing an image as an institution that is adaptive to technology while simultaneously approaching the public through humanistic and transparent digital communication.

Furthermore, this study confirms that the success of the Indonesian National Police's public communication on social media is determined not only by message content, but also by institutional synergy, cross-actor communication governance (Indonesian National Police-partners-public), and the ability to adapt to digital platform algorithms. Thus, the transformation of the Indonesian National Police's communication strategy represents a concrete manifestation of the modernization of public institutions in managing narratives, trust, and legitimacy in the digital era.

The expansion of digital ecosystems has redefined how institutions distribute and consume information. For a public institution like POLRI, whose duties are closely tied to social order and public service, responsiveness and adaptability are essential. The institution's credibility increasingly depends on its ability to engage in timely and transparent communication.

Interviews with key officials, including Inspector General Gatot Repli Handoko, indicate that the transformation of POLRI's communication strategy is driven by changes in public information consumption. Social media is now considered the most efficient medium for reaching audiences rapidly and interactively. Platform X (Twitter) was chosen for its real-time features and its capacity to influence opinion through trending topics and hashtag engagement.

Senior Commissioner of Police Rahmanto Sujudi, S.I.K., Head of the Digital Information Dissemination Division, emphasized that social media serves not only as a news outlet but also as a strategic public engagement tool. This approach aligns with Hallahan's concept of strategic communication, in which institutions must manage consistent and goal-oriented narratives that reinforce their legitimacy and reputation.

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