

# MEDIA MANAGEMENT FOR DAKHAH IN THE DIGITAL ERA: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF STRATEGY, INNOVATION, AND SUSTAINABILITY ROADMAP

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## ABSTRACT

Digital transformation has shifted the paradigm of da'wah from a traditional, linear approach to a participatory, network-based, and experience-oriented model. This article presents a narrative systematic review of the current literature (2020–2025) to analyze da'wah media management in the context of digital dynamics. The research findings reveal that the effectiveness of digital da'wah depends not only on technology adoption, but on the synergistic integration of three main pillars: (1) systematic management principles that combine data-driven planning with authentic Islamic values; (2) innovative content and platform strategies that are creative, interactive, and in line with the preferences of the younger generation (millennials and Gen Z); and (3) strengthening two-way interactions and digital branding to build sustainable online communities. This study also identifies the potential of immersive technologies (AR/VR) and the importance of media production competencies. As a synthesis, a three-layer integrative model (value-strategy foundation, content-technology execution, and relationship-branding) is proposed that can serve as a guide for academics and practitioners. Practical implications emphasize investing in team capacity, audience-centric content strategies, judicious exploration of technology, and a focus on relationship building. Thus, this article offers a conceptual and operational framework for optimizing digital da'wah media to remain relevant, effective, and transformative in the 21st century.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The digital era has catalyzed a fundamental transformation in the communications landscape, including in the realm of conveying religious messages. Islamic preaching media, which previously relied on a one-way communication model through live lectures, radio, and television, is now experiencing a paradigm shift toward a

more interactive, personalized, and geographically boundless digital ecosystem [1]. This transformation brings with it two sides of the same coin: opportunities to expand reach and deepen audience engagement, particularly with the younger generation who live and breathe online, as well as complex challenges in terms of content management, communication strategy

formulation, and meaningful impact measurement.

However, mere technological adaptation without a mature management framework has proven insufficient. Various Islamic missionary organizations have actively adopted platforms like Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok, and have even begun exploring immersive technologies like Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR) [2], [3]. However, long-term success requires more than just a presence on these platforms; a systematic, planned management approach rooted in the core values of Islamic missionary work is needed for digital transformation to produce sustainable spiritual impact [4], [5].

This is where the main problem of this research emerges. While numerous studies have explored partial aspects of digital da'wah, such as the effectiveness of specific platforms or audience responses, there are still limited studies that provide a comprehensive overview of how da'wah media management principles are contextualized within the dynamics of the digital space. There is a gap between the discourse of technology, content strategy, and a holistic management approach. Therefore, this article addresses the need for a systematic approach capable of synergizing values, strategy, and technology within a coherent framework.

Based on the background and problem identification, the objectives of this study are clearly formulated. First, to analyze management principles such as data-driven planning and effective team organization in the context of managing digital Islamic preaching media. Second, to identify forms of technological innovation and creative content strategies such as the use of social media and AR/VR technology that resonate with millennials and Gen Z. Third, to compile practical implications and recommendations that can be used as guidelines in designing a roadmap for managing Islamic preaching media that is not only effective but also sustainable.

The significance of this research spans two domains. Academically, the synthesis contributes to the development of the field of Digital Religious Communication by offering

an integrative perspective that unites studies of da'wah management, new media communication, and the sociology of digital religion. For practitioners such as managers of da'wah institutions, communities, and da'is, this review provides an integrative framework that can serve as operational guidance. This framework is expected to help optimize the role of digital media as a means of da'wah that is not only relevant and transformative but also capable of maintaining the authenticity of spiritual messages amidst the rapid flow of digital information. Thus, this research acts as a bridge connecting theoretical reflection with practical application, towards strengthening intelligent and impactful da'wah in the 21st century.

## 2. RESEARCH METHODS

To answer the research questions and achieve the stated objectives, this study was designed as a systematic narrative literature review. This approach was chosen because of its ability not only to describe but also to synthesize, critically analyze, and integrate findings from various empirical and conceptual studies into a coherent and visionary framework (Snyder, 2019). This method is appropriate for mapping the development of the field of study, identifying patterns, trends, and gaps in the literature related to da'wah media management in the digital era.

The literature search and selection process was conducted systematically to ensure the scope and relevance of the study material. The search was conducted in indexed academic databases such as Google Scholar, Garuda, and Dimensions. To capture a comprehensive literature collection, a combination of keywords in Indonesian and English was used, such as "digital da'wah media management," "online da'wah strategy," "social media for Islamic preaching," and "digital religion Indonesia." Given the rapid pace of technological change, the publication time limit was set within the last five years (2020–2025) to ensure the findings presented remain contextual and up-to-date.

Literature selection was then conducted based on strict inclusion criteria. Only empirical or conceptual articles addressing strategy, management, technological innovation, or audience response in digital da'wah were considered. These publications had to come from reputable sources, such as scientific journals, seminar proceedings, or academic books. To maintain contextual relevance, primary focus was placed on literature set in Indonesia or the global Muslim community that has clear implications for Indonesian practice. Open access requirements were also applied to ensure the completeness of the analysis. From dozens of initial documents, a rigorous screening process yielded nine primary articles that were the most representative and in-depth for further analysis.

Data from the nine key articles were then analyzed using thematic analysis techniques as developed by Braun and Clarke (2006). The analysis process proceeded iteratively through several stages. It began with a thorough familiarization with the entire text, followed by the generation of initial codes to identify key concepts. Similar codes were then grouped into broader themes, such as "systematic management" or "platform innovation." A theme review phase was conducted to ensure consistency and logical relationships between themes before finally presenting them in a structured narrative report in the results and discussion sections.

As is typical of any study, this research has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, its qualitative and exploratory nature, based on a literature review, means that the findings are secondary and not intended for statistical generalization. Second, the focus on the Indonesian context limits the scope of the analysis to the dynamics of digital da'wah in other regions, although this provides contextual depth. Third, the highly dynamic pace of digital technology development presents challenges; the findings in this review may require updating in the near future as new technological platforms and tools emerge. Nevertheless, with this transparent and systematic methodology, the study is

expected to provide a solid foundation and a clear knowledge map to guide academic discussions and practical actions in managing relevant da'wah media in the digital era.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on a thematic analysis of selected literature, the findings of this study crystallize into four main interwoven themes, depicting the complex and dynamic landscape of digital da'wah media management.

The first finding confirms that systematic management principles are an irreplaceable foundation. Sabilillah et al.'s [5] study of the "One Ummah Movement" community shows that the success of digital da'wah relies heavily on data-driven strategic planning, such as algorithm and trend analysis, and the organization of a professional team with clearly defined roles. These classic management principles, however, do not stand alone. Kahfi's [4] study of KH. Ahmad Dahlan's strategy reminds us that lasting success lies in the integration of contextual and transformative Islamic values. Thus, an effective foundation is hybrid: combining modern management disciplines (content planning, audience analytics) with authentic da'wah values (integrity, clarity of sources, educational orientation). Without this foundation of values, technology becomes merely an empty tool and lacks spiritual impact.

Building on this foundation, the second theme highlights platform innovation and content strategies that must be specifically designed to reach the digital generation. Research by Alfiani and Qudratullah[6] on the Hijrah Boosters community revealed that millennial and Gen Z audiences respond positively to informal, relatable, and lively Islamic preaching content on their everyday platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube. Successful content is often packaged in the form of short videos, engaging infographics, or quotes with pop culture language and references. Rahman et al.'s [7] study at the Al-Ikhlash Mosque added that interactivity through question-and-answer or polling features, along with consistent uploads, are key to increasing engagement.

Digital Islamic preaching content strategies have thus shifted from a one-size-fits-all paradigm to a differentiated, adaptive, and participatory one, where content is no longer a one-way broadcast but rather a conversation built with the audience.

Furthermore, the third theme highlights the use of immersive and multimedia technologies as a means of enriching the da'wah experience. Khairullah and Rachmi [2] examine the potential of Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR) to create immersive religious simulations, such as visualizations of Islamic historical sites or simulations of the Hajj pilgrimage, which can enhance audience empathy and spatial understanding. Meanwhile, more established technologies such as video production remain the backbone. Wulandari and Nasir [8] in their analysis of Darussurur Media's YouTube channel emphasized that production quality (audio, visuals, editing), appropriate duration, and a clear narrative structure are crucial for audience retention and comprehension. These findings hint at the future of digital da'wah, which is increasingly multisensory and experiential, requiring managers to not only be able to tell stories but also design experiences for their audiences.

The independence of a digital da'wah initiative is measured by its sustainability, and this is where the fourth theme of strengthening interaction and digital branding becomes crucial. Risky [1] emphasizes that the essence of digital da'wah lies in responsive two-way communication. Interaction in the comments section or live chat provides an irreplaceable space for clarification, deepening, and personal engagement. In a dense digital ecosystem, building a trusted identity is also vital. Sasmito et al. (2025) examined the importance of digital branding competencies, which include visual consistency (logo, color) and consistency of message tone, as well as the ability to highlight the organization's distinctive values. Strong digital branding not only increases visibility but also builds trust and a loyal community, which in turn can act as ambassadors and co-creators of da'wah content.

As a synthesis of these four interrelated themes, this article proposes an Integrative Model of Digital Islamic Media Management that is dynamic and iterative. This model consists of three layers: (1) the Foundation Layer, which combines the core values of Islamic education with strategic management principles; (2) the Execution Layer, which includes the design of creative content strategies and the adoption of appropriate technologies for various platforms; and (3) the Relationship Layer, which focuses on building community through authentic interactions and strengthening digital identity through consistent branding. Feedback from the relationship layer continuously refines the execution and reflects back on the foundational values, creating a continuous cycle of learning and adaptation.

### **Synergy of Values, Audience, and Technology in Digital Da'wah**

The findings summarized in this study reveal a larger narrative underway: the convergence of tradition and innovation is not a conflict, but rather a creative dialectic in digital da'wah. The study shows that systematic and values-based management principles, as inherited by figures such as KH. Ahmad Dahlan [2], serve as a crucial counterbalance to the algorithmic logic and speed of digital platforms. Innovations in the form of social media platforms, creative content, and immersive technology do not replace, but rather contextualize and enrich, the da'wah tradition. As seen in the "One Ummah Movement" community, data-driven planning and solid teamwork [5] are modern instruments for realizing authentic Islamic values in the digital space. This convergence produces a hybrid paradigm, where traditional wisdom meets technical sophistication to create a broader and more profound impact.

In this context, the role of the younger generation (millennials and Gen Z) as active and critical audiences is central. They are no longer passive recipients, but rather agents who actively select, critique, and engage with religious content based on their spiritual and social needs, in accordance with the Uses and

Gratifications theory (Ruggiero, 2000). Studies by Alfiani and Qudratullah [6] and Royani et al. [3] confirm that this generation accesses da'wah through platforms like Instagram and TikTok, seeking content that is relatable, interactive, and relevant to their pop culture. Their intelligence in "reading" content demands a participatory and dialogical approach to da'wah, where religious narratives are constructed through two-way conversations, not monologues. Therefore, the success of digital da'wah depends heavily on the ability to understand and respect the critical agency of this young audience.

Ultimately, these findings firmly position technology as a tool for enriching experiences, not a substitute for values. The potential of Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR) explored by Khairullah and Rachmi [2], or the multimedia production strategies analyzed by Wulandari and Nasir [8], all serve to strengthen message delivery and build emotional engagement. Immersive technologies like AR/VR have the potential to create immersive simulations, but their essence remains as a means to bring spiritual narratives to life, enhance understanding, and foster empathy, rather than an end in itself. The key message is that core da'wah values such as wisdom, integrity, exemplary conduct, and spiritual transformation remain irreplaceable. Digital technology, for all its sophistication, is merely a faster and more engaging vehicle; the quality and direction of the journey remain determined by the driver who adheres to the correct value map. Thus, the future of sustainable digital da'wah lies in a dynamic balance: leveraging innovation to reach the minds and hearts of a new generation, without ever dimming the light of the eternal message it carries.

### **Theoretical Implications**

This systematic review makes a significant theoretical contribution to the development of the field of Digital Religious Communication, particularly in the Islamic context. To date, studies on digital da'wah have often been fragmented into separate disciplines: studies of religious organization management, new media analysis, or the

sociology of religion that examines online religious practices. This article seeks to bridge this fragmentation by integrating these three perspectives into a more holistic and dynamic framework.

First, from a da'wah management perspective, this study confirms and expands classical management theory. Findings such as the importance of data-driven planning and team organization [5] demonstrate that the POAC (Planning, Organizing, Actuating, Controlling) principle remains valid, but its tools and metrics have adapted to the digital ecosystem. Furthermore, Kahfi's [2] study injects a strong value and ethical dimension, reminding us that digital da'wah management theory must not be separated from its normative roots. This integration results in a management theory that is not only operationally effective but also ethically responsive.

Second, from the perspective of media and communication studies, this synthesis enriches the application of theories such as Uses and Gratifications (Ruggiero, 2000) and Digital Religion [9]. The analysis shows that young audiences actively use social media not only for information gratification, but also for spiritual fulfillment, identity search, and community building [3], [6]. The concept of Digital Religion finds strong empirical contextualization, where platforms like Instagram function as both a channel and a space [7] a space where religion is not only communicated, but also "lived" and practiced socially.

Third, from the perspective of the sociology of religion, findings on two-way interactions, online community formation, and digital branding [1] provide a picture of the reconfiguration of collective authority and religiosity. Digital da'wah gives rise to new, more distributed forms of religious authority (networked authority) and imagined communities built on content affinity, transcending the geographical boundaries of traditional mosques or Islamic boarding schools.

As a crystallization of this multidisciplinary integration, this article proposes a Three-Layer Integrative Model

(Foundation of Values & Strategy, Execution of Content & Technology, Relationships & Branding). This model serves as an initial theoretical framework for Digital Religious Communication that views digital da'wah as a complex system. This framework emphasizes that digital transformation in da'wah is a phenomenon that cannot be understood from a single perspective; it is a dynamic intersection between management structures, creator and audience agency, digital platform culture, and transcendent religious values. Thus, this study not only summarizes empirical findings but also invites academics to develop new theories that can capture the complexity and dynamics of religiosity in the digital era more comprehensively and contextually.

### Practical Implications

Based on the synthesis of research findings, this article offers a number of practical implications that can be used as operational guidelines for Islamic missionary institutions, religious communities, and practitioners in optimizing the management of digital Islamic missionary media in a sustainable manner.

First, investing in the capacity of the media team is an urgent strategic step. Findings by Sabilillah et al. [5] and Wulandari & Nasir (2024) emphasize that the success of digital da'wah depends not only on a single figure, but on an organized team with clearly defined roles, ranging from content creators and social media managers to community engagement specialists and data analysts. Institutions need to commit to building or empowering teams that are not only technologically proficient (digital skills) but also possess a deep understanding of content management principles, digital communication ethics, and, of course, da'wah wisdom and integrity. Continuous training and recruitment of young talent who are both digitally literate and strong in religious understanding are essential.

Second, implementing an audience-centered content strategy is key to resonance. Based on the Uses and Gratifications theory and the findings of Alfiani & Qudratullah [6]

and Royani et al. [3], Islamic preaching content must be designed with a design thinking approach, starting with an empathetic understanding of the needs, media consumption behavior, and cultural language of the younger generation (millennials & Gen Z). Content needs to be packaged creatively, interactively (e.g., through polls, Q&A, challenges), and differentiated for each platform, for example, short, trendy visual content for TikTok, more in-depth studies for YouTube, and community discussions for Instagram. This strategy shifts the paradigm from "what we want to convey" to "what the audience needs and how to engage."

Third, explore technology wisely and gradually. While immersive technologies like AR and VR promise a profound da'wah experience [2], technology adoption must be based on careful consideration: resource availability, relevance to the message, and educational objectives. Not all institutions need to immediately implement high-tech; a crucial first step is optimizing basic technologies such as analytical tools to understand the audience and improve the quality of multimedia production (audio, video, graphics), as researched by Wulandari & Nasir [8]. The principle is to use technology as a tool that enriches the delivery of values, not as an end in itself or a substitute for the substance of da'wah itself.

Fourth, and most fundamentally, is a shift in focus from simply gathering followers to building meaningful relationships and communities. As Risky [1] emphasizes, the heart of digital da'wah is responsive and authentic two-way communication. This means managing comment sections, responding to questions, and engaging thoughtfully in conversations. Furthermore, as Sasmito et al.'s (2025) study demonstrates, building consistent digital branding through a strong visual identity and narrative will help foster trust. Ultimately, this practical goal is to create a loyal and cohesive online community, where members are not merely passive consumers but feel ownership, involvement, and even ambassadors and co-creators of the da'wah mission.

Overall, these four practical implications are interconnected and form a cycle: a competent team produces relevant content with the help of appropriate technology, ultimately strengthening community relationships. This community feedback then feeds back into valuable input for refining team strategy, content, and technology use, creating a continuous and adaptive improvement process amidst the ever-changing digital landscape.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Based on a systematic review of recent literature, it can be concluded that da'wah in the digital era has undergone a fundamental paradigm shift. It is now participatory, network-based, and experience-oriented. Unlike the traditional linear and centralized model, digital da'wah thrives within a network-centric ecosystem where audiences, particularly the younger generation, actively seek out, critique, and contribute to shaping religious conversations. The focus is no longer simply on disseminating information, but rather on creating immersive, personal, and meaningful religious experiences, whether

through compelling multimedia content or the exploration of technologies like AR and VR.

The second key finding confirms that success in this new paradigm depends on the synergistic and careful integration of three main pillars. First, a systematic, data-driven management foundation encompassing strategic planning, professional team organization, and ongoing evaluation rooted in authentic da'wah values. Second, creative content and technology innovation, relevant to the audience's digital culture, and delivered through appropriate platforms and formats. Third, building authentic relationships through responsive, two-way communication and a digital branding strategy that builds trust and a loyal community.

Thus, the success of digital da'wah is not the result of a single factor, but rather the fruit of a collaborative symphony between a solid management framework, adaptive content creativity, and genuine relational closeness. The integration of these three ensures that digital transformation not only expands reach but also deepens the spiritual impact and sustainability of the da'wah mission itself.

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