

Social Media as a Strategic Tool for Organizational Communication in the Service Industry: A Quantitative Approach

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ABSTRACT. This paper examines the integration of social networks into organisational communication within the service industry, emphasising their dual role as drivers of engagement and sources of potential risk. Existing literature identifies platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, TikTok, and Telegram as strategic tools for branding, client interaction, knowledge management, and cross-team collaboration, with growing influence from trends such as AI-driven personalisation, short-form video, social commerce, and influencer marketing. However, studies also highlight risks including misinformation, reduced productivity, and algorithmic amplification of sensational content. Building on these insights, the present research investigates patterns of professional social media use, perceived benefits and limitations, and strategies for mitigating negative impacts, with a focus on the phenomenon of fake news. The study employed a quantitative, cross-sectional design, using a structured online questionnaire distributed to 250 employees across multiple service sectors. Data analysis, conducted in SPSS v.26, included descriptive statistics and correlation tests. The research questions addressed platform preferences, frequency of use, perceived impact on organisational communication, and the effectiveness of proposed solutions. Results reveal high daily engagement with multiple platforms, particularly combinations including LinkedIn, Facebook, and Instagram. Respondents reported strong perceived benefits in transparency, speed, and external interaction, alongside concerns about digital skills gaps and misinformation. Proposed solutions included formal guidelines, targeted training, content verification measures, and integrated communication strategies. The findings reinforce the importance of aligning platform selection with organisational objectives and stakeholder profiles. The paper contributes to the literature by offering a data-driven analysis of professional social media use in the service industry, integrating platform-specific insights with practical recommendations for risk management and strategic communication. The results have implications for policy design, training frameworks, and the deployment of technological tools to optimise organisational performance in an evolving digital environment.

Keywords: social media, organisational communication, service industry, digital marketing, fake news, stakeholder engagement

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Introduction

In recent years, the integration of social networks into organisational communication has evolved from an optional marketing tool into a strategic necessity for companies in the service industry. Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, TikTok, and Telegram are no longer used solely for promotional purposes; they have become essential infrastructures for real-time interaction with clients, partners, and employees, contributing to brand positioning, stakeholder engagement, and organisational efficiency. This transformation reflects wider digitalisation trends, accelerated by technological innovation, shifts in consumer behaviour, and increased demand for transparency and authenticity in corporate communication [1].

The importance of this topic lies in its direct connection to organisational competitiveness. In an environment where speed of information flow and digital presence can determine market success, effective social media management offers companies the opportunity to strengthen their online visibility, enhance stakeholder relationships, and optimise decision-making processes [2]. However, alongside these opportunities come significant risks, including the spread of misinformation, overreliance on algorithm-driven content visibility, and disparities in employees' digital competence. Addressing these challenges requires an evidence-based approach that integrates

platform-specific strategies, digital literacy development, and robust content governance [3]. Against this backdrop, the present study seeks to answer the central research question: How do social networks influence organisational communication in the service industry, and what strategies can maximise their benefits while mitigating associated risks? To address this question, the research is guided by three main hypotheses:

H1. Employees in the service industry use multiple social media platforms daily for professional purposes, combining marketing, communication, and stakeholder engagement functions.

H2. The perceived effectiveness of social media in organisational communication is influenced by employees' digital skills and the presence of formal guidelines.

H3. Integrated strategies that combine technological tools, training, and content verification can significantly reduce the negative impacts of misinformation and algorithmic bias.

By empirically testing these hypotheses, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of the role of social media in shaping contemporary organisational communication practices and offers practical recommendations for the service industry in a rapidly evolving digital environment.

Literature review

Evolution and use of social networks

Over the past two decades, social networks have evolved from simple communication channels into essential strategic elements of the service industry. They not only facilitate interaction between companies and clients, but also between business partners and employees, contributing to enhanced organisational connectivity. Thus, in the field of industrial engineering, social platforms go beyond their promotional role, serving also as tools for data collection, optimisation of information flows, and the stimulation of collaboration among geographically dispersed teams.

In this context, the integration of social media into corporate strategies has become increasingly relevant. According to Chen et al. (2017), the analysis of real-time feedback enables not only the monitoring of market trends, but also the anticipation of customer requirements, leading to greater stakeholder engagement and improved decision-making efficiency [3]. Furthermore, agile business models, supported by dynamic interactions with suppliers, can significantly reduce response times to changes in demand. Specialised literature also highlights differences between platforms in terms of communication potential. For example, LinkedIn, Twitter/X, Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok are used both for marketing and for professional networking. Recent data show that TikTok and YouTube dominate in terms of average daily time spent on the platform, while Reddit records the lowest consumption, an aspect that influences the choice of channels depending on the target audience [4]. In addition to these characteristics, each platform has its own specific advantages and limitations. For instance, Facebook offers wide reach but is affected by frequent algorithm changes. Similarly, Instagram favours visual content and e-commerce, yet is less suited to detailed technical presentations. LinkedIn, on the other hand, is recognised for its efficiency in the B2B sector and recruitment, although engagement rates tend to be slower. TikTok excels in creating viral content aimed at younger audiences, while Telegram offers security and direct communication, albeit with lower exposure. Emerging trends, mentioned by Iyelolu et al. (2024) [5] and Rachbini et al. (2023) [6], include the personalisation of messages through artificial intelligence, the growth of video content and live streaming, the expansion of social commerce, and the use of chatbots for instant support [7]. Likewise, user-generated content and influencer marketing remain key factors in strengthening authenticity. Overall, statistical data confirm the continuous growth of social media users from 2.73 billion in 2017 to an estimated 5.85 billion in 2027 [8]. Consequently, adapting communication strategies to platform algorithms, using interactive formats, and optimising SEO for social media are becoming essential conditions for maximising impact in the current digital environment.

Theoretical approaches and current perspectives on the use of social networks in the service industry

The specialised literature emphasises that social networks have evolved into complex digital infrastructures with multiple roles in the industry, going beyond their initial promotional function. According to Chen *et al.* (2017), they contribute not only to strategic communication but also to knowledge management and the stimulation of inter-organisational collaboration [3].

A comparative analysis of platforms reveals clear differences in their usefulness, advantages, limitations, and developmental trends. For example, Facebook is recognised for its global reach and advanced targeted advertising options, yet its dependence on shifting algorithms can affect content visibility [9]. In the other hand, Instagram focuses on visual storytelling and integrated e-commerce, but proves less suited to the communication of

complex technical information [10]. In the B2B environment, LinkedIn is the dominant platform, facilitating recruitment and the exchange of professional resources, although engagement rates tend to be relatively slow [11].

Telegram has emerged as a strategic platform for organisational communication and collaboration in the service industry, including industrial engineering, due to its security, speed, and flexibility [12]. Key functionalities include channels for unlimited message broadcasting without algorithmic filtering, groups for distributed team coordination, and chatbots for automating customer service, technical assistance, and order management [13]. End-to-end encryption ensures secure exchange of sensitive technical and strategic data, while message scheduling supports synchronised communications across time zones.

Advanced features such as voice/video calls and API integrations with CRM, ERP, and industrial automation systems enhance productivity and streamline workflows [14]. Telegram is increasingly used for technical documentation sharing, innovation dissemination, and stakeholder engagement in industrial networks.

Demographic analyses show a user base dominated by professionals aged 18-44, with high adoption in Eastern Europe, Central Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East [15]. Engagement is driven by thematic channels, professional groups, and automation tools.

Overall, Telegram's secure architecture, adaptability, and global reach make it an essential asset for service companies seeking to optimise processes, strengthen communication, and support cross-border collaboration in a rapidly evolving digital economy.

Methodology

The study adopted a quantitative approach to obtain measurable data and enable objective interpretation of results. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire, designed in line with the research objectives and hypotheses and informed by a review of literature on organisational communication and social media use. It combined closed and multiple-choice questions, Likert-scale items to assess attitudes and perceptions, and a small number of open-ended questions to gather qualitative insights. A pre-test with a small participant group ensured clarity and removed ambiguities.

The questionnaire explored participant demographics, social media usage patterns, perceived benefits and limitations in organisational communication, challenges faced, platform preferences, proposed improvement measures, the impact of positive and negative messages, associated risks such as fake news, and levels of digital competence. It comprised 27 questions and was administered online via Google Forms between 20 December 2024 and 15 January 2025, distributed through Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, and WhatsApp to maximise accessibility. The research design was cross-sectional, focusing on capturing perceptions and behaviours at a specific moment in time. The sample of 250 respondents was selected through convenience sampling, targeting employees from diverse sectors of the service industry, including tourism, hospitality, retail, finance, telecommunications, education, healthcare, and consultancy. Demographic diversity was ensured in terms of gender, age, education, and professional experience to allow meaningful comparative analysis. Data analysis was performed using SPSS v.26, beginning with data cleaning and descriptive statistics to summarise frequencies and distributions, followed by inferential statistical tests, including correlation and difference analysis, to verify hypotheses and reveal significant patterns. This rigorous and validated process provided robust, quantifiable evidence, offering a comprehensive picture of how service industry employees engage with and perceive social media in organisational communication.

Results and further discussions

Table 1 presents the distribution of responses to the first five questions of the survey, focusing on the socio-demographic profile of respondents and the frequency of social media use for professional purposes. The data outline the characteristics of the sample and provide a framework for interpreting subsequent analyses of professional behaviour in the digital environment.

Table 1: Analysis of the relationships (networks) and densities among the most cited journals

No.	Question	Response options	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative percent
1	What is your gender?	Female	163	64.9	64.9
		Male	88	35.1	100.0
		Total	251	100.0	
2	Which age group do you belong to?	26–35 years	137	54.6	54.6
		36–45 years	48	19.1	73.7

		46–55 years	9	3.6	77.3
		Over 55 years	3	1.2	78.5
		Under 25 years	54	21.5	100.0
		Total	251	100.0	
3	What is your level of education?	Secondary education	24	9.6	9.6
		Postgraduate studies (Master's/Doctorate)	165	65.7	75.3
		Undergraduate studies	62	24.7	100.0
		Total	251	100.0	
4	How many years of work experience do you have?	3–5 years	121	48.2	48.2
		6–10 years	68	27.1	75.3
		Over 10 years	35	13.9	89.2
		Less than 2 years	27	10.8	100.0
		Total	251	100.0	

Source: Authors' own research.

The results from *Table 1* indicate that the majority of respondents are female (64.9%), with the predominant age group being 26–35 years (54.6%). A substantial proportion hold postgraduate qualifications (65.7%), suggesting a highly educated sample. In terms of professional experience, almost half of participants (48.2%) have between three and five years in the workforce, while 27.1% report six to ten years of experience.

Regarding the frequency of social media use for professional purposes, most respondents (61.0%) access such platforms daily, followed by weekly users (31.1%). The proportion of those using them rarely or never is negligible. This pattern confirms the central role of the online environment in the professional activities of the surveyed group, particularly in sectors where digital communication is essential for networking, client interaction, and information dissemination (*Figure 1*).

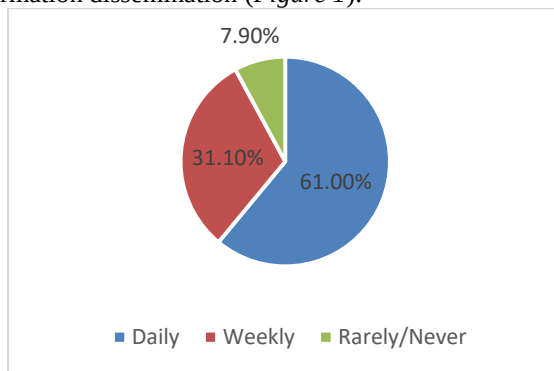


Figure 1: Frequency of social media use for professional purposes

Source: Authors' own research.

Table 2 presents the respondents' behaviours, preferences, and perceptions regarding the use of social media for professional purposes. The consolidated information includes the most frequently used platforms, the daily time allocated to communication through these channels, the main purposes for which they are used, as well as perceptions of the impact of social media on communication, motivation, productivity, and the organisation's image. Presenting the data in a synthesised format facilitates the observation of dominant trends and the identification of relationships between variables.

Table 2: Respondents' behaviours, preferences, and perceptions of professional social media use

No.	Question theme	Most frequent responses (% of total)	Main observation
1.	Social platforms used professionally	Facebook + LinkedIn + Instagram + TikTok – 31.5%; Facebook + LinkedIn + Instagram – 25.1%	Multi-platform use is dominant; LinkedIn appears in most combinations
2.	Daily time spent on professional	Over 2 hours – 47.8%; 30–60 minutes – 25.5%	Nearly half spend more than 2 hours/day for professional

	communication via social media		purposes
3.	Purposes of using social media at work	All five functions (information sharing, promotion, interaction, recruitment, feedback analysis) – 40.6%; information + promotion + interaction – 12.4%	Complex use focused on communication and promotion
4.	Impact – communication transparency	Strongly agree – 68.9%; Agree – 18.3%	Predominantly positive perception of the role of social media in transparency
5.	Impact – faster and more efficient communication	Agree – 47.0%; Strongly agree – 41.4%	Majority confirm improved speed and efficiency in communication
6.	Impact – interaction with clients/partners	Agree – 51.8%; Strongly agree – 36.7%	Social media is perceived as a facilitator of external interaction
7.	Impact – lack of digital skills as a barrier	Agree – 45.4%; Strongly agree – 42.6%	Insufficient digital skills are seen as a major limitation
8.	Impact – false information	Agree – 45.4%; Strongly agree – 43.8%	The risk of misinformation is recognised by most participants
9.	Impact – positive messages on motivation	Strongly agree – 47.0%; Agree – 42.2%	Positive messages clearly influence professional motivation
10.	Impact – negative messages on productivity	Strongly agree – 53.4%; Agree – 35.5%	Negative messages are perceived as factors that reduce productivity
11.	Impact – promoting the organisation's image	Strongly agree – 56.6%; Agree – 36.3%	Social media is considered effective in organisational branding

Source: Authors' own research.

The analysis of the data in *Table 2* reveals a predominantly multi-platform use of social media, with the combination Facebook-LinkedIn-Instagram-TikTok being the most common (31.5%), followed by Facebook-LinkedIn-Instagram (25.1%). Daily time invested in professional communication via social media is considerable, with almost half of respondents (47.8%) spending more than two hours per day for this purpose. In terms of purpose, a complex approach is prevalent, combining internal information sharing, service promotion, interaction with clients or partners, recruitment, and feedback analysis (40.6%). Perceptions of the impact of social media are largely positive: they are regarded as important drivers in enhancing communication transparency (68.9% strongly agree), in accelerating and improving information flows (47.0% agree + 41.4% strongly agree), and in strengthening interaction with clients and partners (51.8% agree). However, the data also indicate an awareness of limitations and risks, such as the lack of digital skills (88% agree/strongly agree) and the spread of false information (89.2% agree/strongly agree), which may undermine communication quality. The impact on employees' morale and performance is notable: positive messages are seen as enhancing professional motivation (89.2% agree/strongly agree), while negative messages are perceived as reducing productivity (88.8% agree/strongly agree). Furthermore, a significant proportion (56.6% strongly agree) recognise the effectiveness of social platforms in promoting the organisation's image, confirming the importance of integrating these tools into institutional communication and marketing strategies.

Table 3 presents the results which investigate the challenges faced in using social media, respondents' level of preparedness, platforms perceived as most effective, the influence on organisational and client perceptions, as well as the impact of positive and negative messages. The consolidated data highlight both the existing challenges and the opportunities to optimise organisational communication through social media platforms.

Table 3: Challenges, preparedness, impacts, and exposure in professional social media use

No.	Question theme	Most frequent responses (% of total)	Main observation
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1.	Difficulties in professional use of social media	Lack of guidelines + insufficient time + lack of skills + fear of incorrect information + inappropriate content – 67.3%	Obstacles are predominantly combined rather than isolated
2.	Level of preparedness for professional use	Very well prepared – 40.2%; Prepared – 35.5%	Generally high level of self-reported preparedness
3.	Platforms considered most effective	LinkedIn + Facebook + Instagram + TikTok + Telegram – 29.5%; LinkedIn + Facebook + Instagram – 25.9%	Combinations including LinkedIn dominate, especially with Facebook and Instagram
4.	Influence on clients' perceptions	To a very great extent – 49.0%; To a great extent – 27.9%	Strongly positive perception of impact on client image
5.	Influence on the organisation's perception of clients	To a very great extent – 41.4%; To a great extent – 39.0%	Social media significantly influences the organisation's perspective
6.	Solutions for more effective use	Guidelines + training + content verification + strategy – 72.1%	A complex and integrated approach is predominant
7.	Perception of positive messages	Motivates and improves morale – 45.4%	Positive messages have a clear impact on professional morale
8.	Impact of negative messages	Reduces motivation and productivity – 44.6%	Negative messages significantly affect perceived performance
9.	Frequency of exposure to organisational messages	Daily – 64.9%; Weekly – 18.7%	Constant exposure is very high

Source: Authors' own research.

The analysis of responses shows that perceived challenges are predominantly multiple and interconnected, with the majority of respondents (67.3%) simultaneously citing the lack of guidelines, insufficient time, limited digital skills, fear of misinformation, and inappropriate content. Nevertheless, self-assessed preparedness is generally high, with 75.7% reporting that they are prepared or very well prepared (*Table 3*). Regarding platform effectiveness, LinkedIn is the central hub, appearing in the most popular combinations alongside Facebook and Instagram. Social media is perceived as having a significant influence both on the organisation's image among clients (76.9% to a great or very great extent) and on the organisation's internal perception of its clients (80.4%). To optimise usage, respondents support integrated approaches, emphasising clear guidelines, training, content verification, and dedicated strategies (72.1%). Positive messages are generally valued for their motivational effect (45.4%), while negative messages are seen as factors that reduce productivity (44.6%). The frequency of exposure to organisational messages is high, with 64.9% reporting daily exposure, underlining the importance of the content distributed in a professional environment.

Table 4 addresses perceptions, practices, and skills related to the use of social media in professional and organisational contexts. The analysis covers aspects such as the perceived impact of social media on workplace atmosphere, the accuracy of distributed information, the level of concern regarding the phenomenon of fake news, existing or proposed measures to counter it, the skills required for the effective use of social platforms, and potential directions for improving internal communication through these channels.

Table 4: Perceptions and practices related to social media use

No.	Main theme	Most frequent option (%)	Other relevant options
1.	Overall impact on workplace atmosphere	Very high impact – 52.6%	High impact – 15.9%; No impact – 13.9%
2.	Accuracy of distributed information	Mostly accurate – 25.9%	Always accurate – 25.1%; Rarely accurate – 17.9%
3.	Concern about fake news	Very concerned – 35.1%	Moderately concerned – 19.5%; Not concerned at all – 18.3%
4.	Anti-fake news measures in the organisation	Clear measures in place – 61.4%	Partial but insufficient – 18.3%; Absent – 15.1%

5.	Most effective anti-fake news measures	Verification algorithms – 62.2%	Constant monitoring – 14.3%; Employee training – 13.9%
6.	Personal ability to use professionally	Very good – 43.4%	Good – 31.1%; Very poor – 14.7%
7.	Formal training in professional use	Yes, organised training – 60.2%	Informal – 24.7%; No, but would be useful – 10.4%
8.	Skills needed for efficiency	Platform management – 52.6%	Visual content creation – 22.3%; Feedback analysis – 13.9%
9.	Improving organisational communication	Clear usage guidelines – 57.8%	Dedicated strategies – 16.3%; Periodic training – 12.4%

The results indicate an intensive and deliberate use of social media in professional activities, reflected in the perception of a very high impact on workplace atmosphere (52.6% of respondents). Regarding the quality of information distributed via organisational channels, opinions are relatively balanced between “mostly accurate” (25.9%) and “always accurate” (25.1%), suggesting a high though not absolute, level of trust (*Table 4*). The fake news phenomenon is taken seriously: over half of respondents report being “very” or “moderately concerned”, and the majority confirm that their organisations have clear prevention measures in place (61.4%). Similarly, proposed solutions to address this issue focus on advanced technological tools, such as automated verification algorithms (62.2%), as well as organisational strategies including constant monitoring and employee training. At an individual level, digital competence is high: 74.5% of participants consider themselves able to use social media professionally at a “good” or “very good” level. This is reinforced by the fact that most (60.2%) have received formal training organised by their company. In terms of development needs, respondents primarily identify efficient platform management (52.6%) and the creation of engaging visual content (22.3%) as the most useful additional skills. To optimise organisational communication through social media, the preferred solution is the creation of clear usage guidelines (57.8%), highlighting the need for standardisation and consistency in transmitted messages. Overall, the data in the *Table 4* underline that social media is regarded as an essential tool in the professional environment, yet one that requires responsible management, specific skills, and clear policies in order to maximise benefits and minimise associated risks. The integration of social networks into organisational communication has reached a high level, being used both for internal relations and for interaction with clients and partners. The majority of employees use these platforms daily or weekly for professional purposes, such as the rapid exchange of information, brand promotion, and optimisation of digital marketing. Social networks are perceived as essential tools for transparency and efficiency; however, their use is influenced by the level of digital competence. The lack of formal guidelines and training remains a challenge, often compensated for through self-education and the exchange of experience [16,17].

The impact on the organisational environment is twofold: positive messages boost morale and cohesion, while negative content or fake news can generate demotivation and uncertainty [7,18]. This phenomenon is amplified by platform algorithms, which favour viral content, including manipulative or sensationalist material [19,20]. Recent data show slight decreases in the use of Facebook, Instagram, and Pinterest, but growth for TikTok and YouTube, with preferences varying by age group [21]. Security measures, such as banning TikTok on official devices, have been implemented to reduce cyber risks [22]. The difficulties encountered include the lack of training, insufficient resources for monitoring, and technical limitations in using analytical tools. Strategic problems arise from the absence of clear communication policies and procedures for verifying information [15]. Proposed solutions focus on coherent communication planning, the use of analysis and moderation technologies, the creation of internal guidelines, educating users on recognising fake news, optimising official profiles, and implementing transparent and authentic communication. Reputation management requires social listening tools, filtering algorithms, and proactive engagement strategies. The successful use of social networks in companies depends on balancing the exploitation of digital opportunities with risk management, through a combination of skills, technology, and clear policies, continuously adapted to the evolution of the online environment.

Conclusion

This study contributes to the understanding of how social networks are integrated into organisational communication within the service industry, highlighting both their transformative potential and the challenges associated with their use. The findings indicate that platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, TikTok, and Telegram have evolved beyond their promotional origins to become essential tools for information exchange, client and partner engagement, brand positioning, and organisational collaboration. The survey results demonstrate a high frequency of

professional use, with a majority of employees engaging on multiple platforms daily to achieve objectives ranging from internal communication to customer relationship management and digital marketing optimisation.

The practical implications of this research are substantial. In competitive and dynamic markets, effective social media management can serve as a strategic differentiator, enhancing transparency, accelerating decision-making, and fostering innovation. The data underscore the value of integrated communication strategies that combine platform-specific strengths, employ technological solutions for content verification, and cultivate digital skills among staff. Moreover, the emphasis on personalisation, authenticity, and timely interaction reflects the evolving expectations of stakeholders in a digitally connected environment. Implementing structured guidelines, dedicated training programmes, and robust monitoring systems can help organisations maximise benefits while mitigating risks such as misinformation, reputational damage, and reduced productivity caused by negative content.

However, this research has several limitations. First, the cross-sectional design captures perceptions and behaviours at a single point in time, limiting the ability to track evolving trends or causal relationships. Second, the convenience sampling method, while ensuring demographic diversity, restricts the generalisability of the results to the broader service industry workforce. Third, the study focuses on employee perspectives, without incorporating the viewpoints of clients or other external stakeholders, which could provide a more comprehensive understanding of social media's organisational impact. Finally, the analysis is limited to self-reported data, which may be influenced by personal bias or selective recall.

Despite these constraints, the study reinforces the central role of digital platforms in modern organisational communication and offers actionable recommendations for practitioners. By balancing opportunity exploitation with structured risk management, service industry organisations can strengthen stakeholder relationships, enhance operational resilience, and maintain competitiveness in the rapidly evolving online environment. Future research should consider longitudinal designs, broader sampling frames, and multi-perspective analyses to further enrich the knowledge base in this area.

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