


Overview of Using Instagram as a Marketing Media of Apotek X Sleman

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| Article Info | ABSTRACT |
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| Keywords: Instagram, Digital Marketing, Pharmacy, Audience Engagement | The development of digital technology has encouraged business actors, including pharmacies, to utilize social media as an effective marketing tool. Instagram, as a visual platform with a large number of active users, offers great potential in building interactions with consumers, increasing brand awareness, and expanding the reach of service and product information. This study aims to describe how Apotek X Sleman utilizes Instagram as a marketing medium throughout 2024, as well as identifying the types of content posted, audience responses, and potential strategies that can be optimized. This study uses a quantitative descriptive method with direct observation techniques on the official Instagram account of Apotek X. The data collected includes the number and type of content posted each month, user interactions in the form of likes and comments, and grouping comments based on sentiment (positive, negative, neutral) and question form. The data were analysed using Microsoft Excel to present a numerical and visual picture of the pharmacy's digital marketing activities. The results of the study show that during the period from January to December 2024, Apotek X published 227 original content without reposts from external parties, with the dominant content being drug information. This type of content also received the most responses from users, reaching more than 1,400 responses. No negative comments or complaints were found on all the content analysed. The highest spike in interactions occurred in June, which was likely triggered by promotional content or relevant health issues at that time. In conclusion, the use of Instagram by Apotek X has proven to be quite effective in building audience engagement and maintaining a positive image of the pharmacy. The development of relevant, educational, and trending content has proven to play an important role in increasing the effectiveness of the pharmacy's digital marketing strategy. |
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INTRODUCTION

The use of social media in marketing has undergone a significant transformation, especially in relation to the needs and behaviour of consumers that continue to change in the digital era. Instagram, as one of the social media platforms with a very large user base in Indonesia, has become an effective means for pharmacies to convey information about their products and

promotions (Putra & Salsabil, 2023). The visual power of Instagram allows pharmacies to showcase products and services in an engaging and informative way that can grab consumers' attention and increase sales engagement (Marufi et al., 2025). In addition, research shows that the use of Instagram in marketing strategies has the potential to take advantage of the viral phenomenon and electronic word of mouth, which has been proven to significantly strengthen brand awareness (Karina et al., 2022). This is in line with the findings that interesting and viral content has a significant influence on consumer purchasing decisions in the health sector (Karina et al., 2022).

Competition in the pharmacy industry is increasing as the digitalization trend continues to grow. A study has identified that pharmacies that integrate digital marketing strategies into their operations can increase their competitiveness through innovation and adaptation to consumer behaviour (Putri et al., 2024). Adopting digital marketing, including the use of Instagram, allows pharmacies to reach a wider audience, conduct more precise market segmentation and increase interaction with customers (Marufi et al., 2025). This is important because the ability of pharmacies to compete is not only based on product quality, but also on how well they are able to meet the expectations and needs of increasingly digitally connected consumers (Putri et al., 2024).

An effective marketing strategy through Instagram includes the use of educational and interactive content, as well as collaboration with influencers to increase visibility and consumer trust (Susanto et al., 2020). Research shows that this collaborative approach can leverage public trust in influencers to increase brand trust and loyalty (Masula & Winarno, 2025). Therefore, pharmacies need to consider partnering with relevant influencers in the healthcare sector to expand their marketing reach (Ramadhan et al., 2024). This will give significant competitive advantage amidst intense competition with competitors who are also adopting digital marketing.

In designing a marketing strategy, it is important for pharmacies to conduct an in-depth SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis. By utilizing this analysis, pharmacies can better understand their internal strengths and weaknesses, as well as identify opportunities and threats from the external environment (Putri et al., 2024). For example, strengths such as a good brand reputation and strategic location can be leveraged to strengthen marketing efforts on Instagram, while threats from other pharmacies that also utilize the same platform need to be anticipated with more innovative strategies (Mardiani et al., 2023). It is also important for pharmacies to apply ethical principles in their marketing on Instagram. The application of business ethics and professionalism in marketing communications can strengthen the image of pharmacies in the eyes of consumers and increase their loyalty (Putri et al., 2024). It is also important to ensure that all information conveyed via Instagram is accurate, clear and not misleading, thus maintaining consumer trust in the pharmacy (Putri et al., 2024). In facing competition, maintaining a good reputation through solid business ethics will be a strong foundation for developing long-term relationships with consumers.

Challenges in pharmacy marketing strategies, especially related to health legislation and ethics, require serious attention from all stakeholders in the industry. One of the main

challenges is compliance with regulations governing the promotion and marketing of medicines, which vary from country to country and are often complex. For example, in some countries, strict regulations apply to the promotion of certain medicines, so pharmacies must ensure that all marketing materials used do not violate existing regulations, including laws regarding advertising to the public that limit the information that can be conveyed about pharmaceutical products (Zack, 2014). In addition, there is also pressure from the pharmaceutical industry that can influence marketing practices in pharmacies. A study shows that the influence of pharmaceutical promotions can lead to unethical behaviour, such as the use of incentives to encourage prescriptions or sales of certain products (Mathews et al., 2020). This creates an ethical dilemma for pharmacists who are expected to provide the best service to patients while maintaining a balance of running profitable business practices. Research analysing ethics in pharmaceutical marketing shows that a lack of training and understanding of professional ethics can lead pharmacists to engage in less than ethical practices (Orayj et al., 2022). Thus, it is important for pharmacies to not only focus on innovative marketing strategies, but also to educate and train their workforce on applicable regulations and professional ethics in order to carry out marketing in an appropriate and responsible manner (Tan et al., 2020).

Creative and consistent content development is key to successful Instagram marketing for pharmacies. Quality content, including relevant health information, customer testimonials, and attractive product photos, can increase engagement and capture the attention of your audience (Susanto et al., 2020). Research shows that visual elements in digital marketing are very important, especially on the Instagram platform, where high-quality images and videos can make products more attractive (Asharudin & Dewi, 2021). In addition, good interactions through comments and direct messages on Instagram can strengthen audience engagement and build a loyal community around a pharmacy brand (Ramadhan et al., 2024). Pharmacies need to adapt and update their strategies continuously to ensure that they remain relevant to changing market trends and technology. Using analytics tools to measure the effectiveness of marketing campaigns on Instagram is essential (Masula & Winarno, 2025). By understanding engagement data, reach, and conversion of the marketing strategies implemented, pharmacies can identify what works and what needs to be improved. (Susanto et al., 2020). This not only helps in optimizing ongoing marketing campaigns but also provides valuable insights for developing future marketing strategies.

Instagram plays a crucial role in building branding and customer loyalty for pharmacies through dynamic and engaging interactions between pharmacies and audiences. Research shows that customer engagement with brands through social media platforms such as Instagram can significantly increase consumer loyalty to that brand (Cahyadi & Tunjungsari, 2023). Through engaging visual content and interactive marketing campaigns, pharmacies are able to build closer relationships with their customers, educate them about products, and provide relevant health information effectively (Ellitan et al., 2022). When users feel engaged with the brand and gain added value from the interaction, it increases their trust in the pharmacy and creates higher loyalty (Ellitan et al., 2022). Providing content that is not only promotional, but also informative, gives pharmacies the opportunity to achieve greater brand

awareness among consumers and encourage participation in brand activities (Schivinski & Dabrowski, 2016). In addition, positive interactions on social media contribute to the creation of a better brand image, which can increase customer loyalty and encourage them to recommend the pharmacy to others (Sulaiman et al., 2021). Thus, the use of Instagram not only increases the visibility of the pharmacy brand but also builds stronger customer loyalty through active communication and shared values between the pharmacy and consumers.

The use of Instagram as a pharmacy marketing medium provides many opportunities to increase competitiveness in an increasingly competitive market. By understanding consumer behaviour, implementing innovative and ethical marketing strategies, and adapting quickly to change, pharmacies can create a sustainable competitive advantage. It is important for every pharmacy to continue to learn and innovate in using social media as an effective and efficient marketing tool in this digital era. This study aims to describe the use of Instagram as a marketing medium by Apotek X Sleman. The problems to be studied include several aspects related to the pharmacy's social media activities. First, this study will identify the number of responses obtained through like and comments on the Instagram content of the X Sleman pharmacy. Second, this study will explore the types of content posted by the pharmacy on their Instagram account. Furthermore, this study will analyse the number of contents posted each month throughout 2024, from January to December. In addition, this study will also examine the content that is most in demand by the Instagram followers of the Apotek X Sleman, as well as the number of complaints received on each content posted by the pharmacy during the same period. Thus, this study aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the marketing strategies implemented by pharmacies through Instagram social media.

METHODS

The research design is quantitative descriptive. Descriptive research aims to describe or describe the situation objectively. Quantitative data were obtained from the number of posts, the number of posts based on the type of content, and the number of interactions in the form of likes and comments uploaded by Apotek X Yogyakarta on the Instagram platform from January to December 2024.

Table 1. Sampling design

| Inclusion | Exclusion |
|---|---|
| 1. Apotek X Instagram post | 1. Apotek X Posts on social media other than Instagram |
| 2. Posts in any form (video, image, or infographic) | 2. Re-post or results of sharing posts of Apotek X by other users |
| 3. All comments, whether in the form of questions or interactions in the form of other writings | 3. Apotek X Posts before and after 2024 |

The data source is a primary data source, namely direct observation on the Instagram platform. Quantitative data is obtained by counting the number of posts, determining the type of content to be able to count the number of posts for each type of content, counting the

number of likes, and counting the number of positive comments, negative comments, and writing questions.

Data analysis in this study uses descriptive methods. Quantitative in the form of numbers processed using Microsoft Excel to get an overview of the number of posts each month, the number of posts for each type of content, the number of interactions (likes) and comments for each type of content.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Posting activity on the Apotek X Sleman Instagram platform started on September 20, 2020, and has been actively carried out. As of May 2025, there were 904 posts recorded with 387 followers. The management of the Apotek X Sleman Instagram social media is carried out by the pharmacy associate and does not involve content creators in accordance with the direction of PT K-24 management for the type of content, content, how to create content, and frequency of posts. There are no posts that are reposts from external accounts, so everything is a creative idea from the pharmacy.

Table 2. Types of Instagram Content from Apotek X in 2024

| Month | Content Type | | | | |
|-----------|--------------------|------------------|--|-------------------------|---------------|
| | Health Information | Drug Information | Other Pharmaceutical Preparation Information | Pharmaceutical Services | Other Content |
| January | 5 | 6 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| February | 1 | 6 | 5 | 2 | 3 |
| March | 4 | 7 | 5 | 2 | 5 |
| April | 2 | 8 | 6 | 2 | 2 |
| May | 2 | 7 | 6 | 2 | 4 |
| June | 1 | 4 | 2 | 6 | 3 |
| July | 2 | 14 | 3 | 7 | 1 |
| August | 2 | 6 | 3 | 4 | 2 |
| September | 3 | 6 | 4 | 2 | 3 |
| October | 3 | 5 | 4 | 5 | 4 |
| November | 2 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 3 |
| December | 1 | 4 | 6 | 5 | 2 |
| Amount | 28 | 76 | 48 | 42 | 33 |

The number of responses to an Instagram content can be seen from the number of likes and comments below the image or video on the post. Likes are symbolized by a heart icon, while comments are symbolized by a round conversation quote icon. Where both have numbers next to each icon indicating the amount. To get the number of positive or negative comments and questions, open the comments column to read each comment and categorize it based on sentiment—positive, negative, or neutral. Positive comments usually contain praise

or support, while negative comments tend to contain criticism or complaints, and neutral comments can be general statements without strong emotions. Comments that contain questions can be recognized by the presence of a question mark or a sentence that requires an answer.

Table 3. Number and Type of Responses from Instagram Apotek X in 2024

| Month | Response Types | | | | |
|-----------|----------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------|----------|
| | Likes | “Neutral” comments | Positive Comments | Negative Comments | Question |
| January | 318 | 38 | 6 | 0 | 16 |
| February | 310 | 13 | 3 | 0 | 9 |
| March | 407 | 4 | 3 | 0 | 1 |
| April | 320 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| May | 355 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| June | 283 | 0 | 18 | 0 | 0 |
| July | 530 | 30 | 25 | 0 | 5 |
| August | 324 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| September | 239 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| October | 377 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| November | 223 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| December | 387 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Amount | 4.073 | 89 | 34 | 0 | 32 |

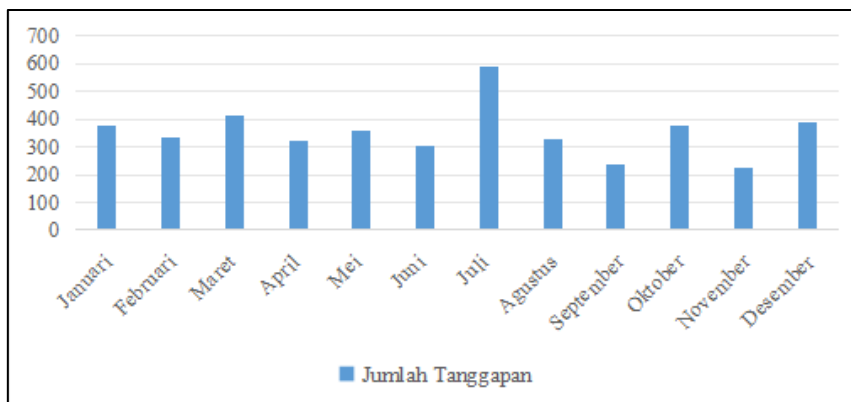


Figure 2. Graph of the number of interactions or responses to posts

Picture and table above show the number of responses (likes and comments) to the Instagram post of Apotek X Sleman in 2024. Based on the graph, it can be seen that the number of responses to Instagram posts varies each month. In July, there was a very significant spike with almost 600 responses, much higher than other months. This peak may reflect more interesting content or greater relevance in that month. In addition, other months, such as January to June, shows a relatively stable and balanced number of responses, with fluctuations that are not too significant.

Overall, the use of Instagram as a marketing medium by Apotek X seems quite effective in attracting the attention of the audience. Although there are certain months with fewer

responses, this graph shows that although the number of responses varies, overall, there is consistent interaction throughout the year. This could indicate that the audience continues to engage despite fluctuations in the number of responses. The content posted has likely succeeded in creating interest for the audience even though the level of interaction is not always high.

One thing that needs to be considered is data in July, which recorded the highest number of responses. It is possible that in this month there is content or promotion that is very relevant to the audience or takes advantage of certain momentum, such as special offers or the latest product information. Furthermore, Apotek X can utilize this insight by trying to analyse content in certain months to increase the level of interaction in other months. The use of Instagram as a marketing platform can be more optimal if the content uploaded is adjusted to the interests of the audience and relevant events.

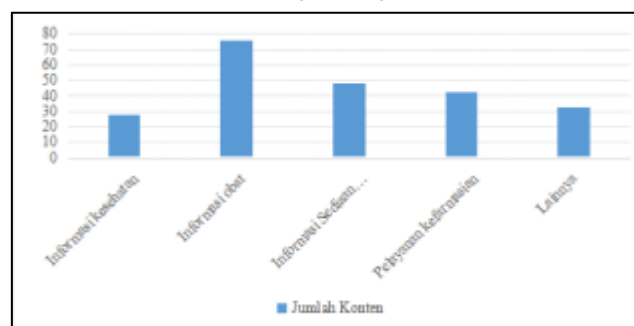


Figure 3. Distribution graph of content types and quantity

Based on the graph displayed, it can be seen that the type of content most frequently posted by Apotek X Sleman on Instagram is content in the Drug Information category, which is recorded as almost reaching 80 posts. This shows that Apotek X focuses on educating the audience about the medicinal products sold in the pharmacy. This is in accordance with the main purpose of the pharmacy as a health service provider that provides clear and useful information about medicines, dosages, side effects, and how to use them. Meanwhile, the Health Information content category was recorded as the least, only around 28 posts. Although it is important to provide general health information, this smaller proportion may indicate that Apotek X Sleman prefers to provide more specific information about medicinal products. This could also reflect that the audience is more interested in more specific topics such as medicines than general health.

Other types of content, such as the category of information on other pharmaceutical preparations and pharmaceutical services, are in the middle with a relatively balanced amount of content, around 48 posts. This shows that pharmacies also provide information related to specific health conditions or the services they offer, although not as much as content related to medicines. Overall, this graph shows that Apotek X Sleman focuses more on drug education, while health topics and counselling are also still given attention but in smaller portions.

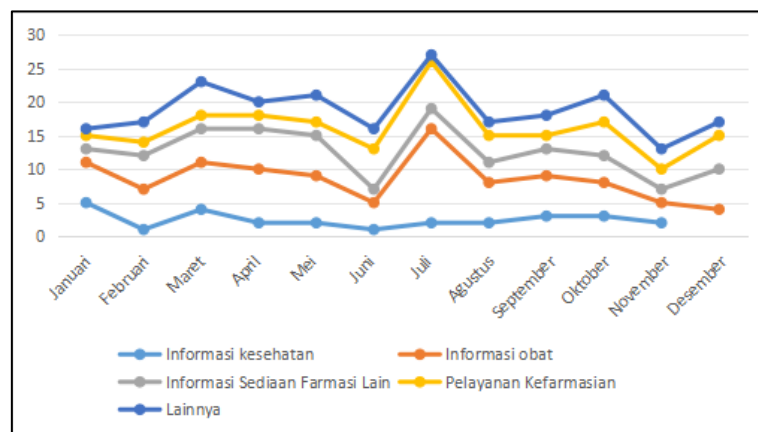


Figure 4. Graph of posts by content type each month during 2024

Based on the graph in Figure 4, it can be seen that the number of contents posted on Instagram Apotek X during the period from January to December 2024 fluctuated every month. This graph presents data on the number of contents based on the type of information published, namely: Health information, Drug information, Information on other pharmaceutical preparations, pharmaceutical services, and Others. Each category shows different trends, but overall, it can be seen that the highest total number of posts occurred in July, while the lowest number of posts was recorded in February and November. This shows that digital promotional activities through Instagram are not carried out constantly but rather adjust to certain momentum which is most likely related to promotional programs, health holidays, or special marketing agendas.

In more detail, in July there was a significant spike in almost all categories, especially in the content of "Pharmaceutical Services" and "Other Pharmaceutical Preparation Information" which reached the highest peak compared to other months. This indicates an intensive campaign in that month, which could be related to special activities such as a month of promotion or pharmacy education. In contrast, February and November showed a drastic decline in all categories, reflecting a decrease in digital activity or a shift in the focus of promotion to other media. The type of "Other" content was relatively stable and low throughout the year, indicating that the main content remained focused on core pharmacy services such as drug education and pharmacy services.

Based on the graph, it can also be concluded that Instagram is used by Apotek X strategically to convey various types of information to the public. The most consistent and dominant content throughout the year is "Other Pharmaceutical Preparation Information" and "Pharmaceutical Services", each of which shows high intensity in most months. This shows that the pharmacy prioritizes education and promotion of its pharmaceutical products and services through digital platforms. Thus, the amount of content posted each month reflects not only the frequency of Instagram use as a marketing medium, but also a content strategy that is tailored to the communication objectives and information needs of the public each month. This graph provides a clear picture of how Apotek X manages its Instagram account to support marketing activities and customer service.

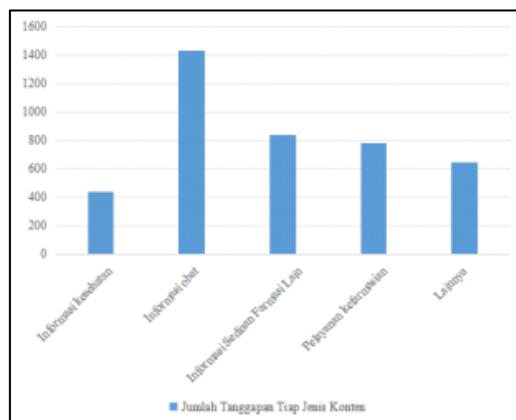


Figure 5. Graph of the number of responses obtained from each type of content

Based on the graph of the number of responses for each type of content on the Apotek X Sleman Instagram account, it can be interpreted that the type of content that is most in demand by the audience is drug information, which shows the highest number of responses compared to other categories. The number of responses in this category reached more than 1,400, far exceeding other types of content such as health information, information on other pharmaceutical preparations, pharmaceutical services, and other categories. This shows that pharmacy Instagram followers are more interested and actively respond to content that provides specific and relevant information about drugs, both in terms of benefits, how to use, side effects, and storage tips.

Meanwhile, other types of content such as information on other pharmaceutical preparations and pharmaceutical services also received a significant number of responses, although not as high as drug information. This shows that users also show interest in information related to services that they can access directly, such as pharmaceutical consultations, purchasing information, and education on services at pharmacies. On the other hand, health information and other content had the lowest number of responses, indicating that although health topics are important, the way the content is presented may be less interesting or less specific, thus not encouraging high interaction from followers.

From this data, it can be concluded that to increase the effectiveness of utilizing Instagram as a marketing medium, Apotek X Sleman should focus more on developing drug information content that is packaged in an attractive, educational, and relevant manner to the needs of the community. This content not only attracts attention but also builds trust and the professional image of the pharmacy in providing evidence-based health education. On the other hand, pharmacy social media managers can re-evaluate the strategy of presenting content in categories that are less in demand so that they can be optimized, for example with a more attractive visual approach, communicative language, and integration with current health issues. Thus, Instagram is not only an information channel, but also a strategic means of interaction to build customer loyalty and improve the image of the pharmacy.

Based on the results of observations and analysis of all content uploaded to the Apotek X Sleman Instagram account from January to December 2024, no negative comments or

complaints were found from followers or other users on each published post. All interactions recorded in the form of comments showed positive, neutral responses, or in the form of informative questions and did not indicate dissatisfaction with the services, products, or information shared. This indicates that during the one-year period, there were no complaints submitted directly through the Instagram comments column, so it can be concluded that the number of complaints on the Apotek X Sleman Instagram content each month from January to December 2024 was zero. The absence of negative comments shows that the management of digital content and interactions by the pharmacy through social media is running well and can maintain a positive image in the eyes of the public.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that the use of Instagram as a marketing medium by Apotek X Sleman has proven effective in increasing interaction with the audience and building a positive image of the pharmacy. Throughout 2024, the pharmacy consistently produced original content that mostly focused on drug information, which proved to be the most popular type of content with the highest response from followers. The absence of negative comments or complaints indicates that the management of digital content and interactions is carried out professionally and in accordance with audience expectations. Digital marketing activities also show variations in the number and type of content that adapts to certain momentum, such as promotions or educational campaigns, which contribute to increased interaction, especially in certain months such as June and July. These results confirm that a targeted, relevant, and educational content strategy can strengthen relationships with consumers and increase the competitiveness of pharmacies amidst rapid digital developments. Therefore, Instagram not only functions as a communication channel, but also as a strategic means of expanding marketing reach and building customer loyalty sustainably.

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