

Buzzer as the Driving Force for Buzz Marketing on Twitter in the 2019 Indonesian Presidential Election

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Abstract.

This study aims to determine Buzzers' existence and the Buzz Marketing strategy carried out by Buzzers in the 2019 Indonesian Presidential Election on Twitter. The method in this study used qualitative research with SOSTAC analysis by P.R Smith. As a result, 1) the Buzzer's existence in the 2019 Indonesian Presidential Election contest was formed at the end of 2018. The formation of a Professional Buzzer was carried out through a recruitment process held by several legal companies with a predetermined payment system; 2) In carrying out Buzz marketing, Buzzer has arranged plans to distribute political content. Buzzers use a variety of political strategies to amplify political messages. Then, the political messages are spread using a minimum of three or more accounts to engage in a conversation. Through systematic Buzz marketing planning, political messages that are informative, persuasive, and instructive systematically and intensely to Twitter netizens make the results more optimal. However, Buzzer still needs the formulation of political content that is more attractive to Twitter netizens such as avoiding old content that uses political narratives containing SARA elements, hoaxes, hate speech, and other propaganda.

Keywords: Buzzer, Buzz Marketing, Politic, Twitter, Presidential Election

1. INTRODUCTION

The widespread use of social media has made Twitter one of Indonesia's essential media in political democracy. Buzzer's use of Twitter in Buzz's marketing via anonymous accounts has become a contemporary style in politics, and it has happened in Indonesia's 2019 Presidential Election. Through Twitter accounts, Buzzer provided considerable support and influence on the success of the political actors they supported at that time. According to Professor Clay Shirky, the use of social media for political purposes, as in other places, is always conceptualized and disguised [1]. Therefore, since it was founded in 2007, the popularity of the Twitter platform has begun to be felt by internet users. Even though it is only limited to 140 characters, that does not mean Twitter can not compete with others. Through a list of themes or Trending Topics, Twitter users can find out about hot news or events that are currently being discussed on Twitter [2]. It is supported by the characteristics of changing topics, which are reflected in the messages sent by its users and can change the real world to

virtual communication. Many individual decision-makers, public figures, and large companies use Twitter. On this basis, Twitter in Indonesia is still believed to be social media capable of distributing political messages [3].

In a democracy in Indonesia, Twitter is used by several political actors and their supporters as a means of the political battle in cyberspace. Besides, to generate a high buzz effect, they also use the services of political Buzzers on Twitter. In simple terms, Buzz marketing is a promotional posture that is focused on maximizing word-of-mouth of a product or phenomenon virally via technology, whether through personal conversations or on larger scale discussions on social media platforms. It is the practice of drawing influencers and connectors who have lots of contacts in different circles [4]. Buzz marketing refers to marketing strategies used to capture the attention of the customers and other influencers to amplify the marketing message to an extent were talking about the brand, product, or service becomes entertaining, fascinating, and newsworthy [5]. Buzz Marketing can be analogous to the spread of gossip. Buzz is information by word of mouth, through endorser, which is essential or popular people [6].

Political actors who participate in the election contest are competing to do Buzz Marketing by organically involving Buzzers in the success teams have created. The Buzzer is defined as personal or collective actions as a "brain" or creator of discourse/issue discussed by netizens in cyberspace. They are called Buzzers because they have to buzz an issue or discourse to accept and capture the public as the construction of thought [7]. Buzzers involved in cyberspace campaigns can come from volunteers, cadres from the party, or other people who are intentionally paid to become political Buzzers during the campaign period [8].

Although Buzzer was initially known on Twitter since 2006 and was used for marketing products on Twitter, but in political contestation, the use of political Buzzers has been known since 2012 since the emergence of digital political volunteers such as JASMEV in the 2012 DKI Jakarta regional election contest [9]. The Buzzer in political democracy can be the spearhead for a candidate's success for regional or state head during the election process [10]. In any political competition, it is inevitable that those who will be crowned as winners are the ones who get the most support from the audiens. That is a democracy with all its advantages and disadvantages. Although not everything that gets much support from the masses is guaranteed to be fair, the democratic law that applies in this world is a political victory equal to constituents' support [11]. Therefore, Buzzer has the primary goal of achieving absolute victory through voter support on social networks. Moreover, it's also what happened in the democracy of the Presidential Election in 2019.

Buzzer's presence cannot be separated from the transformation of the political platform. If initially identified with offline activities such as crowded mobilization, it has changed and present in the virtual world (online). In the 2019 Presidential Election in Indonesia, a political Buzzer was formed at the end of 2018 to support the Presidents

and Vice Presidents candidates in 2019. The process of becoming a political Buzzer on social media begins with open recruitment [12]. Bradshaw & Howard [13] (2019) has released their research entitled *The Global Disinformation Order 2019 Global Inventory of Organized Social Media Manipulation*. The research reveals that Indonesia is a social network Buzzers user in the 2019 Presidential Election. In the 2019 Presidential Election, Buzzer used in Indonesia is a paid Buzzer. The Buzzers are assigned to carry out political campaigns that support, attack political opponents, polarize or divide public support.

Buzzer always carries out all marketing activities in the virtual space and strives to be consistent with the person's goals and a company that has paid them. Marketing is a vital function in a company because the right marketing can determine its position in the market [14]. In this case, Buzzer does not only carry out the usual buzz but also works to overthrow and demonize competitors from the Presidents and Vice President candidates that they support (including attacking with hate speech in various forms). On the other hand, they also defended one of the supported candidate pairs [15]. It happens because Buzzer has a vast network in the virtual world and has access to crucial information to distribute content according to context.

This study aims to determine Buzzers' existence and the application of Buzz marketing carried out by Buzzers during the 2019 Presidential Election on Twitter. The presence of Buzzer in political democracy on Twitter does have an impact on society, namely confusion from the public, who should he believe, even though there are credible sources such as credible media. The government is still considered a credible source. However, in the current era of social media, information cannot be seen from which source, often the source is unknown because it results from copy and pastes from *WhatsApp*, or *Facebook status* and etc. [16].

In the 2019 Presidential Election, apart from political participation through virtual spaces, the phenomena of hoaxes, fake news, and hate speech are increasingly felt. The chaos and massive activity of Buzzers and political bots have injured democracy Digital. The shallow debate between Buzzers, each using hate speech spreading techniques, is not only detrimental to the public but threatens the future of democracy that leads to democracy full of reviles [17]. However, this behavior existence of demand and supply in the market makes Buzzer a new industry that has emerged in the digital era [18]. Buzzer's ability also supports it is heavily influenced by social media, known to have the power to program-specific networks according to different interests and values, including following strategic alliances between dominant actors from various networks [19].

II. METHODS

The method in this study used qualitative research. In qualitative research, we try to explain how the existence of Buzzer on Twitter and the application of Buzz

marketing carried out by Buzzer during the 2019 Presidential Election. Through defined and directed subjects, researchers can provide an accurate picture. Thus, the description in this study focuses on how and who [20].

This study also used a Sostac P.R. Smith's analysis. In the context of marketing, strategy development and implementation activities are coordinated through a marketing plan, and this manufacturing process is known as marketing planning [21]. SOSTAC is a simple tool that helps managers to remember the components of a marketing communication plan. SOSTAC can be applied to all kinds of plans - corporate plans, marketing plans, marketing communication plans, social media plans, email sending plans or even personal plans [22]. The advantage of SOSTAC analysis is that it can better analyze existing strategies through SOSTAC analysis stages to produce solutions and considerations to a problem [23].

In data collection techniques, we conduct participant observation or field research where this technique requires the researcher to be directly involved and spend much time relating to the study's object [24]. Therefore, in analyzing the findings in this study, researchers also participated by entering the Buzzer area on Twitter and deepened by semi-structured interviews with the Buzzers.

Lastly, this study used a virtual ethnographic research type. Virtual ethnography is a combination of ethnography and the online world or commonly called netnography. Netnographic research is commonly used in a qualitative approach to look at social phenomena and user culture in cyberspace [25]. So that in this study, the data analysis technique used follows the steps stated in the book *Netnography: Doing Ethnographic Research Online* [26]. These are arranged in order and adapted to ethnographers' needs as follows: coding, recording, abstraction, and comparison, recheck and repair, and theory.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The result and discussion in this study are in the field data obtained by research qualitative descriptive. It was indispensable as a result of consideration between the research findings in the field and the theory related to the discussion of research. In this case, the researcher analyzes Buzzer's existence and implements Buzz Marketing in the 2019 Indonesian Presidential Election. In the digital era, many new media have emerged recently, such as Twitter and other social networks, making users spend more time communicating online than face to face in real life. New media offers an opportunity for political actors to attract voters, interact directly with the public, and form intimate conversations with the public.

The Existence of Buzzer on Twitter

The political strategy should benefit the Presidents and Vice Presidents candidates, and the campaign team supports them. However, it should also benefit the interests of all parties involved in democracy. The Buzzer's ability to amplify messages by attracting attention or building conversation makes Twitter users more likely to

follow every political narrative that is spread. Therefore, Twitter Buzzer's task is not limited to posting a tweet but also running a campaign or a series of further information to their followers. So a Twitter Buzzer's task can be like a brand ambassador, they must really understand what he is spreading in cyberspace.

In the 2019 Presidential Election in Indonesia, the political Buzzer was formed at the end of 2018. The Buzzer formation was carried out to support one of the 2019 Presidential Candidate pairs at that time. Buzzer formation was carried out through a recruitment process held by several local and central companies. In this process, each Buzzer gets information through flyer designs spread on social media and information obtained by word of mouth. Buzzers who follow the recruitment process and pass the qualifications will continue to the next stage with a 6-month work agreement. In the Buzzer work agreement system, every Buzzer must follow unwritten rules, for example, such as not mentioning the type of work and location of work to others. If these terms and conditions can be followed and agreed upon by the Buzzers, the political Buzzer will work according to the pay given and is said to be a Buzzer or paid Buzzer.

As for the application of the Buzzer work system, there are several requirements that Buzzer must do when working is to create at least ten anonymous accounts on social media, especially Twitter and new e-mails with different identities. In each of these accounts, Buzzers must be able to have > 100 to 1000 of followers. Then the accounts will be grouped and stored in the Data Bank so that they can be identified. Furthermore, when conducting political campaign activities, they will use the data that is neatly stored in the Socmed Data Bank via a google drive link distributed specifically for Buzzers. The data is made into content and will be distributed passively by Buzzers according to each coordinator's orders. Buzzer spreads at least 300 content/days.

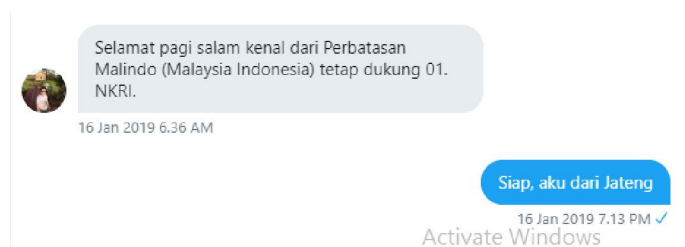


Fig 1. Screenshot of the Buzzer Conversation on Twitter

Fig 1 shows that Buzzers can interact on Twitter by introducing themselves via Direct Message (DM), and then proceed to follow each other's accounts. This method helps Buzzers generate stronger relationships between Buzzers and other Twitter users. Like being the first step to make friends and intimacy virtually among fellow Buzzers. In the process of interacting in a virtual space, neither name nor location is real. Some of them identify Buzzer accounts with different usernames, bio and locations. The reason is, not all Buzzers want Twitter users to know about it. For example, some

Buzzers never want to post content through their accounts, representing supporting the Presidential Candidates during the 2019 Presidential Election. Furthermore, in addition to Direct Message (DM), the Buzzers also communicate by joining the Twitter group members. Within the group, one Buzzer and another have conversations using various political symbols. In addition, they involve the community, especially Twitter netizens, to turn information into Trending Topic.

In Buzzer's life narrative on Twitter, the Buzzer's "life" setting tells more about politics and the supported Presidents and Vice Presidents candidates. What distinguishes Buzzer narratives from regular Twitter users is the narrative about their real life. Through the tweets on Twitter Buzzer, not apart from political symbols, like the use of profile photos and hashtags that are always mentioned in every conversation during the campaign. Therefore, when viewed based on the Buzzer typology incorporated on Twitter, it can be classified as follows:

Table 1. Buzzer Typology on Twitter Groups

No	Name	Description	Type
1	<i>Buzzer A</i>	Has a strong relationship among the Buzzers. The Buzzer actively interacts with Buzzer members on the Twitter group. They can identify and understand the activities of consuming information while in the Twitter group.	<i>Insider</i>
2	<i>Buzzer B</i>	Some Buzzers maintain strong personal bonds with many other Buzzers. However, Minglers are less interested in continuing with the activities that are happening.	<i>Mingler</i>
3	<i>Buzzer C</i>	Has relatively shallow social relationships with other members, but they focus on interest and enthusiasm for community activities.	<i>Devotee</i>
4	<i>Another Buzzer</i>	Some Buzzers don't have strong social ties to the group and only maintain them superficially and have relatively weak abilities and skills.	<i>Newbie</i>

Buzz Marketing Strategy in Indonesia's 2019 Presidential Election

As an experienced buzzer who comes with various interests, Buzzer is like a "political vehicle". They must be able to deliver the political actors they support to the desired peak of power. In order to achieve this, Buzzers must be able to do their Buzz Marketing more flexibly so that they are quickly accepted by Twitter users. Buzz

marketing is a technique of delivering word of mouth about a product, service, or company to generate a high Buzz effect on digital media.

The practice of democracy in Indonesia has turned into a competition that knows neither friend nor foe. Everything is carried out in a systematic manner that is very familiar with the politicization of social engineering conceptualized by Buzzer to attract voters who use Twitter. The Buzzers employ a variety of strategies to amplify the political message. The political messages are then spread using a minimum of three or more accounts to engage in a conversation. In its function and purpose, these anonymous accounts are used as parties that support conversation topics and make the conversation topics included in Trending Topics as the results of the analysis carried out by drone emprit through the Social Analysis Network, one of them was the Buzzer Troops and JKW-MA supporters on social media scattered and formed a natural interaction pattern and programmatic, with a total of 60% Share and Rate of 3.44.

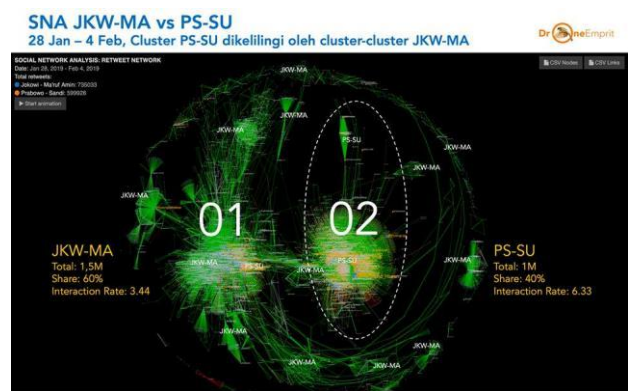


Fig.2. Social Network Analysis JKW-MA

In the framework of political democratization, the strategy adopted by the Buzzer Team includes observing developing issues, utilizing leadership achievements and program designs that have been agreed upon by the political candidates they support. For example, in the period from January 28 to February 4, Drone Emprit recorded total conversations across all channels, JKW-MA outperformed PS-SU with 1.6 million versus 1 million conversations.



Fig.3. Result of Conversation Trend Analysis on Social Media

The Buzzers convey more political messages by highlighting the Presidential Candidates' achievements and leadership experiences that they support, and the Buzzers also put forward the Presidents and Vice Presidents candidate programs that are considered capable of minimizing the problems that exist in Indonesia. So, it becomes a truth without a process of selecting and sorting.

Besides, as a message-spreading entity that has clarity and purpose of messages, by the interests of the group, Buzzer's success in providing a significant contribution is not only limited to planning or promoting the excellence of the Presidents and Vice Presidents candidates that they support. However, they also counter hoaxes committed by competitors. Buzzer's counter hoax is a sufficiently articulate weapon to undermine the credibility of its political competitors. During the campaign period until the voting period, many things were done by Buzzer to strengthen and maintain the electability of the Presidents and Vice Presidents candidates that Buzzer had built in the virtual world. Until the voting process took place, they continued to spread soft selling narratives even though the campaign was not allowed.

Therefore, to comprehensively determine the Buzz marketing planning carried out by Buzzer in the 2019 Presidential Election contest on Twitter, the researchers will analyze it using the SOSTAC model analysis system according to P.R Smith (2011). In its implementation, the elements in this model are: Situation, Objective, Strategy, Tactics, Action (implementation), and Control.

Situation

This stage focuses more on measuring whether Buzzer understands the environment's state (the approach to the situation and conditions in the field or terrain in conducting business activities). By knowing the market situation and audience, you will measure the strengths and weaknesses of the steps taken by Buzzer. In conducting political campaigns, Buzzer uses several media, especially Twitter, to position market segments. After identifying the market segment, the Buzzers then decide which Twitter user segment among Millennials has the greatest opportunity or becomes the target market.

The most important thing for Buzzer to do is to develop value where the audience will choose the offer that is considered to provide the most outstanding value and some benefits, both tangible and intangible because they have performed this important marketing function, many Buzzers have succeeded in bringing candidates to be winners in the General Election in Indonesia. However, to find out in detail the conditions mentioned above, Buzzers and agencies with their paying team can use the SWOT analysis method, which is the strategic planning method used to evaluate.

1. *Strengths*, are situations or conditions that are the organisation's strengths or program at this time.
 - a. Have a clear and mature focus and strategy;
 - b. The leadership experience that is owned by the Presidents and Vice Presidents candidates who are supported by the Buzzers;

- c. Adequate campaign costs;
 - d. Facilities provided to support account creation;
 - e. Buzzer's common vision and mission;
 - f. Have a Data Bank that stores all the content Buzzer needs to do Buzz marketing;
 - g. Have a website to measure the success rate of work every day.
2. *Weaknesses* are organizational activities that are not going well or the resources needed by the organization but not owned by the organization.
- a. Buzzer's adaptation to working hours tends to be slow;
 - b. The political narratives made are not too varied;
 - c. Lack of content modification from Buzzer, so tweets look the same;
 - d. There is a shift in Buzzer's role so that in some time, the campaign on social media is reduced.
3. *Opportunities* are positive factors that arise from the environment and provide opportunities for organizations or programs to take advantage of them.
- a. A large number of Millennial Twitter users;
 - b. Help Regional Buzzers, Volunteers, Artists, and Influencers who support Buzzers;
 - c. The availability of the Trending Topic feature on Twitter which makes it easy for Buzzers to quickly provide information and even influence a wide audience;
 - d. Positive news from various online media regarding the supported figures;
 - e. Website *Trendsmap.com* which can count how many Buzzer's Tweets in a day.
4. *Threat* is a negative factor from the environment that hinders the development or operation of an organization and program.
- a. The Twitter system is fast to enforce account restrictions or block Buzzer accounts;
 - b. Bot accounts used by competitors to enhance their political narratives until they become Trending Topic;
 - c. Paid Buzzers owned by competitors;
 - d. The destruction of Buzzer accounts carried out by competitors through reporting accounts or tweets;
 - e. Twitter users who are starting to become active so they can decide to accept or reject the political narratives that are spread by Buzzer.

Objective

The use of Twitter to disseminate information and political narratives is the key to viral content. Through this Twitter, Buzzers create and share multiple posts and

hashtags. The short-term goal that Buzzers want is to make any content that is distributed to the Trending Topic on Twitter and discussed by a wide audience. So, the level of impression, engagement and electability of supported the Presidents and Vice Presidents candidates increases. While the long goal that Buzzer wants to achieve on social media accounts, especially Twitter, is to deliver the Presidents and Vice Presidents candidates who are supported by winning the 2019 Presidential Election contest through Buzzer marketing communications the virtual space.

Strategy

By considering segmentation, targets, and goals, the marketing communication strategy carried out by Buzzers is based on the following:

1. Perform a series of activities that aim to achieve the target based on the current situation. To achieve this goal, Buzzers have started collaborations with competing Buzzers and Twitter users with verified accounts. This certainly makes it easier for every Buzzer to spread political content to become trendings.
2. Improve communication by prioritizing re-branding of supported political candidates. It means that marketing on Twitter must be reproduced, and done 24 hours, especially at night.
3. Improve communication and coordination across Buzzers in Indonesia because every Buzzer must be able to interact and carry out professional collaboration, so that all stakeholders have the same perceptions and goals.

Tactics

This stage implies "where do we want to be?" It can include a vision for a digital channel. By looking at the results of the explanation of the strategy above, the tactics used by Buzzer in the 2019 Presidential Election are as follows:

1. Buzzer chooses digital media by prioritizing Twitter and Social Pilot on computers as a means of conveying political narratives. Both of these media have a relationship to determine the post settings according to the desired time in captions, hashtags, photos, videos, memes, and other creative content and then make them trendy. So, it can reach a larger target audience because this method is effective.
2. Buzzers use hashtags and fibonanchi as the most important tools to achieve a trend.
3. Following the Hypno Writing training. In this training, the social media team consisting of Design, Buzzer and Content Writers was given tips and tricks on influencing the audience with writing.
4. Lastly, send out some Buzzer doing observation partisipant.

Action

This stage refers to the action plan, change management and project management skills. The execution of the draft strategy and tactics is a further detail than the description of tactics. An action plan, in the form of an organized work

program, concerning the type of program, the time for implementation, and the program's person.

1. Buzzer chooses digital media by prioritizing Twitter and Social Pilot on computers as a means of conveying political narratives. For prevent accounts being blocked or considered spam, Buzzers use the Social Pilot website to set the time when posts will air on Twitter. The use of Social Pilot becomes active in March-April. The Social Pilot was used because of the new Twitter system that easily detects a Buzzer account as a "Bot" account, so Buzzer accounts are easier to limit and even can't be used again. After the post has been published according to schedule, the Buzzers continue to actively comment and spread the post containing political narratives to other media platforms. Besides, Buzzers actively entered Twitter groups during the political campaign period. The Buzzers at the center also interact with Buzzers from various circles to create a stronger relationship. They are working together to spread the political narratives that have been made and make these narratives a trending topic in Indonesia and the world. Still in the same media, Buzzers also pay attention to competitors' movement by entering their environment through hashtags in Trendings. They reply to competitor posts by counter hoaxes, a few of SARA, hate speech, and other propaganda.
2. Buzzers use Hashtags and Fibonanchi as important tools to achieve a trend. In marketing the Presidents and Vice Presidents candidates supported by Buzzers, hashtags are the most decisive thing to classify the content and opinion material that the community wants to build. Besides, during one month during the campaign period, the Buzzers also used the additional fibonanchi number. It's done so that the tweet that is spread is detected by Twitter as an organic tweet and reaches trendings.
3. Buzzer take Hypno Writing training. From March to April, the incessant attacks from competitors made the campaign team find ways not to lose their audience. One of them is by ordering Buzzer to take the Hypo Writing training for several days. This training also teaches each Buzzer to keep the audience focused on the narrative that Buzzer is spreading.
4. Observation. On several occasion, they are also required to go down to the field to do live tweets and collect information on photos, videos and interviews at every major event held.

Control

At the control stage, determine whether the target's strategy and tactics are suitable between planning and operations. Monitoring and controlling, whether the strategy is functioning as desired, so the control can be exercised by the coordinator who is in charge of each Buzzer. Each Buzzer coordinator can monitor and supervise

each Twitter account regarding the number of Tweets and each hashtag that can become trending. Conduct content analysis through a unique website that is owned, 24-hour trends maps and a link to Buzzer daily reports. Every day the coordinator can evaluate whether there are steps that need to be updated. The Buzzer coordinator can also give each Buzzer warnings and even dismissal who cannot meet the target and applicable conditions.

It shows what Buzzer is doing in implementing the Buzz marketing strategy is intended as the dissemination of information about candidates, parties, and programs through Twitter aimed at their targets to change the insights, attitudes, knowledge, and behaviour of the candidates. Voters, according to the wishes of the information provider. Through systematic Buzz marketing planning, political messages that are informative, persuasive and instructive systematically and intensely to Twitter users make the results more optimal.

IV. CONCLUSION

Although the Buzzer phenomenon that drives Buzz marketing in politics is still a contemporary style on Twitter, and its use in politics has recently become a trend that continues to rise. Ideally, anyone needs to look at this comprehensively. Buzzer and Buzz Marketing, which was carried out through anonymous accounts on Twitter during the 2019 Indonesian Presidential Election, still needs the formulation of political content that is more attractive to Twitter netizens. For example, by avoiding old content that uses political narratives containing SARA elements, hoaxes, hate speech, and other propaganda.

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