



Research Article

E-Government and Social Media: A Case Study from Indonesia's Capital

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Abstract

Social Media have become part of our daily life. Facebook with its more than one billion monthly active users could play an important role in any government. In this paper, we look into the initiative by Jakarta City government to adopt social media to improve its public service. Various social media platforms including Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube were used to disseminate information to the public. The result shows that this initiative has mixed results. While their YouTube channel is quiet successful, its Twitter account and Facebook page still need some improvement. However, the public has accepted YouTube as one of the sources to find information about government business. Certain videos on this government YouTube channel are quite a hit with high numbers of viewing. Those are especially videos related to the increase of transparency such as budget hearings.

Keywords: eGovernment, Social Media, Social Network, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube.

Introduction

The proliferation and advancement of the Internet has sparked the interest of a number of governments in using the Internet to connect to their constituents (Singh, Das, and Joseph, 2007). Many governments have seen these initiatives, called eGovernment, as the key element in modernizing public administrations (Becker, Bergener, Niehaves, and Raeckers, 2008). On the other hand, despite the well documented benefits of eGovernments, its adoption and diffusion in

both developed and developing countries is still limited (Al-Shafi, Weerakkody, and Janssen, 2009). A number of successful implementations of eGovernment in developed countries have been documented, while many implementations in developing countries have resulted in a significant failure rate (Dong, Yu, Wang, and Na, 2012).

At the same time, social media have become one of the most successful applications in the Internet. Facebook, one of the social networking sites, has become the number

two destination in the Internet, just behind Google, followed by YouTube as number three (source: Alexa.com). Twitter, another social media site, is also in the top ten. Therefore, social media should become new tools for governments for broadening and enhancing their interaction with the public (Charalabidis and Loukis, 2011). Indonesia is one of the countries with large social media users. Statista.com lists the number of Facebook users in Indonesia currently around 60 Million as of May 2014, just behind the United States, India, and Brazil (source: www.statista.com). SocialBakers.com ranks Jakarta on the 2nd place for the city with the most Facebook users with 11.6 Million, just behind Bangkok, Thailand. Therefore, it is interesting to study how the Jakarta City government is using social media as part of their eGovernment initiative.

This study will examine the initiative by Jakarta City government to adopt social media as a way to disseminate information. Comparison between different types of social media venue will be made. We will try to answer the question regarding how successful these social media initiatives are and whether the public is really interested in using social media to learn what their government is doing.

The paper is structured as followed. In the next section, the background related to eGovernment, and social media based on the literature review is discussed. Then the research methodology is presented, followed by the description of the case study and the data collection methodology. After that, results and discussions about the findings from the data are presented. At the end, the conclusion of this study will conclude this paper.

Background

E Government

The term eGovernment can be defined in general as the delivery of government

services and operations through the use of information and communication technology (ICT) and the Internet (Srivastava and Teo, 2008). A number of studies have been done looking into various aspects of eGovernment, including its adoption (e.g., Gefen, Warkentin, Pavlou, and Rose, 2002), role of trust in its adoption (e.g., Akaya, Wolf, and Krcmar, 2010), challenges in its implementation (El-Haddadeh, Weerakkody, Al-Shafi, and Ali, 2010), and factors for its acceptance (Hofmann, Räckers, and Becker, 2012). Furthermore, several studies are also looking into the implementation in specific countries, such as the United Kingdom (Weerakkody, Choudrie, and Currie, 2004), Lebanon (Harfouche, and Kalika, 2009), Brazil (Barbosa, Cappi, Oyadomari, and Winkler, 2011), Indonesia (Nurdin, Stockdale, and Scheepers, 2012), and Germany (Becker et al, 2008) among others.

Social Media

Despite its popularity, there is no universally accepted definition of the term “social media” (Senadheera, Warren, and Leitch, 2011). However, each of the social media definitions shared some common characteristics such as the capability to interact and engage in other social interactions. The term social media is also used interchangeably with other terms such as social networking, and Web 2.0. In this paper, the term social media is defined as “*over the Internet applications that provide features for social interaction related to sharing multimedia contents, discussing, connecting to others, forming groups, and more on a web-based environment, such as Facebook.*” Studies related to social media have been done in looking into various aspects of it such as Social Media and E-commerce (Raisinghani, 2012), Social Media in Banking (Senadheera, Warren, and Leitch, 2011), Social Media wwin the Workplace (Aoun and Vatanasakdakul, 2012), Social Media Marketing (Richter and Schäfermeyer, 2011), and Social Media in Crisis Management (Kaewkitipong, Chen, and Ractham, 2012). Other studies have looked into the use of Social Media in government

setting, such as Social Media and eParticipation (Johannessen and Bjørn, 2012), Social Media and Political Communications (Stieglitz, Brockmann, and Xuan, 2012), and Social Media and Disaster Management (Ahmed, 2011). Some studies focused on Social Media in various countries, including Mexico (Sandoval, Matus, and Rogel, 2012), Australia (Lubna Alam and Walker, 2011; Senadheer et al, 2011), Egypt (Oh, Eom, and Rao, 2012), the United Kingdom (Vyas and Choudrie, 2012), and China (Nikou, Guo, and Bowman, 2012). A number of social media technologies have also been studied, including Twitter (Sandoval et al., 2012), Facebook (Lubna Alam and Walker, 2011), Wiki (Mansour, Abusalah, and Askenäs, 2011), and YouTube (Tang, Gu, and Whinston, 2011).

Research Methodology

In this research, a case study is selected as a method due to the exploratory nature of this study. Case study has been used widely in social media research such as by Kuikka and Äkkinen (2011) in their study of determining challenges in organizational social media adoption and use, Aoun and Vatanasakdakul (2012) in their study of Social Media in Workplace, and Heath and Singh (2012) in their study of Social Media Engagement. A case study has its strength in examining the phenomena in their natural setting (Benbasat et al., 1987; Yin, 2003), as opposed in a lab setting. Quantitative data, such as subscribers, ratings, number of followers, as well as qualitative data, such as comments and posting will be collected in this study.

Case Study

Jakarta is the capital of Indonesia, the fourth most populous country in the world (Wikipedia). The city government, with its 77,000 employees, is headed by a governor and vice governor, elected directly every five years. Jakarta has an estimated population of more than 11 million. It is divided into six smaller local municipalities and several technical units and agencies. With its annual

budget of nearly US\$5.16 billion (The Jakarta Post), it has more budget than some large cities in the United States, including Houston that has a city budget around US\$ 4 billion (www.houstontx.gov). As the largest city in Indonesia, Jakarta is facing a lot of challenges in becoming an attractive destination for investment. The city government in its Area Development Program 2002-2007 identified several of those problems including (1) potential flooding due to its lower locations; (2) inefficiency in waste management; (3) challenges in traffic management; (4) increasing number of street vendors; (5) lack of participation from the society; and (6) limitation of urban area development possibility (Jakarta Development Agency). Furthermore, those problems are also complicated by high level of suspicious bank transaction activities reported by the Indonesian Fiscal Transaction Reports and Analysis Center (INTRAC), an independent government institution tasked with preventing money laundering activities (INTRACT report). The new governor and vice governor, elected to office in September 2012, have vowed to address all those challenges including eradicating inefficiency and corruptions. They put some new initiatives to combat corruptions and increase transparency. Those new initiatives include the use of e-Budgeting and e-Purchasing to combat corruptions, and adoption of social media to increase transparency. They believe social media could help inform the public about the government's works and activities (Projecting Indonesia Website). For this purpose, the city government set up a twitter account @PemprovDKI1 with the first tweet found on October 30, 2012. On the same day, they opened a Facebook account PemprovDKI. Its YouTube channel had been established since October 2011; however, the first publication was made on October 5, 2012. They tried to maintain consistency for naming those three outlets.

Data Collection

The process of data collection started by visiting each of the social media platforms used by the Jakarta City government. On twitter account @PemprovDKI1, data related to the number of tweets, followers, as well as the content of the tweets are collected. A website, called snapbird.org, was used to collect tweets from this account. On Facebook page PemprovDKI, data about the number of fans (or “likes”), the number of postings, and the number of posting’s “likes” as well as the comments to those postings were collected. From YouTube channel PemprovDKI, data related to the number of subscribers and the number of video postings were collected. Furthermore, data about each video including the number of

comments, the number of “like” and “dislike”, as well as the content of those comments were collected. In YouTube data collection, websites called SimplyMeasured.com and SocialBlade.com were used to collect information about the videos posted in PemprovDKI channel.

Result

The data collected from those three social media platforms show different popularity among them. We use the number of subscribers in YouTube, the number of followers in Twitter, and the number of fans (or “like”) in Facebook as one of the indicators of popularity. Table 1 below summarizes those data related to the three social media platforms.

Table 1: Statistics Data of the three Social Media platforms (as of 2/18/2013)

	Twitter	Facebook	YouTube
Date of the first posting	October 30th, 2012	October 30th, 2012	October 5th, 2012
Follower / fans / Subscriber	3,370	4,879	56,499
Number of Tweets / Wall posting / Videos	430	430	428
People who is talking about this (Facebook)	N/A	5,613	N/A
Total comments all videos (YouTube)	N/A	N/A	9,796,762

From the table above, the number of activities initiated by account owner is almost similar, with the number of video postings which is only a little bit lower than that of the postings on Facebook or Twitter. This could be an indication that they are trying to use those three platforms in the same ways to convey their messages. However, the number of users who subscribe to their YouTube channel were more than tenfold higher than the number of fans in Facebook or the number of followers in Twitter. This could indicate that YouTube is the most favorable social media platform compared to the other two platforms. The number of comments made by users in

Facebook page and YouTube is an indication of their engagement with the contents found in each of the platforms. In this area, YouTube shows a significant number of engagements compared to Facebook page, i.e., 9,796,762 vs. 5,613. This significant level of engagement (almost 1,700 times higher) could indicate a successful initiative by the city government to inform the public through Social Media outlet, especially YouTube.

Table 2 shows the number of fans or subscribers gained every month on Facebook and YouTube. Since it is not possible to get this information for Twitter, we will just focus on these two platforms.

Table 2: Data of fans or subscriber gain per month

	Facebook	YouTube
Average gain per month	899	12,670
Average view per month	n/a	1,054,983

The data show that the YouTube channel of the Jakarta city government had a significant gain compared to their Facebook page with more than fourteen times. Furthermore, while it is not possible to get Facebook page view statistics, the average view per month for the YouTube channel shows a significant high number with more than 1 million views.

Looking into each of the postings on YouTube and Facebook, data about the number of comments for each of the postings were recorded. These data tell about how users engage with each of those postings, as well as how popular a posting was. The top five postings on Facebook and YouTube are displayed in the following table 3

Table 3: The top 5 postings in Facebook Page and YouTube Channel

Posting Ranking based on popularity	Facebook		YouTube		
	Likes	Comments	Views	Likes	Comments
#1	75	23	1,492,474	16,405	8,920
#2	49	11	407,672	1,702	1,049
#3	36	0	362,864	1,936	1,466
#4	36	0	349,516	1,746	889
#5	35	0	198,520	1,323	1,075

Table 3 above shows that YouTube as a Social Media platform for the Jakarta city government is quite popular. The top five postings (videos) on YouTube gathered a significant number of views, with the highest ranking of almost 1.5 Million viewers. The highest ranking video posting also generates significant number of "likes" and comments, i.e., more than sixteen thousand "likes" and almost nine thousand comments.

For each of those top five postings on YouTube channel, the detail information is recorded. The recorded information includes statistics about the posting, i.e., posting date, duration of the video, some other key discovery events available on YouTube. Table 4 below shows detail information about the top five videos

Table 4: Statistics from YouTube for the Top Five Videos

Video ranking based on number of viewers	Posting Date	Duration	First Views based on embedded on Facebook	First Views based on referral from Facebook	First Views based on referral from subscriber module	First View from a mobile device
# 1	11/08/2012	46:00	35,949	49,166	298,185	617,518
# 2	10/24/2012	33:24	3,048	3,696	188,092	109,974

# 3	11/14/2012	1:06:27	0	0	186,133	66,945
# 4	10/17/2012	1:02:19	7,769	6,817	165,199	62,618
# 5	11/30/2012	58:29	0	2,421	110,928	29,726

Based on these data, most of the viewers watch those videos for the first time as a result of being a subscriber to Jakarta City

government channel. Table 5 shows a description about the contents of the top five videos.

Table 5: Contents of the Top Five Videos

Video ranking based on number of viewers	Description
# 1	The Vice Governor received briefing from Public Works Unit regarding its budget for the next fiscal year
# 2	The Vice Governor received participants of labor demonstration at his office
# 3	The Vice Governor visited school for excellent students
# 4	The Vice Governor met City government employees
# 5	The Vice Governor received briefing from Tax and Revenue Unit regarding its proposal for the next fiscal year

Discussion

The result of this exploratory study has shown that a government can be successful in its social media initiatives. The three social media platforms used by Jakarta city government showed that its YouTube channel has outperformed the other two platforms, i.e., Twitter account and Facebook page. While each of the platforms has almost the same number of postings, i.e., Tweets in Twitter, Facebook wall postings, and YouTube Videos, the responses made by social media users, i.e., the public, show significant differences. Users show their preferred media where they get their information as well as where they are engaged with information. YouTube is not only able to get the most viewers, but also get the most engagement reflected in the number of comments and "likes" for each video. Furthermore, the YouTube channel has attracted a significant number of subscribers. This subscription in turn generates a high number of views for those posted videos, as its referral from the

subscription module is the one that attracts the most first views.

The result reveals that some of the traffic to YouTube videos was generated from Facebook, either from the government's page or other Facebook users who embedded or referred to those videos on their Facebook accounts. This is an indication that each social media platform can be used to support other platforms by directing traffic from one social media platform, e.g., Facebook, to another one, e.g., YouTube. Building an optimal synergy between all social media platforms should be one of the important goals to any organization or agency that are trying to capitalize from social media potential. By having a synergy, they can reach wider audience and take advantage from the strengths of each platform.

The Jakarta City government has not been able to attract larger fans in its Facebook page as well as its larger followers in its Twitter account. One of the reasons could be that they have not used those two platforms in optimal way and have not taken advantages of the strengths of those two

platforms. Right now, they seem to use Twitter and Facebook merely as a way to make people aware of the new videos posted on their YouTube channel. Therefore, public or social media users have not seen the usefulness of getting more involved in Twitter or Facebook page of the Jakarta City government. Finding ways to make those two platforms become more useful to the public is one of the important aspects to make them more popular. Twitter could have a potential to become an instant direct communication link between the government and its citizens.

Looking at the top videos in YouTube reveals that the public is eager to learn more about government activities, especially those activities that were previously not transparent or visible at all to the public. YouTube video about briefing from Public Works Unit regarding its budget for the next fiscal year received significant attention from the public, compared to any other videos. In Indonesia, Public Works unit has been well-known for its inefficiency as well as corruptions resulted in poorly maintained public infrastructure such as roads. A World Bank report indicated that as much as 24% of funds allocated for road construction project in Indonesia 'went missing' (Kenny, 2006). As corruptions, collusions, and nepotism are becoming business as usual, the public is eager to consume any information to address those problems. The first step taken by Jakarta City government to increase its transparency is by allowing the public to witness how each government unit set up and defended their budget and proposal. Increasing transparency is one of the measures to fight corruption (Ndikumana, 2006). This step could become an example for other developing countries that face similar problems including high corruptions. Transparency International estimated that in the developing countries illicit financial flows including corruption, bribery, theft, and tax evasion cost around \$1.26 trillion per year (source: transparency.org.uk) and at the same time, corruption will cause 0.5 to 1.0 percent lower growth compared to a similar country with little corruption (Transparency

International). The proliferation of social media and adoption of eGovernment should help in combating that problem, not only in the developed countries, but more importantly in the developing countries. The relationship between eGovernance and reduction in the level of corruption in a state institution has been found significant in a study by Korkpoe (2011).

Conclusion

The Jakarta City government has been quite successful in starting its social media initiative as part of its eGovernment. However, there are still necessary improvements, especially improvements related to the use of Twitter and Facebook. Tailoring contents or messages in Twitter and Facebook, to fit the strengths of those related to social media platforms, could make them as successful as YouTube. Future study should look into contents in those three social media platforms, including contents of each tweet, wall post, and video, as well as the comments made by the public. Qualitative content analysis would bring rich information that can be used to improve this initiative.

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