

# The Utilization of Instagram Social Media as a Promotional and Portfolio Medium: A Media Ecology Perspective

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## ABSTRACT

This study explores the use of Instagram as a promotional and portfolio medium by Buka Project Studios through the lens of media ecology theory. The objective of this research is to analyze the content strategies implemented by the Social Media Officer and identify challenges in maintaining visual identity consistency. This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach, with data collected through in-depth interviews with the Social Media Officer and Creative Lead. The findings reveal that Instagram serves as a dynamic digital ecosystem that integrates soft-selling content and portfolio displays to enhance audience engagement and expand professional networks. The research also highlights key challenges in striking a balance between trend adaptation and brand consistency. These findings contribute to the development of media ecology theory in the context of social media marketing, offering practical recommendations for creative industry practitioners to optimize their digital branding strategies.

**Keywords:** Instagram, Media Ecology, Digital Marketing, Visual Identity, Creative Industry.

## I. Introduction

In today's digital era, social media has evolved into one of the main tools for building communication and brand image. The increasing number of internet users in Indonesia presents significant opportunities for companies to utilize social media as a strategic channel for promotion, interaction, and information dissemination (We Are Social & Meltwater, 2023). Instagram, as a visually oriented platform, has become one of the most popular and effective social media tools to reach audiences through creative and interactive content. According to De Vries, L., Gensler, S., & Leeflang, 2017), social media platforms such as Instagram can significantly influence consumer engagement levels as well as overall company performance. In the context of visual communication, Instagram enables companies to present their portfolios interactively, consistently, and aesthetically, thereby strengthening the audience's perception of brand credibility (Tuten, T. L., & Solomon, 2017). Through features such as feeds, stories, reels, and IG Live, companies can showcase their creative processes, outcomes, and client testimonials directly to their audience.

Buka Project Studios, a visual production house serving clients in the Food and Beverages (F&B) industry, utilizes its Instagram account @bukaprojectstudios not only as a promotional medium but also as a digital portfolio displaying high-quality visual works. Established in 2000, Buka Project Studios has executed visual campaigns for various FnB brands such as @mainstreet, @weekenders, @prouve, and others, with its

Instagram account currently followed by 55 users. The account is managed by a Social Media Officer (SMO), who is responsible for designing content strategies, maintaining visual identity, and ensuring brand consistency. A study by Schivinski, B., & Dabrowski (2016) highlighted that brand communication through social media can enhance brand equity, yet few studies have explored how creative industries like Buka Project Studios strategically leverage Instagram for dual functions—promotion and portfolio. On the other hand, social media management involves more than just visual content creation; it also requires the ability to interpret metrics such as engagement rate, impressions, and conversion. These measurements are essential to objectively evaluate the success of a digital communication strategy (Chaffey & Chadwick-Ellis, 2016). One of the main challenges faced by the SMO is balancing promotional content (such as service offerings) with portfolio content (client projects) while preserving aesthetics and brand identity.

This research adopts the perspective of (Strate, 2017), which views social media as a dynamic environment that shapes user behavior and thinking patterns. In the context of Buka Project Studios, Instagram functions not only as a promotional tool but also as a digital ecosystem where the SMO must adapt to algorithms, visual trends, and client needs. Previous studies, such as Schivinski & Dabrowski (2016), mainly focused on brand equity improvement without exploring the strategic management of Instagram as a digital portfolio within the creative industry. Therefore, this study aims to fill the research gap by analyzing the strategies and challenges in managing Instagram as both a promotional platform and a digital portfolio in the creative industry.

## II. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

### 2.1. Previous Research

Numerous studies have explored the use of social media as a promotional tool. (Schivinski, B., & Dabrowski, 2016) found that brand activities on social media significantly influence brand equity. However, their study focused more on quantitative impacts and did not specifically address social media as a visual portfolio in the creative industry. A study by Rozaq & Nugrahani (2023) investigated the use of short-video platforms as a digital marketing strategy for MSMEs. The results showed that relevant and interactive visual content enhances audience attraction and engagement. Another study by Bagas Prasetya Jati and Dian Purworini (2024) analyzed the use of Instagram by the @lokanantabloc account as a promotional medium through the lens of media ecology theory. This research highlighted how social media serves not only as an information dissemination tool but also as an ecosystem that regulates the rhythm of communication, interaction, and audience perception. However, there remains a lack of research explicitly examining how Instagram accounts in the creative industry—particularly visual production houses such as Buka Project Studios—strategically integrate promotional and portfolio functions within a single account. This study aims to fill this research gap by examining how content strategies are implemented and the role of Social Media Officers (SMOs) in managing the @bukaprojectstudios Instagram account in the context of both promotion and visual portfolio presentation.

### 2.2. Media Ecology Theory

Media Ecology Theory was first introduced by Marshall McLuhan (Griffin & Park, 2006) and later developed further by Strate (2017). This theory posits that media do not merely transmit messages but shape the cognitive, social, and cultural environment of their users. Media are seen as ecosystems that structure how humans communicate, think, and interact. According to Strate (2017), media as digital environments affect perception, behavior, and social practices. In the context of social media like Instagram, this theory emphasizes that users are not passive consumers but also producers and curators of digital identity. The media ecosystem of Instagram creates a dynamic space where content, algorithms, audiences, and creators constantly interact with one another.

McLuhan proposed three key assumptions in this theory:

- a. Humans cannot escape from media; it is embedded in daily life.
- b. Media influence how people think and behave.
- c. Media simultaneously bind the world together, creating global interconnectedness beyond space and time.

Since the emergence of Web 2.0 technologies, media ecology theory has significantly influenced the development of social media and marketing strategies, especially those related to digital promotion. These strategies involve both direct and indirect promotion, engaging consumer awareness in the process. Activities include brand promotion and the process of introducing and reinforcing consumer memory of a product (Rohimah, A., & Hakim, 2021). Through the lens of media ecology, social media promotion also affects emotional aspects, perceptions, sentiments, and communication values in technological contexts. These behavioral patterns ultimately support the effectiveness of promotional activities on social media, such as by sharing content intended to attract attention and drive purchasing behavior (Sari Indah Widarini et al., 2022). This study applies media ecology theory to analyze how Instagram acts as an adaptive space for Social Media Officers to develop content strategies that simultaneously combine promotional messaging and portfolio presentation.

### 2.3. Social Media and Instagram in Digital Communication

Social media has evolved from a communication tool into a strategic platform for marketing, branding, and visual communication. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) define social media as a group of internet-based applications built on the ideological foundations of Web 2.0 that enable the creation and exchange of user-generated content. Among these platforms, Instagram stands out in the realm of visual branding. Instagram is widely favored by companies and creative individuals due to its strong visual appeal and features that support real-time audience engagement, such as feed posts, stories, reels, IGTV, and IG Live. According to Tuten, T. L., & Solomon (2017), Instagram allows users to craft visual storytelling that not only conveys messages but also builds perception and emotional connection. In the creative industry context, Instagram serves not only as a promotional tool but also as a digital portfolio that showcases the quality of work, creative processes, and consistent visual styles. This is crucial because today's digital audiences are more attracted to authentic, interactive, and easily digestible visual content.

### 2.4. Instagram as Promotional Media and Digital Portfolio

As a promotional medium, Instagram allows users to reach audiences through engaging, informative, and interactive content. Promotional content strategies on Instagram include the use of strong visual elements, relevant hashtags, collaborations with other accounts, and paid advertising. However, in the creative industry—especially in companies like Buka Project Studios—Instagram serves a dual role. As a digital portfolio, Instagram displays a curated, sequential, and aesthetically consistent array of visual works. These portfolios include not only the final results of projects but also creative processes, client testimonials, and visual experiments. According to (Chaffey & Chadwick-Ellis, 2016), such portfolios enhance professional credibility and increase the potential for business collaboration.

The main challenge in combining these two functions lies in maintaining visual identity cohesion amidst the demands of rapidly changing visual trends and algorithm dynamics. Social Media Officers (SMOs) must understand key metrics (such as engagement rate, reach, and insights) to adjust content strategies based on audience response without compromising the aesthetic identity of the portfolio. From the perspective of media ecology theory, Instagram is not merely a tool for content distribution; it is a living digital space that continually evolves and requires constant adaptation. SMOs are required to navigate these changes and

create visual communication that is not only effective in marketing but also authentic and representative of the creative portfolio.

### III. Research Method

#### 3.1. Research Location, Duration, and Participants

This research was conducted in person (offline), focusing on the Instagram account @bukaprojectstudios, managed by Buka Project Studios, a visual production house operating in the creative industry, particularly within the food and beverage (F&B) sector. The interviews and observations were conducted on-site at the Buka Project office located at Jl. Drupadi No. 12 RT.05/RW.14, Tegal Gundil, Bogor Utara, Bogor City, West Java, 16152. Data collection took place from April 3 to May 18, 2025. This timeframe provided sufficient opportunity to conduct both thorough observations and in-depth interviews in order to obtain valid and relevant data regarding the operational activities of Buka Project Studios. The participants in this study included three informants, namely:

**Table 1. Informants Participants**

| No | Name    | Age | Gender | Position             | Description  |
|----|---------|-----|--------|----------------------|--|
| 1  | Hernaya | 25  | Woman  | Social Media Officer | The main person responsible for the Instagram content strategy.                          |
| 2  | Vincent | 30  | Man    | Creative Lead        | The individual in charge of visual direction and creative collaboration.                 |
| 3  | Kayla   | 24  | Woman  | Followers            | A member of the audience who provides perceptions and impressions regarding the content. |

The sampling technique employed in this study is purposive sampling, based on the consideration that selected informants play a direct and significant role in the management of Instagram content and in shaping audience perceptions of that content. The purposive selection is aligned with the nature of qualitative research, which emphasizes the depth of information and the relevance of informants' experience to the focus of the study (Busse & August, 2021).

#### 3.2. Research Design

This study adopts a qualitative approach with a case study method. The primary focus is to observe and analyze the content management strategy of Instagram as a medium for promotion and digital portfolio based on the media ecology theory framework. The main variables observed include visual promotion strategy, visual identity consistency, audience engagement, and response.

#### 3.3. Data Collection Techniques and Procedures

Data were collected using two main methods:

##### a. In-depth Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with three key informants: the Social Media Officer, the Creative Lead, and one active follower as a data triangulation measure. The interviews lasted between 10 to 20 minutes per session and were documented through audio recordings and direct field notes. The interview questions were designed based on the indicators of media ecology theory by McLuhan (as elaborated by Strate, 2017), which includes three main assumptions: humans can't be separated from media, media influence human behavior, and media create global interconnectedness.

#### b. Documentation and Observation Study

The researcher conducted direct observation of the Instagram account @bukaprojectstudios by recording posting activities, content types, interaction frequency, and the visualization of the digital portfolio design. In addition, supporting data were collected from secondary sources such as journal articles, online publications, and relevant academic literature to complement the analysis.

### 3.4. Research Instruments

This study employed a semi-structured interview guide based on the media ecology theory. The guide functioned to direct the interview process in alignment with the research objectives and ensure that the questions remained relevant to the theoretical indicators. Other research instruments included a smartphone for screenshots, a voice recorder for documenting the interview sessions, and manual field notes to support complete field data collection. Furthermore, scientific literature and social media platforms were also utilized as secondary data sources to enrich and strengthen the analytical framework of the study.

### 3.5. Data Analysis Techniques

The collected data were analyzed using thematic data reduction techniques. Each interview transcript was processed through three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The data were analyzed according to the categories of media ecology theory (Strate, 2017), which consist of: humans are inseparable from media, media influence thinking and behavior, and media simultaneously connect the world. Data validation was performed through source triangulation by comparing responses from all the informants to ensure the accuracy and credibility of the findings.

## IV. Results and Discussion

### 4.1. Analysis Result

In analyzing the data obtained through interviews, observations, and documentation, the researcher adopted the media ecology theoretical framework as a basis to understand the dynamics of Instagram use by Buka Project Studios. This theory asserts that media functions not merely as a communication channel but also as an environment that actively shapes the ways users think, behave, and socially interact. Referring to the three main assumptions proposed by (Strate, 2017) The analysis results are presented in three subsections that illustrate how the social media ecosystem, particularly Instagram, both shapes and is shaped by the social and professional practices at Buka Project Studios.

### 4.2. People Can't Escape Media

All stakeholders at Buka Project Studios are inseparable from the use of social media, particularly Instagram, as the primary medium for communication and promotion. Each division within Buka Project has its own head; however, every client brief is initially prepared by the social media officer and then submitted to the creative lead. Once all approvals are obtained, the production team executes the tasks. Content produced from projects with clients is then curated and uploaded to the Instagram account @bukaprojectstudios to serve as a digital portfolio.

*"From the @bukaprojectstudios account, we usually curate the photos first, selecting those that are the best and have the most market value. After that, we create a story. What I mean is, we carefully design the content to attract the audience. So the process is not just uploading randomly, but we develop the idea first to make it more engaging." (Vincent, 2025)*

*"As a social media officer, I usually start by sorting the photos taken by the production team. Then, I create the design brief outlining how the visuals should look. After that, I forward the brief to the design team. Once the design is complete, I proceed to create the EP, write the caption, and only then move on to the publication stage."* (Hernaya, 2025)

The stakeholders create content on the Instagram account @bukaprojectstudios as a form of soft-selling promotion and also as a portfolio aimed at the audience, allowing them to see the projects produced by the Buka Project agency team. The curated content, organized in the Editorial Planner (EP), is then posted on the Instagram feed of @bukaprojectstudios as well as in Stories, which can later be saved as Highlights. The content uploaded must be easily accessible and communicative because information that is easily received by the audience from the Instagram account @bukaprojectstudios is certainly a key factor in achieving awareness for Buka Project.

*"Yes, in terms of accessibility, it's easy. But regarding how communicative it is, I'm not entirely sure since I've never directly sent a DM. However, from what I observe, they seem friendly, which can be seen from their communication style on the activity page and also from the team photos, which give a warm and approachable impression. As for information delivery, I think it's really good. As an audience member, when I saw their content appear on Instagram's Explore page, I immediately recognized it as from @bukaprojectstudios, even without reading the account name. It was clearly evident that it was a portfolio account showcasing their projects."* (Kayla, 2025)

In addition to sharing content with commercial value as part of a promotional strategy, this effort also serves as an important means for Buka Project stakeholders to build brand awareness. On the other hand, the content presented provides benefits to the followers or audience of the Instagram account @bukaprojectstudios by encouraging the formation of positive reciprocal relationships through interaction and constructive feedback. The content shared on the Instagram @bukaprojectstudios social media platform is well-received by followers or audiences, whether in the form of feeds, stories, or highlights. This reflects the first assumption in media ecology theory, which states that media have become integrated into daily activities. Instagram is not only a tool for content distribution but also a part of the working system and communication within Buka Project Studios. Thus, the first assumption in media ecology theory can be identified in the work activities of the Social Media Officer (SMO) and Creative Lead at Buka Project Studios, who use Instagram as the primary space for creative interaction and promotion.

#### 4.3. Humans Are Influenced by Media

Building relationships with followers through the Instagram social media account @bukaprojectstudios is a communication activity carried out by the social media officer stakeholders, always accompanied by the creative lead. Naturally, this activity influences the identity and behavior of the followers of the Instagram account @bukaprojectstudios.

*"@bukaprojectstudios has been very consistent with its timeless identity from the beginning. People already recognize us as an agency focused on the Food and Beverage sector, so the content mainly revolves around food, people, and the ambiance of the places. Meanwhile, content that is more trend-driven or 'tap to trend' usually appears on the Buka Project account, not on Buka Project Studios. When selecting content, our first consideration is definitely the aesthetic aspect. We also look at whether the photo angle is good and adjust the tone to fit each client's character. For the feed layout, we usually choose the most attractive photos first to create initial mockups. Regarding captions, we use a casual style that remains persuasive, not hard selling, but more towards soft selling. Usually, at the end of the caption, we include a call-to-action to encourage audience engagement."* (Hernaya, 2025)

*"The first requirement is to have good communication skills. As for visuals, what we mean by good visuals is those that people can immediately understand, for example, they instantly recognize 'Oh, this is what kind of food' or 'Oh, this is what the atmosphere feels like.' Regarding storytelling, it's more*

*about how we guide the audience, how they can experience the process from production to the final result. So, it's not just about seeing, but also emotionally connecting with the content." (Vincent, 2025)*

The information provided by the stakeholders is a crucial point in building relationships with followers on the Instagram account @bukaprojectstudios. The content posted must be able to clearly convey information to the audience while also encouraging their engagement with the uploaded material. Furthermore, the Instagram account @bukaprojectstudios actively provides feedback to its audience by responding to direct messages, replying to comments, and reciprocating likes, thereby facilitating two-way communication. This dynamic interaction significantly contributes to enhancing the engagement levels on Instagram @bukaprojectstudios. In addition to the key points explained by the stakeholders that significantly influence the engagement on Instagram @bukaprojectstudios, these factors also affect followers when they visit the Instagram account. Followers experience ease of access when navigating the @bukaprojectstudios Instagram page. This ease of access is a deliberate goal for both the Buka Project and its audience. However, accessibility goes beyond just technical aspects, such as a tidy layout or well-structured content navigation. More importantly, the Instagram account @bukaprojectstudios is designed to attract attention and maintain followers' interest through the presentation of a portfolio that is engaging, relevant, and easily recognizable. In this context, visual consistency plays a crucial role. By maintaining a distinctive and coherent visual style—including color tones, image composition, and the style of captions—followers can quickly recognize that the content originates from Buka Project Studios. This consistency not only establishes a strong visual identity but also strengthens the emotional connection between the brand and its audience, making each post not only seen but also remembered and eagerly anticipated.

*"Consistency is indeed important, especially in building a brand. However, since we operate in a creative industry that changes very rapidly, I believe the key point lies in the ability to keep up with trends. Differences or changes will always occur, but what matters is how we stay true to the core or basics of BP Studios itself. So, we remain flexible without losing our identity." (Vincent, 2025)*

*"Visual consistency is important because one of the indicators that people remember us is through branding. Visual tone and other elements actually derive from branding, and they affect people's awareness of us. But from what I see with BP Studios, it's not necessary to have a single uniform color tone, because those who visit our account already know it's a portfolio account. So, the branding isn't about how BP Studios visually looks, but more about showcasing the consistent quality of our work with each client, which we highlight. So, it really depends on the account we manage and what its focus is." (Kayla, 2025)*

The posting of works or portfolios by Buka Project is one of the content strategies that holds a unique appeal for the followers of their social media account. This content falls under the category of soft selling because it does not directly offer products or services, but rather builds a two-way communication between the @bukaprojectstudios account and its audience. This interaction encourages deeper engagement, which can foster followers' interest in establishing professional collaborations with Buka Project, particularly in the context of the business development they manage. Thus, this strategy functions not only as a portfolio showcase but also effectively attracts potential clients through a non-intrusive approach. These findings indicate that media influence the mindset and behavior of the audience, in line with the second assumption of media ecology theory. The curated content is not only informative but also shapes the audience's perception of the professionalism and character of the brand. This reinforces the second assumption that media affect how audiences think and behave, especially in shaping perceptions of brands and digital portfolios.

#### 4.4. Media Connects the World Simultaneously

Buka Project cannot be separated from the role of social media, especially Instagram, in building communication and disseminating information about their works and activities. Through Instagram, Buka Project not only actively interacts with its followers but also establishes collaborations with other accounts as

part of its creative strategy. This dependence demonstrates that the presence of social media is a crucial element in the Buka Project's work ecosystem, where social media functions as the primary space for showcasing portfolios, shaping the brand image, and reaching a broader client base and audience.

*"BP Studios specifically targets clients from the F&B sector, such as coffee shops and restaurants. So, our main focus is entirely on the F&B industry. In my opinion, Instagram is indeed an effective medium to expand our reach, so people don't only know us through word of mouth. Especially since Instagram has sharing features like story sharing and tagging friends, which allow content to spread more widely. Therefore, it can be concluded that social media, particularly Instagram, has a very significant influence." (Hernaya, 2025)*

*"In terms of projects, our primary target market is indeed brands in the F&B sector. So, the potential for collaboration with the F&B sector is certainly very large. However, this does not mean we close the possibility of working with non-F&B brands that are also interested in collaborating with us." (Vincent, 2025)*

*"In my opinion, Instagram has a great influence because it is currently one of the main social media platforms most remembered by the public. With the ability to display various content such as photos, videos, and stories, Instagram is very effective in reaching Buka Project's audience more broadly." (Kayla, 2025)*

Instagram social media is consistently utilized by Buka Project as both a promotional tool and a digital portfolio. This Instagram account regularly uploads project results in collaboration with clients, successfully attracting the attention of potential new clients. Such activities not only increase engagement with followers but also stimulate interest from various parties to establish partnerships with the @bukaprojectstudios account. Thus, Instagram serves as a strategic platform for Buka Project to expand its network and strengthen its professional reputation. Instagram is consistently leveraged by @bukaprojectstudios as a means of promotion and a digital portfolio within the creative industry. The account routinely posts works and collaborative projects with clients, effectively drawing attention from prospective clients across various creative fields. These activities not only boost engagement with followers but also open opportunities for collaboration with diverse stakeholders attracted to the creativity and quality of @bukaprojectstudios' productions. Therefore, Instagram acts as the primary platform for broadening networks and reinforcing the studio's professional reputation in the creative industry. This reflects the third assumption of media ecology theory: Instagram enables Buka Project Studios to forge cross-regional connections and expand its influence beyond spatial and temporal boundaries, demonstrating how media simultaneously bind the world together.

*"We consistently follow the latest trends (tap to trend) to maintain the relevance and quality of the reports we produce. We continuously monitor viral content on Instagram and adjust it according to each client's needs. This strategy has proven very effective, especially with the support of paid advertisements (ads) that help expand the reach of our content. The impact has been significant, with many potential clients reaching out to us via Instagram DMs after seeing our content. We have even gained clients from various regions such as Brebes, Jakarta, and Cibubur. Some of them include Kopi Selasar from Jakarta, Mainstreet from Cibubur, and Kopi Kalisoga from Brebes. This shows that our digital portfolio truly attracts interest for collaboration across regions." (Hernaya, 2025)*

*"Of course, the impact is very significant, especially with the support of Meta Ads. The advertisements created can effectively capture attention and direct the audience precisely." (Vincent, 2025)*

*"Currently, I have not considered collaboration yet, as I am not a business owner in the food and beverage or event organizer sectors. However, at the top of mind, if I ever have a business, especially in the event organizer field, I would most likely want to collaborate with Buka Project. This is because I see that the quality of the videos and photos they upload to their Instagram Reels is very attractive. So,*

*even though not in the near future, Buka Project remains one of my options when I need photo and video services.”(Kayla, 2025)*

Buka Project Studios consistently showcases their portfolio works in every post on their Instagram social media account. As an agency operating in the creative industry and specifically managing various brands in the food and beverages (FnB) sector, Buka Project Studios consistently presents visual elements themed around food, people, and the ambience of each client it collaborates with. This visual identity becomes a distinctive hallmark that is inseparable and simultaneously represents the professionalism and visual character of Buka Project Studios on their Instagram account @bukaprojectstudios. This finding reinforces that Instagram is not only a communication tool but also a space for social and economic connectivity that binds audiences and clients from various regions.

#### 4.5. Discussion

Instagram social media serves as the primary interaction space between Buka Project Studios and its audience. The characteristics of Instagram as a visual platform that facilitates real-time communication through features such as feed posts, stories, and reels make the relationship between the account and its followers direct, responsive, and easily accessible. This aligns with the strategy of Buka Project Studios' stakeholders, who use Instagram as the main medium to convey information and consistently build the brand's visual identity. Before content publication, the Buka Project Studios team conducts a visual curation process that begins with the production team's output, followed by the Social Media Officer (SMO) preparing the design brief, creating the editorial plan (EP), writing captions, and finally publishing the content. This process not only aims to showcase the portfolio but also to build an engaging and relevant visual narrative. As expressed by SMO Hernaya (2025), "I usually start by sorting the photos taken by the production team... then write the caption, and only then move to the publishing stage." This statement indicates that Instagram is not merely used as a tool to upload content but is an integral part of the creative workflow cycle.

Furthermore, the content approach employed by Buka Project Studios is a soft-selling strategy, which is subtle, narrative, and non-intrusive. The uploaded content is designed to foster two-way communication with followers, cultivate emotional engagement, and strengthen trust in the brand. This is evident from the caption style that employs a casual tone, storytelling, and the inclusion of calls to action (CTA). "Usually, at the end of the caption, we insert a CTA to encourage the audience to engage," said Hernaya (2025). This communication model actively encourages feedback from followers in the form of comments, likes, and direct messages. The content presented also pays close attention to elements of visual identity, including color tone, composition, and consistency in visual style across client projects. Although each client has a unique character, Buka Project Studios maintains a core identity that makes its brand easily recognizable. Vincent (2025), the Creative Lead, stated that "our content remains flexible in following trends, but the important thing is not to lose BP Studios' core." In this regard, visual consistency is not only a matter of aesthetics but also part of the process of shaping audience perception regarding the professionalism and quality of Buka Project Studios.

From the audience's perspective, the Instagram account @bukaprojectstudios is considered communicative and has a strong visual identity. One follower, Kayla (2025), shared that she can recognize Buka Project Studios' content even before reading the account name because the visual signature is very distinctive. This indicates the success of a sustainable visual identity strategy. The promotional strategy through social media is also reinforced by collaborative activities between brands and expanding reach through Meta Ads. Buka Project Studios actively partners with FnB brands from various cities, such as Kopi Selasar (Jakarta), Mainstreet (Cibubur), and Kopi Kalisoga (Brebek). These collaborative projects not only broaden the audience segmentation but also strengthen the positioning of the Instagram account as a lively, dynamic, and relevant digital portfolio. As Vincent (2025) stated, "the ads we create are more effective in attracting attention and directing the audience precisely."

This discussion affirms three main assumptions in Marshall McLuhan's Media Ecology theory:

- a. People cannot be separated from the media. The activities of Buka Project Studios' stakeholders demonstrate that media (in this case, Instagram) has become an integral part of their daily workflow, from content planning to communication with clients and audiences.

- b. Media influences human thought and behavior. Instagram is not merely a technical medium but has shaped how stakeholders develop communication strategies, build visual identities, and how audiences interact with and remember the brand
- c. Media simultaneously connects the world. Through Instagram, Buka Project Studios is able to reach audiences across various regions and industry sectors, creating a visual communication ecosystem that transcends space and time.

Thus, these findings reinforce that Instagram is not just a one-way communication tool but a digital eco

logical space where brands and audiences interact simultaneously. Social media becomes an environment that shapes work culture, branding strategies, and professional relationships between creative industry actors and their consumers. This context demonstrates the relevance.

## V. Conclusion

This study confirms that the use of Instagram by Buka Project Studios as both a promotional tool and digital portfolio plays a central role in building and maintaining the company's professional image. Instagram functions not only as a platform for content dissemination but also as an interactive communication environment that shapes audience behavior and thinking patterns, while expanding business networks. The application of soft selling strategies and consistent visual identity has proven to be key to increasing engagement and attracting potential clients. The main challenge faced is maintaining a balance between adapting to current trends and preserving brand consistency.

This research offers a significant contribution to the development of digital communication theory, particularly in the context of media ecology theory. The findings indicate that Instagram is not merely a passive communication tool but a dynamic ecosystem that influences social interaction, branding strategies, and audience perception. Therefore, this study reinforces and expands the application of media ecology theory within the realm of social media and the creative industry. For practitioners, especially Social Media Officers and digital content managers, this study highlights the importance of implementing soft-selling techniques and maintaining visual consistency as essential elements in effective social media management. It is recommended that they actively monitor trends and platform algorithms to adapt their content strategies and enhance audience interaction. Furthermore, collaboration with other brands and the use of paid advertising features can serve as effective methods for broadening market reach and building a strong professional reputation.

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